

## History of Medicine in China



EAS 396  
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 Mon. 10-12  
 Lash Miller 155

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**Course description:**

What is Chinese medicine? Many of us today associate it with the exotic practices of acupuncture and herbal remedy, and the all-encompassing concepts of yin-yang and *qi*. These impressionistic views of Chinese medicine, however, belies a more sophisticated understanding of the long-lasting system of healing. We may ask further: How does Chinese medicine actually work? What are the cultural milieus in which it develops and flourishes? And how do we evaluate it in juxtaposition with modern biomedicine?

To answer these questions, we must probe the roots of Chinese medicine and ponder how it has become what it is today. Surveying Chinese medical history from antiquity to the present, this course pursues three major goals. First, we will study the foundational concepts in Chinese medicine and their evolution in history. Particular attention will be directed to the perception of illnesses, the body, and medicinal substances. Second, we will explore the highly diverse and miscellaneous practices of Chinese medicine in society through the lens of religious healing, medical institution, practitioners, and gender. Third, we will examine in the more recent past how Chinese medicine interacted with Western medicine and how it transformed itself during this contested process. Overall, this course seeks to not only enrich our understanding of Chinese medicine in the past, but also utilize historical knowledge to illuminate our ways of living today.

**Assessments:**

- Short-paper assignment: 15%  
Write a short essay (3-4 double-spaced pages) that summarizes and synthesizes all required readings or movie of a particular week in Unit 1. **Due Jan. 25 in class.**
- Podcast assignment: 15%  
Produce a podcast (maximal length 2 minutes) that summarizes and analyzes a primary source of a particular week in Unit 2. **Due 9 PM Feb. 21 on Blackboard.**
- Short-video assignment: 15%  
Produce a short video (maximal length 2 minutes) that examines a historical image from the readings of a particular week in Unit 3. **Due 9 PM Mar. 20 on Blackboard.**
- Two pop-up quizzes in class: each 10%  
Each quiz (10 minutes) includes several multiple-choice questions and a short essay question. The content of the quiz is based on the readings and the lecture in the preceding week.
- Final paper or podcast/video: 25%  
The research project combines course readings/lectures and your own research to explore a specific topic in the history of Chinese medicine. It may take either of the following forms:  
(1) A paper of 8-10 double-spaced pages  
(2) A podcast or video of 6 minutes maximum (2 segments of up to 3 minutes each or, 3 segments of up to 2 minutes each)  
**Due 5 PM Apr. 11 on Blackboard.**
- Class participation: 10%  
Although this is a lecture-based course, I will leave ample time in each lecture to interact with you, either asking you questions or let you ask questions. Active engagement in class is key to your learning.

**On media assignments:**

One unique feature of this course is the media assignments. Compared to the conventional paper-writing exercise, these alternative assignments offer you the opportunity to explore the creative use of podcasts and short videos for effective intellectual communication. If this is the first time for you to make a podcast or video, don't worry. **This is your chance to learn.** I will provide you with sufficient guidance and technical support over the course so you can master the skills of multi-media production and create works that edify yourself and impress your friends. I hope this will be a valuable and fun learning experience.

Technical notes: For podcasts, you can simply use the voice-recording device on your computer to do the job. You can also use more advanced software such as Audacity (for both PC and Mac) and GarageBand (for Mac). For short videos, you can start with PowerPoint (for PC) or Keynote (for Mac). For editing images and videos, you can consider using Photoshop and iMovie (for Mac) respectively. More advanced video-editing software are Final Cut (for Mac) and After Effects. All of these software have tutorials on YouTube or [www.lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com).

**Course policies:**

- Finish all required readings of the week before the class
- Come to class on time. If you have to miss a class, please let me know in advance.
- Laptops are allowed in class only for taking notes. All other uses—from checking emails, to instant messaging, to random internet surfing—are prohibited.
- Submit your assignments on time. Late submission will incur a penalty of one-third a letter grade per day of lateness.
- There are no make-up quizzes.
- Academic integrity. Any use of another source's words or ideas—Internet included—without acknowledging the source is plagiarism. If you have any questions about UT's policies on plagiarism, please consult me or refer to:  
<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>

**Key text for the course:**

*Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History*, ed. TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013.

