

**LARRE & ROCHAT HEART, LING SHU CHPT 8. CHIN. MED. CLASSICS**  
**CLAUDE LARRE AND ELISABETH ROCHAT DE LA VALLÉE (1991)**  
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**THE HEART, IN LING SHU CHAPTER 8, BEN SHEN**

[In this .pdf file: Foreword, LingShu8 text, Introduction, Ideograms for LingShu, Ideograms for Ben Shen, Summary, Questions, The Art of the Heart. pp.1-13, 74-91].

## **FOREWORD**

The Su Wen and Ling Shu, the two halves of the Huang Di Nei Jing, are rightly considered foundation texts of Chinese medicine. The framework of Man, ren, between Heaven and Earth, tian di, is ever present. The alternating flux of yin yang, the turning of the Four Seasons, si shi, the dynamic interplay of the Five Phases, wu xing; this is the field of medicine, the field of the zang-fu, the organs, whose interrelationships were studied in Su Wen Chapter 8, The Secret Treatise of the Spiritual Orchid.

Ling Shu Chapter 8, Ben Shen, is a strong call for the stability of the shen, Spirits, to be central to every treatment.

**Not failing to observe the Four Seasons  
and adapting to cold and heat,  
Harmonising elation and anger  
and being calm at rest as in action,  
Regulating yin yang  
and balancing the hard and the soft.**

**In this way, having removed perverse influences,  
There will be long life and lasting vision.**

Within its traditional structure of the Emperor's question followed by the Minister's reply, this chapter contains an important discussion of 13 successive terms and their interrelationship. This book focuses on this particular section of the text and is effectively a workbook that allows the reader access to the characters of the original text itself. The 13 terms roll on like a waterfall and are taken slowly, line by line, character by character, to present the weave and pattern of the cloth as much as the individual threads themselves. These terms are key to a deeper understanding of Chinese medicine with their strong connection to our mental, emotional and spiritual nature: de, Virtue; qi, Breaths; sheng, Life; jing, Essences; shen, Spirits; hun; po; xin, Heart; yi, Purpose; zhi, Will; si, Thought; lü, Reflection; zhi, Wisdom.

Central to this series is the Heart, pivot between the spiritual and mental faculties, calm seat of the emotions. Empty, to receive, unobstructed, to allow the free flow of life on every level. Here the wu shen, the 5 spiritual aspects: shen, hun, po, yi, zhi, are studied in depth and in context of the whole chapter. This is a profound text, constructed with the simple lightness of the Dao De Jing, illustrating the clarity and depth of perception apparent at the time and no less necessary to the modern practitioner.

Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée, of the Ricci Institute and European School of Acupuncture in Paris, are both lecturers of international repute who have helped to preserve the vitality and depth of Chinese thought with their special blend of scholarship, perception and humour.

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## The Emperor's Question

Huang Di asked Qi Bo this question:

In all needling, the method is above all  
Not to miss the rooting in the Spirits.

Xue and mai, ying and qi, jing shen,  
This is what the 5 zang store.

If a situation arises  
Where, following overflowing and complete invasion,  
They leave the zang,  
Then the Essences are lost;  
Both hun and po are carried away in an uncontrollable agitation,  
Will and Purpose become confused and disordered,  
Know-how and Reflection abandon us.

Where does this state come from?  
Should one accuse Heaven? Is it the fault of Man?

And what does one call Virtue, Breaths, Life, Essences, shen, hun, po,  
Heart, Purpose, Will, Thought, Know-how, Reflection?

## The Minister's Reply

Qi Bo replied:

Heaven in me is Virtue.  
Earth in me is Breaths.  
Virtue flows, Breaths spread out, and there is Life.  
That living beings arise denotes the Essences.  
That the Essences embrace denotes the Spirits.  
That which faithfully follows the Spirits in their coming and going denotes  
the hun.  
That which associates with the Essences in their exits and entries denotes the  
po.  
For that which takes charge of the beings, one speaks of the Heart.  
When the Heart is applied, one speaks of Purpose.  
When Purpose is permanent, one speaks of Will.  
When Will, which is maintained, changes, one speaks of Thought.  
When Thought spreads far and powerfully, one speaks of Reflection.  
When Reflection is available to all beings, one speaks of Know-how.  
Thus Know-how is what maintains your life.

Not failing to observe the Four Seasons  
And adapting to cold and heat,  
Harmonizing elation and anger  
And being calm at rest as in action,  
Regulating yin yang  
And balancing the hard and the soft.

