

Ren Fa Di – Human Beings Follow the Earth



**A Discourse on Human Participation in the
More-Than-Human World as it Relates to Nature Cure in the
Classics of Chinese Medicine**



*The most learned and powerful healer will be one
who has first learned his or her skills directly from the land itself*

- David Abram

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ABSTRACT

The dual degree program in both Naturopathic and Classical Chinese Medicine offers the unique opportunity of simultaneously studying the intricate theory and philosophy of both medical paradigms. The ideas common to both systems comprise the foundation of the model of healing recognized as Nature Cure. Inherent to the theory of Nature Cure is the definition of health as an adherence to the basic laws and energy patterns of Nature. The origin of disease is viewed as noncompliance with Nature's laws. When the behavior of a human being, or of a community of human beings, diverges from these laws, the natural harmony of the macrocosm is disturbed. As a result, the vibrational state of the human body is similarly altered. When one lives out of harmony with the laws of nature, one gets sick. Historically, the role of the physician in both Naturopathic and Classical Chinese Medicine was to first recognize the imbalances manifesting in the human being as disease symptoms and then to look towards identifying the root of this imbalance by turning to the study of what is out of balance with the relationship between Human Beings and everything else that is not human; the more-than-human world.

Naturopaths, like the Daoist medical sages, were concerned with understanding how man can best conform to the laws of nature. However, over time medical theory in the west increasingly lost touch with the science of developing and defining the laws of Nature. The founding Naturopathic Nature Cure practitioners, such as Priessnitz, Kneipp, Lindlahr, and Lust are credited as instigating the medical revolution that is known in the West as Nature Cure. They brought the "Return to Nature" philosophical approach back to Western medicine.

The system of correspondence has withstood the unfolding of historical events in China, and has remained an integral part of the system of Chinese Medicine. Chinese medical practitioners assist their patients back into a concordance with the laws of nature. Treatments utilize acupuncture and herbal formulas to restore the internal balance of vital force, while at the same time they align and harmonize the physiology of the human being with the macrocosmic energy patterns of the Universe. The root of Naturopathic and Chinese Medicine are one and the same. That is, to define the laws of nature and then to live in accordance with them.

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I. BACKGROUND

My wife, Brigitte, was raised in Hochgallmig, a small town nestled high in the beautiful mountains of Tirol, Austria. She was influenced by an alpine culture that aspired to live in harmony with nature. Comprised mainly of farmers whose daily life is governed by the will of the mountains, this culture views health not in terms of medical technology but as a balance of self amongst the external landscape. The air they breathe, the food they eat, the conditions they work in - in essence, the total environment - are all vital components to living a healthy life. The traditional Tirol culture that I became intimately familiar with, like naturopathic medicine, strives to create a healthy world in which humanity may thrive. Hochgallmig has become my spiritual home. Here my mother-in-law fed me all natural food, made me “heaven key” tea from flowers grown on the mountain, and graciously began to teach me some of the means to live naturally. It is here amongst this culture and this alpine landscape where I really feel the closest to *my* nature.

Tirol and all the images it conjures is a symbol of my true home. It is a place where I can both physically and mentally turn towards along my journey when I am in need of comfort. On one visit in July of 1997, Brigitte and I spent the summer working on a nearby alm. This is a type of dairy farm isolated from any village, nestled in the high peaks of the Tirolean Alps. Two years before this trip, I was diagnosed with Crohn’s Disease. At this time I was feeling very ill – both physically and emotionally. I was in severe pain, had no appetite, and there were even periods of time when I would vomit literally every day. I had many struggles and painful events to deal with in my life up to this point. One of the most traumatic was the internalization of a family secret that I, alone, kept from certain members my family for many years for their protection. In addition, I had always wanted to be a physician, but after graduating college I knew it wasn’t right for me to go off to an allopathic medical school. My undergraduate education revealed the complexities of political and business influences on medicine and their effect on medical decision making. This, coupled with difficulties I witnessed for my father who had an integrative practice pioneering in the treatment of Chronic Fatigue

Syndrome patients, discouraged me from entering the profession I had always longed for as a boy. I was dispirited, lost, miserable and very, very ill at the time of this trip.

I was in dire need of soul searching. I had to. I was miserable, and my dispirited emotions and negative attitude were clearly inflicting damage to myself and family. I didn't know how to search my soul, but I knew I had to make changes in my life. Prior to this trip I bought books that were supposed to help, but of course I didn't read them. I was in crisis and something had to give. Up here on this mountain I cried out. I really poured my soul out to whoever was listening. "What am I doing here? What is my path? Why am I so sick? What is the point to all this misery? Somebody. Anybody. Please help me!"

A day or two later, while hiking up the mountain alone, I realized that I no longer felt sick. I felt alive again. I was still lost, but at least I felt well. I had been drinking water from a crisp, clean mountain stream, been breathing fresh unpolluted mountain air, and had been eating simple, unadulterated and very nourishing food. I walked further up the trail. I took time to gaze out upon the distant mountains, I walked amongst the most beautiful magenta mountain roses, and cupping my hands I drank directly from a tumbling spring. The water was just so alive and vital with energy. I sensed it knew a secret; something that it had been waiting for eternity to let me in on. I heard *it* by means of my ears, while I felt *it* reverberate deep inside of me.

Puzzled, I climbed still further up the now narrowing path. It was here, amongst the evergreens, the blue birds and field mice, and in this particular spot on this very large Earth, in this place in which my heart recognized as



A tumbling stream up on the Alm

home, that I heard *it*. It spoke to me. Don't misunderstand me, *it* wasn't a burning bush, but *it* was a voice. It was strong and powerful, and it said matter of factly, "THIS IS ME. This is how I need to live my life. I want to live in tune with nature, I want to help people, everyone - not just the sick - to learn how to live healthy. I want to learn and I want to teach. My path in life has led me to this."

It was my voice, but it was not me who was speaking nor even thinking these words. It was much deeper. My spine shivered, my hairs stood on end. The richness, the tone, the meaning – came not of me, but through me. It was myself, self actualized, reincorporated with it's source.

"Don't even think about turning around," myself and the source continued on. "Your path lies in front of you. You cried out for help and nature has answered. You saw the self that you knew you always were. That arduous path you are on is quite necessary. At each twist and turn you gained necessary experience for the forks ahead. And now your path has led you to a cusp that is both personal and historic. Healing has come full circle. History has led medicine back to nature. Medicine has been on its own convoluted path and it sits today in front of the same fork that you now see before you."

The novel "Ishmael" by Daniel Quinn identifies people as either Leavers or Takers. He defines Takers as people who have a disastrous premise that the world belongs to them, while Leavers believe that man belongs to the world.¹ Modern humanity has mostly subscribed to the Taker premise, which has led man down the path of destruction and disease. But there are many people who are choosing to take a different path. A path with a sign attached which reads: "Return to Nature". Many of the naturopathic and Chinese medical students, alumni and faculty of NCNM have chosen this path. It is my fundamental belief that humanity is indeed coming full circle, and collectively, we are

right now at a junction. If we choose to follow the Leaver premise, then creation can go on forever and humans can bask in the infinite wisdom of nature - we can experience true healing.

It is a common belief amongst indigenous cultures that the most learned and powerful healer will be one who has first learned his or her skills directly from the land itself, from a specific animal or plant, from a brook or a mountain peak, during a prolonged sojourn out beyond the boundaries of human society. They undertook a solitary quest for vision; rendered themselves vulnerable, as shamans and healers, to the wild forces of the land, and if needed, they cried out to all of Earth's living things for a vision, for teachings, and for the power to heal themselves, their human community, and their mother Earth. I feel like I have gone through this very same walkabout.²

Two years after starting the naturopathic program at NCNM, my path, the path nature has chosen for me, lead me to the gates of another great opportunity – the study of Classical Chinese Medicine. Chinese medicine has really been an inspiration for me. It has already helped me rethink and understand holism and interconnectedness in a way that better matches my ideology. It is an embodiment of thousands of years of knowledge of how to live in balance with nature. Classical Chinese Medicine, in combination with Naturopathic medicine, is helping me to become the physician, and human being that I had hoped to become. My goal is to learn how to live in balance with nature and to teach others what I have learned. In so doing I hope to heal myself, others and every participant of this more-than-human Earth.

I love my education here at NCNM thus far, but I have also begun to perceive a side to this profession that I find a little alarming. Often, I have felt that my studies have been tilted in favor of too much objective structure and rational mechanism and not enough more subjective experiential learning. Our studies teach us to remain current with the most updated protocols based on scientific evidence based research. We implement physical exams, run lab tests, where white coats and even have our own pharmacological formulary. I have had experiences at our clinic, which have made me worry that a

Naturopathic Doctor (ND) is trained to substitute isolated herbal constituents and supplements for allopathic drugs. I, like many of my other colleagues, had to address the question of what separates a Naturopathic doctor from a medical doctor? In our desire to fit into the modern landscape of health and healing have we left behind the heart of our medicine - the *nature* in *naturopathic* medicine? Have we forgotten the Naturopathic battle cry *Return to Nature!?*

Because I aspire to become a Leaver, I occasionally felt that my Naturopathic medical instruction was out of balance. Because of my desire to study nature, to reconnect my Qi, my vital force, with the animate world that engulfs me, I was drawn to Classical Chinese Medicine. This thesis is an attempt to bridge the gaps I have perceived in naturopathic theory and practice, and to reconnect naturopathic Nature Cure with its roots – the systematic study of human health and disease as it relates to the laws and energetic patterns of nature.

¹ Quinn, *Chapt. 3*, pp. 53 - 80

² Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, p. 116

II. INTRODUCTION

Vis medicatrix naturae - the healing power of nature - is the core tenet of a system of medicine known as Nature Cure. This power describes the healing ability inherent to the body that is governed by the laws of nature. The word nature has many connotations and meanings in our society. I have come to understand nature to mean the Universe, with all its phenomena. Nature - being both the sum total of the forces at work throughout the universe and the elements of the natural world, such as mountains, rivers, plants and animals - is ordered and intelligent. The human body has a natural state, and when it is thrown into disequilibrium the body experiences “dis-ease”. Human biology is self-regulating, it naturally corrects and adjusts to reach a homeostatic equilibrium. Nature Cure practitioners acknowledge that the nature of human biology, as the nature of the Universe, is to maintain equilibrium. It is my belief that a physician’s primary role is to identify and remove obstacles of equilibrium and to facilitate and augment the natural healing ability both within the individual and also within the larger community.

The early developments of both Western Medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine began with the expression of the human condition in terms of a more-than-human world; a world where humans actively participated with all of the phenomena and manifestations existing in the Universe. Both systems were predicated on the observation that energy patterns observed in nature not only influence the human body but are observed themselves in the body. What occurs in the macrocosm also occurs in the microcosm. Although this was a core tenet shared by both systems’ theoretical composition, the two have recently diverged.

While Classical Chinese Medicine (CCM) remains rooted to the observation that the laws and energetic patterns of nature are the same laws that govern human health, Western Medicine now follows the premise that the human body is governed by the laws of biomechanics and physical equations – a human derived explanatory model far removed from the originating source energetic pattern itself. Naturopathic medicine, which is rooted in the Hellenistic sciences of Hippocrates and Galen, has remained attentive to the laws and energetic patterns of nature. However, Naturopathic medicine, which also has

developmental ties with modern Western medical science has of late found itself struggling to identify with which camp it belongs to.

CCM is based on the experience of humans as “subject” in an environment of a geocentric universe, where the body is treated as a microcosm that follows macrocosmic laws and is continually informed by macrocosmic influences. It is based on the age-old knowledge of the movement patterns of the universe, which are at the root of our body’s transformative processes. In CCM, the physician is the intermediary to the sacred, cultivating the dual roles of the shaman and the sage, connecting above and below, inside and outside, energy and matter. The CCM physician aspires to the Dao of medicine, a process which requires the actualization of his/her individual path by working to become a self-realized being using Qigong meditation, music, calligraphy, painting, poetry, and ritual journeys. He first seeks to thoroughly understand the workings of his own body transformations, and then naturally becomes a teacher who is capable of instructing others how to regulate their body’s Qi metabolism and hence, reconnect to nature.

Nature Cure, one of the principle and founding modalities of naturopathic medicine, is the link that has the most potential for reconnecting medicine in the Western world with its roots in antiquity. The model of health according to Nature Cure is that health is the normal and harmonious vibration of the elements and forces composing the human entity on the physical, mental and moral planes of being. Disease is viewed as an abnormal or inharmonious vibration of the elements and forces composing the human entity on one or more planes of being.¹

Vincenz Priessnitz (1799-1852) of Graefenberg, a small village in what is now the Czech Republic, is credited as being the first figure to set in motion the forces which would lead to the development of the modern naturopathic profession and bring the return of hydrotherapy (a major component of Nature Cure) to the western civilization. Priessnitz devised his patient’s treatment on an individual basis, according to their daily state of health. In addition to eliminating harmful influences on patients, detaching guests from

their normal day-to-day problems, and giving them hope and a new sense of happiness for life, a fundamental part of the cure was the act of returning the patient to nature.

Priessnitz' spa was centered high on a slope of the Rychlebske Mountain Range, 620 meters above sea level. There are over 50 springs flowing through the area surrounding the spa, in addition to the numerous awe inspiring vistas and paths. It was a site of natural beauty. Accompanying the hydrotherapy administered at the spa, Priessnitz would have patients take showers in the woods, engage in manual chores like sawing wood, and was often known to send his patients outside, with bare feet, to drink water from various distant forest springs. Priessnitz valued activity in fresh air, often saying that "if I did not have water, I would have healed with air." He forced patients to take therapeutic walks in nature instead of staying in the dismal atmosphere of a hospital. He took his urban patients, oftentimes members of the aristocracy and wealthy classes, off their high horses (sometimes quite literally) and put their feet back in contact with the earth. Priessnitz believed their medical problems often stemmed from their distance from the natural life of the peasants and working class. In essence, he showed his patients how to live in harmony with the laws of nature – how to return to nature.

It is my assertion that the above-mentioned essence of Naturopathic Nature Cure is now missing from current naturopathic medical practices. The naturopathic profession has been successful in extending and refining the art of using water to heal, but the act of using these methods outdoors, reconnecting human beings with nature is very rarely realized. Hydrotherapy techniques and other Nature Cure procedures, if they are even performed at all, are for the most part carried out indoors in an almost mechanistic manner detached from the animate landscape. I feel the naturopathic profession needs to get back to the integration of Nature Cure and the more-than-human external environment. Coupling these forces can only lead to an increase in treatment effectiveness and will return Nature Cure full circle to the way it was intended, a means and mechanism to help people return to nature.

People have to change their minds in how they are living. As Naturopaths, it is our responsibility to guide our patients to live a life in accord with Nature's laws, to leave their life of being Takers and to ultimately become a Leaver. Quinn through his fictional primate protagonist Ishmael, explains the importance of reaching out to others to promote a lifestyle and relationship with the Earth that is non adversarial, but instead participatory.

As long as the people of your culture are convinced that the world belongs to them and that their divinely-appointed destiny is to conquer and rule it, then they are of course going to go on acting the way they've been acting for the past ten-thousand years. They're going to go on treating the world as if it were a piece of human property and they're going to go on conquering it as if it were an adversary. You can't change these things with laws. You must change people's minds.²

It won't be easy, but this is one of our greater tasks as healers. It will be a challenge to determine what, in fact, are Nature's laws, and to what extent it is possible to live in accordance with them. It is impractical to suggest immediate transformations, but my aim is to guide individuals along a path of increased awareness and participation in a community of the natural world; a trail which leads in the direction of increased health, higher vibration, and greater vitality for human beings and the more-than-human world.

¹ Lindlahr, *Philosophy of Natural Therapeutics*, p. 19

² Quinn

III. PARTICIPATION IN THE NATURAL WORLD



All Hallows

*Even now this landscape is assembling.
The hills darken. The oxen
Sleep in their blue yoke, the fields having been
Picked clean, the sheaves
Bound evenly and piled at the roadside
Among cinquefoil, as the toothed moon rises:*

*This is the barrenness
Of harvest or pestilence.
And the wife leaning out the window
With her hand extended, as in payment,
And the seeds
Distinct, gold, calling
Come here
Come here, little one*

And the soul creeps out of the tree.

- Louise Glück



A. More-Than-Human World

One of the main objectives of the naturopath and the Chinese medical practitioner is to assist people back to equilibrium, not only with the body, but with the external environment with which we actively participate. What are the roots of this disequilibrium, this separation between man and nature? How do we account for our lack of participation in the animate world around us? How can we ever rationalize our culture's experience of other animals as senseless machines incapable of feeling, or of trees as purely passive fodder for the lumber mills? This separation is the focus of the work by David Abram titled *The Spell of The Sensuous*. Abram explains that humans

were active participants in the world and that over time, with the advancement of technology, human kind has separated themselves from the myriad beings of the earth. Abram's says,

If human discourse is experienced by indigenous, oral peoples to be participant with the speech of birds, of wolves, and even of the wind, how could it ever have become severed from that vaster life? How could we ever have become so deaf to these other voices that nonhuman nature now seems to stand mute and dumb, devoid of any meaning besides that which we choose to give it?¹

Central to the ideas of Abram is the concept of the more-than-human earth. This is a term used by Abram to refer to all aspects of life on Earth that are not of the human organism. It is a term that is vital to the understanding of Nature Cure. There is so much wisdom all around us. We see it in the life force and vitality that surrounds us - in stones, plants, and the mountain brook. Why do we get the idea that one is better than the other? There exist entities in this world that are not human. We can call these entities *Other* things. The modern western culture, with its propensity to ascribe a value to everything, more often than not thinks of these other-than-human things as less-than-human. It has become a core belief in this society, that humans have an innate superiority over other things - perhaps subconsciously, perhaps consciously. Today, if one were to survey the impact of humankind on the more-than-human Earth, one would have to conclude that it is intrinsically human to exploit nature as a resource for our evolutionary progress. However, humans are not innately bound to ravage their earthly surroundings. Says Abram,

There are those who suggest that a generally exploitative relation to the rest of nature is part and parcel of being human, and hence that the human species has from the start been at war with other organisms and the earth. Others, however, have come to recognize that long-established indigenous cultures often display a remarkable solidarity with the lands that they inhabit, as well as a basic respect, or even reverence, for the other species that inhabit those lands. Such cultures, much smaller in scale (and far less centralized) than modern Western civilization, seem to have maintained a relatively homeostatic or equilibrium relation with their local ecologies for

vast periods of time, deriving their necessary sustenance from the land without seriously disrupting the ability of the earth to replenish itself. The fecundity and flourishing diversity of the North American continent led the earliest European explorers to speak of this terrain as a primeval and unsettled wilderness - yet this continent had been continuously inhabited by human cultures for at least ten thousand years. That indigenous peoples can have gathered, hunted, fished, and settled these lands for such a tremendous span of time without severely degrading the continent's wild integrity readily confounds the notion that humans are innately bound to ravage their earthly surroundings. In a few centuries of European settlement, however, much of the native abundance of this continent has been lost - its broad animal populations decimated, its many-voiced forests over cut and its prairies overgrazed, its rich soils depleted, its tumbling clear waters now undrinkable.²

As humans, we can experience plants, animals and all of the varied landscapes and life forms from our own human perspective, but these entities also possess an experience all of their own in the community of life. Abram encourages us to give credence to the perspectives that these *Others* possess. When we look at the Earth with anthropomorphic eyes we see that it is filled with its own meanings, its own syntheses and creative transformations. The plant offers its perspective; the north side of a rock, and the tumbling mountain stream, their version of life. A cactus surviving in the dryness of the desert owns its life story. Now picture, a lonely weed alongside I-5 struggling to put up a fight with the greasy cheeseburger wrapper and the half smoked menthol cigarette burning alongside it. We can recognize this weed as having an intelligent role in the planetary homeostasis (such as transforming air pollution into pristine air), and a purpose akin to those of human organisms (like the desire to grow and reproduce in a hostile environment).

Humans are tuned for relationship. The eyes, the skin, the tongue, ears, and nostrils - all are gates where our body receives the nourishment of Otherness. This landscape of shadowed voices, these feathered bodies and antlers and tumbling streams - these breathing shapes are our family, the beings with whom we are engaged, with whom we struggle and suffer and celebrate. For the largest part of our species' existence, humans have negotiated relationships with every flapping form, with each textured surface and shivering entity that we happened to focus upon. All could speak, articulating in

gesture and whistle and sigh a shifting web of meanings that we felt on our skin or inhaled through our nostrils or focused with our listening ears, and to which we replied - whether with sounds, or through movements, or minute shifts of mood. The color of sky, the rush of waves - every aspect of the Earthly sensuous could draw us into a relationship fed with curiosity and spiced with danger. Every sound was a voice, every scrape or blunder was a meeting - with Thunder, with Oak, with Dragonfly. And from all of these relationships our collective sensibilities were nourished.³

Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, in his book *When Elephants Weep: the Emotional Lives of Animals*, echoes the call to take a different perspective on how we view more-than-human emotion. In describing the lay and scientific views of animal emotions, he says,

Most ordinary people who have direct contact with animals freely concede the reality of animal emotions. Their belief arises from the evidence of their senses and logical deduction. A person who hears birds attacking a cat near their nest usually experiences them as angry. When we see a squirrel flee from us, we think that it is afraid. We see a cat licking its kittens and feel it loves them. We see a bird throbbing with song and suppose it to be happy. Even those with only indirect experience of animals often recognize what they see to be an emotional state, a feeling, which they correlate to a similar human feeling. In this respect the layperson's description of animal life may be more accurate and is certainly richer than the standard behaviorist's description, which shows no effort to investigate animal emotions systematically or in depth.⁴

There are a growing number of biologists and ecologists that view Earth as a living interrelated system. Eco-biologically, this perspective sees Earth as an expression of nested systems interacting to yield life and change. James Lovelock in his *Gaia Hypothesis* states that the physical and chemical condition of the surface of the Earth, of the atmosphere, and of the oceans has been and is actively made fit and comfortable by the presence of life itself. It suggests that the Earth's atmosphere can best be understood by assuming that the atmosphere is actively and sensitively maintained by the whole biosphere – the oceans, the soils, the plants, and all the animal life forms. The entire range of living matter on Earth could be regarded as constituting a single living entity. This is in contrast to the conventional wisdom that holds that life adapted to the planetary

conditions as it and they evolved their separate ways and that life has so far resisted all attempts at a formal physical definition.⁵

The Earth is a living entity comprised of complex feedback loops. We can't separate ourselves from her; we are an integral part of the planetary whole and equal participants in Earth's homeostasis. Shared amongst her communal more-than-human world; the carbon cycle, the nitrogen cycle and the food chain are evidence of Earth's very complex biochemical milieus. As humans, we are part of life's continuum - partners in the deep ecological dance of plants and animals continually self-regulating each other to reach homeostasis. For instance, the ocean upholds homeostasis by maintaining a fairly constant salinity, helps maintain climate, is involved with cloud formation, and holds dielectric potentials and ions essential for life. Similarly, the homeodynamic forest provides habitat for the Earth's living creatures, maintains oxygen levels, controls atmospheric chemistry vis a vis forest fires, and the forests hold heat and buffer temperature extremes.

Joan Halifax, in an essay titled *The Third Body: Buddhism, Shamanism, and Deep Ecology*, quotes an old shaman of the Brazilian rainforest when she describes the essence of deep ecology and the notion of the ecological self. In the words of the shaman Chan Kin Viejo,

What the people of the city do not realize...is that the roots of all living things are tied together. When a mighty tree is felled, a star falls from the sky. When the great trees are cut down, the rain ends and the forest turns to weed and grass... There is too much cold in the world now, and it has worked its way into the hearts of all living creatures and down into the roots of the grass and the trees. But I am not afraid. What saddens me is that I must live to see the felling of the trees and the drying up of the forests, so that all the animals die, one after the other, and only the snakes live and thrive in the thicket.⁶

This thicket according to Halifax represents the small boundary of land remaining that stands between the past and the future; a reminder of the delicate place in which we currently find ourselves standing. It is her hope that we still have the time and inclination

to orient ourselves towards the wisdom embodied in this metaphorical thicket, and with the indigenous cultures that still remain. She explains,

It is here that we may still find some of the old wisdom of tribal peoples, how they felt and feel about the Earth; how our star and other stars lined out a choreography of hunting, gathering, planting, and praying. How the passing of the moons and the coming and going of plants and creatures shaped a living calendar; how prophecy protected the future and myth instructed the present; how, for many peoples, one's relations did not end with bloodlines but with lifelines; how all was perceived as being alive, including a landscape full of power and song.¹¹

The terms Mother Earth, Gaia, deep ecology, and “more-than-human Earth” are synonyms used to describe a landscape that is a coherent, living entity. It implies that we do not dwell on the Earth, but that we live within the Earth. Immersed in the sea of life, we form a concert of physiologic activity with other animals, plants, microbes, elements, and biochemicals. In summation, Capra says

Deep ecology does not separate humans - or anything else - from the natural environment. It sees the world not as a collection of isolated objects, but as a network of phenomena that are fundamentally interconnected and interdependent. It recognized the intrinsic value of all living beings and views humans as just one particular strand in the web of life. ...When the concept of the human spirit is understood as the mode of consciousness in which the individual feels a sense of belonging, of connectedness, to the cosmos as a whole, it becomes clear that ecological awareness is spiritual in its deepest essence.⁷

B. Knowledge and Wisdom

The history of philosophy itself centers on the questions of what defines us as human beings and how do we fit into the world that surrounds us? How are we to understand the dynamic world that gives us context, and how are we to function effectively within our ever changing social political, cultural and natural environments?⁸ What is the human

responsibility to this planet? Are plants and animals here to serve us, or are we here to respect and protect them? The manner in which a particular culture responds to these questions defines that culture's relationship with their surrounding and depends entirely upon how they perceive the world. We intuit wisdom from the natural world, but this wisdom can only be accessed if we are active participants in the natural world. The degree to which we participate thus defines the level of our perception and the nature of our relationship with the more-than-human world.

