

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: The Minister's Reply. pp.27-73, 91].

CASCADE I
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...

An Instructive Discussion

地 天
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在 在
我 我
者 者
氣 德
也 也

tian zhi zai wo zhe de ye

di zhi zai wo zhe qi ye

'Heaven in me is Virtue.
Earth in me is Breaths'.

Qi Bo has understood the Emperor's question so well that he places the condition of life for a man within the condition of life in the Universe, whether that is movements of the Mind, the Blood or the Spirit. If you deviate from this movement of life then that will produce all the catastrophes that Huang Di talked about before.

These are all examples of dissolution or decomposition, disharmony between two elements that should come together, such as the hun and the po, the will, zhi, and the purpose, yi - or the knowledge of how to do things, zhi, and the knowledge that one can do them, yi.

The first word in this speech by Qi Bo is Heaven, tian. So here we see that the Breaths are on the side of Earth, and they are on the side of Earth because they are yin and yang Breaths in harmony and composition, alternating, and this will produce all the beings that come out of the Earth. This is done thanks to an impulse, the impulse from Virtue. This is the way of producing things without doing anything in particular. It is through that that all the effects of life are produced. This is on the side of unity and the origin, on the side of Heaven, staying in what we call Virtue in every sense of the term. We have the presentation first of Heaven, then of Earth. The Chinese don't try to look at what you can't see. They start by looking at what is in front of their eyes, and from that they try to rise to the more subtle things. If you want to find out what life is, then what you have before you eyes and what you can feel, is your own life, and it is because of this that you have this pronoun wo, which means me. From what you can grasp of your own life you can understand what life is. If you see that within me there is this profound unity which goes straight forward, and that there is all this animation from the Breaths seen in various different aspects and different forms, you can see that the junction of the two, the joining of all these things will make life in one unity. That makes life because you are alive. *Claude Larre*: He who is in life, has to be in life because he is speaking. There is no question: am I, or am I not? To be or not to be is not the question! There is no question!

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de liu qi bo
er sheng zhe ye

‘Virtue flows, Breaths spread out, and there is Life’.

Elisabeth Rochat: You can say that Virtue flows, the Breaths spread everywhere, that is what makes life.

When Virtue flows down from above, de liu, and the qi spreads, bo, everywhere, that is life, *sheng zhe ye*.

Claude Larre: I would just like to take again the first three lines (lines 11, 12, 13):

tian zhi zai wo zhe de ye.

When we say Heaven we understand that it is the presence of Heaven, or its power in myself that is alluded to. Then how do I qualify this power of Heaven in myself? This is myself, wo, not in the meaning of a human being but this specific human being that I am, me, and not another. This zhe is just insisting on making myself more evident, more objective. De ye, this Virtue, has in our occidental mind a double meaning which makes a single meaning in the Chinese approach. A double meaning in that in myself the Virtue, the fact that I am able to do, to live, this is Heaven. The other meaning is that when Heaven wants to do something in the universe, it does it even through the mediation of man. This is a much larger meaning which is not implied immediately in the text. But we

know from other texts, especially Lao Zi that not only the dao, the Daoist highest concept, and the Virtue, which is very similar to the dao, and Heaven and Earth, are called great. But Man is too.

Lao Zi Chapter 25 says:

Great is the Way, great is Heaven, great is the Earth and great also is the King.

In the universe there are four greats but the King is one of them. So this wo, which by itself is just myself, is as big as Heaven since my true self is operated through the Virtue of Heaven, and my Virtue is never more complete and perfect than when everything in myself is following Heaven's direction. Then we understand that all the ordinary efficiency of life, the life of the patient, may be called back in case of disorder, only if I am strong enough and clever enough, and non-interfering enough to make this gift from Heaven operate again in the self of this patient.

di zhi zai wo zhe qi ye

Then, contrasting Earth to Heaven, going through the same characters, *zhi zai wo zhe ye*, we come to the last opposition between de, Virtue coming from Heaven, with the qi, Breaths coming from Earth. De and qi might be understood in that I feel Heaven in myself as Virtue and I feel the presence of the Earth in myself from the fact that I am full of qi. More specifically, coming to the actual man that I am, I want to know how the Virtue which is myself is operating, and I want to know how the qi coming from the character Earth, has to do with the formation of this individual being that I am? This is then through the liu effect, to flow, and through the bo effect, to spread.

de liu qi bo er sheng zhe ye

The liu effect is that the Virtue comes from above and spreads, and the bo effect is that not only does it flow, but it falls everywhere, and is making the kind of milieu from which I am born. We have to know more precisely how this coming to life is achieved, not only that Virtue is flowing and that qi is spreading, but that Virtue is flowing because it pertains to Heaven to make its Virtue come down from above, and it is proper to Earth to make the dispersion and spreading of Virtue all around. One may say that in springtime, looking at the sky, we may feel that there is enough light to make the grass grow. That would be the vertical influence of the sky, and behind that sky I know there is Heaven, which I can't see but I understand to be represented by sky. Sky is the normal representation for Heaven, it is not the same thing but it is the true image of Heaven. But at the same time I know that at the right moment when it is possible that the Virtue of Heaven makes life come through the sprouting of vegetation and all that, there is another complementary Virtue of Earth which makes sure that the vegetation will sprout and grow. Then the horizontal or the spreading effect of the living being would be demonstrated through the Virtue which is proper to Earth. But this is not called Virtue, which is appropriate to Heaven but qi. So in that context, qi is proper to the effect of the Earth, and Virtue is proper to Heaven's effect. And the combination of them both is what makes a living being - or what makes a being live.

Then after this description of Virtue, of qi and the combination of Heavenly Virtue and Earthly qi, you have the sheng zhe, the living beings. How can we analyse more specifically the constituent factors of this particular individual life? I want to know in myself if there is any other aspect describing the fact that I am a living being.

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gu sheng zhi lai

wei zhi jing

‘That living beings arise denotes the Essences’.

Then the text says: Well, as for life, when something is coming, then we have to give a name for this, and we call it jing.