The text is on course reserve at the [Gerstein Science Information Center](#).

**Useful Online Resources:**

- A Visual Sourcebook of Chinese Civilization:  
<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/index.htm>
- Conversion Tables for Two Romanization Systems (Wade-Giles & Pinyin):  
<http://library.ust.hk/guides/opac/conversion-tables.html>
- Nathan Sivin: Guides to Research, Chinese Science and Medicine  
<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~nsivin/refe.html>

**Schedule:**

Note: All readings are in English (“Primary” refers to primary sources; “Secondary” refers to secondary sources). All readings are available on the course Blackboard.

**Unit 1: Introduction to Chinese medicine**

In this introductory unit, we will explore some central issues and key questions that motivate the study of Chinese medicine. What is the value of studying traditional Chinese medicine? How do we view and evaluate it today? What makes it different from Western medicine? Why is history important to its practice today?

**Week 1 (Jan. 11): Orientation**

Movie in class: Bill Moyers’ “Healing and the Mind: The Mystery of Chi,” 1993.

**Week 2** (Jan. 18): Thinking with Chinese medicine

Secondary	<p>Ted J. Kaptchuk, <i>The Web That Has No Weaver: Understanding Chinese Medicine</i>, 1983, Ch. 1, “Medicine East and West: Two Ways of Seeing, Two Ways of Thinking,” 1-39.</p> <p>Nathan Sivin, <i>Traditional Medicine in Contemporary China</i>, 1987, Ch. I, “Traditional Medicine in Contemporary China,” 3-30.</p>
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**Unit 2: Key concepts in Chinese medicine**

In this unit, we will trace the origins of Chinese medicine in antiquity (the Han period and before) and study the central concepts of sickness, the body, and drugs that laid the foundation for Chinese healing. We will examine both the canonical works—*The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine* and *The Divine Farmer’s Classic of Materia Medica*—and alternative medical thoughts that developed outside these canons.

**Week 3** (Jan. 25): Health and illness

What is health? What is illness? What are the prominent ways of imagining sickness in ancient China? How do they differ from our understanding of disease today? How does the perception of illness change over time? What is the connection between illness and the perception of the body?

Primary	<i>The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine</i> ( <i>Huangdi neijing</i> 黃帝內經), Ch. 1-7, trans. Ilza Veith, 1949, 97-131.
Secondary	<p>Shigehisa Kuriyama, “The Imagination of Winds and the Development of the Chinese Conception of the Body,” in <i>Body, Subject, and Power in China</i>, ed. Angela Zito and Tani Barlow, 1994, 23-41.</p> <p>Li Jianmin, “They shall expel demons: etiology, the medical canon, and the transformation of medical techniques before the Tang,” in <i>Early Chinese Religion I: Shang through Han (1250 BC–220 AD)</i>, ed. John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski, 2009, 1103-50.</p>

**Week 4** (Feb. 1): The body and the world

What is the “body” in Chinese medicine? Why is there a history to the body? How do physicians in the Chinese and Greek traditions perceive and experience the body differently? What is the relation between the body and the cosmos in China? What is the political implication of a Chinese body?

Primary	<i>The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine</i> , Ch. 8-11 & 17-18, trans. Ilza Veith, 1949, 133-146, 159-174.
Secondary	Shigehisa Kuriyama, <i>The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine</i> , 1999, Preface & Ch. 1, "Grasping the Language of Life," 7-60.  Nathan Sivin, "State, Cosmos, and Body in the Last Three Centuries B.C.," <i>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies</i> (June 1995), 55.1: 5-37.

**Week 5** (Feb. 8): Medicines and foods

Happy Chinese New Year! Year of the Goat ends; Year of the Monkey begins.

