

Traditional Chinese Medicine/Western Medicine Two perspectives on medicine

Jean Marc Kespi

Honorary President of the French Association of Acupuncture, France

Corresponding author

Jean Marc Kespi, Honorary President of the French Association of Acupuncture, France.

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This inevitable duality is found in sinology as well as in acupuncture over time and space.

This exists always and everywhere, even during this congress.

This is in accordance with the Yin Yang principle which emphasises that Life contains both, meaning that there is not one dimension OR the complementary, but one dimension AND the complementary. What is important? It is the dialogue between these two dimensions.

Vibrational / Corpuscular: two possible views on light

Contemporary physics tells us that there are two possible views on light, and also on matter, living beings: a corpuscular view (light perceived as particles) and a vibrational one (light as waves). This is also true for human beings. I insist on the fact that light is corpuscular AND vibrational at the same time. It is a question of whether one looks at one side or the other.

Encouraged by French sinologists and by my experience of TCM since 1962, it seems to me that Western science tends to focus on the corpuscular side, whereas traditional Chinese science focuses above all on the vibrational side. We are thus faced with two different but interacting views of LIFE. We are here facing the prerequisites of Chinese and Indo-European civilizations; the dialogue is then established, on both sides, between these two views.

In traditional Chinese medicine, everything is vibration, starting with channels, but also viscera (which, as we know, are seen only from a "functional" point of view) and acupuncture points. Xue 穴, the character for « point » is an empty cave, and it is the vacuum in acupuncture points that allows Qi to set in motion, thus being transformed. The points' structures are vibrational rather than anatomical.

The vibrational aspect can be perceived in Qigong and Taijiquan, where it is told that Qi must move the muscles, in line with

contemporary physics for which "the motion of the particle is directed by a wave" (J.S. Bell, physician).

An important question. What determines the corpuscular or vibrational point of view?

After noting that "the wave/particle duality also characterises matter", Trinh xuan Thuan writes "depending on the type of experiment, light behaves as a particle, or as a wave [1]. The two descriptions do not exclude but complement each other. However, when does light behave as a wave and when does it behave as a particle? ... It is the observation that creates reality". In other words, it depends on the intention and viewpoint of the observer.

The Main Thing is to Create a Dialogue between These two Points of Views

This is important for us medical doctors, as it is impossible for the same person to have these two views on medicine and patients at the same time. Even at different points in time, it is difficult for one person to keep in mind both standpoints, conditioned as we are by our heritage, our past, our psychology...

The ideal solution would be to have a dialogue between two people, each of whom has one of these perspectives; especially in medicine where the patient is the meeting point. The patient contains both aspects, and we can reach each other on a deep level, complementing and enriching for both.

It is therefore essential to have a dialogue between these two medicines, provided that their respective identity is taken into account. This is important in terms of the diagnosis and treatment of our patients. It is also important in terms of research, as the methodology of one cannot be applied to the other without distorting it.

Acupuncture and TCM

I will now share a few thoughts about acupuncture points.

Points are closely linked to Qi 氣 (tchi).

Qi is sometimes translated as energy; the French word “souffle”, or “breath” is a better translation, because it is related to breathing. Another option, instead of translating it, is to try and see it from different points of view.

What does Qi bring to mind? I'm quoting:

« Qi is the central underlying principle that gives form to all things and beings in the universe » [2].

« Qi is the informative and transformative principle of everything » [3].

Qi is differentiated into "all living forms which are nothing but Qi in a particular form" [4].

Qi is thus linked to a form, to the appearance of a form.

Note the frequency of the word: "form"

What do we do when we needle an acupuncture point?

We reactivate, release and remind the patient's body of an information that has been forgotten, buried or obstructed.

This leads to using few needles, so as not to overwhelm the patient's body with too much information. Delivering two or three coherent pieces of information will be more effective.

The clinical case that follows emphasises the vibrational nature of the information circulated by needling. This 48 years old physiotherapist is stocky, overweight, and full of life. He consults for a left posterior sciatica, disabling for 15 months, which radiates to the thumb of his foot; this irradiation means that one should look for the responsibility of Liver 11 which is much more painful on the left side. So, it will be treated. Continuing the questioning this man says that he is depressed, anxious, unable to sleep since his mother's death, 4 months ago. He is not only grieving her, but since her death he could never know who his father was – since he was born of an unknown father. More, 22 years ago he was married to a German woman. They had a son, but after many conflicts she left with their son 20 years ago and he never saw him again.

We know that the channel Jueyin allows free circulation, all continuities. I therefore choose to treat the node of the Jueyin located at the level of the Heart, CV 18, which concerns the continuity of the genealogical level. I forgot to treat the Liver 11.