Human perception is based on the senses – seeing, touching, hearing, smelling and tasting. But perception is more than a single sense, it is the concerted activity of all the body's senses as they overlap and blend together. Our bodies form a sort of open circuit with the world around us. The dynamism and vitality elicited by the participation between the various sensory systems of the body and the encompassing Earth complete this circuit. The primordial, ancestral experience of perceiving the entities and elements of the world around us with all of our senses intertwined is lost in the modern world we live in. The monotony of mass-produced manufactured products – cars, homes, skyscrapers and our technological concrete jungles that dominate our landscape dull our senses. Modern technology with its artificial rhythms and frequencies disrupt and interfere with our primordial perceptual circuitry. According to Abram,⁹

this dynamism is stifled within mass-produced structures closed off from the rest of the Earth, imprisoned within technologies that plunder the living land. The superstraight lines and right angles of our office architecture, for instance, make our animal senses wither even as they support the abstract intellect; the wild, Earth-born nature of the materials – the woods, clays, metals, and stones that went into the building – are readily forgotten behind the abstract and calculable form. It is thus that so much of our built environment, and so many of the artifacts that populate it, seem sadly superfluous and dull when we identify with our bodies and taste the world with our animal senses.¹⁴

There is an extreme difference between the experienced world of indigenous oral cultures and the world of modern Western civilization. The publication of Descartes' *Meditations*,

in 1641 is credited with separating the thinking mind (subject) from the material world of things (objects). Accordingly, Cartesian science proposes that only those properties of matter that are directly amenable to mathematical measurement, such as size, shape and weight are real, while the other more subjective qualities such as sound, taste and color are illusory impressions. Although science has yielded so much of the knowledge and so many of the technologies that have today become common in the modern world, it has ignored and drawn attention away from the equally important experiential qualities of what it means to be human.¹⁰ Abram says of science,

Yet these sciences consistently overlook our ordinary, everyday experience of the world around us. Our direct experience is necessarily subjective, necessarily relative to our own position or place in the midst of things, to our particular desires, tastes, and concerns. The everyday world in which we hunger and make love is hardly the mathematically determined “object” toward which the sciences direct themselves. Despite all the mechanical artifacts that now surround us, the world in which we find ourselves before we set out to calculate and measure it is not an inert or mechanical object but a living field, an open and dynamic landscape subject to its own moods and metamorphoses.¹¹

Supporting Abram is a passage authored by the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty. He articulates the following,

All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, and if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by reawakening the basic experience of the world, of which science is the second order expression... To return to things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always speaks, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is.¹²

Abram believes the process of establishing the spiritual or religious ascendancy of humankind over nature began in part with the potent technological breakthrough of the alphabet. The alphabet is the foundation of scientific advancement. It was perhaps the impetus for the more philosophical or rational dissociation of the human intellect from the organic world. For millions of years humankind jointly communicated with the more-than-human world in a language born of the interplay and contact between humans and the environment. Humans responded and learned to rely on the signals and messages emitted from the animate landscape. As Abram articulates,

The earthly terrain in which we find ourselves, and upon which we depend for all our nourishment, is shot through with suggestive scrawls and traces, from the sinuous calligraphy of rivers winding across the land, inscribing arroyos and canyons into the parched earth of the desert, to the black slash burned by lightning into the trunk of an old elm. The swooping flight of birds is a kind of cursive script written on the wind; it is this script that was studied by the ancient “augurs,” who could read therein the course of the future. Leaf-miner insects make strange hieroglyphic tabloids of the leaves they consume. Wolves urinate on specific stumps and stones to mark off their territory. And today you read these printed words as tribal hunters once read the tracks of deer, moose, and bear printed in the soil of the forest floor. Archaeological evidence suggests that for more than a million years the subsistence of humankind has depended upon the acuity of such hunters, upon their ability to read the traces – a bit of scat here, a broken twig there- of these animal Others. These letters I print across the white surface [of this page], are hardly different from the footprints of prey left in the snow.¹³

Humans also had the need to communicate these perceived informative signals and messages amongst each other. To facilitate this transfer of information, they developed pictograms and petroglyphs. This first introduction of writing was likely based on the distinctive prints and scratches made by humans and other animals, and were replicated on rocks, canyon walls and caves. More conventionalized pictographic systems developed in Egypt around 3000 B.C.E. The characters were composed of stylized images of humans and human implements, animals and other elements of the natural world. China’s pictographic system developed as early as the fifteenth century B.C.E. It consisted of ideograms – a pictorial character that refers not to the visible entity that it

explicitly pictures but to some quality or other phenomenon readily associated with that entity. For example, the stylized image of the sun and moon together signifies “brightness”, while the image for the sun rising behind a tree represents the word for “east”. Although these images are a substitute for the phenomena they represent, they maintain a sensual visual link and experiential connection to the more-than-human phenomena. Abram says,¹⁴

The efficacy of these pictorially derived systems necessarily entails a shift of sensory participation away from the voices and gestures of the surrounding landscape toward our own human-made images. However, the glyphs which constitute the bulk of these ancient scripts continually remind the reading body of its inherence in a more-than-human field of meanings. As signatures not only of the human form but of other animal, trees, sun, moon, and landforms, they continually refer our senses beyond the strictly human sphere.¹⁵

The alphabet was invented by Semitic scribes around 1500 B.C.E. They established a character for each of the consonants of the language. Vowels were sounded breaths that were added to the consonants in order to make them come alive and to be spoken by the reader. The alphabet consisted of 22 characters, and became a simple set of signs that could be readily learned and utilized. This technical innovation, because of its simplicity and ease of use, was adopted by the Hebrews and the Phoenicians who spread this system of writing to the Aramaeans, the Greeks, the Romans and eventually gave rise to virtually all alphabet languages known. The development of the alphabet further distanced human culture from the rest of nature. The phonetic alphabet, with its written characters no longer referring to any sensible phenomenon but solely to a sound made by the human mouth, for the first time completely bypasses the pictorial sign. The ties to other animals, to natural elements and even to the body itself are lost – they are no longer necessary participants in the transfer of linguistic knowledge. Abram says,

The pictorial (or iconic) significance of many of the Semitic letters, which was memorialized in their spoken names, was now readily lost. The indebtedness of human language to the more-than-human perceptual field, an indebtedness preserved in the names and shapes of the Semitic letters, could now be entirely forgotten.¹⁶

Seemingly unaware of each others presence, the cultures of ancient China and ancient Greece have influenced the course of world civilization. Greek civilization is credited with creating and laying the foundation for many of the intellectual paradigms of the West, including philosophy, science and technology. Similarly, the ideas, values and technologies of classical China are the cornerstone of Eastern paradigms. Both of these cultures are products of a time that extends from approximately 800 to 200 B.C.E. when creative thinkers seem to have sprung up everywhere amid the instability of small competing states. The philosophy of both cultures are generally recognized to be in opposite poles, particularly in regards to science and medicine.

Some of these differences can be credited to the linguistic distinction between cultures. The Greeks with their alphabet had the philosophy that tended to systematize order to the natural world while the Chinese with their pictographic language had their emphasis upon situational response. The Chinese have traditionally recognized a relationship between their script and the natural world that the script represents and in which it was often felt to participate. In the first etymological dictionary of Chinese characters, Xu Shen says that the first steps toward writing were taken when Emperor Fu Xi (c. 2800 B.C.E.) “lifted his head up and observed the images in the sky; bowed his head down and saw the formations of the Earth; and then looked out at the patterns on birds and beasts and the veins of the Earth.” It is also said that the Yellow Emperor’s wise minister Cang Jie (c. 2500 B.C.E.) invented written characters when he “saw the tracks of birds and beasts and understood that one can perceive differences in their distinctive patterns.”¹⁷ As linguistic historians Steven Shankman and Stephen Durrant say “with Chinese writing there is, at the least, a tenacious illusion of direct and natural participation in the world of those things and ideas writing is meant to depict.”¹⁸

In *The Siren and the Sage*, Shankman and Durrant compare some of the most influential writers of ancient China and ancient Greece philosophy with the goal of deciphering and interpreting an apparent division between the two terms knowledge and wisdom. The words “science” and “knowledge” are often considered to be interchangeable. The word “science” is derived form the Latin word scire, while “knowledge” was derived from the

word *gnoscere*. The concept of science is used to emphasize the highest and most trustworthy form of secular knowledge. It is the tradition of logical proof and the related assumption that, as Aristotle put it in *Metaphysics* 980, “we all desire to know”. It is this type of encyclopedic knowledge that is the basis of modern Western civilization.¹⁹ This contrasts the tradition initiated in classical China where wisdom is valued over knowledge. In the *Daodejing*, Laozi warns that through our desire to know we may forfeit wisdom. Sage was a term that appeared throughout ancient Chinese texts to designate a person of ideal wisdom and understanding. Confucius redefined sageship as the ability to understand all things; a sage is a possessor of knowledge in the sense of encyclopedic comprehensiveness. In contrast to Confucius, Laozi transforms the ideal of sageship from encyclopedic knowledge into the wisdom that would allow a person to participate in the oneness that is the Dao.²⁰

The first chapter of the *Daodejing* has been more often translated in the West than any other passage of ancient Chinese literature. The translation used below is one of the possible translations:

If a way can be spoken (or followed), it is not the constant way.
If a name can be named, it is not the constant name.
Nameless is the beginning of heaven and Earth.
Named is the mother of the ten thousand things.
Therefore,
 Constantly have no intention (*wu yu*) to observe its wonders;
 Constantly have an intention (*you yu*) to observe its manifestations.
These two come forth together but are differently named.
Coming forth together they are called mystery.
Mystery upon mystery,
Gateway to many wonders.²¹

In this opening chapter Laozi addresses both the inadequacy and the necessity of language. Similar to the earlier alphabet argument, Shankman and Durrant point out that Laozi is concerned that the act of naming, although it is necessary for communication and for the differentiation of one thing from another, it cuts the world of thought and thing into discrete units and severs one’s experience of unity and origin. Laozi’s states that the “Nameless is the beginning of heaven and Earth” because the beginning of all things

cannot be conceptualized and therefore cannot be named. The act of naming creates and defines things from the nothingness. Further, having an intention refers to the desire to conceptualize and manipulate reality. Another translation of the “intention lines” in verse one by Jonathan Star further illuminates an understanding of intention: “A mind free of thought, merged within itself, beholds the essence of Tao; A mind filled with thought, identified with its own perceptions, beholds the mere forms of this world.”²² In this translation, intention can be seen as a component of conscious thought. Consciousness has two aspects, its intentionalist and participatory modes. Reality consists of the “things” intended by this intentionalist aspect of consciousness – Laozi’s “ten thousand things”. A mind can be engaged in an act of imaginative oblivion and can only behold the mere forms of the world if it is a mind filled only with thought and intention. But a mind having no intention, free of thought and intending objects allows one to partake in the wondrous experience of participation in the total process that is the *Dao*.²³ Shankman and Durrant summarize these ideas in their own words,

We live in a world of ‘the ten thousand things’ (*wan wu*) and naming is the ‘mother’ (*mu*) of these things in the sense that naming brings them into conceptual existence, allowing us to differentiate one thing from another, to communicate, and to manipulate reality as we must if we are to survive. But naming, while necessary, can also cut us off from the very experiences that naming – such as the naming of the beginning, or the naming of the experience of oneness with the *Dao* – is attempting to describe and thus name. The author of the *Daodejing* lives in this tension between ‘the nameless’ and ‘the named’.²⁴

Thus language itself, perhaps because it is traditionally used to describe things, cannot adequately express the experience of participation in the *Dao*. The experience of being connected to the more-than-human world obliterates one’s individuality, one’s separateness, one’s need for the distinguishing acts of language. Laozi addresses the paradox of language in verse one of the *Daodejing*; that language may both refer to external reality, to the world of things *and* be an evocation of the experience of a person’s mysteriously inchoate participation in the *Dao*.²⁵

Greek philosophers also recognize this paradox. Although as I have stated that Greek philosophy is tilted in favor of the intentional knowledge and science, there is evidence that Greek philosophy also valued wisdom - the participatory dimension of reality. Shankman and Durrant argue that Greek philosophers attempted to recover the participatory dimension of consciousness in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian Wars. Without detailing their argument, they concluded that platonic philosophy sought knowledge about reality while at the same time fully recognized that such acts of knowledge occur within a comprehensive whole: “philosophy in the Platonic sense thus combines intentionalist seeking with the experience of participation – with being part of a mysterious whole that can never be mastered as an intentionalist object of knowledge.”²⁶ In Plato’s *Symposium*, they explained the experience of noetic participation as seen from Plato’s point of view as the recuperation of the Dionysiac experience of mystical participation in the oneness of the physical cosmos.

Homer vividly outlines this same conflict in *The Odyssey*, with the scene of Sirens. The Sirens, who know everything, offer Odysseus absolute knowledge that will obviate the need to continue searching for wisdom. The Sirens offering is a metaphor for the increase of intentional knowing to the point of all-knowingness; that the philosophical goal of “love of knowledge” becomes actual knowledge. Homer depicts the dream of absolute knowledge as the purposeful forgetting of the part of consciousness that intends objects. This willful forgetting will turn the dream of absolute knowledge into a nightmare of disembodiment, where those who succumb join the “large heap of human bones covered with shriveled skin that lies at the Siren’s feet.” According to Shankman and Durrant, Homer suggests that human beings must learn to exist between the extremes of unconscious immersion in the material world, on the one hand, and of disembodied abstraction on the other.²⁷ They say,

What the Sirens offer, in other words, is the knowledge that will make the wisdom of the sage unnecessary. Those who succumb and short-circuit their journeys become part of the large heap of human bones covered with shriveled skin that lies at the Siren’s feet.... ‘The scene, then, pulls in two directions at once: it represents Odysseus’ desire to yield to the illusion of the absolute knowledge, on the one

hand; and on the other, it registers the Greek hero's struggle to retain a necessary awareness of the truth that the intentionalist knower always remains no more than an embodied participant in the never-ending journey or search for wisdom.²⁸

Shankman and Durrant relate this paradox of consciousness to the distinction of “knowledge” and “wisdom”. They are concerned that the intense desire of the humankind to know and to control reality can cause a serious imbalance in the human psyche. That humans may forget this desire to know takes place within a comprehensive structure of reality of which the human consciousness is itself a participant of. In the human quest for knowledge, the wisdom of the sage will be forfeited - knowledge and wisdom will be at odds.²⁹

¹ Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, p.91

² Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, pp.93-94

³ Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, p. ix

⁴ Masson, *hen Elephants Weep: the Emotional Lives of Animals*, p. 8

⁵ Abram, from his essay *The Perceptual Implications of Gaia*, pp. 75-92 in Badiner's, *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology*.

⁶ Joan Halifax, in an essay titled *The Third Body: Buddhism, Shamanism, and Deep Ecology*, pp. 20-38 in Badiner's, *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology*.

⁷ Capra, p. 7

⁸ Ames, p7

⁹ Abram in the chapter titled *Synaesthesia – The Fusion of the Senses* in *The Spell of the Sensuous*, pp. 59-65

¹⁰ Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, p. 32

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 32

¹² *Ibid*, p. 36

¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 95-96

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 97

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 97

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 102

¹⁷ Shankman & Durrant, in *the Siren and the Sage*, p. 3

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 4

¹⁹ These claims supported by both Unschuld in *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, p 322; and Shankman & Durrant, in *the Siren and the Sage*, pp.1-14.

²⁰ Shankman & Durrant, in *the Siren and the Sage*, pp. 8-9

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 9

²² Star, p.14

²³ Shankman & Durrant, in *the Siren and the Sage*, p. 11

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 10

²⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 10-11

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 214

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 63

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 14

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 11

IV. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF NATURE CURE



It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp Earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us.

- Charles Darwin[†]



Before I begin the historical account of how Nature Cure developed in both naturopathy and Chinese medicine it is important to take an anthropological assessment of the evolution of how human's have come to describe disease.

A. From Then to Now

Humans have suffered from disease for millions of years, from both infectious pathogens and the kinds derived from our own bodies. We have constantly evolved in ways to minimize the effects of these diseases, however, new diseases would emerge with each major change in the ways we chose to live. A group of anthropologists from the Smithsonian Institution, lead by George J. Armelagos, Kathleen C. Barnes, and James Lin, modeled three epidemiological transitions in which infectious and nutritional diseases have increased. In their words:

For nearly four million years, humans lived in widely dispersed, nomadic, small populations that minimized the effect of infectious diseases. With the agricultural revolution about 10,000 years ago, increasing sedentism and larger population groupings resulted in the

first epidemiological transition in which infectious and nutritional diseases increased. Within the last century, with the advent of public health measures, improved nutrition and medicine, some populations in developed nations underwent a second epidemiological transition. During this transition, infectious diseases declined and non-infectious, chronic diseases, and degenerative conditions increased. Today, with the increasing use of antibiotics, we are facing a third epidemiological transition, a reemergence of infectious disease, with pathogens that are antibiotic-resistant and have the potential to be transmitted on a global scale.²

Prior to the first transition, for about the first 4,000,000 years of evolutionary history, humans lived in small, sparsely settled groups. These hunting-gathering tribes maintained a small and stable population with balanced fertility and mortality rates. A Neolithic “revolution” dramatically increased population sizes and densities as tribal economies began to generate food surpluses with agriculture. This is believed to have led to a reduced rate of mortality due to a better nourished and healthier population. There is an interesting argument currently circling among anthropologists which suggests that although population size increased due to agriculture, the health of the population actually decreased. The argument takes the position that instead of experiencing improved health, there is evidence of a substantial increase in infectious and nutritional disease. The reliance on primary food production, according to the authors, increased the incidence and the impact of disease. The combination of disruptive environmental farming practices and the presence of domestic animals increased human contact with parasitic diseases and insect vectors carrying infectious diseases. The shift to an agrarian society resulted in illnesses not frequently encountered by foraging tribes due to the dramatic change in ecology.³ This is an example of how technological advancement, in this case the advent of agriculture, leads to an increase in disease. This can be considered part of the early stages of the taker philosophy being implemented.

Large urban settlements developed by 6000 B.C.E., which increased the already difficult problem of removing human wastes and delivering uncontaminated water to the people. Populations became large enough for the first time to maintain diseases, such as cholera, typhus, the plague bacillus, measles, mumps, chicken pox, and smallpox in an endemic form. An increase in cross-continental travel resulted in the creation of intense epidemics.

In the fourteenth-century, the Black Death eliminated at least a quarter of the European population. The exploration and expansion of populations into new areas, and the process of industrialization led to an even greater environmental and social transformation. The shift from acute infectious diseases to chronic non-infectious, degenerative diseases is referred to as the second epidemiological transition. According to the authors,

Cultural advances results in a larger percentage of individuals reaching the oldest age segment of the population. In addition, the technological advances that characterize the second epidemiological transition resulted in an increase in environmental degradation. An interesting characteristic of many of the chronic diseases is their particular prevalence and 'epidemic'- like occurrence in transitional societies, or in those populations undergoing the shift from developing to developed modes of production. In developing countries, many of the chronic diseases associated with the epidemiological transition appear first in members of the upper socioeconomic strata, because of their access to Western products and practices.⁴

The germ theory of disease causation soon developed with the increasing advances in technology, medicine, and science. This newfound knowledge lead to a better understanding of the source of infectious disease resulting in an increased control over many infectious diseases. Popular knowledge aspires to the belief that antibiotics and other 'magic bullets' are to praise for a decline in infectious diseases rates. A careful study of morbidity and mortality rates actually reveals that this decline is attributed to other external factors - mainly changes in hygienics.

Although scientific knowledge and advancement was able to lower rates of infection via hygienic control it probably should share the bulk of the responsibility for the concurrent rise in chronic disease. Human life-style adaptation to newfound technological advancement includes diet, activity level (greater sedation), mental stress, behavioral practices, and environmental pollution - all of which are also etiological factors for the manifestation of chronic disease. The Smithsonian authors concur. They say,

A unique characteristic of the chronic diseases is their relatively recent appearance in human history as a major cause of morbidity. This is indicative of a strong environmental factor in disease

etiology. While biological factors such as genetics are no doubt important in determining who is most likely to succumb to which disease, genetics alone cannot explain the rapid increase in chronic disease. While some of our current chronic diseases such as osteoarthritis were prevalent in early human populations, other more serious degenerative conditions such as cardiovascular disease and carcinoma were much rarer.⁵

We are now in the process of entering the third epidemiological transition, which is epitomized by a reemergence of infectious diseases comparable to that which took place during the first epidemiological transition, with the additional dimension of infectious diseases with multiple antibiotic resistance. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that of the 50,000,000 deaths each year, 17,500,000 are the result on infection and parasitism. Adding fuel to the fire, indiscriminate and inappropriate use of antibiotics in medical and agricultural practices, which is indicated by the staggering amount (40,000,000 pounds) of antibiotics produced annually in the U.S. has lead to the creation of antibiotic resistant pathogens. Meanwhile we are bearing witness to the new phenomenon of emerging diseases brought on by global ecological change. As of 1996, 22 diseases have emerged in the last 22 years, a list which includes HIV, Rotovirus, Ebola virus, Legionella pneumophila, Hantaan Virus, HTLV I, Staphylococcus toxin, Human Herpes Virus 6, and Hepatitis C.⁶ The Smithsonian group states,

The emergence of disease is the result of an interaction of social, demographic, and environmental changes in a global ecology and in the adaptation and genetics of the microbe, influenced by international commerce and travel, technological change, breakdown of public health measures, and microbial adaptation. Ecological changes such as agricultural development projects, dams, deforestation, floods, droughts and climatic changes have resulted in the emergence of diseases...⁷

The history of medicine, which is tied to the history of disease are dependent upon the human relationship with nature. Recent changes in the environment, such as global warming, have never been more rapid or so extreme than any other time in human history implicating the perils ahead for humans if we continue down the path of separation from the more-than-human world.

B. Hippocrates and Hellenistic Nature Cure

Ancient medicine preceding the sixth century B.C.E. was characterized by a hodgepodge of religion, magic and empirically acquired ideas and practices. Supernaturalism, taking the form of structured religion, dominated the realm of disease and its treatment in cultures such as ancient Egypt. Physicians and priests were mostly one in the same, trained in temple schools. Spirits, demons and gods were held responsible as the causative agent of disease, with spells and prayers their remedy. Beginning around the sixth century B.C.E., Pre-Socratic Greek philosophers began forming notions about nature and how man was himself a part of natural law. They tried to understand the workings of the universe (macrocosm) in naturalistic terms. This was perhaps the first time in the history of the Western world that people thought of their existence in terms of a physical process removed from the dominion of god. It was also during this period when Greek doctors and medical schools arose in Greece. Hippocrates, the infamous father of medicine and teacher of the healing arts, was born around the year 460 B.C.E. on the island of Cos. Many Western schools of medical thought (rational, empirical, regular and irregular medicine) all have legitimately laid claims to this man and his writings as being the original forefather to their traditions. The *Hippocratic writings* are actually a collection of heterogeneous works from numerous authors in Greece consisting of textbooks, monographs, manuals, speeches and notes over a 100 - 200 year period, all relating to elements of medicine in one way or another.

The Hippocratic movement is credited with transferring the supernatural explanation of disease to that of the natural physical model. Hippocrates built on the work of the pre-Socratic philosophers, applying the principles of the macrocosm to the microcosm. There is an over-all correspondence between all things in the universe (macrocosm) and all things in the individual (microcosm).⁸ He considered humans to be physical entities, whose workings are governed by the same principles as the universe. Hippocrates brought healing out of the mythical realm and into the empirical. For example, in the book *On the Sacred Disease*, the author asserts that the dreaded “sacred disease” (epilepsy) is no more sacred than any other disease.

My own view is that those who first attributed a sacred character to this malady were like the magicians, purifiers, charlatans and quacks of our own day, men who claim great piety and superior knowledge. Being at a loss, and having no treatment which would help, they concealed and sheltered themselves behind superstition, and called this illness sacred, in order that their utter ignorance might not be manifest. They added a plausible story, and established a method of treatment that secured their own position. They used purifications and incantations; they forbade the use of baths, and of many foods that are unsuitable for sick folk... But if to eat or apply these things engenders and increases the disease, while to refrain works a cure, then neither is godhead to blame nor are the purifications beneficial; it is the foods that cure or hurt, and the power of godhead disappear.⁹

Health became viewed as dependent on a condition of equilibrium, a disturbance of which would lead to illness. Hippocrates introduced the concept of the four humors for the first time, representing two pairs of opposing innate, bodily qualities. When any of the humors are out of balance, the body's equilibrium is thrown off, disequilibrium follows and disease results. According to medical historian Henry Sigerist,

the humors represented the ideal sustainers of equilibrium. Should one of these humors be present in excess, or should it be corrupted in any way, the organism endeavors, by means of its natural healing forces, to restore the balance. The peccant humor undergoes a process which may be compared with boiling, and when this process is finished, when the humor has 'ripened,' the peccant material is eliminated in the urine or in the stools, in the vomit or in pus.¹⁰

The above passage illustrates some of the all important themes and components of naturopathic philosophy taking their roots from Hippocratic doctrine. Hippocratic physicians emphatically believed that over time the body would naturally restore itself to equilibrium: the nature of humans, as the nature of the universe, restores equilibrium. This self-healing force of nature was termed *vis medicatrix naturae* – the healing power of nature. Restored health occurs by means of coction; the body cooks out excess humors and expels harmful materials as excrement. The more vital heat the patient possessed, the greater the indication of aliveness and that person's ability to heal. Hippocratic physicians were keen observers of the disease process, observing the excrement as signs of the state of the bodies health. Their emphasis on the observation of the disease process,

lead them to value practical applications over speculative theories. Prognosis, based on the ability of a patient to respond to vital force, was more important than diagnosis. Treatment concentrated on the totality of the individual and not on a theoretically based disease. The physician's role was to assist the organism in its own, natural attempt to reach equilibrium through coction. Physicians did not intervene with the all-wise mechanisms of nature, rather they would study, encourage, and allow the body to take on its natural course in disease. Therapy would involve minimal intervention, and contain such practices as giving fluids, opening pores with a sponge bath, and adjusting the diet to help the patient reach a healing crisis. The following passages taken from the writings titled *Prognostic*, illuminate the notion of coctions, crisis, and prognosis.

Stools are best when soft and consistent, passed at the time usual in health, and in quantity proportional to the food taken; for when the discharges have this character the lower belly is healthy. ...The stool ought to grow thicker as the disease nears the crisis. It should be reddish-yellow, and not over-fetid. It is a favorable sign when round worms pass with the discharge as the disease nears the crisis. So long as the urine is thin and of a yellowish-red color, it is a sign that the disease is unconcocted; and if the disease should also be protracted, while the urine is of this nature, there is a danger lest the patient will not be able to hold out until the disease is concocted. The more fatal kinds of urine are the fetid, watery, black and thick...¹¹

Hippocratic philosophy continued to develop and diversify. In the third century B.C.E. the center of Greek medicine shifted with civilization to the new Egyptian city of Alexandria built by Alexander the Great. Under his rule, technological advancement in the sciences progressed immensely. Philosophy and theory began to take on a life of its own separate from the craft of healing. During the ensuing centuries, Hippocratic medicine split into three main trends, or specialized sects. The first group consisted of physicians who continued to practice medicine according to the original Hippocratic writings of the fourth and fifth century B.C.E. They were characterized as being passive, patient and expectant; to first do no harm and let nature run its course. A second group of physicians developed a more empirical approach bringing the clinical acumen of centuries of practical medicine to the bedside. They tended to avoid theory, including that of the humoral nature. A third model of physicians became dogmatic in nature focusing

on advancing the doctrines of theoretical knowledge. The creative period of Greek medicine culminated with the work of Galen of Pergamum (C.E. 130-201).

