

The 8-Extraordinary Vessels
(Qi Jing Bai Mai)

Jeffrey Yuen's class
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Transcribed by
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These notes were taken during a series of lectures in a class on the 8-Extra Vessels taught by Jeffrey Yuen at the Swedish Institute, January through March 2004.

The concepts presented are his; I have rephrased them for ease of flow in reading.

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8-Extra Overview

I) History of the 8-Extra Vessels

- 1) These treatments were not popular until the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644)
 - Prior to this it was thought improper to work on a constitutional level – alter one’s *ming* (one’s life), one’s destiny – the ancestral genetic subset with which a person was born
- 2) In the Ming dynasty, there was an increased interest in the function of the Kidneys/Jing – and thus the 8-Extras – and the ability to affect congenital factors directly
 - The thoughts on this at the time were most heavily influenced by Zhang Jing-Yue (the creator of the 8-Parameters and the 10-Questions), the Ming Men School, and the Warming Yang School (*Bu Yang Pai*)
 - Warming Yang School believed Yang/movement is our essential nature and should be supplemented
 - These schools were influenced by the earlier teachings of Zhu Dan Xi and his School of Nourishing Yin (*Ci Yin Pai*)
 - Zhu Dan Xi came from a sub-tropical area in China, and so came to believe that everyone is too Yang, and are at risk of depleting Yin
- 3) In the Song (960 – 1279) and Ming (1368 – 1644) dynasties, acupuncture was not that popular because it was painful; the preference was herbal medicine
 - The interest in and use of acupuncture to treat illnesses was revived in the 15th century by Xu Feng with his book *Zhen Jiu Da Quan*, Great Compilation of Acupuncture
 - Interest was revived again in the 17th century by Yang Ji Zhou with his book *Zhen Jiu Da Cheng*, Great Accomplishments of Acupuncture
 - He developed the opening points, as well as the coupled pairs for the 8-Extra Vessels
 - Li Shi-Zhen tried to one-up the acupuncture guys with his own writings on herbs, the 8-Extras and their pulses, which were influenced by the work of Wang Shu-He – in particular, his *Mai Jing* (Pulse Classic) and his commentaries on the 8-Extras
 - Li Shi-Zhen was the last major person to talk about the 8-Extra Vessels... he standardized their trajectories

II) Theoretical Aspects of the 8-Extra Vessels

- 1) The 8-Extra Vessels reflect the evolutionary/transformational dynamics pertaining to humanity, ethnicity and gender
 - They are the “roadmaps” of physiology, pathology and evolution
 - They are responsible for both natural and moral adaptations to the world
- 2) The 8-Extra Vessels deal with constitutional energetics – Yuan-Qi – as it is reflected by morphology and astrology
 - They touch upon both Fate (*Ming*) and Destiny (*Yun*)
 - When you use your patient’s astrological chart and/or physiognomy to determine the course of treatment, you will be using 8-Extra Vessel points

- 3) Working with the 8-Extra Vessels gives one the power to alter one's genetics/fate, thereby playing the role of creator/architect of life (probably the reason these vessels were avoided in earlier practice)
 - a) Cultivation of these vessels is the deepest form of self-exploration; in the process of doing so you come closer to full self-acceptance and begin to understand your life's purpose
 - b) With the 8-Extras, you can work on a person's temperament
 - Temperament is caused by a preponderance of Essential-Qi being directed to one of the zang-fu
 - c) Emotional problems like suicidal thoughts and low self-esteem can be treated by 8-Extra therapy, as it works on a person's non-acceptance of themselves
 - d) 8-Extra therapy is used only to help a person through a crisis – NOT (for ethical reasons) for frivolously changing a person's make-up
- 4) If certain things like diabetes, breast cancer or heart disease “runs in your family,” 8-Extra therapy can work against these conditions arising in yourself
 - 8-Extra therapy can actually change your constitution, dealing with mutations to DNA and RNA
 - It's therefore the treatment of choice when confronted with cases of cancer, AIDS, tropical diseases and biological warfare
 - a) The Divergent Meridians also work constitutionally
 - The difference is that they begin at the major joints (bones) of the body, and work to divert EPFs coming in from the Wei-Qi level
 - They span from the Wei-Qi to the Yuan-Qi levels of the body
 - Acute pathologies (Ebola; malaria; lime disease) and auto-immune diseases are Divergent meridian issues
 - b) Constitutional issues related to the length and quality of life are in the realm of the 8-Extra Vessels' control
- 5) The constitution is related to:

