

Twenty Years of Nèijīng Research: What Has Been Learned? Part 2. Nèijīng Nature-Based Medicine — Theoretical Principles

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Abstract

The *Huángdì nèijīng* is the primary source text for the entire profession of Chinese medicine. Despite this central importance, fully implementing a comprehensive clinical method based on its principles and theories has remained elusive. Because of this, the full potential of these principles and theories has remained underutilised in clinical practice, particularly in the West. Over the past twenty years, new approaches to classical text-based research have been developed using the techniques of classical text-based archaeology (see part 1 of this series of articles in issue 125 of the *Journal of Chinese Medicine*). This research methodology has led to the development of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, a comprehensive clinical practice based on the writings, principles and theories of the *Huángdì nèijīng*. In this article, I introduce basic principles of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine. In a subsequent article in this series, I will introduce technical aspects of this practice.

Keywords

Chinese medicine, classical text research, *Huángdì nèijīng*, acupuncture, *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine



I. *Nèijīng* medicine — why is a clinical method needed?

When discussing the need for the development of a specific *Nèijīng*-based clinical method, an initial question arises as to whether or not such a method is required, and if so, why? After all, if the writings of the *Nèijīng* present the original theories and practices of Chinese medicine, can these writings not be read directly as a medical textbook? My personal conclusion, based on twenty years of research,

is that a specific *Nèijīng*-based clinical method is needed now for four primary reasons: (1) the nature of the classical Chinese language of the *Nèijīng* text; (2) the methodological requirements of classical text-based archaeology; (3) the nature of scholarship and scientific inquiry; and (4) the potential for *Nèijīng*-based medicine to develop as a recognised field within the wider context of Chinese medicine. These reasons will be elucidated below.

As noted previously, the *Nèijīng* is a collection of writings that were written by various authors in a classical Chinese

literary style that has been difficult to interpret fully. In *Nèijīng* text translation, it is not uncommon for a single text passage to support multiple points of view, each of which is valid and technically correct. This means that for any given text passage, multiple valid viewpoints often coexist. The result is that establishing definitive translations for any given text passage remains methodologically impossible. A more realistic view of classical text translation is that for any given text passage, a variety of interpretations always exists, each being more or less faithful to the original source language and historical context, each providing unique vantage points, and each being more or less effective in clinical practice. In this way, each translation reflects the personal viewpoints and understandings of the individual translator. Thus in classical text translation, best practices require that each translator clearly state their own translation viewpoints to allow the reader to properly evaluate their work. For example, my own understanding, which has developed over the past several decades of research, is that the *Nèijīng* text is a collection of early scientific writings based on detailed observations of the natural world and the principles of the unseen patterns of space-time motion that create and govern the universe. From these scientific observations, the authors of the text then established a comprehensive practice of medicine. This means that, as a translator, when I am confronted with a specific text passage that contains multiple possible meanings, I will typically choose the one that is consistent with this basic viewpoint. Another equally competent translator will typically make different choices that may also be valid, and this bias should also be stated clearly so that the reader can properly evaluate their work.¹ Furthermore, any specific clinical method that arises from a given point of view will also reflect these biases. Thus, any *Nèijīng*-based clinical method should also identify the individual or individuals that created the method along with their translation viewpoints so that the method can be evaluated by others properly. While the impossibility of creating a definitive translation and method may at first appear to be a limitation of classical text translation, it is in fact a strength that deepens our understanding and impact of these practices.²

A second point relates to the methodological requirements of classical text-based archaeology. In this research method, the translator takes unique validation steps to clarify and validate text interpretations. In this process, clinical efficacy is a primary validation step of the research process. Simply stated, it has been my repeated experience that accurate text translations lead to significantly better clinical outcomes. Thus the clinical method is an important validation step in the research process. If an agreed-upon clinical method cannot be established and defined clearly, then this critical validation

step is no longer valid (figure 1).³

A third point relates to the nature of scholarship and scientific inquiry. Traditionally, the practice of Chinese medicine has been established and supported by both of these practices. Scholarship and scientific inquiry have several defining characteristics: (1) in the scientific method conclusions are derived from observations of natural phenomena; (2) knowledge derived from the scientific method typically exists within established theoretical frameworks;⁴ (3) theories and knowledge derived from the scientific method must possess positive predictive value; (4) the process of scholarship is commonly carried out in specialised groups that have extensive levels of training and experience and possess their own recognised culture, language, and professional standards; (5) all scholarly statements must be able to cite sources that can be verified and evaluated by others; (6) scholarly inquiries must always prioritise the acquisition of ever more truthful understandings of the world over the protection of any specific point of view; and (7) in both the scientific method and scholarly inquiry, any statement or belief can be questioned at any level, and if the statement proves false, it can and should be discarded or revised at any time.⁵ Early scientific and scholarly practices described in the *Nèijīng* represent one of the first true scientific endeavours in human history. As such, *Nèijīng* classical text research and any subsequent clinical method based on this research should also meet these basic standards. If a proposed clinical

