

Introduction

This paper provides an overview of the Zang Fu (the Organ systems) of TCM, and the Jing Luo (the Meridian system). The theory associated with each Meridian category (primary, 8 extra, divergent, lu, sinew, cutaneous region) is introduced.

The TCM Organs (Zang Fu)

The Zang Fu are the Organs, or Organ systems, of traditional Chinese medicine. They are categorised into Yin and Yang, and each is associated with one of the Five Elements (Wu Xing). Each Zang Fu encompasses (includes) the functions of the Meridians which pertain to it.

The information provided here outlining Zang Fu functions is typical of information presented in undergraduate texts and courses on TCM. Emphasis is upon function rather than structure in the gross anatomical body. Further information, such as related tissues, associated sense organs, tissues nourished, fluids, etc., is available in the document on the Concordances (Wu Xing) on this web page.

For an appreciation of the full complexity of the Zang Fu, as well as knowing the information presented here, it is necessary to be thoroughly familiar with their related Disharmonies, associations with each of the Fundamental Substances (Qi, Blood, etc), interactions with the other Organs, and the place of each Zang Fu in the broad spectrum of TCM's theoretical structures. Ideally this knowledge should be supported by sufficient clinical experience to consolidate it in a therapeutic environment.

The Yin Organs: the Zang

There are five Zang: Liver, Heart, Spleen, Lung, and Kidney.

In general terms the functions of the Zang are to "produce, transform, regulate, and store the Fundamental Substances - Qi, Blood, Jing, Shen (Spirit), and Fluids" (Kaptchuk, 1983). They are more Internal than the Yang Organs, and so are more important or 'precious' to the individual. The resonance of their energies is 'Deeper' than that of the Yang Organs.

Their greater importance means that they may require, and often receive, more therapeutic attention than the Fu in clinic. But this is certainly not always the case. Indeed it is very rare to find Disharmony in a Zang without some impact in the Fu as well.

Each Yin Organ is associated with one of the Five Elements. The functions outlined with the Meridians on this web page are those traditionally associated with each Organ. Although they may appear introductory or somewhat 'superficial', the functional, behavioural and descriptive nature of the role of the various Organs is the way in which they are considered in theory, although preferably wrought on the anvil of clinical experience.

In some aspects of theory however, particularly Meridian theory, the Fire Element is considered to have two Yin Organs expressing its energy, Heart and Pericardium. In which case there are six Zang. Heart and Pericardium are usually distinguishable in clinic. In terms of Organ function, both being expressions of the Fire Element, they can be considered as an energetic continuum. The Pericardium may be thought of as the "outer protective shield" of the

Heart (Kaptchuk, 1983), but this is rarely meant purely in an anatomical sense. Quotes from the classics often refer to five Zang and six Fu (Larre and Rochat, 1992a).

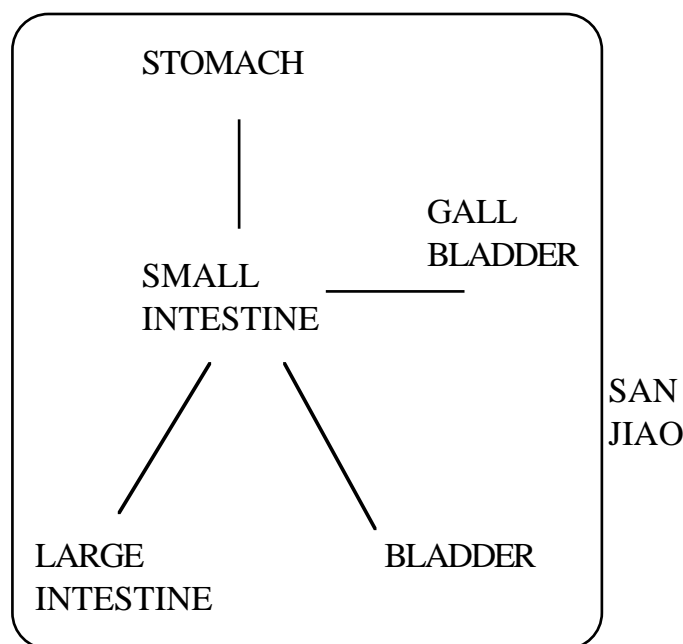
The Yang Organs: the Fu

There are 6 Fu: Large Intestine, Stomach, Small Intestine, Urinary Bladder, San Jiao and Gall Bladder.