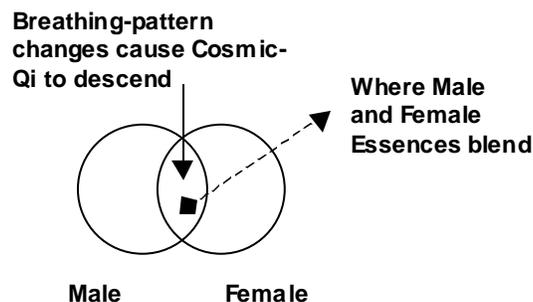
<u>ANATOMICALLY</u>	<u>LEVEL</u>
Jing.....	Humors
Kidneys.....	Zang-fu
8-Extra Vessels.....	Meridians
Yuan-Qi.....	Energetics
Bone, Marrow & Curious Organs.....	Anatomical

III) The Unfolding of Life – of *Ming* and *Yun* (Fate and Destiny) – via the 8-Extras

- 1) Fate – or *Ming* – is pre-given... it's the “cards” you're dealt in life: where you're born, your parents, what you look like, your over-all constitution and disposition

- 2) Destiny has more to do with choice – what you do with those “cards” – how you “play the game”: you’re given choices to make at every turn in Life, and Destiny represents those choices
 - Regardless of good or bad, experiences that are difficult can only be transcended so as not to be re-lived again
 - One must embody the Taoist concepts of *he* and *ding* – harmony and balance – to realize and work with the dynamics of Yin and Yang, for everything occurs in the presence of its opposite
- 3) Conception follows the course of Pre-Natal energetics, which is a reversal of the Generation Cycle

- a) *Water* represents the blending of male and female sexual fluids
- b) *Metal* represents the heavy breathing going on during the blending of sexual fluids
 - This heavy breathing causes the Kidneys to grasp Lung-Qi, bringing in Da-Qi, along with Po – which wants/needs a body in order to experience life – to the place where *Water* mixes



- c) *Earth* represents the *Water* and *Metal* congealing into a matrix, bringing forth the first trimester of pregnancy
 - d) *Fire* represents the second trimester, when Shen begins to develop *in utero*
 - This is when Shen – or the “Sovereign Fire” – decides its conquest in life
 - Questions are formed – questions that will be dealt with and answered in life
 - Lessons to be learned are determined
 - e) *Wood* is the third trimester, when energetically, things ready themselves to spring forth
 - Because of its association with Liver energetics, Taoists believe that if the mother gets overly angry or upset, it can trigger a premature delivery
 - f) Acupuncture is used during the first trimester for things like morning sickness and over-all tonification
 - It should not be used at all during the second trimester, leaving the energies of the mother and developing fetus to their own devices
 - During the third trimester, acupuncture can be used to prepare the mother for birth as well as correct the position of a breach baby
- 4) The birthing process (controlled by Chong Mai) begins with the positioning of the head of the fetus on top of the cervix, which dilates
 - The water breaking represents a movement of the body’s energies toward the Yang