In this way, having removed perverse influences,  
There will be long life and lasting vision...

*Claude Larre:* Chapter 8 of the Ling Shu presents so much material which is so inter-connected, that we need to have a general view of how this terminology is explained in the mind of the Chinese. There is nothing better than to look at Chapter 8 of the Ling Shu, in the same way that we have been working with Chapter 8 of the Su Wen, where we were able to see how the officials were working together. [Monkey Press Publication: The Secret Treatise of the Spiritual Orchid.] It is very common to refer to these two chapters, and my feeling is that the number eight is significant in itself. It means that to organise the inner life through this pattern of eight is the right thing to do. It is the same thing in embryology where we are working within the extraordinary meridians, and there we also find eight.

The winds in the universe are made from dispersion and reunion under this number eight. And since we know that the winds are just the name of Breath, qi, when taken inside the general pattern of Heaven and Earth, we understand that this organisation by eight might be the primitive organisation of life. It is also the number of the ba gua, the eight trigrams.

Although numerology is not the subject of this seminar, we have to keep in mind that there is no understanding of the way the Chinese explain the interplay of organs and every component of life without referring to numerology.

We never take this numerology as an intellectual game. We would prefer to say that we are living beings inside so many circles of life that the development of life is seen through different steps which are affected by a number. The unity of life is something that we feel so much, that when we feel the integration of our life with the life of another person or with the general life of others, we feel it is a healthy condition, a feeling of joy, because life enjoys the same thing - and that is the unity of it. We know the aspects when we come to two, and we know the other aspects when we come to three, four, five, six, seven, and eight: so numerology is nothing other than to be taken in the movement of life and to try to explain to our minds how it works. It is some sort of process. So it is not a dry arithmetic of numbers, it is the flux of life which has this abstract expression of something which is absolutely concrete and real. That is the way we have been working all these years. At first we were moved by curiosity, but slowly we have been entering the field of the presentation of the Chinese text through this analysis.

It remains a mystery and a problem that we should be able, just from the resources of our own minds, to put so much order into life around us that we express the core of its being, which is what all philosophers are trying to do. We ourselves are concerned with the same problems as Plato or Descartes: what is the right method to understand what we are doing here in this universe? We know that the Chinese, being very attached to the study of life, were as concerned as we are with the problem "What does that mean?" and "What am I supposed to do, or what am I supposed to understand in order to put some sort of light in my life that I may be able to go on with it?"

The Chinese order is not the European way of thinking since it is expressed through a special language, the idiomatic language. They have more view of things and the relationship between those things - it is more that way than the way of reasoning. I am not saying that the Chinese are not thinkers or that they are not able to have structures of logical opposition; they are able to do that, but



## THE IDEOGRAMS FOR LING SHU:



Ling Shu

*Elisabeth Rochat:* So we will start with this chapter, Ling Shu Chapter 8, ben shen. But first let's take a look at the characters ling shu, which forms the second part of the Nei Jing. Ling represents the influences that fall from above like rain. The lower section represents three people who are exclaiming and asking for rain, the squares are the three mouths. [Ref. Wieger, Chinese Characters, Lesson 72K].

Most often ling implies an influence that is received from Heaven, or from the Spirits. There are terraces or places that are raised up, called ling, because it is to these places that you go to observe Heaven and to receive influences from Heaven, or to get yourself in a good condition to receive the influences of Heaven. It is always the same idea - that if you receive the best influences but are not capable of understanding and containing them, then the correspondence is not good, and that will do more harm than good. So in this ideogram there has to be a good correspondence between what is given and what is received.

In the second ideogram, shu, there is the idea of a pivot, something between opening and closing, with the idea of going from opening to closing and closing to opening.

*Claude Larre:* And it is also like a revolving door - the entrance and the way out are circling around a pivot.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* We know that before being called the Ling Shu, this collection of chapters was called 'The Classic of the Needles', or 'The Needle Classic', and there are other names as well. They all revolve around this notion of the needle. The first chapter of the Ling Shu which is called 'The Nine Needles and the Twelve Sources', describes the action of the nine needles. Throughout the Ling Shu there are other chapters which deal with needles. This seems to indicate that the name Ling Shu could also refer to the needle in that the needle can be like an intermediary or pivot which allows opening and closing and communication, and once this communication is established then the influences can pass through. They can pass either between the doctor and his patient or perhaps the doctor himself is just a pivot like the needle. At that moment the celestial influences, which are called ling, the power of life, the power of Heaven, can return once more to the patient. This power of Heaven can penetrate the patient through this intermediary, and this is what is necessary to re-establish an equilibrium that has been disturbed, because in a human being who is endowed with reason, reflection, and who contains within himself the most subtle Spirits that exist on Earth, any

disturbance will go to that which is most subtle and most refined . And the most subtle things are the Spirits, shen.

