

Book Reviews

Yamamoto New Scalp Acupuncture: Principles and Practice

By Richard A. Feely

Thieme, 2011

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This book systematically described the Yamamoto New Scalp Acupuncture (YNSA) from fundamental theory, diagnosis methods, and treatment principles to case reports of clinical application.

For most of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioners, Yamamoto New Scalp Acupuncture is not a familiar acupuncture modality, although we probably know conventional Chinese scalp acupuncture and utilise it in our daily clinical work. YNSA however is a unique scalp acupuncture system which is very different from TCM and the classical acupuncture system, both theoretically and practically.

YNSA was discovered and developed during the 1970s by Toshikatsu Yamamoto, MD and PhD, of Japan. Previously published in 2003 was a book entitled 'Yamamoto New Scalp Acupuncture: YNSA' by Toshikatsu Yamamoto and Helene Yamamoto. In this previous book, the YNSA was introduced from basic concepts to practical procedures. This new book by Richard A Feely combines both Dr Yamamoto's pioneering work and the author's diagnostic and treatment points identified in his YNSA practice.

Traditional Chinese acupuncture is based on the systematic theories of TCM including Yin-Yang, Zangfu, Qi-blood-body fluids substances, and especially the channel and point theory. Treatment is applied following TCM-style diagnosis. YNSA is a scalp acupuncture system

very different from conventional Chinese scalp acupuncture, especially regarding point location, diagnosis, or treatment applications.

YNSA is an acupuncture microsystem, like conventional Chinese scalp acupuncture and auricular acupuncture. It uses a somatic representation on the scalp to reflect the different parts of the whole body and internal organs. Its treatment approach is to insert an acupuncture needle in a scalp acupuncture point. The scalp acupuncture points are classified as mainly the Basic points and Ypsilon points (to be explained later). The treatment is based on the unique neck palpation diagnosis and abdominal palpation diagnosis, although clinical history and sometimes pulse diagnosis are also used. YNSA is mainly used to treat musculoskeletal and neurological pain, as well as some other disorders.

Compared with the previous book on YNSA, this book tries to integrate YNSA with TCM. The author gives a brief introduction of fundamental TCM theories, including Yin-Yang, Wu Xing, Qi-blood-spirit, diagnostic principles, and acupuncture channel theory. The author also tries to explain the mechanisms of how traditional acupuncture and YNSA by referring to scientific physiological research evidence. Obviously YNSA is not based on TCM theory, and it would be a difficult and complicated task to formulate YNSA into TCM.

The most valuable part of this book, I believe, is that it presents the details in

YNSA diagnosis and treatment. YNSA uses unique diagnostic methods, i.e. neck diagnosis and abdominal diagnosis. The neck diagnosis is a palpatory examination of the neck soft tissue structure to identify which Basic points and Ypsilon points are to be selected for treatment. YNSA abdominal diagnosis also involves the palpation of different abdominal areas to help determine which Ypsilon points to use. A detailed description of the procedure, purpose, and methods for neck diagnosis and abdominal diagnosis are presented. As these methods are very different from TCM diagnosis, I feel that a lot of effort is needed to understand and master YNSA diagnostic methods.

Another core aspect of YNSA is point classification and location because diagnosis and treatment are ultimately to identify which point to be treated. YNSA points are classified as Basic points and Ypsilon points. The Basic points are the scalp points most frequently used to treat pain in an anatomical area, or disease and dysfunction associated with particular body part. There are 23 points in each Yin and Yang area (anterior and posterior half of the scalp). The point location, anatomical correlate, needling technique, and clinical use are described for each of the points. Ypsilon points are named after the 12 major channels and are located on the temporal region of the head which is divided into the four quadrants each side. There are 12 Ypsilon points representing 12 TCM channels. Ypsilon points are used to treat pain or other symptoms after treating with the Basic points.

This book tends to focus on the practical aspects. Treatment protocols and needling techniques (needling insertion and needling manipulation) are presented. YNSA indications, contraindications and possible side effects are also described. Practice guidelines summarise the step by step procedures in clinical application of YNSA. A list of anatomical sites and common disorders are also listed with the corresponding Basic points and Ypsilon points for clinical reference. Furthermore, 18 case reports are presented and most of them are commonly seen clinical conditions such as migraine headaches, herniated lunbar disk, and sciatica.

