

Harmony 和, Health and Lifestyle Diseases in Classical Chinese Medicine

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Abstract

Harmony is one of the common translations for the Chinese character 和 (hé), an indispensable philosophical and cultural concept in Chinese history. Harmony (he 和), that blends different things and makes them balanced, is also very important for the practice of Chinese Medicine.

With this paper we set out to analyze how Harmony (he 和) influenced the discourse and praxis of Chinese Medicine. We have focused on selected examples from different chapters of the Ancient Medical Canon "Huangdi Neijing" 《黄帝内经》 (*The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon*). We show that Chinese Medicine states: health and disease are rooted in very fundamental levels of Harmony (he 和), or disharmony, in case of diseases. We conclude that Harmony (he 和) plays a central role in Chinese Medicine, in which maintaining and pursuing harmony in all aspects of lifestyle are fundamental aspects in the prevention of diseases and the search for longevity.

1. Introduction

The Chinese character 和 (hé), commonly translated to Harmony, is a very popular and indispensable philosophical and cultural concept in Chinese history. As a very important concept also in Chinese medicine, it has been practiced in daily life in China for several thousand years.

The meaning of the character 和 (hé) has been encoded in the original inscription on bones and the concept of Harmony was already present in early Chinese civilization.

To understand the meaning of 和 (hé), we need to look back to old inscriptions because the character He used in modern Chinese is a simplified version that despite being much more convenient and faster to write, it fails to provide the original meaning behind this character.

When analyzing the original character 龢 (hé), we realize that the idea behind this sinogram is to describe a situation where several bamboo pipes are played by the mouth. The mouth blows in this instrument and makes a harmonious chord (See Figure 1).

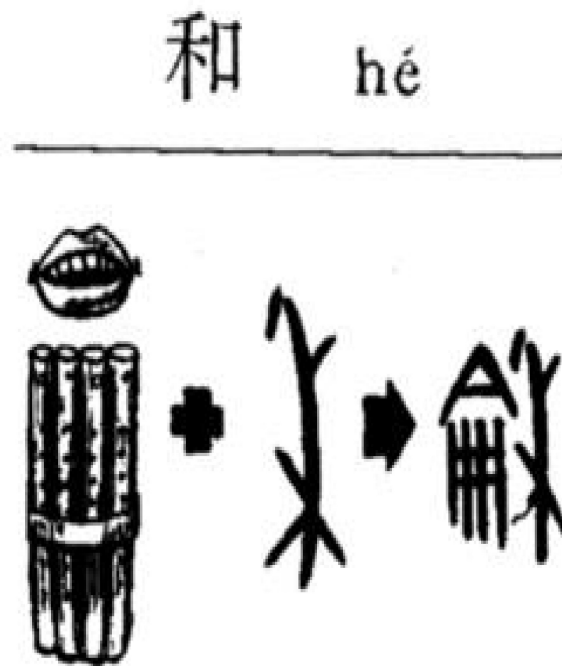


Figure 1 – The Origin of The Character 龢 hé (Harmony)¹

Chinese people have first used the principle of harmony to explain the relationship between Yin and Yang.

Harmony was discussed and interpreted by all the important philosophers in ancient China, including Laozi, Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi, and Zhuangzi.

¹ Liu, G. & Buck, C. *Foundations of Theory for Ancient Chinese Medicine*. Singing Dragon, 2015 p. 157.

Daoism and Confucianism have a tremendous influence on Chinese philosophy and culture, and then on the concept of harmony (hé), which blends different things and makes them balanced. This has become an indispensable concept that is practiced in Chinese daily life.

We can see below some examples selected from “The Analects”, a classical book of Confucianism and also from the Taoist classic Dao Dejing (also known as Tao Te King)

The Analects 13.23

“The Junzi (Gentleman) harmonizes but does not seek sameness, whereas the petty person seeks sameness but does not harmonize”.²

Dao Dejing 42

“Tao begets the one, the one begets the two, the two begets the three, And the three gives birth to all things (in the universe). All things in the universe bear yin and embrace yang, where the central and harmonious qi makes them in harmony.”³

“Harmony” is different from “sameness” which cannot tolerate difference.

“Harmony”, however, not only contains “difference”, but also encourages the coexistence of “difference”.

