

THE SUBTLE BODY IN EASTERN AND WESTERN TRADITIONS

By Gyorgyi Szabo Ph.D.

I assess the concept of energy in the subtle body and discuss in what ways energy as medicine is represented as a healing entity.

“ Man is what he is by virtue of body, etheric body, soul (astral body), and ego (spirit). He must in health be seen and understood from the aspects of these his members, in disease he must be observed in the disturbance of the equilibrium, and for his healing we must find the remedies that can restore that balance.”

Fundamentals of Therapy,
[Rudolf Steiner 1925]

Steiner’s assertion, so eloquently simple yet profoundly comprehensive, touches base with many of the ideas and developments that have helped inform our present outlook on health and treatment in the West. In this essay I will examine some of the more prevalent of these ideas, along with an in depth look at the more fundamental energy models that originate aspects of an Eastern orientated treatment and diagnosis paradigm. I will look also at how recent scientific research is contributing to the general debate on constructing more effective and relevant treatment modalities for the twenty-first century, and indeed helping formulate the concept of a ‘New Age Body’.

Some of the basic ideas looked at will include:

- Concepts of health and healing in the West
- Models of the Subtle body in the West
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- Energy – Field theory and conceptions
- Energy as medicine in contemporary healing practices

Concepts of health and healing in the West

David Michael Levin draws our attention to the importance of interpretations and images of the body that changed historically and such changes were connected to subsequent historical development of medicine itself. 'A concern for the nature of the body is at the very heart of medicine – consequently, the history of medicine calls for an interpretation that sheds light on the history of the body. Such an interpretation, ideally, would bring out essential correspondences between evolving conceptions of the body and progressive conceptions of disease and healing.' [Levin 1990,p94]

Health, healing and treatments for the sick are influenced by contemporary beliefs. In the ancient world, it was considered natural that man was part of nature and that he interacted with his surroundings. It was also natural for man to believe that nature did not consist solely of physical matter, or that the human body constituted only one dimension. The observation of the universe and the workings of its elements offered a view to man 'as above so below.' Thus the laws of the macrocosm were applied in the human microcosm.

Elliott Dacher tells us that 'one of the most important achievements of Hellenistic Greece was the rise of Aesclepiian medicine, an amalgam of the rudimentary elements of a scientific medicine interwoven with knowledge of the inner healing capacities' [Dacher 2003,p9]. He explains further, that a monotheistic Christian authority separated this union of rational and intuitive knowledge that eventually declined, in part due to the initiatives of Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo. Their ideas led to exploration of the connection between anatomical structure and disease, and the development of mathematical laws provided new means of accounting for and measuring physical events. The Scientific Revolution saw a fundamental transformation in scientific ideas in biology, physics and astrology where new ideas contradicted former ones. As a result, the Scientific Revolution led to the foundation of modern sciences. Old traditions started to fade as objective observation gained increasing influence and progressively took centre stage.

The once sacred body, by the early seventeenth century was considered an intricate machine, 'a matter of interiority, a profane flesh to be seen into and seen through, a presence conceived as if its mechanisms would eventually be transparent for technological knowledge.' [Levin 1990,p95] Rene Descartes' (1596-1650) dualistic, Cartesian philosophy stated that nature worked according to mechanical laws and the God created, complex human body-machine hosted a rational soul. Thus this mind-body dualism allowed man's inner workings to be explained by mechanistic laws. It was left to the doctors to repair the faulty mechanisms of the weak, machinelike body when it malfunctioned and broke down.

J.H. Reyner explains in *Psionic Medicine* that around the sixteen century, the Christian Church began to permit the dissection of human corpses for scientific investigation. The Church recognised how the mind-body dualism reaffirms its own position meaning that the weak body, which temporarily hosts the soul, 'was a suitable subject for study by mere scientists, whereas the study of the mind and soul belonged rightly to the Church. Thus, with the blessing of the Church, the mind-body dualism furthered the way for the establishment of the biomedical model of Medicine.' [Reyner 2001,p47]

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries witnessed Isaac Newton and his colleagues teaching that the universe, including humans, was composed of solid objects, which in turn were made out of fundamental building blocks – atoms. Newtonian laws of motion intended to describe natural phenomenon in an objective way where time and space were absolutes and physical events were strictly causal in nature. Rupert Sheldrake states that a 'new vision of human progress began to develop: a faith in the transformation of the world for the benefit of humanity through progress in science and technology' [Sheldrake 1988]. He argues that this belief was strengthened by developments in science, industry and medicine and thus became a supreme global influence. Sheldrake explains that the 'the mechanical universe that we inherited from the nineteenth-century physics was eternal. It was a vast machine governed by eternal laws' [Sheldrake 1988,p3]. This machine was eternal; it would go on forever, whilst being deterministic and predictable in character. God became an 'unnecessary hypothesis' no longer needed to set the world in motion.