So we have to start some sort of meditation to try to understand that; why there is life to come, why this coming is called Essences, and why it is pertaining to life. Then it becomes clear that there is no specific being if the specification is not made by Essences. Specific and Essences come to the same thing. When I say specific it is more abstract, when I say Essences it is just the realisation of this abstract word.

And why lai? Because the Essences are called for. When I am eating some sort of lunch then the process has been started. It is the digesting of the Essences which are in the dishes and they are called for by my organism. It is impossible for me to say that it is my Stomach, the Stomach is just one of the factors, and has to go along with the Small Intestine, the Large Intestine, through the Blood and through all the dispatching surfaces, just like in an office where they sort letters and send them here and there. But this is done under the supreme control of the Heart. The authority has to be completed, helped and assisted by some sort of Prime Minister, a Counsellor to tell him how to do it, and the Heart has to be defended. We are referred to Chapter 8 of Su Wen where the twelve Officials are presented. The twelve Officials are those who make the Essences pertaining to life, go to the place where they are supposed to go. This lai seems to have the meaning that nobody is welcome and nobody is asked to come. There is a substitute, there is a foundation, something reliable in life that is built for life. Myself, I am a living being, and for the reason that I am a man and not a pig or a hawk or whatever, I have things that come to me and they will be making the self that I am through a process and a motivating factor which is the Essences. So there is a connection living, coming and being with this status of Essences.

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liang jing xiang bo

wei zhi shen

‘That the Essences embrace denotes the Spirits’.

Then this character jing, Essences, is taken again with this word liang, which means a couple. A couple of Essences. This means that they are embracing each other. The Essences coming from one part, and Essences coming from another part joining together, they make a couple of Essences. And through the mutual exchanges something arises, and this is called shen. Does that mean that one Essence plus another Essence does not make Essences? Yes, they are still making Essences, they are making a couple, they are not disappearing, but they are producing an offspring from that meeting, and the offspring is Spirits. So it means that the Spirits come by themselves whenever both Essences are joining together.

Elisabeth Rochat: In these first three propositions we had the arrival of life at the universal level, and this life is a junction. You have to have the Virtue, the Breaths, Heaven and Earth, And this exchange, this compenetration is what we call life. Or it is called the 10,000 beings, everything that is alive. Chinese thinking is not so abstract. In French or in English it seems to be very abstract, but in Chinese it's quite real. It is a very concrete image.

In line 14 this is taken up again:

gu sheng zhi lai wei zhi jing

When there is something living that has arrived, life, greenery on the trees, the tides and the seasons, all that comes and goes: when Spring arrives it means that there was something that made Spring. And the same for Autumn and all the other seasons. So when there is a living being, there must have been something to make him, and that is the Essences, jing. The Essences themselves are a junction or a composition, if not they could not make the sub-stratum of life, since life, as we saw here in the first three lines, is itself a junction. So this living being has arrived, lai, and he is there because he had a primordial composition or compenetration which made his own individuality or specificity, with his own species, that is to say a man and not a tree or an animal. So each one is an individual within the whole species, and it is the jing, the Essences, that ensure that I remain myself and you remain yourself. So the first line is talking about the specificity, the individuality, of each being, and in the second line we pass on to reproduction, and this ends with the production of shen which is becoming a new being. We will follow that in the succeeding sentences.

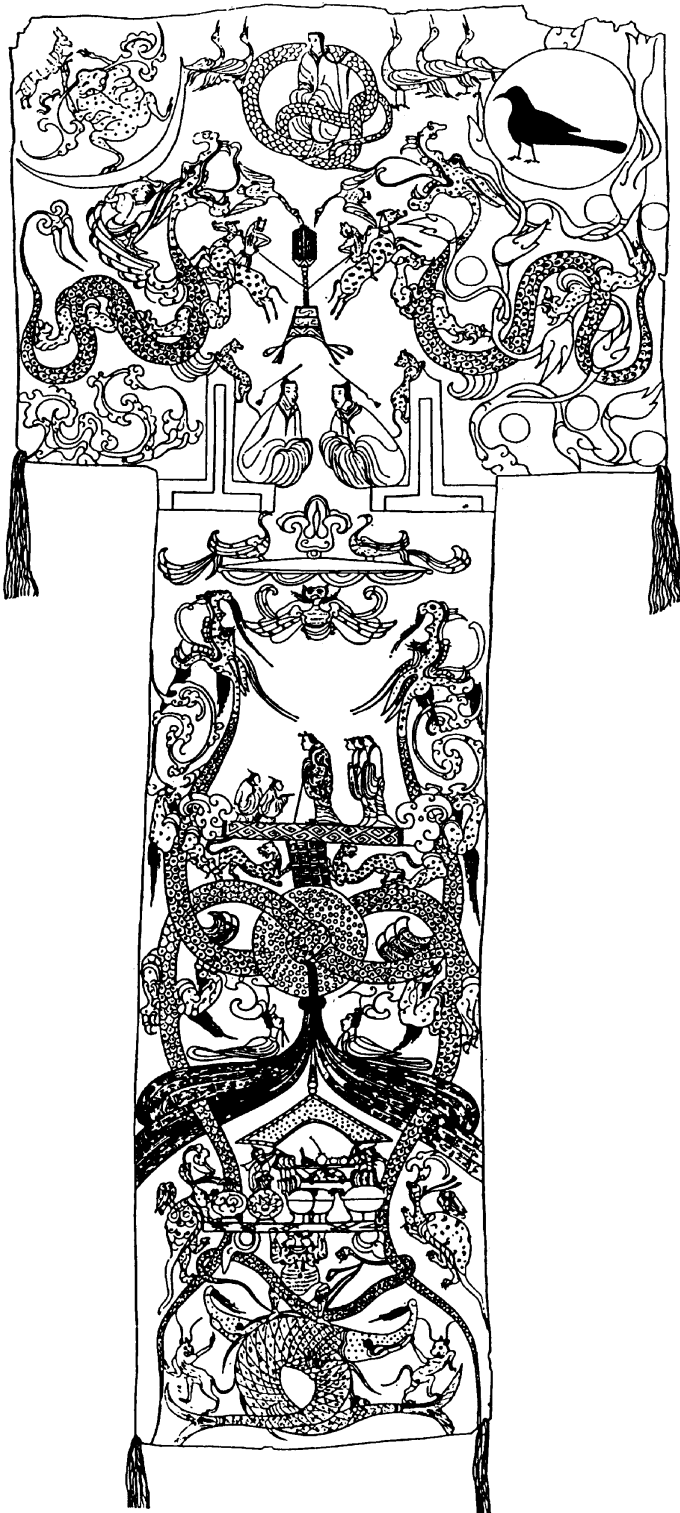
Claude Larre: I feel that something has been lost in the translation and it has something to do with Elisabeth's use of the word 'devenir', to become. It is not enough to have this model or frame to ensure the preservation of the identity of the self, that I remain myself, etc. More than this, the Chinese felt that we need something else to lead life because it is not enough to be self. We exist in a way that develops. We have a future. As long as we are living, we are living for something, we are living for tomorrow, and for the years to come. However long, life is not without prospect. Is there