The YNSA system, especially the diagnostic points in the neck and abdomen, and the treatment points (Basic points and Ypsilon points) were discovered by Dr Yamamoto using trial and error during clinical practice. I was really amazed by the fact that one practitioner could develop such a unique acupuncture system through his practice. As mentioned by the author, finding the Basic and Ypsilon points is difficult at first. This skill, as well as YNSA needling techniques, is best learned one-on-one with an expert instructor. The companion DVD included with this book is helpful for learning, modeling, and practising.

As a practitioner of TCM acupuncture, I believe the theory and techniques presented in this book will expand our theoretical base and permit a wider perspective in clinical practice. The combination of TCM theory, scalp acupuncture which is taught in most acupuncture educational institutes, and the YNSA, will surely improve our clinical results and benefit the patients. For those who want to further expand their knowledge and upgrade their scalp acupuncture technique, this book is highly recommended.

Reviewed by Yun-Fei Lu

Ear Acupuncture: A Precise Pocket Atlas Based on the Works of Nogier/Bahr

By Beate Strittmatter
Thieme, 2011.
ISBN 9783131319623

Although titled a pocket atlas the second English edition of Ear Acupuncture is 424 pages and is a useful and comprehensive source of auricular points and their location. Ear acupuncture is increasing practised around the world, and this text will be useful to those new to this application, as well as the more experienced acupuncturist.

The content of the book is based on the teachings of Paul Nogier and Frank R. Bahr, MD. The second English edition consists of nine chapters. Chapter 2 describes the Projection of the Locomotor System which establishes the foundation for understanding the auricular map. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 provide an overview of the Internal Organs, head and nervous system, and their location on the auricular surface. Each structure is spaciouly laid out with text describing the location, a facing page with a diagrammatical presentation

of the ear and illustration of the location of the relevant structure. In addition, Chapter 5 relating to the nervous system presents a case for indication of use. The remaining half of the book (Chapters 6 and 7) is dedicated to functional points. The same format as earlier chapters is applied, with the point location clearly described, and a succinct description of the application of each point given. Chapter 8 describes the projection of the body jing-luo channel system onto the ear surface. The value of this application is to enhance treatment when using standard body acupoints. For each channel, a selection of four points were selected and their location described. In the last chapter (Chapter 9), specific disorders are selected and a brief treatment plan for each disorder is presented.

My only minor concern with this book would be with this chapter. Overall Chapter 9, presents a plan of the points

that would be selected for a particular condition, mentioning the side of needling and the use of gold or metal needles. This chapter is too brief and is limited to comments relating to the method of locating a point using electrical resistance/conductance, the only points to be needles are those found to be active, which pain points to be needled with gold needles and what other sites to consider needling with stubborn cases. Given the broad and diverse audience this book attempts to target this chapter is too simplistic or insufficient and readers could have been referred to more appropriate texts.

To conclude, this book is easy to read, well laid out and is a useful and extremely handy resource to have at hand in the clinic.

Reviewed by Caroline Smith

Jing Jin: Acupuncture Treatment of the Muscular System Using the Meridian Sinews

By David Legge
Sydney College Press, 2010
ISBN: 97809577392

Musculoskeletal pain is a prevalent condition that does not respond to pain medications very well. It is also the main reason why two-thirds of patients seek acupuncture treatment. The ability to produce consistent and effective results with acupuncture for those patients is the goal of every acupuncturist.

This 166 page book by David Legge seems to promise that. I have been looking forward to reading the book. A few weeks ago, I saw with my own eyes the great improvement that a patient experienced after being treated with Legge's methods.

In this book, Legge takes us back to the basics of the meridian system, the *Jing Jin*, i.e. the muscular-tendon meridian. This aspect of the meridian system and its clinical implication are rarely discussed in modern acupuncture texts. Through his clinical experience and examination of the *Jing Jin*, Legge integrates his anatomic knowledge of the musculoskeletal system, trigger points and Jing Jin, and proposes a revised version of the system replacing acupuncture points and plain language description of the body with anatomic terms. He then uses this system to give practical guidance on how to diagnose and treat different painful conditions.

