

## Medical History in Japan

*Todo Yoshimasu and his Medicine (2)*

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In the last issue, I introduced the biography and the medical theory of Todo Yoshimasu who radically changed Japanese Kampo medicine. His theory replaced the pathophysiological parts needing elucidation — which is the most important aspect of TCM — with a black box that quickly spread across the country and has since become the tradition of Japanese Kampo medicine. In this issue, I will introduce how he administered treatment using case reports from his book, “Kenjuroku” (1763).

### CASE 1: Cold Injury (Shang han)

An old man, aged over 90, never believed in medicine, thinking that it was useless. But he came to admire our master's medicine recently, saying to his family members that when he got ill, the only doctor who could be relied on was Yoshimasu. A few years later, he began suffering from exogenous febrile disease. He began to feel malaise and heat in his chest, and to talk in delirium. There was no urination, he lost his appetite for 6 days. His family members asked Yoshimasu to examine him. There were stuffiness in the chest, and his limbs were a little swollen. Yoshimasu made *bukuryoin* to give him. After vomiting much water, the patient was cured.

Since he was 60, he used to wear thick clothes even in summer time. Nevertheless he felt chilly. He thought it was necessary to wear thick clothes because of his age. But after that treatment, the old man was able to wear thin clothes when he was younger. So the case was not due to senility, but disease.

### CASE 2: Dysphasia

A servant to the lord of a clan, 20 years old, was suffering from dysphagia for 2 years. Every 5 or 10 days, it occurred. He came to feel turgor in his chest and abdomen and his physical condition was getting worse. No doctor could cure him. Hearing of Yoshimasu's reputation, he decided to ask his treatment, saying: life and death are decided by destiny. If I have to die, I would like to die by Yoshimasu's treatment. Yoshimasu provided *daihangeto*, which made him vomit. Everytime he vomited, there was sputum. After 8 or 9 days, the medicine began to work, letting the bowels loose, and his vomiting stopped. Within 2 months, he was cured completely.

### CASE 3: Hematemesis

A merchant of Karasuma in Kyoto, Ihei Izumiya was suffering from hematemesis for 20 years. Almost every 10 days, he vomited blood. In autumn of one year he was very sick and almost unable to breathe. No doctor could do anything to cure him. Family members, crying, were preparing his funeral. Yoshimasu happened to come and examine him. The patient was not dead yet, for when our master put a thread in front of his nose, the thread moved, although the merchant was motionless. When Yoshimasu touched his abdomen, it moved a little. Judging that Qi was not dead yet, he made *san'oshashinto* in haste. Then, after taking the medicine, the patient began to have loose his bowels and after 10 times, then stopped. Within 20 days, he was completely cured. Since then, almost 10 years passed, and there was no recurrence.

### CASE 4: Tuberculosis

A daughter of a merchant, Denbei Masuya of Kawara-machi in Kyoto got ill, and all the doctors diagnosed her symptoms as tuberculosis. No

treatment worked. She got thinner day by day, and almost died. From the beginning, the merchant was afraid of the treatment of Koho (ancient prescription in “Shang han lun”). He could not bring himself to Yoshimasu to examine her. Yoshimasu, learning that the merchant did not believe in Yoshimasu's intention, just left them alone. A few months later, this girl died. Two years later, a sister of the girl got ill. The merchant said: “I have 5 children, and 4 among them have died due to tuberculosis. In the year when they turned 17 years old, in spring, they got ill, and in August, they died. Now the youngest girl is 17 years old, and infected with tuberculosis. Although I know the efficacy of Koho, I am afraid that very-strong laxative medicines are used. But prescription of slow-acting and reinforcement could not work for this disease, as far as I remember. So please cure her disease. If she would die, I will not regret it.” Our master examined her. For enervation, dullness in limbs, alternate spells of fever and chills, and cough, he made *shoseiryuto* and *kontangan*, which he used in mixed form. Before August, she was cured completely.

#### CASE 5: Edema

A chief Buddhist monk of the Kosai-Temple in Bungo suffered from swelling of his body. He could not urinate. Stuffiness in his chest made it almost unable to breathe. His feet became very weak. For him, a doctor made *eppikajutsubuto* which did not work at all. Yoshimasu examined him. As there was unconsolidation in the lower abdomen, for which to correspond, he made *hachimijiogan*. With one dosage, the stuffiness in his chest disappeared. With a second dosage, he was able to urinate. With less than ten dosages, he was cured completely.

#### CASE 6: Pain of the heel

A medical student, aged about 20, suffered from pain of the heel. The pain was like being pierced by an awl or the blade of a sword, unbearable to the touch. Many doctors tried but could not cure him. A surgeon thought that there was pus, so he cut out that part. But that was not effective. Yoshimasu was called to see him.

There was a contracture of the abdominal wall. There was no softness felt by his hand on abdominal palpitation. He made *shakuyakukanzoto* to give him. With one dosage, the pains disappeared.

#### CASE 7 : Soliloquy

An ambitious, poor student studied very hard and read a lot of books without sleeping for 7 days. He started to talk to himself in delirium, laughing, rebuking his master. Everybody thought that he had become insane. Yoshimasu examined him. There was swelling in the sternocostal, a fast throbbing of heart and ki went up and could not come down. He made *saikokeishikankyoto* to give this patient, sometimes attacking poison by shien. Within a few days, the student was completely cured.