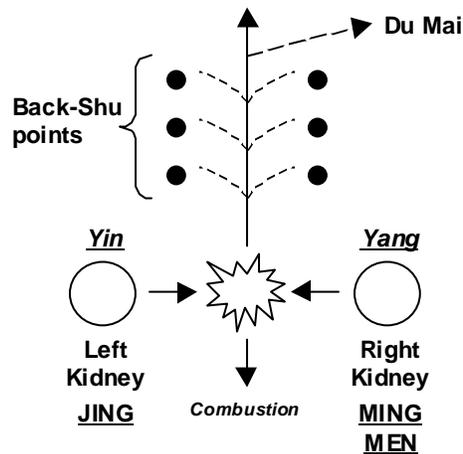
- Delivery happens via the contractions of the diaphragm, abdomen and pelvic regions (the *zong jin* – ancestral sinews – which is related to *Dai Mai*)
- a) Labor contractions stimulate the brain to begin to synchronize with light and time
 - This is under control of the pituitary gland, which is related to Bl-1; this point also has some control over the hormones (see *Qiao Mai*, (II) (12))
 - The pineal gland regulates Yin/Yang (Prenatal-Qi)
 - The pituitary gland regulates Qi and Blood (Postnatal-Qi)
- b) Birth trauma begins with the loss of darkness and buoyancy, coming into a world of light and gravity
 - Then the umbilical cord is severed, requiring nourishment to now come via the mouth and nose
 - There’s an intimate relationship between the mouth and navel
- c) The first cry activates *Qi-Ke* – mouth of qi – to circulate Qi and Blood
 - This is reflected by the pulses at Lu-9 and St-9
 - Breathing into the Lungs (for the first time) sets the Heart-Blood in motion
 - This also creates a pressure in the left atrium, which is greater than that of the right atrium, thereby creating the “Heart barrier,” or Pericardium
- d) The bonding process begins with the infant yearning to reunite with the maternal matrix
 - This reveals itself later on in life as relationships of dependency, either with God – or *the gods*; one’s parents; employer; teacher(s); doctor; &tc....
 - In the absence of an individual, the nourishing relationship can be with food (eating disorders) or drugs (addiction), or, I suppose, any set of external stimuli which is pleasing to the senses and the person’s idiosyncratic needs
 - Synchronizing with the sensations of one’s own bond to nourishment – one’s heartbeat and breathing – creates the same patterns and does the same things as when nourishment/closeness/love is needed
- 5) The 8-Extra Vessels, seen as propagating the continuum of generation and development, are deemed responsible for the manifestation of the different stages of life*
 - These stages are dubbed “the cycles of 7 and 8” (in the *Su Wen*) or “the cycles of 10” (in the *Ling Shu*), which refer to the ages at which major developmental changes occur
 - At 7 or 8, children in China were typically sent out to work in the fields for their family
 - And at 14 – 16, they were typically married
- 6) As the architect of Life, the 8-Extra Vessels have a “blueprint” – determined by ***Chong Mai***
 - which is responsible for a person’s:
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Nature/disposition
 - a) There needs also be raw material (Yin), which ***Ren Mai*** is responsible for
 - b) Construction (Yang) is under the province of ***Du Mai***

* See *Taoist Yoga* by Lu K’uan Yü, pages 16 – 20, for a more in-depth discussion.

- c) Wei Mai is responsible for the process of aging/maturing; it is linked to the defining moments of a person's life
 - **Yang Wei Mai** has to do with bodily functionings, External/climactic factors; for instance, a severe draft causing Bell's Palsy, *i.e.*, permanent deviation of the mouth
 - **Yin Wei Mai** has to do with structural changes, Internal/mental factors; it deals with the past and future issues of a person's inner life
- d) Qiao Mai has to do with the present moment
 - **Yin Qiao Mai** has to do with how one perceives themselves at the present moment
 - **Yang Qiao Mai** pertains to how one perceives the world at the present moment
- e) **Dai Mai** revolves around things – issues, emotions – a person has held on to for a very long time, and not released
 - They know something in their lives need to be changed, but rather than deal with it they pigeon-hole the issue, sweep it under the rug so to speak, within their bodies, within their energetic matrix
 - This suppression eventually causes a physical disease; the person becomes so “full” of what they're trying to suppress that it begins to “leak” out
 - Leukorrhoea and spermatorrhea are two examples....