For example, according to *Ling Shu*, the foot *Taiyang* (Bladder) *Jing Jin* 'begins in the little toe of the foot, goes up to connect with the ankle bone, then goes diagonally up to connect to the knee. A lower branch follows the lateral side of the foot to connect at the ankle bones, then mounts and follows the heel to connect in the crease of the knee' (p32). After examining the muscles in the region and pathways of other meridians, Legge

decided the pathway described in the first sentence fitted in with the *Jing Jin* of the Gall Bladder meridian but not that of the Bladder; his proposed revision reads that the foot *Taiyang Jing Jin* 'begins over the heads of the metatarsals with the plantar fascia which travels over the sole of the foot to bind on the calcaneus. It travels up over the heel to the Achilles tendon, through its muscles – gastrocnemius, soleus and plantaris, and joining popliteus' (p36).

This revision serves at least two purposes. Firstly, it replaces plain language with anatomical terms, which allows acupuncturists to communicate with other health professions more effectively. Secondly, it rationalises the use of points in the calf and hamstring muscles to treat plantar fasciitis although the pain is in the sole. Such knowledge provides a framework for health professions, such as chiropractors, osteopaths, and physiotherapists, who use trigger points distal to the pain sites without a theoretical system.

For clinicians, this book is practical and full of advice on how to diagnose and treat different painful conditions with acupuncture. The treatment parts include selection of *Ashi*, trigger and classical points; and more importantly have detailed description on needling techniques, duration of needle retention and posture of the patients. The latter is often neglected by many acupuncture texts. I consider this is a trigger-point needling book for acupuncturists.

The proposed pathways give us a fresh look at the *Jing Jin*; but at the same time also challenge our thought and belief systems. Those who love the classics and

the complexity of acupuncture might ask 'What is the consequence of altering the first stem of the Bladder *Jing Jin*? Would it limit the clinical implications? For instance, to treat plantar fasciitis, one could also use the points along the Bladder *Jing Jin* on the lateral aspect of the foot'. Others might say that needling multiple *Ashi* points along the *Jing Jin* seems to be rather rudimentary and neglects the holistic feature of Chinese medicine, such as five element theory and *zangfu* theory.

Are challenges and simplification damaging to acupuncture? Each reader will have their own answer. Legge's proposal here is not based just on his belief, but based on his years of clinical experience and knowledge. Being an osteopath and acupuncturist, Legge is in a unique position to examine the *Jing Jin*. As he states on the back cover of the book, he has attempted to 'make sense of Chinese medicine' for 30 years. The book is a fine example of integration of knowledge.

The only drawback of the book is its illustrations. Not all muscles mentioned are included in the diagrams, making it harder to comprehend the information. Most readers will need an anatomy book beside them to assist the reading.

This is a book that every acupuncturist should have. The methods offered will not cure all patients with musculoskeletal pain, but it will likely improve their conditions significantly. Combining the methods proposed by Legge with the holistic view and practice of Chinese medicine, acupuncturists will see more and more satisfied patients.

Reviewed by Zhen Zheng

The Complete Stems and Branches: Time and Space in Traditional Acupuncture

Roisin Golding
Churchill Livingstone, 2008
ISBN 9780443068690

In *Stems and Branches* Roisin Golding provides a clinically practical 320 page text packed with theory to guide the practitioner of Chinese medicine in applying the study of this neglected field. This is the art of awareness of how qi is influenced by the external environment at a much deeper level than just the weather. The dedicated practitioner, upon studying this easy to read text, and with the aid of the energy calculator disc, may immediately diversify his or her practice of acupuncture by complementing diagnosis and acupuncture treatment with knowledge that was very much a part of the repertoire of physicians of Chinese medicine up until the twentieth century.

Golding brings to us, in the English language in an accessible form, ideas that were very much embedded in the practice of Chinese medicine until the exigencies of modernity saw more emphasis placed on tangible areas of medicine which may be subject to physical verification. This idea is that our bodies and our minds are influenced to a significant degree by our place in the universe. The position and the movement of the moon, the planets and the stars were believed to affect our qi so much that an awareness and understanding of this must influence how we treat our patients. The qi of every person on earth, including both patients and practitioners, is subject to constant change, and never in a fixed state. It is affected by time and space and is in a constant state of motion as we hurtle through space at speed. We are not static or still even if we perceive ourselves to be. We have no choice in the matter. In other words, the time of treatment matters because our position, both temporal and spatial, is subject

to rapid change. Golding provides a reference book to enable practitioners to calculate the best times for treatment acknowledging that each patient will be different in a deeper sense than just their presenting symptoms.

The book is divided into three parts: Time, Space and the *Dao*; Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches; and The Inner Core of Acupuncture. Practical book as it is, Golding has combined her research of the area of study with discussions on her own clinical practice. Rendering the study to be of practical use for the clinician, interspersed throughout the book are relevant case studies.