#### CASE 8 : Eruption on the head

A merchant in Kyoto, Kichigoro Yamatoya, every spring had a fever in his head and face. On his head, he had a sore, which was very itchy. If he scratched it, it became infected. When autumn came, the symptoms disappeared, without any treatment. He wanted to be completely cured though. Yoshimasu examined him. There was slight palpitation, fullness in the chest and hypochondrium, and an abnormal rising of Qi. To correspond to the symptoms he prepared *saikokeishikankyoto* and *kyuosan*<sup>6)</sup>. In a month, all symptoms disappeared. Since then, there was no recurrence.

## CASE 9 : Dumbness and convulsive fit

A soldier of the Yamashiro-yodo clan, named Heizaemon Yamashita met Yoshimasu, and said. "I have a 5 year old boy. He cannot speak, and he has convulsive fits once or twice a day. His body has become very thin, he seems to be very exhausted, and close to death. His agony seems to increase day by day. As his parents, we cannot bear to see him in pain. We would be very much obliged if you could treat him. If fortune favors us, and if we will be able to see him well again, even if it will be only once, we will never regret it." Accepting their wish, Yoshimasu examined the boy. He recognized an abdominal symptom of stuffiness in the gastric region, which was soft when he palpated it. He made *daio'orenshashinto*, which he provided for 100 days. The stuffiness in the gastric region disappeared, and convulsive fits also stopped. Nevertheless, there was still swelling in the sternocostal, fullness in the upper abdomen, and dumbness. He made *shosaikoto*, and together with *san'ogan*, he continued his treatment. Sometimes he provided *deikankyogan* to treat those symptoms. In this way, about 6 months passed. One day, his nurse was leaning against the entrance gate with this child in her arms. Someone passed in front of them, leading a horse. Suddenly the child uttered "uma." Being overjoyed to know this, his parents took the child with them to Yoshimasu to tell him this. And when Yoshimasu showed a piece of sweets to the child, he said "uma" again. (In Japanese, "uma" means "a horse" and "sweet taste." It is a homonym.) The parents were very glad. So he continued with the prescriptions mentioned above. Within a few months, the boy's language ability became normal.

Since the last case is interesting, one that

adorns the first page of "Kenjuroku", I will add some explanation from the standing of Modern TCM. The 5-year-old patient mentioned in the book must now be considered to be about 3 years old when various factors relevant at that time are taken into account. From the modern medical point of view, the diagnosis might be a developmental disorder, although the cause is not known.

Todo, however, administered *daio'orenshashinto*, targeting a "distressed and soft epigastrium." Epigastric distress abated in about 100 days and rib-side distension, and hypochondrium fullness," with occasional use of *daikankyogan*, which achieved the desired effect.

From the present traditional medical point of view, what Todo tried to clear out of the body was primarily "retained phlegm" accumulated in the chest, diaphragm, and epigastrium, and secondarily, retained qi in the epigastrium. There is no way to tell from the foregoing if he was aware of pathological products and pathological phenomena, and if he thought they were toxins or a kind of toxin as he asserted. It is conceivable that, depending on the pathological condition, targeted and accurate administration of the four formulae (*daioorenshashinto*, *shosaikoto*, *san'ogan*, and *daikankyogan*) dispelled physical and non-physical afflictions and improved the flow of qi and body fluids.

This is a brief study of Yoshimasu's methods of treatment, citing from his book Kenju-roku. We can see that his methods of treatment were based on his own medical theory, and at the same time he was a very efficient clinical doctor with keen insight.

Anyway, what he said and what he did put the medical world of that time into great turmoil.

Maintaining his motto of relating symptoms to medication, he denied all theories of traditional medicine. He insisted upon the administration of treatments to expel poison, sometimes using very intense laxatives and mercurial medicine. It will continue to be one of our important themes to know how to grasp the meaning of Yoshimasu, and how to make the most of his ideas and methods of treatment in current medicine.

**Prescription (Japanese, Chinese Character, Pinyin)**

bukuryoin 茯苓飲 Fulingyin  
daihangeto 大半夏湯 Dabanshatang  
san'oshashinto 三黃瀉心湯 Sanhuangxiexintang  
shoseiryuto 小青龍湯 xiaoqinglongtan  
kontangan 滾痰丸  
eppikajutsubuto 越婢加朮附湯  
hachimijiogan 八味地黃丸 Baweidihuanwan  
shakuyakukanzoto 芍藥甘草湯 Shaoyaoganzaotang  
saikokeishikankyoto 柴胡桂枝乾姜湯 Chaihuguizhiganjiantang  
shien 紫円  
kyusan 芎黃散  
daio'renshashinto 大黃黃連瀉心湯 Dahuanhuanglienxiexintang  
daio'orento 大黃黃連湯 Dahuanghuanglientang  
shosaikoto 小柴胡湯 Xiaochaihutang  
san'ogan 三黃丸 Sanhuantang  
daikankyogan 大陷胸丸 Daxianxiongwan