As a group the Fu are hollow and relatively External vis-à-vis the Yin organs. In general they are responsible for the reception and passage of food and drink, for the digestion, transformation and absorption of the 'pure' fraction of ingestate, for the transmission of substances through the Yang Organ system, and for the excretion of wastes - 'turbid' substances. The functions of each Fu are reviewed together with their Meridians on this web page. Included are pertinent quotations that derive from the Huang Di Nei Jing and Nan Jing Jiao Shi, two of the foremost classical 'Bibles' of TCM.

Relationships Amongst the Fu

One approach to functional relationships amongst the Fu is shown in the diagram, *Fu Relationships*. Another approach is found in the paper on the Concordances. Yet another is the regular flow of Qi and Blood through the Jing Luo as per the Horary clock - refer Meridian summary tables.



Fu Relationships

In this diagram the flow of substances (ingested food and fluids, etc.) through the Yang Organs has a familiar ring to it given western medical bioscience (WMB) knowledge of gastrointestinal tract function - the Stomach connects with the Small Intestine, which then connects with the Large Intestine. The Gall Bladder contributes bile to the process of digestion.

But an important difference is identified in TCM where a direct functional relationship between the Small Intestine and Bladder Fu is recognised, particularly in terms of Lower Jiao fluid metabolism (Kaptchuk, 1983; Ross, 1985; Maciocia, 1989; Wiseman et al, 1985; Davis, 1995).

Further, when the San Jiao Fu is regarded as the functional relationship that makes all the Organs involved in Fluid metabolism a complete system (see San Jiao Meridian), it seems appropriate to represent this Organ as an embracing field, within which the other Organs function - certainly in the gross anatomical body. It has been argued elsewhere that the San Jiao Fu may be broadly equated with the extracellular fluid compartment, including its neural and endocrine control (Davis, 1996a,b,c,d).

Six Extraordinary Fu/ Curious Organs

The 6 Extraordinary Fu, or Curious Organs, are the Brain, Marrow, Bones, Uterus, Blood Vessels and Gall Bladder. They are called 'Extraordinary' because although they are hollow (and so have an important characteristic of a Yang Organ), they are said to store and not excrete (Maciocia 1989, Wiseman et al 1985), which are Yin Organ functions.

As a group they are not hugely significant in the clinic - the major exception being the Gall Bladder which is classed as both a normal Yang Organ and one of the Extraordinary Fu.

The distinct functions which they have are largely embraced within the broader functions of the Zang Fu and Meridians. Treatment for them is almost always aimed at a related Zang or Fu. Kaptchuk (1983) says that on their own the Curious Organs ... "are of little importance, in both theory and practice ..."

Blood Vessels

Su Wen, chpt. 17. p. 102: " The Blood Vessels are the gathering places of the Blood (and the Blood is led by the Energy)....." (Lu, 1990).

The Blood Vessels store a Yin substance - Blood - which is a Yin function, and distribute/collect this substance throughout the body - a Yang function - under the control of the Heart. These dual Yin and Yang functions characterize the Blood Vessels as an Extraordinary Fu, but otherwise they are very much subsumed under the control of the Heart (the Heart rules the Blood and Blood Vessels).

Kaptchuk (1983) notes ... "tradition states that Qi is associated with Blood in the Vessels and that Qi and Blood are both in the meridians, but the distinction between Blood Vessels and meridians is not clearly stated. The implication is that Blood Vessels carry relatively more Blood and the meridians relatively more Qi. Disorders of the Blood Vessels are treated through the other Organs; for instance, the Heart rules regularity of flow, the Liver rules evenness of distribution, and the Spleen rules the ability to keep the Blood within its pathways."

Brain, Marrow, Bones

All three are very closely related to Kidney energy. Their treatment is almost always directed at the Kidneys or the Kidney Meridian.

"When an individual is created, first Jing is formed; from Jing comes the Brain and Marrow ... Jing [postnatal Jing] forms a cream, seeping into the empty spaces of the Bones to nourish the Brain and Marrow" (Ling Shu, chapt. 10, 36; Kaptchuk, 1983).

