

The Theory and Application of *Ti Ying Quan Xi* (Tissue Correspondence Holographic Model)

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Overview

Acupuncture is often practiced as part of a mapping system that is termed *quan xi* in Chinese. Translated as ‘complete message,’ ‘whole information,’ ‘holographic,’ or ‘microsystem,’ some practitioners consider *quan xi* to be the core theoretical basis for acupuncture.

The *quan xi* method organizes treatment concepts along vertical, horizontal & axial planes. The vertical microsystem involves the six vessels of the Tai Yang, Yang Ming, Shao Yang, Tai Yin, Jue Yin and Shao Yin. The axial plane uses the correspondences between the head and various body parts such as the throat, the coccyx and the plantar surface of the foot. The horizontal plane involves two foci. The first involves the center of an anatomical region for example, the umbilicus is the center of the whole body, the nose is the center of the face, the elbow is the center of the arm and the knee is the center of the leg. The second focus of the horizontal correspondences involves the contralateral, ipsilateral, upper and lower relationships between the ankles and wrists. The translated text describes this last set of relationships literally as “*hand body clockwise, hand body counter-clockwise, foot body clockwise, foot body counter-clockwise, hand foot clockwise and hand foot counter-clockwise*” these are viewed from the patient’s perspective and speak to the nature of the flow of qi.

The highest and most practical of the microsystem techniques involve two methods called the “*wu xing quan xi*” which refers to a five phase holographic model and “*ti ying quan xi*” which is the use of the tissue layer concept of the holographic model. The “*wu xing quan xi*” uses the five phase qualities of the five transport points as a correspon-

dence to treat the five organs; this concept is discussed in the author’s book, *Application of Five Transportation Points* and will not be discussed here. This article will focus on the five tissue layer theory. This method involves needling along the bone for skeletal problems, close to the tendon level for tendon conditions, close to the vessel for vascular diseases, along the muscle for muscular problems and needling in the cutaneous region for dermatological conditions. The tissue layer needling method is not only used to directly impact at the tissue level, it may also be used to treat the five viscera. Original discussions of these theories may be found in the *Nei Jing*, Master Tung used these theories frequently, and they are important within the author’s practice.

Tissue Layer Treatments

Bone to Treat Bone

The concept of using the “bone to treat bone” is an ancient technique of needling bone theory found in the *Ci Qi Lun*, it states, “needle the bone without damaging the tendon.” There are two techniques; one is found chapter *Shu Ci Fa* in the *Nei Jing* where it states, “insert needle to reach the bone.” Another text, the *Guan Zhen Pian (On Needling Technique)* states, “Needling bone technique that is inserted the needles straight in & straight out, touched the bone to treat bone bi.” Another is the chapter *Duan Ci* in the *Nei Jing* where it states, “insert needle along the bone;” the *Guan Zhen Pian* states, “shallowly insert the needle for bone bi, use gentle lifting-thrusting manipulations along the bone to reach the point.” Master Tung’s Points often uses methods that extend along the bone or touch the bone. The text *Zou Shi Jing Luo Da Zhuan (Mr. Zou’s Channels and Collateral’s Compendium)* by

Zuo, Kong Si of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) states, “the internal diseases which move up and down involve the vessels while diseases that move left to right are collaterals. The point is found close to the bone where movement is stopped and accumulation occurs.” The modern research text *Bone Membrane Conductor* states, “bone membranes are enriched with nerves and blood vessels, inserted the needles to reach the bone or along the bone and the treatment effect is conducted through the bone-membrane-conductor to have a direct effect on the joint diseases.” For example, needling Linggu and Dabai (base and head of the first metacarpal) along the bone to treat sciatica pain; needling Renzhong (du26), Houxi (SI3), Shugu (UB65) and Fengshi (GB31) to treat bone spurs in the neck or back; needling Linggu and Shugu (UB65) along the bone to treat heel bone spurs, needling Quchi (LI11) along the bone to treat tennis elbow; and needling Taichong (LV3) along the bone to treat knee pain.

