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Editorial



The Lannoye Report

European Parliament's Debate about Complementary Medicine

by Seamus Connolly

So, finally we have a European Parliament Report on non-conventional medicine. The final version of M. Lannoye's Report was passed by the Parliament by a majority of about 2:1 on May 29th. This final version is a far cry from M. Lannoye's presentation. His view and that of his collaborators immediately after the vote was that it would be better if it did not exist at all in this form. I am reserving judgement on it until I have some time to reflect on its practical implications, but it is clearly no longer the political flagship for non-conventional medicine it promised and, we hoped, it might have been.

What the Report now contains

I have set out a summary of the most important positive points, highlighted in bold, and the most important negative points shown here in italics:

- people throughout the EU are using non-conventional medicines and therapies
- **conventional and non-conventional medicine can complement each other and this view is shared by some doctors**
- **people should have a choice of therapy provided they are guaranteed safety, and accurate information on safety, risks and effectiveness of medicines and therapies and that they are protected against unqualified individuals**
- non-conventional medicine can be an alternative to and or complementary to conventional medicine
- *a doctor may use any form of medicine according to his own judgement and conscience*
- **a certain number of non-conventional medicine disciplines meet the three criteria of - a form of legal recognition in Member States; a European organisation; and self-regulatory mechanisms. Eight therapies including Shiatsu are named as such**
- the EU Treaty principles of freedom of movement between Member Countries and freedom of establishment (i.e. the right to practice your profession) are undermined by the different legal regulations in Member States; **no EU regulation should limit any existing freedom of choice of the public, or right to practice, or of any practitioner's existing right to practice**
- certain therapies have been legally regulated recently in some States
- **Euro regulation could provide the public with guarantees and at the same time should oblige each profession to organise at a European level**
- **each non-conventional medicine discipline needs to be identified and have how they work and their effectiveness researched, but this must be done using customary' scientific methodologies and in particular the**

specifics of biological and statistical science

- a state diploma in their discipline to be compulsory for nonconventional medicine Practitioners and training *must be appropriate to the 'general medical/health principles governing any therapeutic act'*
- the European Pharmacopoeia should include the products used in non-conventional medicine; monographs on each product need to be produced to indicate their safety and effectiveness; and legislation on food supplements would be helpful
- **a transition phase to allow current Practitioners to meet new requirements will be needed**

The Motion,

i.e. the important bit, calls for the following:

- the European Commission to carry out a study on the effectiveness and area of application of all nonconventional medicine disciplines, as well as a study of the legal situation in each Member State
- the Commission 'to launch a process of recognising nonconventional medicine if the above studies allow' the Commission, in formulating legislation, to make a distinction between non-conventional medicine that is complementary and that which replaces conventional medicine
- the European Council to encourage research
- the Commission to report on studies already carried out under Budget line B - 7142 the Commission to ensure, in examining the effectiveness of non-conventional medicine therapies that none make use of medicines made from the organs of threatened animal species
- the Commission to propose a Directive on food supplements which are in the border between dietary and medicinal products.

Analysis

You will have noticed that I have highlighted nothing as being positive in the Motion itself. This is because all it does is to ask for some studies to be done. When they are done only the Commission can, if it decides, launch a 'process of recognising' non-conventional medicine. This language is political code for doing very little, very slowly. Furthermore the Commissioner responsible for this area, Mr Pdraig Flynn, told the Parliament in the debate before the vote that the Commission believed that the time was not yet right for any studies because political opinion was so divided; and also that the unanimous approval of Member States was needed for a Directive. So, clearly the existence of the report is not going to lead to any

significant developments in the near future. However, it will be crucial for Shiatsu to be ready to influence any studies that are done, and, since there was a vote for studies after the Commissioner's contribution, the Commission may change its view on this and act somewhat sooner.

Political Respectability

The Report does say some important things even though it does not follow through on them:

- the fact that non-conventional medicine is acknowledged;
- the fact that the public use it more and more.
- that they have a right to choose whatever therapy has been officially asserted, as has the right of Practitioners to practice;
- the fact that research should be done.

The Report conveys a kind of political respectability even if it inadequately represents the way of non-conventional medicine. Because Shiatsu is included it has now also entered the political consciousness. It is a step in the right direction albeit an unsteady one and definitely not from the hara!

There are now some points of obvious concern the

Report, particularly that research should be done according to conventional research methods; that all Practitioners must have some conventional medical training; that Doctors can practice any therapy. The principle of self-regulation has been removed as has the call for a moratorium on prosecutions. These fell by very large majorities indicating the enormous power of the medical establishment to influence all shades of political opinion.

Encouragement

I think we should be cautious about accepting, rejecting or ignoring the Report. It will still be used by all who wish to take something from it to suit their own purposes. I think we can take encouragement for the fact that non-conventional medicine is now officially on the political agenda even if a long way from the top of it. This may prove to be a blessing in disguise for Shiatsu because we are a far from ready yet for Euro-regulation. The Report, even as it stands, will still be a support for us, and will be an important element in our continuing work for legal recognition.

Seamus Connelly has for many years been chair of the Irish Shiatsu Society and in the European Shiatsu Federation.

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The Eight Extra Meridians

The Unfolding Bud

by Peter Den Dekker



INTRODUCTION

As a boy every early spring I looked in amazement at the sudden opening of buds on the bare branches of the trees. I saw the forms of half open buds of beeches and chestnuts. I imagined I could see the movement of the compressed bud unfolding into the full splay of young leaves. Still, every springtime, I see the same miniature explosions and feel the same excitement. Recently I saw a television program showing a speeded-up shot of the growth of a bulb into a flower. It was followed by the reversal of the same shot, so the open flower shrank back to bud and bulb. To see both extremes, bud and opening, full flexion and full extension, in this relatively small span of time, impressed me very much. The origin and the final creation could be recognised in each other. These images resonate with the meaning of the Eight Extra Meridians.

Bill Palmer, in several articles [5,6,7], has been making linkages between the stages of infant development and the twelve regular meridians, showing how each meridian guides the growth of particular skills in movement and the infant's way of relating to the world. When I first encountered his work, I felt that the processes he was describing were related at a deeper level to a basic masterplan of connecting the different aspects of the organism. In my opinion this deeper integration operates through the Eight Extra Meridians.

THE HEALTHY SIDE

In the study of acupuncture or shiatsu, the Eight Extra Meridians are often not covered very well. The focus in the training programs of schools for Chinese medicine is usually on the energetics of the twelve regular meridians. In some cases, even those regular meridians do not get the attention they deserve, because the study of the ZangFu and their syndromes take a large part of the study time [1]. Since shiatsu practitioners and acupuncturists have to be experts in human energetics, the whole of the meridian system should be addressed. In particular I feel that the study and the use of the Eight Extra Meridians may give

a new depth to the practice of shiatsu.

Throughout the years of my shiatsu and acupuncture practice, I have been searching for information about the Eight Extra Meridians (EEM). Nowadays there is a variety of excellent newly published literature on meridian-energetics available [2,3] and old acupuncture styles are rediscovered or rehabilitated which have survived the dominance of TCM education in the past decades. Nevertheless, the focus of most of this literature is on the clinical use of meridians in dealing with illness and dysfunction. There is very little written about the role of the EEM in an healthy body and in development. If I am right, the essential step in shiatsu is to see and recognise the healthy side.

MERIDIANS ARE THE BODY

First of all we need to have a good understanding of the nature of the EEM and of the meridians in general. I feel there is still mystification around the subject. There is a strong tendency to see meridians merely as connective lines between single points on the body. The activation of one of those points will magically influence an area far away from it.

Learning the meridians in this way means learning something new and exotic. This gives the impression that meridians have a separate existence from muscles, bones and other body-tissues. If we look deeply into the origins of movement and the evolution of anatomy, the meridians are not separate from the body: they are the body! If we practice shiatsu and try to feel the condition of a meridian, we still touch the body and not an abstract energetic entity.

In osteopathic terms we could say that the regular meridians trace myofascial chains [8]. They show how muscles and other body tissues coordinate with each other in movement and posture. In every single meridian we can recognise certain lines of force. The Stomach Meridian for example tells about the way the body deals with incoming information. It shows exactly along which lines in the body information is accepted or refused.

The Bladder Meridian traces which muscles and other body tissues are involved in moving forward. It tells about the relation between visual information and how we move towards it or away from it. Both regular meridians do not exist independently from other body-structures; instead they trace how various body parts are interconnected within a particular function of the whole organism.

MASTER PLAN

The function of each regular meridian seems to be independent of each other. In reality they are united and coordinated into a complete system by the Eight Extra Meridians. I feel the relation between the regular and the

extra meridians is similar as the one between a country's laws and its constitution. The constitution is the ground of the individual laws, but not active by itself. The constitution expresses the most basic values of the country. The individual laws regulate all the details. So the constitution is like a bud, holding all the later forms we see in the flower. Seeing the bud in the open flower, means to see into the origin, into the master plan of the final manifestation. The regular meridian-system manifests twelve basic life functions, having a common source which defines the way these functions inner-relate. The Eight Extra Meridians act as this common source, the master plan of the meridian energetics.

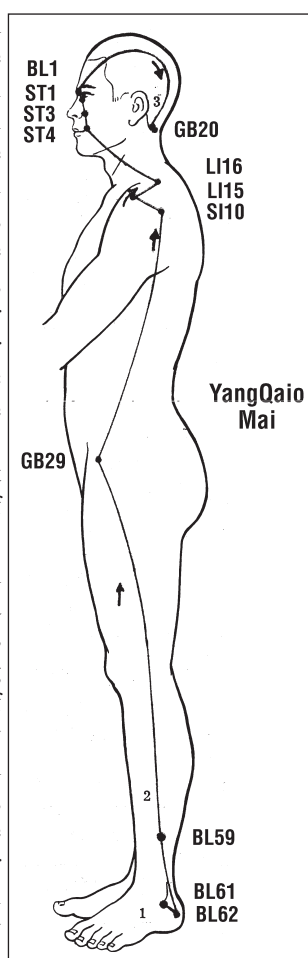
The best contemporary textbook on TCM, written by Giovanni Maciocia, has a chapter on the EEM [4]. Maciocia mentions the basic functions of the EEM, describing them as lakes compared to the rivers of the regular meridians. So in this way they absorb in case of excess and give when there is shortage in the regulars. In Holland, the country where I live, the big lakes have the same function: they regulate the water system of the whole country. The water level of all rivers, canals and ditches is intimately connected to that of the major lakes. In the same way the EEM can be seen as underlying the energetics of the regular meridians. Maciocia further states that the EEM are directly connected to the pre-heaven of the Kidneys and that they regulate the life cycles of men and women as described in the first chapter of the *Nei Jing Su Wen*.

ZIP FILES

The EEM, except for DuMai and RenMai, do not have points on their own. They join regular meridian points, which means that they interconnect the meridians involved. If they precede the regular meridians it means that they hold in themselves the enormous variety of possible activities later shown in the regulars. They are almost like compressed zip files in computers or the DNA in the nucleus of cells, which in a tiny space enclose an overwhelming amount of information, waiting to be unlocked. My intention is to write a series of articles, looking closely at the information in each of the EEM. In this article we will examine the YangQiaoMai.

TAIL TAI YANG

The YangQiaoMai is described as an Extra Meridian which belongs to the backside of the body. It is traditionally closely connected to the Tai Yang division. Its opening point is Bladder 62, its accumulation point Bladder 59 and also Small Intestine 10 and Bladder 1 and 61 belong to its course. All these points are on the Tai Yang meridians. The energetics of the Tai Yang are concerned with visual



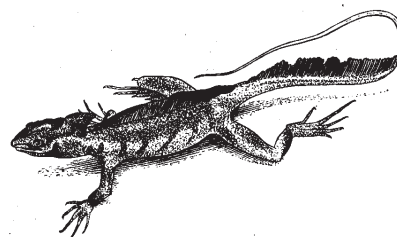
stimulus, intention, will power and movement. The course of Tai Yang is closely connected to the relationship between movement and the spine. In early vertebrates the spine developed in order to be a stable connection between eyes and tail. The tail propels the body in the direction that the eyes focus: for example, towards the food or out of the way of an enemy.

The Foot Tai Yang (or in case of a fish, Tail Tai Yang!) meridian is materialised in the bony structure of the spine and the spinal cord. It connects the forward push of skeleto-muscular system with the direction in which the eyes are focusing. In the development of movement in the human body, both the Foot Tai Yang and Hand Tai Yang control forward directed movement. The leg branch guides the forward push and the hand branch guides the forward reach. At Bladder 1 in the eyes the two Tai Yang meridians converge, initiating extension and therefore leading the forward movement [6].