C. Galen and Nature Cure

Galen is credited with starting professional, scientific medicine. Galen opportunisticly observed the prolific amount of unsystemitized clinical knowledge which had accumulated before him. Galen took on the challenge of unifying the divisions which had manifested before him and creating a coherent, rational system of medicine. He wanted to become a general physician trained in all aspects of Greek medicine, thus making him perhaps the first eclectic physician. His system was based on both experience and reason, advancing the knowledge and theories of anatomy and physiology. Though learned as an empiricist, he developed and taught a system which had evolved into a more scientific and reductionistic rational form. Historian Erwin Ackerknecht, M.D. says “In the Hippocratic writings medicine remained essentially an art. With Galen it became a science, often a deficient science, but a science none the less.”¹² Galen’s therapies, unlike Hippocrates passive approach, were mainly active. He used allopathic like methods in his therapeutics, using *cold* remedies to combat *hot* disease as an example. He also implemented complex pharmaceutical prescriptions which came to be known as *galenicals*. Often using over 25 ingredients, coupled with his methods of compounding drugs, Galen revolutionized pharmaceutical medicine which ruled in the Western world for 1,500 years.¹³

In studying Galen, it has been hard for me to distinguish his historic role in the formation of naturopathic medicine. Galen’s influence on current naturopathic practice is very complex. Again, I have come to realize this as another example of being unable to separate black from white. A case in point, is his belief, according to Acherknecht, that nature does nothing in vain. On the surface, this could be taken to mean that he ascribes to the sentiment that the body has an innate power to heal. But as already mentioned, he takes a more active, aggressive approach in practice, intervening with the healing power

of nature. Moreover, he believed “that the creator had endowed every organ with a special purpose from which its function could be deduced.”¹⁴ Galen’s system of medicine focused more to the organ than on the organism. In sum, it appears that although he values *vis medicatrix naturae*, and honors the vitality of man, he limits their importance and implementation. He transferred vitality from the whole person to the organs - the first step of narrowing the scope of vitality. Despite some of Galen’s seemingly anti-naturopathic tendencies, much of his work precurses that which is taught here at NCNM. For instance, the concepts of humors, for which he further systematized and elaborated upon, dominated medical science as the standard until Paracelsus came along. These concepts and theories remain as remnants in naturopathic philosophy, evident in the explanations of toxemia and fever described in this similar humoral language.

D. Paracelsus

Galen’s theories and voluminous writings endured into the sixteenth century. The cultural explosion of the renaissance period brought with it dramatic changes in medicine. Medical innovators included Leonardo da Vinci, Girolamo Francastoro, Andreas Vesalius, and William Harvey among many others. Yet the most dramatic break from Galen’s humoral framework came from Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541), popularly known as Paracelsus. Raised in the northern Alps of Switzerland, he learned first hand the knowledge of nature. Starting from when he was a young boy, his father taught him about plants and their healing qualities. His father, later a teacher in a mining school, showed him a new, different side of nature - the properties of chemicals and minerals. Paracelsus received his medical degree in Italy where the “new” sciences of the Renaissance were in their prime. He soon made a name for himself as a rebel, as he came to be referred to as the Martin Luther of medicine for his rejection of the authorities and his use of his native German tongue instead of the required Latin. He traveled extensively, and sought out the sacred and scientific writings of many cultures and traditions. After being kicked out of his medical posts, Paracelsus traveled extensively, practicing medicine in the Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy, Denmark, Sweden,

Russia, Africa and Asia. He yearned to gain experience from people of all walks of life, not just from educated medical authorities. He recognized that people, plants, minerals, and disease differ from place to place and that it was necessary to travel in order to see nature in all of its diversity. He says, “A doctor must seek out old wives, Gypsies, sorcerers, wandering tribes, old robbers, and such outlaws and take lessons from them.”¹⁵ He learned astrology from the Arabs, the art of simples from the gypsies, and studied hypnotism, mining, metallurgy, chemistry and alchemy along the way.¹⁶

Paracelsus looked at the theories and systems of medicine taught to him by his professors in medical school and he must have viewed them as forced, artificial models of disease, especially when he compared them to what he had learned from practical experience. He outwardly attacked Galen, discarding the humoral doctrine as a rigid misunderstanding of the elements and their innate properties. Once he had realized the healing power of nature first hand he could not conform to the synthetic theories of his era. Instead, he created his own system of medicine that resonated with the external, more-than-human world he was a part of. Accordingly, Sigerist’s analysis of Paracelsus’ return to nature is epitomized in the following passage:

Galen’s theory of the four humors, the doctrine of qualities - they were logical, doubtless, and the intelligent could readily grasp them; but how would they stand the test of examination by one in tune with nature? They were sustained by the appeal to persons of great authority. But what did authorities matter if experience contradicted their teaching? Paracelsus had already had experiences of his own. He did not come from the nursery to the university. He had grown up in touch with nature, had learned how to observe, had from earliest childhood been in contact with the sick. The miners and the analysts side by side with whom he had worked, were they not much closer to nature, had they not learned far more of nature’s secrets, than these dry-as-dust professors with their books?¹⁷

Like Hippocrates before him, Paracelsus applied the macrocosm to the microcosm, for as he says “external things teach and reveal the cause’s of man’s infirmity...”.¹⁸ Paracelsus, consequently viewed Hippocrates as the only respectable medical authority of the past, mainly due to his emphasis on the importance of observing the disease process, and his having valued practical applications over speculative theory. Although Paracelsus

admired the empirical nature of Hippocrates, he opposed the Hippocratic initiative of separating the art of healing from the supernatural explanation of health and disease. Additionally, he believed healing required the use of theory and doctrine, but that it should come secondary in importance to practice, as he says “Not out of the speculative theory should the practice be hard-wrought, but out of the practice the theory.”¹⁹ In seeing that doctrine naturally develops out of practice, combined with his spiritual beliefs, Paracelsus sought to reunite the practice of healing with rationalism and religious philosophy. He believed that the laws of the human body corresponded with the laws of nature and he endeavored to isolate and differentiate these laws.²⁰

Paracelsus believed the nature of health and disease depends on five factors. The first is *ens astrale*, and relates to astrology and the influence of the stars. Human beings are linked in an orderly chain to creation itself. The second sphere of influence is the *ens venini* which states that even though man and the environment are mutually hostile, man must draw nourishment and sustenance in order for his survival. The vital force, man’s innate determination, comprise Paracelsus’s third factor *ens naturale* - the nature and functioning of man’s physical body. *Ens spirituale* defines the spiritual aspect of a person as having not only consciousness, but self-consciousness. Sigerist says “through the spirit, through the working of the mind, the environment becomes the world in which he finds himself as a thinking and creative being.” Disturbances in these spheres of influence lead to disease. If the *ens astrale*, is out of balance man’s connection to the world is disrupted and diseases of the world, such as pandemic infections, result. In a similar fashion, disease may result from disorders in the environment, a person’s course in life, and from spiritual and mental causes. The fifth sphere, *ens dei*, concerns the power of the divine to bring health out of disease. According to Paracelsus, the physician’s role is to return patient to the natural order of the universe, by aligning with nature’s laws the patient can be healed. Thus describes Sigerist, “In it, man returns from disorder to order. The task of the physician is to guide him to this road, to restore him to his place in the realm of order.”²¹

In leading his patients back to health, Paracelsus implemented the use of herbs, mineral baths, astrology, ritual, along with techniques in chemistry and alchemy. He introduced

mercury, lead, arsenic, laudanum, iron, copper, sulphur, tinctures and alcoholic extracts into the western pharmacopoeia. Paracelsus is credited with establishing the foundation of modern, conventional medicine by way of his accomplishments in pharmacy, physiology, biochemistry and drug-therapy. Here, yet again, we find an example of an important historical figure falling into this gray area. Paracelsus is viewed by many as being responsible for bringing “magic” back into medicine. He became a source of inspiration for many irregular, and empirical physicians, including Hahnemann, the founder of Homeopathic medicine. From a different perspective, allopaths look up to Paracelsus as an important forefather of chemical medicine for his having introduced metals and minerals into the pharmacopoeia. This apparent dissonance can be resolved by understanding that he did not remove himself from the world around him. Mathew Wood, in *the Magical Staff*, believes that he partook in a much more holistic framework than conventional medicine. He says,

There is, however, an important difference between the medicine of Paracelsus and modern science. His approach united the spiritual to the material, the divine to the natural, the whole to the part. For him, the purely reductionist and materialist view of the modern era would have been unthinkable. His chemical substances corresponded with spiritual values, his principles to eternal laws. His medicine encompassed the life force, the wisdom of nature, and the spiritual faculties of human nature.²²

Paracelsus designed experiments in order to learn about the specific properties of the natural world, but not to manipulate nature according to the corporeal wants and desires of man. Paracelsus insisted upon the development of an integrated sense of perception of both the spiritual and material aspects of life. He applied David Abram’s notion of the more-than-human world directly to the way he practiced medicine. His system was all about returning to nature and becoming aware of the multidimensional surroundings of which we mutually interact. Paracelsus believed the natural world was not just a collection of material bodies, but that the world has an interior, spiritual side as well. He insisted that both the subjective and objective elements of perception must be exercised in order to fully perceive natural phenomena. Wood explains,

The wisdom derived from the light of nature... is an inner knowing about the patterns, virtues, powers, and natures of different things. It is much closer to 'animal instinct'. Through this instinct, both animals and man 'know what is going on' in the world around them. Humanity must revert to this natural level of perception in order to have an intuitive understanding of nature. [Paracelsus said,] 'The physician is nothing but a hunting dog who smells the game and [follows] its footsteps from one place to another until he finds the game itself.' From a simple attunement to 'what's going on' our understanding of the light of nature grows, until we are able to detect complicated patterns, truths, and meanings implicit in the world at large.²³

Paracelsus was part of an intellectual culture of the Middle Ages and Renaissance that was immersed in alchemy, and magical philosophy, as ways of observing the patterns of the universe. In concerning themselves with discovering methods for transmuting metals into gold, alchemists searched for the universal solvent - the elixir of life. Alchemy was part of the intellectual and philosophical frontier of the time and the playing grounds of truth-seekers. When we look at the famous scientists of the day, we see an almost universal immersion in alchemy, in fact the so-called sciences were often considered the subsidiary aspects of the great work of personal and communal evolution. For example, Newton's work in alchemy resulted in his laws of physics, likewise, Kepler's accomplishments in astronomy, were based on his work in astrology.²⁴

In the time of Paracelsus the words astrology and astronomy were not yet separated. People still looked at patterns in the sky, the position of the sun, moon, stars and planets to gain information and meaning to the patterns observed on Earth. The correspondence of the macrocosm to the microcosm, an idea often termed the "doctrine of correspondence" figured prominently in Paracelsian philosophy.²⁵ This doctrine originated from shamanic thinking, took philosophical form under Plato and was pervasive in the practice of alchemy. Plato said there were certain primal ideas, or archetypal roots of things that formed the external material world. Wood recounts a famous passage where Plato describes

People living in a cave, seeing events in the outside world as shadows cast upon a wall. This is analogous to our own condition: ideas are the real things, what we see in the world are but shadows.²⁶

The doctrine of correspondence asserts that every created thing has an archetype from which its outward manifestation is derived from. The whole natural world gets its form and meaning from the corresponding archetypal world. Paracelsus views astronomy/astrology as a way to peer into the archetypal substratum upon which creation is constructed, gaining an insight and understanding of medical phenomena.

Emotions correspond to organs, and both correspond to plants, animals and minerals of a similar essence or nature. Diseases have their affinities and correspondences as well, so that they settle into certain organs and are driven out by certain medicines.

Each organ, tissue, or function is in correspondence to an underlying archetype or primordial part in the body of the Divine Human. Each disease correlates to a perversion in the function of the underlying archetype. For this reason, the archetypal configurations inherent in the macrocosm are the basis for an understanding of medical phenomena. If an organ is sick, the doctor appeals to the corresponding organ in the macrocosm... Thus, says Paracelsus, "We must treat limb to limb." That is, "limb of the macrocosm to limb of the microcosm."²⁷

The doctrine of signatures as outlined by Paracelsus bear a strong resemblance to the system of correspondence put forward in the classics of Chinese medicine, that of the five phases, five elements and five organs. These concepts will be discussed further in subsequent chapters.

E. Empiricism vs. Rationalism

Since the times of Galen, there have been three primary schools of medicine: rational, empiric, and methodist. The rationalists believed there was a rationale behind medical phenomena and that physicians must adhere to a dogma conceived from established teachers as a basis for medical practice. Empiricist physicians rejected rationale and

avored personal experience for the basis of their medical practice. Paracelsus believed that theoretical doctrine naturally develops out of experience. “Not out of the speculative theory should the practice be hard wrought, but out of the practice the theory.”²⁸ He identified himself as an empiricist, but he also sought to unite empiricism with rationalism. He says, “Theory and practice should together form one, and should remain undivided.”²⁹

A major theme running through the history of naturopathic medicine concerns the distinction between empirical and rational practice. Succinctly defined, empiricists invoke therapeutic observation and experience while rationalists seek their criterion of reliability in some discipline external to the therapeutic process. In essence, empiricism is a direct descendent of the Leaver system of healing. Indigenous healers base their healing on what they directly observe happens upon their administration of “medicines”. Their processes, though culturally varied, are based on therapeutic observations. Empiricism has regarded the human organism as a vital entity subject only to the laws of nature. Rationalism severed its ties to this line of thought in holding the belief that the behavior of the organism is to be determined by the action of the physician. Originating in Aristotle’s principle of contradiction, rational therapeutics worked on the assumption that cure comes about through the action of using remedies to oppose the action of disease.

In his three massive and descriptive volumes of *Divided Legacy: A History of the Schism in Medical Thought*, Harris I. Coulter outlines the differences between empiricism and rationalism. According to Coulter, the Empiricists came to view

the organism as continually reacting to morbidic stimuli, thus maintaining equilibrium with the environment: the reaction took the form of ‘coction’ - the ‘cooking’ of the morbidic cause or principle by the organism, rendering it inoffensive. Symptoms were interpreted as signs of the coction process, of the body’s own healing effort, hence beneficial. They indicated to the physician the course he should follow in assisting the organism to heal itself. Rationalism, on the contrary, viewed the symptoms as morbidic, reflecting the impact of the morbidic cause on the organism’s humoral balance... [which they considered to] be the principal object

of the physician's attention and developed diagnostic techniques to ascertain its nature.³⁰

In the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries Empirical physicians accepted the principle of the immediacy of therapeutic experience and sought its rules and principles outside the living body, oscillating back and forth among chemistry, physics, mathematics, and mechanics - finally settling on physiology. Modes of treatment remained relatively stable in empiricism, reflecting the stability of its doctrinal basis. In rationalism they varied according to the new field of knowledge which was temporarily accepted as the criterion of reliability.³¹

E. Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy is the foundation of Nature Cure in the naturopathic profession. Hydrotherapy is defined as the application of water in any form, either externally or internally, in the treatment of disease and the maintenance of health. One can easily imagine the advent of hydrotherapy paralleling the emergence of man. The history of the relationship between humankind and water is a very long one. Humans have ultimately evolved from animals of the sea, and are bound to its influences. Water constitutes about one half to four fifths the weight of the human body; hence we cannot live in the absence of it. Accordingly, human cultures have historically chosen to develop their cities near water. Ancient cultures including the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, and Hebrew, used water for hygienic, religious and therapeutic reasons. Evidence of community health associated with the use of water can be traced back to at least 4,000 years ago where bathrooms used by an ancient civilization of northern India were excavated at Mohenjo-Daro in the Indus valley and at Harappa in the Punjab. The creation of water supply systems were developed at least 2,000 years before the Christian era to solve the problem of procuring an adequate supply of drinking water for growing communities. Excavations at Troy revealed a very ingenious water supply system, while palaces on Crete were shown to have magnificent bathing facilities.

The Greeks developed bath houses which used hot and cold water delivery systems for health promoting purposes. It was common for a Greek to stand in a bath tub composed of marble, measuring 30” in height. A slave would douse himself with cold water over his head and body. Building on Greek accomplishments, the Romans left their mark in history as builders of massive and elaborate aqueduct systems, supplying water to the public for consumption, hygiene, baths and other health facilities. The public baths became the city’s center for group enjoyment, places of gossip and contacts. The baths were monumental accomplishments, for example the public baths of the emperor Caracalla seated over 1,600 people, while those of Diocletian seated over 3,000. Aqueducts carried about 300 gallons of water for every citizen at its peak development and by the 4th century AD, Rome would have 11 public baths and 856 private baths. The bath complexes were composed of the Frigidarium, Tepidarium and Caldarium baths. The Frigidarium was the cold water bath, which also supplied the water for the hot water baths of the Tepidarium (moderate heat) and the Caldarium (the hottest). The hot baths were heated by furnaces which blew heat into hollow bricks located under the entire floor of these baths. In addition, the Romans built small circular steam baths which were covered by a high dome. There was an opening in the center, which served as a vent to regulate the amount of heat.³²

By the sixth century AD the Roman empire was in ruins. Barbarian invasions leveled cities across Europe destroying urban civilization along its path. Destruction extended its reach out to include the bath houses and other public health establishments. During this time period in Europe, which is referred to as the Middle Ages, or medieval period, accumulated knowledge concerning health and medicine, including that of hydrotherapy, was lost and replaced with the codes of Christianity. Christians viewed disease as a punishment for sin and consequently devalued cleanliness, equating it with vanity, the sin of displaying material wealth. For instance, the early Christian writer St. Benedict pronounced that “to those that are well, and especially for the young, bathing should seldom be permitted.” The bath houses which still managed to exist came to be regarded as brothels, stigmatized with debauchery and wild parties, and were referred to as “hot houses” or “stews”.³³

The Byzantine empire of the east remained stable during the middle ages. Knowledge of the classic world was transferred to Constantinople, the new cultural center of the world. Likewise, Constantinople became the seat of the medical culture of Europe, as all the essential Greek medical writings were translated into Syriac, Hebrew, or Arabic. The infamous Persian physician and philosopher Avicenna (980-1063) accumulated much of this knowledge. He incorporated this knowledge base into *The Canon of Medicine*, while also adding his own and other Arabic contributions to this text. In essence, this work carried the torch of medical and hygienic knowledge, including the gains in hydrotherapy, into the Renaissance period. The following is a description of the Avicenna bath according to historian Lane:

The bather enters the hararah wearing wooden clogs, a large napkin round the loins, a second round the head like a turban, a third over the chest, and a fourth covering the back. The attendant removes the towels except the first, and proceeds to crack the joints of his fingers and toes, and several of the vertebrae of the back and neck; kneads his flesh, and rubs the soles of his feet with a coarse earthen rasp, and his limbs and body with a woolen bag which covers his hand like a glove. After which the bather plunges into the tank. He is then thoroughly washed with soap and water, and fibres of the palm-tree, and shaved, if he wish it, in the fourth chamber. Then he returns to the antechamber, and here he generally reclines upon a mattress, and takes some light refreshment, while one of the attendants rubs the soles of his feet, and kneads the flesh of his body and limbs, previously to resuming his dress. During this period of rest, a pipe and a cup of coffee is often taken. The operations in the antechamber are the 'restorative friction' of the text and of Greek and Roman baths. Before the dress is resumed, oils or ointments are rubbed in, and fragrant powders sprinkled on the skin.³⁴

Avicenna implored the use of many different types of baths, including the full, partial and sitz bath. In applying the therapeutic effects of water, he modified the temperature (hot tepid, cold), the duration of stay in the bath (long, short, medium), the kinds of water employed, and the frequency. In addition, he looked to the clues of the person being bathed to determine the nature and course of the bath. Avicenna examined the state of the skin (dry or moist), the state of the humors and their quality (cold, immatured). He used the bath to effect respiration, the pulse, innate heat, the strength (relaxing effects,

syncope, impotence), the humors (helping maturation, drawing to surface, diverting superfluities to different parts), the quality of the body (dry, cold, moist), and to treat specific conditions (fevers, affections of the stomach and spleen, etc.). According to Avicenna, the very hot water bath will cause the following to change: “The pores close; there is goose flesh, the moisture does not enter the body, and there is not much dispersal of the innate heat. But the water sometimes adds to the warmth of the body and sometimes cools it. To have the former effect, the water must be very hot.” Of the cold water bath, he says it “cools and moistens the body. As the water cools down, the air of the bathroom becomes less warm, and the effect of the cooling in both directions to which the body is now exposed is to contract the abdominal viscera.” Also of interesting note, he says of the shower-baths, douching and spraying the following:

If water be sprinkled on the face (or over the body) it restores the vigor of the breath, when that has been lost by dyspnea and by the inflammatory changes in hot fevers. This sprinkling is especially beneficial for syncope, if rose water or vinegar be used. It may restore the appetite. They are injurious to persons suffering from catarrhs or ‘cold’ headaches.”³⁵

What strikes me of Avicenna’s accounts of hydrotherapy techniques of the classic and middle age periods are the many similarities to those of Priessnitz, Kneipp, and modern naturopathic techniques and to those of the Chinese medical system which will be discussed thoroughly in a subsequent chapter. They explain to me the continuity and development of future techniques, therapies, theories, and philosophies. The fact that many of these developed independent from each other gives credence to their empirical nature. These treatments work universally irregardless of who and how they developed. Each era and leader added its refinement to Hydrotherapy, shaping it to where we are today with naturopathic hydrotherapy.

G. Naturopathic Nature Cure

Vincenz Priessnitz (1799-1852) of Graefenberg, a small village in what is now the Czech Republic, is credited as being the first figure to set in motion the forces which would lead to the development of the naturopathic profession and bring about the return of hydrotherapy and Nature Cure to the western civilization. After being pronounced incurable from being run over by a horse-drawn wagon when he was 16, Priessnitz cured himself with the application of cold water. The application of cold water packs over his chest for long periods of time led to his recovery. He came to this therapy after watching an injured roe deer, which he saw in the forest, dipping her wound in the mountain spring. He took joy in sharing his experiences with others and began treating people. According to Dr. Milos Koeka of the current Priessnitz medical spa in Graefenberg,

The neighbors thought it was a miracle. When in a similar manner he healed animals and a neighbor's maid, the legend about him spread and people from far and near started coming to Graefenberg. As there was no space to treat everyone, Vinzenz Priessnitz in 1822 rebuilt his own small wooden cottage into a large stone house. There he placed washtubs and drew water from the home's spring and began to treat the sick.³⁶

In 1826 he opened his own hydrotherapeutic institution and by 1840 had 1600 patients who had resided there. Patients included royalty, clerical dignitaries, heads of state and such notables as Chopin, Gogol and Napoleon III. Early on, he was frequently arrested and tried for illegal practice of medicine brought on by local country doctors. His arrests lead to an explosion of public opinions both for and against Priessnitz throughout Austria. He had the good fortune of having an Ambassador from Wuerttemberg lobby for him and the hydrotherapeutic institution, prompting the Emperor to send a commission of prominent medical experts to judge Priessnitz and his hydrotherapy. The commission was at Graefenberg for eight full days. They examined all the hydrotherapy techniques and procedures used, including the baths, perspirations, cold water packs, showers in the forest, drinking spring water, and the practice of patients taking walks. The commission upon returning to Vienna, published their findings and endorsed Priessnitz and his methods.³⁷ The following is an excerpt from their report:

Priessnitz is not your common everyday man. This, even his enemies must admit. He is not a charlatan, but a man with a number of good characteristics, who is full of the purest effort to help where he can. Those who call Priessnitz a charlatan are but a small number. They are mostly local doctors and wound healers, who complain out of envy and are scared about earning their daily bread. Unpretentious and modest, he is always ready to help his patients during the day and even in the night. He is kind, but is strict and exact in his meetings and consultations. ...his curing method is still a new and remarkable discovery in the area of medicine. This remarkable discovery and this extraordinary person deserves merit in every way, and any forcible intervention would be unjust.³⁸

The Austrian government's sanctioning of the institution brought with it an increase in fame and patients. The year 1839 brought with it more than 1,500 guests, including 120 doctors from all of Europe who came to study Priessnitz's therapeutic methods in order to establish hydrotherapy institutions in their own countries.

In studying the Priessnitz' hydrotherapy model it is important to understand the nature of hygiene during this period. Many of his patients came to him dressed in very intensive garb, wearing layers upon layers of clothing. In addition, many arrived malnourished and unaccustomed to the cleansing effects of water as they often didn't bath more than one or two times a year. Thus, the "itch" was often a consequence suffered from their unhygienic practice. Priessnitz took his visitors out to the country. He put them on a simple diet, undressed them, exposed them to fresh air and cold water treatments and watched them get better. Dr. Koeka outlines Priessnitz treatment in the following excerpt:

Vincenz Priessnitz cured his patients by means of the cold compress and wet packs on the injured areas, or he washed this area with a sponge - a treatment which had been known for a long time. But many other methods were his own discoveries, and were completely new to his time. These included the 'perspiration cure', used for treating chronic illnesses. For this treatment, the patient was left to lie peacefully in bed covered with blankets until he began to perspire, 'till the straw mattress was wet'. After which he was to jump into a wash tub filled with cold water. It was a shock for the whole organism, one not possible for every patient. Therefore, before treatment was started, Priessnitz had the patient take an exam,

a sort of physiological test. The patient was led to a tub of cold or lukewarm water into which he had to jump. Based upon the reaction of the Patient's skin, Priessnitz established the means of treatment. In addition, Priessnitz would determine, according to his own experiences, the length of treatment and its potential success.

