

Academic Societies related to Japanese Acupuncture and Moxibustion

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I. Introduction

In contrast to China and Korea, oriental medicine in Japan requires independent licenses for Kampo (pharmacotherapy), acupuncture, moxibustion, anma-massage-shiatsu (Anma). Kampo, using decoctions, can only be performed by physicians with a western medical doctor's license, while acupuncture and moxibustion can only be administered by people who graduated from senior high school and later completed a 3-year education at one of the educational facilities specified by either the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; or the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. Subsequently, practitioners must successfully pass the relevant state examinations to obtain their licenses. Acupuncture, moxibustion and anma are classified within the framework of the Japanese medical care system (that is treatment using western medicine) as “quasi” medical actions.

Academic societies related to Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion reflect this situation in Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion and cover several different fields of learning.

For example, there are academic societies pursuing general academic research on acupuncture and moxibustion; but there are also societies that focus on academic research and on acupuncture and moxibustion pertaining to certain specific fields and related areas. Moreover, among some of these societies, acupuncturists play the predominant role, and in others, physicians do so. Additionally, the research into acupuncture and moxibustion covers a wide range of topics ranging from clinical application to basic research. The basic research covers a wide variety of topics ranging from bibliographic research of classical texts specific for acupuncture and moxibustion, to physiologic research performed on

animals. Thus, there are a significant number of acupuncturists that are affiliated with academic societies covering various areas of Western and Asian medicine. Also, some societies maintain an academic society with an official name, some of these groups are not formally recognized organizations. Some exist solely for research in a specific area. This is a reflection of the historical circumstances pertaining to acupuncture and moxibustion. Taking these facts into consideration, an accurate description of the situation pertaining to academic research into Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion requires that the study groups calling themselves academic societies are also included in this report.

II. Academic Societies related to Japanese Acupuncture and Moxibustion

(1) Academic societies pursuing academic research on acupuncture and moxibustion

1. The Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion
2. Society for Traditional Japanese Medicine
3. Japan Traditional Acupuncture & Moxibustion Society
4. Japan Society of Ryodoraku Medicine
5. Japan Society of Oriental Medical Physical Therapy
6. Japan Eastern Medical Association
7. Japan Conference of Clinical Acupuncture Moxibustion
8. The Japan Society of Acupuncture & Moxibustion History
9. Oriental Medicine and the Pain Clinic

(2) Academic societies pursuing academic research, including acupuncture and moxibustion

1. The Japan Society for Oriental Medicine
2. Japan Dental Society of Oriental Medicine
3. Japan Society of Veterinary Acupuncture
4. The Japanese Society of Balneology, Climatology and Physical Medicine
5. Japan Society of Neurovegetative Research
6. Japanese Society of Psychosomatic Medicine
7. Physiological Society of Japan

III. Japanese Acupuncture and Moxibustion Societies

Japanese acupuncture moxibustion societies in Japan consists mostly of members who are engaged in research relating to acupuncture and moxibustion. These societies hold an annual conference in which members are given opportunities to present papers on the results of their research. The regulations of these societies provide a clause concerning the publication of a journal as a place for presenting research results.

1. The Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (members: 3100)

Regarding acupuncture and moxibustion, the Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion is the only corporate academic society. Organizations are approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and meet certain criteria. This society has 3,100 members, which makes it the largest society among individual academic societies and research groups for acupuncture and moxibustion. When its former organizational form is included, the society can look back on a 55-year history.

Members include university researchers who research the classics, acupuncture and moxibustion from the point of view of modern physiology, and others that use the Chinese medical approach. As a result, the fields under investigation span a very wide spectrum. This society can rightfully be considered to assume core responsibility for research on Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion.

As of June 2008, Shuji Goto assumed responsibilities of the Chairman. The publication of "Journal of The Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion" is available to its members 5 times a year.

2. Society for Traditional Japanese Medicine (members: 1,500)

The Japan Traditional Acupuncture & Moxibustion Society was established in 1940 by Sorei Yanagiya, Keiri Inoue, Sodo Okabe, and others.