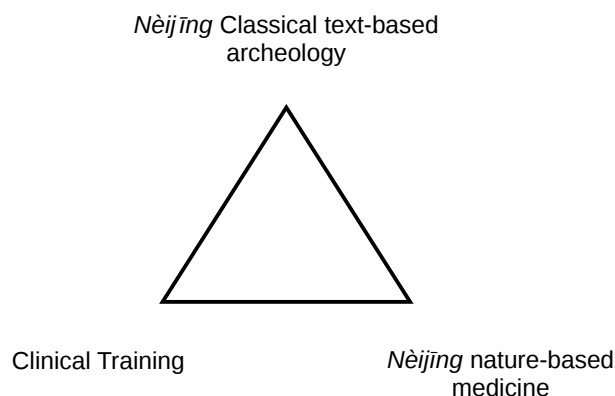


Figure 1. *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine — the research triangle

In *Nèijīng* classical text-based archeology a series of validation steps are used in the research process. Two important steps in this process are the evaluation of clinical efficacy and clinical teaching. During the past two decades, it has been observed that accurate translations lead to better clinical outcomes. For this reason, clinical efficacy is an important validation step in the research process. In addition, clinical teaching refines research findings through continual presentation and student questioning. These two aspects provide ongoing feedback, which continually improve and refine the translation process. Without a clearly defined clinical method, these two aspects cannot be assessed properly and cannot be used in the research method.

method cannot meet these standards, it cannot be evaluated properly and thus is of limited value.

A fourth point relates to the potential for *Nèijīng* medicine to develop as a recognised field within the wider context of Chinese medicine. In this regard, if a proposed clinical method cannot be defined and stated clearly, professional standards of training and practice cannot be established and maintained and the full potential for these practices to be used in the world to promote positive change cannot be realised. For all of the above reasons, it is my belief that a clearly defined *Nèijīng* clinical methodology is needed.

Any proposed *Nèijīng* clinical method must meet several basic criteria: (1) the clinical method should as much as possible be derived directly from and be consistent with the source language and theories of the *Nèijīng* itself and the history, culture, and language of early China; (2) the clinical method must be consistent with observable patterns of nature and the known universe as well as other findings in scientific inquiry; (3) the proposed method must be able to properly evaluate and interpret all clinical presentations that can be encountered in clinical practice; (4) the proposed method must achieve clinical outcomes that are significantly better than those achieved by current practices; and (5) the proposed method should allow practitioners with standard levels of training to achieve recognisable clinical competence, given proper training and study.^{6,7}

Over the past two decades of *Nèijīng* classical text-based archaeology, a specific clinical method has been developed to meet these basic criteria. The name given to this clinical method is *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine.⁸ *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine is a comprehensive clinical method derived directly from the writings of the *Nèijīng* text and the research findings of classical text-based archaeology. It is a clearly defined clinical method that can be assessed, studied and advanced in a collaborative, ongoing way using the methods of scholarship and scientific inquiry. While this method derives its core knowledge from traditional writings and practices of early China, because it is based on observable patterns of nature it also has the potential to complement and inform other modern practices and contemporary research with a goal of identifying innovative solutions to a wide range of current global health challenges.⁹ Because this method is derived from the principle writings of Chinese medicine, it also has the potential to invigorate the profession of Chinese medicine by raising new perspectives, questions and challenges regarding these original practices. Finally, and most importantly, *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine provides a comprehensive theory of human health and illness and, as such, represents a potentially revolutionary milestone in our human understanding of health and illness. In the rest of this article, I will discuss the basic principles of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine.

II. *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine — basic principles

A. The cosmos is a phenomena of continuous space-time motion and transformation

The basic principle that underlies all theories and practices of both the writings of the *Nèijīng* text and the practice of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine is that the universe is a phenomena of continuous space-time motion and transformation. In our daily lives, the world around us appears to be populated with a multitude of recognisable physical structures, each having their own unique tangible form.¹⁰ We perceive these tangible forms as the absolute nature of reality; however, the principles of *Nèijīng* natural science tell us that these perceptions are, in fact, simply a mistaken artefact of our human perception that does not reflect the true nature of reality itself. Instead, according to these descriptions, all things in the cosmos, including the celestial heavens, the natural world and our human bodies emanate from and are ruled by complex patterns of space-time motion and transformation that cannot be observed directly. This unseen world of space-time motion and transformation creates all aspects of the seen and unseen universe—this is the true nature of the cosmos.¹¹

According to the principles of *Nèijīng* natural science, while the vast majority of the universe exists in a state of continuous motion and transformation that is indiscernible to us, in certain unique instances these patterns materialise to become observable physical structures that we can discern with our senses. In both the *Nèijīng* text and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the discernible material aspects of space-time motion are called form (形 *xíng*), while the intangible patterns that create them are called the images (象 *xiàng*).

