Abstract

Adapting treatments to patients, the secret and limits of TCM today

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Traditional and natural medicines do not have, like Western drugs, the power to force the body to do something. They rather help it to correct its unbalance, which is a very different purpose. For that, a deep understanding and a good diagnosis are essential, since it is the adequacy of acupuncture points, drugs or advices given to the patient, and not their intrinsic power, that makes their efficiency. This is one of the reasons why natural and traditional medicines are safer than western medicine. But in order to be really effective, and to treat the root of the problems, they have no other choice than to adapt treatments to patients, and not patients to treatments. This is how Chinese medicine has crossed the centuries, treating each patient as if he was the emperor. The problem is that "Integrative Chinese medicine" of today clearly follows the epistemological standards of western medicine, trying to prove the effects of acupuncture through experiences on mice, or testing the same traditional herbal formulas on thousands of patients (and guess what, the result is not very convincing). Another problem is that doctors, pharmacists and patient of today seem to share a common disease, called laziness. All are fond of quick solutions and immediate results. Prescribing, selling or taking the same manufactured or standardized treatment instead of a personalized one, follow the same logic as manufacturing, selling and eating big macs instead of good traditional dishes. Sometimes, instead of researching new solutions, we would be well advised to rediscover old ones, carried by millenary traditions. This is why, on my opinion, the most important task of TCM, contemporary to Hippocrates's medicine, is to remind to people the deep link between health and simplicity, although being simple is a difficult task in the world of today.

Keywords—
Acupuncture, Ethnomedicine, Integrative medicine, Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Professional Biography (100-150 words)

Heir of Dr Leung Kok Yuen's medical family tradition (16th generation), Patrick Shan has been studying, practising and teaching TCM for 40 years. He is the founder of CEDRE (international school of TCM), and HUMANITRAD (international NGO, providing healthcare and acupuncture training in different countries for ethnic minorities and underprivileged populations), both based in France.
Patrick Shan is regularly invited in China to give conferences about TCM; he published numerous papers, as well as one book: "Paroles d'ethnomédecin".



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Any Comments:

Thank you for specifying as soon as possible the possible duration of my lecture, so that I can adapt my speech. Half an hour would be great, including possible questions.