

A Common Theory of Oriental Medicine

An Integral Model for the System of Acupuncture Channels

Part 2

12 meridians and 3 doshas

The theory of three vital energies or 3 *doshas* (*pneuma phlegm* and *bile*) constitutes the basics of Indian Ayurvedic Medicine. In Ayurveda, elements of the body are divided into 2 groups : causing disease and subjected to disease. The first group involves 7 main components of the body : nutritious juice – end product of food digestion, blood, muscles, fat tissues, bones, bone brain, semen and 3 products of secretion - sweat, urine, excrements. The second group involves 3 vital energies called *pneuma phlegm* and *bile*. These 2 groups of elements are mutually adjusting. If 3 vital energies are in balance, the organism is healthy. Any infraction of the balance caused by different reasons, may result in unhealthy expressions that can be seen as changes in the strength of the body (components of body) and it's debris (products of secretion) [1,3,9].

The functional activity of *pneuma* (Tibetan *rlung*) described as follows: "... it helps breathing and movement of seven major powers of the body, clarifying of feelings and sensations limited impact on the physical condition of the body ...". *Bile* (Tibetan *mkhris*) is characterized as follows: "Mkhris is located exclusively in the blood and sweat. It promotes digestion, separates nutrient juice and debris. Located in close contact with the bodily heat, gives the basis for the forces ... promotes clarity of mind and activity, and generates consciousness, intelligence, desire ... makes it possible to see the images of objects, produces a distinct clarity in the color of the skin. " Functions of *phlegm* (Tibetan *Bad-kan*) relate to the regulation of body water, all the diseases that occur on a background of obesity and joint damage [3]. The following quotation from "Chzhud-shek" Wind and Mucus match *pneuma*, and *phlegm*. "The Wind shall breathe in and out, gives the force that causes the body in motion, direct the movement of physical forces within the body, makes clear the senses and leads the body. Bile depends on the feeling of hunger and thirst, feeding, digestion, bodily warmth, color, courage and intelligence, Mucus enhances the body and mind, gives a dream. It is responsible for joints, soft and oily body" [9]. Each of the three physiological energies exist as five currents that perform specific functions.

What are the three doshas? Their characteristics cited in ancient medical treatises give rise to different interpretations.

Authors of scientific project, devoted to Tibetan medicine based on relevance of Tibetan and modern information on ways of organism regulation came to the following conclusion : "... the key moment to determine the system of regulation in Tibetan medicine is the way of regulatory signal transfer ". There are 3 systems of regulations to

be considered based on this criteria – wind, bile and mucus, that we identify as neural, humoral and local tissue ways of regulation respectively [8]. Local tissue or diffuse neuro-endocrine system, the latter being peptide-secreting cells diffusively scattered in the viscera and in brain tissues and producing the regulatory peptides [5].

Our clue to this problem is the following quotation from the Medieval Tibetan treatise “The Blue Beryl” (Atlas of Tibetan Medicine.)

According to *Blue Beryl*: “These vessels consist of Four vessels of *pneuma* connecting Heart and Small intestine, four vessels of *bile* connecting Lungs, Large Intestine, Liver and Gall Bladder, four vessels of *phlegm* connecting Stomach, Spleen, Kidneys and Bladder’ [2].

Note that in Oriental sources “vessel” term means not only blood vessels and nerve plexus, but also different invisible energy currents-channels of the thin body that maintain life and organism development in general. *

*Oriental philosophy medical teachings present the human body as a combination of 3 bodies : root body, thin body and dense or rough body. The root body or the body of semen – is bodiless Spirit that enters the womb at the moment of conceiving and starts embrione development. It will generate thin and rough bodies later on.

Thin body that appears within 2 months of embrione development consists of numeral invisible vessels (channels) with circulating life energy. There are 3 vessels called forming that appear the first in the developing embrione. The main vessel- flow goes from head to sexual organs. The other 2 forming vessels go close to the right and left sides of the central vessel. The 3 forming vessels cross each other and make branches to create chakras. As a result a net of smaller vessels (managing vessels) appears around chakras , that are responsible for functionality of sense organs, “generating 6 kinds of sensual comprehension”, responsible for regeneration etc. [1].

As known, Tibetan medicine was formed approximately in VII century by acknowledgement of ancient experience and knowledge of traditions of India, China and Iran, that have been combined into one system. The process of thousand years of development of Tibetan medicine also assumed the fusion of different theory concepts. Having discovered the functional links of vital origins of pneuma, bile and phlegm with hollow and dense organs (as cited), Tibetan medics could establish the relevance between fundamental concepts of Indian and Chinese schools.

This became a foundation for integrated theory of oriental medicine that has not been developed further. By using experiences of Tibetan medical scientists that would see vital energies are groupings of organs, we suggest to develop this theory by considering 3 vital origins as functional groupings of 12 main meridians.

