

## **How to know a book by its cover: Stylism in medical culture and the underlying ancient Principles.**

It is interesting that many of the expressions in today's fields of "alternative" medicine have names associated with specific individuals, when the underlying source of their practice is actually associated with Classical or Root medicine/ sense, something which is not about individuals at all, but has a root that is universal. Examples of such fields are the Alexander technique, Feldenkrais method, Jungian Psychoanalysis, Bowen technique, Rolfing....the list is endless, and can be found in every branch of medicine and its philosophy.

There are also words which are trade-names or labels to something that cannot readily be accessed, again immediately differentiating those who "know" from those who "don't know" in regards to health or "understanding". Examples of these are: macrobiotics and the macrobiotic movement, anthroposophy, Structural Integration or Functional Integration. There are hundreds of variations.

With all of these labels we find, at the root, a methodology which is *always* informed by an ancient heritage or inspiration, but often instead of understanding its root meaning – Oneness- there is an attempt to express it with the mark/signature of the person who is now expressing it or it is allocated a "special", and therefore hierarchical, separate word. In the former case, this associates us with the filter of this individual, rather than the overall perspective that they are looking at. This may be as a result of the intention of the individuals themselves or is something which is encouraged by their followers, but either way it ends up blocking the real understanding and being too caught up in the ideology of the individual. For example, Jungian psychoanalysis was heavily influenced by both ancient Eastern and Western understanding of non-separateness. However, by formulating a methodology to set it apart from other expressions, rather than tracing its relation to the whole, we lose the sense of what Jung was connected to, which in fact was the "super-conscious" understanding of Oneness, something that cannot be pinned down.

When we look at all the therapies that have a person's name at the front, such as Alexander, Bowen, Rolfing etc., we immediately know these to be ego-associated. The name is an indication of stylism and there is the immediate understanding that we will be taught a specific method of doing something that *someone specific* has done.

When we look at a method or technique which is called by a "special" word that is difficult to understand or has its own concept, it makes you immediately feel separate from it as it requires further interpretation. A newcomer to the subject might have no immediate understanding of such an expression and might move away because it means very little to them, it is separated from them - a theory of something that is distant from them. I am not talking about cultural differences here, for example, "qi" within China is deeply understood as it is a cultural expression, whereas to other languages and cultures "qi" is foreign expression *and* an imported word. Once it is transported to the West, without this rooting, there is confusion and resistance to it. This is despite the fact that we too have similar words in our language, such as "sense", "instinct", "feeling", all of

which are utterly energetic but are overlooked as something very different to qi-energy which, of course, they are not. In our culture these words are often thought of by Newtonian science as “unclear”, “irrational”, “improvable”, “flaky” or “new-age”. Meanwhile these scientists develop genetic methods to make food that no other animal would touch but that are supposedly “great” for humans! ‘Yeh, now I can see why it's just the “new-age” movement that is real wacko!’, not to suggest that the “new-age” movement actually is what it says it is, very often it is simply another form of separatism like modern science - they are brother and sister expressions really. Words such as yoga or tai chi chuan or Tao-yin etc. when translated, are very easy to understand:- yoga means “to unite” ; tai chi Chuan is “ultimate fist-boxing” “Tao-Yin” means “naturally-led energy/movement”. The key is that these expressions aren’t about parts of something, they aren’t about specific individuals and they aren’t about an intellectual idea or philosophy. They are simply as they are, pure uninterrupted observation, in fact a “pure” science of the 1<sup>st</sup> Person. One doesn’t need to be a certain age, colour or creed to understand this, in fact those who are younger and of a more tribal origin, closer to the roots of the origin of life, have far more understanding here than the modern, confused and highly intellectualized adult.