REPTILES AND CRAWLING

The Yang Qiao Mai also includes points of the other two Yang divisions. Stomach 4, 3 and 1 and Large Intestine 15 and 16 belong to Yang Ming. Gallbladder 29 and 20 are part of the Shao Yang division. The movement

characteristics of the Tai Yang, Yang Ming and Shao Yang are respectively extension, flexion and sideways-rotational movements. The YangQiaoMai regulates these three basic functions in one primary movement pattern. This pattern is called homolateral crawling. We see flexion of one side of the body and extension of the opposite side. Then the movement is reversed as the body moves forward. This homolateral crawling is a natural movement in creeping animals like reptiles.



For infants it is an essential step in order to learn more sophisticated movement patterns like walking [6,9]. The points of the Yang Qiao Mai are key points for the different areas involved in this basic development.

STABLE GROUND

Bill Palmer [6] explains how the Bladder meridian guides the alignment of the skeleton during infant development, so that pushing with the leg produces forward movement. This alignment is learnt through homolateral crawling, and if the foot is not everted during this crawl

then the force of the leg-push travels diagonally up the body. So hip and shoulder muscles have to compensate by over controlling the movement. This over-control then becomes a pattern of hip and shoulder tension in later movements like walking.

The eversion of the foot is performed by the Peroneus Muscles, whose action is regulated by BL62, 61 and 59. This eversion aligns the leg with the hip so that the pelvis can be free during movement, allowing it to guide the leg-push into the spine. This freedom of the hip (and the consequential freedom of neck and shoulders) is dependent on the energy state of the Gall Bladder Meridian and the rotation of the pelvis is has its axis around GB29.

These four points in the last paragraph are the four lowest points of Yang QiaoMai showing how it coordinates Tai Yang and Shao Yang divisions in the alignment of leg and torso during movement.

Eversion also brings the big toe into contact with the ground in such a way that the extension of the leg results in movement by pushing against something. Thus, although the YangQiaoMai does not include points on the ST meridian in the leg, its action facilitates the grounding action of the YangMing division. It therefore embraces all three yang divisions in the lower body.

The whole meridian system is divided into Yin and Yang. Visible movement patterns are shown by the pathways of the Yang meridians. This characteristic makes them relatively easy to study. When their function is healthy, movement is smooth and well integrated; when they are blocked there is pain and inhibited movement. The function of the Yin meridians is more hidden. Each movement and active function needs to be braced by a stable centre. This might the floor, inner soft-tissues or the ultimate attachment of the muscular system, the DanTian. In Chinese terms they are all classified as Yin.

The forward pushing coordinated by the YangQiaoMai also needs to be in contact with stable ground for movement to happen. Later on we will see that the whole of the YangQiaoMai has its Yin counterbalance in the YinQiaoMai, which energises the muscles supporting the arch of the foot such as Flexor Hallucis (Kid 2 and 6).

LITTLE BIRDS

Before movement develops, food has to be received more passively. This is seen in primitive animals like sea



anemones, young helpless animals like birds and also in

human infants.

At this stage the mouth is of primary importance and the reflexes around the mouth are dominant.

It is the two Yang Ming meridians which converge around the mouth, the opening of the digestive tract. Stomach 4 is on the sphincter of the mouth and will, if stimulated, make the head turns towards the stimulus, performing the oral rooting reflex. In this movement it needs the help of the sternocleido-mastoid muscle, which rotates the head sideways. Gallbladder 20 is directly medial to the origin of this muscle.

It is not only the mouth which stimulates movement towards food. Smell is also a strong pull and guides the organism towards food at a distance. Vision stimulates this reach at an even greater distance in humans. In the development of Energy [5], the line Stomach 4, 3, 1 to Bladder 1 traces the early shift from oral to visual attention in infants. In this developmental process, the act of getting nourishment transforms from the static process of calling another to feed it to a kinetic process of moving towards food. That is of course the phase that the forward movement patterns discussed before are developing. They are all based on the awakening of the attention into the outside world. As the process reaches the eyes in ST1 and crosses to BL1 the eyes focus at a distance and the attention leaves the borders of the immediate environment and moves as far as the eyes can see.

In this process we again see the YangQiaoMai coordinating the three Yang Divisions (Yang Ming, Shao Yang, Tai Yang) in the stimulation of movement through the senses. It traces the development from the static Yin relationship to getting food to the kinetic Yang movement towards a source of nourishment. The points ST4, ST3, ST1, B1 and GB20 are staging posts on this path.

WORMS

The basic nature of the other branch of the Yang Ming division, the Large Intestine Meridian, is to connect the mouth with the hands. An early reflex brings the hand towards the mouth. The hand becomes the first assistant of the mouth. This hand to mouth reflex also includes the flexion of the whole of one side of the body and the extension of the other side. Bonnie Cohen [9] points out that this movement underlies the flexion/ extension pattern of homolateral crawling. Thus the 'feeding' pattern of the HTM reflex also underlies later forward movement patterns. Large Intestine 16 is on the joint between clavicle and scapula, essential for the mobility of the arm. Large Intestine 15 is on the medial deltoids, essential for lifting the arm in these patterns.

The oral rooting reflex and the hand to mouth reflex underlie both digestive functions and movement, the energetics of the Tai Yang and the Yang Ming. In primitive animals like worms we can observe the same phenomenon.

External movement and internal peristalsis have



the same origin. The outer form of the animal and its intestines have the same features. A worm eats itself through its environment and at the same time moves its food internally. The course of the YangQiaoMai reveals this deep orchestration.

PRENATAL ENERGY

Mark Seem [10], the writer of the excellent book *A New American Acupuncture* describes how he uses the EEM in all kinds of pain treatments. Mark Seem is basing his work partly on the French acupuncture school. Here the three levels of meridian-energetics, of which the EEM represent the deepest level, is taught. The deepest level (Jing Level) is described as prenatal, when the regular meridians are still not active. In pairs the energies of the EEM underlie the three regions of the body. The frontal part of the body is under influence of the YangQiaoMai-DuMai pair. The lateral aspect is influenced by the YangWeiMai-DaiMai couple. At the frontal part body area two pairs are seen: YinWeiMai-ChongMai and YinQiaoMai-RenMai. The EEM energetics are activated by their opening points. For example, by using contra-laterally the opening points of the DuMai and YangQiaoMai the whole dorsal side of the body is activated.

The EEM are used in case of structural imbalances and chronic illnesses. Bill Palmer called such imbalances, instead of a disease, a developmental lesson which has not learned [6]. I believe this statement illuminates the

nature of the EEM and the origin of movement patterns. If we understand the body at deeper levels, we can touch the lessons which are not learned. Working with the EEM contacts the bud in the flower and reconnects people to the master plan of their development. In this article I took the YangQiaoMai as example. It leaves undiscussed its relations with the DuMai and the YinQiaoMai. And of course the energetics of the two Yang meridians, DuMai and YangWeiMai. I hope to be able to write a follow up on this article. Or, even better, that this article brings up reactions, better ideas, disagreements and additions.

- [1] **Peter den Dekker.** *In Search of Style*
JSOBT Issue 5.
- [2] **Matsumoto and Birch:** *Extraordinary Vessels*
- [3] **Royston Low:** *Secondary Vessels of Acupuncture*
- [4] **Giovanni Maciocia:** *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*
- [5] **Bill Palmer:** *The Development of Energy (1)* JSOBT Issue 1
- [6] **Bill Palmer:** *The Development of Energy (2)* JSOBT Issue 3
- [7] **Bill Palmer:** *The Six Divisions* JSOBT Issue 5
- [8] **Daverick Leggett.** *What is a Meridian?* JSOBT Issue 1
- [9] **Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen** *Sensing, Feeling &*

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The Five Mai Meridians used in Shiatsu Do

by Ray Ridolfi

Creative Theory

I've always found that just when I was getting fed up and frustrated in a situation, I have become my most creative. My Liver, desperate to be an 'ideas' type of guy, quivering impatiently and beating its head against my ribcage, would no doubt prefer that this process was somehow eased and shortened. Usually this requires the inclusion of a meditative or physical activity or some suitably alcoholic appeasement, depending on its 'mood'. We have a saying in Shiatsu-Do, 'Your Shiatsu is only limited by your imagination'.

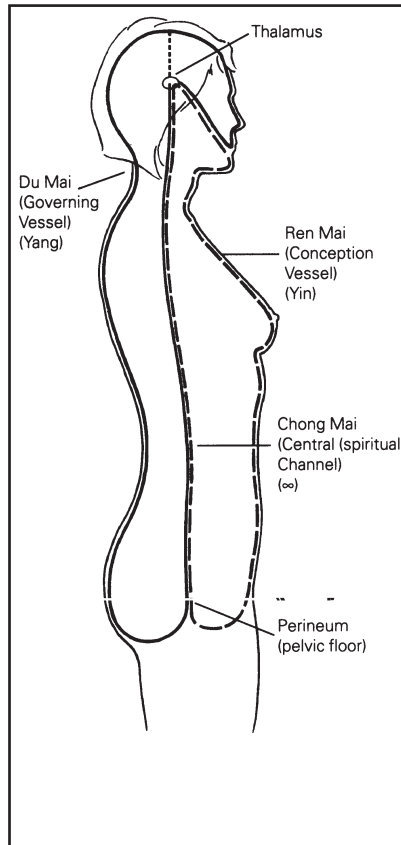
It was after years of frustration in researching classical texts and discovering tantalising tit bits of information which unfortunately often remained without conclusion, that I decided to 'create' some theories and treatment principles based on already available material combined with my revelations in practice. It's not 5000 years old, so treat it like the infant it is, full of potential and excitement about maturing into a well established 'adult' treatment principle.

The Mai Channels

In Shiatsu-Do we use Extraordinary Vessels extensively for both diagnosis and treatment. The Extraordinary Vessels common to Shiatsu usage are the Conception and Governing Vessels. These Vessels are only two of a group of channels known collectively as Mai Channels. We use five Mai Channels in Shiatsu-Do, three of which are our exploration of internal pathways associated with the traditional Mai channels, and consider these to regulate the Yin and Yang in the body. They are the channels which give us our constitutional strength and life 'potential', upright supported stature and the ability to move forward in life. The development of these channels precedes that of the Organ meridians with which we commonly work in Shiatsu and act as the managerial team which oversee and regulate the meridian system.

These are the :

- Central channel



- Du Mai (Governing vessel)
- Ren Mai (Conception vessel)
- Yang Mai (Left channel)
- Yin Mai (Right channel)

I see the traditional Ren Mai (Yin), Du Mai (Yang) and Chong Mai as the exterior expressions of an energetic circuit called the Central Channel or Spiritual Channel. The Central Channel is located interior in the torso parallel to the Ren and Du Mai. We consider the Central Channel as the chief executive which regulates all of the Mai Channels which in turn regulate the meridians. As such, I feel it can also be seen as the internal part of the 'Chong Mai' or 'Penetrating Vessel', which has this overall regulation function in traditional Chinese Medicine. In the rest of this article I shall identify this Central Channel as a deeper and more fundamental part of the traditional Chong Mai meridian.

Embryonic Development

At the point of conception a cosmic eruption occurs melding the Yin and Yang of the ovum and sperm. Separation turns to unification and the one becomes the ten thousand; a single cell matures and splits. I picture the exterior surface of the fertilised ovum forming the Du Mai whilst the surface of the nucleus represents the Ren Mai. The nucleus itself, is the Information Centre (blueprint for the Central Channel). Traditionally, the Extraordinary Channels govern embryonic development and the development of the twelve regular meridians.

We can picture the process of development as:

Central Channel

(Yin Yang regulation)

Yang Mai (Kidney Jing - maturation) strength)	Yin Mai (Kidney Jing - constitutional strength)
Du Mai (Yang regulation)	Ren Mai (Yin regulation)
Yang Meridians	Yin Meridians

(six Yang channels)

(six Yin channels)

The twelve classical meridians receive energy from, and give excess into, these Vessels according to the body's requirements. It is at these central points in the body where the meridians meet the Mai channels that the bilateral aspects of the organ meridians meet one another, creating a continuous energy flow in the Central channel.