Gradually Vincenz Priessnitz developed and disseminated a wide range of natural treatment procedures. The goal of the procedures was to strengthen the weakened and ill body in order that the body would itself drive out the harmful substances, because - according to his convictions - they were the cause of the illness. Priessnitz declared that his responsibility was not only curing the illness itself, but also to treat the patient's organs, his vital functions, his will, the person as a whole. This is why treatment at Graefenberg lasted months, sometimes years.³⁹

Priessnitz devised his patient's treatment on an individual basis, basing it on their daily state of health. In addition to eliminating harmful influences on patients, detaching guests from their normal day-to-day problems, and giving them hope and a new sense of happiness for life, a fundamental part of the cure was the act of returning the patient to nature. Priessnitz' spa was centered high on a slope of the Rychlebske Mountain Range, 620 meters above sea level. There are over 50 springs flowing through the area surrounding the spa, in addition to the numerous awe inspiring vistas and paths. It was a site of natural beauty. Accompanying the hydrotherapy administered at the spa, Priessnitz would have patients take showers in the woods, engage in manual exercise like sawing wood, and would send his patients out, often in bare feet, to drink water from various distant forest springs. Priessnitz valued activity in fresh air, often saying that "if I did not have water, I would have healed with air."⁴⁰ He forced patients to take therapeutic walks in nature instead of staying in the dismal atmosphere of a hospital. He took his urban patients, oftentimes members of the aristocracy and wealthy classes, off their high horses (sometimes quite literally) and put their feet back in contact with the Earth. Priessnitz believed their medical problems often stemmed from their distance from the natural life of the peasants and working class. In essence, he showed his patients how to live in harmony with the laws of nature.⁴¹

I feel a connection with Priessnitz in part because I have been healed as a result of becoming an interactive part of the Austrian mountain environment. Although I did not use hydrotherapy, outside of drinking cold spring water, I physically returned my body to nature. Secondly, Priessnitz was educated from the land itself, in much the same way Brigitte has learned the lessons of life. Like Priessnitz, she grew up on a small farm and had a difficult childhood. Having eight brothers and sisters, her parents had relatively little time for her. A lot of her time was spent out among nature, exploring the woods, investigating the native fields of herbs, flowers and plant life, and communing with the farm animals and other wildlife. Nature became one of her more influential teachers, and she has come to exhibit, like Priessnitz, an extra-ordinary talent for observing and understanding nature's laws. She has taught me an awful lot of what she has learned from the mountains of Austria, and perhaps these insights are in-part what makes me feel connected to Priessnitz, Kneipp, and other water healers of this area. In addition, these historical figures actually had a direct impact on Brigitte, and through her, I as well can't help feeling touched by them.

Brigitte's mother, Margit, had a very strong attraction for older natural healing traditions. She went out of her way to learn traditional methods of healing from family, friends and neighbors. Many of Kneipp's and Priessnitz' techniques are still orally circulating among



My Goddaughter Victoria drinking from a fountain in Hochgallmig, Austria

villagers. In addition, Margit would read books and articles on hydrotherapy. She endeavored to raise her family as close to nature as possible. She tried to keep the household self-sufficient, went out of her way to avoid artificial products, while valuing those things of quality and purity. She kept a well stocked garden of herbs and veg-

etables, and raised goats, cows, chickens, and rabbits. Brigitte and her mother really cherish the fact that the water that they used for their everyday activities came directly from a spring running out of the mountain they lived on. The water was so pure and clean and full of vitality. They drank it, bathed in it, cleaned with it, watered the plants and garden with - it was a part of their lives that they did not take for granted. Brigitte loves to tell the story of her first day in America, pouring herself a glass of water from the sink, putting it to her lips, taking a sip, and immediately spitting it out all over the place. "This is not water, what is this *stuff*" she asked baffled.

Hydrotherapy in this form was such an important and integrated part of her life, but her mother would actually use specific techniques on Brigitte and her siblings. For instance, when Brigitte was sick with the cold or flu, her mom would give her a sweat bath, wrap her up tightly in blankets and have her drink a lot of hot herbal tea. She would sweat all wrapped up for about an hour, and then would change into her pajamas and rest in bed. The tea, often times salbei (sage), was always picked fresh from her mother's garden. The combination together always reduced her fever, and brought on a quick end to her ailment. Margit enjoyed using Kneipp's cures on her children. In particular, Brigitte fondly remembers being sent out with her brothers and sisters into the freshly fallen snow - barefoot. They would run around hooting and hollering, fully enjoying the experience. After a few minutes, they would return indoors and have woolen socks put on their feet. They would cuddle up in a blanket, lie down and rest and relax. She remembers this experience as making her feel good and strong throughout her body. Of the walking in newly fallen snow hydrotherapy technique, Kneipp says in his book *My Water Cure*.

We distinctly remark in newly fallen, fresh snow, which forms into a ball or clings to the feet like dust, not in old, stiff, frozen snow, which almost freezes the feet and is of no use whatever.... I know many people who have walked through such snow-water for half an hour, an hour, even one and a half hours with the best result.... The regular duration of such a walk in the snow is 3-4 minutes.... Generally, the verdict upon this means of hardening is: 'Nothing but folly and nonsense' - because people are afraid of catching colds, of rheumatics, sore throat, catarrh, and every possible complaint. Everything depends on a trial and a little self-conquest; one will soon become convinced how groundless prejudices are; and that the

dreadful snow-walk, instead of causing any harm, brings great advantage.⁴²

Brigitte says that she felt healthy as a child, even when she was sick. She perceived her body as always responding appropriately to infections and ailments; she always had fevers when sick, and healed relatively quickly without the use of pharmaceuticals. She credits this to the pure environment she lived in, the water she consumed, and the work of her mother - all factors conspiring to give her an increase in vitality. In stark contrast, ever since she has been residing in the United States, she has had many more health complications.

Sebastian Kneipp (1824-1897) was a priest from Bavaria who after curing himself with the wonderful healing effects of water went on to develop the Nature Cure method. His notoriety is still existent in Europe, although at one time he was infamous in the United States - an American poll ranked him third as one of the best-known people of the time, right behind the president of the United States and the chancellor of Germany, Bismarck. Kneipp, like Priessnitz developed the reputation for being able to cure thousands of people who were labeled incurable. His healing skills, his numerous writings, and the introduction of other healing techniques took hydrotherapy to the next level of public awareness. In addition to water therapy, Kneipp prescribed exercise, advocated diet therapy in the form of wholesome natural foods (including vegetarianism), the emphasis of harmony between the mental, emotional, physical, social, and ecological planes, and the incorporation of the monastic tradition of herbal medicine. In training Benedict Lust and Henry Lindlahr, Kneipp is responsible for bringing hydrotherapy and Nature Cure to the forefront in the United States.⁴³ Kirchfield and Boyle say,

Kneipp's most specific influence in the U.S. has been on naturopathic medicine. Not only did he inspire Benedict Lust and Henry Lindlahr to become naturopaths and establish his healing principles in this country, but he saved them from life-threatening illnesses so they could accomplish this task.. The hydropathic movement in the U.S., inspired by Priessnitz a generation earlier, had prepared the ground, and Kneipp's Nature Cure, transplanted and augmented with other natural therapies by Lust, and established on a scientific basis by Lindlahr, blossomed into naturopathy, which

over the course of the twentieth century evolved into naturopathic medicine.⁴⁴

Through the efforts of Benedict Lust, naturopathy was built into a profession in the beginning of the 20th century. Lust's goal was to pull together a profession from the existing fields of irregular practitioners. He brought together the sects of homeopathy, botanicals, massage, spinal manipulation, therapeutic electricity, public hygiene, bone setters, mechanical therapists, with Kneipp's Nature Cure. Many German-style Nature Cure institutions were established in America at the turn of the century. In 1896, under Father Kneipp's commission, Lust founded a natural health retreat in the Ramapo Mountains near Butler, New Jersey, which he named the Yungborn. This institution was situated on sixty acres of land, and operated on the same principles as those of Kneipp. Kirchfield and Boyle describe the Jungborn as follows:

Guests who lived in air cottages or tent colonies would rise at 5 in the morning for a day of walks, sports, lectures, mud baths, vegetarian meals, healthnaps, stream plunges and sun bathing, garbed in nature's apparel only. They retired at 9 p.m.. Men's and women's sections were separate. No meat, tobacco, or contagious disease were allowed. One guest wrote that after a week or two of this regimen, 'you feel so comfortable that you want to shout in your ecstasy.'⁴⁵

Although many of these naturopathic hydrotherapy centers became popular and attracted many people who procured healing through nature, few withstood the turmoil of American medical politics. These spas have a much different flavor than those that preceded them of the naturopathic tradition. Today, Spas residing in the U.S. are detached from naturopathic medicine and have nowhere near the same impact of those located in Europe. These spas serve varied roles, including cosmetic, stress-reduction, weight-loss, and health benefits, while often fostering new-age spirituality. In this respect they appear to function in a similar manner as their counterparts in Europe, differing mainly in that the systems of hydrotherapy in U.S. spas seem less cohesive and less clearly defined.

Naturopathic hydrotherapy has now become an adjunct therapy, chosen equally as often as botanical, physical, and homeopathic remedies in the arsenal of tools available to the naturopath. Treatments are now very precise and specific to the patients condition, and I have no doubt have their effectiveness. However, I fear that the soul of Nature Cure as it was practiced by Kneipp and Priessnitz is now lost in naturopathic practice. No longer are therapies applied in the outdoors, nor for that matter do they seem to reincorporate a sense of participation with the more-than-human landscape. The connection of human correspondence to nature is severed. Absent are the guiding principle behind the development of naturopathic practice, and the key constituent in a return to true health leaving behind a void that can only be filled by the subconscious hunger to harmonize with that place within ourselves where we are linked with the larger forces of nature.

¹ Hughes, p.96

² Armelagos, p.1

³ Ibid, pp.2-3

⁴ Ibid, pp.4-5

⁵ Ibid, p.5

⁶ Ibid, p.5-6

⁷ Ibid, p.6

⁸ Wood, p. 18

⁹ Jones, p.141

¹⁰ Sigerist

¹¹ Jones, p.23

¹² Ackerneknecht, p.74

¹³ Ibid, p.76

¹⁴ Ibid, p.75

¹⁵ Wood, p.12

¹⁶ Much of the information on Paracelsus can be found in the chapter *Paracelsus* in Wood, p.1-32

¹⁷ Sigerist

¹⁸ Wood, p.

¹⁹ Wood, p.14

²⁰ Wood, from the chapter titled, Paracelsus: Medicine of the Spirit, pp. 1-32

²¹ Sigerist

²² Wood, p.2

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- ²³ Wood, p.11
- ²⁴ Adapted from a lecture by Mitch Stargrove, ND, in a philosophy class at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine.
- ²⁵ Wood, p. 18
- ²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 18
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 18-19
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 14
- ²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 14
- ³⁰ Coulter, p.viii
- ³¹ *Ibid*, p.xi
- ³² Yegul, pp. 6-29
- ³³ *Ibid*, pp.314-320
- ³⁴ Lane
- ³⁵ Lane
- ³⁶ Taken from the Priessnitz Medical Spa Web Site.
- ³⁷ Kirchfeld, p.17
- ³⁸ *Ibid*, p.17
- ³⁹ Taken from the Priessnitz Medical Spa Web Site.
- ⁴⁰ Kirchfeld, p.20
- ⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.20
- ⁴² Kneipp, *My Water Cure*, p.26
- ⁴³ Kirchfield and Boyle, from the chapter titled *Sebastian Kneipp*, pp. 73-98
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.92
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.195

V. THE EVOLUTION OF CHINESE NATURE CURE AND SYSTEMATIC CORRESPONDENCE

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the fall of the flowers

*The splendor of spring slowly, slowly departs – but whither?
Once more I face the flowers, and raise my cup.
All day I ask of the flowers, but the flowers make no reply:
For whom do you fade and fall?
For whom do you blossom?*

- Yen Yun (9th C.E.)¹





The Chinese literary and cultural traditions begin with poetry. Nurtured by the advancement of poetry, philosophy followed upon the heels of the poetic tradition. The earliest poets tended to articulate a sense of human participation, closely attuned to the more-than-human landscape.² The Chinese took great delight in capturing these moments of experiential interaction with this landscape – the trout leaping high above the river bottom, the croaking of a frog, the shining of the evening sun, and a child grasping a sprig of cherry blossoms while swinging from a branch of a cherry tree. These are scenes and moments of life caught forever by a sensitive artist, put on display to deepen our feelings for the world around us. Richard Lewis, editor of *The Moment of Wonder*, a collection of Chinese and Japanese poetry written over the last two centuries, says in the preface:

All things of nature – blossoms, deer, birds, insects – have a place in our world. They, like us, are young, grow old and eventually die. What is so beautiful in the many poems that the Chinese and Japanese have written about this great family of nature is the deep feeling the poets have for the individual life of each member of this family. Nothing is too small or insignificant for the eyes of the Oriental poet. Everything that breathes and blossoms, everything that moves, everything that lives, is observed with care and

delight... the miracle that is part of the story of every breathing thing is quietly and simply brought to us... We watch a stork standing in the sunlight, butterflies chasing flower petals, a snail crawling in the rain... The family of nature soon begins to show itself in all its busy, wonderful ways.³

The poets wrote with a perspective of a deep, heart-felt appreciation and a sense of companionship with nature and life. The Chinese propensity to perceive the smallest magical details of life permeates ancient Chinese art. As already outlined in an earlier chapter, the desire to capture these moments of wonder is even seen in the Chinese pictographic language itself.⁴ Further, the careful observation of the natural world developed into the science of correspondence between nature and human beings and became prominent and central to the developments of Chinese philosophy and medicine. Ancient science evolved from the desire to define the relationships between human beings, the heaven above and the Earth below. As Lewis eloquently states:

Our eyes look up at the sky and we see the heavens, where day and night move, where rain and snow gather, where moon and sun shine among the swelling clouds. Our eyes look down at the earth, where mountains rise, where streams speed toward the sea, where lakes shiver in the wind, where forests grow in tangled beauty. Both the sky and the earth become our home. When the noise of cities deafens us, we speak to the silence of stars or listen to the quiet rustling of leaves in the wind. Our world, then, is more than the four walls of our house – it is the entire face of the earth and all the heavens above us.⁵

The mother matrix of Chinese science is the principle of movement. Throughout millions of years, human beings have observed and participated in the constant cycles of nature. All life conforms to the cycle of birth, growth, climax, aging and death. The lifecycle is the same for all entities; for the sun, Earth, moon, plant and rock. Human beings follow the same natural laws of Earth. Humans imitate Earth and are subordinate to its laws. As the modern Daoist Hua-Ching Ni asserts,

In spring they were lively, in Summer vivacious, in Autumn they gathered themselves, and in Winter they prepared for return. Thus mankind achieved an existence here on Earth that was in harmony with the divine order of the universe.⁶

The above passage describes the quintessence of what has been termed the law of correspondence. The system of correspondence developed during the last parts of the Zhou period in China. This system, as stated by Chinese historian Paul Unschuld, recognizes “that not just one, two, or a limited number of elements form a line of correspondence, but that most, if not all, natural occurrences and abstract concepts can be incorporated into a single system of correspondence”.⁷ In essence, it considers that the human body is constantly modifying its body structure and adjusting its functions to adapt to the ever-changing environment. The structure and function of the human body (microcosm) directly corresponds with the structure and function of the more-than-human world (macrocosm). Verse 25 of the *Daodejing* is one of the earliest classical sources to articulate this relationship.

Something formless, complete in itself
There before Heaven and Earth
Tranquil, vast, standing alone, unchanging
It provides for all things yet cannot be exhausted
It is the mother of the universe
I do not know its name so I call it “Tao”
Forced to name it further
I call it ‘The greatness of all things’
 ‘The end of all endings’
I call it ‘That which is beyond the beyond’
 ‘That to which all things return’

From Tao comes all greatness –
 It makes Heaven great
 It makes Earth great
 It makes man great

Mankind depends on the laws of Earth
Earth depends on the laws of Heaven
Heaven depends on the laws of Tao
But Tao depends on itself alone
 Supremely free, self-so, it rests in its own nature⁸

The above passage taken from the *Daodejing* contains the statement used in the title of this thesis. Here, Ren Fa Di – humans follow the Earth is translated as mankind depends on the laws of Earth. Similarly, Di Fa Tian - the Earth itself depends and follows the laws

and patterns of the sky (Heaven). Subsequently, all of these laws and energetic patterns that are responsible for the formation of the relationships between Heaven, Earth, and Human Beings are all dependent upon the laws of Dao - the original principles observed in nature. Finally, Dao Fa Ziran - these principles are of themselves the predictable, rhythmic changes observable in nature.

Unschuld points out that the emergence of systematic correspondence and its rise to conceptual dominance in Chinese natural philosophy marks one of the most decisive periods of Chinese intellectual history. The holistic and inductive type of thinking associated with the notion of systematic correspondence of all phenomena played a major role in the development of Chinese medico-theoretical literature. According to Unschuld, the definitive identification of the origins of this innovative development are not sufficiently documented in ancient Chinese sources. Interestingly, he outlines a line of investigation that points to a possible common source with that of the Greek philosophy, which was previously delineated in section IV of this thesis.⁹ He says,

A philosophical impulse may have spread from one unknown source somewhere between Greece and China, carried by its revolutionary strength, never, though, to fill a previously existing void in its original form but always to be modeled and to be adapted to local conditions, corresponding to the specific intellectual milieus it met...

The distinct feature of emerging Greek and Chinese philosophy in the second half of the last millennium B.C.E. is the attempt to explain the phenomena of the perceptible world as natural occurrences, without referring to mysterious forces such as gods or ancestors. The world is now understood by some intellectuals in its own right, and together with a probing into its structure, the central problem of coming-into-being and passing-away is approached conceptually.¹⁰

It is important to remember that medicine in China has been a complex evolutionary process unfolding over the last 3500 years. There has been an enormous variety of differently conceptualized systems of therapy, all representative of Chinese culture. Sometimes these theories and systems seem to overlap, while other times they appear to

be antagonistic. The history of these complex systems is not characterized by simple linear succession. As a new school of thought developed it did not simply replace the old system for a new one as is common to medicine and science of the West. Rather, the history of Chinese medicine reveals a diversity of concepts that remain intact as new paradigms arose. Unschuld describes this unique feature of the Chinese situation as a syncretism of all ideas that exist. He says,

Somehow a way was always found in China to reconcile opposing views and to build bridges – fragile as they may appear to the outside observer – permitting thinkers and practitioners to employ liberally all the concepts available, as long as they were not destructive to society.¹¹

The following sections outline the development of systematic correspondence and the philosophy of human participation in the more-than-human world by studying particular aspects of Chinese philosophical and medical classics. The advancement of the Doctrines of yin/yang and of the Five Phases were important major features in the maturation process and articulation of the system of correspondence and will follow the segments devoted to the *Yi Jing*, the Classics of Poetry, Confucius, Laozi, Chuangzi, Huainanzi, and the *Neijing*.

A. Yi Jing

The *Yi Jing*, translated as *The Book of Changes*, is considered to be one of the oldest of all Chinese books. As a written text, it is dated to 1150 B.C.E.. The *Yi Jing* has its beginnings as an oracle. With a several thousand year history of oral transmission among the sages and shamans of the Zhou people in northwestern China, its contents were collected from the practice of divination. The wisdom held in oral tradition for such a long period of time was finally written down as a book.¹²

People consulted the *Yi Jing* according to Jim Cleaver L.Ac., an expert on the *Yi Jing*, as a key for grappling with and trying to understand the very essence of the unknown, which

is the phenomenon of change itself. The process of divination begins with the posing of a question. He says,

To consult the Yi-Jing as an oracle, or as a venerated teacher, counselor or priest, in my opinion is tantamount to asking the universe ‘what time it is?’ The Yi-Jing responds with more profound information than a clock does, though it also uses numbers and symbols to communicate its message. In the divination/consulting process we enlist the aid of ritual, intention and chance to connect us with the universal consciousness (Dao), whereupon we receive a response in the form of a Hexagram.¹³

Divination was used especially to answer questions about “When?”. When was it the right time to do, or not to do something; when was the best time to start or stop an activity. Cleaver says, “For in the sea of change which is our reality, timing is the essence of success, and even survival.”¹⁴ The most obvious and observable universal constant is change itself. The *Yi Jing* deals with universal times that humans have had to come to grips with since the dawn of human existence. Conflict, resolution, danger, preparation, separation and reunion, loss and gain, beginnings and endings are all examples of these universal times. The *Yi Jing* teaches the art of timing; how to consciously coordinate ourselves with the cosmic flow of change extant in the more-than-human milieu.

As stated by Cleaver, the *Yi Jing* delineates three types of changes – Polar, Cyclic and Random. Polar change describes the oscillation of opposites derived from the daily phenomenon of change, such as light to dark and dark to light. This is the metamorphosis of one time into its opposite. Cyclic change, the second type of change, describes the progression and evolution of time as seen in the movement of the seasons and the passing of years. The third type involves random change – the change associated with fate derived from the universal mystery and metaphysical aspect of time. The underlying principle of the *Yi Jing* is that the universe is constantly changing. This change can be understood, as it is not as random as it first appears. The *Yi Jing* teaches that one can attune to and co-ordinate oneself with these changes. By teaching how to live in balance with these changes the *Yi Jing* describes strategies for living harmoniously with the more-

than-human universe. In this manner, the *Yi Jing* serves as a bridge between the inner and outer worlds.¹⁵

The early Zhou sages and shamans who composed the *Yi Jing* observed heaven above and the earth below and translated nature's patterns into symbols so that people could understand them. These symbols later became the basis for the pictographic written language. The specific hexagram symbol is then interpreted by the diviner to arrive at insights pertinent to the question posed. The text contained in the *Yi Jing* is used as guidance for the interpretation and the symbols serve as maps that lead us back to ourselves and train our understanding and intuition with the more-than-human matrix. It is a tool to enact the ancient premise that heaven, Earth and humans are interconnected. It explains, influences, and opens the door to the matrix reminding us that we are connected to heaven and Earth.

This connection is made conscious through the use of symbols. The *Yi Jing* translates an energetic pattern of nature into a visual symbol; a hexagram which resembles and is representative of the original pattern. The hexagrams are 6 line symbolic pictures that represent a fundamental, or archetypical life situation. Each hexagram is named according to this time. Each line is composed of one of two types: a yang solid line or a yin, broken line. The yang line is associated with Heaven, the yin with the Earth. Heaven and Earth interact to produce the four pairs of lines – the Bi-grams. These pairs represent the four seasons, the four phases of the moon and the four quadrants of the day. Both the energies of yang and yin are separated into greater and lesser parts. The interaction of human beings with Heaven and Earth generates the symbols known as the Ba-gua or 8 trigrams. Each trigram is named after a natural image its universal time/energy represents. For example, three yang lines is the symbol for Heaven with its attributes of creativity. One yang line above two yin lines connects with the natural image of a mountain. The mountain energy is attributed with keeping still, meditating. Each of the 64 hexagrams are then composed of two trigrams.¹⁶

The ancients placed their value in astrology that allowed them to observe the cyclic natures of the environment and the more-than-human world. There are 64 base energetic constellations in the sky that are expressed. The ancients observed material objects in the sky, such as the sun, moon and stars to understand these 64 base energies and it is these base energies that are represented by the hexagrams. An examination of a hexagram, such as hexagram 30 will further illustrate the connection between the *Yi Jing* hexagram symbol with the relationship between Human beings the Earth and the energetic patterns emanating from the Sky.

Hexagram 30 is named Li, translated as Radiance and the Clinging of Fire. It is composed of two of the fire trigrams. A dark line (yin) clings to two light lines (yang), one above and one below. This creates the image of an empty space between two yang lines – the empty space makes the two strong lines bright. This is the image of fire, but fire has no definite form and must cling to the burning object to be bright. The burning, material object is this yin line. Hua Ching-Ni in his discussion of the hexagram Li, reminds the reader that the original Chinese character for beauty portrayed the eyes of a deer and represented the sun and the moon. Because of the light emitted from the sun and the moon brightens the Earth, we are able to enjoy beauty. But beauty, like fire, must cling to something, as it cannot exist independently from an object. We recognize a tree as beautiful because of its form, shape and color of its leaves, fruit and flowers. Ching-Ni says,

On a practical level, this hexagram instructs humanity in the uses of brightness or mental illumination for the guidance of others. When one cultivates brightness, one's light will illuminate all directions. Those who receive this brightness will also reflect it. To perpetuate brightness is to radiate warmth in all of one's actions.¹⁷

Hellmut Wilhelm, in his translation of the *Yi Jing*, also comments on the impact of the hexagram Li on Heaven, Earth and Human Beings with the following:

What is dark clings to what is light and so enhances the brightness of the latter. A luminous thing giving out light must have within itself

something that perseveres; otherwise it will in time burn itself out. Everything that gives light is dependent on something to which it clings, in order that it may continue to shine. Thus sun and moon cling to heaven, and grain, grass, and trees cling to the Earth. So too the twofold clarity of the dedicated man clings to what is right and thereby can shape the world. Human life on Earth is conditioned and unfree, and when man recognizes this limitation and makes himself dependent upon the harmonious and beneficent forces of the cosmos, he achieves success.¹⁸

Chinese philosophers and medical practitioners soon began to take what the ancient sages observed in the motion of the sky to describe that which takes place in the relationship between humans and the more-than-human world and applied it to their fields of study. The following sections of this thesis outline the development of the Chinese medical philosophy which emphasizes the human manifestation of the sky energetics – the study of the sun, moon and stars in the human body.

B. Classic of Poetry

The Chinese Classic of Poetry (*Shi Jing*) is a collection of 305 short poems and is a written redaction of what had been a long and rich oral tradition of song. The poems likely date between the early period of the Zhou (c. 1045-221 B.C.E.) to as late as the last years of the sixth century B.C.E. Many of the poems were of a religious nature and were performed in ceremonies at ancestral shrines, while others are long songs in praise of royal ancestors, such as King Wen and Wu – the founders of the Zhou state. Still others cover such topics as romance, marriage, abandonment, warfare and agriculture. The poems did not focus on images of nature in and of itself, rather the poems used the anthropomorphic emotions evoked from human participation in the more-than-human landscape as it correlates with the analogous human situation. According to Shankman and Durrant,

no lyric in the Classic of Poetry presents, in any overt fashion, a philosophy of man and nature as ‘one great indivisible unity’ Still,

we believe it is possible to discern in the Classic of poetry... a world where there is no sharp break between the realm of humans and that of nature. Indeed, the peculiar power of much of this poetry derives, in large measure, from the intimate way humanity is represented as participating in, and responding to, the natural world.¹⁹

The poems, although abundant in nature imagery, were not nature poetry in the sense that they did not describe nature for its own sake. Rather the poets focused on relating the natural image to that of the human situation. The poems take place for the most part in the countryside, where most of the population in ancient China resided. Their survival depended upon a keen awareness of every aspect of the more-than-human environment. The poems are not logical, intentionalist arguments, rather they evoke a sense of unity, a resonance between human emotion and the natural scene - a profound sense of the individual's necessary participation in the cosmic whole. For illustration, take the following poem:

The wild geese go into flight;
Flap, flap their wings.
These men go out to march,
To toil and labor in the wilds.
Alas for the pitiable men;
Sad that men and women are both alone.

The wild geese go into flight,
And roost in the middle of the marsh.
These men go out to build walls,
And a hundred cubits all are raised.
Although they toil and labor,
At last they have a safe house.