The elitism of the intellect as a foundation to medicine, or understanding of any kind come to that, is absolutely inaccurate. This is one of the main criticisms of -ologies, -osophies, and the like. An -ology is really a “study of” something, such as bi-ology, the *study* of “life”. So why not call it life-study? Why not call anthropology “man or human-study” and why not call psychology “breath/spirit or soul study”, which amazingly it is! No “mind-brain” here, it’s all about the “spirit”, if we read it the way the Greeks would have done. How deeply unscientific of them, or simply inaccurate! Study is really about analysis because Latin and Greek are associated with the intellectual tradition, so whenever the word describing the subject is in either of these languages, one knows this is a separation in itself. It is separating off from most of the people, since only monks and the upper classes could understand them, and suggesting that intellectual study renders “understanding”, which it most certainly doesn’t, not in the terms of what we are discussing here. These two were the languages of the religious and intellectual texts through the centuries, from Ancient Greek through to Christian times and into modern culture. The undercurrent of Latin and Greek therefore implies a perspective that is about ancient wisdom underpinning ideas. However, most of the fundamental ideas are debunked and uprooted in every language of the ancient texts by latter-day scholars, who viewed the world as a place of total separation, which was not the way of the ancients as we see in “psychology” above.

If one goes back far enough in history, the basis of language and expression was about fundamental communication, being able to express ideas to another person, not to separate one off from another, to form hierarchical administration, or hide the truth behind a false front in order to spark individual prowess. It is perhaps the ones who could use language and ideas more easily who called themselves higher authorities and this started the trend towards mind being “all-important” and feet being “all-unimportant”. Hierarchy comes from above, not from below; at ground level we are united by the very gravity that connects us to the earth. The ‘intelligentsia’ is simply a misnomer because

the essence of the ancient understanding of such expressions has been lost, simply through the idea that one can “learn” about instinct, and, in this context, instinctual health. In fact, what is expressed in the Tao Te Ching, is totally opposite from the idea of an intellectual elite:-

*Chapter 18*

*When the great Tao is not “obeyed”  
Naturally arises benevolence and Righteousness  
When mental intelligence emerges  
The great pretence begins*

*When roles of relation to one another are not adhered to  
Natural genuine affection arises between people  
When a nation is led into confusion and chaos  
Patriotic ministers arise.*

*Chapter 19*

*Exterminate the “sage”, discard the “wise”  
And the people will benefit a hundredfold;  
Exterminate the practice of “benevolence”, discard rules of rightness  
And the people will return to natural relationships  
Exterminate ingenuity, discard profit  
And there will be no more thieves and bandits  
All of these falsenesses are simply the surface, they are not the Truth  
People seem to need to attach themselves to something so;  
Express what is natural, unadorned and naked, embrace the Uncarved  
Block;  
There is little thought of “self” and few desires.*

*Chapter 71:*

*Feeling True ignorance is profound.  
To be ignorant of this Truth yet to believe you have it, is sickness  
If one is sick of sickness, one is not sick.  
The natural person is not sick because she is sick of sickness  
Therefore she is not sick.*

It is really those who have little “knowledge” who are actually far healthier and happier overall than the ones that do.

This is, also, not about the “ignorant pig”:

*“It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides. - John Stuart Mill; Utilitarianism Ch.2”*

This seems to be the typical ideology of the modern Western way of thinking, that the pig or fool is ignorant. In fact, as time goes on the intellectual will realize, through constantly finding repetitions of the same problems that humans face, that the fool is in fact something different. It is not about the pig being ignorant, nor the fool, but the intellectual believing he is separate, and as such, is in a world of grief and egoic posturing. “Primitive” is highly evolved and responsive, “advanced” is actually warped. The natural intelligence of life is far beyond the individual’s ideas, be it John Stuart Mill, Thomas Hobbes, Sigmund Freud or any other commentator, ideologist or analyst that cares to investigate the world from the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective. When there is a movement to let go of the intellect and also to let go of the borders of self and just to point a finger towards what it is that one is feeling, without adding anything on, this is when it gets simple. So in these people’s philosophies is the truth of Oneness but one has to see them in stark and broad context, looking past the superstructure and egos, whereas other, simpler, root expressions are clear as a bell. This is true of even the ancient philosophies, as the philosophy *is* the superstructure of interpretation/ideas on top of the basic simple principle of nature, which knows no bounds. Some clear expressions do exist but they are not often heard, are undersold or overlooked, as they have no sales form attached, nor any requirement to “join up” / “get involved”. They are simply signposts to the instinct of being.

