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RESEARCH ARTICLE

METAPHYSICS OF FOOD: IMPROVING HEALTH BY RECONCEPTUALISING OUR RELATIONSHIP TO FOOD

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ABSTRACT

The dominant paradigm within which we conceptualise our relationship to food has largely been based on the reductio-mechanist mode of inquiry. We relate to food commercially by deconstructing it into identifiably fundamental components which can be replicated by reconstructing them chemically into synthesised products for commodification which imitate the living things in nature they once were. What we all too often fail to recognise is that the reductionism which characterises food processing serves on the one hand to detach us, as it were, from the subject matter of our investigations, 'real food. On the other hand the paradigmatic epistemology it presupposes covertly drives us to develop technologies of power designed for the most part to transform and reconstruct the living world of nature into a world of increasingly chemicalised, inert and deadened things. Being detached from our food is a facet of an epistemology of power which in an important sense alienates us from the world. We tend to take this alienation for granted and thus mindlessly live out our lives in environments which are highly artificial, impressively synthesised. Motivated by our obsession with power and dominance to control everything around us, we use our technology to transform the living world, namely, our mammoth cities in particular, into lifeless jungles of concrete, metal, and plastics. It is by virtue of the lifeless concoctions we manufacture that we gain a greater measure of control of the way in which inert things can be used in utilitarian ways. Indeed, the epistemology of power is designed to serve the gods of vested interest. This epistemology of power represents a new hierarchy of value that perpetuates itself by reproducing and recasting the world technologically. Within the commercial context of food technologisation, the mechanist processes which encourage our emotional detachment from the things of nature is the same modality of insensitivity that allows us to process our food by systematically destroying the living elements which define its natural configuration. Without a contrite heart we thus mindlessly and shamelessly transform the once living world of food into marketable but artificial and chemicalised nutritional packages of synthesised inertness. In what follows we endeavour to show that there is evidence to believe that *how we feel about the food we eat* makes a significant difference as to the capacity of the human body to digest, metabolise, and assimilate the nutritional value of what we eat.

INTRODUCTION

Given studies which support the theory of 'conscious action' in the management of human health (Radin *et al.,* 2006; Radin *et al.,* 2007; Shiah and Radin, 2013; De Sousa, 2013; Manek and Tiller, 2011; Weiner and Greene, 2014) aver that there is evidence to establish that metabolic entanglements of conscious interconnectivity between people and food can play a vital role in improving human health. The modality of this interconnection serves as a catalyst for reconceptualising our relationship with food, whereby we acknowledge that our own vitality is sustained by the authentic vitality of natural foods. The more pristine the food, the more vigour and vitality the human body integrates. In addressing this question, we shall now turn our attention to the work of Radin *et al.* (2006).

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In a series of experiments, Radin *et al.* (2006), worked to show that the positive attitudes of consciousness we express to water in particular, and food, constituted largely by water in general, can bring forth significant changes in the molecular structure and purity of the water in its own right, along with the foods in which the water is vested. Thus the capacity of water and food to react to the affection and gratitude from those who drink, or eat it, provide a resonance of energetic field that proves that those who honour and consciously revere the foods they eat and the water they drink, or absorb from the foods they eat, can significantly be benefitted in their health.

A Theory of Water Entanglement and Consciousness

It is the view of Radin *et al.* (2006) that the quality of water, (and food), reacts and changes for better or worse, based on the positive dimensions of the information received. In other words, water treated with compassionate intention improves

the harmonic resonance of its quality. According to Radin *et al.* (2006), negative intentions or negatively expressed emotions such as anger or verbal insult towards water and food can generate disharmony within its molecular structure. Depending on the length of time water is exposed to negative energy resonance, and the intensity of negative energy fields, water can be so acutely restructured that the resultant negativity of the molecular becomes unsuitable for our consumption. This being so, the consequences of consuming negatively energised foods, according to Radin *et al.* (2007) and others (Shiah and Radin, 2013), through exposure to negative intentionality can give rise to a changes in mood and behaviour. Similarly, thoughts expressed which enshrine the degree to which we value and honour the water we imbibe and the foods we eat can create aesthetically pleasing molecular structures, which by virtue of their wholesome energetic and aesthetic composition confer superior nourishment upon those who are privileged to drink and eat it (Shiah and Radin, 2013). On this assumption, Emoto (2004) points out that research over the preceding 50 years has investigated the relationship between human intention and its effect on properties of water (See Barrington 1982; Lenington, 1979; Roney-Dougal and Solfvin, 2004; Schofield and Hodges, 1991). According to Emoto (2004) such a relationship is of great interest to the fields of complementary and alternative medicine research, of particular note, therapies which involve intention (See Milgrom, 2014). It was Emoto (2004) who rekindled the notion that human intention could influence the 'hidden properties' of water and is capable of redefining its molecular constituents. Such a claim has led to further experiments including one study undertaken by Shiah and Radin (2013) which demonstrated that beyond the underlying mechanism of such a phenomenon, the empirical findings suggest that the taste and aesthetic qualities of a foodstuff and/or water can improve based on the addition of one 'secret' ingredient, "loving intention".