With the advent of science the realm of spirit, which once was central in health and healing, was relegated to religion. The Church took responsibility for looking after the soul and the spirit, entities with qualities that are immeasurable, unobservable, personal and subjective. However, science, on the other hand was rational, impersonal and measurable, and was therefore considered the best choice of tool to determine health, illness and healing.

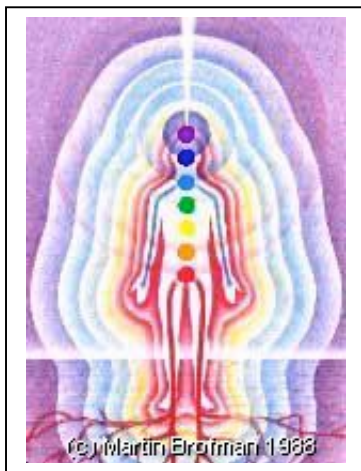
From then on, the pathological sciences attempted to characterize disease, giving rise to various studies in the fields of anatomy, chemistry, pharmacology and so forth. Discoveries such as Pasteur's germ theory (1822), Roentgen's X-ray (1895), the work of the Nobel Prize winners, Pierre and Marie Curie on radioactivity (1903), and Fleming's penicillin mould (1928) are just a few examples of the new sciences registering their mark in the emerging medical paradigm. By the arrival of the twentieth century, these advances in medicine and surgery aimed to control disease in general. Later, drug development, organ transplantation and fibre optic surgery pushed the frontiers of modern medical healing still further. 'The history of modern medicine consists largely of tracking down solid objects that cause disease, although almost all of them dwell in the realm of the invisible, beyond anything the naked eye can perceive.' [Chopra, 1990,p111]

Models of the Subtle Body in the West

Despite the great popularity of science, some spiritualists attempted to bridge matter and spirit to conceive into one unified field. Major pioneers of such movements were Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891) and Henry Steel Scott (1832-1907) founders of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875. Their aim was a profound and disciplined study of the phenomena of nature while hedging the terrain between science and religion. Theosophical teaching represented the convergence of nineteenth century Western occultism, Eastern philosophy, religion, science, and mysticism. They explained man as a spiritual being with seven layers of consciousness, or seven subtle bodies whose core lay at karma - governed reincarnation. Theosophy was mainly

influenced by Eastern philosophies; however, Rudolph Steiner's orientation was predominantly Western and Christian. His Anthroposophical Society described four bodies which constituted the individual: the Physical body, the Etheric body, that acted as an energy double, the Astral body, that was emotional and the Ego with the self consciousness, soul and spirit. 'According to contemporary traditions of Western esotericism and wisdom schools, such as the teachings of Blavatsky, Adyar Theosophy, Steiner, Heindel, and some forms of Spiritualism, after physical death one lives in the subtle bodies until these too drop away and the Soul or Spirit returns to its true home to rest before reincarnating (however the details of the sequences vary)'. [Reyner 2001]

Subtle Bodies



There are many similarities in thought and systems between cultures regarding the subtle body:

Physical body - (the Greek soma and the ancient Egyptian Khat). We know this body best as we express our lives through it, and it is where illness and maladies manifest.

Etheric body – (the Greek psyche and Egyptian Ka). As Ervin Laszlo puts it 'our spiritual shell, could enter a larger wave field and integrate with other shells in that field.' He refers to Alice Bailey who suggested that the word "ether" is a generic term covering the ocean of energy body which are all interrelated and which constitute that one synthetic energy of our planet...the etheric or energy body, therefore, of every human being is an integral part of the etheric body of the planet itself. [Laszlo 2008,p171] This etheric body regulates and organizes the energetic body's mechanisms. It represents a blueprint of the physical body; it assists in maintaining it and therefore the etheric body is the most important from the healing point of view.

