

Man is to himself the most wonderful object in nature; for he cannot conceive what the body is, still less what the mind is, and least of all how a body should be united to a mind. This is the consummation of his difficulties, and yet it is his very being. *Blaise Pascal, Pensees (II, 72)*

EQUIPOISE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE VARIABLES PRESENT IN PALPATION

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- IN PALPATION THE DIFFICULTY IS FEELING AND THINKING: SEAMLESSLY AND CONTINUOUSLY

FEELING AND THINKING

- TWO DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF
BEING

TWO ASPECTS OF BEING?

- UNDERSTANDING THE CHARACTERISTICS AND NATURE OF THE HUMAN MIND/SEEING HOW IT HAS EVOLVED/ CLARIFYING THE PRESENT STATE OF ITS EVOLUTION (POSTMODERN MIND) WILL HELP CLARIFY THESE ASPECTS...
- AND HELP IDENTIFY THE VARIABLES PRESENT (IN BOTH TEACHER AND STUDENT) IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A SEAMLESS AND CONTINUOUS PALPATION

HERE WE GO: PALPATION IS NOT APART

- SHOULD WE CONSIDER
OURSELVES SPECIALISTS?
PROBABLY NOT: PALPATION IS AN
ACTION NOT UNLIKE ANY HUMAN
ENDEAVOUR

2 COMPONENTS OF PALPATION

- BODY (PHYSICAL)
- MIND (INTELLECT): FIRST WE WILL
CONSIDER THE MIND

CONTEXT FOR CONSIDERING THE MIND

ACCORDING TO INTELLECTUAL
HISTORIANS, THE ESSENTIAL HUNGER
OF THE WESTERN MIND HAS BEEN TO
UNDERSTAND THE MYSTERY OF
EXISTENCE (NOT UNLIKE THE HUNGER
TO EXPERIENCE AND UNDERSTAND THE
MYSTERY OF OUR PATIENTS THROUGH
PALPATION)

NATURE OF THE MIND

- TWO CHARACTERISTIC TENDENCIES:
FEMININE AND MASCULINE
- WE SEE THESE AT WORK IN MYTHOLOGY,
PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION
- THESE ELEMENTS ARE ALSO AT WORK
AS TWO ASPECTS OF OSTEOPATHIC
PALPATION



OMNIPRESENT: A
SYNERGY BETWEEN
THEM FIGURES IN EVERY
INTELLECTUAL AND
SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION
INCLUDING OSTEOPATHY

FIRST, THE ANCIENT MIND

- ANCIENT MAN AND WOMAN
EXPERIENCED THE MYSTERY OF
EXISTENCE
- THIS DIRECT EXPERIENCE IS THE
FEMININE CHARACTERISTIC OF MIND:
MAN AND WOMAN IN THE COSMIC
WOMB

THE MIND EVOLVES: MYTHOLOGY

- THE MASCULINE CHARACTER OF MIND APPEARS IN MYTHOLOGY: IT IS DISTINCT FROM THE FEMININE: IT IS CRITICAL, DISCERNING, QUESTING
- THE STORIES IN MYTHOLOGY ARE THE MASCULINE: AN INTELLECTUAL RECREATION OF THE MYSTERY
- THE RITUALS OF MYTHOLOGY ARE THE FEMININE: THEY ARE EVENTS AIMED AT CREATING AN EXPERIENCE OF THE MYSTERY OF BEING
- THESE TWO ELEMENTS EXIST IN PALPATION...

OSTEOPATHY AS MYTHOLOGY

- THE STORIES OF ANDREW TAYLOR STILL ILLUSTRATE THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY
- HIS RITUAL WAS SURELY HIS PALPATION

PHILOSOPHY

- THE MASCULINE CHARACTER OF THE WESTERN MIND FURTHER EVOLVES IN THE CRADLE OF PHILOSOPHY: 5TH C. GREECE
- GREEK PHILOSOPHERS PROPOSE ESSENCES, ARCHETYPES OR FORMS TO EXPLAIN THE NATURE OF REALITY

OSTEOPATHY AS PHILOSOPHY

- THE PHILOSOPHY OF A. T. STILL SHOW ESSENCES, ARCHETYPES AND FORMS TO EXPLAIN THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY
- THESE ARE THE LOGOS OF THE TENETS