These ideas highlight a critical difference between early Chinese ways of interpreting the world and modern understandings. Simply put, the primary attitude of early Chinese scientific and philosophical writings, such as the *Nèijīng* and other early texts, is to prioritise the study of the unseen patterns of space-time motion that generate and govern the universe over the physical structures they create; in contrast, a majority of contemporary approaches focus on understanding the universe by studying the physical structures of the world alone. To put it another way, classical Chinese thinking prioritises the study of pattern over form, while modern thinking prioritises the study of form over pattern.¹²

B. The immaterial patterns of space-time motion and transformation that create and govern the universe have basic qualities

While the majority of patterns of space-time motion that generate and govern our universe cannot be appreciated by our senses directly, we can know them by the study of the physical structures they create. For this reason, by studying

the physical structures of the universe we can begin to understand the immaterial patterns that generate and rule them. This was the revolutionary approach used in *Nèijīng* natural science that was used to build a comprehensive description of the universe.¹³

In *Nèijīng* natural science, all patterns of space-time motion and transformation arise from a single inherent tendency of the universe to move in cyclical patterns. This means that if we were able to travel into the very heart of the cosmos, we would find a single tendency to rock back and forth in continual cyclical patterns of motion. This deep inherent tendency of the universe to move in cyclical patterns appears to us *de novo*, that is, we do not know why it occurs or what precedes it. However, from this point forward, all aspects of the universe can be understood and described through this viewpoint. Because all descriptions in the *Nèijīng* derive from a single observation, the theories of *Nèijīng* natural science provide a unified theory of the universe, something as yet unattained by modern science.¹⁴

In *Nèijīng* natural science, the cyclical motion of the universe is comprised of two elemental phases: (1) a phase of expansion that dispels space-time outward and away from a source; and (2) a force of reversion and return that moves space-time backwards towards the initial source of movement. Because these qualities mirror and are the basis for the natural patterns of breath, in *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the universe—and everything it contains—are understood to be direct manifestations of the deep inherent

tendency of the universe to breathe. Put another way, the universe and everything in it are manifestations of a single cosmogenic breath that is in a state of constant change, moving into and out of different conformational states and expressions.¹⁵ In both *Nèijīng* natural science and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term for the expanding phase of space-time is *yáng* (陽), while the term for the reverting and returning phase of space-time is *yīn* (陰). From these two primary phases of motion all things in the universe have their origin and are understood (figure 2).¹⁶

In both the findings of contemporary cosmology and physics, as well as *Nèijīng* natural science, cosmological space is not understood as being simply an empty void.¹⁷ Rather, in these descriptions, the cosmos is understood to be a continuous fabric of space-time through which the complex patterns of motion and transformation that govern the universe pass and transform. An analogy can be made to the currents and tides of an ocean. In this example, the water of the ocean represents a medium through which the various currents and tides pass and are contained, while the currents and tides themselves arise from different external forces in nature, such as the patterns of wind and the gravitational forces of the moon. From the perspective of *Nèijīng* natural science, all motions in nature arise from and are driven by the primary cosmogenic breath of the universe.¹⁸ In both *Nèijīng* natural science and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term for the fabric of space-time is *qì* (氣) (figures 3 and 4).¹⁹

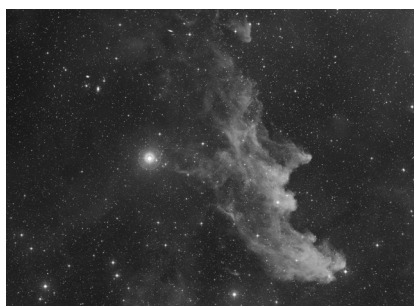


Figure 2. The cosmogenic breath of the universe

The universe is understood to exist as a single cosmogenic breath that manifests in a complex variety of material and immaterial ways. The cosmogenic breath has several basic aspects. The name for the expanding phase of the cosmogenic breath is *yáng* (陽), while the name for the reverting phase of the cosmogenic breath is *yīn* (陰). In this image of the Witch Head Nebula, stellar gases and dust undergo continuous cyclical transformations following the patterns of the expanding and contracting aspects of the cosmogenic *yīn* and *yáng* breath. [https://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/image_feature_1209.html]



Figure 3. The fabric of space-time

In the descriptions of both the *Nèijīng* text and the theories and practice of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the cosmological space of the universe is understood to exist as a continuous 'fabric' of space-time through which the various patterns of the universal *yīn* and *yáng* cosmogenic breath circulate and transform. An analogy can be made to an ocean and its currents and tides. In this analogy, the water of the ocean exists as a substrate through which the patterns of the currents and tides circulate, while the currents and tides themselves are created by external forces of nature and do not arise from the properties of the water itself. [<https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/sea-wave-gm688837980-126750035>]

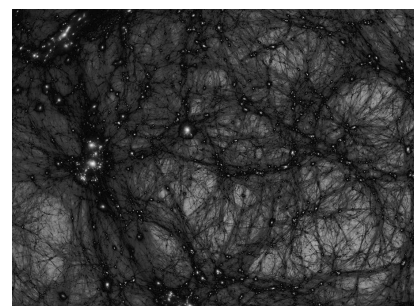


Figure 4. The tensegral universe

The space-time fabric of the universe is understood to be a unified tensegrity from which all material and immaterial manifestations arise and are joined. In this system, changes in one aspect influence and are transmitted instantaneously to all other parts. In this computer simulation of dark matter, different aspects and processes of the universe are joined together in a vast unseen tensegral web. [<https://apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap201025.html>]