There are 3 possible variants of grouping with 3 axes of symmetry, positioned in relation to each other under 120° angle:

1. LI-Lu-BI-Ki, SI-Ht-GB-Liv, TH-HP-St-Sp
2. LI-Lu-St-Sp, SI-Ht-BI-Ki, TH-HP-GB-Liv
3. LI-Lu-GB-Liv, SI-Ht-St-Sp, TH-HP-BI-Ki

Our model suggests that only the third combination (Fig. 7) proves to be functional.

Table 5

	Bile	Plegm	Pneuma
Tratise <i>Blue Beryl</i>	LI - Lu - GB - Liv	Bl - Ki - St - Sp	SI - Ht
Suggested model	LI - Lu - GB - Liv	Bl - Ki - TH - P	SI - Ht - St - Sp

Note that *bile* in our model is identical to the variant of Tibetan medics. As cited, the Chinese theory speaks only about 10 main organs, and 2 others, Three heaters and Pericardium – had not yet been added, although they have been discovered later. Much probably it is for this reason that the other two groups are not absolutely identical to *phlegm* and *pneuma*.

Three groups, corresponding to physiological principles, are formed in the further transformation of the Energy Circulation Cycle (Fig. 7 A,B,C). Let's illustrate the above presented functional links (Fig. 3 - 6) onto new graphic basis (Fig. 7C).

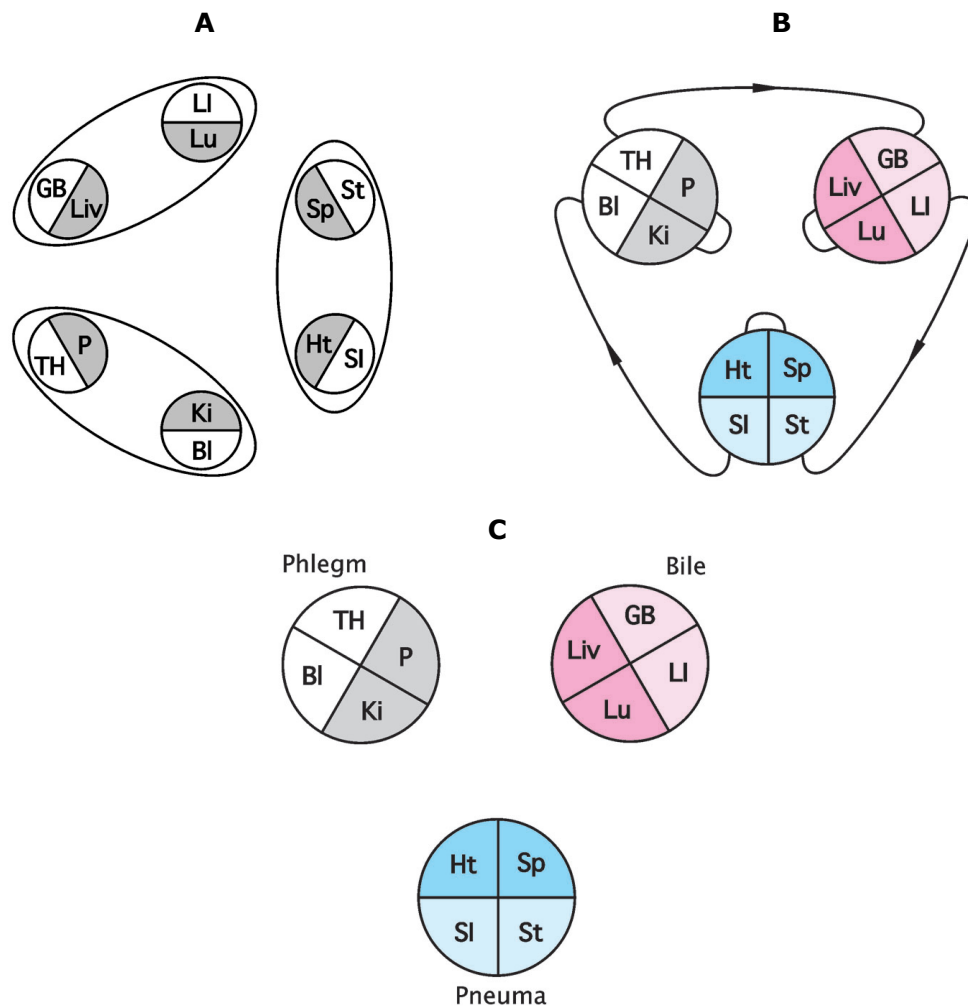


Fig. 7. 3 groupings of 12 meridians.

