

## Editorial

### *Acupuncture and Moxibustion: Present and Future*

In this sense, it can be said that these people possess a perspective that is not found in practitioners of orthodox acupuncture that is advocated as a national policy, as it is in China and South Korea. Following the modern institutionalization of acupuncture in China and South Korea in the 1950s to 1960s, United States, Canada, European countries, Nicaragua, Mongolia and Australia institutionalized Acupuncture or Oriental Medicine after 1990s. From this process, diverse methods of acupuncture will also appear.

“Natural acupuncture” is both similar and dissimilar in some respects with these various other styles of acupuncture. In the West, it draws a sharp contrast with acupuncture practiced by physicians of Western medicine. The unique perspective of “natural acupuncture” has been developed by people who recognized the negative aspects of a capitalist economy and were inspired to open up a new horizon.

Over a period of 2000 years, acupuncture evolved under the various influences of the times, and today, yet a new style of acupuncture is taking shape in the West.

What, then, is the situation with Japanese acupuncture? There is no doubt that Japanese acupuncture is backed by a long history and tradition. However, when considering the institutional status and social status of Japanese acupuncture today, it is difficult to say that its present status is built on a proper evaluation of its tradition. Neither can it be said that a framework has been established, that can receive the benefits of the latest science and IT technologies and social systems.

I have stated earlier that acupuncture has evolved under the various influences of the times, but what influences have the “times” had on acupuncture? In The West, acupuncture is a type of alternative medicine that has “newly” appeared, so from the standpoint of Western medicine, the issue lies in how it should be “integrated.” However, from the Japanese standpoint, acupuncture is a medical technique or medicine that has existed on this island country for more than 1,500 years. During the Edo Period, it was actively practiced as a national medicine in the context of Edo culture and civilization. In order for it to serve a certain role in today’s society, be regarded as an institution, and acknowledged in society, it is necessary to clarify and understand what types of modern contexts have had an influence on Japanese acupuncture.

When thinking about the status of Japanese acupuncture in today’s Japanese society, I tend to think that Japanese acupuncture is more than a bit similar to “natural acupuncture” in Western countries.

Hereafter, the further development of acupuncture in the world will likely produce various new variations of acupuncture in each country and bring the uniqueness of Japanese acupuncture into question. What is the uniqueness or the characteristics of Japanese acupuncture? The time has come to firmly communicate this to the world.

At the same time, we must realize that an acceptance of the global diversity of acupuncture must underlie. This means viewing Japanese acupuncture objectively, clarifying the similarities and differences among acupuncture around the world, and accepting the diversity that is revealed in that process. From there, a wealth of new possibilities of acupuncture shall emerge.

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