Astral body – (Greek Thymos and the Egyptian Ba). Embodies a psychic, emotional body with all passions and drives ‘it is in full activity when we are aroused, excited, frightened or in any way emotionally charged’ [Baggott 1999, p30]. Andy Baggott explains, ‘a clear, green astral body indicates a healthy individual who is in touch with their own emotions while at the same time being aware and considerate of the emotions of others.’ [Baggott 1999, p30] He goes on to say that negative emotions cause disharmony and imbalance in the astral body, which affects the etheric and physical bodies and results in disease.

Mental body - the body of thoughts and intellect, it forms an outer layer around the astral body and is most active when thoughts and intent are pure.

Spiritual body – it represents the higher self that connects one to the cosmos and its vibration can extend to several metres.

Theosophy and Anthroposophy considered a special field of subtle radiation, termed *aura*, wrapping a person or object like the halo of religious art. The aura is regarded as a multi dimensional ‘Human Energy Field, a manifestation of universal energy that is intimately involved with human life. It can be described as a luminous body that surrounds and interpenetrates the physical body’ [Brennan 1987,p41], and hosts different subtle bodies. They contain energies, are represented in different colours and are very unique to each individual. The aura is a multilayered sphere of energy, and ‘each layer is a body; just as real, alive and functioning as is our physical body. Each body exists in a conscious reality that is in some ways like, and in some ways unlike, the physical reality. Each layer is, in a sense, in a world of its own, yet these worlds are interconnecting and exist immersed within the same space in which we experience our physical reality.’ [Brennan, 1987,p137]

Energy healer Dona Eden [1999], through many years of practice experienced that the seven bands of the aura correspond with the seven charkas, though they seem to process energies differently. She believed that as the aura acts like a primary filtering system at the interface between individual and environment, the chakras may further filter out energies the aura has attracted. The aura works like the body’s own atmosphere, attracting,

regulating and maintaining a vital energetic field that both supports and proclaims life.

Jan Smuts's book on *Holism and Evolution* [1926], decades after it was published, helped to give birth to a movement that aimed to encompass mind, body, spirit and environment in accounting for the health of an individual, as opposed to the conventional view of orthodox reductionist medicine. The role of the mind in health and disease became more of a focus than it had been before and emerging public interest in Eastern philosophies contributed to this trend.

Models of the Subtle Body in the East

Many cultures believed that man is more than just a mere physical body conducted and organized by the brain. Some also thought that a kind of spirit, soul or subtle energy existed within the body, which departs at death to a different realm. Dona Eden explains in her book, *Energy Medicine* that the soul is the source of the subtle energies of an individual and these subtle energies give meaning to cells and indeed one's sense of the self. 'If spirit as it is often defined, is the all pervasive, intelligent energy of creation, soul is the manifestation at the personal level.' [Eden 1999,p20]

Ancient Egyptians celebrated life and hoped for a continuation in another kingdom of existence. Their religious practices were designed to keep the body and soul as intact as possible in order to prepare the deceased for this desired goal. From a basic Three-Constituents: body, soul and spirit, a complex system developed that entailed layers of personality, all of which had to be protected. Amongst these were: the cosmic body (Sahu), the energy double of the physical body (Ka), the spirit body (Khu), the spirit double (Ba) etc.

According to Indian Vedantic philosophy, five different sheaths or *koshas* referring to different layers of subjective experience covers the *atman* or Self. Layers extend from dense physical body to the more subtle levels of emotions, mind and spirit. Vedic teachings included the idea that man should discriminate between the *atman* and the *koshas*, which are non-self.

Maitriupanishads explains that 'There are five subtle elements, *tan-matras*, and these are called elements. There are also five gross elements, *maha-bhutas*,

