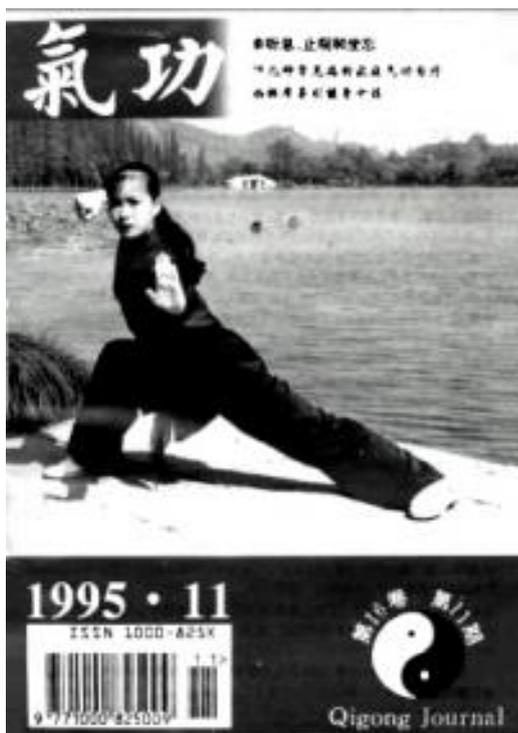


Qigong Masters Sharing their Views of Meridians



This article was published in the monthly magazine "Qigong and Sport" in Xi'An, Shaanxi province of China in the 1990s. In this article some Qigong masters who belong to different schools share their visions of the energy channels' system. Strikingly, their descriptions are very similar, which provides another evidence of some objective reality beyond our limited perception.

It is obvious that in our normal state of awareness it is impossible to perceive the energetic form of Qi directly. A University-trained Chinese medicine doctor can only assess the flow of Qi by analyzing the signs and symptoms - such as looking at the appearance of the patient, hearing the voice, palpating the pulse or observing the tongue. However, direct perception of Qi can be achieved by prolonged Qigong practice, involving meditation and careful self-observation.

The ability to perceive Qi directly is termed as "internal vision" in Qigong. The accounts below come from advanced Qigong masters who mastered their internal vision and use it to help their student and patients.

General notes about the system of energy channels and circulation of Qi

An article by Zheng Jingyue, Zhang Jilian

"Internal tunnels" can only be seen with "internal vision". This is still true in the modern days. Using the methods of "penetration", "visual dissection" and "micro-vision" by means of the Eye of Wisdom [tian mu or "heavenly eye" between the eyebrows] we could see that the tunnels are actually far from being "tubes". The thinner ones are more like silver silk threads; the wider - resemble the stripes of light. Interweaving, they form a cobweb engulfing all our tissues.

In the cross-cut, the tunnels are circular-shaped or oval-shaped, however sometimes they are of irregular shapes, and the substance flowing through them is similar to the liquid crystals of the LCD displays.

In ordinary people this substance possesses relatively dense texture with scarce amount of more "dispersed" areas. It flows slowly and steadily. In those who practice Qigong, the texture is more light and clear and it flows faster, with ease. In the epicenters of disease the substance has highly dense and heavy texture, it is dark-colored and moves extremely slow, sometimes even showing signs of complete stagnation.

Once we were doing a group session of Qigong therapy with external Qi emission. During the session many patients began to perform some spontaneous body movements. One lady ceased her movements abruptly and "petrified" in a rather extraordinary posture. In order to find out what was the cause of this, we had to use "penetrative vision". It was found that although the wider channels were about 4-5mm in diameter and should not have been causing obstruction of the flow, the substance in the epicenter of her disease became almost solid. That was the reason why the lady was fixed in this posture. After two days of continued practice her reaction on the external Qi emission became normal. The "penetrative vision" showed that due to stimulating action of external Qi the flow of the substance through the affected area was restored.

The color of the substance contained in the energy channels may vary too. Depending on the level of a person's Qigong practice, it may be colored from white and red - up to the purple/violet.

Also, depending on the level of one's Qigong practice and the degree of "opening" of the Eye of Wisdom, every person may perceive the picture of the energy channels differently. That is why we cite not only our visions here, but also the visions of our colleagues.

Master Zhang Xiaoyang

Zhang Xiaoyang: "Energy channels exist in a fluid state and to the person who can use internal vision, they present themselves as light. This light is the Qi itself. I observed energy channels as a fluid flowing into pre-defined routes in the tissues of skin, muscles, internal organs and fascia. Without any external influence the fluid moves slowly and the movement is almost unnoticeable. As its movement follows the complete cycle that correlates with the cycles of Heaven and Earth, movement of the Moon and Sun, at any moment of time which we would take it looks steady, immobile. However this is not true.