RELIGION

- THE AIM OF RELIGION IS TO REFINES ONE'S LIFE : THE IMMORTAL IS IDENTIFIED
- STORIES ARE WRITTEN TO ILLUSTRATE, GUIDE AND REFINES ONE'S LIFE
- RULES OF BEHAVIOUR ARE DERIVED SO THAT THE PRACTITIONER CAN EXPERIENCE LIFE'S MYSTERY

OSTEOPATHY AS RELIGION

- A.T. STILL PROPOSES A REFINED EXPLANATION OF THE BODY AND HOW TO 'TREAT' IT
- HE PROPOSES THE TENETS AS THE 'COMMANDMENTS' AND PALPATION AS THE 'SACRAMENTS'

OSTEOPATHY VS. CRISIS OF MODERN SCIENCE

IN "THE STRUCTURE OF SCIENTIFIC
REVOLUTIONS" THOMAS KUHN QUESTIONS
THE RATIONALITY OF SCIENCE, CITING MANY
EXAMPLES IN THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE...

CRISIS

- SCIENTISTS TYPICALLY SEEK CONFIRMATIONS OF
THE PREVAILING PARADIGM RATHER THAN
CONFORMING TO THE IDEAL OF SYSTEMATIC SELF
CRITICISM
- SCIENTISTS OFTEN UNAWARE OF THEIR PARADIGM
ACTING AS A LENS THROUGH WHICH EVERY
OBSERVATION IS VIEWED
- THE GRADUAL ACCUMULATION OF CONFLICTING
DATA PRODUCES A PARADIGM CRISIS: NOT A
RATIONAL REVOLUTION (TARNAS)

THE REVOLUTION

- OSTEOPATHY EMERGED FROM THIS KIND OF REVOLUTIONARY CRUCIBLE
- THE OSTEOPATHIC PARADIGM IS UNDERGOING A NEW REVOLUTION AND RENAISSANCE OF PALPATION THAT IS INFORMED BY ALL OF THE DISCIPLINES DISCUSSED...AND THESE ARE ONLY A FEW

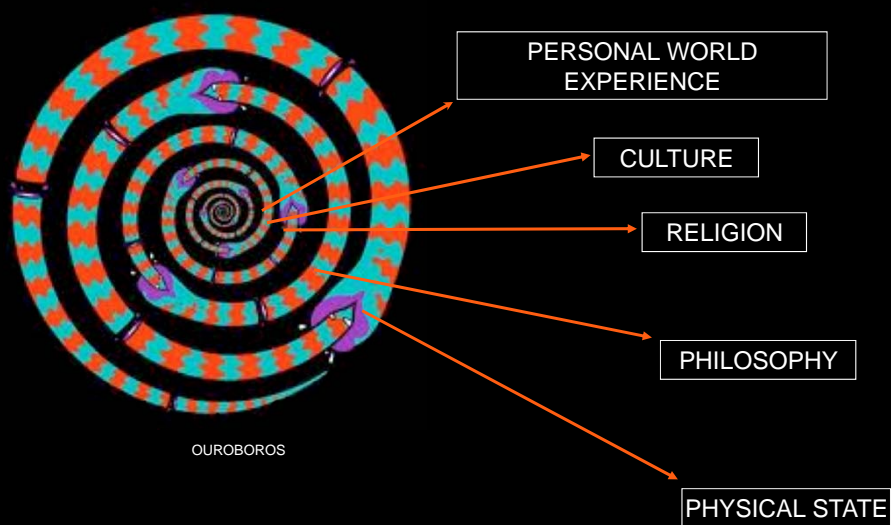
BRING IT ALL ON

- THE OSTEOPATH NEEDS TO EMPLOY THE LESSONS OF MYTHOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND SCIENCE



- WHAT THE HECK HAS THIS GOT TO DO WITH TEACHING OR LEARNING PALPATION?

