

FIVE DRAGONS
ACUPUNCTURE COLLEGE
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



LESSON 10
OF
31 LESSONS

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Recommended books to simplify your research are as follows

Essentials of Chinese Acupuncture
Gray's Anatomy
The Merck Manual
Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary

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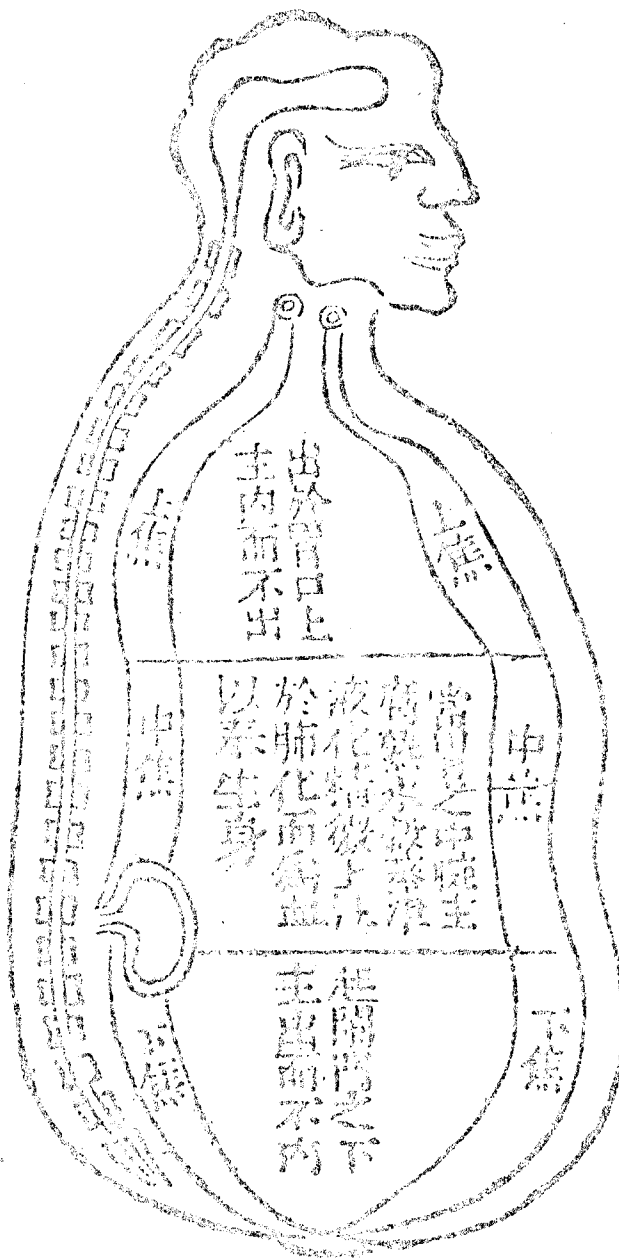
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MODERN & TRADITIONAL ACUPUNCTURE

LESSON 10

ENERGY AND TRIPLE BURNER ENERGETICS



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絡命門辨互宣泰等



Traditional acupuncture and Chinese medicine are based on the concept of ENERGIES and their mutual relationships, as well as man's relation to cosmos and earth (environment). Health is the normal flow of these energies and dis-ease results from disturbances in their flow. Chinese medicine (including acupuncture) resolves problems of human health and disease by "manipulation" of energy. Thus, the "energetics" of man constitute the only true basis of acupuncture theory. To be able to distinguish between the various types of energy, and to know how they are generated is one of the basic conditions for the study of acupuncture. Without knowledge of these energies and their production, the effectiveness of traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture remains inaccessible to Western man, both in practice and research. In this Lesson then, we introduce the major types of energy involved in man and some of the basic theories of human energy production in Chinese medicine.

In order for the student to understand the various energies better, we will first deal with the Triple Burner, which we know is a functional entity of the body rather than an actual anatomical organ.

The Triple Burner concept is intimately related to the functioning of the Stomach itself, as it is considered theoretically to be situated in the mucous tissue of the stomach wall. The Triple Burner then is part of the Stomach, however, because of its very important function it is considered as an entirely distinct "organ". The term Triple Burner can now be thought of as being three separate 'burners', or "energy reactors" as a part of, and/or connected to the Stomach. These 'reactors' are responsible for the transformation or processing of food [classically, "energy of the cereals"] into ENERGY, and are called the UPPER BURNER, the MIDDLE BURNER, and the LOWER BURNER.

The Chinese assumed the existence of three reactors in the Stomach which are responsible for the conversion of matter from the earth (food) into energy, and thus the Triple Burner generates energy from the food. On this basis (energy=matter) the

Chinese thousands of years ago formulated concepts approaching modern physics, and it is easy to see how the terms 'burner', 'heater', and 'warmer' became associated with this conversion process (heat) of matter into energy. The physical location of the 'three' Burners of the Triple Burner is assumed to be:

UPPER BURNER - at the entrance of the stomach (cardia).
MIDDLE BURNER - in the region of the large curvature of stomach.
LOWER BURNER - at the exit from the stomach (pylorus).