The wild geese go into flight;
Sadly their calls resound.
It was these wise men
Who called us to toil and labor.
It was those foolish men
Who called us to brag and boast.
- (Mao 181)²⁰

Early commentators such as Zheng Xuan (127-200 C.E.) connect the poem to a rebellion against the Zhou ruler King Li that occurred in 842 B.C.E. and the subsequent restoration

of the kingly way that was reestablished under King Xuan in 828 B.C.E.. According to Zheng Xuan the poem compares what the geese know to what the people know. It is “a comparison between the geese and people who know how to depart from rulers without the Proper Way and go to those who have the Proper Way”.²¹

The images of geese flying restlessly, then aligning in a marsh, and then calling out in discontent resonates quite organically with the human narrative that follows each of these images. Indeed, the peculiar beauty of this poem – as of many correlations created by the poet between the nature imagery and the analogous human situation. There is no discontinuity here that requires elaborate explanation.²²

C. Confucius

The Classic of poetry was collected during this period of disunity, a period many scholars consider a “golden age” because it is the birth of Chinese literature and the flourishing of its “hundred schools” of philosophy. The great classical Chinese philosophers, such as Confucius and Laozi, are of this age. Despite the rise in literature and philosophy, it was a time of danger and despair to the Chinese. In 771 B.C.E. a group of Chinese rebels dismantled the Zhou state, with the Zhou court becoming only a figurehead government. In the absence of a strong central government, the small subordinate states became independent and struggled with each other for their survival and to enhance their own political positions. This era is considered one of the bloodiest periods in Chinese history.²³

Almost all the questions that spurred the rise of Chinese philosophy were troubled ones: “Where has the proper Dao gone?” “How can society be stabilized again?” ‘How can one live out one’s life in peace and security in an age of constant strife/’ ‘How can the empire become one again?’ The classic of Poetry is our primary textual record of these centuries of transition from the heroics of the early Zhou rulers (Kings Wen, Wu, Cheng, and Kang) to the disarray of troubled voices that were to follow... It creates a consciousness of the past shaped around the notion of Heaven’s Charge and it

expresses a nostalgia for that age when sage-like kings ruled the state with ‘great glory.’²⁴

As a result of this social upheaval, numerous philosophical schools with widely diverging social theories formed to confront the prevailing social chaos. Each school attempted to convince the rulers of competing states that the application of their ideas to practical politics would reunify the empire and create peaceful coexistence. Among these schools were the Daoists and Confucians. Daoists saw the violation of the natural course of events as the principal cause of the disintegration of society and considered the ideal rule to involve as little governmental intervention as possible. Confucians believed the downfall of society was due to the loss of ritual and social customs before the fall of the Zhou. Confucius felt that the true cause of social unrest was the discrepancy between the expectations associated with social roles and the actual conduct of members of society. The old harmony between heaven and man was viewed as the foundation for correct behavior. Its collapse led the Confucians to search for the “real values” that could restore heaven to its perfection. These “real values” became the basis for a new harmony in the individual human being’s capacity for empathy and potential for self-actualization. This value, Confucius termed “Ren” – humaneness, the highest distinctive quality of a human being is the ability to treat other people well.

Confucius saw participation in human society as the only way humanity can be actualized. To reach this objective, Confucius bound individuals and groups to precisely defined hierarchical social roles. A king was to act as a king, a minister had to act the role of a minister, the scholar a scholar and the farmer a farmer - social order was required where every member had their duty to conduct themselves according to their bestowed status. The social relationships among those fulfilling these roles were bound by specific customs and rites.²⁵ He saw the return to ritual as the only way to resuscitate the lost spirit of the Zhou. The Confucian sage masters the details of ritual and reflects the virtue of humaneness in all interpersonal dealings. As stated earlier, Confucius defined sageship in terms of knowledge – the pursuit of the intentional consciousness to master the texts and practices of the past - one who understands humanness outside of the participation in the more-than-human world.²⁶ A passage from the *Analects* quotes Confucius saying “I

cannot associate with birds and beasts. If I do not associate with human beings, with whom would I associate?” Confucian philosophy is more akin to Socrates disdain for the natural phenomena. Socrates says in the dialogue *Phaedrus*, when asked to leave the city for the countryside in order to have a conversation, “I am a lover of learning, and the countryside and the trees will not teach me anything, whereas men in the town do”.²⁷ Shankman and Durrant summarize,

Confucianism is a philosophy of social and political participation. The virtue of humanity cannot be realized in society with “birds and beasts,” and Plato’s “the countryside and the trees” likewise have nothing to teach Confucius. Indeed, a human being is only constituted as such, according to Confucius, through interpersonal relationships.²⁸

D. Laozi

Laozi, like Confucius, believed that Chinese society had fallen from an earlier unity. Instead of looking at a time in history when political and social order aligned humans with the heavens, Laozi, the father of Daoist philosophy, looked to a time before history when humanity rested in harmony with the natural order. Daoism was concerned with understanding how man can best conform to the laws of nature – follow the Dao, the Way of nature. Star describes Dao as “the Supreme Reality, the all-pervasive substratum; it is the whole universe and the way the universe operates. Te is the shape and power of Dao; it is the way Dao manifests.”²⁹

Laozi rejected the Confucian agenda of ritual, duty, humaneness, and knowledge because he believed these only lead to yet greater levels of intentionalism and resulted in further exile from the Way.³⁰ Says Unschuld, “Confucians trusted implicitly in the moral power (Te) resulting from adherence to a detailed system of rites, to rectify the political situation, the Taoists of the fourth, third, and subsequent centuries B.C.E. explicitly rejected such submissive infringements, basing their own doctrine on the potential (Te) that arises from adaptation to the Way of Nature (Tao).”³¹ *The Daodejing*, written during

the latter part of the Warring States period, is a collection of Daoist verses whose authorship has traditionally been ascribed to Laozi. A look at *The Daodejing* further illustrates Laozi's disdain of Confucian intentionalism and separation from the Way.

After the great Way has been thrown aside,
There is humanness and duty.
After cleverness and knowledge appear,
There is great falseness.

(DDJ 18)

Therefore, one loses the Way and then there is virtue.
One loses virtue and then there is humaneness.
One loses humaneness and then there is duty.
One loses duty and then there is ritual.
This thing 'ritual' is but the wearing thin of truthfulness and loyalty.

(DDJ 38)³²

Shankman and Durrant impart that Laozi differentiates between knowledge and wisdom, intentionalism and participation in *The Daodejing*. Laozi uses different words for "knowing" in *The Daodejing*. He employs the word Zhi to imply knowledge in the purely intentionalist manner - the type of "knowledge" that is artificial and contrived and that thus inhibits any true understanding of the Tao. Laozi uses the verbs *ming* and *guan* to suggest an awareness of the participatory dimension of the human consciousness. Ming, composed of the two characters that represent the sun and moon, suggest the luminous quality of this experience of participation. In the second verse, Laozi states that "the whole world understands [zhi] that which makes beauty beautiful, and thus the concept of ugliness arises. Everyone understands [zhi] that which makes goodness good, and thus the concept of badness arises." The conceptualization or intentional understanding and defining of beauty or goodness acts to categorize and therefore limit their experiences. The creation of artificial categories of what is beautiful and what is good subsequently defines and manifests the opposite category of the ugly or the bad. Thus, reality is manipulated and one's experience of unity is ruptured.³³

In verse four, Laozi speaks of the duality of Dao. It is empty yet it fills every vessel with endless supply; it is hidden, yet it shines in every corner of the universe. (TTJ p17),

Because of its depth, it resembles the ancestor of the ten thousand things. If it is itself like the ancestor of the visible universe, then the question that follows is what then is responsible for generating Dao? To this Laozi answers “I cannot know [zhi] whose son it is – this son was here before the creation of the physical world”.³⁴ “The coming-into-existence of the Dao cannot be ‘known’ as an intended object of the consciousness because such a process cannot be conceived in spatio-temporal terms. The Dao is itself the very ground of existence, including the existence of divinity,” say Shankman and Durrant. “Knowing” in the sense of zhi is thus associated with an understanding from one’s limited individual perspective rather than with an awareness of how that perspective is situated within a greater whole.³⁵

This contrasts with Laozi’s usage of the word ming, referring to the “luminosity” or insight and enlightenment sought by the sage as the knowing of the constant - the following of the eternal Dao and the returning to the nature of one’s origin.³⁶ Verse 22 states that the true sage will experience luminosity if he is one who embraces unity (bao yi) and does not focus on himself - without showing himself, he shines forth (bu zi jian, gu ming). “Without showing himself” implies that one does not view reality from his own limited perspective, but participates in the more-than-human perspective. Similarly in verse ten Laozi says only “when a sense of luminous awareness [ming] shines through and clarifies the four quarters, are you capable of not knowing [zhi]?”. Shankman and Durrant explain the significance of this passage with the following:

The sense here is that only when one refrains from pursuing knowledge in the relentlessly intentionalist mode can luminosity manifest itself. True enlightenment, ming, is “knowing the constant”.³⁷

The Daodejing is recognized as being a sort of Daoist manifesto, consisting of spiritual teachings, folk wisdom, political instruction, cosmology, mystical insights and of course observations of nature, but it is also important in that it is a representation of anti-Confucian philosophy originating from the Warring States period. It stands in opposition to the Confucian virtue of humanness and the philosophy that values exclusive social and

political participation over the participation of humans in the more-than-human world. Shankman and Durrant recapitulate with the following:

But *The Daodejing* also is a daring attack on all those constructs and beliefs that Confucians and many other early Chinese thinkers might have regarded as leading to a more orderly and content society. Laozi avers that we will not overcome our sense of alienation from the Dao through ever more intentional striving. We must, somehow, recover a lost spontaneity, what is ‘so of itself,’ and in such a participatory consciousness we will once again ‘be fed by the mother.’³⁸

E. Zhuangzi

Zhuangzi, a philosopher also of the Warring States period who lived after Laozi is also considered one of the founders of Daoism. Zhuangzi, with his anti-Confucian sentiments, joined Laozi in assuming a clearly participationist response to the intentionalist philosophers of this time. Beginning in the 4th Century B.C.E. there exists for the first time in China thinkers who are obsessed with the mechanics of argumentation and a literalistic manipulation of language. One of these philosophers, Huizi, was a contemporary of Zhuangzi whose philosophical ideas stood in stark contrast to Zhuangzi. Huizi partook down a philosophical path of relentless intentionalist naming. “Fire is not hot,” “A wheel does not roll on the ground,” and “Swift as the barbed arrow may be, there is a time when it neither moves nor is at rest,” are such examples of intentionalist language. Shankman and Durrant contend that Zhuangzi joined Laozi in believing that the act of naming separates us from the very experiences that the naming is meant to evoke. This type of language obscures the Dao through a reductively intentionalist discourse. Zhuangzi says, since Huizi did not “honor the Way, he scattered himself insatiably among the myriad things, ending up being famed as skillful debater.”³⁹ Zhuangzi clarifies the difference between the “knowledge” of the intentionalist thinker and the “wisdom” of the Daoist sage with the story about the happy fish from the “Autumn Floods” section of the classic Zhuangzi:

Zhuangzi and Huizi wandered [you] onto the bridge over the Hao River. Zhuangzi says, “The Shu fish have come out to wander [you] and move freely about. This is the peculiar happiness of fish.” Huizi asks how [an] Zhuangzi can possibly know [zhi] that the fish are happy, since he, Zhuangzi, is not a fish. Zhuangzi replies, “You are not I, so how do you know that I don’t know what fish enjoy?” Huizi concedes that he is not Zhuangzi and that he therefore certainly doesn’t know what he, Zhuangzi knows. But by the same token, Huizi adds, “You (Zhuangzi) are certainly not a fish – so that still proves you don’t know what fish enjoy.” “Your asking of the question how did I know,” Zhuangzi replies, “presupposed the fact that I did in fact know.”⁴⁰

For Huizhi, *Zhi* means certain knowledge from an intentionalist perspective, whereas for Zhuangzi, *Zhi* means the awareness of his participation in the unity of the Dao. Zhuangzi and the fish are not separate and purely self-interested entities. Rather, the two are intertwined in the matrix of the more-than-human world. Their kinship is suggested by the repetition of the verb *you*. Zhuangzi and Huizi wandered [you] onto the Hao Bridge, the fish swim about [you] beneath them. Zhuangzi thus “knows” what makes fish happy because he and the fish both participate in similar ways – they both wander about [you] in the very same reality. Thus this is an example of how Zhuangzi rejects intentionalism in favor of an awareness of how living beings all participate in a cosmic anthropomorphic whole and are linked together with each other. It is this participatory awareness, claim Shankman and Durrant, that is how the wandering Zhuangzi knows that the analogously meandering fish are happy.

Xunzi, another of Zhuangzi’s rivals, encouraged a clear distinction between what is natural and what is human. He advocated the full exploitation of Heaven as an available resource while insisting that Human beings concentrate their efforts on the Human world and leave the working of Heaven to Heaven itself. He says,

The greatest cleverness lies in what is not done and the greatest wisdom lies in what is not thought about.... Thus, if people abandon the affairs of the human being to conjecture on the business of [Heaven] they will lose sight of the real circumstances of those things around them.⁴¹

Again what is presented here is the Confucian notion that human beings should not venture into what is not-human because of the human exclusive commitment to the human world. Zhuangzi and the Daoists do not distinguish between and thus separate that which is human and that which is not-human. As Zhuangzi says, “How do we know what we are calling “Heaven” is not “Human,” and vice versa?”⁴² Zhuangzi, then does not even want to recognize the proposed dichotomy between nature and the human world. He proposes that an Intact Person is one who is harmoniously and equivocally intertwined in both. A passage in the Zhuangzi says,

To be skilled at what is natural and to be equally good at what is human – only the *intact person* can do this! Only insects can be both insects and be natural. The complete person hates what is natural, and hates what is natural about what is human. How much more does he hate this flip-flopping between “Am I natural?” or “Am I human?”⁴³

F. Huainanzi

The Huainanzi was a compendium of wisdom and knowledge written in the early Han dynasty, dating to around 130 B.C.E.. It dealt with a multitude of subjects, including astronomy, calendrics, government and the art of warfare. It ultimately concerns itself with communicating a practical understanding of the Dao and with tracing the Dao to its source in all its myriad manifestations. Accordingly the post face of the Huainanzi states

Thus, in these twenty treatises, the patterns of the heavens and the Earth are thoroughly explored; the affairs of the human world are broached; the ways of emperors and kings are given full account... Because the myriad things are so prolific, observations about them must range broadly in order to disclose their full significance.⁴⁴

It is believed that *The Huainanzi* was presented to Emperor Wu by Liu An, the King of Huainan, as a gift to celebrate the recent unification of the Chinese empire. It is speculated that this particular gift was given to teach the young emperor how to understand the world around him. Liu An probably created this compendium by

compiling the thoughts and theories from the high ranking philosophers which gathered at his own vassal court. Ames says that the central message of the *Huainanzi* is the advocate of inclusivity – “an appreciation of the contribution that each and every thing can make to the well-being of the whole when orchestrated by able leadership into a productive harmony.”⁴⁵ He asserts that the vassal court of Liu An can be seen as a feudal bastion of pluralistic shamanism and “Daoistic” culture holding out against the gradual ascendancy of Confucianism. The *Huainanzi* can be viewed as a practical extension of *The Daodejing* and *The Zhuangzi* as it reflects on their central theme of how to understand the dynamic world that gives us context, and how to function effectively within our ever changing social, political, cultural, and natural environments.⁴⁶

Components of the *Huainanzi* parallel the concept of leavers and takers philosophy outlined by Daniel Quinn and discussed earlier in this thesis. A continuation of Zhuangzi’s “intact person” in the *Huainanzi* is the delineation of the concept of integrity. A human being maintains its integrity when one ceases to distinguish being human from not being human. In other words, one who is preoccupied with the human world separates oneself from the connection with Heaven and the more-than-human world. Consider the following excerpt from the *Huainanzi*:

Thus, one who understands Dao
Does not barter what belongs to Heaven for what is man’s.
While externally he is transformed along with the transformation of
things,
Internally he does not become other than what he is really like.⁴⁷

The category “Heaven” in the above passage refers to the more-than-human Universe, including both the natural world and those natural conditions which are defining of human integrity. On the other hand, “Man”, refers to the unnatural preoccupations of being human which disturb both the person and the environment. Roger T. Ames says, in *Yuan Dao: Tracing Dao To Its Source*, “the point here is that “integrity” is not genetic, but achieved within one’s context, and for one to lose one’s integrity is to jeopardize the integrity of one’s natural, social, and cultural environment.”⁴⁸ Quinn defines Takers as people who live with the premise that the world belongs to them, people who identify

their integrity solely with what it means to be human. Having decontextualized themselves from the world in which they reside, they see the world as a multitude of objects that they can Take and manipulate at will. The Leavers are human beings who identify their integrity as not as merely belonging to the human realm of existence but belonging to the world itself. Leavers are the antithesis of Takers, as they are interdependent with the world in which they reside - they simultaneously shape it and are shaped by it.⁴⁹ The terminology of Quinn, Zhuangzi and Liu An in the *Huainanzi* can be exchanged without losing their perspective meaning: the term “Man” can be substituted with Leavers, and Heaven can be swapped with the term Leavers. Then those who follow Heaven, the Leavers, are those people who preserve their integrity and as Ames says, “wander contentedly through the world as companions with the process of change.”⁵⁰ Section 10 of the *Huainanzi* states: “Thus, the sage does not adulterate Heaven with Man, and does not allow desire to disturb his actual nature... And he is a comrade of the demiurge of change.”⁵¹

G. Huangdi Neijing

The Huangdi Neijing is the earliest medical classic known to exist in China. Although still controversial, most medical historians and scholars agree that the majority of the *Neijing's* contents were compiled during the Warring States period (475 B.C.E. – 221 B.C.E.). Some sections were added during the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.E. – 207 B.C.E.) and the Eastern Han Dynasty (25 C.E. – 220 C.E.). The book is named after Huangdi, the Yellow Emperor, who as head of the earliest Han tribe is regarded as the earliest ancestor of Chinese people. The legend of Huangdi had a profound impact on the development of Chinese culture. In an effort to attract readers, authors would attribute their work to that of Huangdi. Such is the case with *The Huangdi Neijing*, where it is believed to have been authored by many authors and not the work of one Huangdi, nor any other single author for that matter. The collection of articles that comprise *The Huangdi Neijing* offer quite varied academic opinions and verbal styles and even contain contradictory theories. *The Huangdi Neijing* is usually translated as the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal

Medicine” and is often simply referred to as the *Neijing*. The *Neijing* is comprised of two parts: the *Su Wen* and the *Lingshu*. The *Su Wen* translates as discussion on material life and focuses on physiology and pathology. The *Ling Shu* is a text devoted to acupuncture and its translation means miraculous pivot or techniques – only in mastering the techniques of needling can acupuncture create a miraculous effect.⁵²

The *Neijing* is the crystallization of accumulated experience and knowledge of ancient Chinese physicians. For the first time, random bits of information, scattered medical experiences, and systematic theories were all collected under one title. Dr. Long, Clinical Supervisor and instructor at NCNM, states that “there is no other medical book that is as valuable and influential as the *Neijing*, and that in essence, it has become the “bible” of Chinese medicine.”⁵³ Just as the *Neijing* is a compilation of medicotheretical ideas it is also the manifestation of multiple, syncretic philosophies and ancient Chinese natural scientific ideas that have developed prior to and alongside its compilation. Many of the philosophical arguments and developments outlined in the previous sections of this thesis play prominent roles in shaping the theories set down by the *Neijing*. For example, elements of Daoist philosophy and *Yi Jing* science intermingle with Confucian structure and shape the form and content of the *Neijing*. This being said, there is one underlying theme that is paramount to the philosophy of the *Neijing*, and that is of course the correspondence between human beings and nature.

Maoshing Ni, in his translation of the *Neijing* describes this work as being one of the most important classics of Daoism because it portrays a holistic picture of human life; where the health of human beings is dependent upon the harmony with the laws of nature. He says,

It does not separate external changes – geographic, climatic, and seasonal, for instance – from internal changes such as emotions and our responses to them. It tells how our way of life and our environment affect our health. Without going into fine detail, the *Neijing* articulates a treasure of ancient knowledge concerning the natural way to health, implying that all phenomena of the world stimulate, tonify, subdue, or depress one’s natural life force. This

holistic life philosophy of the ancient developed ones represents the basic tenets of the Integral Way – a life lived in harmony with the universal law.⁵⁴

The *Neijing*, like the Chinese philosophic texts preceding it, abounds with passages speaking about the necessity of human participation in the more-than-human world. Chinese naturalists were observing the regularities in the observable phenomena, such as the succession of day and night, of the seasons, of the tides, and of the sun and moon and explained them in terms of a novel structure of systematic correspondence. The *Neijing* is unique in that it is the first compendium devoted to delineating how health and disease is closely interwoven with the concepts of the correspondence between human beings and nature. As expressed by Unschuld, “For the first time in Chinese history, a systematic image of the body’s interior, of the various organs and their connections both among each other and with the outside world, was discussed and verbalized.”⁵⁵ The energetic patterns and laws of the more-than-human world as they have come to be understood by the philosophers and scientists of the past were now applicable to the manipulation of health in human beings. This is succinctly outlined in chapter 25 of the *Neijing*:

People are dependent on the nourishment and fortification of heaven and earth, water and food, and the essence of the universe to grow and prosper, according to the laws and changes of the seasons....

Every individual’s life is intimately connected with nature. How people accommodate and adapt to the seasons and the laws of nature will determine how well they draw from the origin or spring of their lives. When one understands the usefulness of the ten thousand things in the universe, one will be able to effectively utilize them for the preservation of health.⁵⁶

In chapter 3 the relationship between heaven and human beings is explained in terms of how humans and the more-than-human terrain correspond with each other. Not only does the *Neijing* stress the imperative that human beings must follow the laws of nature to preserve health and prevent illness but it also aspires to define these laws and elucidate their characteristics. Central to the study of nature’s laws is the observation that the material world is in constant motion (change). Arising out of this core tenant and forming subsequent corollaries are the doctrines of yin and yang and Wuxing (the 5 phases).

The *Neijing* builds its theoretical case for yin and yang upon the philosophical developments of earlier works, but in particular, it is an extension of the ideas expressed in the *Yi Jing*. The formation of Yin and Yang theory arose out of the empirical evidence that indicated that much of the phenomena in the surrounding world is dualistic or complementary in nature. The ancient naturalists recognized and studied the endless rise and fall of seemingly oppositional forces in nature. These opposing forces came to be designated by the symbols yin and yang. Originally, yin had meant the “shady side of a hill” and yang meant the “sunny side of a hill”, but over time these terms came to directly represent and correspond to the oppositional forces themselves. For example yin represents the observed phenomena such as darkness, coldness, cloudy weather, rain and water, and femininity; while yang symbolized the energies associated with lightness, sunshine, heat, and masculinity.⁵⁷ Unschuld describes the developmental features of the yinyang doctrine as result of a dualistic line of association,

which encompassed numerous natural phenomena and abstract constellations, viewed as manifestations of two opposed yet complementary categories that spanned all existence. The cyclical patterns evident in the movement of the tides, and in the alternation of day and night, may have led these thinkers to a world view marked by a characteristic dynamic underlying apparent stability and continuity. Natural events were explained by a model of the ceaseless rise and fall of opposite yet complementary forces...

In the yinyang doctrine, the terms yin and yang no longer retain any specific meaning themselves; they function merely as categorizing symbols used to characterize the two lines of correspondence.⁵⁸

In the *Yi Jing*, yin and yang came to symbolize the energetic patterns of Heaven and Earth respectively. The transformation of heaven and Earth into symbols is a direct relationship in nature between energy and matter. Symbols in ancient medicine pay tribute to fact that humans live not on Earth but amongst it as an active and full participant. They brought a sense of clarity to abstract concepts while forming a broad range of interconnected relationships. Symbols are the best embodiment of a principle, function or energy carefully chosen from the natural human environment. They are comparable to holograms in that you see different things as you look at the same

representation in different ways. Symbols allow for the representation of an abstract principle at all levels simultaneously - on physical, psychological and spiritual levels. The symbols originate from the more-than-human world; humans use them to evoke the perceptible qualities of the macrocosm from the microcosm.

Heaven is the energy represented as objects in the sky and its energy is recognized in movement, and is seen as a source of light. It represents the origin of the pattern of constant change; and as such it is a precise instrument to measure the original source of change in the universe. Opposite to heaven is Earth, the representation of transformation and change. Earth is the place, the matrix, where life can happen. Its energy is material in nature and has an ascending quality, while it is characterized by passivity and stillness. The following is an excerpt from *The Book of Rites* (Li Ji):

The qi of Earth ascends, the qi of heaven descends. In this fashion, yin and yang grind against each other, and heaven and Earth merge in undulating embrace. If this setting is vibrated by thunder, excited by wind and rain, moved by the flow of the four seasons, and fondled by the germinating light of sun and moon, the world's myriad processes of transformation become aroused.

Heaven and Earth as symbols, represent the dualism of energy and material things. As already outlined in the *Daodejing*, Chinese cosmology holds the notion that the “Dao generates the one; the one generates the two; the 3 generates the 10,000 things.” One is the representation of the sky; the number 2 is representational of heaven and Earth; and the number 3 signifies human beings. From human beings, all material things are generated. The *Neijing* maintains that Qi is the basic form of material substance that initiates the creation of everything in the universe. In the beginning of creation, the original source qi separated into yin and yang. The yang parts of this original qi became the Heavens and the yin heavy parts became the Earth. Chapter 66 in the *Neijing* states,

Qi fills out the boundless sky, it starts to create life. Thus everything comes into being: wind, cold, hot, dry and damp. The five-climate Qi travel around, spreading over the vital energy to animals and plants. The universe starts to split into two parts: heaven and Earth. Looking up to heaven, the nine planets hang up in the sky, the seven stars spin. The most brilliant ones are the sun and moon. One is

shining, the other is dark, one is blazing, the other icy cold, one is hard, the other soft, thus four seasons present. Look down to the Earth, animals and plants are generating and transforming, giving rise to a colorful and diversified world.⁵⁹

In the medical evolution of Yin and Yang theory, and also correlating with the *Yi Jing*, is the subsequent division of yin and yang into four subcategories and then later into six. These models allowed for the description and further differentiation of phenomenological observations. Yin was thus divided into yin within yin (pure yin), and yang within yin (lesser yin). Similarly, yang was divided into yang within yang (pure yang), and yin within yang (lesser yang). These energy patterns correspond with the bi-gua of the *Yi Jing* and are representative of the four seasons. For example, summer represents the pure yang, and winter the pure yin patterns. The six fold subcategorization propagated three subcategories for yin and yang each organized according to the degree, or strength of yin and yang in each subcategory.⁶⁰ This system of differentiation later became essential for meridian and collateral theory. The following excerpts from chapter 5 are included for their ability to illustrate the manifestation of yin and yang from the macrocosm to the microcosm.

The law of yin and yang is the natural order of the universe, the foundation of all things, mother of all changes, the root of life and death. In healing, one must grasp the root of the disharmony, which is always subject to the law of yin and yang.

