



SAR & CAMM 2014 International Symposium on Acupuncture Research: Impact of Acupuncture Research on 21st Century Global Healthcare, Beijing, China

By Cynthia Easter, MSAc

Cynthia Easter received an MSAc from the National University of Health Sciences in 2014. With Francis Yurasek, PhD (China), MSOM, LAc, she co-presented a poster at the 2014 Society for Acupuncture Research & China Association for Acupuncture Moxibustion Symposium in Beijing, China. She has participated as a reference assistant and editor for several publications.

The Society for Acupuncture Research (SAR) co-hosted its first SAR conference to be held outside the United States in conjunction with the China Association of Acupuncture and Moxibustion in Beijing, China, May 30-June 1, 2014. This international forum was designed to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration among researchers, clinicians, and policy makers. With more than 300 research abstract submissions from 19 countries, the program covered a broad array of topics featuring basic, clinical, translational, qualitative and quantitative research.

The goals for the conference included "promotion of patient-centered comparative effectiveness research, improvement of acupuncture efficacy by encouraging integrative research, and expansion of acupuncture research to a greater breadth of diseases/conditions. Ultimately, better research quality will lead to a better understanding of the role of acupuncture and moxibustion in improving human health in the 21st century."¹

Given the responses of the more than 200 professionals in attendance, the goals were not only met but exceeded the loftiest of expectations. Opportunities to mix and mingle throughout the three days of the conference afforded new contacts to be made as well as old acquaintances to be renewed.

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Group photo of conference attendees

Conference Overview

Opening Ceremony:

Professor Bao-yan Liu, MD, President, CAAM [China]

Professor Vitaly Napadow, PhD, LAc, Co-President, SAR [USA]

Professor Li-xing Lao, PhD, MB, Chair [China]

Richard Harris, PhD, Co-President, SAR [USA]

Keynote Speakers:

1. Claudia Witt, MD, MBA [Switzerland]: **"Comparative Effectiveness Research"**
2. Bao-yan Liu, MD [China]: **"Technique and Platform of Clinical Research in the Real World"**
3. Vitaly Napadow, PhD, MB [USA]: **"Neuroimaging Correlates of Acupuncture: What do we know? What lies ahead?"**
4. Hugh MacPherson, PhD, LAc [UK]: **"Acupuncture for Chronic Pain: Compelling Evidence from Innovative Meta-Analyses"**

Symposium Speakers:

Claudia Witt, MD, MBA [Switzerland]; Hugh MacPherson, PhD, LAc [UK]; Richard Hammerschlag, PhD [USA]: **"New Directions in Pragmatic Trials of Acupuncture"**

Ryan Milley, MAcOM, LAc [USA]; Robert Davis, MS, LAc [USA]; Jiang-Ti Kong, MD [USA]: **"Exploring the Diversity of Acupuncture: Lessons Learned from Research on Manual vs. Electrical Stimulation"**

Elisabet Stener-Victorin, RPT, PhD [Sweden]; Remy Coeytaux, MD, PhD, [USA]; Xiao-ke Wu, PhD, MD [China]: **"Acupuncture Research for Women's Health"**

Richard Harris, PhD [USA]; Li-xing Lao, PhD, MB [Hong Kong]; Xiao-chun Yu, MD, PhD [Hong Kong]: **"Basic Science of Acupuncture"**

A panel discussion on the conference headline "Impact of Acupuncture Research on 21st Century Global Healthcare" was facilitated by Richard Hammerschlag [USA], Claudia Witt [Switzerland], Ari More [Brazil], Christopher Zaslowski, [Australia], Bai-xiao Zhao [China]. A lively discussion generating from a global perspective concluded that, given the direction of research in the field, a significant impact can be expected to positively affect on the health and well-being of the citizens of the world.

Oral presentations were divided into eight from each of the Basic and Clinical Sciences tracks. The titles and conclusions/recommendations of each study showcased the broad field of research.