IV) The 8-Extra Vessels' Relationship with Jing/Essence

- 1) The 8-Extra Vessels derive their Qi from the Kidneys and the Jing stored therein to support Post-Natal Qi
 - They are the link between Pre-Heaven and Post-Heaven Qi
 - They thereby play a major role in the cycles of growth, development, maturity, conception and pregnancy
 - This is supported via Blood and jin-ye/body fluids
- 2) The dissemination of Jing:



- a) Kidney-Qi/Yuan-Qi extends outward from Du Mai to the Back-Shu points, which then gets transferred to the Primary Meridians, proceeding to the Yuan-source points
 - In this, a preponderance of Qi tends to go to one organ/meridian, creating one's temperament and constitution

- b) The combustion of Jing leads to aging
 - But also gives Life... which builds up the brain, bestowing knowledge through the experiences gained
 - The process of Life is the transmutation of Jing to Shen
- 3) The *Nan Jing* identifies the Right Kidney as *Ming Men*, or Life's Gate
 - *Men* = a superficial door, as opposed to *guan*, a deep, hidden portal
 - Ming Men brings life out to the "surface"
- 4) The 8-Extras generate bone via marrow
- 5) Because of their relationship with marrow, the 8-Extras nourish the brain (*nao*)
- 6) It is said that the energetics of the 8-Extras are conveyed through the eyes via Zong-Qi (Ancestral Qi)
 - In Chapter 71 of the *Ling Shu*, it says: "Zong-Qi accumulates in the center of the chest (Ren-17) and expresses itself through the throat and larynx, and links to the Heart (which links to the eyes)"
 - Bl-1 is therefore an important 8-Extra point
 - This correlation with the Heart and the eyes signifies the role the 8-Extras play in one's self-image, and how one's thoughts come to reflect the way one perceives the world

V) The 8-Extra Vessels' Relationship with Other Meridians

- 1) Where the 8-Extras lie energetically in the body:

Wei Qi	→ <i>Primary meridians; Sinew meridians; Divergents (Exterior)</i>
Ying Qi	→ <i>Primary meridians; Luo Vessels; Divergents (Interior; Blood level)</i>
Yuan Qi	→ <i>8-Extra Vessels; Divergents (Jing level)</i>

- 2) The 8-Extras have a relationship with the Luo Vessels, Divergent Meridians, and Yuan-source points
- a) The sequence of the Luo Vessels end with the Luo Vessels of Ren and Du (in the *Ling Shu*), or alternatively, with Yin and Yang Qiao Mai (in the *Nan Jing*)
 - Luos thereby have a correlation with the opening points
 - b) The 8-Extras relate to the Divergent Meridians by way of the bones/joints (the yin of yang)
 - c) The 8-Extras relate to the Yuan-source points via the dissemination of the Jing (stored in the Left Kidney) by the Right Kidney (*Ming Men*) along Du Mai, which then travels to the Back-Shu points, and thence to the Yuan-source point of the pertaining zang-fu
- 3) In Chapter 27 of the *Nan Jing*, it is said the 8-Extra Vessels are beyond the reach of the 12 Primary Meridians

- According to Jeffrey Yuen, you can only *probe* the 8-Extra Vessels; you don't necessarily "open" them as you would other channels since the energetics here relate to one's essence – one's soul – and rarely does a person bare to you their absolute self
- 4) The same chapter of the *Nan Jing* goes on to relate the 8-Extras to reservoirs, or ditches that catch the surplus overflowing from the main waterways/channels
- *"The ancient sages constructed ditches and reservoirs for the waterways in the event of something extraordinary. When rain pours down from Heaven, the ditches and reservoirs become full."* (An obvious reference to meditative practices)
 - In the actual wording of this they use the word *hai* (sea), relating the 8-Extras to the ocean, which is the collecting place of water from all rivers
 - The "ocean" can also be seen as a metaphor for the state one's consciousness enters when in a state of trance induced by meditation