Tendon to Treat Tendon

The “Tendon to treat tendon” method follows the ancient technique of needling tendon theory found in the *Ci Qi Lun* where it states, “needling the tendon without damaging the muscle.” There are two techniques; one is found in chapter *Guan Ci Fa* in the *Nei Jing* where it states, “insert needle to the tendon.” The *Guan Zhen Pian* states, “Use needling tendon technique where one inserts the needles perpendicularly into the tendon in order to treat tendon bi.” Tendon treatments are also discussed in chapter *Hui Ci Fa* in the *Nei Jing* where it states, “insert the needle along the tendon”, the *Guan Zhen Pian* states, “use the ‘recovering tendon technique’ by inserting the needles along the sides of

the tendon to relax the spasm and treat the tendon bi.” These techniques can treat twitching of limbs, cramps, spasms, stiffness and weak tendons. For example, the location of Zhengjin point is in the center of the Achilles tendon, one inch above the calcaneum; it is excellent for treating stiff neck and a twisting lower back; Chize (LU5) is located on the radial side of the tendon of m. biceps brachii, needling Chize (LU5) along the tendon to this point can treat spasmodic pain of whole body, frozen shoulder, cramping hand and hemiplegia. Chize (LU5) is water point in metal channel. Sedating this point can avoid the metal control wood, which can relax the tendon, the same as the theory of Chengshan (UB57) and Yanglingquan (GB34).

Vessel to Treat Vessel

The “Vessel to treat vessel” method involves an ancient technique derived from discussion on needling vessel theory in the *Ci Qi Lun* where it states, “needle the vessel without damaging the skin.” There are two techniques; one is to “insert needle into blood vessel” it is also called a “bleeding treatment.” The *Guan Zhen Pian* states, “Needling the vessel technique lances spider hemangiomas in order to get a few drops of blood so as to treat abscesses.” Another method is to “insert the needle along the artery, it won’t cause bleeding because this technique is not touching the artery but treating the blood vessel diseases.”

Bleeding is not merely an effective treatment for difficult or chronic diseases, but also an effective treatment for acute illness and febrile diseases. For example, bleeding the 12 jing-well points can treat stroke, coma, high fever and sore throat. Bleeding Weizhong (UB40) can treat occipital headache, neck and back pain, sciatica pain, lower legs pain, hemorrhoid, abscess, sudden turmoil, as well as acute vomiting and diarrhea. Bleeding the cubital crease of elbow can treat frozen shoulder, arm pain, asthma, heart disease and sudden turmoil. Bleeding the back of ears can treat eye diseases, bells palsy, dermatitis, insomnia and hyper-hydrosis. The author’s teacher, Master Tung used the

“distal points to sedate luo channels” technique, that is bleeding the upper back to treat foot pain, bleeding lower back to treat arm pain, and bleeding Sihuzhong, Sihuwai to treat internal organ diseases. Master Tung also used the method “needling proximal to the vessel to treat vascular disease.” For example, Taiyuan (LU9)—located proximal to the radial artery—is the influential point of vessels and is excellent for treating vascular diseases. The points Renzong and Dizong are located close to large vessels and can regulate blood circulation, greatly benefiting arteriosclerosis and heart disease. The points Huoying and Huozhu points are located close to the 1st dorsal lateral metatarsal artery. They can also treat vascular disease.