For this reason, it is important to understand that harmony evolved to be a multidimensional and broad concept that was applied to different fields, such as music, rituals, cosmology, politics, mathematics, engineering and architecture, social relationships, and of course, Chinese Medicine.

Almost everyone who travels to Beijing will pay a visit to the Forbidden City. Over there, you will find that inside this imperial palace, the main and

² “君子和而不同，小人同而不和。”

³ “道生一，一生二，二生三，三生万物。万物负阴而抱阳，冲气以为和。” And here, according with Prof. Andrea Mercedes Riegel, another possible translation to “冲气以为和” is “They infuse Qi in order to harmonize them”.

most important hall has the character 和 He within its name. The Great Harmony Hall (太和殿) was used to hold a grand ceremony when an emperor was to ascend the throne. That was also the hall used by the emperor to accept greetings from his ministers.⁴

During the opening ceremony at the Olympic games held in Beijing in 2008, more than 3000 dancers used small wooden boxes to form the Chinese character 和 (hé).

2 The Role of Harmony in Chinese Medicine



Figure 2 – *The Five Phases – “Metal (金), Wood(土), Water(水), Fire(火), and Soil(土) must balance each other”.*⁵

⁴ There are also two important halls just behind the Great Harmony Hall (太和殿), which have Harmony (Hé 和) in their names as well: The Central Harmony Hall (中和殿) and the Protect Harmony Hall (保和殿) See Guohui, Liu, & Charles, Buck. *Foundations of Theory for Ancient Chinese Medicine*. Singing Dragon, 2015 p. 156.

⁵ “金木水火土，当更相平” – Seventy-Five Difficult Issue of the Classical book 《黄帝八十一难经》 "The Huang Emperor's Canon of Eighty – One *Difficult* Issues also known as – The Nanjing . Here the last character 平 (Píng) means “Balance” and take the connotation of Harmony as a state of dynamical balance between five different “elements” the compose the model of 5 Phases.

The ancient Chinese people believed that health and disease are rooted in very fundamental levels of Harmony, or disharmony, in case of diseases. Some texts also use the terms balance and unbalance. Those have the very same meaning in this context. For this reason, we can state that he 和 is the “ultimate aim of philosophy of Chinese Medicine”⁶ In a broader sense, we can state that he 和 has many connotations in the philosophy of Chinese Medicine. However, the most fundamental levels are the harmony (he 和) between Yin and Yang (阴阳) and the harmony (he 和) between each one of the 5 phases (五行).

Figure 2 shows a graphical representation of the dynamic harmony of the 5 phases. With the harmony (he 和) between Yin 阴 and Yang 阳 located in its center, the inner circle connecting the bodies of each dragon represents the generation cycle (生 sheng) and the outer circle, the controlling cycle (ke 克). The 5 phases theory show us that the concept of harmony involves flexibility, adaptation, and dynamism between different elements.⁷

We can also include inside this framework, other important fields where Harmony (和)

Plays a central role: The harmony (he 和) between body and mind/spirit (形神); The harmony (he 和) between qi and blood (气血), and the harmony (he 和) between wei qi and yong qi (卫营气).

Now, we will analyze the role of harmony in Chinese Medicine using some examples selected from different chapters of the Huangdi Neijing 《黄帝内经》.⁸

⁶ Fengli, Lan. *Culture, Philosophy, And Chinese Medicine*. Peter Lang, 2012.

⁷ The dark dragon represents water phase (水). The dark water generates the green dragon (wood木). The green wood generates red dragon (fire火). The red fire generates the yellow dragon (earth土). The yellow earth dragon generates the white dragon (metal金), and white metal dragon generates the dark dragon (water水), completing the generation (生). On the other hand, the water dragon restricts the fire dragon. The fire dragon restricts the metal dragon, the metal dragon restricts the wood dragon, and the wood dragon restricts the earth dragon, completing the restriction/control (克) cycle. The 2 cycles (五行生克) are interconnected and must keep balance between each other.

⁸ Huangdi Neijing 《黄帝内经》 The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon is considered the earliest and the most important written work of Chinese Medicine. It was compiled during the Warring States period (475-221 BC). Until nowadays, this is considered the most fundamental and representative medical text. It is composed of two

In *Lingshu* – Chapter 17 we can notice that the twelve organs also rely on harmony to perform their functions in the human body.

“The lung qi reaches the nose. The lung being in harmony, the nose can perceive odors.

