

WHY MOXING **ZHI YIN** CAN CORRECT FETAL MALPOSITION?

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ABSTRACT

Numerous are the medical works, both Eastern and Westerns, which describe the **jiu fa** (moxibustion) technique of the BL67 **zhiyin** point (*reaching yin*) in order to correct a poor presentation of the fetus and thus facilitate normal delivery.

However, they do not develop an explanation of the Chinese medical theoretical basis that leads to such therapeutical decision, nor is it mentioned what *Neijing Suwen Lingshu* teaches us about which is the energy path through which the heat applied to the small toe -BL67- leads to a correction of the fetal position aiming for an eutocic delivery.

This paper, by founding itself on the Chinese Medicine classic thought attempts to clarify the energetic dynamisms that explain the therapeutical choice of applying moxa to the BL67 point in order to correct the fetus malpresentation.

KEY WORDS

Pregnancy, fetus, malposition, moxabustion, **zushaoyin**, **zutaiyang**, **zhiyin**, **chongmai**, **renmai**.

INTRODUCTION

Conception, the first step in gestation carries all the energy and the blood from the whole organism to focus on the maternal womb to nourish the new being. The whole body pulls towards the **yin**, the uterus, whose essential role is to nourish the embryo under **chongmai** and **renmai**¹ direction.

ENERGETIC MOVEMENT

In the beginning, in the conception, **yin** must be very strong to be able to start something, a form

¹ Kespi Jean-Marc *Acupuncture*. Maisonneuve. 1982:217

...The conception of man is a condensation of the vital energy; its condensation is life, its dispersion, death.²

Suwen 6 tells us that for the appearance of the form, the **yin** springs first before anything else sees light, because life operates in the dark and wet, in the earth core, in the mother with her hidden and nutritious matrix.

The initial form with **yin** roots springs in a **yin** environment, **yin** in the **yin** (**shaoyin**) but life pushes and this sprout soon has an offspring who pushes itself upwards, a calling from the sky that pulls from the earth towards its light and heat. It keeps its form and roots, and approaches light and heat, the **yang** in the **yin** (**taiyang**) not forgetting that the sky covers and incubates and this allows the energies to remain in the earth and condensate themselves, and thus since the earth carries and holds the sky up it attracts towards itself, the interchange between both of them can be accomplished.³

The expression **bao zhong** defines, in the human being, a function common to both sexes as a utility which is protective of the original life of each being, this function is linked to kidney and to **mingmen**, and to the uterus and to the core of the protective covers of life as well, a place where it is said that two extraordinary meridians are generated: **chongmai** and **renmai**, and sometimes **dumai** too (*Lingshu 65*). *Suwen 33* teaches that the vital circulations of the uterus depend (**shu**) on the heart and connect (**luo**) with **baozhong**.

The presentation of each one of the three **yang** great meridians is operated from the **yin** meridian already coupled. The first **yin** meridian is determined in relation to the sprout formed in the **yin** and it is **shaoyin**, the kidney meridian that upholds that sprout which is considered by *Suwen 6* as the foundation of everything built in the being, the foundation of life, everything emerges from it. The ideogram **shen** kidney contains the idea of reproduction, of procreation and secondarily of testicle.

From **shaoyin** arises **taiyang** its opposite and complementary, that is to say the carrier of **yang** energies that joins with **shaoyin** to give water element its double **yinyang** dynamism.

As for the omnipresent water, main factor in the origin of life, we can say there are three ways of acting upon liquid: gravity (sliding down along slopes) pressure (*geyser*) and dynamizing heat (in this case: moxa). **Yin y yang** get together at St.30 **Qi Chong** (*impetuous qi*) where **chongmai** connects with the kidney meridian to ascend together towards the thorax, and also from there another branch descends along the inner side of the thigh and leg running down counterstreaming the kidney meridian to the inner malleolus to reach to the sole of the foot where B67 and K1 reunite.

² Zhuang Zi. *Maestro Chuang Tsé*. XXII. Traducción, introducción y notas de Iñaki Preciado Idoeta. Kairós.Barcelons 2007:220

³ Rochat de la Vallée, E. Père Claude Larre. *Suwen. Les 11 premiers traités*. Maisonneuve.éditeur. Moulins lès Metz 1993:205

Chongmai ascends again together with kidney. We can also see that the basic energetic activity of **chongmai** from the moment of fecundation is also multiple and extensive in the gestation of a new being either independently or in contact with other seminal meridians. In the perineum where the ancestral muscle **zongjin** resides, **shaoyin, taiyin, yangming, renmai** and **chongmai** get together. **Daimai** relates with muscles and tendons whose tonicity is commanded by that one from **zongjin**.