- 5) Needles are kept in for 30 – 40 minutes
- 6) Ming dynasty texts recommend 3 cones if using moxa
 - Except when treating Du Mai, then only 1 cone is used
 - With Ren Mai, 7 cones are used
- 7) Between treatments, you can have the patient treat themselves using essential oils on certain prescribed points
 - Here, you're using the essence of a plant to treat the essence – or *Jing* – of an individual
 - These oils can be applied directly without dilution; however they should be tested on the person first to make sure there's no allergic reaction
 - a) Chong Mai: Angelica + Patchouli
 - b) Du Mai: Cedarwood + Cinnamon Leaf
 - c) Ren Mai: Neroli + Ginger
 - d) Yin Wei Mai: Rose + Melissa
 - e) Yang Wei Mai: Rosemary + Citronella
 - f) Dai Mai: Mugwort + Niaouli + Sandalwood
 - g) Yin Qiao Mai: Narcissus + Jasmine + Juniper
 - h) Yang Qiao Mai: Basil + Cinnamon Leaf

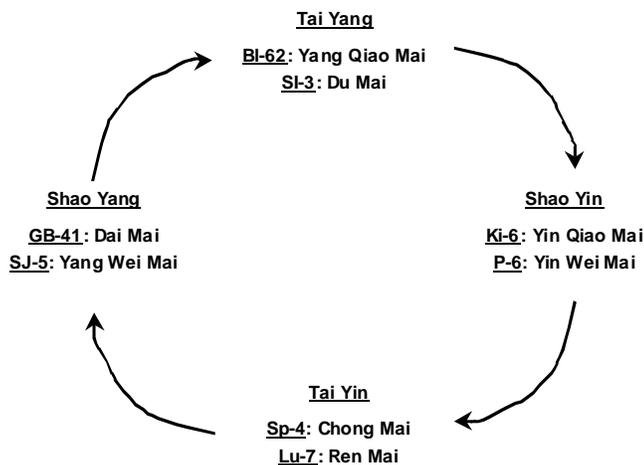
IV) Point Selection

- 1) The Confluent (or “Opening”) Points are most often used
 - These were developed in the Ming dynasty – discovered through the interplay of Yin and Yang – by Zhen Jiu Da Cheng
 - He did not use them in all his treatments
 - Li Shi Zhen did not have the same Confluent Points

a) The Confluent Points are →

b) If you needle a leg point, an arm point should also be needed:

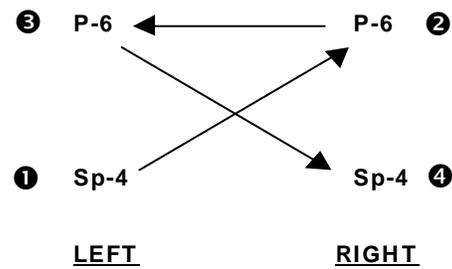
- GB-41 ⇔ SJ-5
- Bl-62 ⇔ SI-3
- Ki-6 ⇔ Lu-7
- Sp-4 ⇔ P-6*



* The last two couplings are the reverse of how they're paired according to meridian energetics....

c) Coupled pairs should be needed in a criss-cross fashion:

- The order in which these points are needled depends on whether the patient is male or female
 - For men, begin on the left side
 - For women, begin on the right
- The Japanese regard the left as pertaining to Yang, male energy; the right as Yin, female energy



- **Irrespective of gender:** the left is always used when opening Du Mai; right is always used when opening Ren Mai
- Between these points, ion pumping cords can be used – a Japanese technique

d) There's debate on the use of coupled pairs:

- Whether they are to be needled bi-laterally (or just the leg point on one side, the arm point on the other)
- Whether they are to be done at the beginning, or the end of the treatment
- Whether the treatment should begin with one Confluent Point, and end with the other