Beyond this assumed physical location of the Three Burners (on the Stomach) the Chinese also recognize an expansion of influence thereof into three distinct parts --- the Upper, Middle and Lower portions of the body cavity. These three portions are often referred to as the "Three Burning Spaces". The Upper Burning Space is contained in the region from the cardia (the opening through which food enters the stomach and which connects the stomach with the esophagus) up to around the tongue, and thus includes the chest, the heart, the lungs and the esophagus. The Middle Burning Space contains the region of the upper abdomen between the cardia and the pylorus (the outlet opening of the stomach through which food enters the intestine), and thus includes the spleen and the stomach itself. The Lower Burning Space is contained in the region of the lower abdomen, below the pylorus, and thus includes the bladder, the liver, the kidneys and the intestines. [See drawing on cover of this Lesson.]

Roughly speaking, the Triple Burner (as a functional concept) represents the entire alimentary canal from throat to anus and urinary orifice, as divided into three sections --- above the diaphragm (thorax), between the diaphragm and umbilicus (navel), and between the umbilicus and the pubic symphysis (pelvic area). Function-wise, the Upper Burning Space is associated with respiration, the Middle Burning Space is associated with digestion, and the Lower Burning Space with elimination of waste matter and reproduction. Along with all of these is the idea of production of body heat or warmth, and the Chinese would say that the Triple Burner feeds the necessary life-warmth to the Kidneys

(the Kidneys are another entire chapter in the energetics of Chinese medicine and are dealt with in a separate Lesson). In this associated capacity as a regulator of body temperature [some authors call the Triple Burner the "thermo-regulator"] the Triple Burner is closely related to the skin as for example in the temperature regulation effect of perspiration. The skin is of course also related to the Lungs and the Kidneys [skin --- largest "organ" of the body??].

The Triple Burner represents the body's main source of 'energy' and in effect controls the entire chemical environment of the organism. Because of the Triple Burner the human organism is able to absorb and transfer the energy so vital to life, and therefore the Triple Burner meridian is one of the most important meridians for controlling the vital force of the whole body. In acupuncture, stimulation of the Triple Burner meridian by itself, or via other meridians that exert control on it, has well marked effects, and a number of serious diseases are treated by changing the overall energy balance of the Triple Burner. On the other hand, a healthy, active, well nourished person is said to have "a strong Triple Burner".

Two of the meridians that exert control over the Triple Burner are the Envelope of the Heart and the Conception Vessel. The Triple Burner meridian is of course 'coupled' with the EH and these meridians can therefore be used to regularize each other. By virtue of its opposing actions the Triple Burner counter-balances the functions of the Envelope of the Heart. Acupuncture points on the Conception Vessel have great control on the Triple Burner as well, with the fifth point of the Conception Vessel (Co-5) being the main point for evaluation and control of the entire Triple Burner. Other Conception Vessel points are Co-17, Co-12 and Co-7 representing the Upper, Middle and Lower Burners respectively.

Narrow interpretations of Triple Burner function as "the body's water-ways", "transporter of fluids", or as the "human sewage system" simply show a lack of understanding in the full

scope and nature of the Triple Burner as well as Chinese medical theory. To the traditional Chinese physician the Triple Burner represents a much higher concept, virtually bordering on being the link between man, the earth, and the universe or cosmos. In spite of the fact that there is no such distinct anatomical organ as the Triple Burner in Western thinking, for the Oriental it exists in theory, and energetically explains a vast number of processes and metabolic functions taking place in the human body --- explanations that in some cases still have yet to be defined in Western medicine beyond the 'theory stage'. Let us now take a closer look at this "organ" that is such a concrete entity in Chinese pathology and therapeutics, and at the major body energies utilized in traditional acupuncture. In the back of your mind keep hold of one fact --- that all of these concepts and theories have worked in the past, and still work, in practice.

MIDDLE BURNER: RAW PURE AND RAW IMPURE ENERGY

When the "tender substances" (chewed food, water, etc.) from the mouth reach the Stomach, they are "converted" by the MIDDLE BURNER, and result in what is known as RAW PURE and RAW IMPURE ENERGY. These two energies are named as such because they also have a figurative meaning. Pure Energy is light and tends to flow upwards (Yang), while the Impure Energy is heavy (more like an energetic 'fluid' than an energy) and tends to flow downwards (Yin). After its production from food by the Middle Burner, the light RAW PURE ENERGY flows to the Spleen. In the Spleen it is 'moistened' [Spleen supplies the body with what is known as "cool humidity" as opposed to the Stomach which supplies "warm humidity"], and the moistened Pure Raw Energy passes into the Upper Burner, and from there into the Lungs. SOME of this RAW PURE ENERGY from the Middle Burner is retained by the Spleen for distribution, storage, etc. The Spleen is often referred to as being "energy conscious". It absorbs Raw Pure Energy from the Middle Burner, and serves in the capacity of "registering" and "preserving" this energy.

THE "FIVE TASTES"

However, true to the typical dualism of Yin and Yang, this Raw Pure Energy is not absolutely pure, but rather consists of a YANG portion or very pure part, and a YIN portion or not as pure part. The very pure part or Yang portion is known as the "FIVE TASTES". These Five Tastes or flavors represent the true pure energy supply which is fundamental for the digestion process itself. Part of this Yang portion is conserved in the regions of the intestines and the Stomach in order to support or maintain the production of the various energies. On the other hand part of it is also allotted for storage to the various organs by the SPLEEN. On this basis, these Five Tastes are really considered to be concentrated energy or 'essence', which is stored in the organs to be released upon demand into the energy circulation. This process incidently is NOT governed by the Law of the Five Elements, but rather is direct, with the Spleen (Earth element) distributing the "Tastes" to the corresponding elements and allicting as follows:

- sweet to itself, the Spleen,
- sour (or acid) to the Liver,
- bitter to the Heart,
- pungent (or spicy) to the Lungs,
- salty to the Kidneys.

