

Part 4: The Regulatory (Functional) “Terrain” Revisited

*“The nervous system, as Blainville philosophically observed, creates a **secret harmony** between the different parts of the living frame, establishes a permanent connection between them, and renders them mutually dependent upon each other.”*

Claude Bernard, *Lectures on the Spinal Cord*
(Published in the U.S. by Medical Times & Gazette, 1861, p. 183)

So the autonomic nervous system and “the arteriole, the capillary, the tissue space, the cell, the lymph capillary, which also lies in this same area, and we have a functional unit which is common to all tissue in the body.”

Martin R., *Dynamics of Correction of Abnormal Function* -
Terrence Bennett (California Chiropractor), *Lectures*, 1977, p. 6

“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

In Part 1 we emphasized that when “thinking about biology” we need to keep in mind the fact that there three levels at which issues can be addressed: *macro*, *meso* and *micro-levels*. In Part 1 we also addressed the *macro-level* concept of “Universal Intelligence” and argued that the concept that life is a product of an intelligent process is worth fighting for to the Nth degree. In Parts 1 and 2 we also demonstrated that “innate intelligence” refers to the body’s dynamic, functional, regulatory capacity and leads to a holistic viewpoint in biology and medicine. Further, we argued that this holistic viewpoint, or paradigm, is both philosophically defensible and a rational conclusion from the empirical data.

In Part 2 we considered the *meso-level* proposition that a major factor in the onset of disease is a **reduced functional capacity** due to interference with the body’s innate dynamic regulatory mechanisms. We will now return to the *meso-level* concept of the **biological terrain** or, as Dr. F.H. Barge so eloquently puts it - the **SOIL**. Two major *meso-level* questions need to be raised: 1) **What, or where, is this “soil”?** and 2) **Does this “soil” serve its regulatory function through only chemistry or are other mechanisms involved? Other mechanisms are involved!** (We will return to the second question in Part 5.)

The above quotation from the work of Claude Bernard is very important. As pointed out in Part 2, Claude Bernard is generally recognized as the leading medical physiologist of the 19th Century. Indeed, Bernard is considered to be one of the “patron saints” of allopathic medicine due to his proposal

that animal experimentation should be used as a basis for the advancement of medicine. However, allopathic medicine has totally ignored Bernard's pathophysiological model in favor of Virchow's theory that disease starts in the individual, autonomous, cell; plus now the genes. That is, for the allopaths, the seed is also the soil. (Of course, they currently include the immune cells/system.)

The allopathic community is entitled to follow their concept that the organizing/regulatory capacity is limited to the cells (including immune cells) and genes. But, their monopolistic practices relative thereto need to be constantly challenged. How? By pointing out that the allopathic position is, at best, a partial truth; by fully articulating the "functional/regulatory" paradigm and by asserting the constitutional right of chiropractors to follow their own basic paradigm(s). (Of course, one should also assert the patient's right to choose.) In addition, however, it is imperative to keep clearly in mind the levels at which these subjects are being addressed and to especially recognize where philosophy ends and science begins. That is, one should use the arguments that are appropriate to the *level* one is addressing; using philosophical/historical arguments to defend *macro-level* concepts and chiropractic principles; using philosophical and empirical arguments and evidence at the *meso-level* and by using primarily empirical evidence at the *micro-level*.

What is the Soil/Terrain?

Any chiropractor worth the title should let out a war chant upon reading Bernard's 1861 statement that the "nervous system creates a **secret harmony** between the different parts of the living frame." But we must go further. Bernard, in the same lecture in which the "secret harmony" quote was used, also stated: "in short, the discovery of the vasomotor nerves is pregnant with deeply-interesting results, both in Physiology and Medicine; it explains the singular phenomena of local circulation, from which the great majority of morbid symptoms are derived." I picture some chiropractors leaving me at this point; but hang on.

In 1895 D.D. Palmer wrote: "we have given the study of this dreaded disease (cancer) special attention. We think that we have at last fully arrived at the cause, . . . The cause is an obstruction to the blood circulation and an injury to the nerves." (Keating, J, *B.J. of Davenport, The Early Years of Chiropractic*, 1997, p. 13) Of course, the historical record is clear that D.D. subsequently narrowed his focus to the nervous system. But, we must now consider more contemporary knowledge of the body's holistic regulatory mechanisms – the "**soil**".

Terrence Bennett, a California chiropractor, started developing his understanding of the body's innate functional/regulatory capacity in the early 1920s and later used his concept of the "**functional unit**" (see above quotation) to develop his theory and practice of "neurovascular reflex" therapy. This therapy is presently practiced primarily by AK practitioners and is limited to the use of Bennett's neurovascular reflex points on the head. But, Bennett also identified points on the Torso that affect the **function** of the visceral organs. For anybody interested in Bennett's Torso points I suggest Leon Chaitow's book – *Soft-Tissue Manipulation, A Practitioner's Guide to the Diagnosis and Treatment of Soft Tissue Dysfunction and Reflex Activity*. The major point for our present purpose is that Bennett gave us an expanded definition and understanding of the "**soil**".

One has to ponder why the chiropractic colleges have not further advanced the description, understanding and therapeutic use of the soil/terrain concept. Fortunately, the German **functional**

medicine community has gone a long way towards doing this. Their bottom line is that the whole extracellular tissue serves a regulatory function and, as a unitary compartment, extends to every nook and cranny of the whole body.

A broadened understanding of the “soil” opens the door to *micro-level* questions such as why, how and under what circumstances, does the soil fail to serve its functional/regulatory purpose. I will leave you with two alternative but complimentary research perspectives – allopathic cancer research focuses on the following *meso-level* question – Why do cancer cells grow or become aberrant? The functional paradigmatic *meso-level* cancer question is – What keeps a normal cell from growing or becoming aberrant? (See former Parker Chiropractic College Professor Dean Black’s book – *Inner Wisdom, The Challenge of Contextual Healing*, 1990, p. 90.)

*David Prescott is a former prosecutor, law school dean, professor of constitutional law, and a trial attorney with over 30 years experience. He is also a 1989 Cum Laude graduate of Cleveland Chiropractic College. You may contact him through **The Prescott Group** (800)989-0855*