Muscle to Treat Muscle

The “Muscle to treat muscle” method is an ancient theory discussed in the *Ci Qi Lun* where it states, “needling the muscle without damaging the vessel, needling the muscle without damaging the tendon.” *Guan Zhen Pian* discusses various methods of needling the muscle layer, “*Fu Ci* (floating insertion) involves needling from the side of the muscle superficially. Use this method to treat acute cold attacking the muscles and causing muscle spasm. *Fen Ci* (layers insertion) involves inserting the needle into different layers of muscle in order to treat muscle pain. The *He Gu Ci* (valley insertion) method requires insertion of the needle into the thick muscle (this kind of muscle is shaped like chicken feet) to treat muscle bi.” The technique of “*Fu Ci*” (floating insertion) uses horizontal or oblique insert needle into thin muscle to treat cold muscle spasm; The “*Fen Ci*” method requires insertion of the needle into thicker muscle in order to treat muscle pain, numbness or atrophy; the “*He Gu Ci*” method involves perpendicular insertion of the needle directly into the thickest muscle, then lift the needle up to under skin layer, and insert obliquely left-right or distal-proximal to treat muscle bi caused by wind cold damp.

Hegu (LI4), Quchi (LI11), Shousanli (LI10), Zusanli (ST36) and Sima are all

located on large muscle groups with extensive musculature. They are used to treat muscular problems and especially muscle atrophy. These point selections are from the *Nei Jing* discussion of muscular atrophy as related to the Yangming channels. These points are superior in treating muscle spasm or dermatological conditions. It is the same theory of Chengshan (UB57), Jianzhong points.

Skin to Treat Skin

The “Skin to treat skin” method involves needling the skin tissue level in order to affect skin conditions. This ancient theory is discussed in the *Ci Qi Lun* which states, “needling the skin without damaging the muscle.” In the *Guan Zhen Pian*, it states, “*Mao Ci* (hairy insertion) involves superficial insertion to treat the skin bi,” whereas “*Ban Ci* (half insertion) involves shallow, rapid insertion of the needle. The needle is not retained and the muscle is not contacted; it is like pricking hair to get the skin qi.”

The technique of “*Mao Ci*” requires a very fine, gentle, superficial and tiny needle insertion that is similar to using a piece of hair to touch the skin. It is used for symptoms experienced throughout the cutaneous regions such as numbness, floating bi syndromes, or dermatological conditions; the “*Ban Ci*” method requires needle insertion that is superficial and rapid. It is like pricking the hair to bring the blood up to the skin layer and to treat conditions in dermatology, derma-neuritis, hair loss, and alcoholic nose. “*Ban Ci*” is deeper than “*Mao Ci*.” “*Ban Ci*” originally used the three-edge-needle and in modern practice, the “plum-blossom needles” are typically used. The *Guan Zhen Pian* identifies a contraindication for this method. “This technique cannot be applied in the white skin regions; this ‘superficial bleeding’ technique is only applied to the red skin color that is caused by excess blood heat or toxic heat.” This technique is directly applied to affected areas including red skin dermatitis, pimples, erysipelas, and herpes zoster.

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Master Tung used a special derma-needle technique at the thicker muscular layer in order to treat dermatitis. It is based on the five-phase theory of boosting earth to generate metal while using the skin layer to treat skin. Sima is often used to treat dermatitis since it regulates qi and blood via its location on the Yangming channel where there is excess qi & blood. The technique is to either use shallow insertion for the skin layer or to use a sedating method by inserting the needle to the *Di* (earth) level, and using a strong sedation method by lifting up to the *Ren* (human) level and then lifting to *Tian* (heaven). The needle is then retained in the *Tian* (heaven) level. The *Nan Jing* states, “during the sedating treatment, we need to get the qi from the ying level”. The point choice is based on the same theory of Quchi (LI11) can treat the dermatology diseases.