The heart qi reaches the tongue. The heart being in harmony, the tongue can recognize the 5 flavors.

The liver qi reaches the eyes. The liver being in harmony, the eyes can distinguish the 5 colors.

The spleen qi reaches the mouth. The spleen being in harmony, the mouth can appreciate the “5 cereals” (to eat with appetite).

The kidney qi reaches ears. The kidney being in harmony, the ears can perceive the 5 sounds.”⁹

In chapter 8 of *Suwen*, the imperial bureaucratic hierarchy is metaphorically used as a way to describe functions and characteristics of these twelve organs. Finally, the last sentence makes it clear that they need to keep coordination and harmony among each other.

“...The heart is the official functioning as ruler. (...) The lung is the official functioning

as chancellor and mentor. The liver is the official functioning as general.(...)

The spleen

and the stomach are the officials responsible for grain storage (...). The

kidneys are the

official functioning as operator with force....All these twelve officials must not lose

[contact with] each other....”¹⁰

texts: *Suwen* (素問), also known as *Basic Questions*, and *Lingshu* (靈樞) [*Spiritual Pivot*], which discusses acupuncture therapy. Each text has 81 chapters.

⁹ We have selected only the 5 zang organs to illustrate our example. The complete text of *Lingshu* – Chapter 17 includes all the twelve zang Fu: 《脉度》故肺气通于鼻，肺和则鼻能知臭香矣；心气通于舌，心和则舌能知五味矣；肝气通于目，肝和则目能辨五色矣；脾气通于口，脾和则口能知五谷矣；肾气通于耳，肾和则耳能闻五音矣。五藏不和，则七窍不通；六府不合则留为痛。

¹⁰ Once again, we have just selected the zang organs for our example, although the original text of *Suwen* – Chapter 8 describes the metaphors to all the twelve zang Fu organs: 《灵兰秘典论》“心者，君主之官也， (...)。肺者，相傅之官， (...)。肝者

Chapter 47 of *Lingshu* emphasizes the importance of harmony in the most fundamental functional layers of the human body.

“This is why: When blood and qi are harmonized, the Jingmai circulate, enlarge the routes of Yin and Yang, consolidate the muscles and bones and facilitate joint movements. When Wei qi (“defensive energy”) is in harmony, the flesh masses are relaxed and the skin and hair are supple.”¹¹

2.1 “Disharmony” – Bu He (不和)

Now we will see some examples describing situations when the body fails to support this balance or harmony.

In *Suwen* – Chapter 62 we can find the following passage:

“If blood and qi are not in harmony, then the one hundred diseases (cause change and transformation) come into existence by transformation. For this reason [the way for regulation] is to care for the channels.”¹²

Another illustrative example is found in *Suwen* – Chapter 67:

“When the different kinds of qi agree with (reach) each other, then this results in harmony. When they do not agree with each other, then this results in disease.”¹³

This sentence reinforces the very fundamental relationship between Harmony and the coexistence of “difference”.

，将军之官，(...)。胆者，中正之官，(...)。脾胃者，仓廩之官，(...)。肾者，作强之官，(...)。凡此十二官者，不得相失也....”。

¹¹ 《本藏》“是故血和则经脉流行，营复阴阳，筋骨劲强，关节清利矣；卫气和则分肉解利，皮肤调柔，腠理致密矣。”

¹² 《调经论》“血气不和，百病乃变化而生，是故守经隧焉”。 Here, the term “one hundred diseases” (百病) is a metaphor that means “all kinds of diseases”. This metaphor is extensively used in the text *Huangdi Neijing* to describe a myriad of diseases. And here the term 隧焉 (jingsui) means the connections between the five viscera.

¹³ 《五运行大论》“上下相遘，寒暑相临，气相得则和，不相得则病”。

We can also find an even more refined example in *Suwen* – Chapter 45:

“When the stomach is not in harmony, then the jing qi is exhausted. When the jing qi is exhausted, then it does not provide support for the four limbs.”¹⁴

This passage is important because it shows us that from the perspective of the Chinese Medicine, disharmony or imbalance is the root of all diseases and physiological disorders, which means that the proportion of body's yin and yang is out of its normal, becoming unequal and uncoordinated.

In all these textual passages, “bù hé” (不和) means “disharmony”, “not harmonious”, “not in harmony”.