The first part is an introduction to the genre, combining a discussion of the theory of time and its relation to clinical treatment. Ranging through aspects of time such as day and night, the four seasons and the moon cycles Golding then reflects on the life and death cycle. Significant in this part of the book is a chapter on the relevant calendars including the farmer's calendar and the lunar-solar calendar. Central to this study of Stems and Branches is a longer chapter on Heaven, Earth and Humankind (*Tian, Di, Ren*). Golding shows that this method enables us to more effectively treat mental and emotional disorders. The reasoning behind this is that time and space and our relationship with the universe influences our emotional and psychological state. Part two, Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches (*Tian Gan Zhi Di*) is a detailed discussion of how it all works. This can be summarised by this quote from the *Su Wen*:

The celestial stems and the terrestrial branches should be established first...

and then the change (in climates) may be identified. Consequently, the way of Heaven may become visible, the energy of the people may be regulated, yin and yang may become intelligible, with the result that the whole theory will become something close to us.

With the liberal inclusion of charts we see how the stems and branches work in acupuncture treatment. If one is so inclined, you may also make use of the exercises provided in implementation of the stems and branches system.

The final part of the book, the Inner Core of Acupuncture, is essentially an examination of the relationship between astronomy and Chinese medicine. This part will appeal to those interested in understanding the underlying theory of stems and branches. Golding argues that 'for those who want to...unravel several of the mysterious and frankly esoteric passages in the *Nei Jing*, an understanding of astronomy is essential'. Golding complements her discussion on astronomy with a look at psychological profiles and how consideration of the emotional state of a patient cannot be divorced from an awareness of stems and branches, or in lay terms, our relationship with the universe in all its leviathan manifestations. The book concludes with chapters on numerology and symbolism, and examines such concepts as the trigrams. Replete with maps and charts, a further quote from the *Su Wen* shows that this is the source of inspiration for Golding to research and write this book.

A physician should know something about the upper region, which is astronomy, something about the lower

region, which is geography, and should know something about the middle region, which is human affairs; and it is only with such knowledge that the physician will be able to make medical theory long lasting to teach it to the people...

How many of us can claim to have such knowledge? Whether one is attracted to this book depends on whether one believes that this quote from the *Su Wen* is applicable in the twenty first century. Golding argues passionately that it is as applicable as it ever was. Arguably, the *Nei Jing* was the most influential single text in shaping not only Chinese medical thought but also Chinese cosmological thinking and doing the most to shape how Chinese people understood the world. If we concur, it behooves us to study the area in question. Golding is reminding us of the value of such considerations and their very practical nature. Difficult as it is to validate in Evidence Based Medicine systems and even harder to standardise, stems and branches often gets ignored and considered as being in the too difficult basket.

An advantage of this work is that Golding is herself a busy practitioner running a clinic in London, UK. She speaks from experience and not from simply transcribing various textbooks from China. With an obvious love of the Chinese medical classics Golding urges us to consider a return to values and conceptual treatment approaches central to physicians in China prior to modernity. Other authors have written about Stems and Branches but I believe this text to be of interest as it features a deep reverence for the classics from a practitioner in the field combined with a more esoteric discussion on astronomy. This makes the book unique.

This book is worth reading for those who wish to get closer to the essential roots of classical acupuncture. Speaking from my own experience, it was my fascination for the kind of material presented in this book that initially attracted me to study Chinese medicine. With all due respect to my teachers, as a new student, I soon lost interest in stems and branches as I found it to be taught superficially and mechanically, absent of any real theoretical explanation, let alone

astronomy. Later, as I delved more into the world of Chinese medical culture, it was reinforced to me time and time again the importance of the above quotes from the *Su Wen*. Even if Stems and Branches receives only superficial attention in modern day courses of education, these ideas are embedded in Chinese, Korean and Japanese cosmological thinking. If one spends any time in these countries one is struck by the constant and obsessive attention to the calendrical cycles and issues of time and space and the stars in general. Indeed, study of the *bazi*, related to astrology, little known by many contemporary physicians, was an every day part of medical culture in East Asia up until the twentieth century.

This should be a book to whet your interest in an area of much fascination and of considerable clinical significance. I look forward to more scholarly work in this area. It can make clinical practice that much richer.

Reviewed by James Flowers