Elisabeth Rochat: Yes, they are the same. What presides over the conception of a new being is the Essence and Spirits of the parents. This is what permits a new being to be, the Essences and the Spirits of the new being. Afterwards one splits the hairs, pulls out the threads, for example the liquids of the body, the threads of the Spirituality of the person. It only makes sense if you put them all back together. We are looking at the thread of the Spirit, shen, of the person. One should always look at the text as one thread that one is pulling out and looking at, which permits you to see a colour, or to understand something. As the text is saying, one must always keep in mind the whole. It is an instinctive and necessary movement, and each acupuncturist should have this feeling at the moment he is going to needle somebody. To diagnose he is looking at the different threads and then he decides what he is going to do. You can justify everything in it and on the other hand you can justify nothing!

Claude Larre: We have more and more terms but these terms are more and more precise. We understand more the difference between hun and po than we understand the difference between Heaven and Earth. We may think that Heaven is very clear and Earth is equally clear, but that is not true because when we are talking of Heaven we are thinking of sky and when we are talking of Earth we are thinking of ground. It is just an appearance. Heaven and Earth are the most mysterious names even within our own reality. But when we come to hun and po, since we know that there are seven po and three hun and all that, we understand that the text is making more observations, and when we come to the repetition of the verbs chu and ru, to come forth, and to come back and penetrate, it is the movements which are coming more to our minds than just the expression Heaven/Earth. Earth is too big to understand. Just consider the mystery of the junction of Heaven and Earth. Here we are making an analysis which is more a description of the ways life is coming and going, spreading and entering.

Question: I understand the general movement, but I don't understand the position of shen. It began with shen, qi and jing, with shen leading.....

Claude Larre: We know that the shen are the messengers of Heaven. Everywhere shen are presented as messengers of Heaven, and since we have been talking of Heaven it is normal that we would be talking of Heaven now under another name, and that name being the messengers of Heaven. Heaven is not in myself without some sort of intermediary and the intermediary between Heaven and myself is shen. If we are respecting shen it is because we are respecting Heaven. And if we pay attention to the gui it is because we have to pay attention to the Earth's condition of life. Each new character is going under the parenthesis of the former. If we are talking of shen we have to talk of Heaven, if we are talking of jing, we have to relate that to Earth. When we are talking we have to be like a musician playing, to be sure that we strike the same note at the same time. It might be that there is some difference and then someone may feel the Essences related to Heaven, and another may feel the Essences related to Earth. That is quite normal. It is impossible not to mix the issues if we are not in the same frame. Just as if we are playing together and we are not starting at the same time. And if there is not the appropriate combination of instruments then the music will not be in harmony.



Mawangdui Funeral Banner:

This painting on silk, discovered in a tomb from the 2nd century BC, shows the human destiny after death. At the top (A) is the Paradise of peace and equilibrium, into which the soul of the deceased hopes to merge. Here is the axis that distributes the flowing movements, making living beings through the play of yin and yang (represented by two dragons). In the middle (B), two individuals greet the deceased on her journey toward Heaven; she is followed by her three Hun souls. Farther down (C), a funeral banquet is being arranged around the casket of the deceased. Seven individuals symbolize the Po souls. Their task is to return into the depths of Earth what belongs there.

from: **Rooted in Spirit, The Heart of Chinese Medicine** (1995). Larre & Rochat de la Vallée. Trans. S. Stang. Station Hill Press. pp.35-36.

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sui shen wang lai zhe

wei zhi hun

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‘That which faithfully follows the Spirits in their coming and going denotes the hun’.

We are proceeding as in the former two sentences. We want to understand why and how this character hun appears.

Assuming that we know what shen is we want to understand the hun that is depending on the shen. What is the relation between what we call hun and shen? It is the same thing - and it is different. It depends how you are looking at them. It is different because you are looking at the way they move. The shen are free to come and go, to come into myself or to quit this place and to fly away. The hun are more like a shadow depending on an object moving under light. They are some sort of escort. The shen go up, they want to go back to Heaven, then in myself, a part of my animation which is called hun is on the verge of leaving my body. My family will try to call back my hun so that I will not be a dead person. For myself, if I want to save my life then I am recalling myself my hun. And if you are lacking energy because you are too weak, or you have been ill for too long then you have no more strength, no voice strong enough to call back your hun. Then you die.

Wang is to go outside, lai as we saw, is to come back. These two ways of movement, wang lai, are the movements proper to make the hun from the shen. Is it possible to make hun from the shen? It depends how you understand the words. There is no material substance. Shen are not some sort of material that you could transform to make hun, that is not possible. But psychologically speaking, if you understand that the connection with Heaven is made through the shen, you may understand that your most inner self which is less Heaven and more yourself, is that face of the shen turned to be your own. One may say that, *shen zai wo zhe hun*. I mean that these Spirits in myself are hun. But the text is not saying that, because it was possible to say that Heaven in myself is Virtue. This 'in myself' is the largest word that we may use to connect myself and Heaven.