'Marrow' here refers to both bone marrow and the spinal cord. Its main function is to nourish the Bones and the Brain. The Brain is the "sea of Marrow" (Ling Shu, chapt. 33; Kaptchuk, 1983), and so is very closely identified with Kidney energy.

The close relationship between Bones and Kidney energy means that support of Kidney energy in the clinic is an important avenue for having a therapeutic effect on bones, eg. fractures.

"If the sea of Marrow is abundant the vitality is good, the body feels light and agile, and the span of life will be long; if it is deficient, there will be dizziness, tinnitus, blurred vision, fatigue, and a great desire to lie down" (Ling Shu, Maciocia, 1989).

Uterus

In TCM, just as in WMB, the Uterus has an important functional role in menstruation and pregnancy. The TCM approach to both these processes is that they are governed functionally by the Zang Fu, especially Kidneys, Liver, Spleen and to an extent Heart, and also by two of the Eight Extra Meridians, Ren Mai and Chong Mai. Ren Mai largely provides the Uterus with Qi while Chong Mai largely provides Blood.

In both pregnancy and menstruation, functional processes receive emphasis in TCM, rather than a particular interest in, or focus upon, anatomical structures.

Menstruation requires a 'communicating' Ren Mai, and a 'full' Chong Mai.

In women, both these Meridians are thought to "arise in the Uterus" (Ling Shu, chpt. 65, Kaptchuk, 1983). Blood is closely associated with the Uterus, and this Fundamental Substance also has an intimate functional relationship with both the Spleen and the Liver. The word 'uterus' in Chinese means "the palace of the child" (Kaptchuk, 1983).

Kidney Jing as well as Blood has an important role in both menstruation and gestation.

The Meridian System (Jing Luo)

"A study of the channels provides an essential basis for understanding the reciprocal relationships and influences among the various physiological, pathological, diagnostic and therapeutic aspects of traditional Chinese medicine".

O'Connor and Bensky (1981) **Acupuncture, a Comprehensive Text**, p.35

The Meridian System is presented and discussed on this web page in terms of its constituent parts. The nature and function of each group of Meridians is reviewed. The detailed pathway of each Meridian is described in various downloadable papers on this web page.

The course of each Meridian has been revised and where necessary rewritten to ensure the language used is consistent with contemporary western anatomical terminology, while at the same time retaining the meaning and integrity of the source material.

This web page provides a reasonably comprehensive view of the Jing Luo. Its content has been sourced and edited from the various titles listed in the References.

Twelve Primary Meridians

The primary Meridians are the most significant of the Jing Luo. As a group they connect and integrate the whole Meridian system.

There are twelve primary Meridians, each of which is an External expression of the Zang Fu to which it pertains. All connect with at least one other Organ, apart from its own, particularly that of their Yin or Yang partner.

Each Meridian is an integral participant in the activities of its pertaining Zang Fu, and receives part of its name from this relationship, for example, the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang.

Meridians participate continuously in all the functional activity of the Zang Fu, and in doing so participate in all the physiological activity of the body. The primary Meridians distribute Qi, Blood and other Fundamental Substances throughout the body (though mainly Qi), and together with the various other types of Channels, integrate and coordinate the activity of all the Organs.

They may reflect disharmony in the function of the Zang Fu, and are accessed, usually via the acupuncture points, for therapeutic benefit. The Meridians may also be investigated, usually with palpation, for diagnostic purposes.

A Meridian has a separate existence to the rest of its pertaining Zang Fu, to the point of having its own symptomatology, but at the same time is an essential and integral component of the whole Zang Fu. It is the same 'energy' as the whole (complete) Zang Fu.

A Meridian may be thought of as a functional subset within its Zang Fu, and yet it is an essential participant in all activities of the Zang Fu.

The term 'energetic Orb' has been used to encompass the functions of the Organ as well as those of its Meridian, particularly from the western point of view (Porkert, 1974). This allows specificity in discussion.

The Internal/External nature of the relationship between an Organ and its Meridian may be thought of as integrated and continuous, with an Internal or External view simply being a different approach to, or perception of, the whole (energetic Orb) entity.