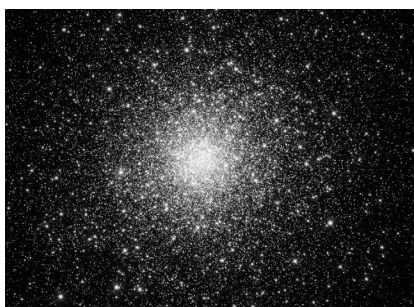


Figure 5. The transcendent dimension of space-time

All organised patterns of living systems are guided in their expressions by a special dimension of space-time that is characterised by a quality of transcendent illumination. This dimension of space-time exists in both hidden and expressed states. In its hidden state this dimension is called *shén* (神), while in its expressed state it is called *shén* illumination (神明). In the heavens, *shén* illumination can be seen in the illumination of the celestial bodies. In the human body, *shén* and *shén* illumination arise spontaneously within the heart. *Shén* illumination emanates from the heart and circulates through the body by the pathways of blood circulation. In its original form, acupuncture was a form of traditional surgery that regulated the circulation of *shén* illumination by normalising the blood circulation of the body. In this image, a multitude of stars in deep space emanate the qualities of *shén* illumination. [https://images.nasa.gov/details-GSFC_20171208_Archive_e001569]



Figure 6. The transcendent aspect of spiritual and religious experience

Because the transcendent dimensions of *shén* (神) and *shén* illumination (神明) guide the development and expression of all organised patterns and living things in the universe, it exists as a unified transcendent dimension running through all things. In this way, the dimensions of *shén* and *shén* illumination are seen to serve as the basis for human religious and spiritual experience. [<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3721524>].



Figure 7. The universal resonancescape

The universe exists as a complex resonance system constantly moving into and out of material form. These resonance patterns function as a tensegrity system in which changes to any part of the system influence and are transmitted instantaneously to all other parts of the system. In *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term for the resonant nature of the universe is the universal resonancescape. In this image, rain falling onto a lake creates complex resonant patterns on its surface. The pattern of the whole is influenced and changed instantaneously by each subsequent raindrop that falls. [<https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/big-puddle-with-ripples-and-bubbles-during-heavy-rain-gm854996328-140588411?clarity=false>]

... All aspects of the universe exist as different emanations and manifestations of a single cosmogenic breath.

In *Nèijīng* natural science, a fourth dimension of space-time plays a critical role in the creation and governance of the living universe. This special dimension exists in both potential and expressed states as qualities of transcendent illumination. In both *Nèijīng* natural science and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term for the dimension of transcendent illumination when it exists as a potential state is *shén* (神), while the term for this dimension in an expressed state of illumination is *shén* illumination (神明). In the universe, *shén* illumination arises in unique conditions where the cosmogenic breath of the universe comes into a state of balanced equilibrium. The primary actions of *shén* and *shén* illumination are to govern the coherence and expression of natural patterns and living systems.²⁰ In the celestial heavens, *shén* illumination is observable in the illumination of the celestial bodies. In the human body, *shén* was believed to arise in the heart from the normal structures and processes of anatomy and physiology, while the expressed form of *shén* illumination

both arises in and then emanates from the heart where it passes into the three-dimensional blood circulation. Just as all expressions in the universe arise out of a single cosmogenic breath, so too all expressions of *shén* and *shén* illumination represent different manifestations emanating from a single transcendent state (figures 5 and 6).^{21,22}

To summarise: In both *Nèijīng* natural science and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, all aspects of the universe exist as different emanations and manifestations of a single cosmogenic breath. This cosmogenic breath has four primary qualities: (1) an expanding phase of space-time motion termed *yáng*; (2) a reverting and returning phase of space-time motion termed *yīn*; (3) a fabric of space-time through which these circulations pass and in which they are contained termed *qì*; and (4) a transcendent dimension of space-time that exists in both potential and expressed forms that is responsible for governing the coherence and emergence of natural patterns and living systems termed *shén* and *shén* illumination.

C. The immaterial patterns of space-time motion and transformation that govern the universe exist in different dimensional states

In both *Nèijīng* natural science and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the patterns of space-time that generate and rule the universe are moving continually into and out of different spatiotemporal conformations. Each of these conformations can be defined by different levels of organisational order and numerical complexity. In *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term given to these different spatiotemporal conformations of space-time is *dimensional state*. Each dimensional state exists as a unique configuration of patterns with its own expressions and principles. As the organisational energy within a given dimensional state increases or decreases, it reaches a critical threshold at which time it flips into its next higher or lower order dimensional state in a series of discrete quantum steps. In *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the level of energy at which one dimensional state transits into its next higher or lower state is called the *dimensional threshold*, while the process of one dimensional state transformed into another is called *dimensional shifting*.

In the universe, the vast majority of dimensional states

and their transformations occur in aspects of space-time that are imperceptible to us. These unseen patterns communicate through complex tensegral-resonance patterns that are contained within the fabric of space-time *qi*.²³ In *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term used to describe the tensegral-resonance nature of the universe is *resonancescape* (figure 7). At any given point in the universe, the properties for that aspect of space-time can be described by the summation of local resonance patterns coexisting at that specific location and by the level of organisational order that exists in the local dimensional state. In *Nèijīng* natural science and other early Chinese texts, different dimensional spaces are indicated by the use of numerical integers. In this schema, dimensional states with higher levels of organisational order are defined by higher-order integers, while dimensional states with lower levels of organisational order are described by lower-order numbers (figures 8, 9, 10 and 11).²⁴