This connection being understood, we now have to understand what movement the shen are making in myself, and they are making the motion of the hun. The imaginary function, especially when we are dreaming, by day or by night, this dreaming activity is the movement induced in myself by the fact that the shen are going out or coming up, and they are like the master, and the hun are just the companion to that movement.

Question: In pathology, when a patient has attempted suicide, or thinks a lot about suicide, would you, in terms of the spirit, relate that to a loss of the animated self, this hun, or would you relate that to weakness in the po, like actual survival?

Claude Larre: There are people who are very strong who commit suicide, take the Japanese during the last war. You cannot say it was because the po were too weak. But in society in the big cities when people are distressed, they think they want to go to Heaven quickly. They are not able to sustain the pressure of their daily life and then this might be a question of po. It is never one against

the other since life is a mixture, it is a joining of hun and po, but maybe the prevailing factor in this case is the determination of the will.

In another case it might be a weakness of the Kidneys or I don't know what. Then if you restore the Fire in the Kidneys and the man is no longer thinking or talking of suicide, then you have the proof that you have been right. But if you are treating the po and it goes on, then this man has trouble in his mind, the hun are not quiet, and then he commits suicide. So why not treat both? It might be safer!

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bing jing er chu ru zhe

wei zhi po

'That which associates with the Essences in their exits and entries denotes the po'.

Let us try to understand this po character which is contrasted with the hun; hun and po being the two sides of life in an individual.

Here now we have chu, to go out, and ru, to penetrate. Wang was to go out but with not the same meaning as chu. In chu there is the implication of doors. We are passing through a door or a barrier and then that is called chu, and ru is where you come back through the door. In both cases there is something to pass. This is more on the side of Earth where there are obstacles. Wang is more on the side of Heaven where there are no obstacles. The shen go and come back as they please, but the po go if the door is open, and they come back if the door is not closed. And they may have to knock on the door. The condition of the po is not as high as the condition of the hun would be.

The sui is to go along, one following the other; bing is close association. Of course it is a way to go along too, but not to follow, there is nothing to follow here. I will let Elisabeth try to give you more the feeling of the difference between the ways the hun are following the shen, and the ways the po are accompanying the jing. You saw already there is a difference here in chu ru, which is not wang lai. Then you have to find a similar difference between the sui and the bing.

Elisabeth Rochat: The Spirits come from Heaven and they are the Virtue of Heaven within us. When you take the hun and the po you see that they have one part of their characters in common. It is the ideogram gui which means Spirits of the Earth, as contrasted with shen which is the Spirits of Heaven. So you have the unity of Heaven and the unity of the Virtue of the Spirits. In hun and po you have a duality, because what passes through Earth comes in the form of yin and yang, and in the most spiritual animation when it passes through this taking into form, which is the mark of Earth, then this spirituality comes out again as a yin yang couple, where hun is on the yang side and po the yin. This is talked about in the ancient texts. So the hun and the po are the yin and yang aspect of the shen which is passed into form, and it is easier to grasp them and more possible to define them. You can say that the Spirits are there when everything is well ordered. You get them showing in the means of expression which are either of a good quality or not; from that either you radiate, shine or you go out. Within this general picture we can refine things much more. The first thing is to look at the hun

and the po, and to see within the hun an aspect of movement that can reach a long way, for example, imagination, thought, thinking, the mind. You can go a million miles a second with your imagination. *Claude Larre*: If you are thinking of something real - I am thinking now of my house in Paris, this is not imagination, this is a recollection of mine. But if I am thinking that I would like to go to a very nice place for Easter time, and I know what sort of place... I may think of coconut trees and all that, and I may dream... that is not a recollection, it is imagination, most probably built on a lot of recollections, but they are not real. The good point in that teaching is to compare the movement of the will, the movement of the purpose, the movement of the imagination, which really go fast and far, and contrast this flying mood with something more constrained, more attached to circumstances and going slowly, and that is the po condition.

Elisabeth Rochat: We can remember at this moment that the Liver has the function of expansion, putting things into movement and sending things a long way, without forgetting at the same time that its deeper nature is yin, storing the Blood which serves as the dwelling place for the hun. The Liver storing the Blood gives the hun this ability to be attached so that it doesn't fly off. So we have the function of the hun in dreams and in imagination, in thinking and in meditation, which is also a very spiritual activity. Meditation is not apathy, not inertia. It is an activity which is very calm and very subtle. Everything that is acting in thought, including everything that we consider as intellect and intelligence, all of these things will be the domain of the hun. So why do the hun follow the shen? If all this world of intelligence and imagination, spirituality wants to remain authentic, that is to say in a straight line with life itself, then it has to conform to the Virtue that is in me - and that is the Spirits. It must follow the inspiration, just as Earth follows all the inspirations of Heaven. Yet it is through Earth that all these different forms appear.

So it is not certain that with the shen alone you could have ideas and thoughts. But when you have the hun, then you can have ideas and thoughts, dreams and all that, but in order that it can conform to my original, true and authentic life, it has to conform to the initiative of the shen.

Po are on the yin side of the Spirits, and in Ling Shu Chapter 8 it is the reference to the Essences which brings out this yin aspect of the po. The po take charge of all that is instinctive in life, everything that is in combination, everything that is entering and exiting, everything that is concerned with the permanent building of life, and at that level there is no difference in nature between po and jing, the Essences. For example, there is an expression, 'The sweat of the po', which is a loss of fluids because of an opening up of the pores of the skin, and the sweating deprives you of the internal fluids which are the richness of life on the interior. When this liquid is lost this function of opening and closing does not work. This is a weakness which is linked with the po. The po can no longer command this instinctive functioning which means that there are things that come in and things that go out; that you eat, digest, eliminate; that you breathe through the mouth and nose as well as all the pores of the skin. And you can see the Lung as the master of all this field, with the Large Intestine evacuating at the bottom.