Central Channel - (Internal Chong Mai)

This is the internal pathway and the most yin of these vessels. It governs and controls its son and daughter, the Du Mai and Ren Mai and takes support from its younger brother and sister, the Yang Mai and Yin Mai respectively. As the controller of the yin yang balance it acts like a computer internal hard disk or unconscious brain, storing both physical and metaphysical information. In my view, all events in this life, and perhaps past lives, are stored in this memory bank. Past traumas and happiness exist like a shadow, always in the background, awaiting revival when opportunity arises. I see it as the 'sea of memory', storing the ancestral and cosmic memory which is not commonly accessed. Some 'memories' inhibit your potential and prevent you progressing into the fullness of life. Fear creates resistance to taking the risk of 'change'. By treating the Central Channel, through the Du and Ren Mai, I feel the inhibitions limiting your potential can be dissolved.

We envisage the Central Channel flowing from Governing Vessel 20 internally to the thalamus where it converges and forms a confluence of 'flows' with the other Mai channels. From here we picture it flowing deep in the interior of the centre body to the perineum, Conception Vessel 1 and Governing Vessel 1 and 2. The Mai channels again converge at the level of the umbilicus (CV8) and Ming Men (GV4) internally where they meet the Kidney branches of the Yin Mai and Yang Mai.

Activating the Central Channel

There are no specific tsubo on the Central Channel as it is an internal channel, access may be achieved by stimulating GV20, GV16, GV4 (Ming Men) and GV2 using an 'activation' thumb or finger contact as follows:

- To 'activate' a tsubo, use a clockwise (facing the Receiver) spiralic action at each tsubo. Place your contact digit against the tsubo using a 'butterfly' touch, that is, as light as a butterfly landing on a leaf, make a clockwise spiralic motion seven times whilst projecting Ki into the tsubo and 'engaging' the energy stream of Ki. Why seven times? As one of my Qi Gong teachers once replied, "it sounds like a good number". Not being completely satisfied with this explanation I have resolved that we already refer

to seven levels of energy in a tsubo and seven energy centres (chakras). Anyway, it works better than six or eight in practice.

- Activate GV20, and then 'engaging' the Ki flow 'think' to the thalamus (mid brain) and then along the internal pathway of the Central Channel to Conception Vessel 1 (pelvic floor). Think of a string connecting these two points and your mind travels the length of this string. You may ask your partner to squeeze their anal sphincter several times to aid the connection to the pelvic floor muscles.

- Use the same spiralic activation at GV16 and 'think' into the thalamus and also connect with the Du Mai channel (GV) like placing your hand into a flowing stream.

- Locate Ming Men (GV 4) and apply the spiralic activation and feel the Du Mai stream and then 'think' deeper into the Central channel in the interior of the body. From Ming Men, you may also connect directly through to the umbilicus and the Ren Mai (CV 8) as the linking connection for these three Mai Channels.

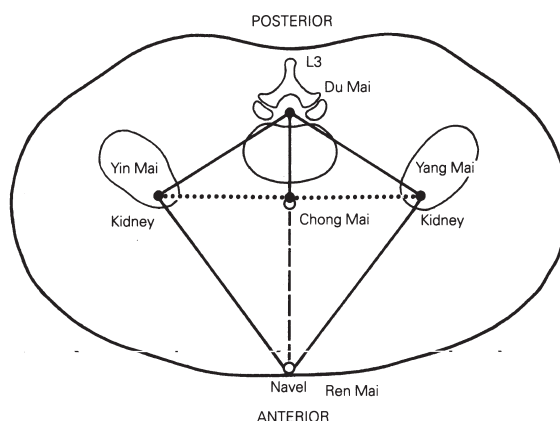
- At GV 2, situated at the sacral hiatus or sacral-coccyx joint, make the spiralic activation, connect to Ming Men by placing your other hand at GV4 and then 'think' the Ki further and deeper along the Central channel to the thalamus

and GV20.

The effect of this Activation is to tonify, open and alert the Central channel. This heightens its control over the other Mai channels and the meridian system and 'kick starts' it into greater activity. The result of this will be an enhanced filtering of information to the 'workers' of the energy system, the meridians and their pertaining ZangFu organs.

This channel is used primarily in the treatment of constitutionally degenerative disorders such as cancer, multiple sclerosis, chronic fatigue syndrome (M.E.) and chronic illnesses such as asthma, arthritis, hormonal disorders and other diseases of the skeletal system. It is also a powerful tool in the treatment of psychological and emotional imbalances. This approach addresses issues of the inner or unconscious self which is sometimes inhibited by dominant neurological patterns implanted during childhood. For example, the potential for self improvement of an adult may be inhibited by having been constantly told as a child that he/she is a 'stupid child'. This 'input' sometimes moulds the person into becoming a 'stupid adult' with poor self esteem.

I consider that this disruption of the information system is an energetic 'lesion', something that warps or modifies the information flow in the body. It is like a physical lesion (scar tissue) which inhibits Ki flow and movement. It is therefore necessary to be aware that deeper



emotional issues may arise as a result of treatment and this factor should be discussed and agreed to by your Shiatsu partner, making sure he has adequate professional support for dealing with these issues if and when they arise.

Ren Mai - (Conception 'Directing' Vessel)

Also called the Great Mother Flow, regulates the Yin including the six yin meridians and Zang organs - our stored potential and awareness; the resource required before movement can take place. It appears that the word 'Conception' applied to this vessel is a loose translation and is better translated as the Directing Vessel responsible for the directing of the yin throughout the system. This has the strongest Yin energy influence and oversees the body's Water (yin). The Conception Vessel, as the name implies, influences our ability to conceive on a sexual level as well as how we relate spiritually within our environment.

The Yin meridians are connected internally to the Central Channel which is found posterior (interior body) to the Conception Vessel. As the Ren Mai enters the mouth it branches to the thalamus to meet the 'confluence' of the other Mai channels. It also connects to the others at the umbilicus (CV8) where it branches internally into the Central Channel stream and posterior to Ming Men where it connects with the Du Mai and the Left and Right Mai channels.

Du Mai - (Governing Vessel)

Also called the Great Father Flow, regulates the Yang including the six yang meridians and Fu organs - our movement and activity; the impetus for direct action and moving forward in life. This has the strongest Yang energy influence and oversees the body's Fire (yang). The Governing Vessel acts as the central support for the spine, containing the spinal cord, and as such greatly influences the nervous system and mental health.

The Yang meridians are connected internally to the Central Channel which is found anterior (interior body) to the Governing Vessel. As the Du Mai enters the mouth it branches to the thalamus to meet the 'confluence' of the other Mai Channels. It also connects to the others at Ming Men (GV 4) where it branches internally into the Central Channel and the Yin and Yang Mai channels as well as anterior to the umbilicus (CV8) where it connects with the Ren Mai.

Yin Mai and Yang Mai

In traditional Chinese Medicine, the Yang Linking Vessel (Yang Wei Mai) and Yin Linking Vessel (Yin Wei Mai) run from the feet up to the head linking all the Yin and Yang Channels on the way.

In our work we feel that there are deep channels acting as foundations for these Mai meridians which run up the bone marrow in

the legs. We call these the Yin Mai (on the right side) and the Yang Mai (on the left side).

Bone 'marrow' can be considered another 'extraordinary' organ in that it aids in the production and storage of Kidney Jing, our constitutional energy. This 'marrow' acts as a medium for the transportation and transformation of genetic information as the 'blue print' for development. The Brain and spinal cord are also considered to be 'marrow' contained within the bones of the cranium and spine and are therefore strongly influenced by the Kidney Jing. If we accept that aging is the natural expression of Kidney Jing depletion, then we can observe that deterioration of bone density and mental faculties are an expression of the quality of the 'marrow' diminishing.

The Yin Mai and Yang Mai channels relate directly to the Kidney Jing storage and activation and their pathways run bilaterally from Kidney 1 to the calcaneal notch on the heel, through the bone marrow of the tibia and femur to the pelvis where it joins the kidney organs. They then connect with Ming Men (GV4) of the Du Mai and to the Chong Mai and Ren Mai internally before proceeding parallel (lateral) to the Chong Mai through the chest cavity and organs therein, and can be accessed externally at Gall Bladder 21 where it then enters through the auditory canal into the midbrain (thalamus) to meet at the vortex of the Chong Mai, Du Mai and Ren Mai confluence. These channels are used primarily for constitutional strengthening and any condition which involves Kidney imbalance.

Bone Ki Activation

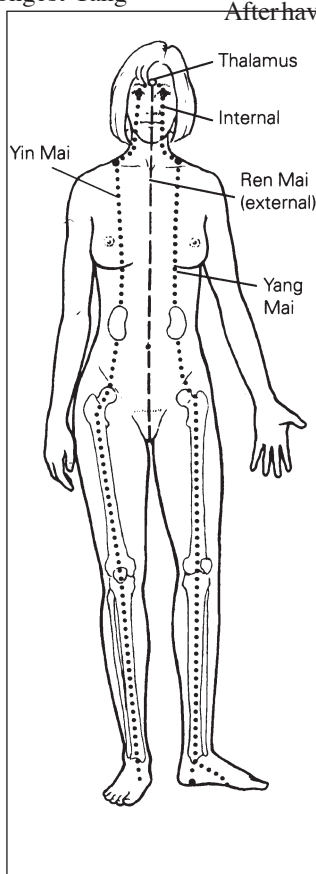
The Yang (Left) and Yin (Right) Mai channels can be used diagnostically as well as therapeutically.

After having done the Central Channel Activation, you can sit at your partner's head (Receiver in supine or prone) and contact GB21. Apply the spiralic activation to open the pathway and 'think' down to the kidney organs.

Using an Empty Mind approach, you may be able to interpret energy imbalances in other organs of the chest and abdominal cavities in your journey to the kidneys. This form of diagnosis is likened to driving along the motorway, your concentration is on the road ahead (to the kidneys) and your peripheral vision often becomes aware of attention attracting scenes such as a white horse running in a field. Be aware of areas of stagnation which you may wish to return to later. Connect with the kidney organs, assess and Ki project into them to enhance physiological functioning or treat the related meridian.

- At this stage, you may also 'think' to the internal connection, mentioned earlier, with the other Mai channels at the umbilicus level.

- Sit at the feet and 'activate' KD1, do one leg at a time until you feel more comfortable with this exercise, while still



holding KD1 you can 'activate' the calcaneal notch. This is found at the centre of the heel. 'Think' along the bone marrow of the tibia to the knee (assessing the joint) and then along the femur and into the hip socket (continued assessment of the joints and tissue) and pelvis. In the pelvic area (Lower Burner) allow your mind to assess the organs of reproduction and elimination on your journey to the kidneys. You have now completed the connection of these channels. At any stage of this process you may stop and Ki project into an unhappy joint, tissue or organ.

These techniques may be incorporated into a conventional Shiatsu treatment or be used as a treatment protocol in itself. Shiatsu is about self expression and clear communication, so I hope that can you enjoy the creativity



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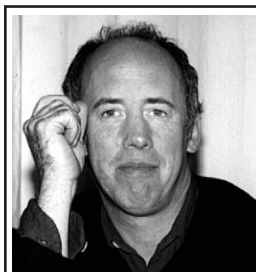
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The Energetics of the Gestalt Cycle

by Bill Palmer



Introduction

This is the first of two articles attempting to link psychological insights into human behaviour and experience with the Oriental understanding of body energetics and postural patterns. This article describes the Gestalt Cycle, which is one of the most successful models of psychological process to have been developed and links it to the Six Divisions of Chinese Medicine. The second article will describe the therapeutic possibilities opened up by this cross-fertilisation and link the development of movement patterns in childhood with the development of relationship patterns described by the Gestalt Cycle.

Developmental Lessons

Gestalt theory has lacked a coherent theory of child development because its strength is in dealing with how we can respond in the present. Psychodynamic models of development do not sit very comfortably within the framework of Gestalt therapy because they are analytical and do not make a linkage with our present sensational experience. The theory of energy development [1] that we have been forming in the last decade makes explicit the way in which the past has formed our posture and the way in which our posture gives a basis for our sense of self.

There is no need to hypothesize past traumas to explain postural patterns. Instead, the theory identifies postural and movement patterns in the present with developmental 'lessons' that have or have not been integrated. My belief is that any of these fundamental ways of physically moving that we have not learnt in childhood form uncompleted developmental Gestalts which are continually 'trying to be resolved' in the life of the individual. Hence we do not have to analyze how a developmental stage was blocked but focus on how that lesson is being continued in the present. This enables gestalt theory to include child development in its understanding of adult behaviour patterns in a way that does not compromise its focus on the present.