I see him again a month later. The sciatica disappeared in 48 hours with the one general point. Psychologically he is much better; he says he dreamt about his father for about a week, saying “I feel that I know him better now. I am at peace”.

Two years later he asks to see me, telling me that his son called him after a separation of 20 years, and that he is going to meet him in two weeks! And he adds: "I am telling you this because your treatment is in part responsible for this coincidence, yet at the same time there is something beyond you, and beyond me that made it happen”.

I said to myself that by stimulating VC 18 I had caused a string to vibrate, which then began to resonate with other strings of the same wavelength far away.

To conclude, I believe that any profound acupuncture treatment

sets the vibrational mode in action and this case clearly illustrates this.

Puncture a point is releasing, re-actualising or recalling a piece of information; referring to the “resonance” Ganying of Huai nan Zi 21, it may stimulate or reactivate a vibration which in turn will cause vibration of other strings which happen to be on the same fundamental wavelength. This applies to the human body, to planet earth and perhaps even to the cosmos, as two atoms that have been in contact for a brief moment keep a close link, however far apart they may be in the universe.

One more thought: we know that there is a dialogue between acupuncture points

Each point has several functions that reflect the fundamental information defining it. We call upon one or the other of a point's functions by needling it alone or together with one of the other points.

I am taking Baihui - Governing Vessel 20 as an example.

It is located on the midline, on top of the head, in fact it is just behind the top.

It is the equivalent, in the body and skull, of the **opening in the roof** of a house. The roof is symbolically linked to heaven since it is situated above the house – it isolates, separates and protects. When opened, it allows human beings to receive heavenly (cosmological, not theological) information and to respond to it, for example during ancestor worship rituals, or in acupuncture by means of Bladder-60, Liver-1, Liver-3, as we shall see.

It can be combined with several points that I'm going to describe briefly. I will develop this topic in Milan in 2022.

Governing Vessel 20 – Conception Vessel 1: GV-20 signifies an incitement to live, while every potentiality is contained in CV 1.

GV 20 Kidney-1 (Heaven/Earth) CV 17 and CV 21 (Man):

Here the heavenly incitement given at GV-20 is more specific, it is an incitement to become differentiated, to emerge from indistinction, from original chaos (i.e. the undifferentiated confused mass that contains all possibilities), while KI-1 signifies an earthly incitement to take on a form at conception, to be born, to grow. CV 17 and CV 21 convey the responses of man to these two incitements, namely at CV 17 the differentiation of original Qi into an infinity of Qi necessary for our life, and at CV 21 the initialisation of these Qi.

GV 20–Liver 1 and Liver 3: the Zujueyin channel-free circulation without obstacle or hindrance, like the sap of the tree which goes from the roots to the tips of the branches-ends at GV-20; two points have a close relationship with Baihui: Liver 1 and 3.

GV 20 - GV 16: these are the points of the brain when viewed as the “sea of marrow” (Ling Shu, chapter 33). The brain and the marrow are in charge of transmissions at all levels, and that's why in TCM no distinction is made between the spinal cord and bone marrow. Once again, only function matters.

GV 20 – Conception Vessel 8 – Bladder 60: they are linked to Kunlun. Baihui, on the top of the head, also known as « Kun Lun

of Man upright», is linked with Shenque, CV 8, in the navel, «Kunlun of Man lying down»; Bladder 60, on the foot, is called Kunlun too [5]. GV 20 at the head corresponds to Heaven, CV 8 in the navel to Man and Bladder 60 on the foot to Earth.

Just a word about Kunlun: for Schipper Kun Lun is about a relationship with original, primordial chaos, with the undifferentiated, with indistinction [6].

GV 20 punctured alone: I will illustrate this through a clinical case A 64-year-old woman, tall, strong, socially well-off, consults for depression, anxiety and insomnia. In fact, she says "she is lost": in conflict with her husband and her two children who are exploiting her and her fortune. She knows she must separate from them, distancing herself from these perverse relationships. In the beginning, I treated CV-16 for two sessions. She felt a little better, but nothing more. Then I decided to puncture Baihui to reestablish the relationship with her symbolic "Heaven", namely with the clear and the just dimensions in her. The result was spectacular. A month later this woman comments on how she felt, without knowing anything about this point: "she felt an alignment, a sort of verticality, like an upright mast; a tangible energy that pushes everything away that seems to pollute her; no more dodging or escaping is possible". She had reconnected with her "Heaven".

Our body

Our body is corpuscular and vibrational

Our body is, like all living things and beings, corpuscular - organic and vibrational - wave.