To summarise: The cosmogenic breath of the universe transits different dimensional states of organisational order in a series of quantum steps. Dimensional states interact via complex tensegral-resonance patterns through the fabric of space-time (*qi* 氣). Each dimensional state exhibits its

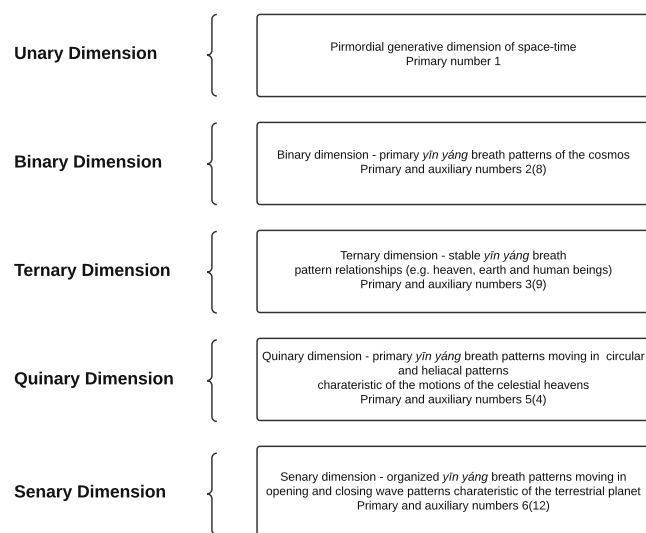


Figure 8. Dimensional expression

The breath of the universe is understood to transit different states of dimensional order in a series of quantum steps. Each dimensional state is characterised by a unique degree of organisational complexity. In these descriptions, different dimensional states are indicated by the use of primary and auxiliary numbers. Primary numbers are the numbers most commonly used to describe a specific dimensional state; auxiliary numbers are alternate numbers that are also used to describe the same dimensional state.

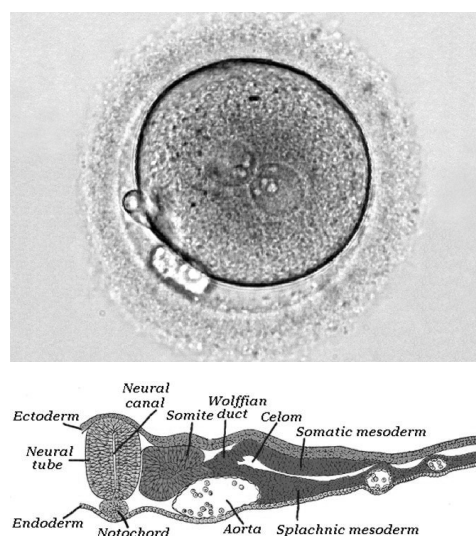


Figure 9(a) & (b). Binary/ternary dimensional order

The universe passes through a series of dimensional states with increasingly higher levels of organisational order. Beginning with a single unary dimension of order, space-time then shifts into a binary state of order. In this image of a human zygote (a), the binary-level development of the human embryo is shown. This level of dimensional order creates a unique world in which all things are characterised and defined by a binary reality. Next (b) as the zygote transforms into a maturing blastocyst and implants into the uterine lining it shifts into a ternary state of dimensional order and becomes the trilaminar germ disk. [9(a) <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zygote.1.jpg>; 9(b) <https://www.wikidoc.org/index.php/Mesoderm>]

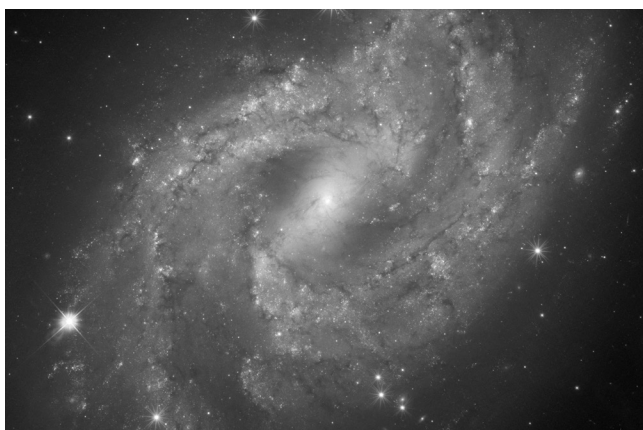


Figure 10. Quinary dimensional order

From the ternary level of dimensional order the space-time breath pattern transits into the quinary state of dimensional order. This pattern is characterised by the circular and heliacal patterns seen in the celestial heavens in such things as the turning of the stellar constellations in the night sky and the circular patterns of galaxies and solar systems. This dimensional state is indicated by the primary number five and the auxiliary number four. Here the number five describes the primary structure of a circle with four primary quadrants plus a centre axis of rotation. At other times the auxiliary number four is used to describe this same state—here describing the same pattern but simply omitting the central axis. In Nèijīng nature-based medicine, the term for the quinary fifth-level aspect of dimensional motion and order is the universal base pattern. In this image, patterns of the quinary level of dimensional order are seen in the spiral galaxy NGC 2525. [<https://apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap201023.html>]



Figure 11. Senary dimensional order

On our own planet earth, the senary level of dimensional order is seen in wave patterns of motion that undergo a continuous series of opening and closing motions. This state of dimensional order is indicated by the primary number six and the auxiliary number twelve. Here the number six describes the primary phases of a sinusoidal wave, and the auxiliary number twelve doubles this description by including both both *yīn* and *yáng* (i.e. day and night) aspects. In Nèijīng nature-based medicine, the term used for the senary sixth-level dimensional order that predominates on the earth is the terrestrial local pattern. In this image, waves circulating through the ocean move according to the patterns of the senary sixth-level dimension. [<https://www.pikist.com/free-photo-smuyb>]

own unique properties and patterns. The qualities for any given aspect of space-time in the universe can be defined by the level of organisational order and summation of the local resonance patterns present at its location.

