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## **Towards the creation of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a research area of medicine**

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### **Abstract**

*We make an attempt to answer two major questions: “Why do we need to develop Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a research area of medicine?” and “How can we reach it in accordance with the requirements of contemporary science?” The urgent matter is substantiated and a strategy is developed for creation of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a new research area of medicine based on the aspects of Western philosophy, general scientific approaches and recent achievements in physics, mathematics, systems theory, psychology and computer science.*

### **1. Introduction. Urgent matter of the development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a research area of medicine**

Today we can report a significant increase in the scientific community interest in studying Qigong, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and other ancient methods of human healing and treatment. In many famous scientific and educational centres of the world research institutions for study of Qigong were created and a large number of research were performed by scientists in many countries, many national and international conferences were arranged, in particular, our annual International Conferences on Yi Xiang Yi Xue (Image-medicine (IM) and TCM).

Thanks to many years of persistent work of Professor Xu Mingtang, the Kundawell Institute as well as many of his followers from all around the world, today a huge work was made in studying, training, promotion, testing and development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine methods and also a developing system Zhong Yuan Qigong (ZYQ). However, despite significant advances in the development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine, unique treatment effects of its methods, most of these developments are often only empirical and unsystematized, that does not prove the development of a comprehensive scientific branch of medicine, as there are many uncertain and uncontrollable theoretical and experimental aspects and regularity of the conducted research, such as:

1. During the research of the IM methods not enough attention is paid to planning and arrangement of the study process in accordance with the standards of contemporary evidence-based medicine, in particular the conducted studies are characterized by a limited (sometimes these are single cases) volume of homogeneous statistical data, and alternative (control) group of patients is also rarely used in a study, there are no standardized requirements, report forms for all image-therapists in research and treatment that significantly complicates accurate and reliable evaluation of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine techniques efficacy.

2. There is no proper scientific justification and explanation of real mechanisms (physical, chemical, psychological, informational) of the obtained therapeutic effects in IM that causes a sceptical attitude towards its techniques among scholars.

3. It is not clear what factors have priority in the method of treating a particular disease: physical effects (massage), psychological effects (conversation with a patient), energy impact of an image therapist by their Qi radiation, information influence of a therapist by changing the image of disease, medicinal products, herbs and dietary supplements, patient's role in healing (Placebo effect).

4. IM theory is presented in the pre-scientific religious-philosophical concepts and terms by basic verbal and graphical models that are part of concepts of Jing-Qi-Shen, Ying-Yang and Emptiness, as well as religious and philosophical concept of life generation Tao – Emptiness – Ying/Yang – (Sky, Human, Earth) – All mass of things. In particular, for description of the fundamental concepts of IM as ‘Image’ there are only some verbal pre-scientific explanations and some spontaneously used analogy with the concepts of quantum mechanics and Superstring theory. This state of theoretical IM do not allow to talk about a scientific theory in a strict sense but only in the initial semi-empirical state.

The reason for the above, as well as other disadvantages, is weak expression of theoretical and empirical components of research in Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine, which indicates the need

creation new direction in medicine such as Yi Xiang Yi Xue and is an important urgent scientific problem solution of which contribute not only to promoting Qigong and IM to a wider audience, improving IM prestige, but also will help to understand the nature of its phenomena and laws much better, the underlying causes and mechanisms of human diseases, and to develop effective methods of treatment using scientific and technical current and future discoveries.

## **2. The body**

### ***2.1. The object of the study and fundamental methodological models of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine research***

The fundamental differences between practice and scientific research of Qigong, between the real healing practice and its scientific research should be emphasised, because its knowledge and experience applied differ, as well as approaches and diverse criteria for efficiency evaluation are used. The first field (healing by MI methods) is probably more art than science, and the second one (scientific research in MI) is a scientific activity and knowledge. A healer during diagnosis or treatment uses his internal sensations and images, but not abstract scientific concepts and categories, thus, the less he reasons and analyses the clearer will the result of diagnosis and treatment be. An IM researcher tries to operate with strict abstract concepts and categories, relating everything to the requirements of contemporary scientific reason.

The research Qigong is a good example of scientific approaches application in study of such phenomena as telekinesis, teleportation, clairvoyance, extrasensory methods of diagnostics and treatment that are of different intensity in Qigong practitioners and similar mindset training techniques. In the research qigong scientific methodology is used: all studies must be performed according to the requirements of contemporary science. The developed theoretical and experimental material in research Qigong should be transferred correctly (and significantly complemented) into scientific research of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine.

