

Part 2: “The Power that Makes (Organizes) the Body Heals (Regulates) the Body”

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“THE CAUSE OF DISEASE

The Soil? or The Seed?

*‘Illnesses hover constantly above us, their seeds blown by the wind, but they do not set in the **terrain** unless the **terrain** is ready to receive them.’*

Claude Bernard” (Emphasis added)

Barge, F.H., *It Is As Simple As That & More*, Vol. VIII, 1996, p. 124.

“Chiropractic’s rationale begins with the law of biology known as homeostasis. Claude Bernard, the famous 18th (sic - 19th) century French physiologist, was the first to develop a concept of the constancy of the internal environment as the condition of free and independent life.”

Strang, V., *Essential Principles of Chiropractic*, 1948, p. 48.

Holistic/Functional morphology... (deals with) “the unity and wholeness of the organism, the striving toward an end ‘which constitutes the inner reality of life’ and the integration of form and structure.... The harmony of structure and function within organisms.”

Russell, E.S. (1916), *Form and Function*, Reprinted 1982, Univ. of Chicago Press, (quote from introduction to reprint), p. xv.

In Part 1 we considered three points that need to be reiterated here. First, in thinking about biology it is essential to consider the issues at three levels: *macro, meso and micro-levels*. Second, the expression “Universal Intelligence” is a philosophical concept that operates at the *macro-level* and is not subject to empirical proof but should be, and it readily can be, defended upon historical and philosophical grounds. Third, the term Innate Intelligence is a *meso-level* concept that refers to the “principle of organization” in living matter.

The proposition “the power that makes (organizes) the body heals (regulates) the body” contains two *meso-level* claims that can be considered separately. We will do that here and then touch upon their initial unification in the work of Claude Bernard.

Holistic/Functional Morphology

There was a huge debate in 19th Century England about the subject of “intelligent design”. That subject is once again a hot topic in the Western world. In fact, it is such a hot

topic that it is often referred to as simply I.D. The I.D. debate focuses primarily on the issue of a “designer”. That is, whether the evidence of living matter tends to (or does) prove the existence of God. We will presently leave that subject to the theologians and philosophers and return to the concept of the innate capacity for self-organization - morphogenesis.

The German biologists for the first sixty years of the 19th Century took their basic philosophical perspective (*macro-level* theory) from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant’s writings of the 1790s and early 1800s. Kant circumvented the “intelligent design/designer” issue and started with a philosophical assumption that living forms manifest purpose (teleology) and that the **“life sciences must ultimately rest on an explanatory framework uniting the principles of both teleology and mechanism.”** (Lenoir, T, *The Strategy of Life*, 1982, p. 2.; see also, Moss, L., *What Genes Can’t Do*, MIT Press, 2003.)

The German biologists following Kant’s *macro-level* teleological concept addressed, at the *meso & micro-levels*, questions as to the mechanisms by which this teleological principle manifests in the morphogenesis of individual organisms. An issue of central importance was whether the “organizing impulse” (Bildungstrieb) functioned within the organism as a whole, or was merely resident in the parts. The clear consensus among German biologists prior to the time of Darwin and Rudolph Virchow (1850-60s) was that the “organizing impulse” is an aspect of the organism as a whole – their paradigm was, therefore, both teleological and “holistic”.

Darwin and Virchow started a shift away from the holistic paradigm and towards an explanation of morphogenesis as the result of the activities of the parts (cells) and the metaphysical (*macro-level*) concept that living forms have been shaped exclusively by random chance and external environmental conditions – chance/selection. The quotation from E.S. Russell in the opening table clearly demonstrates that there was still a strong research tradition in basic biology espousing the teleological – holistic perspective into the 1910s.

The shift from the holistic perspective to a reductionistic (parts/cells) perspective took place primarily during the period from the 1860s to the 1920s. That shift obviously involved many players and many incremental steps. This history is well developed in the books by Lenoir and Morris referred to above and will not be addressed further here. Suffice it to say, Darwin and Virchow were the pivotal figures in this paradigm shift; especially due to Virchow’s influence on allopathic thinking and the allopaths legally protected monopolization of the market place of ideas.

It is important to presently recognize that the holistic perspective has been re-emerging since the 1970-80s and it is once again becoming a major paradigm within basic biology. It is often now referred to as an “organismic” or “epigenetic” theory. Chiropractors need to claim their legal rights to prominence with respect to the teleological - holistic/functional paradigm rather than having some of our chiropractic colleges chasing after separate licensing for acupuncture or allopathically oriented naturopathy.

Virchow v. Bernard

Virchow, in his 1858 work on *Cellular Pathologie*, theorized that the human body is an aggregate of autonomous cells and that disease starts as a process of change within those individual, autonomous, cells. His theory became a core concept of allopathic medicine and remains so to this day. Of course, the allopaths have now added gene theory to their model.

Claude Bernard is generally recognized as the leading medical physiologist of the second half of the 19th Century. Bernard was a follower of the teleological – holistic/functional tradition. However, he added an important element to that tradition in a series of lectures at “The College of France” in 1861. Bernard disagreed with Virchow’s theory of pathology and proposed that disease does **not** start as either a result of external factors (bacteria – “seed”) or within the parts/cells. Bernard theorized that disease starts as a dysfunction within the body’s “**terrain**” and he contended that the nervous system is a central component in this **terrain**.

In effect, Bernard correlated the teleological, holistic/functional “principle of organization” (the *Bildungstrieb*) with **regulatory function** – The Power that Organizes the Body Regulates the Body. (An English version of Bernard’s lecture was published in the U.S. in 1861 and a copy of that article can be viewed at www.promedlaw.com > medical articles > Co-Counsel in Dissent 2.)

Bernard’s argument was primarily with Virchow’s theory of pathology. However, their differences also came into issue with respect to Pasteur’s germ theory. It is said that for most of his life Pasteur agreed with Virchow but that towards the end of his life he shifted allegiance and agreed with Bernard; that is, as indicated by Dr. Barge, the **terrain** is the critical factor, not the invading pathogen. (Perhaps Virchow’s and Bernard’s positions are both partial truths.) We will return to the concept of the **terrain** in part 4 after presenting “**Part 3: Medical Monopolies – Leveling the Playing Field**”.