



The Parallels between Reiki Therapy and the Tangent Paradigms of Traditional Chinese Medicine: Review of Literature

Daniel Chagas de Pontes^{1,2,3*}, Vitor Hugo Auzier Lima^{4,5}, Dhiego Lima Costa^{6,7,8}, Daniele Salgado de Sousa^{9,10}, Rebeson Moraes¹¹ and Matheus Pinheiro¹²

¹Department of Physiotherapy, UNAMA - University of the Amazon, Brazil.

²Department of Physiotherapy Traumatology and Clinical Orthopedics, CBES- Brazilian College of Higher Studies, Brazil.

³Department of Acupuncture, FACEI - Einstein College, Pará, Brazil.

⁴Department of Biotechnology, UFPA - Federal University of Pará, Brazil.

⁵Department of Physiotherapy, UEPA - State University of Pará, Pará, Brazil.

⁶Department of Biology, UFPA - Federal University of Pará, Pará, Brazil.

⁷Department of Pharmacy, UFPA - Federal University of Pará, Pará, Brazil.

⁸Department of Environmental Microbiology, UFPA - Federal University of Pará, Brazil.

⁹Department of Biotechnology, UFPA - Federal University of Pará, Pará, Brazil.

¹⁰Department of Natural Sciences, UFPA - Federal University of Pará, Pará, Brazil.

¹¹Computed Tomography and Magnetic Resonance Imaging, UNAMA - University of the Amazon, Pará, Brazil.

¹²Faculty of Exercise Physiology, CESUPA - Pará State University Center, Brazil.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration with all authors. Author DCP was the majority author of this manuscript, since he carried out the research and wrote in his majority. Author VHALL was the second author and correspondent of the magazine, reviser of this work and updated its references. Author DSS was the third reviewer, translator, and assistant in bibliographical research. Authors DLC, RM, and MP managed the feasibility analyzes of the study, and were scientific advisors, and payers of this article. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This review aims to demonstrate the similarities between Reiki therapy and traditional Chinese medicine, both in relation to its paradigm, ancient history, the concept of energy and philosophical foundations. And in conclusion, it was ratified that there are many idiosyncrasies between Reiki therapy and traditional Chinese medicine, as well as in the physiological foundations of both. This was conceived during the preparation of the monograph of the specialization in Acupuncture of Einstein College - FACEI.

Keywords: Reiki; traditional Chinese medicine; similarities.

1. INTRODUCTION

The paradigm of Reiki therapy is closely linked with the view of traditional Chinese medicine. According to De Carli [1], this model comes from the Greek prefix holo which has the meaning of total, integral, the idea that "The Whole is contained in the One," or that "the parts are in the whole and the whole in the parts".

Analogously, Yamamura [2] tells us that Traditional Chinese Medicine concentrates on the observation of the phenomena of nature and on the study and understanding of the principles that react to the harmony existing in it. In other words, in Chinese conception the Universe and the human being are subject to the same influences, being integral parts of the Universe as a whole.

2. METHODS

The present study is a bibliographical review, with consultation in technical books of Traditional Chinese Medicine, acupuncture, Reiki and holistic (vibrational) therapies, besides monographs and scientific studies in the areas of acupuncture and Reiki.

3. RESULTS

After a thorough survey of the literature, a synthesis of this amalgam of knowledge was performed, for a more didactic elucidation, through the following table and discussion.

Vasconcellos [3] reports that the term paradigm has been widely used to refer to how the human being perceives and acts in the world, for which this time means model or pattern to be followed for the study of phenomena and reality.

That is, a paradigm means something that serves as a benchmark for a science Capra [4].

We understand from the table above that Traditional Chinese Medicine and Reiki therapy are much more in agreement with the holistic paradigm of health than with respect to the biomedical model.

De Carli [5] states that among the various therapeutic cultures in the world, Chinese medicine has an important insight into holism.

It is therefore interesting to emphasise the concept of yin and yang in Traditional Chinese Medicine as the fundamental basis of Asian traditions.

Table 1. Comparison between the biomedical paradigm and the holistic health paradigm

Biometric paradigm	Holistic paradigm of health
Treatment of symptoms.	Search for patterns and causes and more for the treatment of symptoms. Integrated, concerned about the patient as a whole.
Pain and diseases are entirely negative.	Pain and illness are information about conflicts and disharmonies.
Disability is seen as a thing, an entity.	The disease or disability is seen as a process.
Emphasis on eliminating the symptoms of the disease.	Emphasis on achieving maximum well-being, "meta-health".
The patient is dependent.	The patient is autonomous.
The professional is authority.	The professional is a therapeutic partner.