TEACHING PALPATION: VARIABLES FOR BOTH TEACHER AND STUDENT



WHAT INFLUENCES PALPATION? EVERYTHING

HELP THE STUDENT SEE THAT PHYSICAL
CONDITIONS, AGE, SEX, CULTURE,
RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY ARE ALL
VARIABLES THAT AFFECT PALPATION

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TEACH PALPATION? FIRST CREATE AN AWARENESS OF THESE VARIABLES

- THESE VARIABLES ARE
PRESENT AND EVOLVING
DURING PALPATION
- THIS AWARENESS MIGHT HELP
THE HEAD AND THE HAND WORK
TOGETHER (SEAMLESSLY AND
INDEPENDENTLY) IN PALPATION
- THE OSTEOPATH AND PATIENT
ARE A FUNCTIONAL UNITY

PHYSICAL VARIABLES IN PALPATION

- PHYSICAL STATE, ENVIRONMENT ETC, OF OSTEOPATH AND PATIENT
- PHYSICAL CONDITION OF BOTH PATIENT AND D.O. LESIONS, TEMPERAMENT, FATIGUE, ENTHUSIASM, CONCENTRATION ETC.
- AWARENESS THAT *ANYTHING* THAT ENGENDERS TENSION IN THE OSTEOPATH AFFECT PALPATION

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BUT FIRST WE MUST
CONSIDER THE PRESENT
STATE OF MIND: THE
POSTMODERN

VARIABLES OF POSTMODERN MINDS

- THE PLASTICITY OF THE MIND: THE CONSTANT FLUX OF REALITY AND KNOWLEDGE SUBJECTIVELY DETERMINED BY A MULTITUDE OF FACTORS
- OBJECTIVE ESSENCES (OR THINGS-IN-THEMSELVES) ARE NEITHER ACCESSIBLE NOR POSITABLE
- THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH MUST BE TOLERANT OF AMBIGUITY AND PLURALISM AND IS THEREFORE RELATIVE
- THE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE IS SELF REVISING AND EXPLORATORY (TARNAS, PASSION OF THE WESTERN MIND)

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POSTMODERN MIND

“THE POST MODERN MIND IS NOT A PASSIVE REFLECTOR OF A FIXED, EXTERNAL WORLD...

...IT IS NOT *REMOVED* BECAUSE WE ARE *ENGAGED* AND THEREFORE *CONSTANTLY TRANSFORMING*...

...WHILE BEING TRANSFORMED” (TARNAS)

FINALLY!

...I BELIEVE THIS POIGNANTLY
DESCRIBES THE PROCESS OF
PALPATION, AS WELL AS THE
CHALLENGE, TO BOTH THE
TEACHER AND STUDENT OF
PALPATION...

EQUIPOISE: A POSTMODERN PALPATION

- ✓ NECESSARY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT NO SET OF RULES APPLY TO THE ACT OF PALPATION: THERE ARE FORMULAS THAT SERVE AS GUIDES
- ✓ THE ACT OF PALPATION INVOLVES MANY VARIABLES, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL
- ✓ THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL, SOCIAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, RELIGIOUS, OSTEOPATHIC BIAS ETC.
- ✓ THE ACT OF PALPATING IS AN EVOLVING PROCESS OF UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO THE BODY OF THE PATIENT AND THEREFORE INVOLVES ANY OF THESE VARIABLES
- ✓ THEREFORE ANYTHING THE BODY WILL AFFECT THE BODY WILL AFFECT THE ABILITY TO FEEL: AN AWARENESS OF THESE INFLUENCES ALLOWS THE STUDENT TO PLACE THE HANDS IN SUCH A WAY THAT HE/SHE CAN SEAMLESSLY THINK AND FEEL

EQUIPOISE

1. THE STUDENT EXPLORES AND SITUATES THE SELF
2. CONTACTS THE PATIENT AND SECURES AN ONGOING COMPLICITY
3. BALANCES THE HAND WHERE THE PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL ARE MOST COMPLIMENTARY AND AT THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL
4. ALLOWS AND A CONTINUAL EXCHANGE OF THE INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL INFORMATION BETWEEN THE OSTEOPATH AND PATIENT

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WORK TO DO

PHYSICAL/SPIRITUAL/MENTAL/INTELL
ECTUAL/PHILOSOPHICAL:

ALWAYS MOVING TOWARDS SELF-
KNOWLEDGE

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“Labour is blossoming...,Are you the leaf,
the blossom or the bole? O body swayed
to music, O brightening glance,How can
we know the dancer from the dance?” W.B.
YEATS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY
GRATITUDE FOR ‘THE PASSION OF THE
WESTERN MIND’ BY RICHARD TARNAS:
IT WAS MY INSPIRATION AND GUIDE