Equally, Oriental Medicine has no coherent theory of how psychological and behaviour patterns can be addressed through the body. There are simple linkages made between

emotional tendencies and the Five Elemental phases of energy but there is no mature way of integrating this with the subtle insights of Western Psychology into the dynamics of the personality. Various people have noticed that Oriental philosophy and gestalt theory resonate well [8]. I hope that these articles will show in detail how they do.

What is the Gestalt Cycle?

Imagine a lioness sleeping on the African Savannah. She has not eaten for a day or so and the pangs of hunger start to gnaw at her belly. Soon they become so insistent that she is forced to wake up and look around. Close by is a herd of gazelle grazing peacefully. As she sees them her body energizes and fills with alertness, you can see her purpose filling her muscles and her eyes focus intently on her prey. Her excitement grows and her spine lengthens, tail twitching, poised for action. Suddenly she erupts into movement and, choosing a gazelle slower than the rest, streaks across the yellow grassland. She leaps and buries her teeth into the spine of her kill, meeting her partner in this ancient dance of death. She tears at the warm flesh and gorges herself. Before long she lets of a low growl of satisfaction and, as the rest of the pride arrive to share her spoils, paces away and lies down in the evening shadows to sleep again.

Imagine a baby dazed with the satisfaction of his mother's milk. His mouth turns away from the tit and he stares inward, motionless, lying on his pillow. Slowly his attention swims out into the room again and he contemplates the moving colours of the world. Among the colours something shines and twinkles. His wide contemplation is gathered together into a one pointed focus which pulls him to a fast crawl across the room towards the glittering glass. Just as he reaches it and extends his hand to grasp the sharp shard he is lifted high in the air and his mother scolds: "Don't touch that, it hurts!". But the pain of his uncompleted reach is just as great and he cries out his loss, inconsolable in his lack of satisfaction.

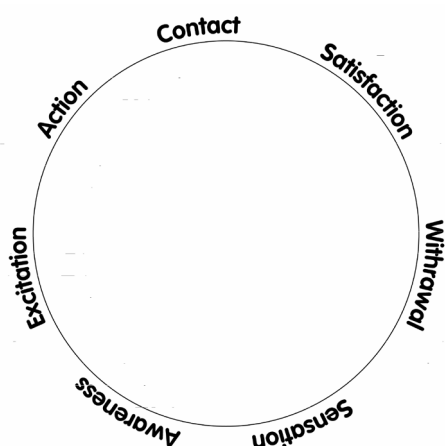
Both of these stories describe a life process. In the first, the process completed making a rounded event. All the energies come a full circle. This is called a "Gestalt" and the Gestalt Cycle describes how life processes start and complete. Uncompleted processes are one of the major causes of suffering in human life since something that hasn't finished retains a charge of unresolved energy which is experienced as tension or emotional pain. Gestalt Therapy, created by Fritz Perls [2] and others, is largely concerned with helping unresolved energy in the body and mind to gain satisfaction in the present and thus to let go of its charge and complete.

Shiatsu, in my opinion, is also concerned with helping uncompleted Gestalts to resolve. The unresolved energy is stored in the body as tension and is seen in Zen Shiatsu as a Jitsu meridian [3]. In addition, a completed gestalt nourishes the being by bringing the interaction with the world back into the self to be digested. The aspect of ourselves that is starved of nourishment or dis-inhabited in an uncompleted process is often pushed into the unconscious in our attempt to deal with the pain. This is mirrored by a part of the body being de-energized and is described in Zen Shiatsu as a Kyo meridian. Zen Shiatsu aims to complete the cycle by helping the energy stored in the Jitsu meridian to directly nourish the deficiency in the Kyo. Because the cause of a Kyo/Jitsu pair of meridians is an unfinished Gestalt, the Shiatsu work has the effect of helping us to let go of past resentments and attachments and come more into the present.

Buddhism, at a deeper level, also focuses on letting go of the charge that we hold onto from past un-finished business. In this system an uncompleted Gestalt is called Karma and the Buddhist's spiritual practice focuses on liberating the self from Karma by becoming aware of the unresolved energy buried during past actions. Simply bringing this energy into awareness through meditation can help deep frozen process to thaw out and start moving again. This means that alternative ways of bringing it to completion can be found.

Unresolved Gestalts can cause major life issues, or, like the second example story can be minor dissatisfactions that are soon released. The act of releasing, in contrast to "forgetting", means that an alternative way of feeling satisfied has been found. This is easier for small events than for traumas that deny our deepest needs. However, Gestalt Therapy, Shiatsu and Buddhism all, in their different ways, aim at finding alternative ways for unresolved energy to find satisfaction in the present.

The original Gestalt cycle, described by Perls and others, is pictured below.



This model was primarily designed to describe human gestalts but, as we shall see, the energy cycle it describes can be seen within all life processes including the development of groups and ecologies.

If we examine the characteristic energy functions in each stage we find that they can be linked to the Six

Divisions of Chinese Medicine. A past article on the Six Divisions [4] may help in understanding this analysis.

This linkage has great therapeutic potential because the Six Divisions describe how aspects of the body and posture are connected to our energy patterns. So it gives Gestalt Psychotherapists insight into how to work with the body to facilitate the emotional process that are often in the foreground of psychotherapy. The link also gives Oriental Body Therapists a way of translating their physical and energetic insights into an understanding of the way in which people deal with emotional issues in their lives.

1. Withdrawal Phase - Yang Ming Division

After eating, withdrawal and rest helps us digest. Withdrawal is necessary to be able to re-connect with our base and to process our interaction with the world. If we find withdrawal difficult then we have a tendency to try to merge with other people. If we find it impossible to cope with disagreement we cannot really be ourselves, since disagreement is inevitable. Equally, we cannot accept the separateness of another person and cannot really make contact with the outside world in situations where the it doesn't conform with our inner model. In this state we cannot get nourishment from relationships where there is conflict. We are in the dilemma of wanting to agree with everyone but actually being in disagreement, so real contact is avoided. Gestalt theory calls this state **Confluence**.

In the language of Chinese Medicine the energetics of confluence are identical with an imbalance in the functions of both the Stomach (ST) and the Large Intestine (LI). The Stomach empowers us to accept the foreign energies of the outer world into ourselves, giving us the opportunity to get support and nourishment from the energy that we can assimilate. But if the **Stomach** function is unbalanced then we are over-accepting and reaching out to others too much. The **Large Intestine** empowers us to disagree with those parts of the outer world that we do not want to accept as part of ourselves and to push them out of our boundaries. If the LI is weak then we find it difficult to disagree with another person and our boundaries are unclear. The ST and LI together form the **Yang Ming division** so the Withdrawal stage of the Gestalt cycle is enabled by this division and problems with the Stomach or Large Intestine meridians can be often associated with patterns of confluence in the life of the individual.

The Body Therapist, noticing chronic imbalance in these meridians may be able to help an individual link their body sensations to any confluent life issues in an holistic way. Weakness in ST and LI meridians results in postures which are over-reaching forwards, are not grounded through the legs and over-supinated in the arms. Working with strengthening the movements associated with these meridians can give the person a sense of how it feels to be grounded and be physically capable of pushing rather than reaching. This, in turn, can support their attempts to deal with their confluent tendencies; the personality is no longer receiving the physical sensations from the posture which told them that they were in the process of reaching out to others. So the Psychotherapist, noticing confluent patterns

in a person's life may be able to work physically with the client to support them in their therapeutic process.

In my discussion of the other phases of the cycle, I will identify the energetic focus of each phase in terms of the six divisions but will postpone the detailed description of the therapeutic applications until the next article.

2) Sensation Phase - Tai Yin division

During the stage of Withdrawal digestion takes place. By being apart from interaction we can process the past and get what nourishment we can from it. We then start to feel the inner support gained from having engaged with the outside. This feeling of inner support and nourishment is an uplifting energy and allows us to expand outwards again, confidently filling our own space and being open again to input from the outer world.

This stage is the **Sensation phase** of the Gestalt cycle. If we have a problem in this phase we contract and collapse inwards, blocking off from input. Gestalt theory calls this **Desensitization**. Psychologically this is often caused by avoidance of pain. We inevitably have pain in our lives and it can be a stimulus for growth and learning, nourishing our development. However, if we feel we cannot cope with the pain then it is common to collapse into a victim state or contract inwards to avoid the cause of the suffering. However, both the contracted and collapsed states also mean that we throw the baby out with the bath water: by closing off from painful situations we also close off from nourishing energy and fresh stimulation.

In Chinese Medicine the ability to feel nourished and supported is the function of the Spleen and the resultant confident expansion and openness to the world of sensation is function of the Lung. The Spleen and Lung together form the **Tai Yin Division** so the Sensation phase is empowered by the Tai Yin. Chinese theory traditionally links the Lung to the realm of sensation, naming it as the home of the **Po**, or 'sensation soul'. The Lung function fills the the whole body with the nourishment gained from the outside world (the process called Ying Qi). It is also our ability to receive fresh stimulation (for which Chinese energetics uses the metaphor of Fresh Air). Finally, the Lung is traditionally called the courageous Organ and the ability to be open to the world in spite of the knocks it gives you is one example of its bravery.

3) Awareness and Energizing Phases - Shao Yin Division

If we do not have that courage then we may tend to respond to painful stimuli in a way that reduces their strength; for instance by talking abstractly about our feelings rather than experiencing them.

However, the stimulus still has an effect, even if it is not in our awareness, so the effect is to create a split between our sense of self and our body state. We may end up doing things or having feelings without knowing why. This process of reducing awareness of the present is called **Deflection** in Gestalt theory and can happen at any stage in the cycle, as we will discuss later, but is often most noticeable in blocking the transition from sensation to feeling. For instance, if we witness a shocking event like a suicide, the sensation of vision can be clear but we may block our feelings about the suicide by deflecting our awareness into practical thoughts about how to clear up the mess, arrange the funeral, tell the partner etc. In this situation our actions are not in line with our real feelings and we may feel 'disconnected from reality'.

If, on the other hand, we can be aware of our whole response to stimulation then we start to feel the potential energy that drives our actions. If we can allow this inner excitement to ripen then it can blossom into actions which feel authentic, they are the true expression of our self. Therefore this phase of being aware of our core excitement and allowing that to drive our action is important in being able to own our behaviour and act authentically.

If we find difficulty in this phase then we experience a lack of integrity; we are caught in dilemmas like 'I want to cry but I must behave like a man and deal with the practical problems'. Our energy is divided because we are split between desire for satisfaction and desire to maintain an image of ourselves that is not real. Instead of acting from our core and facing the disapproval it might entail, we filter our actions by creating an internal policeman to keep us in line. This process of creating an internal authority figure separate from our core sense of self is called **Introjection** in Gestalt theory.

Of course, if we acted on all our urges then life would be hell. Many of us would end up killing, raping and pillaging. However, there is a great difference between (a) being aware of our impulse and choosing not to act on it and (b) feeling ashamed of our impulse and inhibiting our energy as a consequence. In the first case we have many options for going forward, we can choose some other way to satisfy our excited energy. In the second we block ourselves from any action because we feel that the original urge is 'wrong'.

Tantric Practice

This is an essential step in most therapeutic and spiritual processes, becoming aware of the underlying energy rather than the behaviour it causes and finding an alternative way for the excited energy to manifest. In essence, this is the basis of Tantric practice in Buddhism.

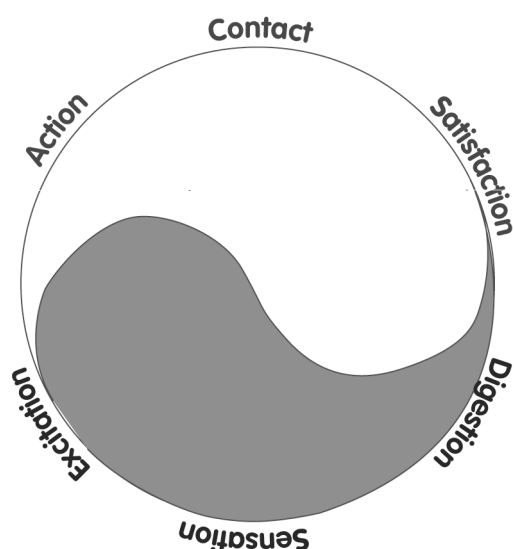


Once we start feeling desire or anger, for example, those emotions are inevitably projected out onto an object. I can't just desire, I have to desire something. If that something is unattainable then I've got a problem and I will never be satisfied. Tantric practice develops the capacity for experiencing the pure energetic excitement underlying emotions such as desire or anger and channeling that excitement into another path. In this way we do not repress our urges but they transform into an energy that can resolve without causing more turmoil [5].

