

EMOTIONS: EARTH ELEMENT #2

(from: Wiseman & Feng, 1998; Wiseman & Boss, 1990; Larre & Rochat, 1990, 1996).

WU ZHI 五志 FIVE WILLS

Elisabeth Rochat: We have the expression 'the five wills' (wu zhi). When they speak in Chinese classics of the five wills they are summing up all the particular inner tensions of each zang. It should be as in Su wen chapter 5, anger for the liver, elation for the heart and so on. But before you have anger, for instance, you just have the ability to push life upwards with a kind of impetuosity. Before you have pathological fear there is just a kind of self-restraint. Before elation or joy there is a spreading out. With sorrow or sadness there is something stopping movement and the beginning of a tightening. For thought, before it becomes an obsession, is just a way of considering all things and being the place of passage for all thinking. These five inner tensions coming from the expression of the five elements inside the body are called the five wills, and when they are in perfect balance this is the condition of a well-equilibrated inner life. The five express the perfect balance of the five zang at this level which is the most inner impulse of life. These five movements make up the unity of life. The same character (zhi) is also in use for the unity for these five wills. Zhi should be the expression of the kidneys themselves because the kidneys are the foundation of life, and the firm and solid basis for the springing up of life. They are able to ensure a kind of continuity in the being, by the relationship with the origin and so on. They are always making the power of life arise. In the image of the bone and the marrow, the strength and uprightness of the bone comes from the richness of the marrow inside the bone. And the bones protect the marrow which in turn makes it full and flowing inside the hollow of the bones. This shows the power of the kidneys which always give support for the spring. It is also an image for the will and its duration.

Another use of zhi is for will not only as the expression of the kidneys but as the expression of the total power of the five zang in perfect balance. In Su wen chapter 2 there is a description of the four seasons. The three months of the spring are called 'spread out and display'. The text continues by describing the special relationship of heaven and earth at that time of spring and what man has to do to respond to the qi of this season. The correspondence with the spring is at several levels, one is the conduct of life: to go to bed when night falls and wake at dawn, to go into the courtyard and do appropriate exercise, to accompany the power of the liver which is stimulated by the spring. At another level we have to direct or orientate our will in the sense of the vital impulse, in family, business and society. To be a little exuberant is not bad in the spring, because all expansive movements are welcome to invigorate life. But this is not the same in summer when the impetuosity and great courage and audacity of spring are not so welcome. You need to develop things, but in the manner of ripening fruit. Then in autumn the general tone of feeling is carefulness, caution, prudence and circumspection. You need to be quiet and peaceful. In winter at the level of the will you have to look after yourself to reconsider your own life and to take precautions for your own vitality and return to your inner life for self-preservation.

What is the meaning of these four directions of your psychological life during the four seasons?

There is no constant will which is proper to any kind of life. It is a question of the time, the moment,

of circumstances. It is exactly like the pulse for instance. A normal pulse is not the same in each season because the manifestation of life inside the body through the blood and qi is not the same when the general life of the universe is not the same. Life is not the constant regulation of something which is always the same. Life is always adaptation and transformation. This is very well described at the beginning of Su wen chapter 17 and especially in the commentary of Zhang Jiebin of the 17th century.

A good will changes not in the anchoring but in the general orientation, and these changes are only possible if you are well anchored in yourself. Each manifestation of your willpower, with all the changes and transformations, is always an expression of your real vitality. There are a lot of images of this in classical texts. For example, the pole star, which is motionless in the sky and around which all the constellations move throughout the year. This is the image of the heart in Confucian and Daoist classics. This is the kind of fixed point which is the deepest life at the level of the spirits of the heart, around which all turns and changes. The will is not will as we think of it in the West. It is not something you have in your head, or a decision that you take. The will is the expression of your vital tension showing the work of your five zang. If your willpower and your thinking are not reflecting all your circulation and so on, there is something wrong in you.

In Su wen chapter 54 it says:

'When the normal qi of the meridians (jing qi) has arrived, be careful to keep it without letting it be lost: avoid all changes. The depth and surface are in the will (zhi): it is the perception of the interior (nei) and exterior (wai) of the illness. Whether it is near or far it is all one: it is in the observation of the qi through the depth or the surface. Be as if looking into a deep abyss: take care not to fall. Make your hand like one that would seize a tiger: do not lack strength. Do not allow your spirits (shen) to be disconcerted by anything: with a quiet will (jing zhi) consider (guan) your patient without shifting your gaze to the left or right. Do not allow your movement to deviate, since your own uprightness will allow for rectification (zheng). First of all, rectify your spirits (zheng qi shen), since your regard to the patient will call for the regulation of his spirits. Hence the qi circulates with ease.'

This is the attitude of the practitioner in front of the patient. The spirits must not be disconcerted by the multitude of beings and must not be the slave of the external manifestations of life. You must be able to shut the door of the orifices in order to concentrate your power in the heart and in a good orientation of life. The will is just the expression of the vital tension of the practitioner turning to the patient. This is the only way to decipher symptoms and to be able to see them all without preconceived ideas. It is not a concentration with anxiety, just a reading of all the detailed symptoms which appear externally, and also a perception of the unity of the patient through the spirits which is behind all the tools and means of diagnosis. If you are not in the state of inner rectitude yourself how can you hope to make a suggestion of inner rectitude to your patients. But there is no question of the free will of your patient, because you have no particular will for this person.