What is a medicine? What distinguishes a medicine from a foodstuff in China? What makes a drug efficacious? How are medicines classified in pharmacological canons? How are they prepared? What is the relation between medical theories and drug therapy? Who consumed these drugs in society?

Primary	Excerpts from <i>The Divine Farmer's Classic of Materia Medica</i> ( <i>Shennong bencao jing</i> 神農本草經) in <i>Medicine in China: A History of Pharmaceutics</i> , Paul U. Unschuld, 1986, 11-28.
Secondary	Paul Unschuld, <i>Medicine in China: Historical Artifacts and Images</i> , 2000, 42-53.  Vivienne Lo, "Pleasure, Prohibition and Pain: Food and Medicine in China," in <i>Of Tripod and Palate</i> , ed. Roel Sterckx, 2005, 163-185.

**Week 6** (Feb. 15): Family Day

Have a good break!

**Unit 3: Chinese medicine in society**

In this unit, we will go beyond medical theories and examine how Chinese medicine was practiced and transformed in society. Inspecting the medieval through the late imperial era (3<sup>rd</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century), we will explore the intimate connection between medicine and religion, the state's effort to standardize and promulgate medicine, the various types of medical practitioners and their interaction with patients, and the role of women in Chinese medicine.

**Week 7** (Feb. 22): Medicine and religion

During the Six Dynasties (220-589) and the Tang (618-907), religious therapies flourished. What are the Daoist, Buddhist, and shamanistic approaches to healing? How did religious practitioners

visualize the body and conceive the sickness? How did their views differ from (or resemble) those of canonical medicine? How did one religious group differentiate their healing practices from others?

Secondary	<p>Lin Fu-shih, “Shamans,” in <i>Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History</i>, ed. TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes, 2013, 67-69.</p> <p>Akira Akahori, “Drug Taking and Immortality,” in <i>Taoist Meditation and Longevity Techniques</i>, ed. Livia Kohn and Yoshinobu Sakade, 1989, 73-98.</p> <p>Catherine Despeux, “Visual Representations of the Body in Chinese Medical and Daoist Texts from the Song to the Qing Period (10<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century),” <i>Asian Medicine</i>, 2005, 10-52.</p> <p>Pierce Salguero, <i>Translating Buddhist Medicine in Medieval China</i>, 2014, Ch. 1, “The Buddhist Medical Transmission,” 23-43.</p>
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**Week 8** (Feb. 29): Medicine and the state

Chinese medicine underwent marked transformation during the Song (960-1279). What was the role of the state during this period in standardizing and transmitting medical knowledge? Why did the Song government make such an effort? How were medical texts selected, and produced with the rise of printing? How did the state regulate local medical practices?

Primary	Excerpts from <i>The Tang Code (Tanglü 唐律)</i> trans. Wallace Johnson, 1997, Vol. II, 71-73, 76, 461-463 [skim for the background: Vol. I, 3-13].
Secondary	<p>TJ Hinrichs, “The Song and Jin Period,” in <i>Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History</i>, ed. TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes, 2013, 97-119.</p> <p>Asaf Goldschmidt, <i>The Evolution of Chinese Medicine: Song Dynasty, 960-1200</i>, 2009, Ch. 1, “Emperors and medicine: The revival of Classical Medicine,” 19-41.</p>

**Week 9** (Mar. 7): Medicine and social practice

From the Song period on, China’s ruling class became increasingly involved in medical learning and practice. Why and how did these elite scholars practice medicine? How did their approach differ from non-elite healers? How did different types of practitioners learn medicine, and how did they gain credibility? In what way did patients’ experience inform these healers’ practice?

Primary	“Yuan-period Medical Cases,” trans. Charlotte Furth, in <i>Hawai'i Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture</i> , ed. Victor H. Mair, et. al., 2005, 440-443.
Secondary	Angela Ki-che Leung, “Medical Learning from the Song to the Ming,” in <i>The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History</i> , ed. Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn, 2003, 374-398.  Christopher Cullen, “Patients and Healers in Late Imperial China: Evidence from the Jinpingmei,” <i>History of Science</i> , 1993, 31: 99-150.