In the universe, the pure yang qi ascends to converge and form heaven, while the turbid yin qi descends and condenses to form the Earth. Yin is passive and quiet, while the nature of yang is active and noisy. Yang is responsible for expanding and yin is responsible for contracting, becoming astringent, and consolidating. Yang is the energy, the vital force, the potential, while yin is the substance, the foundation, the mother that gives rise to all this potential.

In nature, the clear yang forms heaven and the turbid yin qi descends to form Earth. The Earthly qi evaporates to become the clouds, and when the clouds meet with the heavenly qi, rain is produced. Similarly, in the body, pure yang qi reaches the sensory orifices, allowing one to see, hear, smell, taste, feel, and decipher all information so that the shen/spirit can remain clear and centered. The turbid yin qi descends to the lower orifices. The clear yang qi

disperses over the surface of the body; the turbid yin qi flows and nourishes the five Zang organs. The pure yang qi expands and strengthens the four extremities, and the turbid yin qi fills the six fu organs.⁶¹

Concerning the nature of Yin and Yang and its division into the six subcategories - Yang into taiyang, shaoyang, and yangming and yin into taiyin, shaoyin and jueyin (high, middle and low respectively). The *Neijing* says in chapter 6,

Taiyang is on the surface, and its nature is open and expansive; it is the outside. The yangming is internal and its action is storing; thus it is the house. the shaoyang, which is between the internal and external, acts as a bridge and is considered the hinge between interior and exterior. The three yang, however, do not act separately, but rather in unison. So, collectively we call them one yang.

Huang Di asked, “what about the separation and the union of the three yin?” Qi Bo replied, “The outside is yang and the inside yin; that has been established. What is inside consists of the three yin. The taiyin/spleen is medial and is in the shade. ... In summary, we can say that the taiyin is the most superficial of the three yin channels, and its nature is expansive. The jueyin is the deepest inside of the yin. Its nature is that of storing and thus it is considered the house... So you have one yin and one yang. The qi of the yin and of the yang move unobstructed throughout the entire body. This is because of the interplay of the yin and yang and the relationship of the exterior and interior.”⁶²

Health is interpreted physiologically as a harmonious balance between yin and yang. As stated in Chapter 3, “when yin Qi is ample and calming and Yang Qi is strong enough to protect the body, a person maintains health physically and mentally.”⁶³ Any disruption in the balance between yin and yang results in a pathological diseased state. The following passages taken from Chapter 3 summarize what has been discussed concerning the doctrine of yin and yang and its relationship and import to Classical Chinese Medicine.

Huang Di said, “From ancient times it has been recognized that there is an intimate relationship between the activity and life of human beings and their natural environment. The root of all life is yin and yang; this includes everything in the universe, with heaven above and Earth below, within the four directions and the nine continents.

In the human body there are the nine orifices of ears, eyes, nostrils, mouth, anus, and urethra; the five Zang organs of kidneys, liver, heart, spleen, and lungs; and the twelve joints of elbows, wrists, knees, ankles, shoulders, and hips, which are all connected with the qi of the universe. The universal yin and yang transform into the five Earthly transformative energies, also known as the five elemental phases that consist of wood, fire, Earth, metal, and water. These five elemental phases also correspond to the three yin and the three yang of the universe. These are the six atmospheric influences that govern the weather patterns that reflect in changes in our planetary ecology. If people violate or disrupt this natural order, then pathogenic forces will have an opportunity to cause damage to the body.⁶⁴

The nine orifices, the five Zang organs and the twelve joints all are manifestations of the universal qi. But they are also the symbolic human correspondences to the energetic patterns of Earth and Heaven. Like Lovelock's Gaia Hypothesis, the Earth is viewed as a living entity with mutual anatomical and physiological correspondences. Humans have four limbs are offered as an analogy to the four seasons, the nine orifices to the nine continents and the five Zang organs to the Wuxing, the five phases.

Heaven is round; the Earth is square. Man's head is round; his feet are square so as to correspond to the (shape of heaven and Earth). Heaven has sun and moon; man has a pair of eyes. The Earth has the nine districts; man has the nine orifices. Heaven has wind and rain; man has joy and anger. Heaven has thunder and lightning; man has the sounds of (his) voice. Heaven has the four seasons; man has the four limbs. Heaven has the five notes; man has the five viscera. Heaven has the six (yang) pitch-pipes; man has the six bowels. Heaven has winter and summer; man has cold and heat. Heaven has the (cycle of) ten days; man has, at his hands, ten fingers. There are twelve divisions of daytime; man has, at his feet, ten toes and he has a penis and a scrotum so as to correspond to this (number of twelve). Females lack (the latter) two details and hence (do not) encompass man's (complete) physical appearance. Heaven has yin and yang; man has husband and wife. A year has 365 days; the human (skeleton) has 365 sections. The Earth has high mountains; man has shoulders and knees. The Earth has deep valleys; man has arm-pits and the hollows behind the knees. The Earth has the water of the twelve streams; man has the twelve conduit-vessels. The Earth has the vessels (supplying) the springs; man has protective influences. The earth has the grasses and plants; man has his fine hair. Heaven has day and night; man has (times) to rest and to rise. Heaven has an orderly arrangement of stars; man has his teeth. The earth has small

mountains; the human (body) has its short sections. The earth has mountainrocks; man has high-rising bones. The earth has forests and woods; man has membranes and sinews. The earth has gatherings (of people) and towns; man has swellings of flesh. The year has the twelve months; man has the twelve sections (of his limbs). The earth has (regions where) during all four seasons no grasses grow; among men are those who have no children. These are the mutual correspondences between man and heaven and earth.⁶⁵

Wuxing became the representational model for the correspondences between the generating energy patterns observed in nature (including the seasonal climatic changes) and those observed in the body. It is a representation of five types of energy movement that is produced from the interaction of yin and yang and is the self-generating process of life. These phases are characterized below.⁶⁶

PHASE	CHARACTERISTIC MOVEMENT
Wood	symbolizes the beginning phase (sprouting or generating)
Fire	symbolizes the fully-grown or expanded phase
Metal	symbolizes the collecting or introverting phase
Water	symbolizes the reverting phase
Earth	symbolizes the harmonizing phase

As a medical philosophy in the *Neijing*, the Wuxing was used to explain how nature influences the human body.

In nature, we have the four seasons and the five energetic transformations of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. Their changes and transformations produce cold, summer heat, dampness, dryness, and wind. The weather, in turn, affects every living creature in the natural world and forms the foundation for birth, growth, maturation and death.

The principles of the five elements would help you understand all transformations in the universe. For example, metal can cut down wood; water can put out fire; wood can penetrate earth; fire can melt metal; earth can contain water. These transformations can be applied to the myriad things of the universe.⁶⁷

The *Neijing*, like the Hippocratic treatise *On Sacred Disease*, is credited with transferring the supernatural explanation of disease to that of the natural physical model. There is a concerted effort in the *Neijing* to explain the earlier concepts of disease and health away from demons and spirits to that solely on the basis of natural laws. According to Unschuld, “These laws guarantee a natural order independent of place, time, and human or metaphysical beings. For the first time, ‘nature was indeed understood as impersonal, constant, and rule-governed.’⁶⁸ But there was never an actualized clean break from demonological healing. The syncretic nature of Chinese society allowed for the adaptation of the central principles of the old style of thought to a changed conceptual environment. Unschuld says

Hence an innovative systematic approach to health and illness, based in an acceptance of the notions of an all-pervasive systematic correspondence, was fused with an ontic approach whose justification and plausibility lay in past centuries of civil war and in the equally long-established familiarity with the concepts of demonic attack as causes of illness.⁶⁹

Chapter 13 illustrates how the acceptance of demons as pathogenic agents of disease is not rejected outright, but rather how an explanation based on the new style of thought is delicately offered in its place. Unschuld translates this section in the following way:

Huang Di asked: I have heard that, when [the people] in antiquity treated a disease they simply moved the essence and changed the qi. They were able to invoke the origin, and [any disease] came to an end. When [the people of] nowadays treat a disease, [they employ] toxic drugs to treat their interior, and [they employ] needles and [pointed] stones to treat their exterior. Some are healed; others are not healed. Why is this so?

Qi Bo responded: People in antiquity lived among their animals. They moved and were active and this way they avoided the cold. They resided in the shade and this way they avoided the summer heat. Internally, they knew no entanglements resulting from sentimental attachments; externally, they did not have the physical appearance of stretching toward officialdom.⁷⁰

Per Unschuld, the term *zhu you* is translated as “invoking the cause” and is a well-understood code word for the use of magic and ritualistic ceremony and other practices to anticipate and prevent evil. Rather than defame the past techniques of “invoking the cause” the *Neijing* authors chose not to be antagonistic to the previous paradigm and simply depicted these techniques as no longer being helpful or needed because life and society has become more complex. But there is another explanation that I think is very important. Unschuld asserts that the phrases *to move essence and to change qi* (*Yi Jing bian qi*) and *to move essence and to invoke the origin* (*Yi Jing zhu you*) may be interpreted as linking together, or transitioning from the old to the new medicotheroretical paradigm. Through the assertion that it was no longer necessary to employ the techniques *to move essence and to change qi*, the authors of this passage were rejecting the validity of the cultivation of such techniques as breathing, sex, and exercise – techniques considered essential to moving essence and changing qi in the body. These were techniques proposed by Guanzi, and were also included in the Mawangdui and Zhangjiashean medical manuscripts but never clearly emphasized as valid therapeutic modalities in the *Neijing*. Unschuld speculates that this omission is due to their close association with “religious, Daoism-inspired macrobiotic hygiene and immortality practices” and as such, they were not accepted in the therapeutic context of the *Neijing* that reflects mainly Confucian values. Expounded further, Unschuld says “To state that ‘moving essence and invoking the origin [of an illness]’ is no longer helpful is to say that, under current conditions, making offerings to external spirits to invoke the spiritual-demonological cause of an illness is meaningless.”⁷¹

There exists a second way to interpret what is meant by *moving essence to change qi* and *to invoke the origin*. Below is Ni’s interpretation of the above passage,

Huang Di asked, “I have heard that in ancient times, when the sages treated, all they had to do was employ methods to guide and change the emotional and spiritual state of a person and redirect the energy flow. The sages utilized a method called *zhu you*, prayer, ceremony, and shamanism, which healed all conditions. Today, however, when doctors treat a patient, they use herbs to treat the internal aspect and

acupuncture to treat the exterior. Yet some conditions do not respond. Why is this?

Qi Bo answered, “in ancient times, people lived simply. They hunted, fished, and were with nature all day. When the weather cooled, they became active to fend off the cold. When the weather heated up in summer, they retreated to cool places. Internally, their emotions were calm and peaceful, and they were without excessive desires. Externally, they did not have the stress of today. They lived without greed and desire, close to nature. They maintained jing shen nei suo, or inner peace and concentration of the mind and spirit. This prevented the pathogens from invading. Therefore, they did not need herbs to treat their internal state, nor did they need acupuncture to treat the exterior. When they did contract disease they simply guided properly the emotions and spirit and redirected the energy flow, using the method of zhu you to heal the condition.”⁷²

Qi Bo refers to a time when life was less complicated, when there were less products of intentionalistic knowledge and advancement getting in the way of human perception with the more-than-human landscape. This is a time when people perceived changes in the energetic patterns in the world around them and were able to compensate and react to these changes unburdened by the encumbrances of modern life. Qi Bo is referring to an actual time in history when people were one with nature. I have asserted that this is not some mythical reality; that there exists a more-than-human world where human beings have the potential to participate fully. Sages and shamans also have existed and continue to exist today. As healers, they are the exemplary intermediaries between humans and the more-than-human world. Abram has defined this role.

The traditional or tribal shaman... acts as an intermediary between the human community and the larger ecological field... he ensures that the relationship between human society and the larger society of beings is balanced and reciprocal, and that the village never takes more from the living land than it returns to it. But the shaman is the exemplary voyager in the intermediate realm between the human and the more-than-human worlds, the primary strategist and negotiator in any dealings with the Others.⁷³

The Sages of the past enacted methods and techniques to move essence and to change qi, they invoked the origin and restored balance between humans and the Others. The sages taught individuals how to harmonize their own internal existence with the external world

and in so doing they had the ability to heal all conditions. The medical Sages of the past did not solely rely on the use of herbs and acupuncture to restore the balance in the body, they also relied on the techniques of zhu you to restore the homeostatic relationship of the human microcosm and the more-than-human macrocosm. This aspect of disease prevention is titled macrobiotic hygiene. Early Chinese historian Donald Harper explains,

The physician-authors of the Huangdi neijing acknowledge that according to physiological theory a person will not become ill so long as he maintains the natural harmony of the organism. This is the subject of Su wen 2, which concludes with the dictum: “The sage does not treat those who are already ailing, he treats those who do not yet ail; he does not treat what is already chaotic, he treats what is not yet in chaos” The kind of preventive medicine implied in this statement is of course the individual practice of hygiene.⁷⁴

Medical macrobiotic hygiene utilized the practices of dietetics, massage, exercise, gymnastics, qigong, and breathing exercises among other techniques for the preservation of health and the prevention of disease. The physician-scholar Xu Da Chun, in his work titled *Yi Xue Yuan Liu Lun (Forgotten Traditions of Ancient Chinese Medicine)*⁷⁵ written in 1757 C.E., commented on the importance of these techniques.

The basic therapeutic methods of the Neijing are needling and cauterization, and these [two methods] are supplemented by pointed stones, hot poultices, baths, gymnastics, massage, and [medicinal] wines. For each illness there exists a suitable [therapeutic method]. Not one [of those listed] must be omitted.⁷⁶

¹ Lewis, p. 73

² Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 24

³ Lewis, p. 5

⁴ Lewis, preface

⁵ Lewis, p. 37

⁶ Ni, Hua-Ching, p. 164

⁷ Unschuld

⁸ Star, p. 38

⁹ Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, p.54-55

¹⁰ Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, p.54-55

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- ¹¹ Ibid, p. 57
- ¹² Cleaver, p.10
- ¹³ Cleaver, p.9
- ¹⁴ Cleaver, p.10
- ¹⁵ Cleaver, Intro section
- ¹⁶ Cleaver, pp. 21-24
- ¹⁷ Ni, Hua-Ching, *The Book of Changes and the Unchanging Truth*, pp. 374-380
- ¹⁸ Wilhelm, Hellmut, pp. 118-121
- ¹⁹ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 51
- ²⁰ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 57
- ²¹ *Ibid*, p. 57
- ²² *Ibid*, p. 57
- ²³ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, pp. 19-22, & Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, p.31)
- ²⁴ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 57
- ²⁵ Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, p. 62
- ²⁶ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 186
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 181
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 181
- ²⁹ Star, pp. 1-2
- ³⁰ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 185
- ³¹ Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, p. 102
- ³² Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 185
- ³³ *Ibid*, p. 187
- ³⁴ Star, pp. 17 & 106; Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 187
- ³⁵ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 187
- ³⁶ Star, p. 201; Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 187
- ³⁷ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 188
- ³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 189
- ³⁹ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 188
- ⁴⁰ Shankman & Durrant, *The Siren and the Sage*, p. 191
- ⁴¹ Ames, p. 36
- ⁴² Ames, p. 36
- ⁴³ Ames, p. 36
- ⁴⁴ Ames, p.
- ⁴⁵ Ames, p.

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- ⁴⁶ Ames, p.
- ⁴⁷ Ames, p.
- ⁴⁸ Ames, p. 37
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 20
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 37
- ⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 38
- ⁵² This paragraph derives its support in part from Chinese Medical Classics lectures and notes from Chinese Medical Classics taught by Dr. Long at NCNM.
- ⁵³ *Ibid*
- ⁵⁴ Ni, Maoshing – pp. xii-xiii
- ⁵⁵ Unschuld, *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, p. 327
- ⁵⁶ Ni, Maoshing – pp. 100-102
- ⁵⁷ Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, pp. 55-56
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 55-56
- ⁵⁹ Chinese Medical Classics lectures and notes from Chinese Medical Classics taught by Dr. Long at NCNM.
- ⁶⁰ Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas*, pp. 55-57
- ⁶¹ Ni, Maoshing – Chapter 5; pp. 17-26
- ⁶² Ni, Maoshing – Chapter 6; pp. 27-29
- ⁶³ Chinese Medical Classics lectures and notes from Chinese Medical Classics taught by Dr. Long at NCNM.
- ⁶⁴ Ni, Maoshing – Chapter 3; pp. 8-12
- ⁶⁵ This is from the Neijing lingshu, chap 71 translated by Unschuld, Introductory Readings in Classical Chinese Medicine, p.51.
- ⁶⁶ Ni, Hua-Ching, p. 17.
- ⁶⁷ Ni, Maoshing – Chapter 25; pp. 100-102
- ⁶⁸ Unschuld, *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, p.320
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 327
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 328
- ⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 329
- ⁷² Ni, Maoshing ; p. 50
- ⁷³ Abram, p.7
- ⁷⁴ Harper, p. 116
- ⁷⁵ The physician and his work was translated by Unschuld into Wade Giles. Dr. Arnaud Versluys translated Hsu Ta-ch'un as Xu Da Chun in pin yin and the work I-hsueh Yuan Liu Lun as Yi Xue Yuan Liu Lun literally translated as “Treatise on the Source and Stream of Medical Science”.
- ⁷⁶ Unschuld, *Forgotten Traditions of Ancient Medicine*, p. 190

VI. VITALITY, DISEASE AND NATURE CURE



A. The Healing Power of Nature

Lindlahr defines Nature Cure as “a system of man-building in harmony with the constructive principle in nature of the physical, mental and moral planes of being.”¹ This constructive principle is later described by Lindlahr as the energetic pattern observed in nature that “builds up, improves and repairs”. Accordingly, the body is maintained by this constructive principle; it displays efforts to restore a disturbed harmony among its functions. This constructive principle of nature is synonymous with the terminology used by Hippocrates and Galen to describe the healing power of nature, *vis medicatrix naturae*. Lindlahr incorporates this Hellenistic concept into his model of Nature Cure. He says,

It is this supreme intelligence and Power that acts in and through every atom, molecule and cell in the human body, which is the true healer, the “*vis medicatrix naturae*” which always endeavors to repair, to heal and restore the perfect type. All that physicians can do is to remove obstructions and to establish normal conditions within and around the patient, so that ‘the healer within’ can do his work to the best advantage.²

Lindlahr asserts that although the human body has an innate ability to heal itself, the ultimate cause of healing and self-repair comes from a more supreme intelligence, a higher power which can be equated with nature itself. This power to heal is “but an expression of the Life Force, itself a manifestation of the great Creative Intelligence which some call God, others Nature... each according to his best understanding.”³ The three terms used by Lindlahr *constructive principle in nature*, the *vis medicatrix naturae* and *the healer within* are all mutually dependent upon each other and form the quintessence of Nature Cure theory. There is an inherent ability for the body to self-heal as long as there are no obstructions between the body and the primary source of healing, that being nature itself. The role of the naturopath is to remove any obstacles that are currently, or might in the future, interfere with the healing power of nature. Obstructions are created, according to Lindlahr, when the laws of nature are not observed; the result of which is disease. Lindlahr explains that Nature Cure “teaches that the primary cause of weakness and disease is disobedience to the laws of nature” and that Nature Cure “arouses the individual to the study of natural laws and demonstrates the necessity of strict compliance with these laws”⁴ Disease, cure and health preservation are all based on how one follows the laws of nature. Lindlahr further explains:

The fundamental law of cure... as revealed by Nature Cure philosophy, impress upon us the truth that there is nothing accidental nor arbitrary in the process of health, disease and cure; that every changing condition is either in harmony or in discord with the laws of our being; that only by complete surrender and obedience to these laws can we attain and maintain perfect physical health.⁵ (p.26)

Thus Lindlahr states in the above passages that the only way to be in line with the constructive principle of nature and to allow for the *Supreme Intelligence* of the microcosmic body to heal is by following the laws of nature. In so doing, health and disease of the microcosm are aligned and dependent upon a harmonic relationship with the *Supreme Intelligence* of the macrocosmic more-than-human landscape. He says,

Health is normal and harmonious vibration and disease abnormal and inharmonious vibration. If there is to be health, the vibratory

conditions of the organism must be in harmony with nature's established harmonic relations in the physical, mental and psychological realms of human life and action.⁶

He describes this harmonic relationship using an analogy of how a watch is expected to be in harmony with the astrological movements of the sky. He says,

If a watch is in good condition, "in harmonious vibration", its movement is so adjusted that it coincides exactly in point of time, with the rotations of our earth around its axis. The established harmonic relationship between the vibrations of a normal "healthy" time piece and the revolutions of our planet. The watch has to vibrate in unison with the harmonics of the planetary universe in order to be normal, or "in harmony". In like manner, everything that is to be normal, natural, healthy, good, beautiful, must vibrate in unison with its correlated harmonics in nature.⁷

A watch is to the rotations of Earth around its axis as human beings are to the energetic changes in nature. Like the ancient Chinese Sages, Lindlahr's philosophy as described in the above passage points to a correspondence between all things that exist on the Earth, including human beings themselves, and the energy patterns of the universe. A direct comparison exists with Huangdi's statement in Chapter 74 of the *Neijing*, that "People and nature are inseparable. In nature the cyclical movement of the heavenly bodies produces atmospheric influences that exert control over the rhythms of the seasons and is responsible for change to the myriad living and nonliving things."⁸ The ability of the body to heal and self-rectify that which is in disease is dependent upon human participation in the more-than-human landscape and ultimately the extent to which this participatory relationship is in accord with the laws and harmonic energy patterns of nature.

Thus in *the Philosophy of Natural Therapeutics*, Lindlahr defines health, disease and therapy in terms of a corresponding relationship between Heaven, Earth and human beings. However, unlike the medical philosophers of Chinese antiquity, he is unable to delineate the laws of correspondence as a systematic entity. The laws of nature, to which man must obey to be in a state of health are never well articulated, nor formally put

forward by Lindlahr. This can be explained in part because systematic correspondence never developed in the West like it did in China.⁹ What can be found instead are empirical relics and remnants of experiential common sense concepts of these laws. There is a longing for a return to nature, for a participatory dimension in the natural landscape and an innate knowledge that one must return to nature. Lindlahr asserts that “violation of nature’s laws in thinking, breathing, eating, drinking, working, resting, as well as in moral, sexual and social conduct, results in certain primary and secondary manifestations of disease.”¹⁰ Further, he describes the violations of nature’s laws as being caused by such acts as over-working, working at night, bad habits, excesses, overindulgences, over-stimulation, poisonous drugs, ill-advised surgical operations, wrong thinking and feeling, faulty diet, and over-eating.¹¹ He teaches that humans have to adapt their habits and behaviors to the natural laws of their surroundings. These laws are an implied wisdom, even though they are not a focus of discussion by Lindlahr and other naturopaths, but they are nonetheless the very same laws of nature put forward by the Sages and physicians who authored the *Yi Jing*, *Neijing* and the other classical Chinese medical writings.

Xu Da Chun is a Chinese physician scholar of the 18th century who wrote the *Forgotten Traditions of Ancient Chinese Medicine*, a collection of one hundred short essays on what he felt was the essential aspects of medicine. In a similar tone as Lindlahr, Xu Da Chun denounces the modern medical theoretical advances of his time and held contempt for physicians who practiced medicine on the basis of this knowledge. In this work, Xu Da Chun identifies the weaknesses and problems that he saw as unavoidable consequences of deviating from what he considered the correct paths as pointed out by the Sages of antiquity.¹² Unschuld, the translator of this book, says that Xu Da Chun,

voiced harsh criticism against most of the theoretical innovations introduced into medicine since the Sung era, and he despised the standards of medicine practiced by many of his contemporaries. He idealized the “ancients” as almost perfect examples for all future generations, and he recommended the Huangdi Neijing as the most authoritative source of wisdom for health care.¹³

Unschuld argues in the prologue that despite the Western view that there is an incompatibility between classical Chinese and Western Medicine thinking on the issues of disease prevention and therapy that there is in fact a common ground shared across cultural boundaries. Interestingly, as one of his examples to support this claim, Unschuld outlines how Xu Da Chun believed in the healing power of nature, the same “phenomenon that was called *vis medicatrix naturae* in Europe since antiquity; that is, a tendency of nature to cure certain problems by itself.” Unschuld sites a few passages that illustrate Xu Da Chun recognition of *vis medicatrix naturae*. The following two passages are the words of Xu Da Chun:

If an illness is not accompanied by fatal pathoconditions, any external affection will slowly retreat, and any internal damage will gradually recover. [That is, the illness] will heal by itself.¹⁴

When pathoconditions emerge as a result of affections from outside, or of harm from inside, they heal by themselves, even though one devotes [only] little attention to their treatment. This is even more true for minor illnesses; they may heal gradually even without any intake of drugs. Even in cases [where] the strength of the illness is quite dangerous, the evil influences will recede gradually, and a state of normalcy will return by itself, if the physician in charge does not commit too great a mistake.¹⁵

Unschuld further sheds light on this all important tenet of Nature Cure in his assertion that it is a mutually recognized entity shared by both Western and Chinese medical theory. He says,

Medicine, therefore, in the opinion of [Xu Da Chun] and paralleling the tradition of Europe, is not to intervene in each and every case. It is the physician’s task to closely monitor the course of an illness, and to support a natural tendency towards self-healing with milder or stronger stimuli. Much further research is needed, though, to allow for an assessment of whether these thoughts were introduced into Chinese medicine by [Xu], or were adopted by him from insights gained in former times.¹⁶

Thus, the self-healing power of nature as a medicotheretical idea is recognized in Classical Chinese Medicine. Unschuld brings up the possibility that these thoughts were a

novel introduction by Xu Da Chun and may not have existed in earlier times. In a separate source, Unschuld argues that the conceptualization of self-healing forces were in fact observed in early China, even in such classics as the *Neijing*, *Nanjing* and *Shang han lun*, but that it never developed to the same extent as it did in the West. “The self-healing potential of the organism is stated, but it is neither explained nor conceptualized as a starting point for an appropriate therapy.”¹⁷ He says that the *Suwen* mentions several examples of how patients did not need treatment because their illness was expected to heal by itself. Although the self-healing forces of the human organism were observed, Unschuld asserts “one may wonder, however, why no special attention was paid to this phenomenon [in the *Neijing Suwen*].”¹⁸ In answer to this question, he points to the heavy Confucian philosophical influence in the *Neijing*.

