

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE'S HOLISTIC THOUGHTS

Li RUNHU¹

ABSTRACT. *Traditional Chinese Medicine includes almost all the core concepts of Chinese Traditional Philosophy which combines spirit, human and nature from a holistic view. That is why TCM doctors treat people under the background of society and nature. This is a big difference between them and Western Medicine which treats people only as men with problems in their tissues and organs. According to it, there is no identical patient situations in the world, that is why doctors of TCM always treat patients individually, they pay more attention on a patient by the holistic thought not illness (According to Western Medicine, there is only illness in their point of view which lead them always get same diagnosis to different persons). However, the concept of TCM is hard to understand and communicate, Chinese Science is poor in these several hundred years and treatment of TCM has not got a big progress for a long time, all of that mislead people all around the world believe that TCM is not as good enough as Western Medicine. The holistic thought of TCM is its core idea during the entire process of TCM. I believe TCM and WM have its own character; we should integrate their valuable ideas and techniques to do more good things for human beings. I would like use the concept of Modern Medicine to substitute TCM and WM.*

KEYWORDS: *TCM; Holistic thought; Western Medicine; Modern Medicine*

Contents

Introduction

1. A systematic holistic research methods of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) on the precaution
2. Traditional Chinese Medicine also has the systematic holistic thoughts on the diagnosis
3. The system holistic thoughts of Traditional Chinese Medicine treatment
4. The system holistic thoughts of Traditional Chinese Medicine on “after healing”

Conclusion: What is the real meaning of thorough holistic system of TCM?

¹ Beijing Normal University, Beijing, CHINA.

Introduction

The Theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) contains the rich holistic thoughts. That is why the most important idea resources of Traditional Chinese Medicine derives from the Chinese Traditional Philosophy thoughts, such as concept of yin-yang and five elements, ancient Buddhist or Taoist concept of communion with nature (i.e. Unity of Heaven and Man), all of these Chinese Traditional philosophical concepts were borrowed by TCM to describe the relationship between the body's tissues and organs and the same token between man and nature. All of these reasons above cause plenty of obstacles for further understanding and popularize TCM.

TCM is constant in analyzing disease with holistic thoughts in contrast with the research approach of Western Analytic Reductionism. Meanwhile, TCM focuses not only on the systematic entirety of each parts of human body, but also on the systematic entirety of human body and natural environment. Furthermore, it strives to achieve the optimal effect by conducting comprehensive observation and examination, dialectical treatment of the disease with the application of combined medications, and adjustment of the whole body and mind. Conclusion is that the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a systematic holistic science.

Traditional Chinese medicine's (TCM) systematic holistic thoughts are mainly manifested in the following three aspects:

1. A systematic holistic research methods of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) as precaution of illness

TCM believes that there is not only coordinated and orderly organic whole between each part of human body, but also believes in unity among the human body, spirit and nature. Because of human disease is closely related to seasonal climate changes, human body blood running has a rhythmic change during day and night, the body's biological rhythm is directly related to the phases of the moon, the human body physiology is closely related to the geographical environment, Traditional Chinese Medicine still claims that there is a unity between human beings and nature.

The holistic thought is a basis of TCM, by virtue of this concept, TCM can achieve its ultimate purpose by the way I believe it is the most important idea in TCM, i.e. "nip in the bud". In China, we have a very famous legend about Bian Que who was a miracle-working doctor in ancient China. It can be used here to explain the importance of prevention in TCM.

Bian Que has two elder brothers; they all are proficient in medicine. His eldest brother is the doctor better than he and his elder brother. His elder brother is better than him; he believes that he is the worst doctor ever.

His eldest brother could predict the illness before someone has the omen and prevent it in time. But because of that, nobody believes in his medical skill: each man feels nothing about their illness, they think they are very healthy and they do not believe that he does a lot of favor for them, they recognize him as a liar.

His elder brother could realize the importance of the illness after getting slight related signs of sickness and cure a disease before it gets worse. However, the illness

is very gently at its attacking stage, most of people do not take his elder brother's medical advice because they think they just have a minor illness which should not be paid too much attention, even though his elder brother cure their illness, they say that it is common place that a doctor can cure that kind of illness, they do not believe his elder brother has crack skill in medicine.

The irony is Bian Que only can find the pathogenesis and cure his patients when they are hopeless about their illness. Bian Que could recover his patients at that desperate situation, so people commend him and acknowledge him as a miracle-working doctor. So many times he resurrects the dead people, he become the most famous doctor than any others especially his two brothers.

From this story we can understand that all of the TCM doctors from past to present believe that the best TCM is precaution, not cure. The best doctor is not like Bian Que who always do remedial work but like Bian Que's eldest brother who can prevent people from illness.

2. Systematic holistic thoughts of Traditional Chinese Medicine on the diagnosis

The core concept of TCM regards human body as a unity, at the same time looks on people & nature & society from an organic holism view, so during the process of diagnosis, TCM doctors not consider illness as a partial problems which can just "find it and fix it" like Western Medicine. During a process of TCM diagnosis, a TCM doctor not only try his best to examine the patient to get the information from patient but also pay much attention to the patient lives with what kind of geographical environment and the social relationship, even more he works harder to understand the temper & habit and hobby and so on.