Exploring the Plausibility of Evidence-Based Experiments

Emoto (2004) demonstrated, through independent research, that the molecular structure of water could be influenced by human intention. However, it was the work of Radin *et al.* (2006; 2007) and Shiah and Radin (2013) that confirmed the work of Emoto, establishing a plausible understanding fundamental to intention and its influence on physical properties. Radin *et al.* (2006), adopting the hypothesis put forward by Emoto, showed that water "treated" with human intention could influence ice crystal structures from water, under double-blind conditions. According to Radin *et al.* (2006), after excluding subjective bias and potential for artifact, results from this study indicate that water treated with pleasant intention resulted in more pleasing crystal formations in comparison to water treated with negative intention. Reinforcing the work of Radin *et al.* (2006) is a follow-up studyby Radin, Hayssen and Walsh (2007) which investigated whether chocolate exposed to "good intentions" would enhance mood more than unexposed chocolate. In this double-blind placebo-controlled experiment, individuals were assigned to one of four groups, and asked to record their mood each day for the period of a week– mood was recorded using a Profile of Mood States (Radin *et al.* 2007). According to Radin *et al.* (2007), three groups blindly received chocolate that had been intentionally treated by three different techniques. These techniques included intention imprints placed by (1) a pair of experienced mediators, (2) use of an electronic device imprinted by 6 experienced mediators (See also Tiller, Dibble and Fandel, 2005; Tiller, Dibble and Kohane, 2001; Tiller *et al.,* 2004; Dibble and Tiller, 1999), and (3) a ritual performed by a Mongolian shaman. The objective in each case was that people who consumed the "intentioned" chocolate would experience a superior feeling of "energy, vigour and well-being". To differentiate outcome, the fourth group in this study blindly received untreated chocolate, as a placebo control (Radin *et al.* 2007). The hypothesis, as stated by Radin *et al.* (2007 p. 485) was that "mood reported during the three days of eating chocolate would improve more in the intentional group than in the control group". In a conceptually similar method to that of water, the findings from this study suggest that the "ethno historical lore of suggesting that the act of blessing food, with good intentions, may go beyond mere superstitious ritual…. (and moreover) have measurable consequences" (Radin *et al.* (2007 p. 490). For example, in this study, the analysis of participants who consumed less than 3.2 ounces of chocolate per week demonstrated enhanced improvements in mood (P =.0001), fatigue (P =.01), and vigour (P =.002) (Radin *et al.* 2007). Supporting the initial assessment of Radin *et al.* (2007) was a double-blind randomised study undertaken by Shiah and Radin (2013) investigating the effect "good intentions"on oolong tea, and whether mood could be enhanced for those who consumed it. In this study participants recorded their mood for a period of 7 days – using the Profile of Mood States - during which time they consumed oolong tea. According to Shiah and Radin *et al.* (2013), stratified, random sampling was used to allocate 189 adult subjects into two groups according to age, gender, the psychological trait of neuroticism (a trait that often has patients score high for heightened changes in mood) and the amount of tea consumed on average each day (all tea consumed was produced from the same source). The first group in this study received tea that had been intentionally treated by three Buddhist monks, while the second group received untreated tea. Fortifying the previous findings verified by Radin *et al.* (2007), the results of this study demonstrated that those who consumed treated tea experienced enhanced mood compared to those subjects who drank untreated tea (Cohen's d = 0.65, P =0.2, two-tailed). More interestingly, and strengthening Emoto (2004) and Radin *et al.* (2006) initial hypothesis, is the finding that change in mood was also experienced in participants who believed that they were consuming treated tea in contrast to that of participants who did not believe (Cohen's d = 1.45, P =.00002, two-tailed). Said another way, the belief that one was indeed consuming a treated tea produced an enhanced mood, however, only when the participant was actually consuming a treated tea. This being so, Shiah and Radin (2013) make the point that there exists interconnectivity between belief and intentional enhancement.