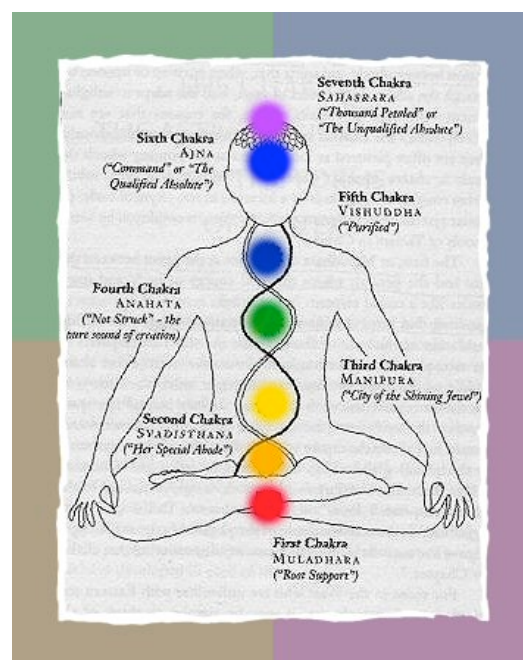
and these are also called elements. The union of these is called the human body. The human soul rules the body; but the immortal spiritual Soul is pure like a drop of water on a lotus leaf'. [Mascaro 1965,p100] The entire universe is a combination of five elements. There are realities within the individual body just as they are within the physical universe. Within the five gross elements *maha-bhutas* - ether, fire, air, water, and earth - there are five forces, which manifest the elements. These forces are the universal causes of everything that is physical, and are called *tanmatras*, a term which signifies the essence of objects.

In general principle within the spiritual traditions of India, China, Tibet and Japan, subtle bodies are described as different levels of manifestations of consciousness that are determined by an immortal spirit, Brahman or Tao. By understanding and mastering the subtlest levels of reality one gains control over the physical realm. This control can be attained through self-knowledge (*atma-jnana*) via diligent practice of the path of yoga. Following various practices of breathing exercises (*pranayama*), one can regulate the vital force in order to reach higher states of consciousness towards immortality and liberation. It was believed in the East that within the subtle bodies existed a series of channels that transported the life-force (prana, ch'i, and ki) to adjoining chakras and acupuncture points.

Both chakra and nadi systems are mentioned in Hindu and Buddhist yogic texts. The chakras are perceived as energy centres or vortices, which penetrate both the physical and subtle bodies. Hungarian holistic healer Maria Sagi PhD explains "Chakras belong to the unseen part of the body, the 'etheric body', or better the bio-energy field that governs and regulates the visible biochemical, bio-molecular and cellular body." Each chakra is associated with particular functions of the body, regulates the organ and the different levels of consciousness. Each chakra has its specific colour scheme, pattern, different spin speed (frequency) and the quality and quantity of the vital energy that flows through these centres, determines health. Chakras are thought to be

able to radiate energies outward and to pull energies in from the environment (including from other human beings) and distribute them within the body.

Tibetan and Hindu texts may differ in interpretation, but seven chakras is the number most often cited and they are positioned from the base of the spine to the top of the head.



Any chakras' condition of balance or imbalance, over or under activity are thought to have an effect upon the physical body. Chakras can be blocked or unblocked. Chakras are linked through a network of channels, or nadis, of which there are three main and thousands of minors. The main nadi, the *sushumna*, is considered the central channel that links the base chakra and the crown chakra and has a balancing function. *Ida* and *pingala* are named as other two main nadis, the former thought of as the moon, and the latter as the sun. They act as polar energy flows but join at the brow chakra and then flow on as a single current.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) refers to vital energy as Ch'i. Catherine L. Albanese in her paper titled *The Subtle Energies of Spirit: Explorations in*

Metaphysical and New Age Spirituality, states that Ch'i 'is at once physical and spiritual or energetic, both body and what makes the body's becoming.' TCM practitioners consider that Ch'i flows in an orderly way through the body via specific pathways referred to by their Chinese names, such as Ren Du or Ren Zhi (*meridians* in Western terminology), affecting vitality and the functions of

the organs. There are twelve main meridians; each is related to a specific organ with a series of acupoints of varying depths. They are also linked together forming a chain of energy flows. The central and governing meridians open directly to the environment and the body's surrounding energies can enter and exit via them. In short, the meridians are the body's *energy bloodstream*. As every meridian feeds a different system in the body, its flow is vital in life. Each of the meridians has its own twenty-four-hour cycle with high and low tides in turn. 'When a yang meridian is at the peak of its cycle, the corresponding yin meridian is at its nadir.' [Eden 1999,p124]

Acupuncture, a medical art that goes back 4,000 years, is designed to unblock the meridians and to balance the flow of Ch'i energy. Ch'i is thought to flow through all living things; it permeates and animates all the cosmos. It is what practitioners seek to raise in Ch'i gong, a disciplined meditation, and to experience in Tai chi ch'uan and various other meditational and martial arts practices. Ch'i works on the body's energy field and through the meridians via the control of the mind to move and regulate the Ch'i in order to improve health and maintain balance and harmony.