This society is based on the theoretical and practical foundations of channel therapy. In the same year, Keiri Inoue, Shohaku Honma and others established "The Acupuncture and Moxibustion Classics Study Group. Also, in 1943, Hakko Baba established the Japanese Society for Research into Acupoints.

The "Su Wen", "Ling Shu" and "Nan Jing" served as the original texts, pulse diagnosis was the central examination method and the therapy was based on Kampo diagnosis (zuisho chiryo = sui zheng zhi liao). Clinically, the instruction given in sections 69 and 75 of the "Nan Jing" provide the theoretical basis for the therapy, point selection for reinforcement or reduction depending on states of deficiency or excess in the twelve channels; and thus are the foundation of the therapy. The channel or Meridian concept is considered to be of the greatest importance, and the existence of "qi", on which this concept is based, is included in this explanation. The understanding of human beings and views regarding the significance of the relevant concepts differ somewhat from modern scientific perspectives. After the war, this group provided the leading theories for, and support of, Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion.

"The Journal of Traditional Japanese Medicine" is published quarterly.

3. Japan Traditional Acupuncture & Moxibustion Society (members: 800)

This society, which forms the center hub for the activities of groups like the Society for Traditional Japanese Medicine, the acupuncture and moxibustion classics study group, or the "Meishin Kai" for the purpose of cross-school academic research into traditional acupuncture and moxibustion, was established in 1973.

The Japan Traditional Acupuncture & Moxibustion Society deals mainly with academic and clinical research into Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion based on a classical point of view. There are approximately 20 different groups studying

classical Japanese acupuncture and moxibustion and more than half of these are affiliated with this society. Many of these groups center their activities on clinical research, but there are also groups that pursue the study of historical texts like the "Koten acupuncture and moxibustion study group" or the "Japan Naikai Medicine Study Group". Since the 1970s, acupuncture and moxibustion have been researched in a scientific way and has been affected by Chinese medicine, leading to the formation of new groups. This trend placed great importance on traditional comparative pulse diagnosis, or a system based mainly on the "Nan Jing", concentrating on pulse differentiation, diagnosis and abdominal diagnosis.

As from April 2009, Shuichi Katai, Associate Editor of this journal, has assumed responsibilities of the Chairman.

The bi-annual journal of "Traditional Acupuncture and Moxibustion" is published for its members.

4. Japanese Society of Ryodoraku Medicine (members: around 800)

This society is engaged in research based on the theory discovered by Yoshio Nakatani in 1950 demonstrating that low electrical resistance points demonstrate special affinity with the acupuncture meridians. The Society was established in 1960. For a time, the Society was divided into two: one managed by physicians, and the other managed by acupuncturist and moxibustionists. Now the 800 members' activities are organized as one society. Approximately half of the members are physicians and the other half are acupuncturists and moxibustionists.

Nakatani is a physiologist, and his Ryodoraku is said to be based on a physiological theory, involving especially autonomic neurology. The concepts of acupuncture channels, acupuncture points in the science of acupuncture and moxibustion have greatly influenced the Ryodoraku theory. Modalities of treatment in Ryodoraku are the use of acupuncture

and moxibustion. However, aiming to make the physiological interpretations based on modern western medicine (especially neurophysiology), the Society engages in scientific research.

The "Journal of The Japanese Society of Ryodoraku Medicine" is issued quarterly.

5. Japan Society of Oriental Medical Physical Therapy

The Society was initially named the Japan Society of Practitioners in Acupuncture, Moxibustion and Massage (Japan Society for All Acupuncturists). In the establishment, Katsusuke Serizawa, Professor Emeritus at University of Tsukuba played an important role. Serizawa's effort to try to define acupuncture and moxibustion stimulation as a kind of physical stimulation led to the addition of "Physical Therapy" in the Society's official name. The Society is run mainly by members with impaired vision, notably membership of acupuncturists and traditional Japanese masseurs with impaired vision is high compare to the total membership and compared to other academic societies.

