

## Culture, Embodiment, and the Senses

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What kind of observation counts as knowledge?

Hippocrates emphasized the ethical/therapeutic relationship between doctor and patient.

Galen was a philosopher, physician and medical scientist – general “Renaissance” man. He revolutionized medicine, using dissection to understand anatomy. The idea of the “organ system” developed, and healing strategies like bleeding emerged as sister ideas.

Perspective determines certain truths, but on a deeper level, **the way we exist in the body is different in different time periods and across cultures.** We must ask the question, *is this the same body?*

Foucault argued that discipline matured from a visible government to self-discipline, evidenced by changes in the State, use of surveillance, cataloging, and changes in bureaucracy.

\*Are we going to be aware of more **microscopic levels of experience**? There is a difference between acknowledging a physical sensation of pain and asking one's self if such-and-such-organ is the cause. The issue is **specificity and minutiae of attention.**

There is the tactile activity of sensing.

What is considered **legitimate knowledge**? West dismisses East – the Western biomedical tradition wants to be considered truth and so emerges the problem of incommensurability. Complementary Eastern medicine is studied in a *Western* fashion.

Film, “Journey to the West: Chinese Medicine Today”

Eastern emphasis on *function* vs. Western emphasis on *state*

Eastern goal is for the body to regulate itself. When there is a free flow, there is no pain. Stagnation and stasis result in pain and imbalance. You treat the body to harmonize it.

Chinese medicine originated in the Daoist tradition. If you are more in touch with your body, it is easier to know when something is wrong and thus easier to go about correcting it. Examples of being in touch with the body include martial arts and meditation.

There is an emphasis on a harmony between body and nature and environment.

Eastern treatment aims for maximum impact with minimal intervention.

Eastern medicine focuses on intuitive thinking and experience from trial and error vs. Western focus on anatomy and data analysis.