Source: Ferguson [6] & Chia [7]

Table 2. Differences between Reiki therapy and Chinese traditional medicine

Differences between Reiki therapy and Chinese traditional medicine	
Reiki	Traditional chinese medicine
Practice alternative therapy	Complementary character - and not substitutive
Brings together theories of vital energy and universal cosmic fluid	Basic theory of the body's vital energy
Meridians, chackras, branches connected to organs, and external to them.	Channels, called meridians, which would have branches that would connect them to organs
Little researched and documented	Little researched and documented
It's a therapeutic resource, but not a complete and isolated system of treatment	Systematization "of the earliest forms of Oriental medicine
Developed intuitively and by inspiration of his creative monk	Developed empirically
Method created but not evidence-based	From clinical experience
Structure of theoretical foundation based on metaphysics	It is based on a systematic and comprehensive theoretical framework of a philosophical nature
It's based purely on non-negative or positive energy flows	The study of the relation of yin / yang, of the theory of the five elements and of the system of circulation of energy by the meridians of the human body
It's based on the relation of the organism with the universal cosmic fluid	Functioning of the human organism and its interaction with the environment according to the cycles of nature
Purely energy techniques	Uses phytotherapy and other medicines as their last resort to combat health problems.
The cure in this method depends on the channeling and application of energy captured from the creative source of your system	Resources to heal the problems for yourself.
Energy disturbances	Basic aspects to consider in a diagnosis
Has its own diagnostic and treatment system	MTC interacts with Western diagnostic methods
Can be used during illness and in health balance. In the disease is analyzed by the energy of the chackras and meridians.	Clinical: Observed directly in the consultation (face, tongue, wrist)
Without side effects or contraindications	A set of symptoms that refer to disturbance of one of the major organs.

Source: Mota [8] & Baldwin [9]

Capra [10] comments "[...] the concepts of yin and yang are central. The whole universe, natural and social, is in dynamic equilibrium, with all its components oscillating between two archetypal poles [...] the healthy individual and the healthy society are integral parts of a great standardized order, and disease is disharmony at the individual or social level".

This concept confirms one of the topics in Table 1, which describes that according to the holistic paradigm of health, pain and illness are information about conflicts and disharmonies. This can be confirmed by the information in Table 2 above, which shows their differences and similarity in a didactic way:

Also Reiki therapy is more in accordance with the holistic paradigm, since according to De Carli [11] the energy does not act in a linear way, that is, only in the physical body, but it will seek the cause in the imbalance, thus acting in the various dimensions of the human being, as commented

in the introduction, that is, physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or energetic and environmental.

Thus, Reiki therapy confirms at least two principles of the holistic health paradigm, presented in Table 1, which are: the search for patterns and causes, plus the treatment of symptoms, and the principle of Integrated, concerned with the patient as whole, and not just with your physical body. Thus showing a great resemblance between Traditional Chinese Medicine and Reiki therapy.

4. DISCUSSION

Reiki is a word of Japanese origin formed by the union of two ideograms, REI and KI.

The REI symbolizes the idea of Universal, Cosmic energy, the energetic essence that surrounds and interpenetrates all that exists, the spiritual and divine aspect of the energy that manifests itself in creation is the source and flow of all the vital energy of the universe.

KI is the vital energy that flows into all living organisms. It is noteworthy that KI energy has many denominations, for example, Mantak Chia who is a Qi Gong instructor (a Traditional Chinese Medicine technique) defines Qi (the KI equivalent) as "energy" or "life force", showing, since from this concept a similarity between the Reiki therapy and the Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Leal [12] says that Hindus and practitioners of yoga call it PRANA, the mystical Christians of Holy Spirit or Light, the Egyptians of KA, the Kahuna of Polynesia of MANA, the Greeks of PNEUMA, Native American Indians of North America of Great Spirit or ORENDA, in the Hebrew of Kabbalah this energy is called RUACH, the Sufis (Islamic mystics) call BARRACK, the Russian researchers of BIOENERGY or BIOPASMATIC ENERGY.

