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Celestial Healing: Energy, Mind and Spirit in Traditional Medicines of China, and East and Southest Asia

Marc Micozzi
Singing Dragon (August 2011)
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This clearly written overview will be appreciated by those seeking healing through Eastern traditional medicine, by guiding them to the best type for their situation. Dr. Marc S. Micozzi, founder and Director of the Policy Institute for Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, does an excellent job of describing different strains of Asian traditional medicine in a manner that is educated, informed, and fair.

Much of what developed as Asian medicine first emanated from what the author calls “greater China,” a huge landmass that has been “organized as a cohesive society” for over 5,000 years. Inevitably, Chinese medical techniques spread to remote parts of Asia, where each has taken on a unique character. In modern Viet Nam, for example, to be ill is to have offended a deity, and all healing must have a spiritual concomitant. This is a concept that once played an important role in Chinese medicine, but today, the Chinese have become more analytical, seeking to favorably compare their healing traditions to modern science. Micozzi unequivocally states that “Chinese medicine works.”

One example of the balanced picture presented in *Celestial Healing* is the section on the macrobiotic diet, propounded in the West in the early 1900s by Michio Kushi, who based his theories on earlier practitioners who “cured themselves of serious illnesses by changing from a modern, refined diet to a traditional Japanese simple diet.” Micozzi cautions that though the macrobiotic regimen “may provide a healthy and nutritionally balanced diet,” there is no proof that it cures cancer.

In this book you will learn the differences between Reiki and Shiatsu massage, an important distinction being that while both utilize the *qi* (essential energy) that emanates from the hands of the practitioner, shiatsu massage is relatively simple and anyone can learn to do it. The book explores the traditional medical practices of Japan, the Malay Peninsula, Thailand, Burma, and Vietnam. A useful list of plants and herbs and their medical uses in different countries is included.

Micozzi’s book offers a valuable basis for comparison of Eastern medical practices, points out that in the few short years since China opened its doors to the West these practices have gained a significant foothold in Europe and the US, and concludes that though much about Chinese medicine remains “a mystery to Westerners” it certainly represents “a worldwide resource for health and healing in the twenty-first century.”
BARBARA BAMBERGER SCOTT (July 18, 2011)

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