There are also other energy systems known that 'lace' through our bodies and resonate between them. They help hold the entire energetic structure together, one such is called the 'Tibetan ring' as it crosses and intertwines the energy pathways. Another such system is referred to as the 'Basic grid', a matrix of energy lines, which are totally contained within the body. It aids the body in withstanding traumas or illnesses. Chinese sages detected 'strange energy flows' which pulse through organisms not using the beaten path of the meridians. It is thought that an individual, via a self-administered acupressure system called Jin Shin Do can access these flows. The 'primary action of the strange flows is to communicate and coordinate, the meridians

added the function of transporting specific energies to targeted areas, which allowed for the development of more specialized organs.' [Eden 1999,244]

In Eastern medicine it was believed that illness appears in the energies before it manifests in physical symptoms. Meridians may run backward, chakras might be pulled too tightly around the organs, the auric field may be collapsed or have holes that create sensitivities. As Dona Eden observes, all of these are symptomatic of existent physical problems, or, perhaps more telling, problems to come.

Energy – Field Theory and Conceptions

'Einstein showed through physics what the sages taught for thousands of years: everything in our material world – animate and inanimate – is made of energy, and everything radiates energy...He concluded that the continuous unfolding and dynamic nature of the universe could only be understood as the work of a higher guiding intelligence of another dimension.' [Collinge 1998,p2]

Life is not a mere accident and the universe is not a lifeless, soul-less congregation of matter but rather it resembles a living organism, explains Prof Ervin Laszlo. In his view, 'Matter, life and mind are consistent elements within an overall process of great complexity yet coherent and harmonious design. Space and time are united as the dynamic background of the universe. Matter is vanishing as a fundamental feature of reality, retreating before energy, and continuous fields are replacing discrete particles as the basic elements of an energy-bathed and information-filled universe. The reality we call universe is a seamless whole, evolving over eons of cosmic time and producing conditions where life, and then mind and consciousness, can emerge'. [Laszlo 2008,p52]

Barbara Ann Brennan, in *Hands of Light* suggests that modern science acknowledges that the human organism is not solely a mere physical structure composed of molecules, but like everything else around us, is also

made up of energy fields. Cutting edge scientific research appears to be paving the way for a departure from a world of solid static form towards a world of dynamic interacting, informing energy fields. 'Thus, the concept of a universe filled with fields that create forces that interact with each other was born. Finally, there was a scientific framework with which we could begin to explain our ability to affect each other at a distance through means other than speech and sight.' [Brennan, 1987,p23]

Laszlo observes that the great interest in natural healing and other types of non-conventional medicine at the beginning of the twenty-first century has 'contributed to the revival of interest in biological fields. Termed energy or information medicine, the increasingly widespread alternative forms of healing suggest that the electric and magnetic fields generated by tissues and organs, and altered by pathologies, are useful indicators of the body's condition and serve for purposes of diagnosis as well as of healing. These fields appear to be essential elements in the communication of cells within the organism, and of the organism with its environment.' [Laszlo 2003,p46]

Rupert Sheldrake asked the question 'what exactly are fields? Maxwell thought of them as modifications of subtle medium, aether.' [Sheldrake 1988,p31] Sheldrake postulated that 'fields are non-material regions of influence. The earth's gravitational field, for example is all around us. We cannot see it – it is not a material object; but it is nevertheless real.' These fields act as the medium of "action at a distance" and through them objects can affect each other even though they are not in material contact. Fields are mysterious in nature and this must have been a contributing factor in scientists and philosophers attempting to bring all kinds of fields under one umbrella – a single unified field. In Sheldrake's view fields are more fundamental than matter as they cannot be explained in terms of matter; 'rather, matter is explained in terms of energy within fields.' [1988, p99]

Sheldrake states that 'life and conscious process make matter, and not the other way around'. In his book *A New Science of Life*, he proposed that there are invisible organizing fields he called the Morphic Fields. He believes that these fields organize not just living things but molecules and crystals.

Morphic resonance transfers information and influence across space and time. Thus living things and beings are continually interconnected.