DISCUSSION

According to Tiller *et al.* (2004) and others (Tiller, Dibble and Fandel, 2005; Tiller, Dibble and Kohane, 2001; Dibble and Tiller, 1999), there is evidence to incite the concept that human intention can influence the molecular structure of physical properties. As voiced by Shiah and Radin (2013), why is it that mother's home-made soup tastes, and is more aesthetically pleasing to the eye, that that extracted from a can? Tiller *et al.* (2004) speaks to the abstract of this statement by offering the notion that human consciousness, in the form of a 'mother's nurturing intention', may play a critical role in the outcome of such a meal.

It is not to suggest that such intention dismisses the importance of using nutritious ingredients to prepare and construct a meal, suffice to say, that "loving intention" expands the capacity of such a meal to not only improve aesthetic qualities, but in conjunction, enhance the healing properties of the food itself. According to Manek and Tiller (2011), intentional-imprinted electrical devices are capable of recording an intention that can be played at a later date, with the ability to influence physical properties in its vicinity. As previously, although casually stated, the majority of research in this field has been reported by physicist, Professor William Tiller and colleges. Criticism has been raised, with independent replications of the concept proving difficult (Mason and Patterson, 2003), however, Radin *et al.* (2006; 2007) and others (Shiah and Radin, 2013) have independently demonstrated such an effect on physical properties utilising an intentional-imprinted electrical device. For example, Radin *et al.* (2007) recruiting the design put forward by Tiller *et al.* (2004) showed that by playing back a recorded intention for five days inside a Faraday cage containing samples of chocolate, the intentioned chocolate had a positive effect on mood, vigour and energy. Reflecting on the influence of intention at a macro-level, Manek and Tiller (2011) acknowledge that the hypothesis that macroscopic information entanglement is plausible. Meaning that at a macroscopic level, human consciousness is capable of influencing physical properties within its vicinity.

For Tiller *et al.* (2004; See also Manek and Tiller, 2011) his initial research using an intentional-imprinted electrical device demonstrated that human intention could influence the biological properties of water pH, and both the liver enzyme (ALP) and the molecular unit of currency, adenosine triphosphate, in the biological cells of fruit fly larvae. It is such unique research which highlights the plausibility of a connection between human intention and biological systems. Offering a philosophical description to the above is Laura, Chapman and Hinchey (2009) who identify the interactive phenomenon of human intention as an instantiation of "participatory consciousness".

According to Laura *et al* (2009), their hypothesis of "participatory consciousness" plays a key role in comprehending the efficacy of human intention in the study and design of physical properties. For instance, Laura *et al.* (2009) puts forward the notion that in the context of human intention, an interconnection exists whereby the parts of a biological system, for example, are entangled by virtue of their connection to the "whole" system. This being so, Laura *et al.* (2009) elucidates that if we are to extend this hypothesis by challenging the orthodox paradigm of mechanistic-reductionism by circumscribing the limits imposed by conventional Newtonian mechanics, it can be understood that the philosophical notion of participatory consciousness can influence the biological aspects within its vicinity. Looking at this from another perspective, Laura *et al.* (2009) points out that, in any randomised control trial, the important qualities of interest are at least vectors and thus, for a system of multiple parts, there is always an information entanglement amongst parts unless they are intrinsically and endogenously isolated from each other. According to Tiller *et al.* (2004), such thinking is slowly being recognised by physicists, whereby entanglement is imperative to the overall behaviour of any one system in nature, including the entanglement between parts of scientific experiments, including those presented by Radin *et al.* (2006) and others (Manek and Tiller, 2011; Radin *et al.* 2007; Shiah and Radin, 2013). On account of the philosophical view offered by Laura *et al.* (2009) it is plausible that the notion of participatory consciousness as an example of human intention helps to reinforce the hypothesis of Emoto (2004)that the interaction between human intent and its influence of the properties of water is reasonable.

Conclusion

On account of the evidence discussed, it is plausible that human intention can influence the food we eat, and the water we drink. Further, that the effect of human intention on physical properties can positively influence human health including changes to mood, energy and vitality. It is also clear that the intention itself plays a critical role in the outcome received. For example, negative intention produces outcomes of insignificance and/or in effect, whereas "good intention" produces encouraging results, with notable changes specific to human health.

It is considered that interconnectedness between human intention and the physical properties it interacts with, condition its environment to reflect the intent placed upon it. This condition, we suggest, is based on a participatory consciousness (See also Sheldrake, 1987) that shapes the environments we engage with, and in the context of food and/or water, can reconfigure or enhance its health related benefits. Moreover, Laura *et al.* (2009), points out that the epistemology of participatory consciousness expands the dominant paradigm of reductio-mechanism, which we argue has degraded the ritual of blessing our food, and our reverence to it.

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