The Tastes then have their origin in the food entering the mouth and they are directly absorbed by the Spleen from where they are immediately allotted to the respective organs. An excess of any of these Tastes will damage (poison) the associated organ --- the Spleen would suffer from an excess of sweet taste; the Kidneys from an excess of salty taste, and so on. You can see where the excessive use of sweeteners and salt, to give flavor to poor quality food that is in itself perhaps more or less tasteless, could present a real problem here. On the other hand, a total deficiency or absence of any one of these five tastes could result in a shortage of what is known as "Yong Energy."

YONG ENERGY

The "moistened" Raw Pure Energy from the Middle Burner that is not distributed by the Spleen to the various organs as "The Five Tastes" or used up as energy supply, being light and consequently tending upwards (Yang), passes to the UPPER BURNER. The Upper Burner sends this Pure Energy to the Lungs [notice we have now dropped the word 'Raw' --- consider the Upper Burner as further refinement of the Raw Pure Energy]. In the Lungs, this pure energy of food origin mixes or blends with the respiratory energy extracted from the air by the Lungs (ie. oxygen) and results in what is known as YONG ENERGY. [Note: Many authors call Yong Energy "Ying Energy", but to avoid confusion between it and the word 'Yin', especially in oral communication at seminars, we prefer the modified term and word of 'Yong'.]

YONG ENERGY is formed or produced by the Lungs. The Lungs are the center of energy production and its distribution. Once the Yong energy has formed, it is spread by the Lungs through the body via the twelve main meridians. The Yong energy circulation starts in the Lung meridian (at Lu-1) and follows the classical order or cycle of "ch'i" energy flow, introduced in Lesson Two, with which you should be more than familiar by now. This also spells the end to our use of the word "ch'i" energy in regard to the energy flowing in the twelve main meridians, for we can now be more specific and say that it is predominantly YONG ENERGY flowing in these meridians.

The Yong energy is the true alimentary energy of the organism and is often referred to as the NUTRITIVE ENERGY simply because it provides nourishment or energetic 'food' for the organs and meridians. It can be compared energetically to the sap of a plant which feeds and invigorates it. Because it flows in the meridians and consequently into the deeper parts of the body, it is also known as the YIN ENERGY (Yin as opposed to the Yang body surface).

Energetically speaking, YONG Energy is a slow, "cool" ener-

gy, leisurely flowing through the twelve main meridians to feed the body and organs. Its maximum intensity changes every two hours from one meridian to the next meridian. This flow of energy theoretically intensifies in the Lung meridian from 3 to 5 AM as the day is rising, and proceeds according to the Twenty-four hour 'Horary Cycle' or "Energy Clock" discussed in Lesson Eight (Page 11).

Disturbances in Yong energy production affect the 'feeding' or energetical nourishment of the various organs, and result in fairly serious disorders. As Yong energy is Yin in nature, such disturbances result in a gradual decline of the Yin aspect. When the Yin is strong, the Yang easily flows into the Yin to activate it. [Yang sets Yin in motion, and Yin produces Yang.] But when there is a weakness or deficiency of the Yin, the Yin is no longer able to "absorb" the Yang. Since the Yang cannot properly penetrate the Yin it will actually become more abundant (excess). If this is carried on too long, the deficient Yin will no longer allow sufficient production of the Yang, and the Yang itself will then become reduced and deficient. A good example might be excessive air pollution, which would affect the Lungs, and thus the production of Yong energy, with an initial result being a reduction in the Yin aspect, and a long term result a deficiency in the Yang aspect.

WEI ENERGY

As a product of the original digestive process induced by the Middle Burner, the heavy RAW IMPURE ENERGY also flows to the Spleen, where it is "moistened". Then this heavy moistened Raw Impure Energy passes into the LOWER BURNER. (Do not confuse this Raw Impure Energy with the "not so pure" or Yin part of the Raw Pure Energy mentioned on Page Six, in connection with the Five Tastes!) The LOWER BURNER controls this Raw Impure Energy which flowed downwards from the Middle Burner, and functions as the starting point or basic reactor for the processing of a type of energy called WEI ENERGY.

The Lower Burner sends the Impure Energy [notice we have now dropped the word 'Raw' to acknowledge the Lower Burner's influence on the Raw Impure Energy] which we can now actually call unrefined Wei Energy (containing liquid and material products of digestion) through the intestines and into what is known as the INTERNAL DUCT OF THE TRIPLE BURNER. [A duct or passage in an energetic sense only, from the pylorus to the Kidneys, thus including the intestines.] Through this conceptual "duct" it then reaches the Kidneys where the conversion process continues. Already on the way to the Kidneys, ie. in the Small and Large Intestines, energetic components are being converted and absorbed, while material components are discharged via the Large Intestine. The Kidneys purify or "refine" the Wei Energy even more and send it to the Liver (and Spleen), from where it spreads as Yang type energy in the organism. The eliminated waste water of this transformation process is stored in the Bladder where it eventually leaves the body through what is termed the "external channel of the Bladder".

