Application of Shiatsu provides therapeutic relief to a growing number of people seeking a solution to their health problems which are not solved by biomedicine. This practice was introduced in Buenos Aires by Japanese masters in the 70’s. It received additional impulse in the 90’s due to the performance of non-Japanese therapists who had been trained both locally and abroad. Another contributing factor was the fact that it was promoted and brought to public attention by New Age circuits. There are currently eight centers available for treatment of patients and for the development of training courses. There is also a network of independent therapists. Surveys reveal the existence of insatisfaction with official medicine due to its excessive emphasis on technological development and neglect of an attitude of humane understanding. Patients obtain positive results in the treatment of a wide range of ailments. Whilst providing health care to those who are in need of it, therapists are able, at the same time, to pursue their own inner search. In many cases, a true interaction of oriental and occidental cosmovisions takes place, resulting in the modification of previously constructed ways of perceiving the universe. Thus, the practice of Shiatsu provides significant elements to those who apply it, in terms of nourishing social perceptions and legitimizing the adoption of new functional subsystems, conveying meaning, identity and a sense of belonging.

Keywords
Shiatsu, health, therapy, identity.