

First International Wang Ju-Yi Channel Theory Symposium

by Jeffrey Dann

In Beijing on August 3-5, 2013, I attended and participated in the first international symposium devoted to Dr. Wang Ju-Yi's work: based on clinical results and pure scientific research, the restructuring TCM on the basis of channel theory and palpation as understood from the classics.

Dr. Wang work of the past 30 years has sparked a "return to the classics" movement promoting meridian-channel palpation and diagnosis, shifting the emphasis away from TCM herbalized zang-fu point protocols. Dr. Wang believes that research and interpretation of classical channel theory has long been ignored and has led to the decline and stagnation of acupuncture practice and theory in China.

At the symposium, there was clearly broad-based official support for Dr. Wang's work over the past three decades, which culminated in the formal certification by Dr. Wang of seven teachers and the acceptance of seven new official apprentices, both Chinese and foreign. An impressive number of official groups from hospitals and medical schools participated in the symposium: among them, the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences the Beijing Bureau of Chinese Medicine, the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, the Beijing Acupuncture and Moxibustion Association, the China Acupuncture and Moxibustion Association, and two hospitals affiliated with two different medical universities.

The symposium spanned two and a half days, and included a morning lecture by Dr. Wang and 16 presentations by Dr. Wang's students presenting case histories, discussion of the classics, international teaching reports, as well as a most impressive scientific research report on channels and the role of interstitial fluids as understood from the classics. All these doctors had abandoned "official" TCM and deeply studied Dr. Wang's work as apprentices. It was a special honor to be invited and present, as I was the only non-apprentice of Dr. Wang to do so.

Dr. Wang asked me to attend because I was one of his first foreign students in 1981, at the Beijing Municipal Hospital of TCM. After 25 years, I reconnected with Dr. Wang when he came to California to teach at several acupuncture schools after the publication of his seminal book, co-written by his student and certified instructor Jason Robertson.

A brief summary of Dr. Wang's system is as follows:

Dr. Wang's central thesis on channels derives in large part from *Ling Shu 10*, although he is also very influenced by the *Nan Jing* as well.

LS 10: The five zang foster essence and therefore govern destiny, the channels permeate and provide (substances) and therefore govern life.

五脏育精而主命，经络灌渗而主生

LS 10: The meridian-channels determine life and death; harbor the 100 diseases; regulate emptiness and fullness; and must not be blocked.

经脉者，所以能诀死生，处百病，调虚实，不可不通。

LS10: The 12 channels travel in the spaces between the flesh, at a depth that cannot be seen, what is observable are the collaterals.

经脉十二者，伏行分肉之间，深而不见；其常见，……诸脉之浮而常见者，皆络脉也。

Wang's Applied Channel Theory consists of eight topics based on the classics, his clinical experience, and scientific research. His system elucidates the nature of channels, the structure of channels, channel-qi transformation (*qi hua*: 气化); channels and points, channels and symptom patterns, channel examination, channel differentiation and channel selection, point combinations, and hand manipulations.

Dr. Wang brings a new understanding to six level-same named-hand-and-foot meridian energetics and their pathophysiology. The logic of the six level energetics, where the yang and yin channel dynamics open, pivot, and close, is developed with great brilliance and clinical usefulness for treating disease at different physiological and tissue levels.

These topics, the nature of channels and channel palpation and treatment, are central to traditional Japanese acupuncture. And the referential foundation classical texts are the same. Yet professionals in both China and Japan have virtually no significant interaction with each other.

NAJOM strives to be a conduit of international exchange and communication that furthers the development and understanding of acupuncture. Our Japanese colleagues display exquisite sensitivity to surface palpation but often lack a deeper classical theoretical foundation. Dr. Wang's interpretations of the classics fills in this theoretical gap and extends the clinical utility of channel diagnostics.

As an editor for **NAJOM**, I feel it is extremely important to introduce our Japanese colleagues and teachers to this brilliant doctor's work. **NAJOM** has in the past published a book review and two articles about his work but this barely touches the

depth and significance of Dr. Wang's understanding of the channels, their diagnostic usage, and palpation techniques.

Therefore **NAJOM** is pleased to present in this Spring 2014 issue, and the 20th anniversary of this journal, a significant block of articles by Dr. Wang and his senior students.

By publishing a select number of articles from Dr. Wang's symposium, I hope to introduce our Japanese colleagues to this significant transformation in acupuncture theory and practice that is happening in China. It is also my hope for new dialogue between Chinese and Japanese teachers and practitioners. Hopefully, some day there will be a Japanese translation of the book **Applied Channel Theory in Chinese Medicine** by Dr. Wang and Jason Robertson.

The following articles from Dr. Wang's symposium include his introductory lecture (abbreviated), an overview by co-author Jason Robertson on teaching Applied Channel Theory to TCM foreign students, and a case study by the director of the school of the blind describing channel differentiation between Jueyin and hand Shaoyang patterns and treatment.

In a future issue of **NAJOM** will be an historic analysis of palpatory terms from classical literature by Dr. Shelly Ochs PhD and a scientific investigation into the concept of weiqi and our contemporary understanding of interstitial fluids. Further papers of theoretical and clinical interest are described by two of Dr. Wang's foreign students, Jonathon Chang and Nyysa Lu.

Jeffrey Dann began studying seitaiho and shiatsu in Japan in 1972 while training at the Mito Tobukan. He has been an acupuncturist since 1981 and has a practice in Hawaii and Boulder Colorado. His interests are in movement therapy and osteopathic palpation. He teaches internationally and around the US and is on the faculty for the Japanese Acupuncture doctoral program at the Tri-State College of Acupuncture in New York City.