Given all the conceptual parallels between body and state, to believe in a self-healing force of the human organism would have meant to accept such a potential in human society too. This, of course, was not a notion prevailing in Confucian philosophy. Not to defend one’s residence ... Hence crisis prevention and immediate reaction, not complacency or even negotiations with a respected partner, were the strategies recommended to statesman and physicians alike for managing their respective “bodies.” While clinical reality was taken into account to the degree that it was acknowledged that some diseases end by themselves, the ideological environment of vessel theory medicine may have barred ancient Chinese observers from attributing to the physical or social body a nature that was able to act responsibly on its own behalf. The Confucian Legalist ruler was not prepared to take into account the movements of the social body to manage its own crises; he imposed his government.”¹⁹

The above is a legitimate explanation, but as stated earlier in the previous chapter (section G) the *Neijing* integrates both Confucian and Daoist philosophy in a syncretic manner. An alternate explanation can be based on the more Daoist medicoscientific aspect discussed in this thesis. The *Neijing* stresses that it is imperative for human beings to follow the laws of nature in order to preserve health and prevent illness. In contrast to Lindlahr’s *The Philosophy of Natural Therapeutics*, the *Neijing* aspires to define these laws and elucidate their characteristics. Hence the emergence of the doctrines of yin and yang and Wuxing (the 5 phases) in a medical context - both representational models for

the correspondences between the generating energy patterns observed in nature and those observed in the body. Both Lindlahr's notion of *vis medicatrix naturae* and the healing power of nature expressed in the *Neijing* assert that the human body has an innate ability to heal itself, but this ability ultimately comes from a higher place; the Creative Intelligence which Lindlahr recognizes as nature itself, and what the *Neijing* terms the Dao. There is an acknowledgment that the body has an inherent ability to heal itself so long as there are no existing obstructions between the body and its connection to the primary source of healing. The role of the physician in both medical systems is to remove any obstacles that interfere with the healing power of nature.

B. Disease Pathophysiology: Divergence From Nature's Laws

Nature Cure asserts that the primary source of pathology originates from the violation of one of nature's laws. As previously stated, Lindlahr defines disease as the abnormal or inharmonious vibration of the elements and forces composing the human entity and that the primary cause of disease, barring accidental or surgical injury to the human organism and surroundings hostile to human life, is violation of nature's laws.²⁰ He says,

The effects of the violation of nature's laws on the physical human organism are: 1. lowered vitality. 2. Abnormal composition of blood and lymph. 3. Accumulation of waste matter, morbid materials and poisons.

These conditions are identical with disease, because they tend to lower, hinder or inhibit normal function (harmonious vibration), and because they engender and promote destruction of living tissues.

Both Nature Cure systems recognize that the violation of nature's laws effect three primary manifestations of disease pathophysiology in the human body. The expression and way in which a disease manifests itself is dependent upon the quantity, quality and movement patterns associated with 1) Qi and vitality 2) blood and body fluids, and 3) accumulation of waste material, morbid matter and evil pathogens. The following section provides a brief outline and is meant only to sample a taste of the surprising similarity of

both Chinese and Naturopathic Nature Cure theory as it relates to the manifestation of disease pathophysiology and the subsequent utilization of therapeutic modalities.

Lindlahr equates Vitality with the innate Life Force, that which distinguishes living things from the nonliving and that which maintains the state of being alive. Lindlahr says “The freer the inflow of life force into the organism, the greater the vitality the more there is of strength, of positive resisting and recuperative power.”²¹ His notion of the life force is derived from the doctrine of vitalism which has had a long history in medicine. This is the same life force that is behind Hippocrates’ and Galen’s concept of the healing power of nature. Wood skillfully summarizes the vitalism of Hippocrates and Galen.

Hippocrates advanced the idea that it was nature (physis) in the organism which healed the patient. The doctor could assist the physis through passive means such as nutrition and the removal of waste products. (From this came the term physician). It was not seen as having a very active view of the power of the life force. It was not seen as having a dynamic quality which could radically transform organic processes. Seven centuries later, the doctrine of the vital force was modified by Galen. He was interested in establishing patterns and explanations for natural phenomena in the organism. In order to facilitate this, he introduced the concept of pneuma or spirit... [which] he used to account for various physiological processes.²²

According to Wood, both Galen and Hippocrates thus expressed the role of the vital force in healing as tending to be passive. Disease was viewed as an expression of a basic configuration of energy, a disturbance in the behavior of the vital force. The varied symptoms were viewed as indications of specific, interior problems that could be traced and understood by looking at the vitality of the organism. The vitality of the individual gave rise to symptoms in a meaningful fashion. Trained physician instinctively reacted to the presence of observed disturbances in the vitality of the patient and acted passively by administering minimal intervention. The physician’s role was to assist the organism in its own, natural attempt to reach equilibrium through coction - allowing the body to take on its natural course in disease.

Paracelsus, in Wood's opinion, had a more active understanding of the vital force. Paracelsus believed the vital force had the ability to transform organic processes – it maintained and repaired the organism in a dynamic fashion. He likened it to the animal instinct: a vital intelligent power. Like Hippocrates and Galen, Paracelsus believed the vital force to be the instrument operated by the healing power of nature in giving the body the ability to heal itself. Additionally he visualized the vital force, which he called the archeus, as the “inner alchemist.” Just as the alchemist separates all things into their constituent parts, says Wood, the archeus intelligently and actively separates the useful from the useless, incorporating them into the organism.²³ According to Wood, Paracelsus saw the vital force as

The arch-principle dominating life processes in a biological entity. It was all-pervading and powerful within that milieu, yet invisible to the material eye. Only through its effects could the existence of the archeus be known. Through these the realization was possible that life was governed by a self-regulating and self-healing intelligence. The archeus of physician could comprehend and interpret the archeus of the patient.

As an intelligent entity, the function of the archeus is to assimilate healthy materials into the organism and defend it against invasion from outside. As a result, the characteristic tendencies of the archeus are attraction and repulsion... In the realm of food and nutrition the function of the archeus is to discriminate between foods and poisons, allowing the first in and the rejecting the second. It then helps the organism to assimilate the nutriment and build it into the body.²⁴

Lindlahr's notion of the vital force is equivalent to Paracelsus's notion of archeus. He views the vital force as “an intelligent energy, otherwise it could not act with that same wonderful precision in the electrons of the atoms as in the suns and planets of the universe.”²⁵ He says that this intelligent energy can originate but from one source - the will and intelligence of the Creator. He asserts a more material description of the life force to that held by Hippocrates and Galen. In replace of “coction” he substitutes “spontaneous combustion”. His vitalistic conception of life is more equivalent to Paracelsus dynamic archeus.²⁶ Lindlahr says,

There are two prevalent but widely differing conceptions of the nature of life or vital force - the material and the vital. The former looks upon life or vital force with all its physical, mental and psychical phenomena as manifestations of the electric, magnetic and physiochemical activities of the physical material elements composing the human organism. From this viewpoint, life is a sort of “spontaneous combustion” or, as one scientist expresses it, as “succession of fermentations” or chemical changes. The vitalistic conception of life, on the other hand, regards vital force as the primary force of all forces, coming from the great central source of all life. This force, which permeates, heats and animates the entire created universe is an expression of divine intelligence and will, the “logos” the “word” of the great Creative Intelligence. It is the divine energy which sets in motion the whirls in the ether, the electric corpuscles that make up the atoms and elements of matter.²⁷

It is in Paracelsus and Lindlahr’s framework of vitalism that the naturopathic Nature Cure theory of vitality has comparable meaning to that of Chinese medicine’s concept of Qi. Historically, the concepts of Qi and vital life force were very important in both Ancient China and Greece. In ancient Greece, the vital breath of life was called *pneuma*. The philosopher Anaximenes (ca. 545 B.C.E.) says that all life begins with breath – that all things come from it and dissolve into it at death. Keneth Cohen, in *The Way of Qigong: the Art and Science of Chinese Energy Healing*, says the Greeks saw the vital breath as creating a unity between the microcosm and macrocosm in the same manner as the Chinese concept of the all pervasive Qi. The breath controls and holds together human beings by preventing the disintegration or decomposition of the body. And breath, as air or wind, encloses and maintains the world. He sites a translation of Anaximenes’ *The Presocratic Philosophers*, by G.S. Kirk and J.E. Raven, as recognizing an equivalency between yuan qi (original qi) and the Greek hun (breath-soul).²⁸

In Kirk and Raven’s translation, “The life-principle and motive force of man is, traditionally, pneuma or the breath-soul; (pneuma is seen in the outside world, as wind) therefore the life-principle of the outside world is pneuma; (therefore wind, breath, or air is the life and substance of all things).²⁹

Rose and Zhang in their work *A Brief History of Qi*, further support the claim that the life force, or pneuma in Greece philosophy draws parallels to the Chinese conception of qi.

Also like qi in ancient China, pneuma was an important concept in ancient Greek medicine. It too was the substance with which people filled their lungs (pneumon” in Greek). But like its Chinese counterpart, the Greek pneuma represented an even more vital substance. It took on the meaning of the breath of life, breathed into mortals by the gods. This substance provided the medium whereby divine “inspiration” (literally “breathing in”) took place. And, like qi in China, pneuma came to be understood as the primary connective substance by which the organic interrelationships of all creation were established and maintained.³⁰

Unschuld also discusses a correlation, or shared ideas relating to the concepts of qi in both China and Greece. He says that even the pictogram for qi, *vapor rising from rice*, has a corresponding observation in ancient Greece at that same time period. He says that it should not be overlooked that during the fourth century B.C.E., Greek Hippocratic medicine developed the concept of vapors rising from food as its central pathogenic idea. Unschuld says

Surprisingly enough, this phrase has exactly the same meaning as the qi pictogram, that is, “vapors rising from food.” This simultaneous appearance of an identical concept in both China and Greece is probably coincidental but, nevertheless, noteworthy. At any rate, in China the pictogram qi, possibly created to correspond to an etiological concept, was used in the literature of the third and second centuries, in a broader context; its meaning included related ideas and phenomena such as “that which fills the body,” “that which means life,” “breath,” and “vapors” in general, such as clouds in the sky, or even “wind”.... Qi was considered to float through the air and, together with blood, through the organism.”³¹

The *Neijing* maintains that just as Qi is the basic form of material substance that initiates the creation of everything in the universe it is also the material and spiritual substratum of human life.³² In the human body, qi takes on two distinct forms 1) material building blocks that are essential for the maintenance of physical life, as in yuan qi (original), zong qi (breath), or gu qi (food), 2) functional action of specific organ networks, such as stomach qi, liver qi, taiyang channel qi, etc. Giovanni Maciocia describes the concept of Qi in Chinese medicine in his textbook *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*.

According to the Chinese there are many different types of human Qi, ranging from the tenuous and rarefied, to the very dense and coarse. All the various types of Qi, however, are ultimately one Qi, merely manifesting in different forms. It is important, therefore, to see the universality and particularity of Qi simultaneously... Qi changes its form according to its locality and its function. Although Qi is fundamentally the same, it puts on “different hats’ in different places assuming different functions.³³

Yuan qi, or source qi, is the most fundamental qi of the human body and because it is derived from the universe itself it forms the foundation of vitality. The source qi can be seen as the root source of the body’s metabolism; and like Paracelsus and Lindlahr’s life force it is the dynamic motive force behind the functional activity of all the organs. Additionally, the yuan qi can be split up into the original yin (matter qi) and original yang (function qi) energies of the body. This concept of yuan qi parallels the creation of the 10,000 things in the macrocosm with the manifestation of the material substance and physiologic energy and processes on the internal human microcosm. Chu Cheng Yan, in his *Introduction to Zhang and Rose: A Brief History of Qi*, eloquently explains how yuan qi is the basis of material existence.

Qi is yuan qi (original qi). In Laozi’s book it is called dao. In Lu’s Spring and Autumn Annals, it is called tai yi (great oneness) or yuan bao (original bud). It is called tai ji (ultimate limit) in the Book of Changes. In other words, these terms, Tai yi, Tai ji, and dao are all synonymous. They refer to the yuan qi before the separation of heaven and earth. This qi is the material that permeates everything. It “covers heaven and carries the earth, extends in all four directions, and gives rise to the eight extremities. It is so high that it cannot be measured. It folds heaven and earth within it and is possessed of no shape.” Qi is also a worldview that asserts the whole world came from nothing to something, from chaos to order. From this perspective of the Huainanzi derived the model of existence of the world: “the dao begins with emptiness. Extensive emptiness gives birth to the world. The world gives birth to qi. Qi gives birth to heaven and earth. The endowment of the essence of heaven and earth yields yin and yang. The concentration of this essence becomes the four seasons. The distribution of essence becomes ten thousand things.”³⁴

So too does Lindlahr assert that the material basis of life originates from an original source of vibration and that it too separates into polar aspects. He says

All things in nature, from a fleeting thought or emotion to the hardest piece of diamond or platinum, are modes of vibration. Until a few years ago physical science assumed that an atom was the smallest imaginable part of a given element of matter; that although infinitesimally small, it still represented solid matter. Now, in the light of more recent evidence, we have good reason to believe that there is no such thing as solid matter; that every atom is made up of charges of negative and positive electricity acting in and upon an omnipresent ether... Thus the atom, which was thought to be the ultimate particle of solid matter, is found to be a little universe in itself in which electrons revolve around one another like the sun and planets in the sidereal universe.³⁵

Lindlahr, in the above, makes reference to the work of the Greek philosopher Democritus, who postulated the existence of indivisible, elemental increments of matter from which all things were composed. These irreducible “atoms” served as the basis of the centuries-long search in Western sciences for the elemental particle, a search that continues today. It is in this concept of qi, say Zhang and Rosen, “particularly with respect to its intimate relationship to yin and yang, [that] has another close parallel in ancient Greek philosophy.³⁶ Lindlahr also discusses the division of the Life Force into dual, polar energies that are quite similar to the separation of qi into yin and yang. Any disruption in the balance of the polar forces will result in disease. He says

At the very foundation of the manifestation of life lies the principle of polarity which expresses itself in the duality of positive and negative affinity. The swaying to and fro of the positive and the negative, the effort to balance incomplete polarity, constitutes the very ebb and flow of life. Disease is disturbed polarity or unbalanced chemical equilibrium. Exaggerated positive or negative conditions, whether physical, mental or psychical, tend to disease on the respective planes of being.³⁷

Chu Cheng Yan describes qi as having the same attributes as Paracelsus archeus and Lindlahr’s life force – the greater the influx of life force, the greater the vitality and strength to resist disease and the power to recuperate.

Humans are born from qi. They receive qi from nature. They protect the true yuan qi. The body adjusts the qi of ying [the qi acquired from nutrition] and wei [the body's defensive qi]. To be born, one must depend on qi. To live, one must depend on qi. To grow strong, one must rely on qi. Sickness decreases qi. Death depletes qi. If one does not drink for days or eat for weeks, still one may not die; but one will surely die from not breathing qi for less than an hour it is clear how precious qi is.³⁸

The above passage speaks of specific physiologic aspects and roles of Qi in the body. Both Naturopathic and CCM systems delineate different functions and jobs required of the specific subsets of the qi and vital force – each type wears one of Macioca's "different hats". In the CCM system, Qi is divided into pre-natal (that originating in Heaven) and postnatal qi (the qi that arrives in the body after birth; i.e. from eating and breathing). The Gu qi (food qi) literally means the Qi of grains, or Qi that is distilled from food. When food is eaten it first enters the stomach where it is "rotted and ripened." The Spleen then transforms the food into Gu qi and then sends this qi up to the chest and Lungs. Here it combines with air (Da qi) and forms the Zong Qi (Gathering Qi). The Lungs also send the Gu qi to the Heart where it is transformed into Blood with the help of the yuan qi. Zong Qi is formed from the combination of breath and distilled food essence. It nourishes the Heart and Lungs; helping the Heart in its function to govern the Blood and promotes blood circulation and it aids the Lungs function of controlling respiration. Zhen Qi, or True Qi, is the last stage in the transformation of Qi. Zhen Qi is the combination of prenatal original qi and postnatal air/food qi and is the sum total of the body's energy. The Zhen Qi circulates in the meridians and nourishes the organs. True Qi assumes two distinct forms: Ying Qi (Nutritive Qi) and Wei Qi (Defensive Qi). Nutritive Qi is closely related to the Blood and has the function of nourishing the internal organs and the whole body. Defensive Qi, is more yang in nature than Ying Qi as it flows on the outer layers of the body. Wei Qi circulates under the skin, in between the muscles and diffuses over the chest and abdomen. Defensive Qi has the main action of protecting the body from attack of exterior pathogenic factors such as wind, cold, heat and dampness. Additionally, Wei qi warms, moistens and nourishes the skin and muscles; it regulates

sweating by adjusting the opening and closing of skin pores; and it regulates the temperature of the body by its control of sweating.³⁹ Chapter 43 of the *Neijing* states

The ying is the essence extracted from food. It is transported through the six fu [hollow organs] via the actions of the five zang [organs], through the channels, and finally nourishes the zang and connects with the fu. The wei is the defensive qi that is formed from the same foodstuff; this qi is different; it is fast and smooth. It cannot travel within the blood vessels but flows between the skin and muscles. It circulates through the chest and remains outside of the channels and vessels.⁴⁰

It is in the above aspects of Qi that are most comparable to the functions of Paracelsus' archeus (vital force). The function of the archeus is to assimilate healthy materials into the organism and defend it against invasion from outside – a direct likeness to the actions of the ying qi and wei qi respectively. It bears repeating the passage quoted by Wood regarding the function of nutrient assimilation and defensive actions of the vital force.

The function of the archeus is to assimilate healthy materials into the organism and defend it against invasion from outside. As a result, the characteristic tendencies of the archeus are attraction and repulsion... In the realm of food and nutrition the function of the archeus is to discriminate between foods and poisons, allowing the first in and the rejecting the second. It then helps the organism to assimilate the nutriment and build it into the body. Paracelsus visualized the archeus as the "inner alchemist." He said it was located in the stomach, the seat of instinct and assimilation of food. He likened it to a fire,... [separating] all things into their constituent parts, the archeus separates the useful from the useless, incorporating them into the organism.⁴¹

The following also summarizes the physiology of Qi. The Qi in the body originates from prenatal Qi supplied by the Dao, the Creative Intelligence of the universe. It then is combined with the postnatal air and food qi that is processed in the lung and spleen/stomach system. Next, it separates and traverses the meridians and nourishes the 5 internal organs before disseminating to the whole body. Thus the Yuan Qi, the Qi that originates from Heaven, is transformed by the Spleen, the Earth organ in the body, before it goes on to nourish and sustain the rest of the Human body. This is a microcosmic

representation of how the Qi of Human Beings follows the Earth, and the Qi of the Earth follows the Qi of Heaven. Further, the physiology and composition of the human body maintains its connection with the wu xing (5 phases) and the system of correspondence links the inner workings of the body with the macroscopic energy patterns of the Universe. Unschuld elaborates,

The laws of yin and yang and of the five agents serve to explain physiological and pathological processes in the human organism; at the same time they underlie the eternal interactions influencing the most distant corners of the universe. The physical and chemical laws known to be valid on the farthest stars are, conceptualized as biophysics and biochemistry, valid also in the smallest human cell or gene. Hence to oppose yin and yang or the course of the five agents is as detrimental to health as to act against the biochemical necessities of human metabolism. The systematic approach explains it all.⁴²

Returning now to Lindlahr's concepts concerning the primary cause of disease and its manifestation, it becomes apparent that the violation of nature's laws, the same physical and chemical laws known to be valid on the farthest stars, is detrimental to the Life Force and decreases the Vitality of the human body. Lowered vitality results in lowered vibration, which causes accumulation of waste. This in turn reduces the inflow and distribution of vital energy, increasing susceptibility to blockage and disease. In many ways, disease tends to act on and aggravate one another resulting in a negative feedback loop of increasingly lower vibration. Lindlahr explains that this "lowered vitality means lowered, slower and coarser vibration," and "results in weakened resistance to the accumulation of morbid matter, poisons, disease taints, germs and parasites."⁴³ As the second of the three primary manifestations of disease, Lindlahr points to the abnormal composition of the blood, lymph and other body fluids. He explains that the cells and organs of the body receive their nourishment from the blood. He stresses the importance of maintaining the homeostatic balance of the components of the blood for the maintenance of health and that the quality of blood is dependent upon the character and combination of the food elements. Further, he states that "improper food combinations create an over-abundance of waste and morbid matter in the system."⁴⁴ The accumulation

of morbid matter and poisons is the third primary manifestation of disease. The retention of waste and systemic poisons in the body occurs as the result of lowered vitality and the abnormal composition of the vital fluids.

As already pointed out the three primary causes of disease tend to reinforce one another. Health is dependent upon an abundant supply of life force, upon the unobstructed, normal circulation of the vital fluids and upon perfect oxygenation and elimination of waste. Anything which interferes with these essentials causes disease; anything which promotes them establishes health. Nothing so interferes with the inflow of life force, with free and normal circulation of blood and lymph and with the combustion of food materials and systemic waste as the accumulation of foreign matter and poisons in the tissues of the body.⁴⁵

Additionally, Lindlahr stresses that mental and emotional factors have a powerful influence upon the inflow and distribution of the vital force. For example, he says “fear, worry, anxiety and all kindred emotions create in the system conditions similar to those of freezing. These destructive vibrations congeal the tissues, contract the minute channels of life and thereby paralyze the vital activities.”⁴⁶ All destructive emotional vibrations similarly obstruct the inflow and normal distribution of the life forces through the human body. In contrast, constructive emotions, such as faith, hope, happiness, love and altruism exert a “relaxing, harmonizing and vitalizing influence upon the tissues of the body, thus opening wide the floodgates of the vital energies and raising the discords of weakness, disease and discontent to the harmonics of buoyant health and happiness.”⁴⁷ Further clarifying the cause of disease according to naturopathic Nature Cure theory, Lindlahr states,

Health is “satisfied polarity”; that is, the balancing of the positive and negative elements, forces and energies in harmonious vibration. Anything which interferes with the free, vigorous and harmonious vibration of the minute parts and particles composing the human organism tends to disturb and unbalance polarity and natural affinity, thus causing discord and disease.⁴⁸

The above mimics the terminology of Chinese medical classics: when one lives in discord with the harmony of the universe, such as over eating harmful foods or not living in accord with the four seasons, the vibration quality of the qi decreases, the wei qi (defensive) declines and the body becomes overcome by wind, cold, dampness and other pathogenic qi (xue). These pathogens not only arise from the external environment but also can come from the inside, such as emotional imbalance and insult. The following is a passage from chapter 2 of the *San Yin Ji Yi Ping Cheng Fang Lun* (*A Discourse on the Three Causes of Illness*) written by Chen Yan⁴⁹ in 1174 C.E and is a prime illustration of the pathomechanism of disease that has been delineated above.

(The fact) that man lives because he receives the yin and the yang (influences) of heaven and earth (may be explained as follows)... In the external (parts of the body) the (protective) influences and the blood flow through the conduits and network (conduits) in a circulatory course. They tend to be harmed by the six excesses. In the interior (of the body reside) the essence and the spirit,... They tend to be harmed by the seven emotions. The six excesses are cold, summer-heat, dryness, moisture, wind, and hot (items). The seven emotions are joy and anger, mourning and thought, grief, fear, and fright. If one, in his efforts to preserve (his health), pursues a suitable (way of life, he will, as a result,) be happy and remain free from any disturbances. If, (however, one leads a) risky (life that) is not in accordance with the principles (of nature), all possible illnesses may emerge as a consequence...

However, the six excesses are ordinary influences of heaven. If one fails to care about (their assimilation in correct proportions), they will flow into (the body) starting from the (major) conduits and network (conduits, and, then,) unite internally in the viscera and bowels. They are causes (of illness) that have come from outside. The seven emotions are ordinary (attributes of) human nature. If one excites them, they will be set free first in the viscera and bowels, and (then) they will take shape in (the appearance of man's) limbs and body. These are causes (of illness) that have come from inside. (Such factors contributing to illness) as food and drinks, hunger and overeating, shouting (to an extent that) harms the influences (of the lung), complete exhaustion of one's spirit, extreme fatigue in the strength of one's sinews, violations of (the correct ways of intercourse of) yin and yang, and also (injuries caused by) tigers, wolves, and poisonous worms, wounds caused by metal (weapons), fractures resulting from falls, possession by the hostile, possession

(by evil demons), death through violence, death through a falling wall, drowning, and further such (factors) in contrast to the normal principles (of life), they constitute neither internal nor external causes (of illness).⁵⁰

The causes of illness as detailed in the classics of Chinese Medicine are viewed in the same light as Naturopathic Nature Cure. Unschuld says, “the fundamental tenet of the medicine of systematic correspondence concerning the causation of illness [is] a belief in the loss of harmony with the basic laws *of nature*.”⁵¹ The basic idea of the medicine of systematic correspondence was to identify and distinguish the proper way of living in tune with the natural rhythm and energetic patterns of the more-than-human Universe. When one lived in accordance with these laws, the result was a corresponding harmonious state of health not only between the individual and the external environment but also of the microcosmic internal energy patterns composing human physiology. Any disturbances in the normal harmonic relationship of human beings with the energetic patterns and laws of nature has a corresponding disruptive influence on the internal balance of life force (Qi) in the organism, permitting pathogenic energy to enter the organism from outside and cause disease. General pathology includes the consequences of such developments, such as the ceasing of proper functioning of Qi metabolism, resulting in an impairment or blockage of transportation channels (Qi stagnation in the meridians, and blood stasis in the blood vessels) and the development of symptoms. Take for example the pathophysiology of weak extremities due to the impairment of the Stomach organ; a consequence of improper behavior such as what might happen with improper eating. A passage in Chapter 29 of the *Neijing* reads

In order for the extremities to carry out their proper functioning, nourishment from the stomach is required. But the jin and ye or body fluids cannot reach the channels of the four extremities from the stomach directly. They must go through the transformational process provided by the spleen to be properly distributed. This is normal physiology. When the Spleen is disordered, it cannot effectively transform and transport the Jin ye/body fluids. The extremities then suffer a lack of nourishment, which also includes the Food/food qi. Gradually, the muscles and tendons atrophy and lose function.⁵²

Since health in the medicine of systematic correspondence was based on the commensurate conduct of one's life that brought about the harmony of all influences, and avoidance of disease depended upon the proper balance of the body's own influences and those absorbed from outside, treatments were based on restoring a harmonic relationship with the phenomena of the more-than-human earth. It became imperative to develop a balanced relationship with all phenomena, to avoid extravagant excesses and scarce deficiencies. This included the use of herbs and acupuncture to restore balance and proper flow in the internal environment. For example, chapter 43 of the *Neijing* says, "If the Ying and wei lose their orderly flow, one will suffer from imbalance and disease. However, all one needs to do is restore the orderly flow again and illness will be resolved."⁵³ But effective therapy also meant subjecting and adapting oneself to rules of conduct that supported a return to a more harmonious relationship with the external environment. Unschuld explains that

the followers of a medicine of influences grounded in systematic correspondence were convinced that it was worthwhile to subject oneself to rules of conduct in order to remain in good health... Survival in this field of influences [such as climatic influences emanating from the points of the compass, from the stars, from food and drink, from heaven and earth, from rain and wind, from heat and cold, and from numerous other phenomena] was possible if man adapted himself – by means of a life style based on well-defined norms – to the system of influences and emanations and did not contravene it.⁵⁴

Emit Densmore, in *How Nature Cures*, outlines a similar philosophy inherent in Naturopathic Nature Cure therapy. He says,

It will be seen, after the most searching scrutiny from whatever point of view, that a tendency toward an abounding health and vigor is inseparable from life, and, more-over, whenever and wherever the normal conditions of healthy life have been interfered with, and weakness, lassitude, or any of the symptoms of ill-health appear, *as soon as the conditions natural to the organism are restored, a movement toward health is always sure to follow.*⁵⁵

Lindlahr also defines cure as the readjustment of the human organism from abnormal to normal conditions and functions. He outlines six methods of Nature Cure treatment that support this definition of cure.