In the modern western world there are a several protagonists of what I will call Philosophic-psychological bodies of knowledge - amongst these are Carl Jung, Rudolph Steiner, Abraham Maslow, George Gurdjieff and others. These people broadened out the ideas of medicine as being something that encompassed all of life rather than a specific focusing with Newtonian-scientific/materialistic tendency. Their general approach always bordered on, if not jumped headlong into the religious - Steiner rooting for the basis of Greek and Christian understanding, Jung looking towards similar expressions but also looking into the East and native cultures, Gurdjieff based in his own culture and connection to Sufism, and Maslow attempting to find a unified model for all humans, which one might call a kind of Theosophy. These are but a few of the thinkers who engaged in this process. Each of them, it could be said, reached a clarity in their own feelings and sense which allowed them to create models of reality based on their insights and intuitions. Steiner formed Anthroposophy, a movement which was really a teaching of meditation to allow intuition to develop towards enlightened clarity, a freedom that if striven for, would break through all limitations of the individual. Jung also felt that enlightened clarity was possible through the process of a person becoming True and authentic and thereby connecting to a universal consciousness. Gurdjieff saw that people were asleep and needed to awaken, which certain practices would induce. Maslow was convinced that in order to create widespread harmony, self-actualization, which is akin to being the true-self, is possible. Therefore humanistic psychology was born, including

many therapies, allowing a person to engage with existential issues often in a self-directed way.

There have been numerous attempts over the years to note parallels between all of the above and as such there is no need to do anything other than this. The point is that at root all of these are the same. They all may have different wording for the same problem, for example Jung's "complex" might be Steiner's "body-mind-instinct organization", which could be what others have described much more simply as "conditioning" or "mind-identity". However this is no way to regard the word "instinct", although this may have been lost in translation. Also, what Jung might call "Individuation/ ideal archetype" Maslow might describe as "self-actualization", or Steiner might call "the individual". And lastly what Jung might call the collective-unconscious, Steiner might call "spiritual intuition/ intuitive thinking" and Gurdjieff might describe as "awake", which is most similar to ancient Eastern expressions. All of these are different wordings for the same thing, the words in fact often divert meaning rather than actually relate to it. All these ideas were formulated into a study and a method which to some degree involved a kind of meditative practice which would bring about realization and a movement towards enlightenment.

The whole reason for all these processes is because modern western cultural ideology is rootless, there is no longer any ancient understanding grounding people to Truth and there are no more "Elders" and therefore this gap requires a unification with the origins of a culture. Whereas much of the information above has long been known to ancient cultures and developed in numerous ways, the modern western understanding of such things has only recently been investigated. None of the above is new, although often portrayed as such by their originators, because it was new to them! It is really an attempt to reclaim a missing element known through the insight and life experiences of its protagonists.

Fundamentally the nature of these ideologies is that they are all branches of the same tree. They are all at base unified in a monism, or understanding of Oneness. This said, however, the attempt to draw people towards the understanding of Oneness or "an enlightened state" is deeply a *dualism*, and it's a dualism shared by all of the above. The fundamental dualism is of teacher and student. As soon as there is a person who knows, then there is the situation of the seeker and the one who has found. This set-up is usually the basis of an approach that can only end in hierarchical organizations, monuments, appraisals and processes of structures around a basic and very simple principle which is open to anyone. That which can teach has no interest in the process of teaching something, but is simply being what it is and by this, it is ripe, is an induction of nature through that person. One might consider this as an osmotic process, in a similar way to an infant's experience of the world. This is most commonly understood through the natural world around us and the observation of it without analysis, in infants, in native peoples and in the understanding of those expressions of the ancients that relate again to instinctive natural process. These are collectively "teachings" although there is no teacher or teaching really involved.

