Ancient Art Used Stone, Bone, Bamboo Needles

BY BOB CRAFT

Dr. C. Y. Ting, a practitioner of the Chinese medical art of acupuncture, gave a lecture and demonstration of the art Thursday evening in the new B. A. building auditorium.

Ting is a third generation Chinese doctor who practiced in Shanghai before coming to the United States. He began his lecture with a history of acupuncture. Ting said acupuncture had been known for about 5,000 years but that the art had only found written expression in the last 2,000 to 3,000 years.

Ting said that the first stone needles were used and were replaced by bone, bamboo, metal, gold and silver until the present stainless steel needle was introduced. Acupuncture treatment uses not only the needle, but also heat and herbal medicines.

The theory of disease in acupuncture states that a disease enters the body through an imbalance in the yin and yang or the positive and negative. Ting explained that this imbalance affects the entire body. He said that each organ had yin and yang and that one organ and “if one is sick the other is sick also. If the blood has a problem then the liver has a problem,” he said.

He said because of this theory of balance there is no such thing as a specialist in Chinese medicine, because more than one organ must be treated.

To diagnose a disease, “every part of the patient is observed including a patient’s walk and color,” Ting said that in an examination if the patient yells, that very length of the yell tells the doctor something about nature of the patient’s illness.

Ting said each case is different and some symptoms are not treated alike.

The treatment after the diagnosis is partially medical and needling. Ting said that acupuncture came so late to the United States because acupuncture cannot be proven scientifically. He said that the relationship between the organs and the procedures of acupuncture could not be known by the scientific process.

He said that there had been arguments raised that acupuncture was a form of hypnotism, but Ting said acupuncture can be practiced upon animals and since animals cannot be hypnotized, acupuncture is not a form of hypnotism.

Ting said in Shanghai in 1948, that traditional Chinese doctors refer patients to Western doctors and that the reverse was also true.

Ting said that traditional Chinese doctors have a four-year training period followed by a two-year internship before they are allowed to practice. Ting said that during his internship he learned to place the needles by practicing on himself.

He said that all diseases could not be cured but that among that could be cured were cancer, arthritis, deafness.

He said that his father had a case of a forty year old woman with breast cancer who had not wanted to have surgery. The doctor treated the woman by acupuncture. The pain went away, although the lump remained in the breast. The woman died when she was eighty.

He said that there have been cases of deafness in children where as much as 40 per cent of the hearing was regained through treatment by acupuncture.

In cases of arthritis, Dr. Ting said the problem was that “the nerves couldn’t stretch,” he said he didn’t know how, but that there was how the disease was treated. After the nerves had regained their “elasticity,” the pain went away and the calcification in the joints receded naturally.

Dr. Ting also said that acupuncture could be used to control internal parasites, could be used for birth control and for symptoms of paralysis following strokes as well as for anesthesia.

He asked for volunteers from the audience to demonstrate the insertion of the needle. Dr. Ting received a man who volunteered. Dr. Ting inserted the two inch needle about a half an inch into the man’s leg. The man reported feeling no pain, just a slight pressure when the needle went in. When the needle was removed there was no blood or any trace that there had been any puncture of the skin.

Dr. Ting said that he did not have a license to practice in the U. S. He stated that a recent bill in California to allow acupuncturists to practice under the supervision of “western physicians” had been vetoed by the governor.

Dr. Ting seemed to agree with the governor’s action. He said that western physician’s did not know enough about acupuncture to supervise it.

Dr. Ting smiled when a member of the audience asked him how much were the charges for acupuncture treatment. He said that in China, it was not like the U. S. The patient pays whatever he thinks he can afford. The rich, therefore pay more than the poor. Dr. Ting said that the patient didn’t cheat the doctor because the patients believed if he did, the treatment would not work.

RETURNING TO CAMPUS

Returning to campus after his semester leave, George Garret, USC’s writer-in-residence, read excerpts from his works to an audience of about 150 persons.

Garrett, more widely recognized as a prose writer, featured some of his poetry, particularly “Palm Sunday 1968.”

In addition, he read from Death Of A Fox, his most recently published work about the life of Sir Walter Raleigh. The bulk of the afternoon, however, was devoted to Garrett’s novel, The Magic Strip Tease, which is scheduled to be published early in the fall by Doubleday.

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