1. Establish normal surroundings and natural habits of life in accord with nature's laws;
2. Economize vital force;
3. Build up the blood on a natural basis; that is supply the blood with its natural constituents in right proportions;
4. Promote the elimination of waste material and poisons without in any way injuring the human body;
5. Correct mechanical lesions;
6. Arouse the individual in the highest possible degree to the consciousness of personal responsibility and to the necessity of intelligent personal effort and self-help.⁵⁶

Naturopathic hydrotherapy as a major component of naturopathic Nature Cure therapy embodies the theory outlined above. It is based on a working hypothesis that health and healing is proportional to normal flow of healthy blood, specifically, the quantity and quality of blood flow through given tissues. The hydrotherapist, by either increasing or reducing circulation, seeks to normalize the quantity of blood circulating through a specific area during a specified time period. Naturopathic hydrotherapy utilizes the mechanical effect of hot and cold water in a refined way to improve the quality of blood in circulation with the result of encouraging the body to correct any existing mechanical lesions; promoting the elimination of waste materials; and promoting the normal quality and flow of blood and vital force. Naturopaths Wade Boyle and Andre Saine, in their textbook *Naturopathic Hydrotherapy*, explain

It is a notion, unique to naturopathic medicine, that by enhancing blood flow through the organs of elimination, such as the skin, liver, kidney and bowels, detoxification, and thereby improvement, of the blood takes place. In addition to improving blood by eliminating undesirable elements such as waste products, naturopathic hydrotherapists believe that water treatments can also help build the blood up by increasing desirable elements such as oxygen, nutrients, red blood cells, and white blood cells, etc. This is done primarily through treatments which tonify the digestive organs and thereby improve the nutrition received by the blood. The naturopathic

hydrotherapist views blood as the conveyer of life. ... hydrotherapy is the manipulation of circulation to maximize the life-giving properties of blood. Naturopathic hydrotherapy works because it optimizes the quality of blood while improving the efficiency of its circulation.⁵⁷

Despite what Boyle and Saine claim as a notion exclusive to naturopathic medicine, the notion of enhancing blood flow through the organs of elimination and thereby improving the quality of blood, as already discussed in this thesis, is also a very important component of Chinese medicine. Hydrotherapy was also implemented by notable physicians of the past in Chinese medicine. One of the most notable physicians, Hua Tuo, who lived in the second century C.E. is credited as being the “first known doctor to prescribe health exercises and hydrotherapy.”⁵⁸ Hydrotherapy, then could be viewed as an essential component of Nature Cure therapeutics for both naturopaths and CCM physicians.

In summary, human beings are generated by the process of heaven and Earth blending their qi. Both Nature Cure systems acknowledge that human beings are fundamentally made from vibrational energy (Qi) and as such can never be without it. Human beings, therefore, always have to rely on this all-encompassing and all-transforming qi to survive. Health is dependent on an ample supply and the smooth flow of vibrational Life Force, while disease on the other hand is a manifestation of deficient or stagnating Life Force. The original cause of illness is the violation of nature’s laws. If a person is ill, this person is out of balance with the laws of nature. Nature Cure understands the majority of diseases to be attributed to wrong living and behaviors that are inharmonious with the more-than-human world. Nature Cure practitioners assist in helping people live closer to nature. When this is done, the body’s innate power to heal, the *vis medicatrix naturae*, will be augmented and healing will ensue. It is through the restoration of connectedness between human participation and the more-than-human landscape that vibrational life force can recover. Recapitulating, Lindlahr says,

That which is orderly, lawful, good, beautiful, natural, healthy, vibrates in unison with the harmonics of this great ‘Diapason of Nature’: in other words it is in alignment with the constructive

principle in nature. That which is disorderly, abnormal, ugly, unnatural, unhealthy vibrates in discord with nature's harmonies... Health is normal and harmonious vibration and disease abnormal and inharmonious vibration. If there is to be health the vibratory conditions of the organism must be in harmony with nature's established harmonic relations in the physical, mental and psychical realms of human life and action.⁵⁹

¹ Lindlahr, p. 18

² *Ibid*, p. 24

³ *Ibid*, p. 24

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 22

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 26

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 25

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 25

⁸ Ni, Maoshing; p. 280

⁹ This is an assertion that was outlined in an earlier chapter of this thesis.

¹⁰ Lindlahr, p. 28

¹¹ Lindlahr, p. 28

¹² Unschuld, *Forgotten Traditions of Ancient Medicine*, p. 3

¹³ *Ibid*, p.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 301

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 124

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 8

¹⁷ Unschuld, *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, p. 334

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 333

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 335-6

²⁰ Lindlahr, p. 28

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 29

²² Wood, p. 15

²³ *Ibid*, p. 15

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 15

²⁵ Lindlahr, p. 23

²⁶ Lindlahr, p. 23

²⁷ Lindlahr, p. 23

²⁸ Cohen, p. 24

²⁹ Cohen, p. 24

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- ³⁰ Zhang & Rose, p. 16
- ³¹ Unschuld, *Medicine in China*, p. 72
- ³² Maciocia, p. 37
- ³³ *Ibid*, p. 37
- ³⁴ Zhang & Rose, p. vi
- ³⁵ Lindlahr, p. 24
- ³⁶ Zhang & Rose, p. 16
- ³⁷ Lindlahr, p. 29
- ³⁸ Zhang & Rose, p. viii
- ³⁹ Maciocia, *Chapter 3: the Vital Substance*; pp. 35-57
- ⁴⁰ Ni, Maoshing, Chapter 43, pp. 160 -162
- ⁴¹ Wood, p. 15
- ⁴² Unschuld, *Huang Di Nei Jing, in the Epilogue*; p. 331
- ⁴³ Lindlahr, p. 30
- ⁴⁴ Lindlahr, p. 32
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 32
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 32
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 33
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 33
- ⁴⁹ Dr. Versluys translates the Wade Giles *San yin Chi I ping-cheng fang lun* as *San Yin Ji Yi Ping Cheng Fang Lun (A Discourse on the Formulas on three causes of disease are ultimately one)*. Ch'en Yen is written in Pin Yin as Chen Yan.
- ⁵⁰ Unschuld, *Introductory Readings in Classical Chinese Medicine*, p103 - taken from *San yin Chi I ping-cheng fang lun*, ch.2; *on the three causes of illness*.
- ⁵¹ Unschuld, *Introductory Readings in Classical Chinese Medicine*, p79
- ⁵² Ni, Maoshing, Chapter 29, pp. 115-117
- ⁵³ Ni, Maoshing, Chapter 43, pp. 160-162
- ⁵⁴ Unschuld, *Medicine in China*, p. 73
- ⁵⁵ Densmore, p. 7
- ⁵⁶ Lindlahr, p. 20
- ⁵⁷ Boyle & Saine, p.18
- ⁵⁸ Johns, p. 117
- ⁵⁹ Lindlahr, p.25

VII. RETURN TO NATURE



The above, titled Empowering the life-force, was painted by Romio Shrestha, a preeminent master of the Tibetan medical thangkas. The caption reads:

In Tibetan culture, the act of freeing birds, fish and other beings from captivity or imminent death is believed to have a reciprocal benefit on one's own life-force. Representing more than a perfunctory observance of the Buddhist ideal of compassion, such acts express the generosity and creativity at the heart of all existence. In the act of restoring wholeness, Buddhists claim, one renews both self and other. Tibetan art has an analogous function. It frees us from accustomed perception. Here the Buddhist ideal is shown not as a 'fisher of men', but as one who opens the nets of ignorance and partiality and restores beings to their naturally liberated state.¹

Vibrational Life Force lowers with wrong habits, negative thinking and feeling, over work, and unnatural stimulus. The violation of Nature's laws reduces the vibration and vitality of both the individual and of the more-than-human Earth. It is this vibrational connectedness between the Earth and human beings that is most effected by the ways in which human beings live their lives. As humans, we have the choice of living our lives in accordance with either Taker or Leaver lifestyles. As a whole, we can either live in tune with the laws of Nature or choose to live in opposition to them. Takers, in acting as if the

world belongs to them, are repeat offenders of Nature's laws. In an era when Taker philosophy dominates human society, is it no coincidence that chronic disease is so prevalent and physical health so poor. Lindlahr eloquently articulates the connectivity of physical health and natural law when he says,

The naturist, who has regained health and strength through obedience to the laws of his being, enjoys a measure of self-content, gladness of soul and enthusiasm which cannot be explained by the mere possession of physical health. These highest and purest attainments of the human soul are not the results of mere physical well-being, but of the peace and harmony which come only through obedience to natural law.²

In attempting to treat the whole cause of disease, those who follow the tenets of Nature Cure find that it is hard to isolate causes of an illness on an individual basis from those causes that are rooted in environmental and social disharmony. How can one separate diseases of a toxic body from that of the toxic home, workplace, city, and world? Similarly, the etiological agents behind anxiety, paranoia, frustration, and fear result from the absurd amount of crime, violence, and disrespect in the world. Likewise, disease is often attributed to overpopulation, the loss of vegetation, the loss of animal habitat, the inhumane treatment of animal husbandry, the abrupt drop off in biodiversity, and the depletion of minerals and increased chemical toxicity of the soil. Nature Cure appreciates the need to perceive the goings-on in the environment, and function in terms of wholistic ecology. This parallels the worldview held by indigenous, Leaver cultures. The indigenous Aborigines of Australia are a prime example. Cohen recounts the connection between individual life force and human relations to the natural world observed in Aboriginal society.

Some fifty or sixty thousand years ago, long before the Chinese spoke of qi, Australian aborigines were cultivating life energy as a key to healing and spiritual power... Aborigines, like other indigenous tribes, believe that people today have less of this life energy than in the past. Because life energy is the common source and link between people and nature, the loss of it parallels the loss of connection between human beings and their relations: the plants, animals, stones, water, sky, the earth, and all of creation. Restoring life energy to its original condition of fullness may be the key to

recovering lost potentials and realizing that “the Kingdom of Heaven is in our midst.”³

As discussed earlier, it was the development of Western Cartesian science and Eastern Confucian intentionism that initiated the separation of knowledge and wisdom and were the initial forces behind mankind losing touch with nature. Frijof Capra, in *The Web of Life*, argues that the crux of the human situation is the separation of self from the web-of-life, or with what I have outlined as the more-than-human landscape. It is in the fragmentation of the ego-self from the external world that has alienated us from nature. Capra says,

The power of abstract thinking has led us to treat the natural environment – the web of life – as if it consisted of separate parts, to be exploited by different interest groups. The belief that all these fragments in ourselves, in our environment, and in our society are really separate has alienated us from nature and from our fellow human beings and thus has diminished us. To regain our full humanity, we have to regain our experience of connectedness with the entire web of life.⁴

Modern society has become so intellectualized, and has forgotten how to listen and perceive with all of its senses the natural world that surrounds us. To regain our full humanity, we need to open our senses, and relate to the world we are a part of. We need to be anthropomorphic, and when we perceive a cloud to be speaking to us (as I have done while on that mountain top in Austria) we need to know it’s all very normal, and that we are not crazy. Health in the microcosmic body and in the macrocosmic web of life are dependent upon both human perception and participation in the more-than-human Earth. Nature Cure provides both a theoretical construct and practical roadmap to regain the experience of connectedness with the universal Life Force and with the entire web of life.

The naturopathic philosophical concept of Nature Cure, parallels that of the system of correspondence in Classical Chinese Medicine in many ways. Both models of medicine understand that our bodies often express inner, subconscious states as the expression of disease and that we need to recognize and harmonize with that place within ourselves

where we are linked with the larger forces of nature. The physician's role in both systems is to guide the patient towards greater self-awareness, beyond the self-imposed limitations that foster disease, and align the patient with the laws of nature. Disease, then, becomes an opportunity, or process, that enables us to make changes for the betterment of our complete selves and the Others which co-inhabit the world we live in.

In the preface to the book *The Tibetan Art of Healing*, Deepak Chopra describes the art of healing as the achievement when all of our actions are inspired by a higher reality in which our individual identity is inseparable from the creative forces of the Universe. The Tibetan medical thangkas, paintings derived from Tibetan medical tantras, are vivid tools, according to Chopra “used for exploring the mind's role in creating illness and health, as well as for discovering the place within us where the body's innate intelligence mirrors the wisdom of the Cosmos.”⁵ The thangkas, in addition to revealing the vast variety of diseases encountered by human beings, depict the intricacies of the ancient Tibetan system of healing. Portrayed in the paintings are the diagnostic and therapeutic procedures of Tibetan medicine including pulse divination, dietary modification, yogic exercises, meditation and massage. Tibetan healers use the visual thangkas to invoke the memory of wholeness within the physiology of our bodies. In restoring the memory of wholeness, healing occurs within our mind, body and spirit. Chopra says,

When we meditate on a painting that has within it the memory of wholeness, our attention shifts from the superficial turbulent activity of the world to a transcendental reality: a realm of peace, harmony, laughter and joy. Restoring these qualities to our consciousness once again allows the flow of nature's intelligence throughout the body. The great achievement of Tibetan Buddhist art, and the Tibetan medical thangkas in particular, is its revelation of the human organism as a vehicle of transcendence and spiritual liberation... The paintings impart knowledge in a spontaneous and effortless manner. As we contemplate these timeless images, a shift in consciousness occurs. The conceptual mind is stilled, and a new vision of health and healing begins to unfold.⁶

Like the Tibetan medical thangkas, the art of healing known as Nature Cure aspires to instill into the human being the desire, inspiration and wherewithal to put all of their actions inline with a higher reality in which their individual identity becomes inseparable

from the creative forces of the Universe. Such is the call to return to nature. On the heels of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's philosophy of Naturism in Europe, and the poem's and works of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau in the United States, Naturopaths rallied to the call of "RETURN TO NATURE!". It is Thoreau who stated the well recognized quotation, "in Wildness is the preservation of the world." His wildness did not refer to some vast, unsettled tract of land, rather says John Elder in his introduction to the works of Thoreau and Emerson it stood as "a quality of awareness, an openness to the light, to the seasons, and to nature's perpetual renewal. [Thoreau's] alertness was sharpened by the dialogue between settlements and the untracked lands around them, between human language and the rich communication of the senses".⁷

It was Adolf Just who most propagated the battle cry "Return to Nature!" in the turn of the twentieth century in both Europe and the United States. Suffering from poor health, nervous breakdowns, and what was diagnosed as neurasthenia, Just turned to nature for healing. In the von Pawel Woods in Germany, he built light and air huts where he could spend many days and nights outside. He went on long barefoot hikes into the mountains, bathed in babbling creeks, and became a keen observer of animals and plants.⁸ He says,

I soon recognized how wisely and easily Nature communicates her rules and prescriptions to him who harkens at her voice. When I arranged my mode of life according to her after such a long time of sickness and anguish, I perceived a real feeling of health, strength and freshness of youth, happiness and joy of life, repose and peace of the soul; a beatitude as never divined before.⁹

Out of this experience, he came to the conclusions that one could only recover through a direct and intimate contact with nature and that "men who no longer listen to the voice of nature become the victims of a thousand different diseases and miseries."¹⁰

In all cases, and in all diseases, therefore, man can recover and again become happy only by a true return to nature: man must to-day strenuously endeavor, in his mode of living, to heed again the voice of nature, and thus choose the food that nature has laid before him from the beginning, and to bring himself again into the relation with water, light, air, earth, etc., that nature originally designed for him.¹¹

Just stresses the importance that one cannot return to nature merely by turning to textbooks, and listening to other human beings. Nature offers “her lessons not in books, not in dusty tomes; she expresses her will to her creatures plainly and clearly through instinct, the organ of sense, etc.”¹² Human beings can only return to nature if they fully participate and experience the more-than-human world with all senses.

The Sages in the Chinese Medicine Classics also hail the calling of “Return to Nature”. One can only free oneself from illness by adjusting and conforming to the changes of yin and yang, the four seasons, and the energetic patterns of life: growth, reproduction, aging, and destruction. Chapter 2 of the *Neijing* is unmatched in its expression of the need to experience and participate with the universal life energy – a return to nature.

So the full cycle can be seen. Spring is the beginning of things, when the energy should be kept open and fluid; summer opens up further into an exchange or communication between internal and external energies; in the fall it is important to conserve; finally, the winter is dominated by the storage of energy...

The heavenly energy naturally circulates and communicates with the earth's energy; the heavenly energy descends and the earthly energy ascends. When this intercourse takes place and these energies merge, the result is a balance of sunshine and rain, wind and frost, and the four seasons. If the heavenly energy becomes stuck, sunshine and rain cannot come forth. Without them, all living things cease to be nourished and lose their vitality, and imbalance manifests as storms and hurricanes; severe and harsh weather disrupts the natural order, causing chaos and destruction.

In the past the sages were able to observe the signs and adapt themselves to these natural phenomena so that they were unaffected by exogenous influences, or "evil wind," and were able to live long lives. If one does not follow the play of the elemental energies according to the seasons, the liver energy will stagnate, resulting in illness in spring. In summer, the heart energy becomes empty and the yang energy is exhausted. During the autumn there will be congestion of the lung energy. In winter the kidney will be drained of Jing.

The transformation of yin and yang in the four seasons is the basis of the growth and the destruction of life. The sages were able to cultivate the yang energy in spring and summer and conserve the yin energy in autumn and winter. By following the universal order, growth can occur naturally. If this natural order is disregarded, the root of one's life will be damaged and one's true energy will wane.

Therefore, the change of yin and yang through the four seasons is the root of life, growth, reproduction, aging, and destruction. By respecting this natural law it is possible to be free from illness. The sages have followed this, and the foolish people have not.¹³

Nature Cure is the model of healing that identifies health with a return to nature. It is in returning to nature that human beings collectively realign themselves with the more-than-human Earth. The Earth, in turn, abides the energetic patterns and laws of the universe and is once again in congruence with the Dao. Human beings follow the Earth, the Earth follows Heaven, Heaven follows Dao, and Dao follows the original source - nature itself. Ren Fa Di, Di Fa Tian, Tian Fa Dao, Dao Fa Ziran.

¹ Baker, p.161

² Lindlahr, p.27

³ Cohen, p. 25

⁴ Capra, p. 296

⁵ Baker, p.9

⁶ Baker, p.11

⁷ Elder, p. xvi

⁸ Kirchfeld & Boyle, p. 117

⁹ Kirchfeld & Boyle, p. 117

¹⁰ Just, p. 4

¹¹ Just, p. 5

¹² Just, p. 5

¹³ Ni, Maoshing; Chapter 2, pp. 4-6

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The dual degree program in both Naturopathic and Classical Chinese Medicine offers the unique opportunity of simultaneously studying the intricate theory and philosophy of both medical paradigms. I have observed over the course of six years certain specific underlying themes that are shared and integral to both systems. This thesis is an attempt to delineate and discuss these themes. I have asserted that the ideas common to both systems comprise the foundation of the model of healing recognized as Nature Cure. Inherent to the theory of Nature Cure is the definition of health as an adherence to the basic laws and energy patterns of Nature. The origin of disease is viewed as noncompliance with Nature's laws. When the behavior of a human being, or of a community of human beings, diverges from these laws, the natural harmony of the macrocosm is disturbed. As a result, the vibrational state of the human body is similarly altered. When one lives out of harmony with the laws of nature, one gets sick. Historically, the role of the physician in both Naturopathic and Classical Chinese Medicine was to first recognize the imbalances in the human being that presented as disease symptoms and then to look towards identifying the root of this imbalance by turning to the study of what is out of balance with the relationship between Human Beings and everything else that is not human.

As time has gone by, specific philosophical and political events have altered the shape and form of medical theory. In the West, both Naturopathic and Allopathic Medicine derive their roots from the same common source – Hellenistic philosophy and science. Contained in this common source theory is the notion of human participation in a more-than-human world. A major evolutionary divergence in theory between Naturopaths and Allopaths centers around the concepts of knowledge and wisdom. Allopaths focus on rational scientific intentionalism, while Naturopaths remain true to the more participatory empirical wisdom attained through the observation of human interaction with the laws of nature. A similar dichotomy is observed in the evolution of Chinese medicine. Confucian philosophy focuses on intentional knowledge while Laozi promoted the Daoist philosophy of participatory wisdom. The syncretic nature of ancient China, the ability for multiple ideas to coexist and build from one another, allowed for the simultaneous

incorporation of both Daoist and Confucian philosophy into medical theory. It is in this setting that allowed for the comprehensive development of a defined set of Nature's laws and energy patterns - the system of correspondence. This was not the case in the West.

Naturopaths, like the Daoist medical sages, were concerned with understanding how man can best conform to the laws of nature. However, over time medical theory in the west increasingly grew to lose touch with the science of developing and defining the laws of Nature. A descriptive system of nature's laws, as based on a participatory model of knowledge and wisdom never developed to the extent it did in China. Cartesian science further propagated this schism and took medicine in the west down a course that separated the relationship of human participation in nature from the model of health and disease. Paracelsus was a bastion to the past, connecting the microcosm to the macrocosm. As a whole, however, these concepts were lost in the Western medical movements until they were reintroduced by Priessnitz.

Priessnitz is credited as instigating the medical revolution that is known in the West as Nature Cure. He brought the "Return to Nature" philosophical approach back to medicine. He, along with future Nature Cure practitioners, instructed his patients in how to return to nature, i.e. follow the laws of nature. They developed empirical therapeutic treatment modalities based on the detailed study of natural life – the full perception of the more-than-human Earth. The body of knowledge and system of defining these natural laws was only scarcely reincorporated into Nature Cure doctrine. To this day, a gap in the theory and philosophy of Nature Cure exists.

The system of correspondence has withstood the unfolding of historical events in China, and has remained an integral part of the system of Chinese Medicine. Chinese medical practitioners assist their patients back into a concordance with the laws of nature. Treatments utilize acupuncture and herbal formulas to restore the internal balance of vital force, while at the same time they align and harmonize the physiology of the human being with the macrocosmic energy patterns of the Universe. As Chinese medical treatments have been forced to adapt to the modern influences imposed on it, a new

deficiency in Chinese Nature Cure has evolved. Where the theory and the blueprint for a return to nature is still mainstay, what is now missing is the aspect of physical participation in nature. Further, Chinese Medicine still advocates for activities such as the eating of a diet that is conducive to the energetic patterns of the seasons, and exercises like Tai Chi and Qi Gong, but what remains void is that final link of bringing humans back in contact with nature; of opening up the senses and encouraging human participation and sensorial perception of the more-than-human Earth.

The opposite is the case in Naturopathic nature cure, where key individuals advocated a full return to nature where participation and therapeutic modalities brought humans back in contact with Earth, sky, babbling brook, with water, natural foods, etc. The root of Naturopathic and Chinese Medicine are one and the same. That is, to define the laws of nature and then to live by them. Through the course of my education at NCNM, I have observed deficiencies in both Naturopathic and Classical Chinese Medicine theory and practice. However, what each one is lacking and deficient in, the other system is strong in. Through the interaction of yin and yang, as it relates to both the laws of nature and a greater participation and perception of the more-than-human world, dual degree students hold the potential to create a more complete and truly wholistic paradigm of health.

It is my assertion in this thesis that the primary role of Healers is to instill balance in the relations of human beings to the more-than-human world. It is essential for true healing of the individual and the more than human planet for Naturopathic and Chinese medical physicians to assist their patients to first identify what factors in their lives are inharmonious with the laws of nature and then to subsequently assist and guide their patients to make the necessary lifestyle and behavioral changes that are required to restore balance and allow for the healing power of nature to unfold. Treatments should focus on restoring balance to both the microcosmic body and the macrocosmic nonhuman Earth and must increase the participatory dimension of human interaction with the Others of this planet. The physician, patient and larger community must together form a partnership that reinforces collaboration and pushes for the human community to make a return to nature. It is Abram's perception of the traditional medicine man as primarily an

intermediary between human and more-than-human worlds that I feel Naturopathic and Chinese medical practitioners should model themselves after.

The traditional or tribal shaman, I came to discern, acts as an intermediary between the human community and the larger ecological field, ensuring that there is an appropriate flow of nourishment, not just from the landscape to the human inhabitants, but from the human community back to the local earth. By his constant rituals, trances, ecstasies, and “journeys,” he ensures that the relation between human society and the larger society of beings is balanced and reciprocal, and that the village never takes more from the living land than it returns to it... To some extent every adult in the community is engaged in this process of listening and attuning to the other presences that surround and influence daily life. But the shaman or sorcerer is the exemplary voyager in the intermediate realm between the human and the more-than-human worlds, the primary strategist and negotiator in any dealings with the Others.

...the traditional medicine person functions primarily as an intermediary between human and nonhuman worlds, and only secondarily as a healer. Without a continually adjusted awareness of the relative balance between the human group and its nonhuman environ, along with the skills necessary to modulate that primary relation, any “healer” is worthless – indeed, not a healer at all. The medicine person’s primary allegiance, then, is not to the human community, but to the earthly web of relations in which that community is embedded – it is from this that his or her power to alleviate human illness derives...¹

Like the Nature Cure practitioners before me, I too have experienced an illness that was an expression of my inharmonious relationship with the laws of nature. My trials and tribulations of living in discord with the energetic patterns of the Universe brought me to the place within myself where I was given the opportunity to ask why? Why I am I in a state of dis-ease? Like the most learned and powerful shamans and Sages of the past, I undertook a quest for answers. I opened my heart for receiving a reply, and as coincidence or fate would have it, I wound up on the top of a mountain peak beyond the boundaries of human society. Vulnerable, I cried out to the wild forces of the land, to the more-than-human Earth for a vision, for teachings, and for the power to heal myself, my fellow human community and our Earth.

The more-than-human Earth responded. It was strong and powerful, and it said matter of factly, “THIS IS ME. This is how I need to live my life. I want to live in tune with nature, I want to help people, everyone - not just the sick - to learn how to live healthy. I want to learn and I want to teach. My path in life has led me to this.”

¹ Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, p. 7

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