The Spirits is a term that can be very generally used to indicate everything that is the power of life in that human being, but which is without form. Spirits barely even have the form of Breaths. With everything that has form, which can be touched or seen etc, we can see what is behind.

Chapter 47 of the Ling Shu, ben zang, describes in great detail the appearance of each of the organs or zang. Chapter 2 of the Ling Shu is called ben shu. It is not the same shu as in Ling Shu, but another which has the meaning of yu point. A yu or shu is not very visible or sensitive - but you have to be sensitive to it. Three chapters follow the same pattern, ben shu, Chapter 2, ben shen, Chapter 8, ben zang, Chapter 47, and they suggest a triple rooting - in the points, in the Spirits and in the organs. If the zang represent the dwelling place of the Spirits, welcoming them, and if the Spirits are the secret animation of the zang, then Spirits and zang are like Heaven and Earth. Thus, the points on the Human body represent the activity, the sensitivity, in the median, and perhaps the way to re-establish the relationship between Spirits and zang.

*Claude Larre:* There is nothing to be seen and it is difficult to make any association. But there is a knowledge of it, so it is a very non-material thing that we are looking for. That is the idea of the point which is conveyed by the Chinese character shu. In other words when you are touching the body in some place you are feeling that something will happen, and the patient slowly will feel better, we hope. Then feeling better, it means that some part of the body has been echoing what you were doing, and it is the feeling that from this part where you have been pricking a flux is sent or is moved to another part. It is the feeling of going from one place to another that is built into the character shu, because on the left side of the character is a chariot for transportation and the other part is two boats floating alongside each other. This means that what we are doing here is making a parallel effect on the flux of life. Your action is received and the man's life goes through some sort of transportation accordingly. That is the meaning of shu.

## THE IDEOGRAMS FOR BEN SHEN:

*Claude Larre:* To come back to the meaning of shen, the presence of Heaven in me is given by the shen flocking down to rest in me. The general feeling of shen is vague, celestial, intangible and all that - but the shen are really connected with each special part of my body. So it is difficult for us because we have two contrary concepts. One is shen at large, and the other is shen operating specifically here and there. Later on we will be able to see how to connect different perceptions of the same mysterious fact, that the action is celestial and brought to us by the shen coming from Heaven and falling down upon us, resting somewhere and being able to move our life through a certain process which will be described step by step, and each step will be characterized by an ideogram. So it's no use now to talk too much about the shen which is the ultimate goal of the teaching in the chapter, since the title it has been given is ben (you have to go to the roots) shen (in order to attract the power of the spirits).

**Ben Shen**

So I just want to warn you against the too broad idea of shen without any corresponding effect on the body, or against an appreciation of shen so much connected with the body that the celestial power is not understood. The fact is that we are working from one concept to another concept, and that is the ordinary way that our minds work. But the Chinese are not doing that, they are just writing characters, and through the characters we have to see how many different lines of perception are offered. Shen is offering the view of Heavenly effect. At the same time shen is giving you an indication of the most precise ways to move the Breath in yourself or in a patient. The character ben, from ben shen, is composed with the radical mu, number 75, with the meaning of tree or wood. It is quite obvious that this character is one of the Five Elements, Wood as an element and more concretely, a tree. Wood as a material is not Wood as an Element. Wood as a material is wood to make chairs and tables. Wood as an Element is a kind of vibration.

We know that the Wind, the Wood, the green colour, the acid taste and the muscles are something in different stages in the real thing which has the same movement. Wind is known by its producing force, but Wood is known by its fibre, and muscle is known by the fibre. And acid is known by its progressive mode, and the green colour is the colour of grass, trees and all sorts of plants which are growing. They are coming up progressively and they are bending, and going everywhere. And all that is the same aspect of life which is encompassed by this character.