Some healing agents have called it ENERGY ORGONE or ORGON (for psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich), ANIMAL MAGNETISM (F. Mesmer) and Munia (for the metaphysical physician Paracelsus).

Reiki is, therefore, the process of meeting these two energies, being conceptualized as a method of healing or vibrational therapy through the imposition of hands, where the healer channels the subtle, cosmic energy mentioned above, which is high frequency.

It should be noted that according to Gerber [13] the paradigm of vibrational medicine or Reiki therapy is not Newtonian as Western medicine, but rather Einsteinian and quantum, that is, according to Albert Einstein and its formula $E = M \times C^2$, in which $E = \text{Energy}$, $M = \text{Mass}$ and $C^2 = \text{The speed of light squared}$, it has been scientifically proven that matter and energy are interchangeable and convertible, depending only on the speed of their particle, ie according to scientist and physicist Stephen Hawking, the higher the velocity of a particle, the more it approaches the state of energy and the higher the frequency the higher the energy (quantum).

According to the experiments of nuclear physics, high-energy particles, quarks and anti-quarks when they are united can produce electrons and these make up the atoms that are parts of molecules that produce matter, that way you can transform energy into matter, after the

first condense, or decrease its speed and frequency.

The opposite is also possible, for example, through a process of nuclear fission, it is possible to transform matter (uranium, enriched plutonium) into energy (nuclear explosions) as happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki De Carli [11].

This Inter transformation shows us the similarity or interface between vibrational therapy with Traditional Chinese Medicine, especially with respect to the concept of Yin and Yang.

According to Maciocia [14] this concept is probably the most important and distinctive of the theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine. It can be said that all Chinese medical physiology, pathology and treatment can eventually be reduced to yin and yang.

This theory confirms what was said above regarding energy and matter, because for Chinese medicine the yin contains the yang seed and vice versa, yin represents matter and yang energy, Maciocia [14] reports that in its purest and rarified form the yang is wholly immaterial and corresponds to pure energy, and yin in its most rough and dense state is wholly material and corresponds to substance.

From this point of view energy and matter are two states of a continuum with a number of infinite possibilities of states of aggregation.

Returning to the similarity between Traditional Chinese Medicine and Reiki, specifically with regard to the similarity of ideas expressed by the ideogram of Qi and Ki.

According to Maciocia [14] it is very difficult to translate the word Qi, and many translations have been proposed, such as "energy", "material force", "ether", "matter-energy", "life force", "force of life", "vital power", "power of locomotion", "this author reports that the difficulty in translating that word correctly consists of its fluid nature.

"The proximity of the concept of Qi and energy was emphasized by an article on the nature of Qi, written by an eminent professor of the Institute of High Energy Physics of China" and "Qi" also conveys the idea of "Ethereal waves," or "radioactive emanations," in the modern sense.

From the moment that something can be at the same time a particle, that is, an entity confined to an extremely small volume, and a wave that spreads over an extensive region of space, thus forming a paradox, the formulation was created of quantum theory.

This theory had its beginning and development according to De Carli [1] from the discovery that the energy of thermal radiation was not continuously emitted but appeared in the form of "energy packets".

In the words of Capra [15]: "Einstein called these packages of quanta, in them recognizing a fundamental aspect of nature. Einstein was brave enough to postulate that light and all other forms of electromagnetic radiation may appear not only as electromagnetic waves, but equally in the form of these quanta. The quanta of light have given quantum theory its name, have since been accepted as genuine particles, which are now called photons. They are particles of a special type, devoid of mass and always moving at the speed of light. "

Giving us the notion of this form of everything being energy in the universe (as the ideogram of REI energy was), and that energy only differentiates by its speed and its frequency.

Taking a parallel and seeking similarity with Chinese medicine the classic book Nei Ching says that "the whole universe is an oscillation of Yin and Yang forces."

Goswami [16] reports that "the Chinese have realized that the basic entity we feel in the vital body, the vital energy they call chi, contains complementary aspects. The two complementary aspects of chi are called "yin and yang," this Chinese view reveals evidence of a quantum understanding of reality. "

According to this author Yang is the transcendent, undulating aspect of chi, so his theory is that Chinese medicine is quantum, since it adopts quantum wave (yang) and particle (yin) aspects of chi to classify imbalances of vital energy and representations in the organs of what he calls vital morphogenetic bodies. Thus, Chinese medicine employs the wave-particle polarity of the underlying quantum dynamics of chi itself.