B. All physical structures in the universe arise from immaterial patterns of space-time motion and transformation

While all aspects of space-time can be defined by their complex resonance state and degree of dimensional order within the local environment, a third parameter is needed to describe the universe fully. This parameter is the degree of materialisation present at any given location (figure 12).

As stated above, the vast majority of space-time motion patterns in the universe are invisible to us and cannot be perceived directly; they can however be known through the material forms they create. In these descriptions, all discernible forms in the universe exist as materialisations of unseen patterns of space-time motion as they move into and out of physical structure. Because of this, all material forms reflect the immaterial patterns of space-time motion that are present at the time of their creation. To illustrate this concept, we can examine patterns formed in a sand dune—in this example, the wind pushes through the sand to create various patterns of peaks and troughs. The sand that is pushed to the side forms the banks of a trough, while the trough represents the area through which the wind passes and circulates most strongly. In this example, the sides of the trough express the physical structures created by the wind, while the trough represents the passageways of its circulation. In both Nèijīng natural science and Nèijīng nature-based medicine, the terms given to the space where unseen patterns of circulation pass within physical form is the *graining pattern* (lǐ 理) or the *in-between space* (jiān 間). In the universe, all material forms, including all patterns of nature and the human body are formed by this universal principle, which can be summarised as follows: all organised material forms in the universe arise and evolve in ways to maximise the ease and efficiency of the immaterial patterns of space-time motion present in their environment at the time of their creation and continued existence (figure 13).^{25,26}

Since all patterns in the universe arise from four basic properties of space-time, and all physical structures are created by these immaterial aspects of motion, all physical structures in the universe are also created and governed by these four properties.²⁷ Because these four basic properties derive from a single deep tendency of the universe to breathe, all immaterial and material aspects of the universe—including all aspects of nature and the human body—exist as direct manifestations of the primordial cosmogenic breath. Due to this, all aspects of

the universe, including all aspects of the human body, can be described and understood in relation to the primary phases of breath motion. In both *Nèijīng* natural science and *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term for the aspect of space-time motion circulating in accordance with the cosmogenic breath patterns of the universe is *flow* (順), while the term for the aspect of space-time motion circulating against the cosmogenic breath patterns of the universe is *counterflow* (逆). Specific aspects of circulation that circulate in a flowing pattern are called proper (*zhèng* 正) patterns. Aspects of space-time motion that impede the cosmogenic breath patterns of the universe and engender disease are called pathogenic factors (*xié* 邪).

Thus, in *Nèijīng* natural science and the theories of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, all aspects of the human body, including every aspect of its anatomy and physiology, exist as direct manifestations of the cosmogenic breath of the universe. Further, all aspects of the human body are tied directly to all other aspects of the cosmos through a complex web of tensegral-resonance relationships mediated by the fabric of space-time (*qì* 氣). Two important

conclusions arise from these observations: (1) every human illness that has ever been or ever will be has at its origin a primary impairment of space-time breath motion; and (2) every therapeutic intervention that has ever been or ever will be involves the correction of these impaired breath motion patterns to some degree. And it is from these basic principles that the technical practice of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine will be established.

III. Summary

A clearly defined *Nèijīng*-based clinical method is required at this time for several reasons. To meet this requirement the practice of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine has been developed. This method is based on more than twenty years of *Nèijīng* research using the methodologies of *Nèijīng* classical text-based archaeology. During this period, a series of conceptual milestones have been reached that serve as the foundation for this method. In temporal order, these research milestones are the recognitions that: (1) the

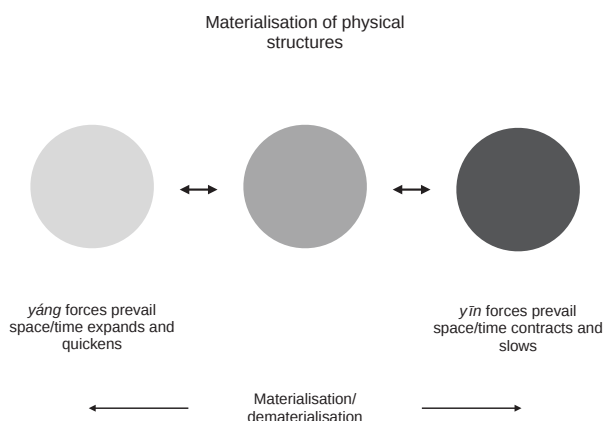


Figure 12. The materialisation/ dematerialisation of physical form

The universe is understood to be a complex resonance system that is largely indiscernible to our senses. In special cases, these intangible aspects materialise to become appreciable to our physical senses directly. As opposed to contemporary understandings in which physical matter and energy exist as two distinct states, these theories describe all things in the universe to be in a state of constant motion. In this model material aspects of the world are simply patterns of space-time motion that have slowed down enough to materialise into physical form. While they appear to us to be stationary they are in fact, simply moving too slowly for us to perceive. The materialisation of space-time occurs in places where the contracting and slowing forces of *yīn* predominate. In contrast, when *yáng* forces prevail, physical structures dematerialise and begin to move apart in more intangible ways.