In the language of Chinese Medicine, the capacity for Awareness of our core being is called the Heart while the excitation of the core which drives our actions and emotions is the energy of the Kidney. Thus the Awareness and Excitation Phases of the Gestalt Cycle are combined into the **Shao Yin Division** which connects both Kidney and Heart.

This Shao Yin phase is an important point in the cycle. The process has, up until now, been largely internal and at this point the internal (Yin) energy has ripened to a point that it has to give birth to action in the outer world. We see the seeds of the (Yang) action being born in the aware intentions that the Shao Yin division produces.

The Taoist symbol of Yin-Yang interdependence can be superimposed on the Gestalt cycle to reflect this observation and the next three stages describe the Yang aspect of a process.



4) Action Phase- Tai Yang Division

Interruptions of the cycle such as introjection effectively block authentic action from manifesting. It is as though the core excitation in the Shao Yin is capped and pushed down before it can come out into the world.

Essentially, introjection happens because we have not been able to discriminate between other people's view of how we should be on the one hand and our authentic nature on the other. Certain pressures from the environment can be naturally assimilated into ourselves because they flow with our inclinations, introjections are pressures that we have swallowed and absorbed but not been able to assimilate because they are too foreign to our nature.

This language is very digressive in nature which is why the Chinese associate the ability to discriminate between energy we can assimilate and that which is too foreign with the Small Intestine. In fact, Chinese Medicine calls this ability the Small Intestine Function.

Its meridian is strongly related to the extensor muscles of the shoulder, shoulder blade and neck and tension in these muscles is strongly connected to introjection, producing an inhibited and cowering posture.

However, if the Small Intestine function is healthy then we experience the ability to "go for it" without inhibition and the potential energy of the Shao Yin turns into clear action. The muscles and bones involved with aligning the body for action and transmitting our power through the skeleton to produce movement run along the Bladder meridian.

Thus the Bladder and Small intestine meridians are both involved in facilitating clear action in this phase and the two combine to form the **Tai Yang Division** in Chinese Medicine.

There is an interruption to the cycle, complementary to introjection, that is particularly associated with this phase. If, instead of focusing on our own impulses, we transfer the feelings we have about them onto the actions of someone else it is called **Projection**. Projection is a common method of disowning our own actions. For instance, I may be lustful. Introjection means that I disapprove of that tendency in myself and repress my feelings. I end up feeling disempowered. Alternatively, I can deflecting my awareness of my lust by projecting my discomfort onto other people who seem to be seeking sex. I judge them, disapprove of them and I may even disapprove of sex in general. Projection is thus a more Yang deflection than Introjection and I feel better about myself, in this case, as a result of off-loading all my self-denial onto someone else.

5) Contact Phase - Shao Yang Division

If I can own my impulses and act clearly then I am inevitably inter-acting with my environment. My action elicits a response and I am in relationship. This engagement of my core self with the environment is called Contact in Gestalt theory and is a phase full of rich complexity and creativity.

The major skill involved in this phase is the ability to maintain connection in spite of the differences between myself and the other. This is like a dance, both people moving in their individual ways but integrated by the joint adventure of dancing together.

It is only through Contact that conflict can truly resolve. In a contactful relationship, two people can maintain their differences but transcend them by seeing the value of both sides in a common project. The conflicting natures come to be seen as complementary and compassion can be born.

In our bodies, the same dance is continually being enacted between the muscles on each side of a joint. Their natural contraction moves the joint in opposite directions so there is great potential for conflict. However, if the two

muscles are in relationship as the agonist and antagonist of a movement then they do not conflict but simply modulate each other to create smooth, graceful movement.

In the language of Chinese Medicine this function is called the Gall Bladder and its meridian runs on the midline between the extensor muscles and the flexor muscles, providing a focus for this collaborative relationship in the body. The result of Gall Bladder function is the ability to act without internal conflict, to make clear decisions and to go forward without vacillation.

But also, this collaboration at a joint needs to connect to the rest of the body so that the movement embraces whole. In the same way, an act of collaboration by two people means nothing if it is not part of an ongoing relationship and a relationship between two people only makes real sense if it is integrated into a social context.

In Oriental terms this integration of the whole matrix is the function of the Triple Heater which links central energy to the periphery and creates a unified organism by integrating all the different parts. The Triple Heater meridian runs down the centre of the arms, up the side of the neck and down the core of the body to the centre of gravity.

We can see how the contact phase of the Gestalt cycle is enabled by the Gall Bladder and Triple Heater which together form the **Shao Yang Division**.

If, instead of receiving response to our actions from others and thus forming relationship, we self-respond to our own actions then we interrupt the contact phase by turning our energy back into ourselves. In effect we only have relationship with ourselves. In Gestalt theory this is called **Retroflexion** and self-criticism is a common example. Guilt is our negative response to our own action: instead of standing by our authentic actions and facing the displeasure of others in relationship with them, we preempt their response by censoring ourselves, denying the possibility of full contact with the other.

In the body, Retroflexion translates as jerky and over-controlled movement. If the Gall Bladder function is unbalanced then the antagonist reacts against the agonist's movement resulting in muscular conflict. If the Triple Heater is unbalanced then one part of the body will not be integrated into the movement of the whole, again causing internal conflict.

6) Satisfaction phase - Jue Yin Division

Engaging in relationship with the environment or another person means that, not only do our impulses complete their trajectory into the outer world, but also we receive energy in the form of the other's response.

If we act from the Heart then other people's response is to our Heart rather than to a protective layer. Relationship is a real exchange of energy. This allows our impulses to find satisfaction and come to rest and also nourishes us, replenishing the energy we have given out to the other.

This means that our store of internal nourishment is

not depleted by our actions. A contactful encounter leaves us feeling full rather than empty and our movement can find a place of rest and satisfaction.

Full contact is being actively in relationship, creating relationship. There are also times in the process of relationship when two people are simply communing with each other; being in contact but without energetic interaction taking place. This companionship really forms the centre around which the pulsation of separation and togetherness in a relationship can flow smoothly.

Satisfaction has two faces. On the one hand it means that the Gestalt has completed and we can move on clearly into the future without being dragged back to finish off unsatisfied impulses. On the other hand it provides a store of contentment which means that we can enter times of separation and conflict without fearing that we won't be satisfied again. It is the ripe fruit of relationship which creates a smooth flow of movement around the cycles in our lives.

In the language of Chinese Medicine these two aspects of satisfaction are called the **Liver**. The Liver function is to create smoothness in the movement of life processes. It does this in both the ways mentioned above.

The **Liver Yang** is the clear vision of the future that completed Gestalts allow. It facilitates a forward movement without being pulled back by the past. The **Liver Yin** is the store of contentment (**Blood** in Chinese Medicine) which allows us to go through difficulties without panic or deflection. The result is that we can move through the Gestalt cycles of our life without losing contact with our Heart.

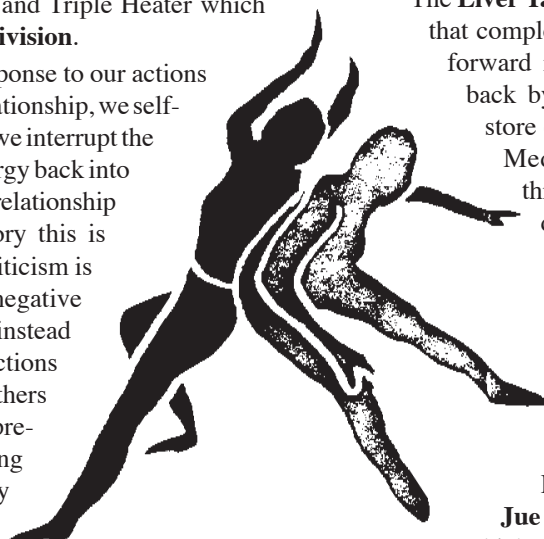
In oriental energetics this maintenance of connection with the Heart is provided by the Heart Protector. The Liver and the Heart Protector together form the **Jue Yin Division** and it is this division

which enables the **Satisfaction Phase**. The

Jue Yin, in postural terms, is largely concerned with flexion at the shoulders and hips and adduction of the limbs, thus providing a physical sense of being knitted together and connected to centre.

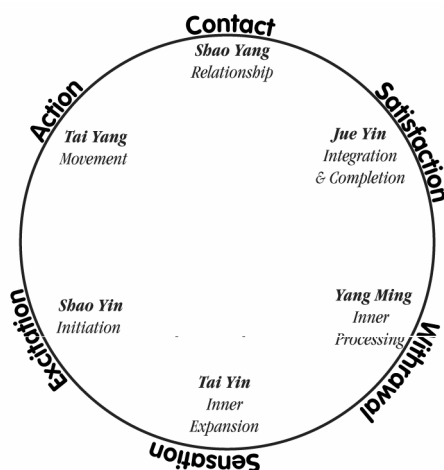
It is possible to experience the contact phase and to miss out on satisfaction. This is more common in people with a bias towards action and the Yang side of life, they leap onto the next gestalt without reaping the contentment provided by the last. The oriental emphasis on a balance of Yin and Yang provides the therapeutic key for people with this tendency. By encouraging the Yin aspects of the body and behaviour, these individuals can be helped to feel nourished by the warmth of their contactful interactions.

It is more common in neurotic personalities however for both the contact and satisfaction phases to be missed. Retroflexion describes the action of responding to oneself rather than being in outer relationship. The result of this is that we attempt to get all our nourishment and satisfaction from ourselves. We form a self-contained circle. This



state is called **Egotism** in gestalt theory and I see it as the Yin side of Retroflection. An example of egotism is self-analysis. Instead of experiencing, we comment on and analyze the experience. This as a futile attempt to 'digest' ourselves to get nourishment but it leaves us empty and without satisfaction.

This completes our description of the Gestalt cycle and its connections to the Six Divisions can be summarised by this diagram.



Awareness in the cycle

You will notice that the traditional Gestalt cycle has seven phases. Some theorists have added even more detail. In this article, however, I have linked it with a system of six divisions by combining the Awareness and Excitation phases into one.

This fits naturally into the Shao Yin division because the Shao Yin actually does embrace both Awareness (the Heart) and Excitation (the Kidney). But I feel there is a deeper reason this dissonance of numbers.

Essentially, all the interruptions of the Gestalt cycle, Confluence, Desensitization, Introjection, Projection and Retroflection can be seen as forms of Deflection : turning aside from awareness [6]. It is fundamentally awareness that produces liberation from the endless round of incomplete cycles by helping unfinished energy to complete its gestalt.

In this way Awareness can be seen to be the sea in which the whole gestalt cycle moves and therefore is not strictly a phase in the cycle.

This is reminiscent of the Buddhist view of the **Wheel of Life**. This Wheel is the idea that we are continually suffering because we are attached to resolving unfinished business, or Karma, and are not free to move on or to respond authentically. Buddhist philosophy also identifies awareness as the key to being liberated from this painful circling. [7]

It also resonates with the role of the Heart in Chinese Medicine. The Heart is the seat of pure awareness in that system and is seen more as the context in which life process happens rather than an active function of life. In this system the role of the Emperor in Ancient China is seen as the metaphor for the Heart. He purposely did as little

as possible; his role being to provide an immutable centre around which everything else could move securely.

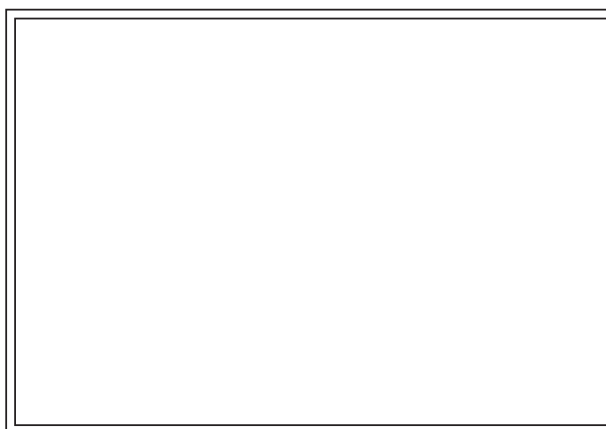
Conclusion

These connections between Chinese energetics, Gestalt theory and Buddhism complete a gestalt in my life. All three disciplines have been major factors in my development and to combine them gives me great satisfaction.