In other words to Goswami [16] both chi and meridians are part of the vital body (which for him are those already mentioned in the previous

paragraph magnetic bodies), which is represented in the physical body by the organs.

Within this point of view we can find another similarity between Acupuncture and Reiki therapy, which would be that both therapies can act in the body morphogenetic, being acupuncture through the meridians and organs Zang and Fu and Reiki through the chambers, glands endocrines and nadis that are a kind of "channels" through which energy flows, similar to meridians.

Gerber [13] reports that in Korea during the 1960s a team of researchers led by Professor Kim Bong Han conducted a series of studies on the anatomical nature of the meridian system in animals.

Kim worked with the acupuncture meridians of rabbits and other animals. He injected radioactive P32 (an isotope of phosphorus) into a rabbit's acupuncture point and monitored the absorption of the substance by the surrounding tissues. Using the micro-auto-radiografia technique, he found that P32 was actively absorbed along a thin tubular system (about 0.5 to 1.5 microns in diameter) following the classical acupuncture meridian stroke. Concentrations of P32 in the tissue immediately adjacent to the meridians or in the vicinity of the injection site were negligible. When P32 was deliberately injected into a neighboring vein, the amount of the substance that could be detected in the meridian network was small or zero. This finding suggests that the meridian system is independent of the vascular network.

Another similarity between TCM and healing by laying hands is that both are ancient.

According to author Xinnong [17] Acupuncture and Moxa are an important invention for the Chinese nation, in the classics of 2,000 years ago, it was often quoted that acupuncture instruments were made of stone and called bian stone.

The author mentioned above reports that: "As there was no iron cast, the needles were made of stone," and this episode correlates with the fact that stone instruments are extensively used in primitive society, whereas in the early period of China was divided into two phases, the Paleolithic Age (from ancient antiquity up to 10,000 years ago) and the Neolithic Age (from 10,000 to 4,000 years ago).

In China, a 4.5 cun long bian stone needle was discovered in the ruins of the Neolithic Age in the Duolon municipality of Inner Mongolia and two more bian stones were discovered as funerary objects in an ancient tomb of the Neolithic Age in the province of Shandong, this shows how much the Acupuncture technique is old.

Before there was the word Reiki, or that method of healing that was rediscovered by a Japanese Buddhist monk named Mikao Usui, around 1922, according to De Carli [11], the technique of healing by laying hands already existed a long time ago.

For example, De 'Carli [11] states that Tibet has records of healing techniques through the hands for more than eight thousand years. Gerber [13] reports that this ability to heal healing has received many names over the centuries, such as laying on of hands, magnetic healing, spiritual healing, Therapeutic Touch, etc.

The laying on of hands to heal diseases is thousands of years old. Evidence was found of its use by the ancient Egyptians in the Papier of Ebers, written around 1552 BC This document describes the use of hand-held healing in medical treatment.

Four centuries before Christ the Greeks were already using Therapeutic Touch to heal the sick in their Asclepius temples. The writings of Aristophons describe in detail the use of the laying on of hands in Athens to restore the sight of a blind man and restore fertility to a barren woman.

The bible contains many references to the use of the laying on of hands for therapeutic and spiritual purposes, it is known that many cures performed by Jesus and his apostles were made through this method.

According to Gerber [13] over the centuries the role of the church as ministering agent of healing began to decline. However, in Europe the administration of healing was performed by kings who were supposedly successful in curing diseases like Tuberculosis (scrofulosis) through the laying on of hands.

Several early researchers who were interested in studying healing mechanisms theorized about the likely magnetic nature of the energies involved.

One of the first to propose the existence of a vital force, magnetic force in nature, which was already quoted in the first paragraph of the discussion, was controversial doctor Theopharstus Bombastus von Hohenheim, also known as Paracelsus (1493-1541).

Paracelsus founded the sympathetic system of medicine, according to which stars and other bodies (especially magnets) influenced human beings by means of a fluid and subtle emanation that permeated all space.

For this scholar the connection that was proposed between human beings and the "heavens" consisted of a subtle diffuse fluid, possibly a kind of primitive "ether" found throughout the Universe.

We see that this researcher has a reference to universal energy, just as the ideogram REI would in future express the idea of universal energy.

Theopharstus attributed magnetic properties to this subtle substance and believed that it possessed remarkable healing qualities. He concluded that if this force were dominated or controlled by someone, then that person would have the power to stop or cure diseases that were developing in others.