Basic Science Track

1. **"Differential cerebral response to somatosensory stimulation of an acupuncture point versus two non-acupuncture points measured with fMRI"**
Conclusion: Results suggest that stimulation of acupoints may modulate somatosensory and saliency processing regions more readily.
2. **"Electro acupuncture shows evidence of regenerative potential in degenerated intervertebral discs in vivo"**
Conclusion: EA increased the level of extracellular matrix in degenerated disc. It is able to keep a dynamic balance between extracellular matrix synthesis and degradation.
3. **"Effects of reinforcing and reducing methods by twirling and rotating the needle for left ventricular damage of spontaneous hypertensive rats"**
Conclusion: Twirling reducing method has an important role in preventing myocardial damage caused by hypertension. The twirling reducing and twirling reinforcing methods (which had no significant similar effect) have different biomedical effects on hypertension.
4. **"Acupuncture effect on motor functional connectivity change in facial palsy: fMRI study"**
Conclusion: Functional neuroplasticity changes of brain regions connectivity with the four regions of interest due to the BP and acupuncture. The resulted regions are related to sensory-motor regions, motor association regions, attention and motor learning.

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Right: Dr. Frank Yurasek with Dr. Linpeng Wang

Far Right: Cynthia Easter with Dr. Frank Yurasek, both poster presenters



"Given the responses of the more than 200 professionals in attendance, the goals were not only met but exceeded the loftiest of expectations."

5. "Specificity of manual acupuncture needling on pain control: What is the difference between BL 60, SP 6 and a non-acupoint?"

Conclusion: Results indicate that the stimulus to acupoints analogous to BL-60 and SP-6 at the lower limb can reduce the pain-associated behavior in mice while the non-acupoint cannot. Findings suggest that there is point specificity not only in reducing the pain behavior, but that there is specificity also in the endogenous pain control system modulated by each acupoint.

6. "A study of the toxicity of moxa smoke following a 12-week occupational exposure in rats"

Conclusion: Moxa smoke has no adverse effects on rats following a three month equivalent to nine times occupational exposure, and there is no significant difference among the control and three moxa smoke groups. Data suggest that moxa smoke that is experienced in a regular moxibustion clinic is safe.

7. "Dissociation of the acupuncture effect of somatosensory needling and needling credibility on low back pain patients using fMRI"

Conclusion: Physical information processing and placebo/analgesic brain area were involved in somatosensory needling effect, while cognitive processing was related to the needling credibility effect.

8. "Evoked pressure pain functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) predicts clinical response to sham but not verum acupuncture in fibromyalgia"

Conclusion: Results suggest that evoked pressure-pain fMRI blood oxygen-level dependent (BOLD) response in pain responsive regions may be a factor in determining subsequent responsiveness to sham acupuncture but not verum acupuncture.

Clinical Research Track

1. "Herb-partitioned moxibustion and acupuncture for the treatment of active Crohn's disease: A randomized controlled trial"

Conclusion: Acupuncture and moxibustion are effective and safe treatment methods for mild to moderate Crohn's disease. In addition to the placebo effect, acupuncture also has significant therapeutic effects.

2. "The effect and safety of deep acupuncture at Tianshu ST-25 for functional constipation: a multi-center randomized controlled trial"

Conclusion: Deep acupuncture at Tianshu for functional constipation can increase the weekly SBMs effectively, improve the constipation-related symptoms, and be safe. These improvements can last for 12 weeks.

3. "TCM diagnosis: Inter-rater reliability and the effects of normalization"

Conclusion and recommendations: Normalization improved inter-rater agreement in pathogenic diagnosis of un-well subjects. Training practitioners removed scoring bias should have some effect, and may therefore significantly improve diagnostic agreement. It is recommended that if further investigations confirm the indications of the preliminary study, a "true score" training program will be employed from the top down in our profession and improve agreement between researchers, teaching staff, practitioners, and students.

4. "A meta-analysis of sham-controlled acupuncture studies: The importance of the dermatomes"

Conclusion: Segmental anatomy offers a neurophysiological explanation of acupuncture's major actions. The findings of this study mark a paradigm change in the theoretical body of acupuncture and consequently for acupuncture research. The meridian theory may no longer be the major guideline for acupuncture research and practice.