In this regard, I want to strengthen that the main job of Western Medicine is an analysis of patient's biochemical pointer, from this point of view I want to emphasize that the main job of Western Medicine diagnosis is analyzing of the biomedical indicators of the patient and making the diagnosis based on some physical and chemical (organic and inorganic chemistry) principles. Nevertheless, Traditional Chinese Medicine believes that these steps are the very beginning of the understanding a patient's illness, and the diagnosis should not stay on the surface. The environment and social reasons, as well as physical and psychological causes should also be taken into concern, in order to make a correct diagnosis. In short, the Western Medicine has only the concept of disease, while the Tradition Chinese Medicine believes that there is no identical disease or illness in the world, we need treat each of them from a developing and changeable sight due to different patients and same patient but different time and situations. The Western Medicine might categorize cold into several types, no matter what the gender, nationality and race of the patient. The Traditional Chinese Medicine believes that each patient in his each distinct period may get a unique cold type, which requires a totally new diagnosis to find out the unknowns in the patient's illness. Two identical diseases never ever exist, just as there cannot be two identical leaves in this world. Thus, each diagnosis by the Traditional Chinese Medicine is a new research and exploration of a new disease. We can see that we need comprehensive study of pathogenic factors and through local

pathological changes of the body we can understand the whole physiology.

There is a fun expression at TCM doctors` world which can state the TCM doctors` attitude, they say that “the people who understand you most should be us rather than the one you love or even your parents”.

3. The system holistic thoughts of Traditional Chinese Medicine treatment

Treatment of Traditional Chinese Medicine emphasizes dialectical therapy, by using the systemic regulation to the patients to achieve the purpose of the cure. The reliable diagnosis and evidential treatment for the clinic in TCM is not only by observation, listening, interrogation, and pulse-taking but also take consider of season, climate, one of the 12 two-hour periods of the day, the emotion of the patients and all the other related factors. All the cure power (such as acupuncture, moxibustion, cupping, massage and putting the medicines of TCM under the skin) and medicines of TCM are from nature not from limited human rational power or synthetic chemicals; even most of medicines of TCM are ordinary food in daily life.

According to the description of *Huangdi Neijing* (黄帝内经), the circle of life & nature of China Yi-Tao thoughts is a basis of the organic whole of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Yi follows the law of heaven and earth, so Yi as holistic thoughts which unite the life view and the world view (the same to unite Tao of Heaven and Tao of Human.)

Therefore, the treatment of TCM follows the paradigm of nature to recover the patients and let them in harmony with nature again. By the same token TCM takes everything into consideration under the perfect system of nature and society. The most amazing thing is in the ancient TCM we already have own logotherapy and psychotherapy like nowadays which called “意疗法”. TCM believe that people have seven emotions: happy, anger, yearn, worried, sad, fear and surprised which may cause mental disease when these emotions cross their reasonable line. TCM use “意疗法” and TCM medicine to cure the patients from past to present.

So the treatment of TCM is all-encompassing, it is full of valuable thoughts which we should learn it and carry forward it.

4. The system holistic thoughts of Traditional Chinese Medicine on “after healing”

TCM and traditional Chinese philosophy believe that the best mode is “use natural rules to match nature, use natural rules of bird to feed bird (以天合天，以鸟养鸟)” (quote from <*Zhuang zi*>), and this mode is suitable for human beings. We should treat people with their own inherent characters and wish them to be themselves in a totally free As we know, the precaution, diagnosis and treatment of TCM are pure natural paradigm, at the same time its methods, techniques and medicines are from nature, without any synthetic stuff can give patients a natural new life style which can cure illness naturally and unconsciously. The treatment of TCM intervene patients` life and form them healthy eating and lifestyle habits, in addition, it can influence the patients` outlook on values and life

and make them get into a peace state which can be harmony with the universe. The “after healing” of TCM is not like Western Medicine’s same process which is directed on acquiring patients` physical data and no matter of disease resurgence they need humanistic care. Why? Because TCM use natural ways to make patients back in the embrace of nature, once the doctors of TCM made it, there is no need to care about the possibilities of relapse, sequelae and side effect and so on.

Conclusion: What is the real meaning of thorough holistic system of TCM?

According to the methods and ideas of precaution, diagnosis, treatment and “after healing”, we can see that TCM is a thorough holistic system. Certainly, TCM is not as quickly as Western Medicine at some emergency situations, but the reasons for this is not because of the idea of TCM, it is because of lacking of technique of TCM (As I know, the technique of TCM hasn’t get a big progress for a long time) and the backward Chinese science in past days. But I believe that the idea of TCM has its own profound value like the idea of Western Medicine, the fight between the TCM and Western Medicine is stupid and meaningless. The only value itself perhaps is we can see more clearly the advantages and disadvantages of TCM and Western Medicine.

I believe that real meaning of thorough holistic system of TCM is TCM and Western Medicine should complement each other and do pretty good things to people`s health together. So we should advocate the concept of Modern Medicine which can integrate TCM and Western Medicine and avoid their disadvantages to provide human beings a healthier and happier life in future. That is real meaning of holistic thought and thorough holistic system of TCM.

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