Because of this we have these two words, entry and exit, chu ru. Chu is exit, and the first exit is arriving in life, or birth, a coming into being, and the last entry, ru, is death, where you return to the Earth, to what is formless. Between the two all of life takes place through the composition, the

re-composition, the joining together of these Essences in a spontaneous and natural manner under the authority of what we call the po, as long as my mind does not disturb the process.

Just one last remark. If you look at the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th lines of the text, working from the right, you can see that the Chinese text adds one ideogram in each line, an ideogram which is not strictly necessary to the meaning of the text, but it is like the image of a staircase that you go down step by step. It has been made this way so that you can see the progressive stages.

Claude Larre: We can contrast sui, one following the other, with bing, two persons going abreast, side by side, not following each another. The hun are moving behind the shen, but I would say that the po are going with the jing.

Earlier the text says: Heaven in me is Virtue. Does it mean that if I am possessing any sort of ability to do whatever I may do, that comes from the fact that Heaven is present in myself? That's absolutely sure. Does this de character have another meaning? Yes, the de character has been used to mean to get, to obtain. So we may expand or explain the meaning of de, as the Virtue to get.

Then we understand why so many people do not speak of Breaths but of energy, since to get something we need energy, and through this energy or power we are able to get more. Just as if I have money I am always able to get money, but without money how am I able to get money? So Virtue in itself would be some sort of follower, maybe a consort of the dao. Dao would be more expressionless and de would be the following expression. There is something more tangible in the Virtue than in the dao. But if I know something about Virtue, from what I know I may be able to figure out something about what I do not perceive.

In Chinese there is some sort of conversion from the idea of big to the idea of the dao. I am forced to give a nickname to something I cannot express and I will call it big, and the second big would be the Virtue of the first big.

Elisabeth Rochat: There is some sort of relationship between Virtue and the Spirits. The Spirits are running the Heart and there is the Heart in the ideogram of Virtue. Another thing is that Spirits and Virtue have common qualities such as radiance and brightness. It is proper to Virtue to shine out, to radiate, just as it is the nature of the Spirits to be resplendent. This is part of the most ancient Chinese tradition. The first words of the first Confucian book, which is the little book that all school children learn by heart, is a definition of dao. Not in the Daoist sense of the term but in the Chinese sense, that is to say, appropriate behaviour. So the definition of this dao is to make the Virtue in yourself radiate, and naturally in ourselves it should be brilliant. That is to see things from a social point of view, Virtue should lead or direct your own life, and should direct the life of a nation or a people in the same way as the Spirits serve to lead your life and put things in the good direction of an authentic life, so that my life gives joy to the other lives around me and gives them more life. That is the radiance or brilliance either of the Spirits or of Virtue.

Claude Larre: To come back to my question on how to understand the difference between sui and bing, why in this sentence do they say that the hun are following the shen, and that the po are going in the same rank as the Essences? It might be that the Spirits being so similar to Heaven, have this freedom which is proper to Heaven. But as for Earth, Earth is absolutely subordinate to the Heavenly influx. Earth is concerned with morphology, with places, with walls, doors, openings and some sorts

of restrictions which are proper to Earth, contrasted to the expanding freedom proper to Heaven.

Then, if part of the animation in myself which I call hun, is so depending on the Spirits which themselves are depending on Heaven, who is not (I prefer to say who), who is not depending on anything except the dao which is not dependent, if there is so much freedom on the side of Heaven, then the Spirits are just following, they are not restricted. To follow somebody who is free is to be free - even if you are dependent, you are free. There is no contradiction in the Chinese mind between to depend and to be free. It depends on whom you are depending. But on the contrary, the condition of Earth is always to be restricted by the power of Heaven in order to give manifestation, forms, morphology in general to what Heaven is meant to do. Then, for this reason, that part of my animation which is concerned with the building and rebuilding of the self, that is the Essences or the motion of the Essences which is the po, is subordinate to this restriction proper to the Earth. And the glory of Man is that he has to be free on account of his Heavenly origin, but to be free he has to restrict himself to the Earthly condition which is equally his proper condition. So there is no difference between the way things are at the highest level, which is the reunion or compenetration of Heaven and Earth, or at the level of yin yang which is the name of the movement proper to Earth / Heaven. There is no difference between the universe and this small part of the universe or small duplication of the universe which is myself.

We read in the ancient texts of the state of the authentic man who has completed his demands and his abilities to become one with the dao and to be a companion to the dao, and that is done by following strictly ming, the destiny. Destiny is the mark of Heaven in me.

As for the specific verbs or words to describe the po in comparison with the Essences, it is chu ru, chu being to go out and to be seen as a small plant coming forth from the ground and beginning to sprout, and ru being the grain detached from the natural plant, falling down and entering the ground. Then the contrast is between being a companion with what is most free in the universe, companion to the dao, or to be strictly linked with all the contingencies and all the restriction proper to morphology. Nobody can really expand the length of his body or the time of his life, all this is restricted through the species. We cannot go much further or very much further than one hundred years, and we cannot be much higher than two metres. There is some limit. We have to be contented with those two antagonistic situations. That we are the most free that one may conceive and we are the most restricted prisoner in life that one may imagine, and the important point is not to mix the issues, not to say, "I am not free because I am an earthly man", or say "Since I am free I can do what I want, I don't care for situations as they are - since I am free, I am free". All that exaggeration is not acceptable in the text.

It seems that the verbs describing the movement are more important than anything else, when the question is what is hun and what is po. Since we understand that the text comes from the observation of life, it seems that they have decided that man is hun and po as far as animation is concerned. This is just one aspect, because another aspect would be that man is xue qi, Blood and animation. And we are supposed to accept all these specific terms and the couples they are making with one another, and the series in which they present themselves. It is impossible to take any two words in that series and

see them in isolation. You have to see them in a connecting line and see how they contrast one with the other.