WEI ENERGY is also referred to as YANG ENERGY or DEFENSE ENERGY. It is of course an end product of alimentation as produced in the strict sense by the Kidneys (Yang Kidney). Wei energy is the most superficial of all energies of the body. This means that Wei energy circulates at the SURFACE (hence Yang, as opposed to the deeper parts which are Yin). In contrast to the Yong Energy (Yin) it flows superficially, penetrating into the very fine subcutaneous energy capillaries of the skin. As a rule it circulates outside of the main meridians, and consequently it is the principal energy of what are known as the 'secondary vessels' (ie. the Tendino-muscular meridians). Since it does not generally penetrate into the main meridians (although a small quantity certainly does) it circulates therefore in the skin, in the muscular fibres and tendons, and can also exist in the peritoneum as well as in the chest and abdomen.

Wei energy defends the body's exterior surface against external attack (ie. wind, dampness, cold, etc.) as well as internal disorders due to malnutrition and poisoning [maintains

a balance on the Five Tastes] and therefore represents the DEFENSE ENERGY of the human body. Additionally, it maintains the muscle tonus and body turgor, nourishes the skin and hair, as well as opens and closes the pores thus regulating the body temperature by perspiration. Energetically speaking, Wei energy must be thought of as being a "warm" energy (Fire energy) having great force behind it. Thus, it moves extremely fast and is very lively and agile. Because of its speed and mobility it moves very quickly from one part of the organism to another when it is needed.

Disturbances in the production of Impure Energy, as would result from a defect in the Middle Burner, Lower Burner, and Intestines (Internal Duct of the Triple Burner), cause a weakness of the Kidneys. Here also, the modern processed foods with their chemical additives and preservatives have a detrimental action, as the chemical components affect and to a certain extent destroy the intestinal symbiosis. A damaged or destroyed intestinal symbiosis naturally implies a disturbance in the preparation of Wei Energy. As a consequence Wei Energy (Yang energy) is decreased, and the body is deprived of its defensive protection. Because of the reduced Wei energy, harmful external elements (cold, dampness, wind, etc.) and internal elements (ie. from poor quality food) are then able to more easily penetrate and damage the body further, resulting in very serious internal disorders. [Here we could say that the Yin essences of the Five Tastes are no longer in harmony with the Yang type Wei Energy.] Slowly the Yin aspect will become affected because it is no longer activated or kept sufficiently in motion by the Yang aspect, and almost irreversible Yin conditons will develop (ie. tumors, degenerative diseases, nervous system disorders).

Wei energy is subject to a day and night rhythm. Flowing on the surface of the organism during the day it retires to the internal parts during the night. This daily rhythm is constantly repeated. At midnight the Wei energy starts to grow, ie. to flow slowly to the exterior through various routes and special meridians. At mid-day, it reaches its maximum. Then it slowly

withdraws again into the interior. At midnight its exterior presence is at its lowest ebb or practically nil. In reality, though it is never completely nil, because there is always some Wei energy at the outside. [Note: Some authors claim a complex Wei energy circulation pattern of fifty cycles per twenty-four hour day --- twenty-five cycles in regard to the Yang aspect during daytime and twenty-five cycles in respect to the Yin aspect during nighttime. Whether this complex circulation exists is still a subject of some debate among master acupuncturists. But there is agreement on the basic day and night rhythm as mentioned above, and clinically speaking on the cyclic symptom occurrences outlined below in regard to Wei energy.]

During the day then, Wei energy flows in the external part of the organism, because one of its functions is to defend the body against outside aggression (ie. wind, cold, etc.), and during the night it withdraws into the interior, to the regions around the internal organs. When night falls, and particularly when going to bed one sometimes feels a bit cold, which is due to the withdrawal of the Wei energy towards the interior. A person who is very tired and for example perspires easily may catch a cold because the temperature control and defense mechanisms of the Wei energy are less active. During the day however, a person whose body energy is functioning properly, gets the full protection of this Wei energy in regard to the external forces, irrespective of the person's activity or the climatic conditions.

Therapeutically and diagnostically Wei energy must be taken into consideration in all cases where the symptoms are of a daily cyclic nature. An example would be recurring evening abdominal symptoms with morning headaches. Wei energy passes in the evening through the affected zone in the more central parts producing the internal symptoms, and at another time of the day, when it emerges once more to the surface it can lead to an entirely different symptom formation in the affected exterior area. In such a case we would have to take this energy and its special meridians and travelling routes (covered in a subsequent lesson) into consideration.

VITAL OR ESSENTIAL ENERGY

Reference is often made in Chinese medicine to the concept of "VITAL OR ESSENTIAL ENERGY", although the term itself is not precisely defined in the Chinese language it is generally rendered simply as "Ch'i". Essential Energy corresponds to a union of the energy from the cosmos (celestial) and the energy from the earth (terrestrial), which we can think of as the two primary energies. Under the influence of the Triple Burners, Lungs, Liver, etc. these two primary energies of breathing (air, immaterial factor) and digestion (food, material factor) are transformed into the secondary energies. Roughly speaking the secondary energy situated in the Yang part of the body (on the exterior parts) is a Yang type energy called WEI Energy. The energy situated in the Yin part of the body (in the interior parts) is a Yin type energy called YONG Energy.