In all these cases the process of “getting there” is focused upon, the seeker is seeking something, and as a result will always be in the process of getting to where a teacher is. This suggests an “attempting to” or “trying to”, associated with reaching peace, whereas this is utterly incorrect. It is however the very same process of all religious doctrines that move away from the central kernel of truth spoken by a person a long time ago. Hence in the above terms the following “religions” are formed:- Steiner forms “Anthroposophy”, Jung forms “Jungian Psychoanalysis”, Maslow forms “Humanistic Psychotherapy” and Gurdjieff (via Ouspensky) “the Fourth Way”. These will of course be refuted by the followers of these expressions, declaring that they are not religions at all but “paths” or processes by which to investigate the “self” or go beyond it depending on one’s terminology. However this is exactly the same as any other religious movement where the process is associated with a person being highlighted, a Way being forged. All of this is stylism and therefore comes with all the issues of stylism, it fails to see the whole view and renders a process conforming to books and study and process, rather than revealing the total illusion of any attempt to “do self-development”, whereas that change occurs naturally without any effort at all, as Oneness of nature is in control of it all, there is no such thing as an individual.

Any one thing that differentiates itself from something else is a style, as such it is to do with an individual, and as such it is limited, therefore attempting to move along the same channel will result in a teacher-student dualism which cannot be let go of, until it just is. Then something else happens which is totally in no-one’s hands. The same is true of any other religious path or doctrine involving a seeker and an ideal, or a seeker and a teacher, or a seeker of any kind. This is not the ancient root to religion but the structuralism above it. The deep expression of the people at the origin of the world religions was not understood and has been defined and seen as a goal to reach, which is the opposite of the nature of the Truth, but this is impossible for people to swallow, so stylism develops which is a continuation of the status-quo or separatist dualist expression covering obscuring a known Oneness.

From ancient times, especially in Europe, the post-Socratic Greeks engaged in the philosophic debating and arguing that has formed the highly intellectually-dominated society we are in. It was all about the intellectual classes and the belief that “they knew”. The pre-Socratics, such as Parmenides, however, were very unlikely to have recognized the idea of a thing called “philosophy” because there was still at that time an understanding of the nature of reality being unfathomable intellectually, and so his writing and that of others of his time around the world, such as Lao Tzu, would have clearly been able to differentiate mental activity and analysis from nature.

Of course, in everything I am saying here there is a total recognition that all these apparent conflicts are one, that even though there is a belief in a separate “way” of doing something or that something is “better” done by specific individuals, all this is underpinned by nature. But our present interest is in what underlies ideas, so let us continue.

Medicine is fundamentally about Oneness. Hence any form or sense of separation is a very sensitive area because the illusion of separation spreads like wild-fire. The human egoic quality is what formulates methods and what sees itself as standing-out from others, which is what is expressed. Followers often like to have a master to worship, to keep them “safe” in an enclosed arena, a numbness of sorts, even if the teaching is all about “awareness” it is still in a box of either follower or “master’s” making. The so-called “master” is a person who either has a sense of a connection/unity to the universal way, or is simply being instinctive. These followers formulate the “master’s” expression into a method, often after the “master” has died, as a result of great leaps of interpretation. This may be seen in all organized religions, from time immemorial - everyone missing the point.

We still see this happening today, in cults, cliques and in those who follow particular teachers, ideologies and sensitivities, and who adopt them as their own beliefs, for they do not trust their own senses. This includes those who perform Newtonian scientific experimentation to analyse phenomena, for this is simply a belief in separate parts, one could call it the religion of “separatism”. Conversely, there is the focus of making “their own” expression, which is like advertising for followers, or attention, and is fundamentally nothing to do with medicine, although it can be very enjoyable. The point is that in order to find the roots of medicine one needs to differentiate style from principle. The style is always a seeming separate or surface part, the principle is always that part within and is underpinned by the whole universe. Therefore anything at all that is a principle of medicine and healing can have nothing to do with the individual, it is totally impersonal and at the same time deeply intimate.