Gerber [13] reports that in 1778 a radical healer raised his voice to say that he could achieve remarkable therapeutic successes without there being a need for the patient to have faith in Jesus' healing powers or himself.

Franz Anton Mesmer claimed that the cures he performed resulted from the proper use of a universal energy which he called the fluidum. We see that this researcher and healer also referred to a universal energy, just as the REI ideogram would express the idea of universal energy later.

Mesmer asserted that the fluidum was a subtle physical fluid that filled the entire universe and was the connecting medium between people and living beings and between organisms, Earth and celestial bodies.

Something very similar to the Chinese conception that the universe and the human being are subject to the same influences, being integral parts of the universe as a whole, as was described in the final paragraph of the introduction.

This scholar believed that all physical bodies, animals, plants and even rocks were impregnated with a magnetic fluid.

According to Gerber [13], Mesmer discovered during his first medical research in Vienna that placing a magnet on areas of the body affected by a disease often resulted in healing. Experiments with patients suffering from nervous problems often produced unusual motor responses, with successful magnetic treatments causing strong muscle spasms.

He came to believe that the magnets used in therapy served essentially to conduct an etheric fluid emanating from his own body and would produce the subtle healing effects on the patients.

He thought that this vital force or energy, which in Traditional Chinese Medicine is called Qi and in Reiki of KI, was of a magnetic nature and therefore called it "animal magnetism" to differentiate it from mineral magnetism or ferromagnetism.

He advanced the hypothesis that nerves and body fluids transmitted the fluidum to all regions of the body, which it vivified and revitalized.

This concept of Mesmer's fluidum recalls the ancient Chinese theory of Qi or Chi energy, which flows through the Jing Luo (channels and collaterals), and possibly into nerves, since today acupuncture is considered a neuromodulatory therapy, and vessels vital force to the organs, viscera and body tissues.

Another important similarity between Reiki therapy and acupuncture, or rather Traditional Chinese Medicine, is that both have similar philosophical pillars or foundations, such as Taoism and Buddhism.

Leal [12] reports that the beginning of Reiki formations in the West were marked by many false and incomplete information. According to this author there is no superficial mysticism. The Reiki rediscoverer, Mikao Usui, used much of the techniques of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Chi-Kung, Taoism, and Mahayana and Tendai Buddhism. We also know that the MTC is influenced or even as a pillar of Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism, hence the similarity between Reiki and Acupuncture.

Nowadays, modern science has tested the effectiveness of Reiki methods through research, since traditional Chinese medicine already has

some relevant evidence, so there is still a different look just for the energetic and holistic Reiki methodology. Therefore in randomized studies on these techniques applied clinically as those of Monezi [18]; Monezi [19]; Baldwin [9]; and other authors as Lee [20]; Miles [21]; Barnes [22] partially ratified its therapeutic effects.

For Monezi [19] Reiki could produce psychophysiological changes and quality of life in the elderly with symptoms of stress and for this it measured in a group of elderly volunteers who received Reiki and a group that received a Placebo treatment. The set of their results obtained suggested that Reiki therapy produced psychophysiological and quality of life changes in elderly patients compatible with a significant reduction of stress.

For Baldwin [9], Reiki has been shown to be efficient in modulating heart rate in both stressed and non-stressed rats, thus indicating its responsible use as a treatment for stress in humans.

Monezi [18] chose reiki because it is a non-religious practice among other hands-on practices to apply to animals that have been sacrificed and evaluated for their immune response, that is, more accurately for the body's ability to destroy tumors, taking into consideration, the treatments received (laying hands x placebo). As a result, in animals in the laying hands group, immune cells and white blood cells had doubled their ability to recognize and destroy cancer cells.

Which corroborate in evidences of their therapeutic functions also the light of the current science. More a resemblance to traditional Chinese medicine.

5. CONCLUSION

To conclude, we affirm that there are many similarities, points in common or interfaces between Traditional Chinese Medicine and Reiki therapy, both in their concepts of "vital energy" or simply energy, which can be explained in the most scientific way, modern theories and quantum paradigms. We also verified that the old history of both forms of treatment did not invalidate its importance in the present time and that it made them evolve to the point of science to seek a modern paradigm in order to base them scientifically. Finally, we also conclude that

there is a great similarity between the physiological foundations of both.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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