A Meridian, usually via its constituent acupuncture points, is the means by which acupuncture gains therapeutic access to a patient's internal milieu, in order to influence Zang Fu function.

Almost all Meridians are bilateral. This is true of the primary Meridians, Luo's, Divergents, Muscle-tendinos, and skin regions, as well as five of the Eight Extra Meridians. There are three exceptions to this general rule, each of which is an Eight Extra Meridian. Du Mai and Ren Mai run along the midline of the body (back and front respectively), while Dai Mai is the only transverse (encircling) Meridian of the Jing Luo.

The Horary clock order of the Meridians presented in the tables below indicates the order in which Qi and Blood normally flows (in health), through the Meridian system.

12 Primary Meridians: Horary Clock order

	Hours	
Lung Meridian	0300 - 0500	Shou Tai Yin Fei Jing, Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin
Large Intestine Meridian	0500 - 0700	Shou Yang Ming Da Chang Jing, Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming
Stomach Meridian	0700 - 0900	Zu Yang Ming Wei Jing, Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming
Spleen Meridian	0900 - 1100	Zu Tai Yin Pi Jing, Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin
Heart Meridian	1100 - 1300	Shou Shao Yin Xin Jing, Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin
Small Intestine Meridian	1300 - 1500	Shou Tai Yang Xiao Chang Jing, Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang
Bladder Meridian	1500 - 1700	Zu Tai Yang Pang Guang Jing, Urinary Bladder Channel of foot Tai Yang
Kidney Meridian	1700 - 1900	Zu Shao Yin Shen Jing, Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin
Pericardium Meridian	1900 - 2100	Shou Jue Yin Xin Bao Jing, Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin
San Jiao Meridian	2100 - 2300	Shou Shao Yang San Jiao Jing, San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang
Gall Bladder Meridian	2300 - 0100	Zu Shao Yang Dan Jing, Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang
Liver Meridian	0100 - 0300	Zu Jue Yin Gan Jing, Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin

12 Primary Meridians: Alphabetical

Bladder Meridian	Zu Tai Yang Pang Guang Jing, Urinary Bladder Channel of foot Tai Yang
Gall Bladder Meridian	Zu Shao Yang Dan Jing, Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang
Heart Meridian	Shou Shao Yin Xin Jing, Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin
Kidney Meridian	Zu Shao Yin Shen Jing, Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin
Large Intestine Meridian	Shou Yang Ming Da Chang Jing, Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming
Liver Meridian	Zu Jue Yin Gan Jing, Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin
Lung Meridian	Shou Tai Yin Fei Jing, Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin
Pericardium Meridian	Shou Jue Yin Xin Bao Jing, Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin

Anatomical Distribution of the Primary Meridians

All primary Meridians have at least part of their pathway on one of the body's limbs, either upper or lower. It is from this anatomical distribution that the full name of a Meridian derives e.g. Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming, Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang. The following grouping shows Yin Yang partners. Each Yin Yang pair distributes to the same limb. The anatomical distribution of the Meridians is further described in Meridian descriptions and Meridian summary tables which may be found on this web page.

Yin		Yang
	Upper Limb (Shou)	
Heart Meridian		Small Intestine Meridian
Pericardium Meridian		San Jiao Meridian
Lung Meridian		Large Intestine Meridian
	Lower Limb (Zu)	
Kidney Meridian		Urinary Bladder Meridian
Liver Meridian		Gall Bladder Meridian
Spleen Meridian		Stomach Meridian

Points on the Main Meridians

The following list gives the standard/nominal number of acupuncture points on each of the 14 main Meridians. Points on other Meridians such as the Luo Mai and the Eight Extra Meridians are made up of various points from the 14 main Meridians.

There are also many 'extra' points which are not part of the traditional Meridian system. Such extra points are found on the ears, face, scalp, trunk, hands and feet. They are commonly part of the micro-systems of acupuncture therapy.