5) Other points used relate to Yuan-Qi

- Yuan-Source points
- Back-Shu points
- Mu points
- Hui-Influential points
- Luo points
- Divergent Meridian points

6) Points along the trajectory of the 8-Extra Vessels are, of course, used as well

- 4) To **Nourish and Invigorate Blood** (with Zong-Qi {Chest-Qi}), use:
- Sp-4 and P-6
 - The Kidney Shu-points
 - The He-sea and yuan-source points associated with the Blood Deficiency or Stasis
- a) Lung-Qi (as expressed by Zong-Qi) moves Blood
- Blood engenders Qi
 - If there is stagnation, blockage or weakness of either, the classical signs and symptoms are:
 - Heart pain (can be emotional or physical)
 - *Xiong jing* (knotting of the chest)
 - Fullness
 - Distension
 - Tightness
 - Pain below the sternum
 - Nausea/vomiting
- b) A classic example would be Liver Blood Deficiency with Blood Stasis
- Signs and symptoms:
 - Anemic
 - Scanty period (Qi and Blood Deficiency)
 - Tired on exertion
 - Tightness in chest at time of period (Cold)
 - Clots in menses
 - Tongue: Thin; dark Purplish; Thin, Pale coat
 - Pulse: Thin and Tight, or Choppy
 - Treatment:
 - Open Sp-4 on the right side
 - Sp-4 probes the First Trajectory of Chong Mai (Kidney-Spleen/Stomach relation)
 - Needle Ki-24 bilaterally; even technique
 - Needle P-6 bilaterally; even
 - Palpate spine and Hua Two points, looking for tightness (Blood Stagnation)
 - Needle and disperse
- 5) To **Invigorate Yang to treat Bi-syndrome due to Blood Stagnation**, tonify:
- Sp-4
 - GB-26
 - Du-4 (where Dai and Du Mai meet)
 - Bl-17 (needle obliquely towards spine and tonify, using lift and thrust method)
 - Bl-11 (needle obliquely towards spine and tonify, using lift and thrust method)
 - With either of the Bladder points, check and see if their parallel Hua-Two points are more tender; if they are – needle them instead
 - GB-41 (add in if treating zong-jin – the ancestral sinew)
 - SI-3 (opens Du Mai)
 - Ahshi points along Chong, Dai and Du Mai (needled in that order)

- 6) To **Ascend Spleen-Qi** (via Kidney Yang), use:
- Sp-4
 - Ki-11
 - Ki-10
 - Bl-40
 - Ki-6
 - Ki-3
 - Ki-1
- This treatment is good for:
- Supporting the Spleen
 - Diaphragmatic problems
 - Hemorrhoids
 - People who are flaccid around the back of the knees (usually obese people)
- 7) To **Tonify Spleen-Qi and Nourish Stomach-Yin** (Yang Ming), use:
- Sp-4
 - St-30
 - St-36
 - St-37
 - St-39
 - St-42
 - Lr-1
 - Sp-1
 - For Stomach-Yin, add:
 - Ren-22
 - Ren-23
 - St-4
 - St-1
- a) The above treatment is good for symptoms like:
- Food stasis
 - Nausea/vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Intestinal Wind (ulcerative colitis, where there's the frequent need to fart and crap)
 - Esophageal reflux
 - Borborygmus
 - Naval pain
 - The five types of jaundice:
 - Food (due to too much fried, greasy, fatty food)
 - Alcohol
 - Unilateral (where there's injury to the Gall Bladder)
 - Limbic (due to overexertion over a long period of time)
 - Weak/Male (due to too much sex)
- b) If there's jaundice, add Du-9 to the above treatment
- c) For nue malaria, add Lu-7 to the treatment
- d) For **Rebellious Qi** manifesting as rapid, horse breathing and/or plum-pit throat, add Ren-22 and St-5 to the treatment
- e) A common point combination to add in to the above treatment is Ren-12, Ren-17, and St-36