However, this personal satisfaction is somewhat arid for other people unless I can also show how Gestalt psychotherapists can use the insights of Chinese Medicine through bodywork and how Oriental Body Therapists can include the subtle view of the personality provided by Gestalt and Buddhism. For me, the key to this therapeutic cross fertilisation is the study of child development, showing how the posture and personality develop together. This is the subject of the following article.

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Re-defining the role of Shiatsu in pregnancy, birth and babyhood

by Suzanne Yates

Suzanne Yates, is a Shiatsu practitioner and teacher based in Bristol, who has focused a lot of her work since 1989, in the field of pregnancy, birth and babyhood. She runs, with her partner, Chris Wilkinson, Homœopath and Yoga teacher, "Well Mother" which offers a whole package of support for women and their partners. In this article she makes a case for exploring our attitudes to pregnancy and birth, as well as evaluating the role of Shiatsu at this time.

As a lot of my work is in the field of "Midwifery and complementary therapies". I am concerned that Shiatsu does not have such a high profile as some of the other therapies - particularly yoga, acupuncture, homœopathy, reflexology, massage and aromatherapy. I have decided to extend my work, which up until fairly recently has been primarily working with parents and babies, to working much more with midwives and NHS health professionals, shiatsu practitioners and other holistic therapists. I hope through this article to stimulate more discussion on the role of Shiatsu in this field

Pregnancy is Natural

I think pregnancy is often an area which is seen as something separate, rather than as a natural part of many women's lives. It is ideally a healthy movement from womanhood to motherhood, which offers much potential for change, growth and personal development. Yet by many it can be viewed with anxiety, as times of change often are. Shiatsu practitioners are as guilty of doing this as anyone else. I do wonder how many Shiatsu practitioners are anxious in some way of working with women through their pregnancies and births, and perhaps err on the side of donning kid gloves.

I find it interesting that in the core curriculum, points contra-indicated during pregnancy are highlighted as a separate topic. I also wonder how much we have unconsciously absorbed many of the attitudes linked in with the Western medical approach to birth.

Pregnancy in Western Medicine

More than any other time of our lives, even the most alternative people have some contact with the NHS during their pregnancy. It is illegal to give birth without a midwife present. Yet although the Western approach does have a lot to offer, it has in my opinion one fundamental



flaw. That is that the very nature of the care it provides tends to undermine the confidence of the mother and the partner in listening to and acting on their own wisdom, and that of their baby. Although now, since the publication of the government report "Changing Childbirth" in 1993, women are, supposedly, the experts, and their knowledge is acknowledged to be as valid as any obstetricians, the whole system of care is by its very nature disempowering.

The Role of Shiatsu

Shiatsu by its very essence enables people to be more connected with their own energy and during pregnancy with the energy of their baby, in a very direct and accessible way. In this sense it can be one of the most powerful therapies for women and their partners at this time, particularly if the Shiatsu session itself is complemented with tools for the woman to continue exploring and deepening this connection with her body and her baby.

The underlying belief which informs all my work with pregnant women is that ultimately they know their bodies and babies better than anyone else. As practitioners we need to be aware of any of our own anxieties which may interfere with us empowering women to contact their wisdom. We also need to be aware of any influences which inhibit the mother being in contact with her wisdom. There are the situations we are familiar with, of people not eating well and living lives which disconnect them from their bodies. Yet we also need to be acutely aware of how Western maternity care powerfully undermines that trust a woman has in her body, at a time in which she is particularly sensitive and vulnerable.

The Scan Disempowers Women

The first part of the maternity package is to go along and have a scan. This used to be done routinely at 16 weeks, but now often seems to be happening earlier and earlier, even at 8 weeks. The scan is when ultrasound is passed over the baby in the womb, with the rationale being to determine the age of the baby. It can often pick up what are called "gross anomalies" i.e. major physical problems. But often the ones it picks up are so serious that the baby would probably die in utero anyway. Women usually want to have a scan to "check the baby is all right", but it can not offer this reassurance.

Scans have never been shown to be that dangerous, but they have never been proven to be particularly safe either. It is entirely possible that they may cause subtle neurological damage to the child. It is difficult to prove this because the kind of research that would pick up this problem is not available. From an Oriental perspective, seeing the development of the baby in the womb as mirroring the evolution of humanity from the water state to the earth state, each day represents 100 million biological years of evolution. Exposure to ultrasound for any amount of time, (the minimum exposure time would be a few minutes ranging up to half an hour), would obviously affect the baby in some way. Research is now beginning to show, surprise, surprise, that the baby is distressed by the contact with ultrasound waves. The WHO has argued that there is no medical justification for routine scans. But the number continues to grow.

Scans, I feel, exemplify the Western approach to birth. If there is a test, a measurement, that doesn't appear to be unsafe, do it, get more information. Yet the value of the information needs to be considered. More information does not necessarily mean better care - often the reverse can be the case. Routine foetal heart monitoring in labour has led to a higher number of unnecessary Caesareans. More information has led to the situation today where obstetricians and medical professionals hold power and women have given up their knowledge.

Routine ultrasound scanning undermines the woman's relationship with her baby. Often women say to me that the pregnancy becomes more real when they see the picture of their baby on the screen. Unconsciously, they are absorbing the attitude that someone else needs to validate their pregnancy, that they are not able to be in touch or trust in their own inner sense of the baby and their own knowledge of their pregnancy. This then affects their whole attitude throughout their whole pregnancy and during the birth of their child. They value obstetrical judgements over their own inner knowledge. Some women are aware of how this relationship has been undermined and make comments like "I left my baby behind in the gynaecologist's office".

Expert Judgement v.s. Natural Wisdom

Women are extremely sensitive during pregnancy and comments by health professionals such as "your baby is too big", "your baby is too small" "What if your baby stops breathing and you're at home" introduce anxiety and powerfully undermine their confidence in their own ability and knowledge. I am always amazed how normally articulate women, used to standing up for themselves, come out with comments such as "well, we have to trust in what the obstetricians say, they know best" rather than being able to see that different obstetricians have often diametrically opposed opinions. Working in this field we do need to be reasonably informed about the differing opinions within the world of maternity services, so we can help women put the information they are given in a broader context.

Complementary Therapy and the NHS

On the other hand there are many exciting developments in maternity services. I serve on the Avon Maternity Services Liaison Committee which is a multidisciplinary committee made up of obstetricians, paediatricians, midwifery managers, health visitors, midwives from the local trusts and lay representatives. One of our current areas of discussion is the role of complementary therapies in maternity services. Some NHS trusts offer some complementary therapies. There is a midwife acupuncturist at Plymouth, an aromatherapist at Peterborough and John Radcliffe in Oxford has been using Aromatherapy on the delivery suite for some time. There is beginning to be some awareness of the part that complementary therapies can play. There is a journal of "Complementary therapies in nursing and midwifery" and the book "Complementary for pregnancy and childbirth" edited by D. Tiran and S. Mack, to which Elise Johnson contributed the chapter on Shiatsu. I hope that we will be able to get Shiatsu accepted as a vital part of midwifery care, particularly during labour.

Some of us are already familiar with attending births and maybe using specific points and techniques. I myself have also taught many birth partners Shiatsu for labour, including fathers and midwives. I regularly run, with my partner Chris Wilkinson, Birth Preparation Days, of which Shiatsu is a crucial element. I am always surprised how much people can take on after even a few hours tuition. I particularly encourage people to get a feel of "Shiatsu touch", as well as teaching the points and areas which can be of use. We guide them to relate to their partner's body in the "Shiatsu" way, getting some feel for energy and how it changes when working with points.

Experiences of Shiatsu in Pregnancy

I'd like to share with you now a little of how I came to be involved in this field, and how I have developed my work to what I am doing now, which goes beyond my training as a Shiatsu practitioner. My real interest in Shiatsu and pregnancy began during my first pregnancy in 1989/90. I had only recently (1988) graduated from the Healing Shiatsu Education Centre and was beginning to assist Sonia Moriceau on the 3 year diploma course. I'd worked on a few pregnant women, but very carefully, unsure of the strength of the new born baby in the womb, armoured by precautions, "avoid work in the first trimester" "don't stimulate these points in the second trimester" and so on.

I hadn't planned on being pregnant, and initially wasn't sure whether I wanted to be. So, while on the course, I worked quite intensely on my spleen meridian and especially SP6 as well as other contraindicated points. I carried on with my meditation and exercises, quite vigorously, but my daughter hung on in there. I gradually became aware of the resilience of the spirit within me. I firmly believe now that connecting with the energy of the mother we are not able to cause harm. I usually am guided away from the contraindicated points, but occasionally surprise myself by working on "contraindicated" points

or areas, although I'd say never with firm pressure and usually working more ethereally than with direct physical pressure.

Meridian Exercises for Pregnancy

During this pregnancy, I began quite detailed personal study of the kind of exercises that were appropriate for me. I was initially quite cautious, once I decided that I did want to be pregnant, but gradually became more confident in my body's and baby's strength. I went to study ante and post natal exercise and baby massage with Elizabeth Noble at the Maternal and Child Health Centre in Boston, USA.

My partner is a Yoga teacher and with his support, I gradually developed my own system of exercises for pregnancy and postnatally. I was never drawn to training as an active birth teacher as I felt their training was too yoga based and I wanted to include more meridian work.

When my daughter was 3 months old in September 1990, I began teaching weekly ante and post natal classes, which I have been doing ever since. I continue to develop my exercises, learning continually from the women who attend my classes and through my second pregnancy in 1995. I include variations on makka-ho exercises, more yoga type work for strengthening the back, quite a lot of work on physically toning the abdomen and pelvic floor muscles, as well as a lot of breathing and contacting energy kind of work, especially including an awareness of the baby, whether in the womb or already born.

I find these weekly classes complement Shiatsu sessions. If people come for Shiatsu as well, then I can tailor the exercises to support the meridian work done in the session. I have also been surprised by how quickly, even sometimes after attending just one class, many women gain relief from physiological symptoms like backache, tiredness, varicose veins, rib flare, swelling, simply by attending these classes, without the support of the Shiatsu session.

Preparation for Labour

Antenatally some of the work in the weekly classes is to prepare women for labour through connecting with their energy and exploring birth positions and movements and breathing. I developed the Birth Preparation days with Chris, my partner, by drawing together our joint work and also through our experience with the birth of our daughter Rosa Lia.

We had decided we wanted Rosa to be born at home and in 1990, pre Changing Childbirth times, this was not supported by the NHS. I was indeed quite horrified by the way the community midwife, every time I went for a visit, tried to undermine my confidence, putting forward negative viewpoints of women and birth constantly. In the end my waters broke, I didn't go into labour and they wanted to induce me. Chris and I meditated and communicated with the spirit of our daughter. She seemed fine and we still intuitively felt that we all wanted her to be born at home.

The Partner's Role in Shiatsu Birth

I showed Chris the Shiatsu points for induction and he worked them vigorously. It still took a couple of days for me to go into labour. For me it was LV3 which did it. I was definitely feeling quite angry by then. Once I'd gone into labour, Chris worked mainly the sacral points and labour progressed smoothly and quickly. The lessons for me of this birth, were that a partner is able to support a woman in labour with Shiatsu without being a Shiatsu practitioner. Over the 7 years we have been teaching these workshops, we have witnessed many other partners give support with Shiatsu. I think one of the best times was when I had a class full of obstetricians and later they came back to me enthusiastic about the effectiveness of the Shiatsu. By the time I gave birth to our son in 1995 the midwives didn't need to be convinced of the value of Shiatsu and our approach to birth. It's been one of the high points of my work and life, that they did nothing at the birth, and it was my body and my hands alone which brought Bram into the world.

Shiatsu for Babies

I have also developed Shiatsu for babies. I find it is better to teach the parents to massage their babies, although sometimes with ill babies I'll work directly on them and then teach the parents specific techniques. Postnatally, especially in the first 6 months, I find it is important to be able to offer home visits, as mothers focus exclusively on their babies' needs, at the expense of their own. I also find it is important to be able to be adaptable and to include the baby in the session if necessary. I've given some lovely sessions where the baby has been lying on the mother's belly, even feeding. The baby is not really separate from the mother in this early period. Many cultures see the first 9 months of a baby's life as a transition period, when although out of the womb, s/he is still strongly interconnected with the mother.

Networking Holistic Approaches

I hope this gives you some inspiration for expanding your work with pregnant women. There are many other ways which we can link in with other approaches and disciplines, which fall outside the Western medical model. As my partner is a Homeopath, I have become aware of the value of Homeopathy, particularly in the first year of a baby's life.