A Principle is a universal understanding of Oneness, a style is a particular view of this understanding, an individualistic view, an inevitable view and a limited view. Medicine distinguishes itself from other cultural phenomena because it reaches to the culture’s basal origins of Oneness with the natural Principle, or *instinct* in “rooted” societies, which means those with cultural heritage that is not imported and has ancestral lineage to pre-history, for example India or China. The principle is known as the truth, the style is known as the expression. We don't focus on the expression, it becomes clear that this leads to a very small part of the picture in and of itself and therefore, if taught, it will only teach this “branch” of the whole tree. This is a natural limitation of the individual expression, which is why Principle cannot be “owned” by anyone. Also Principle is medicine, which means medicine can’t be owned by anyone. We could consider the truth or medical Principle as “the table”, while the things on the table, the styles, go in and out of fashion from day to day, like plates of food. The table remains unmoved and is relied upon for everything, underpinning all the different ‘flavours’. The style is not wrong or right but it is limited, hence those who learn only from such a method will be limited and those who gain from the source within them, the Principles, have a broad and accepting view, whatever their stylistic way. The style is the branches of the tree and they are all accepted and beautiful, but these develop all from the origin: the same trunk and roots. In any form of connection-with-nature/ medicine within the native environment of its origin, the Principle, not the teacher, is highlighted and as such the message is passed on, otherwise it is always about lineage rather than medicine.

Rarely, a modern Western expression will indicate this same connection of its expression to the root, for example, “Authentic Movement”. This is a method based on the deep fundamentals of Buddhist/Taoist understanding and other ancient understanding but has clearly, even in its title, something that people can understand directly and easily. It isn’t hiding *behind* a method or a theoretical perspective and it isn’t about an individual, but may have been influenced by many. It is easily accessible and simple. All people who deeply understand medicine will realize that it is the simplicity at its heart which counts. If it requires years of arduous practise and feeling, betrothed to a master, then very often it is more about that than it is about healing. Healing is simply direct, authentic and immediate. The length of time for healing to effect a consistent change to take place isn’t the point, it’s the actual connection we are talking about; it is purely natural, as easy as eating, sleeping, defecating, stretching, yawning, the heart beating and the breath in the lungs. When there is a sense of disconnection from these processes this is dis-ease; when there is Oneness there is peace, or the end of dis-ease. It isn’t anything complicated, requiring efforts to make oneself better or more polished as a healer, it is fundamentally about dissolving and letting nature take over. Medicine is really just about triggering the process.

Another example of this is the work of Haruchika Noguchi, in the expression of medicine called “Katsugen”, or translated, similar to “Life-activating energy”. This is clearly translatable: the energy of life. This points to the fundamentals, not to the individual, even though this is an individual’s expression of it. In the case of Noguchi, he leaves himself out of it, for this would be to obscure the understanding he is pointing to. It also makes this expression commercially unviable, as there is no “unique selling point”; there is in fact no-thing for sale. This is not the general way, this is the rare way, and such rarities are hard to see within the great array of different “methods” and styles available. It is like being in a field covered in a layer of freshly-cut grass, where one is trying to find the blade that is still connected to the earth.

The key problem today for students and patients of medicine and those interested in “alternative” medicine and therapies, concerns trying to find one’s way blindfold and it takes a while to feel one’s feet. Please be aware that this current problem has also been seen throughout the long history of all ancient medicine. For example, in Oriental medicine alone, there are thousands of stylistic ideologies and very few are rooted medicine, still connected with the root principles. It is no different when looking at the expanded view of *all* of the natural therapies, worldwide, than it is looking into only Chinese or only Indian or only European methods. Oneness is Oneness and so Principle and basal understanding don’t change. It is universal, no matter what the language, era or time zone.