Any science has its object, subject and research methodology, theoretical and empirical part (practical use, experimental confirmation of the theory). These components should constitute the core of research MI. Theory should guide practice, and practice should develop and verify (confirm) theory. Theory and practice, like two bird's wings: only keeping the balance between 'wings', science can support their mission and open new horizons of knowledge.

General (complex) object of studying of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine is a process of interaction between an image-therapist and a patient in all its aspects: physical, energy, informational, psychological (mental, spiritual). This definition of the research object allows piecing the processes of diagnostics and therapy (healing), which are separate objects of study. The general object can be studied from the perspective of various contemporary scientific disciplines, such as physics, mathematics, psychology, physiology, anatomy, computer science, cybernetics, synergetics, systems theory, as well as of different engineering sciences, so a wide range of potential research subjects in the research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine is naturally generating.

When creating a theory one should be clearly aware of its epistemological possibilities for transfer and accumulation of knowledge about the reality described in it, because any theory is a kind of model of reality, not the whole reality. Model is something different from the object of knowledge, that is present in the subject of knowledge and is its integral part, but its structure is in some ways similar to that of the object. Model is always a piecing together of subject and object. Any proposal (statement of anything) is approximation and has a model character. Therefore, we must remember of approximation nature of any theory in terms of its adequacy to Being. All scientific theories, philosophical and religious systems are such original models. This is the whole complexity of the construction of an adequate reality of theory, especially if a human and life in its entirety is this reality, such as in the study of Qigong and IM. As a natural being, human is subjected to the effects of physical and biological laws, but there is something very important in a person that puts him beyond the actual Being, and this is his inner world, which is immersed into the unknown, even mystical, spirit world, people were engaged in studying it throughout their existence.

Expanding on the creation of research IM, the development of scientific research methodology it is very important to observe tolerance and respect for the self-sufficient ancient system of healing and practicing image therapists that is based on the knowledge and deep understanding of non-standard, complexity and cognitive uncertainty of the research subject. It is unacceptable to compulsively and hard implement the used schemes of research into the treatment process by an image therapist on or after the research, because it leads to a direct negative influence on a healer and the healing. Ideally, one should aim to undertake a study so that it was not actually noticed either by a healer or a patient.

Research IM should have at least two complementary fundamental methodological research model: 1) model, which is based on the postulate of an objective reality, independency of the research object from subject studying it 2) model, which is based on the postulate of holistic inseparability of the research object from the subject studying it that is characteristic feature of recent theories of quantum mechanical and psychological systems.

The first methodological model is the axiomatic fundamental of science, the result of its historical development and in some sense a personification of the science as such. The use of such methodological structure would make sense for the organization, conduct and analysis of clinical study that will clearly display the results of anatomical and physiological changes in the body of a patient under the influence of an image-therapist. The second methodological model, which is based on the postulate of holistic inseparability of the research object from the subject studying it, has significant research capacity in the scientific justification and explanation of the actual mechanisms of therapeutic effects in IM because the psychological, energy effect of an image-therapist, information influence of a therapist by changing the disease image, and psychosomatic self-healing process of a patient should be described in the fundamentals.

### ***2.2. The structure of the theory of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine***

The structure of the future theory of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine should include such components: religious-philosophical conceptual model; philosophical and general scientific conceptual model; collection of private theories, models, methods, techniques and algorithms in specific sciences (quantum mechanical models, synergetic models, mathematical models and methods, biology models, evidence-based medicine, psychology, etc.).

Religious-philosophical conceptual model of the theory of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine is represented by a set of graph-verbal concepts (models) as the concepts of Jing-Qi-Shen, Ying-Yang, Emptiness and the concept of life generation Tao – Emptiness – Ying/Yang – (Sky, Human, Earth) – All mass of things, and several others. These models are the phenomenological fundamental of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine and display in a very concentrated form the original basic Images of Life and Human, their components and interaction between them, the evolution of Life and Human that are established by practitioners on a purely empirical spiritual level. These early models should be the fundamental for development of current scientific theory of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine, as they are symbols, signs of a huge reservoir of invaluable experience of the whole congregation of ancient Masters of internal practices of self-development and healing.