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BOOK REVIEW



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Chinese Medicine from the Classics

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The Liver

By Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée

Book Review by Karen Reynolds, LAc, RN

The Clinical Pearls section of this journal presents cases on how to treat the condition known as “frozen shoulder.” Given that the Liver official has the function of invigorating muscles, specifically the sinews, it seems a valuable task to review and deepen our understanding of the title, charge, and functions of the Liver as cited in Chinese classics. *The Liver* was first transcribed in London in 1985 following a seminar presented by the late Father Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée. Released as part of a series of books focusing on the Chinese classics, it has been re-edited and includes the Chinese characters throughout the text.

Father Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée met in Paris in 1969. Father Larre had previously lived for some 20 years in China, Vietnam, and for a short period of time in both Japan and the Philippines. His experiences and studies abroad gave him an invaluable grasp of Chinese mind, which is imperative to understanding acupuncture and Chinese classical medicine theories. In the late 1960s Father Larre gathered a small group of interested intellectuals to delve into an in-depth study of Chinese classical medical texts. Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée was invited to be part of this group, which was initially called the Jade Circle.

Meeting once a week, this fastidious, brilliant gathering of minds labored through the *Huangdi Neijing*, aka the *Inner Classic of the Yellow Emperor*, which includes the books the *Su Wen* and *Ling Shu* as well as the *Yijing*, aka *The Book of Changes*. In 1975 Father Larre and Ms. Rochat decided to begin lecturing about their findings. A year later they founded the European School of Acupuncture. For more than 37 years, they traveled and methodically lectured on the spirit of acupuncture and its classical teachings.

“Father Larre is expert in comparing and contrasting the Western thought construct vs. the Chinese mind.”

They have also established a legacy of accurate translations of the above noted texts into French, English and other western languages. In addition, they have translated the *Nanjing*, the *Shanghanlun*, *Jingue Yaolue* and the *Jiayijing* each into several languages. Our profession owes them a debt of gratitude as *The Liver* is simply one small piece of their vast array of written works.

It often seems that new practitioners more easily grasp the idea of Liver *qi* stagnation as blockage to the free flow of *qi* that is so necessary for the healthy liver. However, what may escape diagnosticians of all levels is the importance of the spirit of liver official divining where and when to stop spreading outward and upward. We know that the healthy movement of Wood (Liver) is always upward and outward, but like a growing tree, that movement is not constant. It is not possible or sustainable for trees to grow every minute of every day. When there is fatigue due to overexertion or a pattern of perpetually pushing the limits, this too can induce pronounced stress for the liver.

Ms. Rochat phrases it well, succinctly stating “...through the spirit of the liver there is the decision and determination of where and when to stop. The hair must be loose, the body relaxed without being too tired because above all, the great function of the liver is to make the *qi* circulate well.” {p.19} The Liver is indeed the grand planner of the great ball; but it is as

important to the Liver that qi reach all the areas of the palace so that the service staff are not falling apart mid-party or the dancers are too fatigued to finish their waltzes.

Father Larre is expert in comparing and contrasting the Western thought construct vs. the Chinese mind. He aptly illustrates the will of life of the Liver official as anger, with a comparison to the tension necessary to "draw a bow." Tension is required to shoot an arrow with a bow. However, this anger is not, as he phrases it, "reproachful." He believes it is the tension necessary for life. There must be some amount of tension for a small flower to push up between cement lines in the sidewalk. It's doubtful the flower is angry about it. It is simply its will to grow where it is, requiring brute force to accomplish the task. I have heard teachers refer to this as the "violence necessary for life." It does not mean hostility or destructive force nor does it mean that individuals who are Wood Causative Factors are angry all the time.

The Liver is well worth reading for the first time and continues to reveal its value upon re-reading. In addition to expanding upon the liver's function of treasuring Blood, this short book includes in-depth discussions about understanding the communications between the *Shen* and *Hun*, the formation Blood, Marrow giving rise to the Liver, and disease processes of the Liver.

As a collection, the Monkey Press books appear deceptively diminutive, but wonderful things indeed come in small packages. Please see their site for more information about the series.

<http://www.monkeypress.net/about-monkey-press>

Karen Reynolds has been a California licensed acupuncturist and herbalist for 15 years as well as a critical care registered nurse for 27 years. Her private practice, located in Mill Valley, California, offers a mixed specialization in both Five Element and traditional and Chinese medicine acupuncture well as conventional medicine lab testing, assessment, and interpretation. Please feel free to contact her at: kreynolds@balancerestored.com.