ESSENTIAL ENERGY in effect is a combination of WEI Energy and YONG Energy, and is the true, vital energy of man. It acts as the principal energy of the body's physiological functions, for with this energy the organs are "bathed" and the body is maintained. The term Essential Energy can refer to YONG Energy as well as WEI Energy, and therefore covers both of these energies. Depending on the cycle, ie. whether this energy takes the direction of the YONG Energy or the WEI Energy, it represents either one or the other of these two energies, and loosely any combination of the two of them.

The prime function of Essential Energy thus is to maintain the body by alimentation. This then is the actual "ch'i" energy of the whole body, that we have been so far referring to in the lessons, and now that you know the term ESSENTIAL ENERGY, we can finally put that broad, general word "ch'i" to rest. From this Lesson, we are now able to be more specific in speaking about the different energies of the body. This said, let us now take a further look at Essential Energy, particularly the clinical aspects of a deficiency thereof (excesses of Essential Energy being rare).

The Lungs are the absolute master of the Essential Energy (YONG and WEI). A deficiency of this Essential Energy in the body leads to the following symptoms: Physical fatigue and weakness; Dyspnea (difficult or labored breathing); and, Perspiration. As it is a product of digestion and respiration (as governed by the Lungs), the above symptoms of deficient Essential Energy may also appear in connection with disorders of the Stomach and Spleen. As well, most "chronic" diseases influence the Essential Energy in that it gradually becomes exhausted.

Because the lack of Essential Energy is a factor in a significant number of cases encountered in acupuncture, we feel it important to present the basic treatment for its deficiency in conjunction with our discussion of this type of energy. Such acupuncture point combinations or treatment 'formulas' are generally not given in the program until after students have covered the full scope of the meridian system and the necessary background material to enable them to understand the development of point combinations. (The latter is important in order for them to develop their own combinations, or at least be able to evaluate existing published symptomatic formulas.) However, because of its value to the material in the next few Lessons, this particular treatment combination must be included at this time. As this combination will not be covered again in subsequent Lessons, we also give here its development. Students should simply ignore the supplemental information (below and on the next page) in regard to this formula's development until Lesson Fourteen. Those students with considerable background in acupuncture from outside of the course, may find its development of interest now, and enjoy 'working through' it by themselves, especially in light of the Clinique Question in Lesson Nine.

FORMULA TO TONIFY ESSENTIAL ENERGY: Lu-7 (Lieh-Ch'üeh)
 LI-4 (Ho-Ku)
 St-36 (Tsu-San-Li)

FORMULA DEVELOPMENT: By the very nature of a deficiency in Essential Energy (such as the result of an excess created by external factors) we know the deficiency exists in the Yang aspects of the body. This then is a problem

requiring assistance from the body's Yin aspects in order to strengthen the Yang, but also will involve digestion (earth) as well as the Lungs (cosmos) which are the absolute master of the Essential Energy in the first place. How do we best take energy from the Yin to the Yang as well as stimulate the Lungs and the digestion? Reflection on this threefold problem leads us logically to the YANG MING Energetic Layer.

We know a Transversal LO meridian runs from LO point of Lung meridian to IUNN point of Large Intestine meridian, forming one of the channels for regulation of energy between the Hand Yin Maximum and the Hand Yang Equilibrium (in effect between Yin and Yang). At the Hand Yin Maximum end of this channel is the LO point, which immediately offers us several possibilities. LIEH-CH'ÜEH will help to stimulate the Essential Energy as it provides the means to let the Yin pass into the Yang energetically speaking, via this Transversal LO. Furthermore, needling the LO point of Lung meridian will stimulate the Lungs by means of the fairly direct contact through its Longitudinal LO meridian also starting at LIEH-CH'ÜEH, thus influencing the entire circulation of the meridians. In addition it will ensure the energy feed-back into the Kidneys by the Metal-Water relationship. Therefore it constitutes one of the most important points within the entire energetic physiology and must be used for a problem of this nature.

Receiving the Transversal LO meridian is the IUNN point of the Large Intestine meridian. Needling HO-KU then, as IUNN point of Large Intestine meridian would draw energy from the Lung meridian into the Large Intestine meridian to actuate the energy circulation. Thus this point plays a very important part in the production of energy since it directly influences this circulation from the Hand Yin Maximum to the Hand Yang in Equilibrium, that is from Yin to Yang. Lu-7 and LI-4 together adequately look after two of the three basic factors in the problem of tonification of Essential Energy, namely the necessary assistance from the Yin and the participation of the Lungs (cosmos). This still leaves us with the necessary tonification of the complete digestive (earth) influence on the Essential Energy.

Energy production of course depends on digestion: the Stomach, Triple Burner, Large Intestine, etc. As a consequence of needling HO-KU, we have already influenced the Large Intestine meridian itself, which as Hand Yang in Equilibrium constitutes half of the Yang Ming energetical layer. How are we going to tonify the rest of the system? The second half of Yang Ming is the Foot Yang in Equilibrium Stomach meridian, which could certainly have a great influence on digestion. The Stomach in Five Element theory corresponds to the Earth Element. The Earth element corresponds to the Ho point in the YANG meridian control (command) point structure. Therefore we must needle the point on the Stomach meridian which acts on the Earth element (the base of all energies from the earth and their transformation). The Stomach HO point is the famous TSU-SAN-LI (Stomach 36). Stomach-36 will increase energy production of the Stomach and thus in turn reinforce the energy production of the Triple Burner. TSU-SAN-LI also happens to be a point for sedating of outside influences in the center of the body which might assist as well.