Meridian	Nominal (Unilateral) Points
Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin	11
Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming	20
Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming	45
Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin	21
Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin	9
Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang	19
Urinary Bladder Channel of foot Tai Yang	67

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Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin		27
Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin		9
San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang		23
Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang		44
Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin		<u>14</u>
	Total unilateral primary Meridian points	309
	Total bilateral primary Meridian points	618
Du Mai		28
Ren Mai		<u>24</u>
	Total main Meridian Points	<u>670</u>

General Summary of Primary Channel Disharmonies

This very brief overview of TCM pathology reflects both the anatomical distribution of the Meridians, as well as typical Disharmonies of the Zang Fu they participate in. It is an introduction in the most general terms, and is not meant to be other than that.

Three Arm Yin Meridians:

Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin - diseases of the chest, throat, trachea, nose and Lung.

Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin - diseases of the chest, Stomach and Heart; mental disorders generally.

Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin - diseases of the chest, tongue and Heart; mental disorders generally.

Three Arm Yang Meridians:

Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming - diseases of the face, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth, gums, neck, throat, and Large Intestine; febrile diseases generally.

San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang - diseases of the temporal region and lateral head, eyes, ears, throat and lateral ribs; febrile diseases generally.

Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang - diseases of the vertex, the back of the head, eyes, ears, throat, shoulders and scapulae; mental and febrile disorders generally.

Three Leg Yin Meridians:

Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin - diseases affecting the hypochondriac region, lower abdomen and genitals, menstruation and urogenital system, and head; mental disorders generally.

Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin - diseases of the upper abdomen, Spleen, Stomach, Intestines, menstruation and urogenital system; mental disorders generally.

Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin - diseases affecting the waist, menstruation and urogenital system, Kidney, Lung and throat; mental disorders generally.

Three Leg Yang Meridians:

Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang - diseases of the temporal region, nose, eyes, ears, throat and lateral ribs; febrile and mental diseases generally.

Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming - diseases of the face, forehead, nose, mouth, gums, teeth, throat, Stomach and Intestines; mental and febrile diseases generally.

Urinary Bladder Channel of foot Tai Yang - diseases affecting the vertex, back of the head, nose, eyes, dorsum of the trunk, and lumbar region; febrile and mental diseases generally.

Eight Extra Meridians/ Eight Extraordinary Vessels

These Meridians are called Extraordinary Vessels as they do not have the same characteristics as the primary Channels. Although there is a general pattern of Qi and Blood distribution, they do not cover the body to the extent of the primary Channels and in six of the eight cases are actually made up of acupuncture points from the primary Channels. None of these Meridians is directly identified with a specific Zang Fu in the way the primary Meridians are.

Each Eight Extra Meridian has a Master and Coupling Point, which together with other acupuncture points, may be used to treat disorders of that Vessel.

The Eight Extra Meridians have the function of reservoirs which regulate the Meridian system generally, but especially the primary Channels. They fill and empty in response to varying conditions of the primary Channels.

Of the major Organs, they are possibly most closely related to the Kidney, Liver and Spleen. They are also closely related to the Uterus, Brain and other Curious Organs.

By providing further interconnectedness between the primary Meridians they serve to integrate the whole Meridian system.

Two of the Eight Extra Meridians have their own points, Ren Mai and Du Mai. The pathway of each Eight Extra is described on this web page.

EIGHT EXTRA MERIDIANS:

Ren Mai	Conception Vessel (CV), Directing Vessel
Du Mai	Governing Vessel (GV)
Chong Mai	Penetrating Vessel, Thoroughfare Vessel
Dai Mai	Girdle Vessel, Belt Vessel
Yang Qiao Mai	Yang heel (motility) Vessel
Yin Qiao Mai	Yin heel (motility) Vessel
Yang Wei Mai	Yang linking Vessel
Yin Wei Mai	Yin linking Vessel

Twelve Divergent Meridians

There are twelve Divergent Meridians. A Divergent Meridian branches, or diverges from, each of the primary Meridians. They have a roughly vertical, or longitudinal, flow in the body. All Divergent Meridians reconnect to a primary Yang Meridian.