Figure 13. The universal law of organised physical structures

While the majority of space-time motion patterns in the universe are indiscernible to us they can be known through the material forms they create. The universal principle that guides the materialisation of physical forms in the cosmos is that organised physical structures arise and evolve in ways to maximise the ease and efficiency of the intangible patterns of space-time motion circulating in their local environment at the time of their creation and continued existence. In this image, intangible forces of wind push through the sand to create a series of peaks and troughs. In this example, the banks of the trough create the material structure of the pattern, while the trough itself represents the passageway through which the wind circulates most strongly. In both the *Nèijīng* text and the theories and practice of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine, the term used to describe the material aspects of space-time motion is form (*xíng* 形), while the terms used to describe the circulatory passageways created within the form are graining patterns (*lǐ* 理) and in-between spaces (*jiān* 間). [<https://www.goodfreephotos.com/israel/other-israel/sand-dunes-landscape-with-sky-and-clouds-in-israel.jpg.php>]

Nèijīng is an early Chinese natural science text that defines the immaterial patterns of space-time motion that generate and govern the universe; (2) the intangible patterns of space-time motion that generate and govern the universe arise from a single unified tendency of the universe to breathe in cyclical patterns; (3) in these patterns, the cosmogenic breath of the universe transits through a series of different dimensional states and conformations; (4) these different dimensional states and conformations are governed by specific patterns and principles and are defined and indicated by a specific numerical order; (5) all of the organised material structures of the universe arise from intangible patterns of space-time motion following certain universal rules and principles; (6) all aspects of the human body exist as direct physical manifestations of the primary space-time breath patterns of the universe; (7) all human illnesses have as their primary pathology a primary impairment of breath motion; and (8) all successful therapeutic interventions address and ameliorate these impairments to some degree. Because *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine is a method based on a unified model of the nature of the universe, it has the potential to describe a universal model of human health and illness—a potential revolutionary advancement in human understanding. In the third part of this article series, I will describe technical aspects of the clinical practice of *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine. 醫經

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Endnotes

1. This requires that translators first understand and are able to state their own perspectives and viewpoints.
2. Along with other early Chinese philosophical and scientific writings such as the *Dào Dé jīng* (Classic of the Way) and *Yi jīng* (Classic of Changes), the *Nèijīng* is an example of a *jīng* (經) text. In Chinese literary traditions these texts are seminal writings that have the potential to create and nourish entire philosophical and scientific traditions. One of the defining hallmarks of classical *jīng* (經) texts is that, similar to any great work of art, they have the capacity to support many different points of view that can change over time. This diversity represents a strength rather than a weakness of these texts.
3. If practitioners do not have an established method and treat in unrelated and diverse ways, a clinical method cannot be evaluated properly.
4. Empirical observations existing outside of theoretical frameworks often serve as the starting point for scientific theories but, in themselves, do not express the full potential of the scientific method.
5. This is in contrast to lineage-based systems in which conservation of specific points of view is often maintained over generations and is not typically challenged directly.
6. Clinical medicine is a results-based practice. If current standards of therapy result in better clinical outcomes, they should be used instead for the benefit of patients.
7. If a clinical method cannot be taught to qualified practitioners in consistent ways over a reasonable amount of time, it is of limited value.
8. Specifically, *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine is a clinical methodology developed by the individual work of Dr. Edward Neal during the past two decades of classical text research, teaching, and clinical practice.
9. Traditional sources of knowledge remain significant repositories of information that have the potential to be used to identify new solutions for current global health challenges, such as malaria, tuberculosis, heart disease and cancer.
10. In this article, the term tangible is used to describe physical expressions of phenomena that are appreciable through the senses.
11. From the perspective of *Nèijīng* natural science, as well as descriptions in contemporary cosmology, the overwhelming majority of our universe exists in a state that is imperceptible to us through our direct senses. To the human mind, the world appears to be populated primarily by those things that we can perceive directly. This leads to a mistaken understanding of the world based on an artefact of human consciousness and perception.
12. There are some exceptions to this; for example, in cosmology the study of dark energy and dark matter is made through inference, i.e., they cannot be studied directly.
13. In this way, *Nèijīng* natural scientists reverse-engineered the true nature of the universe by examining the material forms its patterns created.
14. Because *Nèijīng* nature-based medicine is based on these ideas, it has the potential to describe a unified theory of human health and illness. This is a potential milestone in human understanding.
15. Because all aspects of space-time motion in the universe are joined through the fabric of space-time, all of the patterns represent different expressions of a single impulse to breathe, not a multitude of disparate phenomena.
16. SW66. 夫五運陰陽者天地之道也萬物之綱紀變化之父母 生殺之本始神明之府也可不通乎
fū wǔ yùn yīn yáng zhě tiān dì zhī dào yě wàn wù zhī gāng jì biàn huà zhī fù mǔ shēng shā zhī běn shǐ shén míng zhī fǔ yě kě bù tōng hū
[The] five [celestial] turnings [and the] breath motions of [yin] [and] yang are [the] dào of heaven [and] earth. [They are the] guiding principles of [the] ten thousand things, [the] father [and] mother of biàn [and] huà transformations, [the] root [source] of life [and] death [and the official] abode (fǔ) of [the] shén míng. [How] could [one] fail [to] understand [this importance]?
17. Cf. descriptions of the nature of space-time and the theories of general and special relativity made by Albert Einstein in the beginning of the last century.
18. All patterns of motion in the universe arise from the primary