The next stage of the development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine theory will be establishment of its philosophical and general scientific concepts as the basis for private models and methods within the specific sciences. Contemporary science has developed along with Western philosophy and has a lot in common because they both aspire to rational awareness of laws and regularities of the studied objects and phenomena expressing the result of knowledge through a system of logical concepts and categories. Alternatively to science, philosophy operates the most common categories and concepts of all Being but not to a specific form, side and aspect of its development that is typical for science. General scientific knowledge is based on postulates (principles, axioms); this is to any extent some philosophical statements that are often perceived as obvious and well-known truth. Since the conceptual religious and philosophical graph verbal models of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine theory are of a very wide, real, universal nature, the natural

way of a scientific theory development is generation of philosophical conceptual models within the western philosophical systems.

The study of constructing possible philosophical concept of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine using such Western philosophical systems as empiricism, positivism, dialectic, existentialism, phenomenology is promising, because on the one hand the basic aspects of these systems have common elements with the conceptual religious philosophical models of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine, and on the other hand with the recent scientific theories in physics, biology, computer science, general scientific theory of systems. In this respect, philosophical concepts are intermediary between the pre-scientific religious-philosophical concepts and strictly scientific theories that will make up the framework of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a future research area of medicine.

Due to the paper restrictions we present a very brief analysis of some basic concepts of religious-philosophical categories of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine theory in the context of their compliance with the main categories of Western philosophy. The first element of the model of life origin is Tao – a very deep and very difficult to define (even indefinable) concept. This is something that is hidden behind all manifestations of the Universe, the Universe, and is its eternal Source. Some pre-scientific Tao concept analogues can be found in different religious and philosophical doctrines, e.g. Absolute, God, Existence. It is very difficult to uniquely associate any notion in Western philosophy, and most likely this concept will constrain the Tao, which is not limited. The Tao concept was subjected to many philosophical studies, so we leave this issue for the future more thorough investigation.

Emptiness is the next element of the conceptual model; it is also a very deep and difficult to define concept almost completely analysed in Buddhist religious and philosophical tradition. Its equivalent in Western philosophy can be, for example, the category of Nihil as opposed to Being, or the concepts of Integrity, Unity, which reflect the principle of communion, integrity, substantiality of the reality.

Ying and Yang concept can adequately be described in dialectic, which operates with such dual categories as object – subject, integral – multiple, external – internal, developed – undeveloped. Dialectics allows expressing the truth very flexibly in a rational intuitive form because an irrational, intuitive issue is always inherent in every dialectical statement as well as a rational part. Materialistic and idealistic dialectics is only the extreme part of an integrated dialectics, which originates in human existence, in their Spirit. The principle of complementarity, interdependence of opposite concepts, which is characteristic feature of the Ying and Yang concept, is always used in dialectics.

In the context of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine philosophical representing of Spirit (Shen) and Matter (Jing) association is important. Two aspects of Being, Reality can be conditionally emphasized: internal and external. The internal aspect, the internal Being is the Spirit (subjective, consciousness), external Being is the Matter (objective). The concept of Internal should not be assumed as a smaller component of a material object but as opposed to materiality, as inner world of a human to the outside world. The Matter is something external to our consciousness. Material in human is his body, physiological processes, all body structure and organization; it is all that anatomy, physiology, physics, chemistry, etc. study. Spirit is being in itself, and the developed spirit is also being for itself. Matter - is being for another. The Spirit, ideal is non-being in terms of the external reality, matter. Consciousness is a manifestation of ideal in human. Through the consciousness a human has direct access to the ideal aspect of the world, is aware of the ideal and their relationship to it. Matter and consciousness can only be understood in their unity, because they are only different aspects of reality. Information and structure, space and time are the characteristic features that are inherent in both the matter and the spirit. The approaches of artificial intelligence and behaviourism are not right that reduce spiritual phenomena to information processes in the matter.

For display and content interpretation of the Image concept, which is fundamental in Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine, it is beneficial to use phenomenological philosophical systems, in

particular their Phenomenon category, as the basis of all human experience. However, the image in the IM and Phenomenon in phenomenology have quite different properties, in particular, the phenomena belong to a specific person, and images can exist independently of it: a person can perceive them from other people, animals, plants, and can also generate, emit their own images in the spiritual, interpersonal, information space.

Certainly, taking into account the complexity of construction of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine philosophical concept, as well as the fact that every philosophical system is a model, or a 'projection' of Truth, it is necessary to use an integrated approach that harmoniously combines the best achievements of Western philosophy.

The next step in development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine scientific theory is the establishment of structural models within different scientific fields. Quantum mechanical, holographic, superstring, synergetic, semiotic models, the models of physical vacuum theory, bioinformatics, artificial intelligence and transpersonal psychology are the most promising for this.