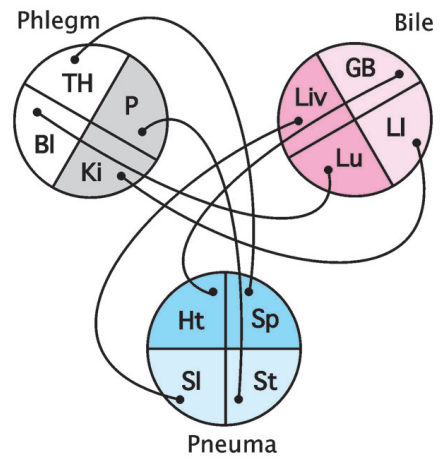
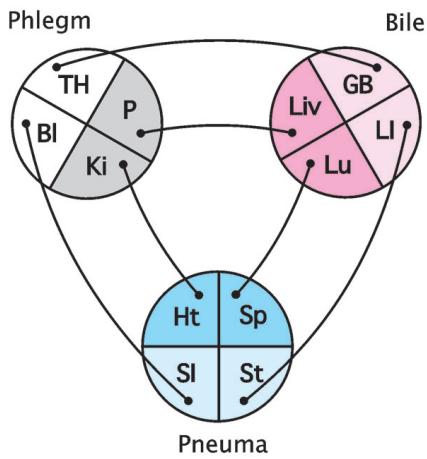


Fig. 8. Six Big Meridians. Fig. 9. Meridians Connected by 'Midday - Midnight' Law.

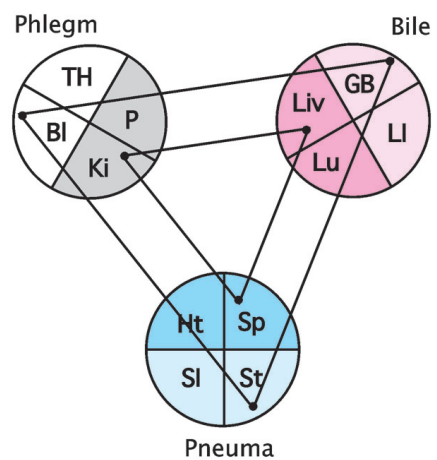
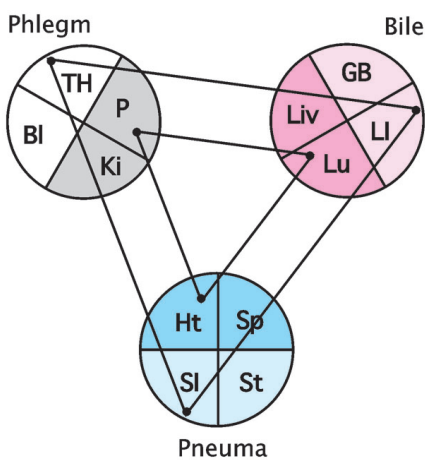


Fig. 10. Groupings of Hand and Foot (upper and lower) Meridians.

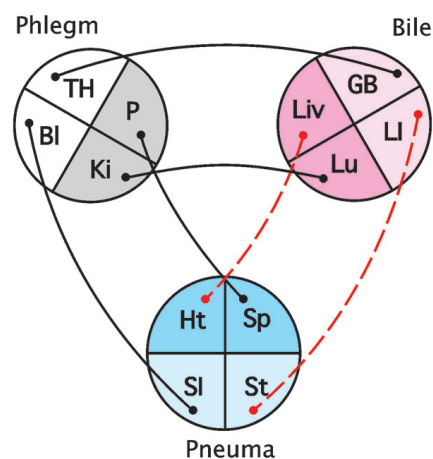
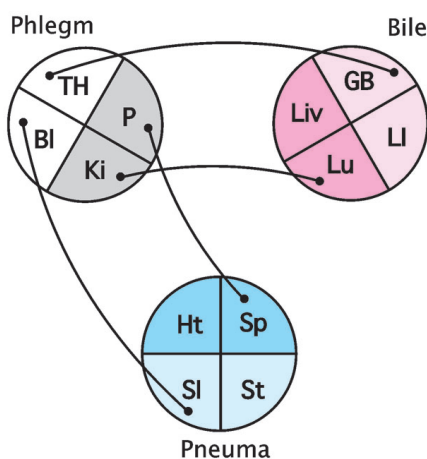


Fig .11. 4 pairs of Extraordinary Meridians. Fig.12. 6 pairs of Extraordinary Meridians.

Obviously, the 6 Big meridians, meridians connected by 'Midday - Midnight' law and groups of hand and foot meridians, form a closed system, connecting with each other *phlegm*, *bile* and *pneuma* (Fig.8-10), and in case of extraordinary meridians there are missing links between *bile* and *pneuma* (Fig. 11). This way, another 2 new pairs of extraordinary meridians have been discovered (Fig. 12).