But the Chinese way to use this radical is to fix the central aspect and to make further division in that aspect. Taking trees, we might be interested in this part of the tree where the trunk is going inside the earth with different roots. Then to mark that part of the ideogram which is specifically indicated we draw a small line. Then we say that inside this character we choose this aspect of the tree which is the root and the trunk. Each of us is living because we are well rooted, and from the fact that we are well rooted, we are able to spring up vertically like a plant. But, at the same time, we may be interested by the top of the character, which, with one extra stroke on top, becomes an ear of corn. We may play with this radical, doubling the radical it is two trees, a lot of trees, a wood. Or perhaps three of them, and that would be a forest, This is the way, not to play, but to use one single aspect of life which is connected with this progression. So whenever, in the actual text, we are looking at a character, it is not only the meaning which is given by the dictionary for the first word of the first line, because there are so many meanings which are compatible with the character and it is connecting all these circles with the other circles given by the following character, and it is really all the line which makes the

atmosphere in which the word itself has to be seen. So there is always much more in the Chinese text than in the English text, since the visible aspect of the ideogram is enriching the context of what is presented. And it is difficult to understand among so many significations going along one to the other, which is the guiding line of the expression. But in Chinese as in any other language, we are looking at the end. If someone starts to speak, you have it in mind that he wants to go somewhere and there is more meaning at the end than in the middle part or at the beginning. At the beginning there is strength, the approach to the subject is usually very clear and very bright, and it goes step by step to the end. So, enough of this.

With the trunk and the root, the two associated meanings are that the trunk is needing the roots and the roots are expressing themselves to form this well built body of life. That is something very close to another aspect - stems. Stems and branches have something to do with this ben or with this mu. The branches are the lateral expression, but the vertical expression is the stem. The stem is standing but does not give the same impression as ben. Ben is insisting on the root which is a trunk, which is not the case with stem. You see from a very simple example, that when it is the same English or French word which is used to make a translation referring to a stage where the expression is still Chinese and not yet English, at that place you have to feel how life presents itself, and you keep that in mind.

Now let's come to shen. Shen is made with two parts. The left part is radical number 113, which has something to do with Spirits. The Spirits are not seen, but if somebody is making a sacrifice he arranges a table with a stand from which something will rise. The right hand part is made from a primitive form of writing in which one part of the influence is going this way and the other part is going that way. So the concept and impression given by shen is of influx developing in both directions. And that influence is immaterial, not in the sense that it is non-substantial, it is not a question of logic. It is just that you cannot see it, but you may receive it, and you may feel it.

Now, we are a group of people, one is lecturing, the others listening: that is something that is not really seen, but it is perceptible. You can see it in your patients: when the patient is in a better condition, you can feel it, and he or she feels it. Everything is restored to life, and that is the effect of the Spirits. It may be visible on the face, in the emission from the eyes, the brightness of the face, the smile, the alertness, and everything is so active. So many Spirits are moving that life is now restored. And this is the meaning of the radiance of the shen. Radiance is perceptible, and if something is perceptible it is because something is working. The Spirit is shown through the radiance: there would be no radiance without something to irradiate.

So ben is that you have to go to the roots of life, and shen is that you have to move the lazy shen, or to call the shen back because they may be displeased with the state of the disorder where they are supposed to rest. If they have no rest they will not stay. And ben shen for the physician or for the therapist is to go with all his knowledge and all his power into the place and try to move something, to attract the Spirits and make them work again. Enough of that...

*Elisabeth Rochat:* It is also interesting to see that in the primitive graphics for the Spirits there is the idea of this alternating power which makes life, and which within the Spirits is at the same time imperceptible and indissociable, it can't be separated. The Spirits are a power which can accept

everything that is yin as well as everything that is yang, but beyond that they cannot be analysed according to yin and yang, they are beyond that.

This is confirmed by the Great Commentary, Xi Ci, on the Yi Jing (I Ching), The Book of Change, where the great definition of shen is that it cannot be detected through yin and yang, because reconciling the two and being at the same time beyond it, it represents the power of life in its Heavenly unity, capable of penetrating and embracing, containing and accepting the yin and yang which makes life on Earth.

You find Spirits, shen, joined together with something which we consider to be very yang, like the Breaths, qi, and also with something which we consider very yin like Essences, jing. You find both couples, and the qi and jing, Essences and Breaths, themselves constitute a couple. So we have the three great key terms in Chinese medicine where the Spirits represent the power of Heaven, and the Breaths represent the power of Earth, because it is by the virtue of the Breaths that all forms are created, and the Essences refer to that which is joined together in the middle. All this will be clearer when we look at the actual text of Ling Shu Chapter 8.