Names and naming of different expressions of therapies are important, they tell one the quality of what’s going on. They immediately express what is missing from the equation, so, for example: “osteopathy” - one knows, if one has learnt Latin (or has a dictionary), that this is about the bone “osteo” and “pathy” “suffering”, but this immediately begs the question, what about the rest of the body? This is a question which osteopathy is



constantly aware of, and what moves those who are seeking something more subtle or less structural towards cranio-sacral therapy, a further refinement but still with a label of “specialized” rather than Principle. These immediate points of contact, the words we use to describe things, tell us the overall nature, the innate intention, be it limited or expanded. We are used to considering medicine as something that is all about body parts, of different “specializations”, but this is not to do with the medicine, this is to do with the practitioner. This is his/her limitation. Medicine and medical Principle are very different from individuals and this is the key here. One doesn't need to be a genius, one simply needs to fix one's gaze on the overall picture, rather than the limited one, to find one's way, and often, if one is doing this, medicine is irrelevant, as that very process is the expression of health. This is very much like the “magic-eye” pictures of the 1990's, which were so popular, where one had to look beyond the immediate way the eyes are used to seeing, and gradually, with relaxation, the “hidden” image which was actually always there behind, would reveal itself. This is the very same idea, one needs to be relaxed and viewing broadly, in order to understand the nature of style and underlying principle, otherwise they all seem to be blades of cut grass.

One might say, “That's all very well but what's in a name? Don't judge a book by its cover,” or “What's the difference - it's all associated with the same thing?” The point here is that all expressions are on the surface, while what they represent is on the inside; this is the fundamental of the diagnosis of anything. It is about reading the surface, as that allows one very clear access to the intention behind something. Everything can be read on the surface, it just depends on how one looks at it, whether one sees broadly or if one is looking for specifics. Something that is hidden expresses that it is hidden, if one is interested enough to notice, like a black hole, which can only be seen through the action it has on stars around it. Medicine is not for the highly intellectual, the studious or the ones in power, it is in fact both diametrically opposite *and* underpinning these expressions.

There is a big difference between principle and style. One looks to find the truth, the other looks to find a banner to formulate an expression behind a name or method or idea. This is actually the difference between yin and yang. The yin is always about medicine, the yang always about expression. Medicine is always about the fundamental truth, expression is always about the truth of that expression. Hence with the methods, the theories and the ideas associated with much of modern stylism, it is important to differentiate this from those who are simply putting themselves to one side, so that they can express the truth of what they see, without required indoctrination or adoption of a “new” idea or method.

One may know a healing experience from a healing method because the former will always be more about what IS, the latter about what you are trying to achieve or trying to become, trying in any form, in fact. Notice, also, that healers are not confined to their specific “sphere of knowledge” unless a) they believe that, and have been indoctrinated by a brand-identity of whatever they have learned; or b) that they want to adhere to a particular expression because its particularity is about an advertisement of themselves and their expression, which is a nice detour and expression, but it's not to do with

medicine. Medicine is fundamentally always about listening, it is fundamentally receptive and accepting by nature; everything it does comes from this place. It is never a “bad” thing to preach, to sing, to dance and to express oneself, in whatever way one likes, but this is not the basis of medicine, it is the basis of expressional art. Medicine is art but of a very different kind, it is the art of the mother who watches the child play.

When ‘trying’ unravels and ‘forms’ let go and there is opening to the unknown, then there is the possibility of Oneness being to see underneath the illusion. Expressions of this Oneness in the modern world are rare, but they do exist. Those who express this are in touch with the yin behind the yang of the world, this is the basis for healing. Others may have had this experience but the way it is then expressed or filtered turns it into “something” and as a result it renders it limited, fragmented and associated with cliques/groups and units, all believing they are rarified and at “a higher level”, seemingly separated from one another, rather than able to see Unity. Medicine *is* Unity - the realization of non-separation.

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