Thus evolves the formula for tonification of Essential Energy. The singular influence of TSU-SAN-LI on a deficiency of Essential Energy is well known in acupuncture. However its effectiveness (clinically substantiated) is vastly enhanced by the addition of LIEH-CH'ÜEH and HO-KU for that purpose. In combination these three points constitute the basic treatment formula for tonification of the body's Essential Energy.

END OF FORMULA DEVELOPMENT

ANCESTRAL ENERGY

Another form of energy is that known as ANCESTRAL ENERGY, which is also referred to as Hereditary or Original Energy. The Ancestral Energy is a pure energy which is transmitted by the parents through the chromosomes. Being transmitted by the parents it is characteristic for the species and the Chinese naturally thought of it as the "energy of our ancestors". It is the innate genetic energy which constitutes the basis of all somatic organizations. It determines the whole of the development process and is responsible for inducing so to speak cybernetically, the functions of the organism. Consequently it is responsible for the development of the various systems (nervous, genital, bone, etc.) which are called the Singular Organs by the Chinese. The Ancestral Energy is said to be produced in the Kidneys and conserved or stored in the adrenal glands (which for the Chinese are part of the Kidneys) and has its own circulation in what are known as the Eight Ancestral Meridians.

A special characteristic of Ancestral Energy is that it has its own unique circulation pattern through what are known as the EIGHT ANCESTRAL MERIDIANS (sometimes referred to as Eight 'Extra' Vessels or meridians because of their extra or special function). These eight Ancestral Meridians distribute the Ancestral or hereditary energy as stored in the adrenal glands. For this lesson it is sufficient to make you aware of the names of these eight Ancestral meridians, as they are covered in depth by subsequent Lessons. The eight Ancestral Meridians or Vessels are called: Governing Vessel, Conception Vessel, Ch'ung Vessel, T'ai Vessel, Yang-Ch'iao Vessel, Yin-Ch'iao Vessel, Yang-Wei Vessel, and the Yin-Wei Vessel. Thus, the Ancestral Energy flows via these vessels or meridians to the surface of the body, as well as to the Singular Organs, and then back to the Kidney (adrenal glands) in order to complete the circulation pattern.

Another special feature of the Ancestral Energy is that it has its own organs, namely the so called SINGULAR ORGANS. So far

in the program we have mentioned only ten organs and two functions (EH and TB). Naturally there are still other organs or systems of the body, which the Chinese thought of as "singular" organs, and which name we retain. These are the five SINGULAR ORGANS or systems which are alimented by Ancestral Energy: (1) The nervous system (brain and spinal cord); (2) Bone and bone marrow system; (3) Blood circulation; (4) Reproductive system (ie. uterus); and (5) Hepatic-biliary system in terms of biliary function and other than that which is assigned to the element Wood. From the above you can understand that the brain, female womb, bones, etc. also belong to and fit in with the body's 'energetic' physiology. Most books on acupuncture in English give very little information or ignore these Singular Organs or systems entirely, as if they didn't exist or had no energy of their own within them, or supplying them.

In regard to the Singular Organs then, Ancestral Energy has a Yong energy function, in that it is in charge of nourishing or feeding them. These organs contain an especially high amount of Ancestral Energy, and they rely heavily on this type of energy. The fact that these five Singular Organs are alimented by the Ancestral Energy does not mean to imply that the Singular Organs do not contain Yong or Wei energy as well. However, the Ancestral Energy is their specific energy, which emphasizes the important influence of heredity on this system.*

After birth, and throughout life, the Ancestral Energy is "nourished" by the Essential Energy (Yong and Wei) and therefore a relationship exists between Ancestral Energy and the Essential Energy. In this relationship, the action of the Ancestral Energy could be considered like that of a catalyst, in that it is an agent that causes or induces the almost cybernetic action of

* In regard to "Blood circulation system", tends to support the hereditary factor in Buerger's disease, Raynaud's syndrome, in embolism, etc.; For the "Biliary system", the hereditary influence on Gallstones, chronic cholecystitis; And for the "Bone and Bone Marrow system" possibly certain chronic conditions such as Paget's disease are affected by Ancestral Energy.

the Essential Energy, making life (development) possible. Here the classics of Chinese medicine say, for example, that the Ancestral Energy assists energy production by "driving off the essences of food in the Triple Burner". The catalyst (Ancestral Energy) in turn needs this reinforcing nourishment to escape from being dissolved or used up --- to rid itself over and over again of the compounds which it is forming from particles of impure or not converted energy. For this reason then there is an important interrelationship between the Essential Energy and the Ancestral Energy 'catalyst'. [Some schools of thought in traditional acupuncture weigh this interrelationship of the Ancestral Energy and Essential Energy so heavily that they actually include Ancestral Energy as a third formal component of the Essential Energy.]

Apart from its inherent 'catalytic' action on the Essential Energy as a whole, Ancestral Energy helps reinforce the defense (Wei) energy of the body. The eight Ancestral meridians bring the Ancestral Energy to the outer surface of the body where it circulates (defense function) and eventually some of it joins or enters the principal meridians, the rest going back to the adrenal glands to start another cycle. As a result, it can be said that all meridians, organs and the whole organism in general receive Ancestral Energy. [Along the twelve main meridians the Yong Energy (nutritive energy) is dominating --- but it is accompanied by a small portion of the defensive Wei Energy and of the Ancestral Energy. Thus the Wei Energy and the Ancestral Energy to some extent circulate in AND outside the principal meridians.]