Theosophy also refers to the Akashic Records as a field of information of everything that has ever occurred since time began. Akasha means ether in Sanskrit or the all-pervasive space. Theosophists believe that a vibrational record exists on the astral plane of every sound, light, thought and action. Ervin Laszlo has written, 'generations upon generations of humans leave their holographic traces in the A-field. The individual holograms integrate in a superhologram, which is the encompassing hologram of a tribe, community or culture. The collective holograms interface and integrate in turn with the super-superhologram of all people. This is the collective in-formation pool of humankind.' [Laszlo 2008,p124]

In her book 'The Field', Lynn McTaggart has summarized the ideas of a group of scientists who have postulated that the Zero Point Field (ZPF) is like a heaving sea of energy, 'one vast quantum field' where everything is connected to everything else like some invisible web. These scientists also discovered that we are made of the same basic material. On our most fundamental level, living beings, are packets of quantum energy constantly exchanging information with this inexhaustible energy sea....Information about all aspects of life, from cellular communication to vast array of controls of DNA, was relayed through an information exchange on the quantum level.' [Taggart 2001,Prologue]

Field scientists have postulated that the body is able to exchange information with the ZPF suggesting a capacity for knowledge much deeper than we have thought before. Karl Pribram hypothesized that our memory is a coherent emission of signals from the ZPF. Taggart's overview indicates that the ZPF experiments 'had helped to validate alternative medicine, which has been shown to work empirically but has never been understood. If we could finally work out the science of medicine that treats human energy levels and the exact nature of the 'energy' that was being treated, the possibilities for improved health were unimaginable.' [Taggart 2001,p295]

Dean Radin has shown that across all cultures people report 'psychic' or psi experiences suggesting a profound, invisible interconnection among humans and objects that disregards the boundaries of time and space. Dr Maria Sagi explains in her work *Holistic Diagnostics at the Third Level* that she integrated Prof Ervin Laszlo's psi field theory into her own healing practices. The theory is based upon the concept that every living organism possesses information stored in the psi field; in much the same way that DNA houses physiological information. 'The information set in the psi field stores all information associated with the organism. The brain is in permanent contact with this information whether or not we are aware of it.' [Sagi 1999]

"The notions of united field put forth by Capra, Bohm, Sheldrake and Laszlo take into due consideration the phenomenon called Vitality in earlier culture. Thanks to the new physics, certain physical components of the psi field can already be described. We want to stress that it is an information field which permanently 'in-forms', i.e. shapes and maintains the living bioenergetic field." [Op.cit.1999]

However, in the worldview of many philosophies, *Vital Principe* is considered a central tenet in healing. As we have seen, the Chinese know it as Chi and the Indian yogins as Prana. Paracelsus called it Munia, Rudolph Steiner the Etheric Body and others the Bio Field. This form of energy is considered to permeate all living things and is an integral part of life. This information field it is now believed may assist the development, growth and repair of the body. This Bio Field is thought to act as a basic blueprint for all life and every organism has one. The logic concludes that when this life force disappears physical death is consequential. 'The field is the force, rather than germs or genes, that finally determines whether we are healthy or ill, the force which must be tapped in order to heal. We are attached and engaged, indivisible from our world, and our only fundamental truth is our relationship with it. "The field", as Einstein once succinctly put it, "is the only reality".' [Taggart 2001, Prologue.]

Dr K Scott-Mumby, author of *Virtual Medicine* states, 'the newest concept in biology is the *information field*.' He explains that every thing in life is ultimately energy and information and so, in a sense, human survives – not physically, as some kind of field. As Nobel Laureate Carlo Rubbia stated

'matter is less than a billionth part of the manifest cosmos. The rest is pure energy phenomena of interaction, information fields and resonance.' [Scott-Mumby, 1999,p4] Dr K Scott-Mumby concludes that disease needs to be redefined as a disruption or distortion emerging in the energy and information fields. Hence the best way to cure the ill is to restore the harmony and correct the disturbance.