*Claude Larre:* I will just say something about shen and qi, shen being the leading factor and qi being the expression of the leading factor. Whenever you are talking of qi it is a yin qi or a yang qi, or a mixture of yin qi and yang qi to make the very well composed qi, he. He is the combination of the qi of the yang aspect and of the qi of the yin aspect, in order that life is well balanced and every living being is stable and prosperous, because the harmony of yin and yang are constitutive of its qi. There is no living being incorporated in the universe which is not the result of a good combination of yin qi and yang qi. The animation of that which is neither yin or yang is on the higher level, on the level of the Spirits. Without the Spirits the yin qi and yang qi are not able to turn to one another, so you have to draw a line to separate shen from qi. But the shen and qi together make the expression shen qi, which is the expression of life drawn by the qi under the guidance of the shen. And this is a more yang aspect, because qi as animation refers to the more lively aspect of us. But the jing refers to the other aspect. It is impossible to have any animation without a very strict basis for that. It's like so many food dishes put on the table, when you are assimilating those dishes then you build in yourself the same thing, in your Essences, and from these Essences you will be able to manifest the Spirits which are working in yourself. The Spirits from Heaven are your own Spirits, but they are your own only because of the specific pattern which is given by the Essences, jing. The combination of Essences and Spirits give this jing shen which is more like the nerve of your life.

The three main characters are now in place. These are the characters that are connected at the beginning of the Ling Shu.

[The following two .pdf files are a discussion {of the first section} of the text of Ling Shu Chapter 8 taken line by line. For each line the Chinese ideograms are presented, reading from above down within the line and from right to left across the page. The transliteration in pin yin is also given, enabling each character to be identified with ease....

The text is divided into different sections to present a clear picture of the structure and with each line clearly identified. A translation is also given. In this way no previous knowledge of Chinese is necessary to gain maximum benefit from the text and commentary].

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**SUMMARY**

*Claude Larre:* All that is the answer given by Qi Bo to the question from the Emperor, so we have to see it in the context of the beginning of the chapter. If we consult the text, we see that each of the demands of the Emperor has been answered properly, but we may add one or two remarks on points which are now secure.

The first is that in the answer Heaven and Earth are called in. Heaven and Earth are the parents of man. This is seen in *Huai Nan Zi* at the beginning of Chapter 7: Your parents are not your so-called parents, your parents are Heaven and Earth. If we do not stick to that meaning, if Heaven and Earth are taken as some distant actors in our life, then we miss the point, and we miss the Chinese outlook. Another point is that life, which is the character *sheng* (now I am alluding to line 13, sixth character, which is also radical 100) is making Heaven and Earth come together to produce life. But this coming together of Heaven and Earth is more specifically the coming together of the *de* (Virtue) of Heaven in myself, and the *qi* (Breaths) of Earth in myself. We have to keep in mind that I am nobody without the Virtue of Heaven. It is impossible just to have an ordinary life. Each of us has an extraordinary, perfect, individual and uncommon life. And everything is put under the Virtue of Heaven, and everything is put under the *qi* of Earth. So we do not take this as the only formulation of fact of individual life. We can take this as a very well connected line to understand how things are going, to know more about the Essences, about the Spirits, about the *hun*, the *po*, the knowledge, the know-how, and all that.

A third point is the particular treatment given to the Essences. The Essences appear before the notion. The character, or ideogram, for Essences, *jing*, appears before the actual individual life is given. It is proven by the fact that they say that the coming of life is through the Essences, is marked by the Essences. It means that the human species is something that has to be thought of before the actual being is created; and the pre-eminent role of the Virtue of Heaven is to give the pattern before the making. If there were no pattern, the Spirits would have no place to rest, and that's what we were saying previously, that a nest has to be prepared for the bird. Some Spirits would come here because the place is convenient for them, and the Spirits of man are not being mixed with other spirits which may dwell elsewhere. (Though we have some cases where this is so, for example in Chapter 2 of *Huai Nan Zi*, we have an individual who at times seems to be a man, at times a tiger.)

So we can understand that in superstition and in all the creative imagination of the Chinese it is possible that they come to the idea of man's Spirits mixed with other elusive entities. But the *jing*, Essences, for human beings, and the *jing* for the clan and for the family was really the model, the fabric, or the way through which life would appear. And that is clearly said in line 14, that without this preparation of the Essences, life will not appear, and what maintains life is the Spirits. It is as if the Essences were more logical, or a secondary category of things compared with the Spirits.

Intellectually speaking, it is difficult to find an English or French word to explain the connection between the Spirits and Essences. We find the same difficulty in relation to the *hun* and *po*. The *hun* and the *po* are closer to me, but just a duplication of the *shen* and the *jing*. If we understand how the

hun and the po are matching one another, then we understand how the jing and the shen are mutually acting one for the other. It is the same problem but not at the same level.