The "quantity" of a person's Ancestral Energy is said to be determined at the moment of birth. Throughout the person's lifetime it is gradually diminished or used-up. When it is completely spent life ceases, because the Essential Energy is no longer induced or cybernated. The 'catalytic' action of the Ancestral Energy develops gradually and grows more and more vigorous, making its peak appearance during the cycles of growth and in the

course of a person's mental and sexual development. In the later years of life, as Ancestral Energy is used up, its 'catalytic' action slowly diminishes in vigor and becomes less and less influential.

In the male, the action of the Ancestral Energy becomes quite vigorous around the age of eight and for this reason the first teeth are falling out, and the hair grows particularly fast during this period. By the age of sixteen (ie. 2 x 8 years) the Ancestral Energy's action becomes still more vigorous, the sexual development takes place and procreation becomes possible. By the age of twenty-four (3 x 8 years) the energy is even more vigorous, the muscles, bones and teeth are developed and he attains his full height and growth. By forty (5 x 8 years) the Ancestral Energy's action begins to decline, his hair begins to fall out and the teeth start to decay. At the age of forty-eight (6 x 8 years) his masculine vigor is diminishing, his face becomes wrinkled and his hair starts to turn gray. At the age of sixty-four (8 x 8) his ability to procreate is greatly diminished (as is the action of the Ancestral Energy); physical strength is rapidly deteriorating and he loses his teeth and hair. The same stages basically apply to the female, but they are based on periods of seven years each, instead of eight.

BODY HUMOR

The term "Body Humor" refers to all the fluids in the body except the blood! In general it means not only water and liquids taken into the body but also the various fluids processed by, and existing in the body, helping it to function properly. In terms of Five Element Theory, Body Humor is the totality of the "Water Element" in the body --- that element represented by the organs of Kidney and Bladder. Specifically, the term refers to the various fluids that are processed by the body and retained to help it function properly, and it is due in part to them that the body's exterior and interior are kept in a state of

balance or harmony. As we shall see, we can also speak of the Body Humors on an energetical basis in terms of it accompanying the energy in the meridians, and for this reason Body Humors are discussed in this Lesson concerning the various "energies". Before confusing the issue too much more in this first paragraph, let's go on to learn more about these Body Humors.

The BODY HUMORS are a product of the organic water and im-pure energies, and have two main origins. One important source of Body Humor (fluid) is the downwards flowing original Raw Im-pure Energy discussed in relation to Wei Energy. This downwards moving Impure Energy is sent from the Lower Burner through the Intestines --- the Internal Duct of the Triple Burner --- to the Kidneys. The Kidneys then, transform the impure energy from the Internal Duct of the Triple Burner into WEI Energy (which is passed on to the Liver). The Kidneys are ultimately responsible for the Body Humors, and the relationship between Body Humors and Kidneys is referred to as the "water balance" of the body, or more often, the "water balance of the Kidneys".

The Kidneys control the water balance by transmitting urine (waste water reserves, the most impure water) to the Bladder. The Small Intestine and Large Intestine contribute to the water balance by re-absorption of water. By this re-absorption of water for example, the Large Intestine is able to ensure dry excrements. A little further on we will see how the Lungs help maintain the water balance in several ways as well. In a further Lesson on Kidney "energetics" we will take up the above mentioned source of Body Humor and the "water balance" in detail. In this Lesson however, we will concern ourselves mainly with the second source of Body Humors outlined below.

The second source of Body Humors are those produced in the Spleen from the impure part of the Raw Pure Energy that we discussed at the beginning of this Lesson in conjunction with the Five Tastes (Page 6). You may have been wondering what happens to that Yin portion, or not as pure part of the Raw Pure Energy from the Middle Burner, which was apparently "retained" by the

Spleen. The Spleen then, acts on this "not as pure part of the Raw Pure Energy" to produce Body Humor. The first type of Body Humor mentioned in the preceeding paragraph is not identical with this second type, but nevertheless is still a part of the entire body "water". This second type of Body Humor, for the sake of communication, we will call THAN-DICH. As implied by the name, it consists of two parts, which again can be thought of as a Yang portion (THAN) and a Yin portion (DICH). THAN is the predominantly 'energetic' part which can be translated as the equivalent of "freshness", "coolness" or "vigour" (Yang), while DICH is the predominantly 'material' part which stands for the actual liquid (Yin). THAN-DICH therefore consists of energy (vigour) and of matter (liquid). [Some authors refer to Than-Dich as "Ching-i" and separately as "Ching" and "i", but to eliminate confusion between that and other similarly spelled terms, we use the Vietnamese transliteration of Than-Dich.]

THAN, the 'energy' aspect of this Body Humor is Yang, and as such has Yang properties. It therefore accompanies the Yang type WEI Energy, ie. via the Ancestral Meridians, to the body surface (Yang). Here it leaves these meridians to follow along with the Wei Energy into the small energy capillaries under the skin (Tendino-muscular meridians) to nourish the flesh and skin. One of its functions on the surface is to produce perspiration as required for regulation of body temperature, etc.