And finally, it would be the reason why for me this character *bing* is contrasted with this character *sui*. There is a leader and there are followers. The leaders are the *shen* and the followers are the *hun* and they are on the side of freedom, which means Heaven. The character *bing* is drawn with a lot of symmetries, and it is used for a carriage drawn by horses where the horses are side by side. And *bing* is for the *po* and the Essences, but it is not possible to talk of leaders, so instead of leaders I would say models, and instead of followers I would prefer to say all sorts of I don't know what, who are supposed to be conforming to models. Say it in the best way Tim.

Tim Gordon: Clones!

Claude Larre: That is the way to have the teaching alongside modern physics!

Elisabeth Rochat: Or partners.

Claude Larre: Whenever Earth is alluded to, it is in the horizontal line, in the spreading aspect that the situation is seen. And when the statement is made in some sort of verticality there is following, a leader and all that. But partner is a good word, partner is very similar to follower as to the meaning, but the aspect is different.

Question: I wonder if partner is the correct word because the concept of *shen* and the Heart implies a hierarchy. It is the other Spirits *hun* and *po*, which are part of *shen* ultimately. It is the Spirits who come down from Heaven into man and find their expression in the complexion and the eye. We don't have that with *hun*, there is no mention that the *hun* is found anywhere as a physical symptom, but when you have a *shen* problem the *hun* or *po* or will or whatever will also be imbalanced. But the *shen* is monarch Fire and the other *zang* are the officials which have to serve them to complete the whole, so there is a hierarchy. Partners as a word makes something equal.

Elisabeth Rochat: The point is that *po* are partners with Essences. In the text Ling Shu Chapter 8 the *hun* are the followers of the Spirits, the *po* are the partners of the Essences, not of the Spirits but of the Essences.

The *hun* are specific to man. After death the *hun* reach Heaven and they survive for a certain time. And this survival depends on essentially two things: on the way you have lived your life, and on the quality of life you have received from your ancestors which has made these *hun*. It depends on your ancestors whether you are strong enough to survive. The other thing is the cult of the ancestors, the way in which your descendants nourish your *hun* through the cult.

The notion of immortality is not the same in China as it is in Europe. It is not because you have a soul which survives after death that you are immortal, as it has a variable time of survival after death. The *po* also have a possible time of survival but it is the reverse. The goal is that the *hun* should survive for the longest possible time and that the *po* should survive as little as possible. When death arrives the desire for life which united the Essences and the *po* and which made them grasp each other, must be exhausted at the moment of death in order for there to be dissolution without any regret. But if instead of dying, you perish, for example in a violent or premature death which is rejected, this desire is always there with greed. And this greed will be a desire for all the other beings around which risk

becoming food for this unsatisfied part, and this gives rise to ghosts and evil or dangerous phantoms. And what does it mean to be evil? Just that they are evil for those with whom they come in contact. *Claude Larre*: It would be difficult to live with your window overlooking a cemetery. Is it psychological, or is it the fact that there really is something that hinders your own life. Some people want to have a house that is well disposed for life and the Chinese pay great attention to geomancy just in order to secure more proper ways of life.

Question: So when the po is not at rest when someone dies you get earthly Spirits?

Elisabeth Rochat: When the po do not dissolve properly, then this power which in a living man is rapacious - his desire to live and eat - that would be called gui after death, not po.

At the beginning of the text we saw the appearance of life, specific life which came into being and which had the possibility of creating other life through the Essences and Spirits, the jing shen, and how this created yin yang movement at this level, which at the spiritual level was expressed by the hun po. You can see in these first seven lines that these concepts are taken again and again through the ideograms. And once we have arrived at the po there is a break in the construction and in the vocabulary that is quite clearly seen in the Chinese. And now we see the appearance of the Heart. We have in the jing, the Essences, the shen, hun, and the po the whole world that makes the individual life. The hun, the po and the shen survive the death of the individual. They are more than the construction the individual makes of their life. No man can exist without the shen, the hun and the po, but at the level of Man there must be a centre and a chief who is exactly appropriate to that life. And this is the place of the Heart. Not the Heart taken as one of the zang, but the Heart taken as the sovereign, the master, and that's what is said in the next sentence, line 18.

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suo yi ren wu zhe
wei zhi xin

'For that which takes charge of the beings, one speaks of the Heart'.

Therefore, when there is something or someone who is capable of taking responsibility or charge of beings, then you can say that there is a Heart.

This ideogram for taking charge or taking responsibility for is ren, the same character as in ren mo. It is to have or be capable of assuming a charge or a responsibility which is vital for life, and that can be the capacity to take responsibility for your own life, as also it can be the capacity to take responsibility for another life, to take the burden of another life. Here, what we call the Heart in an individual means that there is a chief who is capable of taking on responsibility for all the other beings. Unity is maintained. There is a place or a void where Spirits can be held. There is a centre of reception where the influences can come and go and then be diffused throughout the whole being. There is a capable central government which has the necessary capacity for this charge or duty. And as soon as we say there is a Heart, then we can have all the profound, deep movements of the being which are in the realm of the mind or psyche which will guide your life, and which are physical as well as mental.

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xin you suo yi
wei zhi yi

‘When the Heart is applied, one speaks of Purpose’.

Here you can see the same construction of the text where the last ideogram xin, the Heart, is taken as the first in the next sentence.



Yi, Purpose

So there is a chaining or series of these characters. This sentence means that when there is an idea or thought which is presented to the Heart, if the Heart accepts it and it doesn't feel completely strange to the Heart, then you can say there is purpose, yi. The ideogram yi is made up of the Heart in the lower part, and in the upper part the idea of a sound, of a note that resounds, like a musical note. Therefore it is what we call purpose which has something which resonates with the Heart, and obviously a note has to be right, a resonance has to be harmonious. It has to harmonise with everything that you have yourself in your own being.

And when you have that right resonance, when it is in tune, when it strikes the right note, then you have this purpose. It is not yet thought, reflection, meditation, it is just this being in tune or accord between the representation of something and everything that is in you. Centralised, harmonised and unified by the Heart and in the Heart.