Analyzing the commentary of Wang Bing on *Suwen* – Chapter 81, we find the importance of Harmony to the stability of shen (mind/spirit) for the ancient Chinese.

“When the qi is in harmony, then the spirit is in peace.
When the spirit is in peace, then this is clearly reflected externally.
When the qi is not in harmony, then the spirit is not guarded.
When the spirit is not guarded, then the external luster decreases”

Shen, partially translated as spirit or mental vitality¹⁵, has a central role in both diagnostics and prognostic. This passage has an important significance to diagnostics in Chinese Medicine because the methodology and praxis of the diagnostic in Chinese Medicine rely almost exclusively on the analysis and interpretation of external manifestations, which is then used to identify an array of internal unbalances and to define patterns of disharmony.

The importance of shen is emphasized in *Lingshu* – Chapter 54:

¹⁴ 《厥论》“胃不和，则精气竭，精气竭，则不营其四支也”。 Here, the condition of disharmony expands and manifests at the four limbs level and probably through all the spheres of influence of the Stomach in Human body.

¹⁵ To understand more about this important topic see Fengli, Lan, Friedrich Wallner, and Claudia Wobovnik. *Shen, Psychotherapy, And Acupuncture*. Peter Lang, 2011.

“To lose the shen is death; to hold the shen is life.”¹⁶

Shen depends on the harmony of qi to keep its own harmony.

2.2 Tiáo (调) – Restoring the Harmony/balance

Tiáo (调) means to regulate, to adjust, to balance, or to mediate. In the practice of Chinese Medicine, we can consider tiáo (调) as the most fundamental therapeutic principle applied to all of its therapeutic methods, including Acupuncture, Herbs prescriptions, Diet, Tuina, Qigong, etc.

Tiáo (调) is the action aiming to restore the balance/Harmony (Píng平/Hé和).

The original meaning of this character is also related to music¹⁷.

Once harmony is restored, the body is naturally healed. Chinese Medicine doctors gather clinical information to identify disharmonies manifested as symptoms and signs.

This is the first priority in Chinese Medicine diagnostics and results in the determination of a pattern of disharmony¹⁸. The treatment will attempt to re-balance the pattern of disharmony in the body, re-establishing health.

Suwen – Chapter 74 and *Ling Shu* Chapter 67 have some good examples of the importance of the concept Tiáo 调:

Suwen – Chapter 74:

¹⁶ 《天年》“失神者死，得神者生也”。

¹⁷ Once again, what we have in modern texts is the character 调, a simplified version of the character 調. The *Shuo Wen Jie Zi* 說文解字 or *The Origin of Chinese Characters* shows that the relationship between 龠 (Hé) Harmony and 調 (Tiáo) is so close that they could be considered as synonyms. See 说文解字 言部曰。調、龠也。此與口部和音同義別。經傳多假和爲龠。从龠。禾聲。讀與味同。

¹⁸ In *Huandi Neijing Suwen* there are three chapters that have the character 调 in the title: *Suwen* – Chapter 2 《四气调神大论》; *Suwen* – Chapter 34 《逆调论》, and *Suwen* – Chapter 62. 《调经论》 which reflects the great relevance that was given to this concept. Chapter 62 of *Suwen* is regarded as one of the most important chapters of the entire book, setting the fundamental guidelines to treatments in Chinese Medicine.

“[Huang] Di: “To balance the qi, how to proceed?” Qi Bo: “Carefully investigate where yin and yang are present and *regulate*¹⁹ them until a *balance*²⁰ is reached.”²¹

Ling Shu – Chapter 67:

“When Yin and Yang are **balanced**²², blood and qi are fluid and free-flowing. As soon as the needle penetrates [the body] the qi rises up and immediately [the needle and the qi] join up”²³

3 Harmonic Lifestyles and Classical Chinese Medicine

Knowing that harmony is so important to determine health and disease, the question that remains is: How to live in Harmony?

Huangdi Neijing also provides an extensive and precious amount of information about this fundamental question.

The very first chapters of this classic (Suwen 1, 2 and 3) are all dedicated to the analysis of the reasons why the lifespan of a human being was so short, and to give advice about how to protect and prolong one's life. Chapters 8 and 54 of *Ling Shu* also give us very important discussions about this topic. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks of these chapters are strongly influenced and modeled by the *neidan shu*, the ancient esoteric daoist doctrines that involve physical, mental, and spiritual practices aiming to prolong life and create an immortal spiritual body that would survive after death.