You may well have heard of the Active Birth Movement or the NCT. I am involved in a new national organisation "Birth Matters" which values the gifts of complementary therapies and one of its projects is to establish a database of groups and individuals working in holistic ways with women. If anyone would like to be on this database, please contact me for a form. Another project is to set up a national centre, based in Bristol, as a focus for this work. One of the members is organising a "Women's, Health, Birth and Healing" in April at Winchester. The theme of the conference is the 5 elements. I am doing a workshop on Shiatsu.

A Call for Birth Stories

I have realised that there is a definite lack of written material on these approaches to pregnancy, birth, and babyhood, particularly from a Shiatsu perspective. I am currently researching a book to fill this gap. A big part of it is drawing on stories of women and their partners who were able to contact their own wisdom of birth, as well as those who were swept along by medical technology. I have developed a questionnaire to help me gather these stories, so maybe some of you practitioners out there who have had children (it doesn't matter when or how) would like to fill in a questionnaire for me. Or maybe you have clients who have had interesting experiences.

I also feel that more training is needed for Shiatsu practitioners in these areas; in particular a good knowledge of how the NHS system works and its approach; a practical understanding of other approaches, such as exercise, baby massage, work with partners, understanding needs and issues at this time; as well as a more thorough and in depth understanding of Shiatsu during this period. I will be running a one year diploma course for Shiatsu practitioners starting

in 1999 in Bristol "Well Mother; Shiatsu and holistic care for pregnancy, birth and baby hood". I will be running 2 introductory weekends in 1998 one in July and one in September. If you are interested in more information on this course, please send for a prospectus.

You can contact me at 24, Dunkerry Road, Windmill Hill, Bristol BS3 4LB Tel: 0117 9632 306

or you can e-mail me: Suzanne@creation.lway.co.uk

A few useful references;

Marsden Wagner "Pursuing the Birth Machine"

Wataru Ohashi "Shiatsu for Pregnancy and Birth"

D.Tiran and S.Mack (editors) "Complementary therapies for pregnancy and childbirth"

E.Noble "Essential Exercises for the Childbearing Year",

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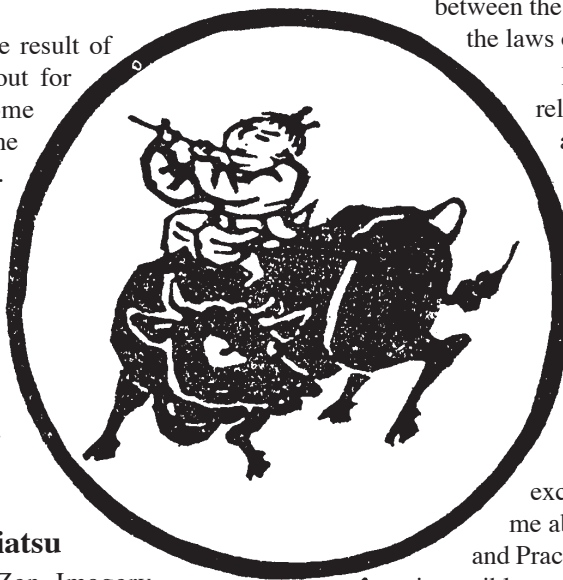


The Concepts of Shiatsu

by Yvonne Muraglia

Introduction

What is written here is the result of some research I have carried out for personal interest regarding some of the subjects suggested by the Cultural Institute of the F.I.S. (Federazione Italiana Shiatsu) to help clarify some of the concepts common to all forms of Shiatsu and its relationship to medicine. I would like to thank my colleagues in the Cultural Institute and remember how stimulating working with the C.I. has been.



Concepts of Health in Shiatsu

Shizuto Masunaga, in *Zen Imagery Exercises*, analyses the meaning of health and its derivation from the word 'heal', this in turn coming from 'hale'. Both these words are related to the words 'whole' and 'wholesome'. In this view, health and wholeness are directly related. Shiatsu holds this concept of health as the integrated functioning of the whole bodymind of and individual.

The result of this view of health in Shiatsu is that it focusses

(a) on the way the whole bodymind of the patient is functioning rather than splitting the body into healthy and unhealthy parts by concentrating on individual symptoms

(b) not on general principles that apply to any patient but on treatment principles that apply to that patient and only at that precise moment. The importance of this point will become clearer later.

Masunaga also compares the two main health care systems available, the western and the oriental. He says that, whereas in the western system the predominant idea of health is one whereby a person reinforces his own defences against illness and death by trying to conserve one's strength, in the oriental system what is of fundamental importance is the attitude and behaviour of Man towards Nature. The Chinese Medical classics suggest many principles on how to develop a harmonious lifestyle.

Masunaga continues by examining the Japanese Kanji (ideogram) for health which is composed of two parts: Ken, which represents a standing human figure, and Ko, which means to be relaxed and at ease. At the end of his essay Masunaga quotes a saying from the I Ching which says "the way to heaven is uprightness". Notice that the word uprightness, as well as having a moral sense, also means to stand upright. I will return to this relationship

between the health and harmony of man and the laws of Nature later.

It seems clear that an intimate relationship exists between Shiatsu and health especially as we all know the whole and total effect that Shiatsu produces, making us feel alive and strong, with new energy available to face everyday life.

Shiatsu and Western Medicine

The thing that has always excited me and, in a way, amazed me about Shiatsu, both as a Receiver and Practitioner, is its ability to touch the intangible.

Since the beginning of time Man has tried to find an answer to his problems. Intuitively we can assume that one of the most important of these problems has always been pain (and illness) because it causes the loss of that feeling of unity and coherence which lets us enjoy life. A discussion of the progress made in the fight against pain, illness and death is unnecessary, however today we find ourselves with two seemingly opposing systems of health care, western and oriental, which it is to be hoped will become complementary in the future.

At present, however, I find the arrogance of western, or at least modern medicine, to claim it is the only, valid answer to health problems totally senseless and unreasonable.

Everyone recognises the vast number of cases when the biochemical model on which western medicine is based can be of help, but does that mean that thousands of possible organic and energetic malfunctions can have no treatment other than surgery or the taking of drugs?

One of my patients who is HIV positive told me about his friends who are being treated with AZT. For a year after starting the treatment they felt fine, but after this period of well-being their condition deteriorated noticeably and they felt worse than they had before. With Shiatsu, perhaps there will not be earth-shattering results (partly because we haven't got a large enough number of documented cases to refer to) however, just considering the case of my patient, I can say that, after around 10 sessions, from my point of view as Shiatsu Practitioner, his energy flows, which previously had been impeded, began to move.

I don't want to dwell on the fact that Shiatsu and (modern) medicine are still two antagonistic worlds and that they can only integrate if both sides humbly recognise that the other is necessary.

Shiatsu and prevention

Most of the patients who come to me do so only when they are already ill, or rather when they realise that they are ill. However, Shiatsu is a way of treating the body which is not limited to the treatment of symptoms which have already appeared. It is particularly effective, above all, in the field of prevention. I don't need to explain this as there is general agreement, but I will just emphasise how important the diffusion of this information is, so as to inform potential Receivers how adequate prevention with Shiatsu translates later into less suffering, fewer problems, shorter healing times and consequently a reduction in costs both for the individual and society. I believe that the Professional Shiatsu bodies should play an active role in this.

Natural Morality

Before discussing the limits of Shiatsu it would be appropriate to investigate some aspects which are often neglected - aspects regarding morality and the observation of the whole, immediate present.

We have already mentioned the importance of behaviour in harmony with the laws of Nature, behaviour which I define as moral, even though I appreciate the ambiguity that such a word entails in current language as it is unfortunately loaded with negative connotations of a sense of guilt and sin. I would say that in an essay on Shiatsu the term morality should regain its original meaning, that of rules of behaviour applied with the single aim of ensuring the well-being and happiness of mankind. With this in mind, I would like to clarify how certain behaviour to ensure survival and therefore well-being, is instinctive and as such does not need to be assessed according to certain rules.

For example, I'm hungry so I eat, simply because my body tells me to and then I have a sense of well-being. The problem arises when the decision about which behaviour to adopt enters into a particular type of conflict, the simplest example being the satisfaction of an immediate interest to the detriment of a future one. For example, staying with eating, I'm hungry and eat an excessive quantity, or I regularly eat food which is tasty but unhealthy. The immediate pleasure which I enjoy today is counterbalanced by the unpleasant feeling of indigestion tomorrow (in the case of over-eating) or liver problems in later life (unhealthy food).

In this article I will use the terms moral and morality only in the sense of behaviour in harmony with the laws of Nature and not with the meaning they are commonly used. Behaviour which is sufficiently moral and harmonious and includes a healthy diet, healthy living conditions and a positive approach to life produces the essential conditions for an effective application of Shiatsu.

It is obvious how moral behaviour on the part of the Receiver is of fundamental importance. That this is a requisite also for the Practitioner may not be so obvious: but consider the process of diagnosis in which there is a need for clear perception and an accurate evaluation of the energy of the Receiver. I maintain clarity is impossible if the Practitioner's energy is in turmoil because the signals

from the Practitioner's own system distort his perception of the patient. Furthermore, to work on blocked Chi, it is important to be able to draw on a fluid Chi.

Holistic Observation

Earlier I mentioned the meaning of whole/total/ oneness of the body/mind and the need to relate Shiatsu to the particular situation of the immediate present. This means that Shiatsu occurs through the observation of the whole of a specific body/mind at a precise moment. In other words, Shiatsu without accurate and careful observation should not exist. Observation of only some particular aspects of a patient, however carefully carried out, is not enough.

The way in which the observation of the whole of the present is demonstrated in Shiatsu can be summarised by contact. Contact reawakens our primordial memories and is the fundamental expression for, in the first place, finding ourselves and, in the second, for maintaining social relationships which, these days can be particularly complex, difficult and often distant. This contact, in Shiatsu, occurs through pressure, which is one of Nature's most powerful ways of producing change (for example, atmospheric pressure).

It is therefore quite easy to understand that we possess one of the most powerful techniques imaginable. Pressure, enhanced by the rules of perpendicularity, stability and, in the Iokai style, support, produces changes in the electrical charges in the body thus re-establishing normal flow along the meridians. Visualised in Chinese philosophy as rivers, the meridians are flows of life-giving (vital) energy, which do not exist in inert material. For this reason the Practitioner, with his sensitivity (perception) and discipline (study), is able to perceive that a body is ill before the person shows symptoms. He is also able to perceive when the body/mind has recovered or healed before the Receiver is aware of it.

In Shiatsu the Practitioner works in two ways:

- 1) like a mirror
- 2) stopping the world.

Being Like a Mirror

When I perform my art correctly, according to the state of the Receiver, I induce in him varying responses (calming, toning, joyful, soporific, etc.) but there is a single, great law which governs all of this, and that is that Shiatsu mirrors the other, without any kind of mediation, and with no compromises. The Receiver reflects how he is and not how others describe him or how he might describe himself. To see phenomena as they really are and not just how we imagine them to be is something only humans can do and, in this world, Man is the inheritor of the winds of heaven and earth, Wang, - Man, noble, tall, and erect.

Observation is therefore the most important act in Shiatsu, without preconceptions or prejudice, distinguishing without distinguishing what is from what is not. During therapy the Practitioner and the Receiver are one, like the poles of a battery whereby if one were missing it wouldn't be able to produce the magnetic effect. Also in a Shiatsu

meeting, the Practitioner, with his role of agent of positive force, simultaneously maintains his negative pole in his ability to listen to the other person. The Receiver, being the passive pole, becomes active as his body/mind return to equilibrium.

The relationship between Practitioner and Receiver is graphically represented in the Yin Yang symbol of the two "fish", one white, one black, 'chasing' each other, with a ball of the other colour inside. Both of the "fish" contain the possibility of changing into the other and to do it in such a way that its force remains the same as it was before any transformation took place.

Stopping the World

By saying that Shiatsu stops the world, an act which I define as a discovery of the present, I mean that the only true time for the Receiver is the present. There are no intermediaries of any kind in this case and his whole life, enclosed in the molecules and cells of his body, passes before his (internal) eyes, in the immediate present. The Receiver thus experiences his moments of presence and awareness which reintegrate his divided 'self' and lead him to perceive the world as a continuous, unceasing and natural flow.

Understanding through the body, mind and spirit that the world is something in transformation, and man

makes up a part of it and this is man's only task, may be achieved through Shiatsu as it is an act which aids this journey, exploring suffering, easing it and accepting it as an essential and inevitable part of life.