DICH, the 'material' or liquid aspect of this Body Humor is Yin, and as such has Yin properties. It therefore follows the cycle of the Yin type YONG Energy and accompanies it along the main meridians. It stays in the various meridians (in accordance with their functions) in order to take Body Humor nourishment to the organs, tissues and other necessary areas. In the course of circulation each organ takes what it needs from the passing Humor and exerts its specific influence on it (ie. produce tears, saliva, etc.). As the liquid factor of the meridians DICH is converted as well into the various body fluids and "lubricants" such as synovia (clear fluid of the joints, etc.) and the cerebrospinal fluid (fluid of brain and spinal cord).

In accord with Five Element Theory, from the Spleen (Earth) the Body Humor (Than-Dich) flows to the Lungs (Metal) where a controlled portion of it is discharged from the body through respiration (breathing). As absolute master of the Essential Energy (Yong and Wei) the Lungs also look after the distribution of THAN-DICH which as we know has properties common to the two components of the Essential Energy. The DICH part of the Body Humor follows the course of the Yong Energy, and is thus distributed over the whole body via the main meridians. The THAN part of the Body Humor is sent by the Lungs to the Kidneys (representing the actual Water element) where it joins the Wei energy of the body [and Body Humors (fluid) already there from the Internal Duct of the Triple Burner]. Here, the Lungs help maintain the water balance by first of all regulating the discharge of water via respiration (exhalation) and also through the control of the THAN being sent to the Kidneys (THAN in turn is able to discharge water through the skin, by perspiration). You can now start to visualize a delicate "balance" of control between organs, Energy and Body Humor, to the point where a deficiency in one could entail a deficiency in the other. Should control be lost, with Body Humors accumulating to excess in a particular part of the body, Chinese medicine considers that practically irreversible conditions will develop (ie. rheumatic degenerations, tumors, central nervous system disorders, etc.).

CONCLUSION

This Lesson represents a discussion of the MAJOR energies necessary for, and utilized in, acupuncture therapy, as well as a basic introduction to the ENERGETICAL CONCEPTS that apply to them. It is by no means a complete coverage of the full scope of Triple Burner Energetics, and certainly not of this aspect of Chinese medicine as a whole, for there remains that important chapter of Kidney Energetics. In order to give the student an overview of the realm of energetics remaining to be discussed, we will simply mention a few items here: Blood production; the

concept of "PURE" Energies; Mental Energy and Psychosomatic Illnesses; Energies involved in Sexual Intercourse, Conception and Fetal Development; "Great Energy" initiating respiration; the influences of the Five Tastes; influence of medication on energies; and of course, Five Element Theory and its relation to energy production. If the things discussed in this Lesson do not seem to make very much sense to you at this time, it is simply because some of the above mentioned items (pieces of the puzzle) have not yet been covered. Even if this is the case, do study and try to understand the material in this Lesson, as much as you would for any other Lesson of the Program. Keep in mind, that if this material was not necessary for a reasonable understanding of the forces being dealt with in acupuncture, nor essential for how to effectively deal with them, we would not be presenting it. Once the remaining pieces of this puzzle are put together in your own mind, you will have a very good comprehension of what 'true' acupuncture is all about --- namely, ENERGETICS.

From this Lesson you can start to see the vital nature of the Triple Burner in the production of BODY ENERGY. Certainly too, you can see the importance of good wholesome nutrition, as emphasized by the common origin of Yong Energy, Wei Energy and Body Humor in the digestion process. But perhaps even more important, is that this Lesson should demonstrate to the student the complexity of traditional Chinese medicine, and the fact that behind acupuncture there exists a theoretical foundation and structure that goes far beyond the elementary, symptomatic approach that is usually written about and practiced in North America. The entire basis of this system of medicine lies in its energetical concepts of human physiology. Acupuncture can not be responsibly performed without a thorough knowledge of the energetical physiology of man and comprehension of the theory and foundation on which Chinese medicine rests, just as surgery cannot be responsibly performed without a thorough knowledge of the anatomical physiology of man and comprehension of the theory and foundation upon which Western medicine rests. Above all, it

is our hope that this Lesson leads you to the realization that it is superficial and illogical to pursue the knowledge of acupuncture on a symptomatic 'recipe-book' basis, while ignoring the underlying theoretical foundation.

NOTE: A few European authors (ie. Bachmann, Schmitt, Voll) have suggested that the Triple Burner and Triple Burner meridian can be identified with the endocrine system of the body [all the glands which produce and discharge secretions into the blood or body fluids directly, such as the thyroid gland, adrenal gland, pituitary gland, and insulin production of the pancreas]. Numerous Japanese authors (particularly of the 'Ryodoraku' school of thought) identify the Triple Burner and Triple Burner meridian with the lymphatic system [the entire network of lymph vessels and lymph nodes]. Some characteristics do seem to justify both of these assumptions, however, serious and thorough study of all aspects of the Triple Burner does not generally substantiate any of these identifications. Furthermore, in practice, the majority of therapeutical effects of acupuncture points on this meridian simply cannot be attributed to either the endocrine system or the lymphatic system. This points out the difficulty inherent in attempting to reconcile energetical Chinese medical concepts with physical Western medical theories.

Note Two: This confusion is resolved by those who practice meditation and qi gong where-by it is observed that the Triple Burner and T.B. Meridian is a LOCUS of ENERGY. No specific physical organs need be associated with the T.B. because in operation it is like a candle flame.