DIVERGENT MERIDIANS:

Diverge from:

Lung primary Channel

Join or Rejoin:

Large Intestine primary Channel

Large Intestine primary Channel	Large Intestine primary Channel
Stomach primary Channel	Stomach primary Channel
Spleen primary Channel	Stomach primary Channel
Heart primary Channel	Small Intestine primary Channel
Small Intestine primary Channel	Small Intestine primary Channel
Urinary Bladder primary Channel	Urinary Bladder primary Channel
Kidney primary Channel	Urinary Bladder primary Channel
Pericardium primary Channel	San Jiao primary Channel
San Jiao primary Channel	San Jiao primary Channel
Gall Bladder primary Channel	Gall Bladder primary Channel
Liver primary Channel	Gall Bladder primary Channel

The Divergent Meridians have their own characteristics, are distinct from the primary Channels, and distribute to relatively Internal areas of the body. Consequently they are regarded as a separate component of the Meridian system. They are of less significance than the primary Channels in the clinic.

In general terms, the Divergent Meridians penetrate into the cavities of the body. Each one makes a relatively 'superficial' connection to the Organ with which it is associated. Refer to the individual pathways. This means that they pass 'near' or 'over' an Organ, or through its outer aspect. So they are not usually associated with the Organs in terms of the 'Deeper' or more significant levels of Organ function.

The Divergent Meridians connect to the Organ of their Yin or Yang partner in the same way.

Those which diverge from a primary Yang Meridian enter their related Organ in the abdominal or thoracic cavities, then connect to the Organ of their Yin partner. Yin/Yang Organ partners are thereby connected. In most cases the Yang Divergents then rejoin their own primary Yang Meridian, usually on the head or neck. Thus the Divergent Meridians from the Yang primary Channels generally rejoin their own primary Channels.

Those Divergent Meridians which originate from a primary Yin Meridian do not return to their own Channel. The Yin Divergent Meridians rejoin the Primary Channels of their Yang partners, and thereby provide an important link between the primary Yin and Yang Meridians as well as the associated Organs of these Meridians.

Each Divergent Meridian of the three primary leg Yang Meridians crosses the Heart area on the way to rejoining its originating Meridian on the head or neck. And each Divergent Meridian of the three primary arm Yin Meridians diverges in the region of the axilla, enters its associated Organ in the chest, then ascends the throat to join the primary Meridian of its Yang partner on the head or neck.

The broad function of the Divergent Meridians is to link Channels, Organs, and functional relationships, especially those which are associated with Yin/Yang partners. They contribute to the interconnectedness of the Meridian system, and its integration with the Zang Fu. There are few separate symptoms which relate to these Meridians, and they are rarely considered separately in the clinic.

In a theoretical sense, they provide the pathways by which the Yin Meridians distribute to the head and neck, and help explain the relationship between distal points on meridians and their impact at various diverse anatomical sites eg. Bladder points (BL-57, Cheng Shan; BL-58, Fei Yang), to treat haemorrhoids. They also help integrate parts of the Organ system which are not well covered in other aspects of TCM theory.

The departure of the Divergent Meridians from their primary Channels does not occur at specific acupuncture points, and they should be thought of as traversing the Interior of the body, not the body's surface. This is in contrast to the Luo Meridians which separate at particular acupuncture points, and relate to the Exterior of the body.

Fifteen Luo Meridians/ Connecting Vessels/ Collateral Channels

There are fifteen main Connecting Vessels which branch from their respective primary Meridians. These distribute Qi and Blood through the more superficial regions of the body.

Each Luo Vessel of the twelve principal meridians also connects to the principal Meridian of its respective Yin or Yang partner. The Luo Vessel of Du Mai distributes Qi and Blood over the dorsum of the trunk and neck, especially on either side of the spine. The Luo Vessel of Ren Mai distributes Qi and Blood over the chest and abdomen, particularly to the upper abdomen. The Great Luo Vessel of the Spleen distributes Qi and Blood over the lateral aspect of the trunk, especially the lateral costal region.

Individual Luo Meridians may also connect with other tissues, Organs, and Meridians.

Disturbance of individual Luo Vessels is indicated by characteristic symptoms, and each Luo Meridian separates from its parent primary Meridian at a particular acupuncture point, called a Luo point. These points may be used to treat disorders of the related Luo Vessel, disorders of the primary Meridian or Organ, or disorders of the Yin Yang paired primary Meridian or Organ.