Conclusion

We have examined the relationship between Shiatsu and morality, the totality of the body and mind, integrity, and observation, uniting them in a universal law of change and transformation. I don't think this has limits if combined with a morality in the Taoist sense, which connects microcosm to macrocosm, and that the previously mentioned principles are upheld.

If, on the other hand, I disconnect the Te from the Tao, the Virtue from the Way, then my results will be discontinuous and inconsistent and I might be better off collecting statistics to see how valid a technique it is for treating illness. I don't want to disregard the value of statistical research, as long as its intrinsic limits are understood, but it is always necessary to be clear that we are working with Nature and with her laws and not against the forces of nature in order to take them over or force them to do as we wish.

Yvonne Muraglia is one of the Officers in the Italian Shiatsu Federation. She teaches and practices Shiatsu in Northern Italy.



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The Short Form

by Peter den Dekker

Shiatsu is a physical therapy with a so-called holistic approach. If it is going to be truly holistic, this also must reflect in the way shiatsu is taught. In the years I have been involved in shiatsu education, I often observe a gap between the period the basic techniques are taught and the moment energetic and diagnostic themes come in. At the initial stage of learning, shiatsu is playful and adventurous. The pleasure of discovering all kinds of wonderful techniques and of learning how to use your body, seems to diminish when all the theoretical information comes in. The magic of a shiatsu treatment is so much connected with the enthusiastic and open attitude of new students. Masunaga wrote that a treatment received from a true beginner is much preferred above the one of a professional who analyses too much. Basic shiatsu without the use of the intellect, seems to be so different from its application in practice.

The Creation of the Short Form

In the school in which I work, Institute Nei Guan in Amsterdam, we have made a bridge between the beginning and advanced levels of training. Over the years we created a basic shiatsu form, which we called the “short form”. In the process of creation we kept a few criteria in mind. First of all, the form had to be suitable for beginners, so easy to learn. The “short form” had to be applicable for a wide range of conditions; without diagnostic skills and it had to be safe to use. Then, there had to contain a natural logic in its composition. Its composition had to reflect the principles of meridian-energetics taught in the more advanced levels. Furthermore, if there was a smooth natural line between the techniques of the “short form”, it would easily be memorised. Over the years we adapted the “short form” until we had something in our hands which was useful and pleasurable.

Integrating through Repetition

Within shiatsu there are so many possible techniques and personal interpretations of them. For the new shiatsu student that rich variety is often overwhelming. We are aware that the time people are in training is limited. It is not wise to teach a great number of techniques, if there is no time to learn them in depth. In my personal experience with martial arts, aikido, taijiquan and qigong, the initial learning process is to repeat certain movements over and over again. The movements transform from being strange to familiar, then becoming automatic and finally part of yourself. The standard is learned in order to develop the personal. The key in this process is the repetition in a regular, diligent practice.

In taijiquan it is the “form” which is learned for some years in order to let the movements go deeply into the body system. There is not a lot of theory involved, it is body-work

in the true sense of the word. To follow a standard form does not mean the ignoring of the personal. The body has many habits, which blur true personal expression. To practice a standard form is to see yourself in a clear mirror. The form can be seen as the accumulation of experience of so many generations; many mistakes can be avoided because they were already made. The repetition of movements unfolds their true character. Djie Han Tung my first qigong teacher called this the process of polishing. The way pebbles are rounded off in the stream of the river.

All shiatsu schools encourage their new students to put the techniques into practice as much as possible. Shiatsu can only be learned by this personal experience. We felt that a standard shiatsu form mustn't be a randomly chosen collection of loose techniques. It had to be a complete treatment in itself which could be applied directly in practice. It takes our students ten evening-classes to learn the “short form”. Soon after we already start with practice-under-supervision, which is the better way to learn. Students at that stage do not have any diagnostic skills, but the “short form” offers a firm structure to work. Its structure relates directly to the basic human energetics, like digestion and movement.

The Three Units

The shiatsu style of our institute is based on meridian-energetics and we group them in the so-called Three Units. As all the twelve regular meridians form a large closed circuit, each of the Units shows how four meridians do the same in a small closed circuit. Each of the Units reflects a certain dimension of energy, movement and life quality. The use of the Three Units simplifies the meridian study and is the foundation for our way of meridian diagnosis. In the “short form” two of the Three Units are present: the First Unit, the Unit of nourishment and embodiment and the Second, the Unit of movement. The First represents flexion, intake and inner support, the Second extension, outward directiveness and movement.

The First Unit meridians govern the front side of the body, whereas the ones of the Second Unit have their trajectories on the back.

At first the repetition of the “short form” builds on routine. It enables us to experiment with posture, hara-hand connection and the quality of touch. In later study it becomes clear for students, that in fact the “short form” is a treatment for the First and Second Unit. The step from basic shiatsu to meridian study is very small in this way. In the practice-under-supervision in the second year, the year in which energetics are taught, students often go back to the “short form” when clinical situations are difficult.

The Short Form as a Context for Diagnosis

The “short form” is not exclusively used by beginners. More advanced students and graduates keep on using it. The condition of many of the people who come for shiatsu is rather complex. Although they might not be ill in the common sense of the word, many external and internal stressors challenge their immunity. In oriental terms, often more than one of the meridians dysfunctions and all of the elements are more or less out of balance.


Using such a general treatment as the “short form” enables us to observe more freely during the first treatments. There is no need to bother about a “right diagnosis”. While you learn more about the persons body and its inherent energetics, you are already treating. In clinic we also see that the “short form” already alleviates some of the complaints and clarifies the general condition.

Miriam Lee, a well known Chinese-American acupuncturist wrote a book about the same topic. Out of her long clinical experience she distilled a treatment with only ten points (five on each side of the body). She found those points very effective in treatment and applicable in in all those cases where the whole energetic system is more or less distorted.

The idea behind the formula is to activate the whole of the First Unit with the support of the Three Leg Yin. She taught the simple ten-point-formula to many of her students in order to help them begin their clinical work. If during the first session it was not possible to get a clue of the body energetics, the ten-point-formula would release some off the constrictions and give the body a general uplift. So the picture of the condition would be much clarified. She found out that her students kept using the same formula also after graduating.

The average time of the use of the “short form” is an hour. Advanced students don’t take the form literally and start to improvise on it. Sometimes they use merely the principles behind it. After the “short form” is mastered more techniques are added. The “short form” is now used as the framework in which the variations are placed in. I like to see it as the structure of a musical composition or the “leitmotif” of it. Once the line of the composition is clear you can freely make variations according to the needs of the person under your hands.

***Peter den Dekker** is Director of the Institute Nei Guan in Amsterdam, Holland. He trained in Zen Shiatsu, and in Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine in China. He will be teaching a series of evening classes in London on the Short Form, suitable for all students from beginner to advanced, starting in February 1998. For information contact Paola Campanelli on 01273 620288.*



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Shiatsu on the Internet

by Bill Palmer

What is the Internet?

Everybody must have heard of the internet by now, it is the fastest growing concept in the world at present and, in the UK, thousands of new people are linking in to it each month. In America, most of the population has access to it and, soon, that will be true in the UK too. From your computer at home, through the phone line at local call rates, you can access a worldwide network of computers on which people place their "Websites".

What is a Website?

A website is a series of pages which can be viewed on a computer which are linked together like rooms in a house. Each page can contain text, graphics, CD quality sound and video. A website for a shiatsu school might have a "Home Page" which is the first room you enter when you visit it. On this Homepage you might have the school's logo, some graphics, a description of the school and, most importantly, buttons or keywords which link you to other rooms in the site. In one room there may be a prospectus, or each course may have its own room, in another there may be a booking form which you can fill in if want to apply to go on a course and which will automatically be mailed to the school. In another room there may be descriptions of Shiatsu with possibly a video of an example treatment.

An individual therapist's Website may simply be one page containing a photo, contact addresses and a description of the therapist and their training. Or it may be more extensive with electronic session booking and links to training courses which the practitioner teaches on. In the USA most schools and many therapists have their own Websites and get a lot of business through them.

Another growing use of the internet is for on-line shopping but there is still a large non-commercial community on the internet, creating information sites which are like specialist libraries. Key words in the text and even pictures can be links to other pages which fill out more related information. Its like having a fully stocked research library in your living room.

Alternative Medicine on the Internet

A year or two ago there were only a few sites of very poor quality about alternative medicine and almost none about Shiatsu. I have just searched the internet for sites containing the keyword Shiatsu and have found 2,328 pages including school sites, practitioner pages and information sites. Searching for Alternative Medicine in general finds 11,769 sites!

At the moment, use of the Internet is only at its infancy in the UK but it is growing extremely fast. Many experts

predict that, within three years, a majority of people between the ages of 14 and 50 will have e-mail accounts and will use the net regularly to shop, find information and advertise their work.

For us in the Shiatsu world, this means that within three years, if any of these people have a health problem, they will probably look on the Internet for information. The sites I review in this article will automatically be called up and will point them at Shiatsu if it is a suitable therapy for their problem. Some of the sites will link to the Shiatsu Society's register of practitioners. Others will automatically list local practitioners and link them to the therapists' personal Web pages so that they can choose somebody who feels right for them and make appointments on-line. I feel this will transform the way in which we work. We will probably be seeing a much wider section of society and the demand will probably increase dramatically.

Searching the Internet

The World Wide Web is growing so fast that it's like a library with thousands of books being delivered each month. How do you search in all this vast volume of information for the little detail that you want.

One method is by using a *search engine*. There are five or six of these on the Internet with names like *Lycos*, *Yahoo*, *Excite*, *Infoseek* and *Webcrawler*. These are big databases that send out little programs called "spiders" which crawl around the Internet sending back information on the Web Pages they find and storing keywords for each page on the search engine.

The disadvantage of these engines is that they give back too much information. For instance a search for Shiatsu produces thousands of references and you have to search through these by hand.

Although the engines also allow you to refine the keyword search (for instance by looking for Shiatsu AND Scotland) which does produce a manageable number of references it is still not satisfactory because you have to know in advance what keywords to put in to get a manageable number of results. Someone searching for Health AND UK or even Alternative Medicine and UK returns too many references to cope with.

Jump Sites make it easy

A solution to these problems is to have specialist catalogues, compiled by people who have already done the labour of sorting out the wheat from the chaff and have organized the information in a way that is easy to get at.

Ideally search engines should be able to recognize these jump sites and point searchers at them rather than at everything. I'm sure that this will come about. This is what the *Complementary Therapy Browser*, *The Rowantree*, *The*

Birmingham Alternative Health Directory and *Holistic Health in the UK* (see the Web Directory below) are about. An ideal jumpsite is Richard Blair's *Scottish Shiatsu Network* site. It is specialist, gives people a comprehensive view of Shiatsu in Scotland and links them to other sites which give more detail. However, it is small and the art of the future is in designing large Jump Sites that retain this one's clarity.

However, it is a fact of life that there are good jump sites and bad and, moreover, everything is in such a newborn stage that most of the sites in our field have very little information on them about the UK. In the USA it is different. Check out the *Bodywork and Movement Therapies Internet Resource* to see the vast range of information collated in the States.

This situation will change and I hope the good ones will thrive and the confusing ones fade away. Maybe in three years time, people searching for Complementary Therapy will only need to be presented with a handful of sites which have catalogued the information in different special ways and this will mean that more people will use the Net to get therapy, meaning more employment for us!

Jump Sites for Shiatsu & other Complementary Therapies

The Shiatsu Network www.shiatuscot.demon.co.uk/

Holistic Health in the UK
www.netplaces.co.uk/health/

The Complementary Therapy Browser & The British Association of Arts & Therapy www.seed.org

The Rowantree Trading Post www.rowantree.co.uk
Bodywork and Movement Therapies Internet Resource web0.tiac.net/users/mgold/www/bodywork.html

A Guide to Psychotherapy on the Internet www.shef.ac.uk/~psysc/psychotherapy/index.html

A Guide to Alexander Technique www.alexandertechnique.com/

Acupuncture www.acupuncture.com/

Individual Shiatsu Sites in the UK

Shiatsu Society www.shiatsu.org

Shiatsu Training:

The Shiatsu Network at www.shiatuscot.demon.co.uk/ hosts all the Shiatsu Schools in Scotland and more

The School for Experiential Education is at www.seed.org/seed.html

The European Shiatsu School is at www.shiatsu.co.uk

Journals about Alternative Medicine

Journal of Shiatsu & Oriental Body Therapy www.seed.org/jsobt.html

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