### Week 10 (Mar. 14): Medicine and gender

Where are women in Chinese medicine? In what ways does Chinese medicine conceive women's bodies and illnesses differently? What are the disorders specific to women? How does women's medicine tell us about sexuality in traditional China?

Primary	Excerpt from <i>On the Origin and Development of Medicine (Yixue yuanliu lun 醫學源流論)</i> by Xu Dachun (1693-1771), in <i>Forgotten Traditions of Ancient Chinese Medicine</i> , trans. Paul Unschuld, 1998, 332-334.
Secondary	Charlotte Furth, “Rethinking Van Gulik: Sexuality and Reproduction in Traditional Chinese Medicine,” in <i>Engendering China: Women, Culture and the State</i> , ed. Christina K. Gilmartin et al., 1994, 125-46.  Yi-Li Wu, “The Gendered Medical Iconography of the <i>Golden Mirror (Yuzuan yizong jinjian, 1742)</i> ,” <i>Asian Medicine</i> , 2008, 4: 452-491.

### Week 11 (Mar. 21): Chinese medicine in global context

How did foreign medical ideas and practices influence Chinese medicine? Conversely, how did Chinese medicine travel to other parts of the world and interact with local knowledge? How was Chinese medicine transformed during this process?

Secondary	Edward H. Schafer, <i>The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T'ang Exotics</i> , 1963, 176-194.  Paul D. Buell, “Arabic Medicine in China,” in <i>Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History</i> , ed. TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes, 2013, 132-134.
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	Erika Monahan, “Locating Rhubarb: Early Modernity's Relevant Obscurity,” in <i>Early Modern Things: Objects in Motion, 1500-1800</i> , ed. Paula Findlen, 2013, 227-251.
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#### Unit 4: Chinese medicine in the modern age

In this final unit, we study the history of Chinese medicine in the past century when it has been facing the serious challenge posed by modern science. We will explore how Chinese medicine negotiated with Western medicine and reinvented itself to gain legitimacy, a contested process that is still going on today.

#### **Week 12** (Mar. 28): Chinese medicine and modernity

What were different attitudes towards Chinese medicine in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century? What were the stakes for these various groups? What kind of new features did Chinese medicine acquire during its transformation? How did Chinese medicine engage in China’s modernization agenda?

Primary	Lu Xun, “Medicine” ( <i>Yao 藥</i> ), in <i>The New-Year Sacrifice and Other Stories</i> , trans. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, 2002, 50-73
Secondary	Bridie J. Andrews, “The Republic of China,” in <i>Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History</i> , ed. TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes, 2013, 209-238.  Sean Hsiang-lin Lei, <i>Neither Donkey nor Horse: Medicine in the Struggle over China’s Modernity</i> , 2014, Ch. 9, “Research Design as Political Strategy: The Birth of the New Antimalaria Drug <i>Changshan</i> ,” 193-222.

#### **Week 13** (Apr. 4): Chinese medicine today

How is Chinese medicine practiced in contemporary China? How does it connect to historical knowledge? How is Chinese medicine practiced differently outside China? What is the challenge of practicing Chinese medicine in the modern world? What is the future of Chinese medicine?

Primary	Tu Youyou’s Nobel Lecture on 7 December, 2015: <a href="http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2015/tu-lecture.html">http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2015/tu-lecture.html</a>
Secondary	Volker Scheid, <i>Chinese Medicine in Contemporary China</i> , Ch. 5, “Shaping Chinese Medicine: Integration, Innovation, Synthesis,” 2002, 134-163.



	<p>David Kessler, "Cancer and Herbs," <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i>, 2000, 342: 1742-3.</p> <p>Ian Johnson, "Nobel Renews Debate on Chinese medicine," <i>New York Times</i>, 10 Oct. 2015.</p>
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– This syllabus is subject to change –