

## Editorial

### *What can the East do for the West and What can the West do for the East in Oriental Medicine*

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Joseph Rudyard Kipling, who became the first Englishman in 1907 to earn the Nobel Prize for Literature (1865-1936), wrote a poem that begins “East is East and West is West, never the twain shall meet.” This phrase has been cited and discussed in cultural and many other areas.

Similarly, Oriental medicine and Western medicine shall never meet. In fact, as in the other real world, both can be reconciled. Then what is the best way for ideal coexistence between them? The answer is to help each other. For this, it is necessary for dialogue to take place between representatives of the nations and regions where Oriental medicine or Western medicine is available and the practitioners. I call on the people concerned to think of “What can the East do for the West and What can the West do for the East in Oriental Medicine.” Through this process, we will be able to create a path toward a new global world.

Oriental medicine, which was originated in ancient China and developed in China and its surrounding countries, is a traditional medicine. TCM in China was a versatile medicine embracing various concepts before the Chinese Revolution. Intrinsically, TCM included and includes a wealth of concepts and these concepts served as the driving force for its development. This is true of Japanese Kampo medicine and traditional Korean medicine in Korea.

Resources of Oriental medicine that the East can provide to the West are varied, ranging widely from knowledge, techniques, medicinal substances, tools, systems, hardware, and software. The East as recipient can freely adopt them.

However, the flow of resources should not be in one direction from the East to the West. The West that received varieties of information will be able to fully understand and reshape it that works for or suits to the West, like the people of Korea, Japan, and Viet Nam have done so for over a thousand years.

In the West, there may be plants similar to Chinese medicinal materials such as American ginseng in North America. Moreover, there may still be a lot of plants left unknown to the East, like the ones that were brought from distant lands of Europe, Persia, and India and came to be used in China.

The day will come when theories, techniques, tools, and medicines introduced into the West from the East develop into new forms in each land and their modifications are brought back to the East from the West.

At the time, Oriental medicine will become a truly global medicine.

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