If we needle any acupuncture point, within a short period of time Qi activates and its flow in the given area of the energy channel speeds up. The Qi in turn moves the fluid which starts moving through the passages of the energy channels. Once the fluid reaches the following acupuncture point, its movement stops for a short moment and during this time the point lights up like a little star. After that, the fluid carries on with its flow [through the channel].

To sum up my observations;

- 1) energy channels in the human body are located at different levels and depths.
- 2) the width of the energy channels varies depending on the person
- 3) the width of the channels also fluctuates depending on time
- 4) the width varies in different areas of the channel.

In particular, applying various needling techniques, the width and the speed of the Qi flow in the channel will change. Speed of the Qi usually increases with intense stimulation. In the case of broadening of the channel, external stimulation of the "biologically active" point leads to the change of the color of the point's radiance.

Points located on a single closed path, glow similarly to the bigger and smaller stars of various luminosity. "Larger" points such as Bai Hui, Jing Ming, Da Zhui and Zu San Li would correspond to the stars of the 1st grade of luminosity whereas smaller points - to the stars of the 2nd and 3rd grades. Every point accumulates certain amount of electric energy and influences the functioning of the energy channel, playing a role of a "pump", stimulating the flow of Qi-liquid through the muscle tissues.

Regarding the "central-median channel" [known as Sushumna in Indian Yoga - O.A.], there are no references to it in the ancient [Chinese] scriptures teaching of energy channels. However, during my Qigong practice and experiments with acupuncture, by means of internal vision I could see the channel leading from Bai Hui point down to Hui Yin point, forming straight line through the trunk.

At the beginner's stage of Qigong practice this channel is very thin and hardly seen at all. However with some improvement in practice it becomes wider and looks like a transparent column of red light. In ordinary people, the "central-median channel" exists as a dashed line coming through the internal organs."

Master Lu Xuezhi

Lu Xuezhi: "Energy channels represent another vital system of a human being. In healthy people they are transparent, free [of blockages] and full of light. In those who are exhausted and ill, the energy channels look drained, dried, fainted, and "knotted", and in the origins of diseases "plugs" can be seen.

The channels of those who practice Qigong are free, radiate bright light and filled with Qi. Qigong helps to utilize full potential of this another "vital system". Energy channels also serve as an important device providing the exchange of "informational energy" between the man and the nature. Subtle matter of nature, entering the "man's field" through the endings of energy channels in the skin, penetrates deeper into the channels and via this network distributes itself into internal organs and other parts of the body.

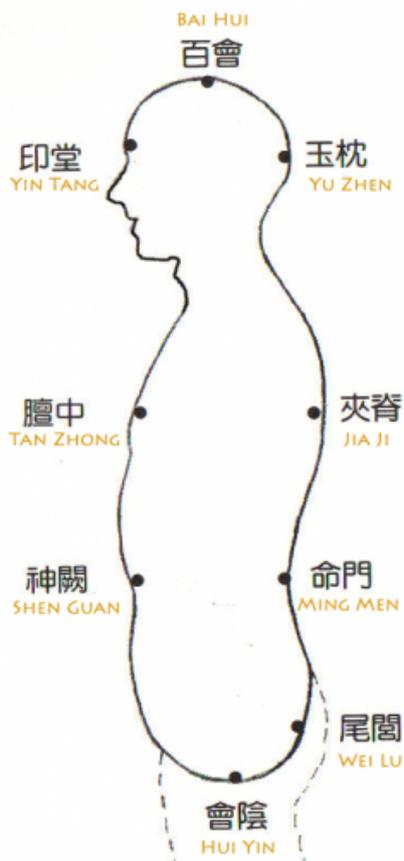
Energy channels also play role in breaking down and expelling harmful substances out of the body, and in the storage of the vital energy. They contribute towards keeping the organism healthy. Energy channels are able to convert the "subtle matter" of nature and "seminal Qi" accumulated in the internal organs into radiant crystallized substance and accumulate it within themselves. This accumulated energy in case of emergency or in need can be quickly discharged to replenish the lack of Zheng Qi ["upright" or antipathogenic Qi] in the organs that underwent some pathological changes, or used to ward-off the external infection.

With the build-up of reserves of this "subtle matter" the person gradually becomes less dependent on food received through the digestive system. He/she will nonetheless have a continuous highly energetic supply that would fill all the organs and bodily structures with the "seminal Qi". As a result of these processes, the state of "refraining from food" spontaneously arises in the person - he/she stays healthy and full of energy while not taking the "gross" food.

Even if a person does not practice Qigong, his or her channel's Qi circulates anyway, although without any conscious control it just follows its natural way. If you try to use your will-power to change the

natural flow, it will influence mainly the Yuan Qi (original Qi) which flows outside the channels. This intrusion without taking into account other relations in the energy body, may lead to an imbalance of the overall "Qi mechanics" and cause significant harm.