Lets examine some selected examples:

Suwen – Chapter 1

“I have heard that the people of high antiquity, all exceeded one hundred years.(...) The people of high antiquity, those who knew the Way, they modeled [their behavior] on yin and yang and they complied with

¹⁹ 调 tiáo.

²⁰ 平 píng.

²¹ 《至真要大论》“谨察阴阳所在而调之，以平为期”。

²² 和调 hé tiáo.

²³ 《五运行大论》“阴阳和调，而血气淖泽滑利，故针入而气出，疾而相逢也。”

the arts and the calculations.²⁴ [Their] eating and drinking was moderate. [Their] rising and resting had regularity. They did not tax [themselves] with meaningless work. In food and drinking they observed moderation.”²⁵

Wang Bing's comment on *Suwen* – Chapter 1 is also very important:

“When one carefully nourishes body and Mind (Xing/Shen), one receives the true qi from heaven. Hence it is possible to make full use of the years allotted by heaven.”

The text of this same chapter also discusses about lifestyle diseases and premature death.

“The fact that people of today are different ²⁶ is because they take wine as an [ordinary] beverage, and they adopt absurd [behavior] as regular [behavior].

They are drunk when they enter the [women’s] chambers²⁷. Through their lust they exhaust their essence, through their wastefulness they dissipate their true [qi].”²⁸

Suwen – Chapter 2 recommends different approaches in lifestyle, aiming to adapt our body and emotions to live in harmony during changes of the 4 seasons:

“The three months of spring, Go to rest late at night and wake up early.

²⁴ Here the term 术数 (shushu) means “magic calculations” that one must skill to practice the arts of fengshui and divination.

²⁵ 《上古天真论》“余闻上古之人(...) 岐伯对曰：上古之人，其知道者，法于阴阳，和于术数，食饮有节，起居有常，不妄作劳，故能形与神俱，而尽终其天年，度百岁乃去”。

²⁶ Meaning that their lives have a short span.

²⁷ Here the meaning is that they are drunk when they engage sexual relationships.

²⁸ 《上古天真论》“今时之人不然也，以酒为浆，以妄为常，醉以入房，以欲竭其精，以耗散其真，...”。

Move through the courtyard with long strides. Dishevel the hair and relax the physical appearance, thereby cause the mind [to orient itself on] life.

Foster all life and do not kill, be generous and agreeable, give freely and do not punish.

This is the way of honoring the qi of spring and nourishing life during this season.

Going against these characteristics of the seasonal flow will have harmful effects on the liver.”²⁹

Lingshu Chapter 54 defines the precondition to live longer:

“[Longevity results from]: The solidity and firmness of the 5 organs; The regularity of the circulation of blood and vessels...;The harmonious circulation of ying (nutritive energy) and wei (defensive energy); The balanced rhythm of respiration; The conformity of the circulation of qi (energy)...When [every function] follows the normal rules, life can be prolonged.”³⁰

And finally, *Lingshu* – Chapter 8 has also this important observation about longevity:

“The way of the sages to nourish life was: to live strictly in accord with the four seasons by adapting to cold and heat, to live in peace by harmonizing anger and joy, balancing Yang and Yin by regulating the hard and the soft, Living in this way the mean pathogens do not reach [the body] and one can live a long life.”³¹

²⁹ 《四气调神大论》“春三月，此谓发陈，天地俱生，万物以荣，夜卧早起，广步于庭，被发缓形，以使志生，生而勿杀，予而勿夺，赏而勿罚，此春气之应养生之道也。逆之则伤肝...”。

³⁰ 《天年》岐伯曰：五藏坚固，血脉和调，肌肉解利，皮肤致密，营卫之行，不失其常，呼吸微徐，气以度行，六府化谷，津液布扬，各如其常，故能长久。”

³¹ 《本神》“故智者之养生也，必顺四时而适寒暑，和喜怒而安居处，节阴阳而调刚柔。如是，则僻邪不至，长生久视”。

Classical Chinese Medical theories have discussed in great details, virtually all the aspects of the human life, as for example, work and rest³², sex life³³, sleep habits³⁴, food habits, emotional balance, and the relationship between human being and environment.³⁵

3.1 The Harmony of Food and Flavors

When discussing the harmony of food and flavors, Huangdi Neijing does not stress a strictly defined diet plan, but instead, emphasizes the variety of food selections.