- cosmogenic breath of the universe—they do not arise from the fabric of space-time *qì*. *Qì* does not equate to the concept of energy as is commonly understood. Rather it is a substrate through which the patterns of breath motion circulate. An important clinical correlate to this is that in practice when we intervene to strengthen the body's circulation, we focus on the primary qualities of breath motion and not the *qì* itself.
19. Since the majority of space-time in the universe is intangible, the term *qì* is often mistakenly equated to the concept of intangible energy. In the *Nèijīng* and other early Chinese philosophical and scientific writings, the term *qì* is used in two primary ways: (1) as a description of the primary fabric of space-time and (2) as a qualifier used when directly contrasting intangible aspects of space-time with physical aspects (form 形 *xíng*). In neither of these uses does this concept mean energy. Instead, in the *Nèijīng*, all aspects of energetic motion in the universe arise from its initial tendency to breathe in cyclical patterns.
20. 神天神引出萬物者也
shén tiān shén yīn chū wàn wù zhě yě
Shén—[the] heavenly *shén* guides [the] emergence [of the] ten thousand things.
(*Shuōwén jiězì* - early Chinese dictionary)
- SW67. 神在天為風在地為木
shén zài tiān wéi fēng zài dì wéi mù
In [the terrestrial] heavens, *shén* is wind; on earth it is wood.
- SW67. 在天為熱在地為火
zài tiān wéi rè zài dì wéi huǒ
In [the terrestrial] heavens, [*shén* is] heat; on earth it is fire.
- SW67. 在天為濕在地為土
zài tiān wéi shī zài dì wéi tǔ
In [the terrestrial] heavens, [*shén* is] dampness; on earth it is soil.
- SW67. 在天為燥在地為金
zài tiān wéi zào zài dì wéi jīn
In [the terrestrial] heavens, [*shén*] is dryness; on earth it is metal.
- SW67. 在天為寒在地為水
zài tiān wéi hán zài dì wéi shuǐ
In [the terrestrial] heavens, [*shén* is] cold; on earth it is water.
- SW66. 故在天為氣在地成形
gù zài tiān wéi qì zài dì chéng xíng
Thus, in [the] heavens [are the intangible patterns of] *qì*; on earth [are the] generation [of physical] forms (*xíng*).
- SW66. 形氣相感而化生萬物矣
xíng qì xiāng gǎn ér huà shēng wàn wù yǐ
[The physical] forms (*xíng*) [of earth and the intangible patterns of] *qì* mutually move against one another, and [through the power of] resolving and creating [transformation (*huà*)] [the world of the] ten thousand things (*wàn wù*) [is] generated.
21. In the original descriptions, *Nèijīng* classical acupuncture was a traditional form of surgery the goal of which was to regulate the circulation of *shén* illumination within the body by normalising the circulation of blood.
22. In this regard the natural phenomena of *shén* (神) and *shén* illumination (神明) are also the core principles that underlie most spiritual and religious experiences. Most of the world's major religions can be understood as being different cultural stories about a single quality of transcendent illumination that exists with the universe.
23. The universe is made up of complex resonance patterns moving into and out of physically discernible form. The patterns are joined together by the fabric of space-time (*qì* 氣). Because of this, when a change occurs at any one place in the universe it is transmitted to all other aspects instantaneously. Thus these resonance patterns form a complex tensegrity system.
24. DDJ42. 道生一一生二二生三三生萬物萬物負陰而抱陽沖氣以為和
dào shēng yī yī shēng èr èr shēng sān sān shēng wàn wù wàn wù fù yīn ér bào yáng chōng qì yǐ wéi hé
[The] *dào* creates one; one creates two; two creates three [and] three creates [the] ten thousand things. [The] ten thousand things [are] supported [by] *yīn* [and] enveloped [by] *yáng*. *Qì* pours [through and] harmony [is established].
25. A similar description has been developed through the perspective of contemporary science. See Bejan, A. (2021). *Design in Nature: How the Constructal Law Governs Evolution in Biology, Physics, Technology, and Social Organization*. Anchor Publishing (2012).
26. This universal principle has implications for evolutionary theory; they suggest that changes in the local environment of space-time patterns directly influence the evolutionary changes of living systems in ways not connected to natural selection, genetic drift, or gene mutations.
27. These four essential properties of space-time are (1) the expanding phase of cosmic breath *yáng* (陽); (2) the reverting and returning phase of cosmic breath *yīn* (陰); (3) the fabric of space-time *qì* (氣); and (4) the transcendent dimension of space-time *shén* (神) and *shén* illumination (神明).



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