Opening of the Lesser Heavenly Circuit



In the course of diligent and regular Qigong practice, firstly Post-Heaven Qi [acquired after one's birth] and then Pre-Heaven Qi [given before the birth] begins to circulate through the energy channels. Breaking through the barriers of Wei-Lu, Jia-Ji and Yu-Zhen, it forms the ring of circulation along the Lesser Heavenly Circuit [also known as Microcosmic Orbit represented by Ren and Du Mai channels along the midline of the body - O.A.]. Those who have enough internal energy can "break through all barriers with a single arrow".

With the opening of the Lesser Heavenly Circuit, according to the principle "the water of the prominent rivers overflows into tributaries" 12 primary and 8 extraordinary vessels begin functioning. Following that, the rest of the "channel-sons" and "collateral-grandsons" regain their permeability so the "Greater Orbit" of the "Lesser Heavenly Circuit" is formed.

Internal Qi in the organism of a practitioner begins to ascend and descend freely, enter and leave, uninterruptedly circulate. This provides for spontaneous "Qigong training" 24 hours a day.

There is a transition happening from the situation when the person trains "post-heaven Qi" to the situation when "pre-heaven Qi trains the person". Everything ill and harmful leaves the body. Transformation happens on the cellular, molecular and nuclear levels. The exchange of internal energy from largely chemical becomes atomic. The work of the vital system becomes more orderly, and a full re-birth of the body follows. The very foundation of life is strengthened.

Those who do not practice Qigong or only train the "post-heaven Qi" doing Qigong forms and sequences, cannot reach to the arrival of the "heavenly original Qi" and fullness of the internal Qi. In this case, there is not enough Qi to fill up the minor energy channels, which leads to stagnation. As a result, stimulation of blood capillaries weakens and 70-80% of them simply do not work. This in turn is reflected in the body metabolism which leads to inevitable [negative] manifestations in general well-being.

Not only blood capillaries are associated with the minor energy channels. In fact every pore on our skin is connected to them. If the True Qi (Zheng Qi) fills the channels, the "body breathing" starts to form and the person gains the ability to absorb "subtle matter" from the "human field" directly through the pores, in addition to the ordinary way of breathing through the lungs. The arrival of "body breathing"

opens avenues to some deeper levels of achievement such as "restoration of the intra-uterine breathing", "leaving the senility and coming back to the childhood" [i.e. reversal of the natural processes of aging - S.S.].

The progression of Qigong practice

Regarding the Taoist concept of "internal circulation of civil and martial Qi" and "black and white channels" forming a curved line above the Du Mai (Governing vessel), the author and some of his students could observe them at a certain stage of their practice, after the appearance of the "central-median channel".

In the beginning of work with the "central-median channel", there is a sensation of a soft "tissue" of Qi, moving along the vertical line of the body. Then, the luminous tube is formed, stretching between Hui Yin point up to the nostrils, which later joins Fan Xue point in Bai Hui area [top of the head - O.A.]. Between the vertex and the perineum a vertical column is formed resembling a luminescent "daylight" lamp about 5mm in diameter. When the "wonder pearl" (Dan) starts moving through the channel, it changes its light from red to white. Following that, two channels appear by themselves respectively on the left and on the right. At first they are felt more like movement of the stream of Qi, and then start to emit the light by themselves.

With the absence of the "central-median channel" the Qi collected from the Cosmos comes through biologically active points and pores of the skin, and circulates through the surface of the skin which leads to the increase of its temperature.

After opening of the "central-median channel" and Fan Xue point, the Cosmic energy like a waterfall rushes into this channel, which instantaneously sparks up with golden light. When this light fills up the whole body, a person starts to feel a powerful warmth inside and outside. Sometimes this "luminous energy" penetrates the body and goes straight into the ground, connecting the Man with Heaven and Earth. Man, Heaven and Earth become an indivisible One.

Sometimes the "wonder pearl" ["dan"] appears, which descends down into the area of the perineum, drifts back into the "white channel" and comes up above the Du Mai vessel. Then it comes into the head and descends down the left channel. Once it reaches the perineum again, the "pearl" enters the "Black channel" and following above the Du Mai vessel, comes to the head again to descend down the right channel.

With the advance of the training level, the meridians, collaterals, the central-median channel and black and white channels constantly widen up and eventually merge with each other. The "luminous energy" fills up the whole body, the boundaries of the channels dissolve.

It is said that "Every inch of the body becomes a biologically active point, and the whole body becomes a Dan Tian". Thus the historic potential of the energy channel system is actualized. In the course of Qigong training it reaches its peak of development."

Credits

Original translation from Mandarin Chinese to Russian is done by S. Sergeyev, 1997. Russian translation can be found here. (<http://www.yangsheng.ru/ru/Journal/Y1997/0603.html>)

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English Article Source: <http://www.qigong.net.nz/channels> (link above no longer active)

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