

## Medical History in Japan

*Historical Significance of the Standardization of Acupoint Locations”, the Second Japanese Acupoint Committee (6) “Detailed Guide to the Location of Acupoints” from the classics to the WHO standardization”, pp411-422, Tokyo, Ishiyaku Publishing, June 2009 (partially revised)*

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### 5. Acupoint charts up to the Tang period and changes in acupoints

Since acupoints are located on the body surface their visualization through illustrations has undoubtedly started from an early point in time. Therefore, the "Ming Tong Illustrations" have probably been drawn around the creation of the original "Ming Tong Jing". Because no directly derived drawings exist, there are no concrete clues, but it can be imagined based on acupoint illustrations up to the Tang period.

The oldest extant text with acupoint charts currently known is the Yellow Emperor's Toad Prohibitions for Moxibustion & Cauterization *Huáng Dì Xiā Má Jing* (Figure 7) and based on the works listed in the Record of the Bibliographic Catalogs of the Sui dynasty it seems likely that the roots have been established in the 3rd century. Not surprisingly, similar to the "Ming Tang", these have been scattered and lost in China and have been preserved and handed down only in Japan. The old manuscripts were discovered during the late Edo period by Mototsugu Taki of the Shogunate Medical School. Figure 7 shows a replica of the Shogunate Medical School's copy and names of acupoints along the hairline or Renying (ST9) can be seen. Moreover, it includes a description that like the imaginary toad and rabbit on the moon moxibustion treatment of some acupoints should be avoided in correlation with the waxing and waning of the moon.



Figure 7 *Huáng Dì Xiā Má Jing*



Figure 8 *Ishinpo*

In the Heian period Yasunori Tamba compiled the text "Ishinpo" based mainly on works from before the Sui and Tang periods and presented this to the emperor in 984. In the 22nd volume are illustrations for each of the 10 months of pregnancy, for each an illustration of a naked pregnant woman, fetus, viscera and bowels, meridians and acupoints. All of which are derived from the Chang Jing. Among these the contents related to the correlation between fetal development and viscera-bowels-meridians originates and has been transmitted from the "Tai Chan Jing" (text on fetuses and birth), placing its origin extremely far into the past. The date of creation of the Chang Jing quoted in the Ishinpo is not clear, but considering the 5<sup>th</sup> century appears to be acceptable and most likely. Figure 8 shows a reproduction of the "National Treasure Seikido Library [12], but the book of the Seikido library is an associated book that has diverged from the Nakarai's national treasure book during the Edo period, so that it cannot definitely be concluded, that the red lines indicating meridians are actually derived from the "Chang Jing".

A text with acupoint charts of the Tang period was unearthed in Dunhuang. Figure 9 shows the Stein Text No. 6168 from The British Library in London and is called the "Illustrated Moxibustion Technique" of the "Moxibustion Scripture". Like the Xia Ma Jing no meridians are drawn and only points not used today like "Shou Suikong" or "Wuzhou" have been marked. Also, the Pelliot text No. 2675 [13], which is in the possession of the La Bibliothèque nationale de France, mentions at the beginning a "First Volume of the New Adorned Scripture of Moxibustion for Acute conditions". In other words, this text was a reproduction of the one volume work "Xinxiu Bei Ji Jiu jing" published by the Li family living a business area in the eastern market of the capital (today called Xi'an). On the backside of the paper the second half of this book describes the location of the "human-spirit" elements correlated to the suitability for treatment as

regulated by the oriental zodiac signs characteristic of the birth year, seasons, months and days, while at the end there is a transcription of the year 861. Thus, this book shows clearly that during the Tang period prior the year 861 textbooks about moxibustion have already been published in Xi'an. At the same time this is also the oldest extant medical book publishing record.



Figure 9 Stein Text No. 6168 (London, The British Library)

On the other hand, paying attention to the hair style shown in Figures 7-9 reveals that although only Figure 8 shows a woman, all are very much alike. The drawing style of the bodies too is strikingly similar. This shows, that until the Tang period the acupoint charts adopted a standardized style. What is more, in Pelliot's text No. 2675 there is a large inscription of "Ming Tang" above the body, revealing that acupoint illustrations have been called "Ming Tang". If that is so, the "Ming Tang Tu" prepared in the third century too was drawn in this style and later presumably followed until the Tang period. Yet, changes occurred in the acupoints. The points "Shou Suikong" or "Wuzhou" shown in Figure 9 are

not found in the "Ming Tang", and in Pelliot's text No. 2675 the point GB21 jianjing (肩井) is called bo jing (膊井), the point TE20 jiaosun (角孫) is recored as yin hui (陰会), the point GV23 shengting (神庭) is called zhu shen (住神) and the point between the eyebrows EX-2 yin tang is called guang ming. During the time following the "Ming Tang" too different names for acupoints and new acupoints appeared and different schools and theories using those names continued to be established.