As the wording of Physical Therapy indicates, the Society uses thermograph in their attempts to elucidate the efficacy of acupuncture and moxibustion and has published many reports on the effects of acupuncture and moxibustion in terms of physical therapy.

The annual "Journal of the Japanese Society of Oriental Physical Therapy" is issued to its members.

6. Japan Eastern Medical Association

The predecessor organization was inaugurated in 1973 mainly for physicians who had completed an acupuncture and moxibustion seminar. At the time of the establishment, Yoshio Manaka served as president. In 1983, the organization took the form of the current Japan Eastern Medical Association. The purpose of the Association is to provide opportunities to present the results of general academic research that includes the integration of the three following elements:

traditional Chinese medicine, Japanese Kampo, and modern Western medicine. The Association holds an annual academic conference providing an appropriate venue for the members' research.

The Association is characterized by active support in scholarly training and professional guidance especially for the activities of The Promotion Foundation of Oriental Medicine. The Promotion Foundation of Oriental Medicine defines its mission as conveying information and educating physicians and healthcare personnel education on oriental medicine. The Association publishes the journal of "Eastern Medicine."

7. Japan Conference of Clinical Acupuncture Moxibustion

"Nihon Shin-Kyu Hiden (cutaneous electrical potential) Study Group" has developed into the present Japan Conference of Clinical Acupuncture and Moxibustion. The regulation of the Conference maintains "the purpose of contributing to the improvement in the quality of acupuncturists and moxibustionists engaged in clinical practice and to the advancement and dissemination of acupuncture and moxibustion treatments through studying clinical cases, conducting clinical research, and exchanging information". The Japan Conference was initially formed as a study group of Nihon Shin-Kyu Hiden in 1960, and changed its name to Nihon Shin-Kyu Hiden Gakkai in 1975 and then became the present Japan Conference of Clinical Acupuncture and Moxibustion in 1983.

The Conference issues the tri-annual journal of "Clinical Acupuncture and Moxibustion" which includes seminar information and articles of case reports.

8. The Japan Society of Acupuncture & Moxibustion History

This society is engaged in research on classical writings by means of philology. The Society was inaugurated in 1993 as the Japan Society of Acupuncture & Moxibustion Clinical Philology and renamed as The Japan Society of Acupuncture & Moxibustion History in 2004. Research subjects are

drawn from classical writings of oriental medicine in China and Japan, especially those of acupuncture and moxibustion. In regard to the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine (Huangdi Neijing), and the Ling Shu, new studies and discussions are conducted every year. The Society issues the annual journal of "The Japan Society of Acupuncture & Moxibustion History."

9. Oriental Medicine and the Pain Clinic

Oriental Medicine and the Pain Clinic were established by Masayoshi Hyodo of Osaka Medical College. Initially this society was a study group in the Medicine of Acupuncture & Moxibustion of the Department of Anesthesiology at Osaka Medical College, but is now conducting activities as an academic body. Hyodo noticed the pain relieving efficacy of needles as an anesthesiologist and made various investigations concerning the action. The activities of the organization used to focus essentially on headaches. Currently, however, its main activities are research on the relationship between Western medicine, oriental medicine and on mutual integrative research.

The society issues the annual journal of "Oriental Medicine and the Pain Clinic".

10. The Japan Society for Oriental Medicine (members: 8600)

This society represents Japanese Kampo medicine and is the most authoritative society concerning herbology in Japan. Established to broaden communication among practitioners and to foster cooperation among researchers, its primary goal was to advance Kampo medicine in 1950 by medical doctors, pharmacologists, and acupuncturists who were practicing this medicine. Its sphere of activity includes Kampo Medicine, acupuncture and most areas related to Kampo Medicine.

The official journal, "Kampo Medicine" features dissertations, theses, case reports, records of lectures about Kampo Medicine and articles on acupuncture; and is published 4 times a year.