

Virtual Medicine
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THE NATURE OF MERIDIANS

In February 1937 the prestigious British Medical journal carried an article by Sir Thomas Lewis describing a hitherto unknown network of cutaneous nerves.' He called it the 'nocifensor system' and deduced, from his experiments, that it was an independent cutaneous nerve system, unrelated to known pathways and unconnected to the autonomic nervous system. It was composed, not of nerve fibres, but a network of thin lines, similar to meridians.

In 1985 Pierre de Vernejoul at the University of Paris carried out a definitive and much-quoted experiment. He used a radioactive marker, technetium 99m, which he injected into subjects at classic acupuncture points. He then used gamma camera imaging to track the subsequent movement of the isotope. He was able to show that the tracer migrated along the classic meridian lines, travelling quite quickly: a distance of 30 cm in 4-6 minutes. [P. de Vernejoul *et al.*, 'Etude Des Meridiens D'Acupuncture par les Traceurs Radioactifs', *Bull. Acad. Natle. Med.* Vol. 169 (22nd October 1985): 1071-5.] As a control he made a number of random injections into the skin (not at acupuncture points) and also injected the tracer directly into veins and lymphatic channels. There was no significant migration of the tracer at other sites than an acupuncture point. What this simple but helpful study proved beyond doubt is that meridians are definitely real 'vessels' but they conform to no macroscopic anatomical structures whatever.

So if meridians are not nerve-conducting channels or other anatomically visible vessels, what are they? How is the energy conducted?

The answer is almost certainly via the collagen fibres of the connective tissues. As the name suggests, connective tissue fills in between the main organs and layers. There is thus a continuum of liquid crystalline water-bound collagen fibres running throughout the whole body. Recent studies have shown that these are not just mechanical fibres but that they have dielectric and conductive properties which make them sensitive to pressure, pH, local ionic composition and surrounding electromagnetic fields. In fact these collagen fibres, like a network mesh of fine electrical fibrils, form the ideal conductor medium in which many of the electro-magnetic phenomena described in this book may take place.

Even just disturbing and stressing these fibres gives off an electrical potential. You will notice when you have electro-acupuncture, as described in the Chapter 4, that the practitioner has the knack of 'massaging' the point he or she is testing, to wake it up and release this electrical potential in order to make a successful reading.

Remarkably, and very conveniently for us, this network of semi-conductor material can enforce a one-direction flow on the electrical current, acting rather like an electrical circuit with one-way gates called diodes. Once again, scientific testing has validated ancient wisdom and shown that the acupuncture meridians flow in one direction only - that which was described by the original *Nei Ching* text.

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MEASURING CHIGUNG

Most people today have heard of Tai Ch'i and its remarkable health benefits. Chigung is a more disciplined meditation, also using the power of Ch'i. Like acupuncture, this ancient practice is based on meridian theory. It is usually done sitting still with 'regulation' of breath (a relaxed concentration). Practitioners learn to monitor consciously the flow of Ch'i through meridians and channels in their bodies. Advanced practitioners can emit Ch'i with sufficient intensity that it can help others' ailing energies, forming the basis of yet another kind of energetic healing. There is also, evidently, an inhibiting Ch'i.

This ought to be detectable by scientific instruments. I have observed the beneficial effects on electro-dermal screening test methods discussed later in this book. But a more academic study was carried out by a group in the US and published in the *American Journal of Chinese Medicine* in 1991. Using infrared detectors, the researchers were able to measure output from the palms of advanced Chigung practitioners and concluded that at least part of the emitted Ch'i was in the infrared band of the electromagnetic spectrum. They were also able to show measurable levels of enhancing Ch'i emissions on human fibroblasts and boar (porcine) sperm. Facilitating Ch'i increased DNA synthesis, protein synthesis and cell growth in the human cells, while inhibiting Ch'i decreased all three. In the case of the boar sperm, different tests established that facilitating Ch'i increased respiration 12-13 per cent, while inhibiting Ch'i decreased it some 45-48 per cent.'

There no longer need be any doubt that science has crossed over into what was considered the etheric and is able to show a real effect. Of course measurements are made of electro-magnetic changes, not at the quantum level. But the body itself acts as the most sensitive quantum detector we have. Whatever is happening out there, it is real, not magic.

Now, surprisingly, we have machines which are actually capable of *generating Ch'i*. This is remarkable, because Ch'i masters have always felt that only living things could generate Ch'i. Even today, the only real detector of Ch'i is a sensitive and aware human being (a bio-detector). Dr Yuri Khronos, working with an Eastern-trained CM master named Dong Chen, has been able to produce CM electronically. Not only that, but it can be broadcast from tapes played through normal hi-fi loudspeaker units. Ch'i-aware people report rapid changes in their states of awareness from such broadcast recordings.

It is only a matter of time before CM detectors are made. The impact of this on the development of consciousness is hard to foresee but will certainly be important (see Chapter 14).