The vibrational body is often misunderstood; it is all the more important during this time of Covid. It participates in our internal construction somatic and psychic, and envelops us on the outside. It is to be explored.

Our first question is: being located on the skin, are acupuncture points at the interface between the vibrational and organic aspect? Do they represent the link between these two sides? Moreover, we know that each being is unique, and as such it has its own vibration, a specific somatic and psychic set of vibrations - like a musical chord made up of notes with their harmonics - that defines it [7].

The important thing is to be in harmony with our basic vibration; this helps to maintain our "inner immunity", because it is a vibrational immunity, according to Benny Cassuto.

Various factors are at the origin of disharmony. They are well described in TCM: violent or repeated external aggressions, poor eating habits, emotional disorders, anxiety, depression...

How can we get back in tune and make our vibration resonate again? Once again, the answer lies in Taijiquan, Qigong, a healthy diet, acupuncture, phytotherapy. I will also add psychotherapy which helps to get to know ourselves better and have distance from our problems.

We understand how important it is to be in harmony with our vibrational body, in contact with our inner immunity, during these times of Covid.

Relation / Being, Continuity / Discontinuity the prerequisites of Chinese and Indo-European civilizations are different.

Let's address now the more fundamental dialogues "Relation / Being, Continuity / Discontinuity". I am talking about the prerequisites that found a civilisation; from there a dialogue between these two views can be established.

Relation / Being

As François Julien, François Cheng and Léon Vandermeersch, among others, point out, Western civilization is preferentially oriented towards 'being', whereas China places the emphasis on 'relation'.

It is no coincidence that "there is no verb for 'being' in classical Chinese", as stated by F. Julien, who adds that "we are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the Indo-European Western perspective, where an isolated analysis of the elements led to the point of view of the atom", the cell, the element... It is a matter of perspective, not an inability [8].

Thus, in medicine, the OM investigates the Lung organ, for example, clinically and through paraclinical examinations, while TCM questions the relations of the Lung, with death, mourning, justice, with the Large Intestine, the Kidneys, the Spleen, the Heart or the Liver.

Continuity / Discontinuity

This pair is at the basis of life and of all living things. Suwen 1 tells us that life is rooted in Numbers and Xiang (siang) (images, symbols); Xiang denotes the continuous and broken lines ----- and ---- ---- of the Yijing. Thus, the universe, in the human body and in every living being, as shown in the Yijing with its continuous and broken lines ----- and ---- ---- whose combinations in stacks of 6 form 64 hexagrams represent all the transformations of life.

Life, as it develops, is both continuity and discontinuity. This holds true in the natural world: the rising of sap, during spring time goes from the origin of the roots to the ends of the branches without a break or obstacles: continuity, as opposed to the falling of ripe fruit, in the autumn: discontinuity.

Thus, continuity in the East (symbolically) implies:

- The importance of a relationship, the direct knowledge of the heart that requires no subject or object and a vibrational view.

Discontinuity in the West (symbolically) implies:

- A look at the atom and all separate elements which must be linked to each other so that they can communicate and stay alive, as demonstrated by Ameisen [9].
- Here knowledge is indirect, cerebral, intellectual and it involves a subject and an object.

These elements of continuity discontinuity have a clinical impact: for example, mourning and grief in TCM.

For example, there are two dimensions to grief, which respond to Heart minister 4 and Lung-1 [10].

Grief caused when mourning premature death: it is a disruption in the continuity of spring circulation, a break to be treated on

Jueyin (which is at the East) by Heart minister - 4, Xi point, emotional point acting on both Jueyin, Liver and Minister of the Heart.



Grief caused when mourning a natural death: in the autumn of a being's life, the ripe fruit falls from the tree; it is related with our discontinuity, our finitude; it is normal and not an accident, not a disruption. A distance is to be taken, on the Lung channel (which corresponds to the West), by its Mu point, Lung 1.

Conclusion

Isn't it wonderful that the dialectic between the vibrational and corpuscular, or continuity and discontinuity, joins this ancient, thousand-year-old medicine and the interrogation of contemporary physics.

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6. Schipper K. Conférence de M. Kristofer Schipper. Annales de l'École pratique des hautes études. 1982. 95: 133-137.
7. Conceivably, vibrational affinities or discordances between people give rise to likes and dislikes, sympathy and apathy / indifference.
8. This civilization poses the question of being; the West, since Abraham, poses the existence of the divine and human person, while India says it is illusory.
9. Jean Claude Ameisen, La sculpture du vivant, Le Seuil, Paris. 1999.
10. I don't want to say « pericardium » which is an anatomical view; TCM is for me a functional, vibratory approach.