I can only repeat what Elisabeth said about the position of the Heart. Up to line 17 it is just a matching of Essences and Spirits or hun and po in an individual without activity in the mind. I feel that the Heart is a mirror, and this appears in many texts, where things, events, affairs, are reflected, or it is the place where they are organised, where they are accepted. The Heart is a collector. There is no specific word for describing what the Heart is, it is only suggested by the position of the characters, one after another. Heart is more precisely known at the intersection of two lines. I am interested in the way that the presentation is working in our own mind, and that is very important.

It is impossible that what has been said of the yi, the purpose, would be able to be transformed into zhi, the will, without the character cun, stay. The same is true for the si and the lü, meditation and reflection or effective consideration of the past; and here is a very good point for modern philosophy. The time will come when there will be philosophers in this part of the world who cannot think a new philosophy without including what the Chinese have said on consciousness, on time, on space, and all that. A lot of them pretend to ignore the Chinese work, and they are just repeating the philosophy after Hegel, Kant, Rousseau and others. But the time will come when they will be quoting the Chinese texts, in good or less good translations, because the question of how a bodily man reacts in the face of life, how life and death is accepted, all this has been said in much better terms by the Chinese. So the time will come when that will be a part of modern thinking.

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## QUESTIONS

### Dreams

*Question:* It was mentioned before that dreams occur because the hun follow the shen and the shen are free to come and go. I thought that if one dreams it was because the hun is not housed, not because the shen is free to come and go.

*Claude Larre:* In the 16th line of the text we have seen that it says: following the shen going and coming away, are the hun. So it is impossible to make any distinction between the hun and the shen when they are going out or coming back home, since one is following the other. We have been discussing this question of reflection. If between shen and hun there is really no more difference than between an object and its reflection, if they go at the same speed, and one is a messenger of Heaven and the other your own proper hun, if the only distinction is that the shen in yourself is called hun then the question of dreaming is a question of how and why the shen are going out, and the answer is given in Zhuang Zi Chapter 2 when it is said that when you are awakened it is not possible for the shen to go freely wandering around. You have open eyes and all your senses alert. You are fixed to all that you see here that makes your imagination and all your actions and movements are under the strict laws operating in the precise world of the awake.

But when you close your external organs, you immediately close the rigid structure of your mind and then you are free to go everywhere with your hun. And your hun are received by other hun. It is possible for the hun to meet like a ladies' club when you are dreaming! There are a lot of references to dreams in other books which are relying on Zhuang Zi Chapter 2, because this chapter is so perfect,

and probably so old, that it has imposed its own understanding of how we are free to move outside the body with the hun. There is the same thing at the end of this chapter about a butterfly being Zhuang Zi, or maybe Zhuang Zi being a butterfly, connected with the time of sleep and the time of awakening.

*Question:* You have said that dreams are a very natural phenomenon, but if different dreams have different pathologies, are they not also a pathological phenomenon?

*Claude Larre:* Everything is pathological in life because there is no perfect man. It is a deep pathology. There is no normality here among us. But some are really in a sad condition, some seem to be in rather a good condition. How do I know that? Through their faces.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* We can say several things about this. There are dreams that are of a healthy man and which are a mark of the freedom of the hun which is contacting the deep reality of life in sleep, when nothing comes to disturb this contact. If someone is slightly disturbed, either in the Spleen, the Liver or the Lung, that can be felt in sleep when you are not concentrating on your own life. At that moment, dreams will give an image of this reality even if this reality is at that moment a picture of a certain imbalance. Therefore in the Nei Jing you have different diagnostic indications linked with specific organs and the objects about which you dream. There is another thing, which is that you may have dreams which shake you up and disturb you deeply, this is an indication of a severe imbalance between the hun and what should fix the hun in the interior. For example, this is often linked with an insufficiency of the yin or Blood of the Liver, and you must not forget that the Blood carries the Spirits to the Heart and the Liver. The Liver stores the Blood, especially in sleep and at rest. The Blood that is not used in the efforts and actions of waking life then returns to the Liver. And here we find the joining of yin and yang, of Blood and Spirits and the hun participating in the balance of the being during sleep.

Also in sleep what is called the wei qi, the defensive qi, which is not active on the outside of the body, must come back inside the organs with double effects: the closing of all the orifices and even of the pores of the skin, and the action of regulating, at a very deep level, the actions of all the organs, which is the function of the wei qi during rest. Rest in a well regulated life should always correspond with the concept of night. This is the ideal proposition.