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yi zhi suo cun
wei zhi zhi

‘When Purpose is permanent, one speaks of Will’.

When this resonance, this purpose, stays, if it is going to last, then you have what is called will. In the ideogram for will, zhi, you have the Heart again in the lower part, and in fact in all these ideograms which form the last in the line you have the presence of the Heart ideogram. So from the moment that the Heart appears everything that flows out from it has the stamp of the Heart, and this is seen from the ideograms themselves. This ideogram for the will is made with the Heart below and the upper part gives the idea of something very virile, maybe the image of a phallus - something that stands up very straight, very firmly, giving the idea of the power behind it. And this combined with the Heart gives the ideogram for will, which is a bit different from what we call willpower in Europe.

Question: Father Larre has said there is a difference between will and wanting. Could you say something about this?

Claude Larre: I would suspect that the wanting implies desire, yu. The way is easier when the desire is controlled. Everybody wants everything. That is the Chinese stance, and since there is not enough for everybody then there are fights for position. We know that. But if I understand that want or desire is normal, I am less afraid of it, and not being afraid of my desires, if I satisfy them at a certain level I may control them.

If in a room or a house a family is controlling their desires in order to make enough space for talking, resting, studying, for everybody in the family, then most probably, the desires would diminish, the wants would be less felt, and then the will would be built up. But the safest way is to build up the will by control of wants, not by suppressing them. If you tried to suppress them, you would deprive yourself of your own vitality, and you may expect a thunderstorm in the future. So, be careful. But if you indulge all wants and desires, then this is the ruin of the will, and each will fight against the others. That is the problem of the punk system, because they feel that they should not control, but express to the utmost. I have nothing against them, but I am sometimes afraid - less for me than for them.

Elisabeth Rochat: The construction of the Chinese text changes again in these next three lines. Even if you don't know any Chinese you can see this clearly in the text (lines 21, 22, 23). And now we rely on what has already been defined: the Heart, with the purpose and the will, and before that the shen, the hun, and the po. You will see in passing that the shen, the hun and the po, along with the purpose and the will form the ensemble which is called the five Spirits, wu shen, which are connected with the five zang.

Claude Larre: In the same way that the Heart is capable of representing the five zang, the shen of the Heart is capable of representing the wu shen, the five shen. The shen is so high that it has the same capacity as the Heart to represent other spiritual Essences without using their proper names, just by saying the five shen. Five shen is the same as saying the shen and the others.

Elisabeth Rochat: These are the usual correspondences and in this chapter we see how they come to be. Here we have the life and the Essences, which are expressed in man by the shen, the hun and the po; this forms the first ensemble which is beyond the life of man. Then we have the appearance of the Heart as the sovereign, just as in Su Wen Chapter 8, The Secret Treatise of the Spiritual Orchid. The Heart has the function of sovereign or master, and it is only after you have a Heart that you have a centred person with the possibility of having Spirits and making them stay with you. By contrast, you can have the will and the purpose, but they are not at the same level. You can't put these five spiritual aspects in the cycle of the five Elements - there are different levels here.

It is the Heart who allows the Spirits to rest in peace and the one who by its void and emptiness and tranquility allows the purpose, yi, and the will, zhi, to exist, without opposing life. There are people who have purpose and who have will which go against their own nature, and there are many illnesses which are linked to that. This is linked to a Heart that is badly disposed, not right.

The Heart as the residence of the Spirits, if it is capable of being this dwelling place, has all the good dispositions that are necessary to be the chief and prince of all the other elements, the mental,

emotional and physical realms, and all the vital functions of life. Afterwards, relying on this effect, we continue to define the movements of the psyche.

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yin zhi er cun bian

wei zhi si

‘When Will, which is maintained, changes, one speaks of Thought’.

The first ideogram in line 21, yin, has this idea of relying on an effect, so it's often translated as consequently.

The character has the image of a man in prison, he can't escape; and with all that we have said we cannot escape what is to come. Because of what has been said, this has to follow. Consequently, the will, when it is there, when it exists, and when it lasts, when it keeps this way of being fixed which is the condition for the will to exist, (you have this idea of duration), and when at the same time it changes, then you can say that there is si, thought.

Here are two contradictory terms: to stay and to change. That doesn't mean to change direction like a weather vane. You stay fixed on something, but you turn and go over the question again and again, looking at all the possibilities of change, and in that moment it is what we call thought. There is no hesitation, but it is the idea of consideration. You look and you mull things over with what you have already considered, and you look at all the movements, all the circumstances which you have already experienced, and through all of that you consider the idea and the will that you have. In this ideogram thought, si, you find again, of course, the Heart in the lower part, and on the top an element which is traditionally explained as being the skull. In the interior of the skull there are these constructions which are the brain. So there is the idea of strict, rigorous construction, and thought, si, is the way in which the Heart and the brain freely communicate to turn an idea over in the mind, to consider all its aspects and all its possibilities, but the will remains firm and constant. It indicates the direction towards which one is moving, and that doesn't change. If you don't have this firm direction then it isn't called thought. A thought that is not fixed somewhere is just a wandering of the mind.

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yin si er yuan mu

wei zhi lü

‘When Thought spreads far and powerfully, one speaks of Reflection’.

When we have a thought, and this thought goes far and goes deep, when it attaches itself to something, then a project can be elaborated, and it can come into being.

There can then be a conception of plans, and this is the conception of plans that is linked with the Liver in Su Wen Chapter 8. It is not enough that a thought is well constructed and that you turn over all the possibilities. It has, at the same time, to be deeply rooted, so that there is the possibility of it going even further. At the moment, then, there is not only the totality of experience that is there, but there are projects or plans, lü, which are made to realise something. In this ideogram lü we find once more the ideogram for thought. So within the ideogram for project is the ideogram for thought. And in addition there is the ideogram for tiger, or more precisely, the stripes of a tiger. That is to say that all this construction is carried forward and there is projection. This means that this ideogram does not only mean ideas that are formulated any old how. You must not forget that behind this there is the Heart, the purpose, the will and thought and then we reach this level which must be thought of as a plan, a project and also as a profound meditation. A profound, deep meditation is not just passive, nor is it just a repetition of an old idea, it is the highest aspect of thought.