The last few decades of the twentieth century have seen an increasing number of research projects measuring energy fields that have been observed and sensed for millennia but have not been scientifically proven, investigated or explained. Scientists can easily measure electrical currents in the heart – ECG, in the brain – EEG and a special device SQUID (superconducting quantum interference device) can detect electromagnetic fields around the body [Brennan, 1987]. 'There are devices that are sensitive at least to the denser electromagnetic counterpart of subtle energies. Changes measured in the ion flow or light emissions emanating from the chakras and meridians correspond with the energetic shifts that follow meditation, acupuncture, qi gong, and other energy healing treatments.' [Motoyama, 1998] As Dean Radin explains the eventual scientific acceptance of psychic phenomena would seem inevitable. They 'present a profound challenge to many aspects of science, philosophy and religion. These challenges will nudge scientists to reconsider basic assumptions about space, time, mind and matter'. [Radin 1997,p8]

Energy as medicine in contemporary healing practices

All energy-healing practices share the same aim, to harmonise the total being and to treat any imbalances, and thus to relieve symptoms of illness. They aim to look at the patient in a wider context, as a life form, and approach the physical disturbance by subtle ways of treating the subtle bodies, reintegrating the patient from an experienced degree of separation from their true place as part of the universe. 'In energy medicine, energy is the medicine. And in energy medicine, this medicine *is applied* to the body's energies. Energy heals, and energy systems are healed.' [Eden 1999,p2]

Whether Reiki, Yoga practices, Tai chi, Chi gong, Herbalism, Ayurvedic medicine, Crystal healing, Flower remedies, Light, Sound and Colour therapies, all share a common denominator, energy, as a particular resonance or vibration to effect the meridians, chakras, and consequently the subtle bodies, thus directly affecting the physical body, they all help in a return to perfect alignment and help to fulfil one's true health potential. 'Therapists who work with colour, light and sound recognise that inharmonious and discordant vibrations can cause illness. They seek to use the harmonious

vibrations of colour, light or sound to restore the balance within their patient.' [Baggott 1999,p178]

Medical practices have progressed tremendously since humans started to observe the heavens for answers. Early modern medicine understood the body empirically by reducing it to a mechanism separated from the surrounding world. However, late modern medicine has begun to restore the body to the larger world-order viewing it as a 'self-regulatory system whose functioning is dependent on, and inseparable from, the larger world and that consequently can exist only in continuous, psychologically mediated interaction with a complex field of social, cultural, historical and environmental conditions. Working with this model of the body, late modern medicine has increasingly recognised diseases as meaningful epidemiological processes belonging to distinctive life-work "economies"'. [Levin, 1990,p98]

In the West we are experiencing dramatic changes in orthodox medicine and healing. People are showing more interest and respect towards holistic healing and energy medicine in order to find alternatives to allopathic treatments via which maladies can be eliminated and prevented. There are a growing number of new researches looking at exactly how emotions and thoughts affect the body our 'energy fields, which in turn affect our bodies and our health' [Brennan, 1987,p10]. Results can point comprehensively towards a picture that depicts a system, which incorporates a mind-body-soul trinity.

Medical anthropologist Marilyn Schlitz attempts to find an answer for the profound question as to what will become of health care in the twenty-first century. She reasons that contemporary biomedicine and systems that direct its progress are in an era of exceptional change. 'But change toward what? Among many health professionals, researchers, and patients, there is a growing conviction that we urgently need a new system that is grounded in healing, a more sophisticated model than the current one that often forcibly fits standard allopathic medicine and alternative therapies under one roof, with integration largely left to the patients rather than the practitioners.' [Schlitz 2005] She argues that this model is *integral medicine* that incorporates all aspects of healing, from physical to spiritual and ecological to cosmological.

Integral medicine requires *integral thinking* whose fundamental principle is the unity of all things: the universe is a whole and human beings are an integral part of it. Integral thinking depicts a dynamic integration of the scientific methods of the West, and the non-dual, self-analytical disciplines of the East.

Man has been opening new doors at a rapid speed towards a new and more informed understanding of humanity, cosmos and beyond. Revelations from continuing discoveries about energy and its 'in-formation' may well be the starting portals to a new chapter in humanity's history book. 'In the seventeenth century Newton's classical mechanics gave us the mechanistic universe, with independent mass points externally connected by deterministic causal relations. In the twentieth century Einstein's general relativity gave us the relativistically interlinked universe, where all things are connected by signals propagating across the geometric structure of space-time. In the twenty-first century integral quantum science will give us the coherent universe, where all things are intrinsically connected by subtle yet effective in-formation conveyed by a fundamental virtual-energy field at the heart of a possibly infinite metaverse. [Laszlo 2003,p101]

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