LUO/CONNECTING VESSELS:	also connects to:
The Luo Vessel of the Lung Meridian	Large Intestine primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Large Intestine Meridian	Lung primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Stomach Meridian	Spleen primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Spleen Meridian	Stomach primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Heart Meridian	Small Intestine primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Small Intestine Meridian	Heart primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Bladder Meridian	Kidney primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Kidney Meridian	Bladder primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Pericardium Meridian	San Jiao primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the San Jiao Meridian	Pericardium primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Gall Bladder Meridian	Liver primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of the Liver Meridian	Gall Bladder primary Meridian
The Luo Vessel of Ren Mai	
The Luo Vessel of Du Mai	
The Great Luo Vessel of the Spleen	

As well as these main Connecting Vessels, there are fine (minute) Luo Vessels which branch from the main Connecting vessels. The fine Luo are superficial Connecting Vessels which distribute to the surface of the body. They are considered to be observable in the skin.

There are also Blood Connecting Vessels which are small visible vessels on the surface of the skin. These may be bled to remove Heat in the Blood, or move Stagnation.

Twelve Muscle-Tendino (Sinew) Meridians

There are twelve Muscle-Tendino Meridians (MTMs) which connect with the muscular system of the body. Although they are associated with each of the twelve primary Channels, the MTMs are 'External' Meridians which do not connect with the Interior of the body.

MUSCLE-TENDINO MERIDIANS (MTMS):

The Muscle-tendino Meridian (MTM) of the Lung Channel

The MTM of the Large Intestine Channel

The MTM of the Stomach Channel

The MTM of the Spleen Channel

The MTM of the Heart Channel

The MTM of the Small Intestine Channel

The MTM of the Urinary Bladder Channel

The MTM of the Kidney Channel

The MTM of the Pericardium Channel

The MTM of the San Jiao Channel

The MTM of the Gall Bladder Channel

The MTM of the Liver Channel

These channels consist of groups of muscles, tendons and ligaments which follow, in a general way, the path of the primary Channel with which they are associated.

Although these Meridians may be treated in clinic, they have no separate points of their own, they do not connect directly with the Zang Fu, and their pathways all begin at the distal extremities of the limbs. They are not like the other Channels, in that they are not considered to be responsible for carrying Qi and Blood.

Each MTM 'binds' or joins to a limb as it travels towards the trunk. They bind to bones and move joints. Associated symptoms include sprains, strains, cramps, spasms and atrophy.

There are four general groups of MTM's which unite at four major binding sites.

The three Yang MTM's of the upper limb (Large Intestine, San Jiao, Small Intestine) bind at the corner of the forehead, near GB-13 (Ben Shen).

The three Yin MTM's of the upper limb (Lung, Pericardium, Heart) bind in the thoracic area, near GB-22 (Yuan Ye).

The three Yang MTM's of the lower limb (Stomach, Gall Bladder, Urinary Bladder) bind in the cheek area, near ST-4 (Di Cang) and SI-18 (Quan Liao).

The three Yin MTM's of the lower limb (Kidney, Liver, Spleen) bind in the genital area, near REN-2 (Qu Gu) and REN-3 (Zhong Ji).

Twelve Cutaneous Regions

The twelve Cutaneous regions cover the body's external surface, the integumentary system. Although they relate in a general way to the primary Meridians, these regions are the most superficial of any part of the Meridian system, and as such, tend to receive less attention than other aspects of the Jing Luo, both in theory and practice.

Each cutaneous region is considered as a surface extension of its primary Meridian. It is served by the most superficial fine Luo Vessels. Disease may enter the body through the Cutaneous regions, the Muscle-Tendino Meridians, the Luo Meridians, the primary Meridians, the Divergent Meridians, the Fu and the Zang. The order of entry presented in the previous sentence is generally External to Internal. Disease may be expelled in the reverse direction, Internal to External.

In clinic, the skin is often used in diagnosis, especially with palpation, olfaction and observation, and obviously may itself be the focus of treatment. The therapeutic approach to such treatment may be via the Meridian system (ie. the Meridian(s) which cross or lie near a particular anatomical site), or it may be via the Zang Fu and Fundamental Substances which have general energetic responsibility for the Exterior, such as the Lungs, Wei Qi and maybe the Liver. Treatment may involve a combination of these approaches.