It is not a secret that the statements of quantum mechanics, astrophysics, general systems theory, synergetics, transpersonal psychology are often reminiscent of the assumptions of mystical Eastern philosophy. Quantum, holographic, physical vacuum theories prove that the world cannot be divided into independent components, and they are considered to be the manifestation of different aspects of the same whole. This Whole is physical vacuum in physics; all matter in the universe emerged from it. At some point, the Emptiness concept is an analogue of physical vacuum in Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine theory. Although it is necessary to understand and differentiate these concepts.

The approaches, models and methods of synergetics are an interesting trend in the research of Qigong and Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine; synergetics is the science of self-organizing of the systems of different nature. It turns out that synergetics and Qigong philosophy have much in common. Qigong and synergetics deal with the interconnectedness of all phenomena of the universe, the subtle dynamic relationships between living beings and the organization of the whole Universe. The Ying and Yang concept is presented in specific mathematical models of synergetics, which describe the functioning of living systems amidst their homeostasis and structural genesis.

Recent scientific knowledge significantly tends to increase the requirements and justification of all its components including its fundamental and axiomatic issues. It is clearly evidenced by the example of contemporary physics and mathematics, which set trends for other sciences because of their validity as well as significant theoretical and experimental evidence-based foundation. Of course, its object and subject differ from similar concepts in physics and especially mathematics, however, for development of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine the experience of these and other present sciences generation should be used.

### **2.3. Strategy for development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a research area of medicine**

Due to the above mentioned issues, we try to outline a strategy for development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a research area of medicine. Such directions of scientific and organizational activities should be pointed out:

**Theoretical approach** deals with the development of theoretical aspects of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine with relation to contemporary philosophy, physics, biology, computer and health sciences.

**Experimental approach** deals with arrangement and conducting comprehensive instrumental and statistical studies of physical, biophysical, biochemical processes in the human body under the influence of image-therapist.

**Clinical trial** is engaged in the development and implementation of clinical trial programs of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine research methods within the requirements of contemporary evidence-based medicine.

**Information analytical approach** deals with the development and maintenance of information analytical distributing client-server system for organizing and coordinating of

practicing Image therapists activities, collection and statistical analysis of the treatment results by IM methods, development of a unified data-base of all theoretical and scientific research in research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine.

For implementation of these directions it is necessary to create a coordinating organ that will deal with organization and development of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine. It is reasonable to create such a organ as a specialized department of Research in Zhong Yuan Qigong and Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine in Kundawell Institute; its main functions are:

- Establishment and coordination of the community of researchers in different fields of science, who are willing to explore Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine and Zhong Yuan Qigong and have relevant possibilities to it;

- Organization of theoretical, instrumental and clinical research of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine methods;

- Development of the electronic data-base of scientific publications in study of human psychophysical systems of personal development and healing systems including Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine;

- Search for international grants and research programmes (e.g. Horizon-2020: the EU research and innovation programme, NATO programmes, etc.) for foreign financing of theoretical and clinical study of Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine.

The creation of a separate section Research Zhong Yuan Qigong and Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine at our conference is promising, as well as preparing a scientific multi-authored monograph “Theoretical and empirical fundamentals of research Yi Xiang Yi Xue medicine”; the significant results of theoretical and experimental studies by researchers of different fields of science will be presented in it.

### **3. Conclusions and future prospects**

Summarizing the above, reconsidering and fresh comprehension of the acquired knowledge and experience by previous generations is important in every new epoch. The present age is distinguished and largely determined by development of science and technological progress in all spheres of human life. The authority of science and scientism is very credible and valuable for modern society. So, there is no doubt that the development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as a research area of medicine will be very important and promising for the enrichment and advance of human knowledge about Reality and about possible treatment of human diseases that will allow scientists to take a fresh look at the origin and nature of human consciousness and spiritual phenomena in general.

This approach will form a significant scientific background of IM as a unique area of contemporary and future medicine, which does not reduce the dignity, identity and integrity of IM as an ancient art of healing but also complements it with scientific data. The establishment of such scientific trends contributes to convergence of modern science and ancient curing methods, healing, self-discovery and self-development; to development of Yi Xiang Yi Xue as an effective and recognized by the society ancient and simultaneously modern area of medicine that is presented in main aims and objectives of Kundawell Institute.

The solution of scientific problems presented in the paper takes a lot of time because of its complexity, however, they say: “The race is got by running” and “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”. Way to go, my friends!