We can see the profound interconnection of the energetic network and its intense participation in the turning of the fetus towards eutocity.

*Lingshu 5*⁴ explains to us that the place from where the meridian breath (the function) starts is called root and the place where it arrives to is the knot. And thus **taiyang** roots (begins) in Bladder 67 **zhi yin** and knots (concentrates) in the eye **mingmen gate of the light**.⁵ The BL1 point is called **jingming bright eye**. **Zhiyin** corresponds to the source and **jingming** to the manifestation of the meridian energy.

Zhiyin is **jing** point (well) that is to say it is the point where the energy polarizes, in this case, from **yang** to **yin** and ascends in the meridian.

Lingshu 9 title is **Zhongshi** “The End and the Beginning” highlighting in that way that the circulation never stops, it ends and begins again, endlessly. This is another proof of the Western inaccuracy when naming with correlative numbers the acupuncture points instead of pointing out-knowing the meaning of the names which illustrate functions.

The expression “end and beginning” was also the title of a chapter in a now lost, ancient classic whose text said: “... determining the **yin** and the **yang** concerns to the end and the beginning of the meridians needed to be known in order to be able to tone up and disperse”.⁶ Let’s briefly remember the **zutaiyang** path from the nape: one branch starts from **tian zhu** BL10 (*heaven window* point) descends to the shoulder blades, continues through the back of the body, branches out in the spleen and reunites with **huantiao** GB 30.

It goes on through the external side of thigh and leg and finishes in the small toe (**Zhiyin** BL67) where the **yang** from bladder reaches the **yin** (we are in the foot) of its coupled kidney through a branch that starting from BL67 reaches **yongquan** KI 1 (*spring fountain*). In BL67 it emerges the energetic “function” of **zutaiyang** (BL), metal point generator of water, tonification point of the energy of the Bladder Meridian.

According to the Chinese medical energetic dynamic, the embryo is associated to the ancestral energy and with kidney **zushaoyin** (*Suwen 6*) that sets life in

⁴ *Ling Shu , Pivot Merveilleux*. Traduction & commentaries C. Milsky & Gilles Andrès. Éditions La Tisserande >Paris 2009:49

⁵ This **ming** means light and not command.

⁶ *Ling Shu. Pivot Merveilleux*. Traduction & commentaries . C. Milsky & Gilles Andrès. Éditions La Tisserande Paris 2009:78

motion, in all its aspects, both physical and spiritual. **Zushaoyin** pairs up with **zutaiyang**, bladder meridian.

The fetal malposition is a result of an imbalance of the relationship between kidney (external) and bladder (internal).⁷ Knowing the paths and length of the meridians, towards the interior they successively establish their dependence from the 5 **zang** and towards the exterior they communicate with each one of the 6 **fu**⁸ bowels. (*Ling shu 10*)

But **shaoyin** is not alone; it is accompanied by the extraordinary meridians emanating from kidney and bladder. **Chong mai** *sea of blood* rules the circulation of blood and passes the kidney energy from depth to surface. It transports the ancestral energy departing from kidney and in a common trunk with CV (**yin**) and -GV (**yang**).

Renmai, source of **yin** inside the body, supports all **yin** aspects of female physiology due to the particular way in which the female body uses blood. The first month of pregnancy is called **shi xing**, *beginning of the form*, which **zujueyin** (liver) holds because **jueyin** rules blood and during the first month blood flows with difficulty, the change makes it not longer to flow towards the exterior and so it needs support from **zujueyin**. *Suwen 1* says: when a woman becomes pregnant **renmai** and **chongmai** start something new they have always had the potential to do.

From week 28 and until week 40, the spontaneous rotation of the fetus towards eutocic positions is expected.

Difficulties in the presentation of a fetus for delivery (complete or feet first breech position, face presentation...) originate in an insufficient maternal energy and blood. However, medical papers about moxibustion on BL67 barely, or just do not, describe the mother status, they do not give data on her energetic situation. The fetal malpresentation is the main diagnostic datum the doctors inform of, so that they can confirm the successful therapeutic evidence and statistic.