What we eat should correspond to individual needs, seasonal changes, and the balance of energies and flavors.

Suwen – Chapter 3

“Too much sour food causes a hyperactive liver ...; Too much salty food damages the bones ... Too much sweet food disperses the qi of the heart ...; Too much bitter food overloads the digestive system ...; Too much pungent food leads to flabby muscles and impaired spirit.”

Lingshu – Chapter 56 is entirely dedicated to discussions about the harmony of flavors and also have important food/flavor prohibitions :

“The “5 prohibitions” are: Spicy flavor is prohibited in diseases of the liver; Salty flavor is prohibited in diseases of the heart; Sour flavor is

³² See Huangdi Neijing Suwen Chapters 23 and 78.

³³ This is a very long and important topic extensively discussed in Ancient Chinese Culture. See Ruan, Fangfu, and Molleen Matsumura. *Sex In China*. New York: Plenum Press, 1991 and also Leo, Jessieca. *Sex In The Yellow Emperor's Basic Questions*. Dunedin, FL: Three Pines Press, 2011.

³⁴ See Huangdi Neijing Lingshu Chapter 43.

³⁵ Suwen Chapter 67 discusses and places all these aspects inside the framework of the Five Phases. See this example: “Anxiety harms the lung; joy dominates anxiety. Heat harms the skin and the body hair; cold dominates heat. acrid [flavor] harms the skin and the body hair; bitter [flavor] dominates acrid [flavor].” Here we can find factors of daily life as food habits, emotions and environment being discussed. 《五运行大论》” 忧伤肺，喜胜忧，热伤皮毛，寒胜热，辛伤皮毛，苦胜辛”。

prohibited in diseases of the spleen; Sweet flavor is prohibited in diseases of the kidney; Bitter flavor is prohibited in diseases of the lung.”³⁶

It is important to remember here that these fundamental flavor combinations and prohibitions are also the same that we commonly use to compose herbal prescriptions. The sophisticated therapy of Chinese Herbal medicine and healthy food therapy are branches that share this same root and have many fields of intersection because many Chinese herbs are also used as ingredients to compose healthy dishes.

If you go to large supermarkets in China or in some China-towns around the world, you can easily find some kinds of packs with small amounts of Chinese herbs already combined and “ready to use” for preparation of healthy soups or other medicinal food recipes.

Daoist practitioners also have emphasized the high importance of the ingestion of balanced food. There are even recipes and specific diets tailored to the practitioner that searches for longevity and immortality. There are recipes that make it clear that they were conceived for those seeking to become (or attain) the immortality.³⁷

3.2 Environment and Living surroundings

Chinese Medicine also stresses the importance of living in a good environment; of pursuing harmony, balance, and the coexistence between human and nature, thus establishing a society with harmony and order. These are the fundamental principles of the art of Feng Shui. A proper living environment can also promote health. To the ancient Chinese everything matters: locations, buildings and room design are influenced by the energy surrounding them. The place of living must have a good "Feng Shui".³⁸

³⁶ 《五味》 “五禁：肝病禁辛，心病禁咸，脾病禁酸，肾病禁甘，肺病禁苦。”

³⁷ In order to understand more about this topic, see Arthur, Shawn. *Ancient Daoist Diets For Health And Longevity*. Boston University, 2007. For a study about the cross-cultural influences on Chinese dietary, see Husihui., et al. *A Soup For The Qan*. Brill, 2010.

³⁸ See Ole Bruun . *An Introduction to Feng Shui and Fengshui in China: Geomantic Divination Between State Orthodoxy and Popular Religion*. A more expanded discussion can be found in Ole Bruun and Arne Kalland. “*Images of Nature: An Introduction to the Study of Man—Environment Relations in Asia*” in Ole Bruun and Arne

4 Conclusion

The importance of understanding all the aspects of harmony and its uses to inspire and guide sustainable lifestyles based on the model idealized in Ancient China, cannot be fully examined in a single paper.

The pressures of life in the 21st century are manifold. Related to work we have stress, unemployment, low wages, overtime. When not working eating habits; abusive use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; compulsive gambling, internet gaming, and also sexual behavior. These dramatic changes in lifestyle we are experiencing impose new challenges and demand different approaches to the prevention and the treatment of lifestyle diseases.