*Claude Larre:* Dreams are possible when we are awake, but they are not called dreams, they are called day-dreams. A day-dream is possible since you are operating with only your eyes and your ears, but part of your senses are not alert. So being disconnected with the intense application to the surroundings, you are not free to go everywhere as in true dreaming, but you are freer than now. Some are really daydreaming now, but others are trying to understand what we say! They are hearing and they are looking, and for that reason it is not easy for them to dream peacefully. Those who are strong enough and brave enough to be day- dreamers, those are half-way between what is needed to do something and what is needed to be done. Because when you are in a dream, you are more done than doing. But if you are done in a certain manner, then it proves that you are surrendering to that sort of eruption in your life. If you are weak in certain parts of your body or life, it will be through that weakness that the sort of dream will be acting.

I remember myself, during the month of December I was rather tired and I was unable to fix my mind on listening to people, and I was able to teach without knowing what I was teaching, I had just a very vague control over what was flowing from my mouth, which is perfect. People like that - but they feel constantly concerned, because they themselves are taken into this way of thinking which is not far from a dream. And we know that we prefer dreaming than facing things to be done. Is that pathology? Yes, definitely. Weakness of the Kidneys or the Spleen, probably not that of the Liver, the Liver being excited in contrast to the weakness of the others. If the condition becomes serious, the Heart itself would have the feeling of emptiness, but not a good emptiness, some sort of xu xin, empty by lack of vigour.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* This is an extract from Su Wen Chapter 80, which shows the kind of dreams that are connected with the Heart:

**When the Breaths of the Heart are empty, then you dream of fires and yang beings such as dragons.**

And in Ling Shu Chapter 43:

**When the Breaths of the Heart rise up in power then you dream that you laugh easily, or that you are fearful.**

The first is the exuberance of the Fire of the Heart which is shown, and the second is a deep injury to the Kidneys, or a disturbance in the relationship between Fire and Water.

**And when there is counter-current which allows perverse energy to attack the Heart, then you dream that you see hills and mountains with fires and fires with smoke.**

## **The Emotions**

*Question:* There has been no mention of the emotions, are we awaiting the subdivision of the zang before we mention that?

*Elisabeth Rochat:* They come later in the chapter when we have all kinds of emotions which injure life, and then all the symptoms.

*Question:* But we cannot consider them only as pathology.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* This is all linked with the void or the emptiness of the Heart, the art of the Heart. When you name an emotion, when it appears, and it appears sufficiently strongly to actually take root in your being, that means it is not in balance with all the other movements, and therefore it is pathological. In the balanced harmony of life in the external circulation and movement through the Heart, what pushes you upwards must be moderated by what pushes you downwards. What pushes you outwards must be balanced by what goes inwards. At that moment it is like a car that is working well, with no little noises. When you get those little noises, then that indicates that you are sad or angry, it shows that there is disharmony. One movement stays at the expense of all the others. At that moment then you are in anger. But if that movement of anger is well balanced by considerate thinking, by prudence, then there is no anger, and you go forward.

*Claude Larre:* When Elisabeth was saying that we balance one of the emotions with the other, I am sure that you understood that this was not to achieve a standstill. It was that for that period of time

you will be more powerful, or you will be more grieving, and so on; like the birds singing in the early morning in Spring. There is no way to stop them, and there is nothing wrong in it. It is pathological only when you are unable to stop that emotion, even when you want to.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* For example, it is normal that rains come from time to time, and that it is windy from time to time. But if it rains all the time, or if it is windy all the time, then we say the weather is crazy. In the Chinese text there are many comparisons between the weather and the emotions in man. It is exactly the same thing.

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## **THE ART OF THE HEART**

[The following is an extract from a commentary by Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée on Nei Ye, Chapter 49 of Guan Zi (translated by W. Allyn Rickett, published by Hong Kong University Press). We are unable to reprint the whole text, but offer a small extract here and urge readers to consult the text. It provides an excellent illustration from a non-medical text of the ideas presented in Ling Shu Chapter 8].