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Formulas for the Great Retreat

The laws that govern one part of nature, govern all of nature. As fall approaches, not only does the sap withdraw into the plant, but our yin, too, begins to retreat to the interior. If a cold invasion rides with the qi to the interior, it can be locked there until spring, and we can be intermittently sick all winter. Warm the interior and supplement qi from mid-October through the end of November with these formulas:

Five Mushroom Formula (*Wu Gu Fang*) is a powerful and versatile formula. It supports the kidney qi and wei qi, strengthens the lungs and nourishes yin. It is also actively anti-pathogenic against external invasions.

Sheng Mai Formula (*Sheng Mai San*) treats qi and yin deficiency. It is especially important when there are irregularities in the pulse due to weak or damaged qi and yin. **Sheng Mai Formula** helps the lungs to receive qi from heaven.

Essential Yang Formula (*Jia Jian Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan*) employs the strategy of supporting yang by using yin nourishing herbs and then warming the whole formula with yang tonics. In this way it is especially helpful to warm the interior during this time of year, since the yang supplementation is not at the expense of the yin.

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5. “Divergent effect of expectancy on treatment response between real and sham acupuncture”

Conclusion: The relationship between expectancy and treatment response is distinct between real and sham acupuncture. Findings suggest that while higher outcome expectancy predicts treatment response in sham acupuncture, such a predisposition is not associated with the response to electro-acupuncture. Once patients develop a response to real acupuncture, their expectancy rises significantly. These findings have important implications for both acupuncture research and clinical practice.

6. “Randomized clinical trials on acupuncture published in Chinese journals: A systematic literature review”

Conclusion and recommendation: The number of randomized control trials (RCTs) on acupuncture was substantial and increasing in China, and acupuncture was most frequently applied to nervous, musculoskeletal, and connective tissue diseases. However, the methodological quality of the trials is still low. The authors recommend that the reports of future RCTs on acupuncture will be based on CONSORT and STRCTA.

7. “Standardized vs individualized acupuncture for chronic low back pain: A randomized controlled trial”

Conclusion: In this single center trial individualized acupuncture was not superior to standardized acupuncture for patients suffering from chronic pain. As a next step a multi-center non-inferiority study should be performed to investigate whether standardized acupuncture treatment for chronic low back pain might be applicable in a broader usual care setting.

8. “Correlates of symptom response to acupuncture: The case of Gulf War Syndrome (GWI)”

Conclusion: The report focuses on the correlates and predictors of response, including expectations for treatment, baseline symptom severity, confidence and satisfaction with treatment, presence of concomitant symptoms: individualized acupuncture treatments may be an effective therapy for GWI, but as with other conditions, effect sizes may be influenced by subjects' baseline characteristics and constitution.

As with the oral presentations, poster presentations were similarly divided into the Basic Sciences Track, with 134 presented, and the Clinical Research Category, with 170 presentations. In the basic sciences category, posters covered a variety of subjects ranging from studies of specific acupuncture points, auricular therapy, moxibustion, electro-acupuncture to the treatment of obesity with acupoints catgut embedding.

The clinical research group presented a wide scope of studies ranging from integration of a curriculum in medical acupuncture with residency training in family medicine at Dartmouth College to a case study involving bee venom therapy acupuncture in the treatment of agent orange-induced Parkinson's disease.

Conclusion

This symposium set many new precedents inasmuch as it was the first-ever SAR event held outside the United States. It represents a major new benchmark in the collaboration of four premiere organizations in the field: the China Association of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (CAAM) and the Society for Acupuncture Research (SAR) served as co-sponsors along with the World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies (WFAMS) and the Institute of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (IAM). The scope of international representation from 19 countries establishes a new reality of the global impact of the research and practice of acupuncture into the 21st century and beyond.

The Society for Acupuncture Research 2015 Conference, “Reaching across Disciplines to Broaden the Acupuncture Research Network” will be held November 12-13 at the Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. It will be followed on November 14 by a joint conference with the Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO) and the Fascia Research Society (FRS).

Footnote:

1. “Welcome Remarks” by Professor Vitaly Napadow, Co-President, SAR and Professor Liu Bao Yan, President, CAAM

Bowel Movements continued from page 31

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