So, in this ideogram lü there are these two aspects of the Chinese which are only different in Western languages. Therefore we translate this ideogram sometimes with the conception of plans and projects, and sometimes by a contemplative, concentrated meditation. It is the same ideogram; it is a thought which is animated by a movement which pushes it further, and whether that is a project or whether that is a meditation, it has to be anchored in reality, the Heart has to be present. The meditation has to be the source of life, and the project has to be possible or realisable, and it has to be in a good direction for life, so it is a thought that goes a long way, but which has not lost any of its roots. It is always rooted in the Heart.

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yin lü er chu wu

wei zhi zhi

‘When Reflection is available to all beings, one speaks of Know-how’.

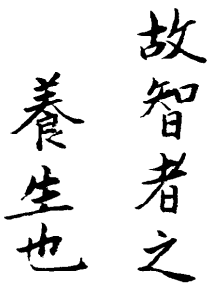
When this meditation, which is at the same time a project or a plan, can really regulate things, administer beings, and pass into a phase of realisation, in that moment you end up with a practical and active wisdom, which is at the same time know how or savoir faire.



Zhi, Wisdom

This is the knowledge which is the upper part of the character zhi, and when this knowledge is put on top of the character for sun, which in this case is also the representation of something coming out of the mouth, then you have this illumination of knowledge, which becomes wisdom. But wisdom for the Chinese is practical. You cannot imagine a distracted sage, someone who has a lot of knowledge in his head but doesn't know how to do anything, who always makes mistakes when he wants to do something. He has a relationship with things and beings which is not correct, and he will have a weakness somewhere in the Kidneys, or somewhere else.

This is not a being who is well built, he would not have this know-how, this thought in movement to regulate all beings. And this is said in the next line:



gu zhi zhe zhi
yang sheng ye

‘Thus Know-how is what maintains your life’.

This wisdom is nothing other than to know how to nourish and maintain your life.

To nourish your life is two ideograms, yang shen. Here we find sheng, life, which we had at the beginning appearing again at the end. The ideogram yang is the idea of nourishing, bringing together all elements that are necessary for the good conservation of life and for growth. If we can look at the whole page of Chinese text with the separations and different placings that have been made here, we have first a group of three columns (lines 11, 12, 13) in which life appears in the universe, a coming together in each being and for each being of the Virtue of Heaven and the Breaths of Earth. Then there is a grouping of four columns (lines 14, 15, 16,17) which show how the Spirits of Heaven and Earth preside over life in each individual.

Claude Larre: If we have Spirits presiding over our life, they are concerned with more than ourselves. So, we are trying to understand what our own life is, and for that we are calling on the Spirits, and when calling on the Spirits we call to higher powers than the power needed to make our own life what it is.

Elisabeth Rochat: And this presentation, somewhat like a staircase, shows that there is a hierarchy which puts the shen, Spirits, back in a more honourable place than the hun and the po. Then there is a break and in line 18 the Heart appears in man. The Heart has to lead life in man and leads it in balance and harmony, good proportion and good relation, and you can see that all the terms that are presented at the bottom of each column in this third section have the radical for the Heart to mark at the same time the supremacy and the presence of the Heart in the intimate movements of the being that are

represented by the purpose, the will, thought, etc. It is not a question of sentiment or emotion or passion here. This comes much later on. It is a question of the harmony of all the movements which make life at the highest level of man.

In the fourth group of columns (lines 21, 22, 23) we have thought, which belongs to man himself. Animals don't keep thought. They are distracted, they think of other things. Man can keep a thought without obsession, and lead it to a realisation which must be the very current of his life. And everything that is presented separately here are, of course, movements that come together in a human being. But the order of the presentation here has to be respected in order to get things correctly formulated.

To use your imagination for plans and projects without anchoring your thought in all of your experience, or without knowing exactly what you want, would mean that you never arrive at appropriate conduct or the appropriate way of doing something. So the order of presentation that is given here is a natural order for doing things, just as the seasons roll after one another. If not, you are putting the cart before the horse, and putting the cart before the horse indicates that you are leading your Spirits against the current.

Now, all the faculties that are mentioned here, the purpose, the will, thought, etc., being governed by the Heart, can deviate if the Heart is not calm and tranquil, or because the regulation of life is disturbed somewhere. For example, it could be from bad diet, or from an emotion that remains too long, or a cold, etc., and that will create an imbalance between all these different movements. And then you have the symptoms that appear frequently in Chinese medicine; for example, someone who is always making plans, but who is incapable of taking the smallest decision, or someone who is completely blocked in his way of thinking. This is just to remind you that behind this presentation there is everything linked with diagnosis, with symptoms and with treatment. Here we simply have what should be. You cannot act on these Spirits, you can just listen to them, and let them govern your life, so that they remain with you.

And from the moment that the Heart appears in line 18 we are in a much more precise, a much closer domain, where imbalances appear and can be rectified. Behind this there are the movements proper to the zang, and especially the zang taken all together and related to the Heart, which regulates this good balance. When you see that all this leads to good conduct and that this conduct comes back to nourishing life, this means that in each thing you follow the natural current which is expressed in the turning of the four seasons: each thing is taken in turn, in the order in which it is presented, making everything turn and revolve regularly.

The beginning of Chapter 15 of the Su Wen says that it is proper to the Spirits to assure this subtlety of permanent revolution, the regular distribution to make everything flow. You have to regulate, or balance, everything in nature that appears as cold or heat, and that manifests in ourselves as anger or joy, etc, either too much activity or inertia. And all of this must be balanced through all the cycles that are known in life. It is through this that you can nourish your life. So this text does nothing but show the natural current of life that is proper to man, which is in his Spirits and under the government of his Heart.