It is the author opinion that it would be interesting as a clinic verification of the Chinese medical reasoning on this acupuncture therapy, that knowing there are three **yang** meridians descending the energy from the head to the foot and in order to complete the diagnosis, an energy evaluation of the patient was carried out, to verify, for example, if she suffers from cephalgia (BL10 is the upper meeting point of the divergent bladder and kidney meridians) and/or if she has cold feet (palpate pedis pulse) which would indicate a blockage, that is to say the absence of energetic descension in the meridians, specially BL and GB and/or ST too. They are sign-symptoms which would abound in the explanation of the physiopathology of the process, whose

⁷ Wang Wenshi. Hospital Populaire N° 4. **Shenyang**, *Le Mensuel du Médecin Acupuncteur*. Octobre 1980, N° 75:173

⁸ *Ling Shu. Pivot Merveilleux*. Traduction & commentaires C. Milsky & Gilles Andrès. Editions La Tisserande Paris 2009:93

therapeutic correction BL.67 moxar indicates so as to correct the energy flux in the mother and also the position of the fetus.

Neijin Suwen tells us that the moxar heats the cold, tonifies the void, fires up the insufficient energy. Likewise, Chinese medical studies⁹ indicate that moxibustion in BL67 significantly reduces the electrical resistance of the auricular points of “uterus”, “**sanjiao**” and “endocrine”, so it can be deduced that moxar regularizes the “uterus” and “endocrine” functions already recognized by Chinese medicine since moxa stimulates both the suprarenal cortex and the uterus activity. Accordingly, the suprarenal cortex relaunches the uterine activity and increases the fetus movements and therefore its heart rate, all dynamic factors favoring the correction of the non cephalic position.

There is a diversity of techniques in terms of time and frequency of the treatment with moxa at BL67 but whatever the standard used, heating the metal point in bladder meridian leads to a tonification of the phase water represented by the kidney-bladder pair.

*Guanzi 39*¹⁰ deals with the fetus development from the cosmological point of view:

*...a human being is water, when the essence **jing** and the energy **qi** from woman and man get together, water flows between them and assumes a form... In the fifth month of gestation the fetus is fully formed and in the tenth month (lunar) is born.*

It is not referring to the water element (which also participates in the liquids of the organism) but to the large amount of blood present in the human body and to the fact that it flows creating life, similarly to water does on earth, as a sort of intermediary between the formless and that which has form, because water, having no definite form, acquires the shape of whatever contains it and thus, life starts.

The ideogram **shui**, water in Chinese culture shows a current expressed by a **yang** central continuous line, the strength to move forward surrounded by **yin** movable lines that facilitate the perception of the water substance. **Yin** makes **yang** appear in its inner core and contains it and **yang** works the **yin** from inside and makes it fruitful.¹¹

Water is the quintessential image of **yin**, the first of the five elements; water is the kidneys, base of the vital tension and source of life.

⁹ Groupe de Recherche de la province de **Jiang Xi** (RPC) *Exploration cliniques et observations expérimentales de version par moxibustion appliquée aux ponts ZHIYIN V 67*. Le Mensuel du Médecin Acupuncteur Octobre 1980, N2 75:171

¹⁰ Rochat de la Vallée, E. *Pregnancy and Gestation in Chinese Classical Texts*. Monkey Press. London 2007 :10

¹¹ Rochat de la Vallée, E. *Les 101 Notion-Clés de la Médecine Chinoise*. Guy Trédaniel Éditeur. Paris 2009:124

CONCLUSIONS

Both cosmologically and energetically, water is first and primordial, fire does not dominate water, it just heats it up; water is indestructible. The KI-BL pair represents the water phase of the energy movement. From BL67 the breath flow goes to KI **yongquan** (*spring fountain*) wood point of the meridian and here we can see the connection with **jueyin** (liver) mentioned above. Wood is starting phase of the energy flow in the **wuxing** system; the setting in motion of tendons, muscles, vessels depends on it. We know that water is cold (as opposite to blood that heats up the whole body) but regardless of being cold it is alive, it carries fire inside, Hydrogen is an explosive gas bombs are made of. Water, that moves the whole time, contains the **yinyang** double aspect that manifests life, the **yin** and **yang** from the kidneys whose task (fertilize and facilitate the vital impulse from the deep) it represents.

The moxibustion “heats the water” so as it flows through this bladder, kidney, liver circuit (heat dynamizes), the mother’s blood, and its energy gets mobilized as well as the child’s, and this process of physiological energetic reconnection, would explain the fact that the fetal position gets corrected.

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