**When our Hearts are well regulated, our senses are well regulated too.  
When are Hearts are at rest, our sense organs are at rest too.  
What regulates them is the Heart.  
What sets them at rest is the Heart.  
The Heart thereby contains a Heart.  
(That is to say) within the Heart there is another Heart.**

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The terms that are used in the Chinese are just this - the Heart is to store the Heart. In the middle of the Heart there is another Heart. So the question is whether this Heart which is the middle of the Heart is the intelligence or the mind. I feel this would reduce the Chinese thinking, but they didn't wish to reduce this thinking by choosing another ideogram. If they had said that within the Heart there was thought or mind then they would have been forced to use another ideogram which would almost certainly have contained the ideogram for the Heart. This would be a limitation with reference to the Heart itself, which is the sum of everything that makes life - intelligence, thought, sensation, emotion, etc. Everything has to circulate and be transformed through the power of the Heart, and it is that that makes the quality of life in man. But at the same time we can understand what is given in the old medical books, where we have a Heart which is protected by a Heart. And from time to time they speak of this central Heart which is nothing but a void, a possibility of transformation and transmutation and of circulation. This void is filled with the Spirits which make all this circulation and transformation, which allow it to stay within my own being and my own unity, so that my life is not the life of another.

We so often take the Heart on a more tangible, more visible aspect, with a particular action, which is seen in the image of Fire. But here it is not the free circulation and flow of everything, but more the specific circulation of the qi and the Blood, and it is in this sense that the Heart is said to master the mo or the mai. It has mastery over the energy pathways which form the Blood. The term which is used for this mastery is zhu, and you can see how this is different from the function of the prince, jun, which we saw just now in the text. And if you remember, in Su Wen Chapter 8 the charge of the Heart is both of these together, jun zhu, at the same time the prince and the master: at the same time

this void, this emptiness which rules and regulates everything, and the expression of life at the level of the Heart and of Fire, for example, through all the animating network making Blood and qi circulate.

So we can see that the French and English translation 'master of the Heart' or Heart Governor is not at all correct. It is not the master of the Heart - the Heart cannot have a master!

**In the Heart of that Heart, intellect comes before words.**

*Elisabeth Rochat:* Here you see that intellect, yi, exists before things have come into words.

**After intellect come forms, after forms come words, and after words come implementation.**

**After implementation (things) will be well regulated.**

**If they are not well regulated, there will certainly be confusion.**

**If there is confusion, there will certainly be death.**

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The ideogram which is translated as 'will be well regulated' is an ideogram that is used for governing things well, or to treat a patient well, or to cure a patient - because all of that is the same thing.

**When the Essence exists (within) and gives life naturally,**

**The outer appearance will then glow.**

**Being stored internally, it acts as a fountainhead.**

**How great !**

**Being peaceful it acts as a wellspring for the Breath of life.**

**So long as the wellspring does not dry up, the four parts of the body then remain firm.**

**So long as the wellspring is not exhausted, the passages of the nine apertures then remain clear.**

**Thus it is possible to explore the limits of Heaven and Earth and reach all within the Four Seas.**

**If within there are no doubts, there will be no calamities without.**

**If the Heart is complete within, the form will be complete without.**

**Neither encountering the calamities of Heaven nor meeting with harm from men -**

**We call such a person a sage.**

**When a man is capable of being correct and quiescent,**

**His flesh is full, his ears and eyes sharp and clear,**

**His muscles taut, and his bones sturdy.**

**Thus he is able to wear on his head the great circle (of Heaven)**

**And tread on the great square (of Earth).**

*Elisabeth Rochat:* Here we can see that with a Heart which is in harmony and well centred, the man is in his correct position between Heaven and Earth. This is seen right down to the quality of the pores of his skin. A sage has a clear complexion. That is said everywhere.

**Concentrate your Breath of life until you become Spirit-like,**

**And all things are complete (within).**

**Can you concentrate?**

**Can you adhere to the unity of nature ....**

**....When the four parts of the body have become corrected and the Blood and Breaths have become quiescent,**

**You may make your intellect adhere to the unity of nature and concentrate your Heart....**

**...It is ever so that the life of a man must depend on impeturbability and correctness.**

**The way in which they are lost is certain to be through joy or anger, sorrow and suffering.**

**For this reason,**

**To put a stop to anger there is nothing better than poetry.**

**For getting rid of sorrow there is nothing better than music.**

**For moderating music there is nothing better than the rites.**

**For preserving the rites, there is nothing better than respect.**

**For preserving respect there is nothing better than quiescence.**

*Claude Larre:* It takes time to see the fitness of each of the determinations. Our work, as far as I understand what it should be, is not only to understand, but to look at the text as if it were not possible to say anything differently, and to look at another text and have that same feeling. It has to be said in this way. Then any so-called contradiction is erased by the fact that the modern mind is free to change its point of view. That is typical of the traditional text.