Five Viscera Treatments through the Five Tissue Layers

Five viscera needling treatment uses the correspondences of the five tissues which are using bone to treat bone, tendon to treat tendon, vessel to treat vessel, muscle to treat muscle and skin to treat skin. That can express the theories of kidney controls bone, liver controls tendon, spleen controls muscle, heart controls vessel and lung controls skin; bone to treat kidney, tendon to treat liver, muscle to treat spleen, vessel to treat heart and skin to treat lungs. The *Guan Zhen Pian* states: “The *Ban Ci* is used to get the skin qi; this corresponds to the lung.” “The *Bao Wen Ci* method is used to treat the blood of the jing luo; this correspond to the heart.” “The *Guan Ci* method is used to treat the tendon bi, it is performed without causing bleeding; this corresponds to liver.” “Using the *He Gu Ci* method, one inserts the needle between the muscles to treat the muscle bi; this corresponds to the spleen.” “The *Shu Ci* method is performed deep to the bone in order to treat the bone bi; this corresponds to the kidneys.”

Clinical Applications:

Needling skin in correspondence with the lungs

For lung diseases, cough or asthma, use subcutaneous needling and the Shuijin or Shuitong points. For lung heat, sore throat, or fever, use shallow insertion at Shaoshang (LU11) or Shangyang (LI1). For nose disease, use shallow insertion of the needle in the wood point of index finger.

Needling muscle in correspondence with the spleen

Needling thick muscle regions will boost and regulate qi via the muscle correspondences of the spleen. Hegu (LI4) and Taichong (LV3), located in the thickest muscle between fingers and toes, can strongly regulate qi even though they are yuan-source points. Sima not only treats dermatitis but also strengthens the spleen and boosts qi. Master Tung's point selections emphasize spleen and stomach theory, the following groups of points are located on the thick muscle of thigh. Sima treats the lung; Tongguan, Tongshan and Tongtian treat the heart; Tongshen, Tongwei and Tongbei treat the kidney; Tianhuang, Minghuang and Qihuang treat the liver; and Fengshi (GB31) is the important point for pain. These points all strengthen the spleen.

Needling vessels in correspondence with the heart

Bleeding techniques are very affective for cardiovascular diseases. I bled Zouwen, Sihuzhong Sihuwai – located closed to Tiaokou (ST38), Fenglong (ST40) – in an emergency case of cardiac infarct. In addition, one can needle the point Dizhong (strengthen the heart point) to revive the yang-collapsed syndrome and treat heart diseases and arteriosclerosis. Huoying, Huozhu which are located close to the 1st dorsal lateral metatarsal artery, strengthen the heart and treat heart paralysis. Taichong (LV3) is the point to wake the coma patients up after needling Renzhong (DU24) and Baihui (DU20).

Needling tendon in correspondence with the liver

Yanglingquan (GB 34) is an important point to treat liver & gallbladder disease and tendon disease; Chengshan (UB57) is the point of leg muscle spasm, stomach spasmodic pain, and menstrual cramps.

Needling bone in correspondence with the bone

Needling Linggu along the bone to treat back pain, heel pain, and tonify the kidney deficiency syndromes. Needling Fuke and Huanchao along the bone to tonify kidney and treat infertility, Wanshun and Sanyinjiao (SP6) points as well.

Some other points like tendon and muscle or bone and muscle tissue layers respond to the needling combination of Shousanli (LI10) in the tendon and Quchi (LI11) along the bone. This combination is often used to treat tendonitis and tennis elbow; it is the theory of treating the tendon and bone to nourish the liver and kidney. One of my most often used methods is to thread the needle from Yemen (SJ2) below the tendon and along the bone to Zhongbai (called Zhongzhu (SJ3)) & Xiabai – located in the thick muscle area. This is used to treat spleen, liver, and kidney related diseases and is one of my ten important points.

Small Conclusions

Body correspondences needling methods are part of Quan Xi needling which includes tissue corresponding to body and tissues corresponding to organs; this technique is one of Master Tung's core point philosophies. These theories are rooted in the Huang Di Nei Jing. However, many practitioners do not follow these theories. In this paper, I compiled my teacher Tung's and my forty years clinical experience to emphasize this ancient theory and modern practical applications. I wish to “throw the brick out to guide a jade back” to get more practitioners to apply this technique and give feedback to improve the development of acupuncture clinical applications.

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