Environmental issues as the abusive use of pesticides, food contamination, pollution (air, water, electromagnetic fields, etc), destruction of ecosystems, GMOs dissemination and also the failure to apply some basic sanitary policies and others, all exert enormous pressure in reshaping lifestyles globally.³⁹ Economical and cultural globalization also plays an important role in amplifying social and cultural tensions and anxieties. Paradoxically, these changes produce both accommodation and resistance in all aspects of life. Even the practice of Chinese Medicine faces challenges and risks⁴⁰. We believe that these issues are interconnected. A multidisciplinary approach, taking in consideration the complexities and dynamics of global sociocultural transformations, is necessary in discussing proposals for action⁴¹.

Kalland (Eds) , *Asian Perception of Nature: A Critical Approach*. Curzon Press, 1995. pp. 1-24.

³⁹ For an specific study about the transformations of natural environments in Modern China, see Judith, Shapiro *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*, Cambridge University Press, 2001 and also from the same author, *China's Environmental Challenges*. Polity Press, 2012. For an historic account, see Robert B. Marks "China: Its Environment and History". Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011 and "The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China", by Mark Elvin. Yale University Press, 2008.

⁴⁰ See Volker , Scheid. *Chinese Medicine In Contemporary China*. Duke University Press, 2002 and Heiner Fruehauf. "Chinese Medicine In Crisis: Science, Politics, And The Making Of "TCM" . *Classicalchinesemedicine.org*. 2016. Web. 11 Mar. 2016.

⁴¹ The success of these multicultural approaches in practice depends on new epistemological and specific methodological frameworks. See Wallner, Fritz (1994). *Constructive realism: Aspects of a new epistemological movement, Philosophica 11*. Vienna: Braumuller.

Chinese Medicine and the concept of Harmony exposed in this presentation already gives a major contribution, but it is possible to do much more..

In several western countries, Chinese medicine is already part of both public health programs and private health insurance.

Brazil is an example of a country where, since 2006, the public health system, via the National Policy on Integrative and Complementary Practices of the Unified Health System, offers free Acupuncture and Tuina treatments and preventive initiatives such as Qigong and Taiji Quan to patients in public hospitals. Even more importantly, the Brazilian population shows growing acceptance of those as family health strategies. This hints that the ancient Chinese model of Harmonic Lifestyles, when implemented carefully and rationally, can be considered universal and able to produce successful results all around the world.

Appendix

List of all chapters of Huangdi Neijing 《黄帝内经》 Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon cited in this paper.

From Suwen

- Chapter 1 《上古天真论》
- Chapter 2 《四气调神大论》
- Chapter 3 《生气通天论》
- Chapter 8 《灵兰秘典论》
- Chapter 23 《宣明五气》
- Chapter 45 《厥论》
- Chapter 62 《调经论》
- Chapter 67 《五运行大论》
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- Chapter 8 《本神》
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- Chapter 47 《本藏》
Chapter 54 《天年》
Chapter 56 《五味》
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Life Sciences and Lifestyle in the View of Buddhism

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Abstract

The paper is intended to explore the Buddhist way to deal with the human life in some unique way. This way could be partly compared with a thing done by modern scientists called the life sciences which include the study of the human life in terms of biology, medical science, and so on. The main purpose of the paper is not intended to study the Buddhist philosophy in terms of the pure philosophy, but to apply the Buddhist philosophy as said to the study of the possible way to form a thing that could be called a Buddhist medical and biological insight concerning the nature of the human life as a whole, and how to live such a human life happily as most as possible.

Buddhist Life Sciences

I would like to begin with a thing called the Buddhist life sciences. I have used this term to mean the knowledge that provides us at least two things: (1) what is the nature of the human life, and (2) how to live such a human life happily as most as possible. It seems to be well known that what taught by the Buddha is mainly concerned with the question 'what the human life is.' And we know that why the Buddha begins with this question. For the Buddha, before we would know how to make a thing better, we need to know its nature because the way to make a thing better is nothing but to follow the way provided by nature and such a way has been already determined by nature itself as a proper way.

Sometimes Buddhism has been mentioned as a naturalist religion, to be compared with another kind of religion which is a theistic religion. The difference between these two kinds of religion lies in that the theistic religion likes to say that God is the source of important things taught in the religion such as goodness. But in a naturalist religion, everything has been explained