In the will there is also the idea of retaining something. For instance in Su wen chapter 81 it says that when tears flow out of the eyes it is a question of lack of will. This is not because you are unable to

stop yourself crying, it is because in your kidneys this power to contain the liquids is not functioning well. Between your heart and your will there is something wrong because the heart cannot endure some kind of suffering. The will is not strong enough to contain the liquids inside the organism. This tension of retaining the liquids loosens, and you can have the very physical reaction of crying which is called losing the will. In the West the will is thought of as very cerebral. There is an application in practice with this where there are people with strong will, but it is really a lack of will. Very often there is some kind of blockage at the level of the diaphragm and maybe other symptoms as well. They think it is their will but it is an idea which does not fit with their nature, circumstances and heart. Similarly, if your will never changes it is not a good will. Your will must be very strong and very supple at the same time because the real strength is in the suppleness and adaptation.

In some texts, for example Ling shu chapter 10, you have a description of people dying because qi coming from the five zang is so weak that it interrupts their flowing. The description of this death details the movement of the eyes turning upwards, which is a sign that the will dies first. When the will dies first the patient will die in one and a half days. This is a symbolic number, because in some presentations this is the time it takes for the qi of five zang to make a complete circulation. This is also the expression that the will and the power of the kidneys are no longer powerful enough. The anchor is cut loose.

Another aspect of the will is given in Su wen chapter 34. This is a case where the nutritive and defensive qi are both empty.

As a result the patient has a lack of sensitivity and a sort of paralysis. There is a double emptiness of yin and yang. Afterwards it says that if the patient does not succeed in making his body and will come together he will die. The will here is certainly the correct orientation of inner life coming from the five wills and the movement of the five zang. If someone is in a state of quite serious illness, if he is able to make a right appreciation of his state he will survive. But if he is unable, he will die because he wants to be alive in such a way that it is impossible. He cannot put his body and his will in harmony and adjust to the circumstances of his life.

ZHI YI 志 意 WILL AND PURPOSE

Elisabeth Rochat: At the beginning of Ling shu chapter 8 the Emperor puts this question to Qi Bo, the master: 'When needling, one must not miss the rooting in the spirits.' Afterwards he says: 'when there is a disorder in a person, if the situation becomes such that by a sequence of overflowing and total invasion by passions, the jing and shen and all which is kept preciously by the zang leaves the zang, then the jing is lost, hun and po are carried away in an uncontrollable agitation, will and purpose become confused and disordered.' We can see through this negative form that the normality of the couple of will and purpose is to control the good order of the manifestation of life, of the current of qi and the circulation of blood, and the moderation of feeling and emotion.

In Su wen chapter 62 it says:

'The heart stores the shen. The lung stores the qi. The liver stores the blood. The spleen stores the flesh (rou). The kidneys store the will. That is what completes the bodily form (cheng xing), will and purpose

are in free communication (tong); they are attached internally to the bones and marrow, and that is what constitutes the individual, from the bodily form to the five zang.'

Here we have one of the personal presentations of the building of the being and the body. So it is not only the bodily form but also the internal animation of this bodily form with all the free circulation making relationships and life which is constructed. It is made through the power of each zang but also through attachment one to the other of the will and purpose. The will and the purpose are really a way to gather together and unify the power of the five zang, turned to the realisation of life. It is not by chance that between the spleen and kidneys you also have, through the will and purpose, the junction of what is called anterior and posterior heaven. It is the anchorage in the origin, the fidelity to your own nature, and the way to maintain your whole exterior self, and the nature of what you are. When this axis is upright all the circulation and rebuilding of all parts of your body are well made, and the spirits of the heart can be present at each level.

We can see something nearly the same in Su wen chapter 3. This text says: 'When the qi of heaven is clear and quiet the purpose and will govern as necessary.' Here the qi of heaven is the heart or the spirits, and all the reception and communication which is making my life. 'Consequently the yang qi is strong and solid and the thieves and perverse qi are unable to cause any damage.'

In Ling shu chapter 47 it says:

'Huangdi asked Qi Bo: "Man, having xue qi and jing shen receives life (sheng) from them and they ensure the regular movement between nature and destiny (xing ming). The jing mai are what circulate the xue qi, maintain yin yang, humidify muscles and bones (jin gu), allow the use of the articulations and energetic relays (guan jie). The defensive qi is what warms the mass of the flesh (fen rou), fills up (chong) the layers of the skin, greases the cou li, and directs openings and closings (kai he). Will and purpose are what conduct jing shen, gather (shou) hun and po, regulate hot and cold, harmoniously blend (he) elation and anger."'

This is a good description of all the effects of the heart and the general regulation of life. You have effects on the hun, the po and the jing and all the subtle and invisible parts of your life. You make use of your hun and po through your purpose and will. You also have the regulation of hot and cold, and of elation and anger, because this is the regulation of all the deepest aspects of your movement of your qi and jing. If your qi is circulating well, you are in a quiet state emotionally and are not afraid of cold or heat.

It continues:

'Thus, when the blood is in harmony, then the jing mai circulates and flows, nutrition comes and returns to the yin and the yang, muscles and bones are strong and powerful, articulations and energetic relays work perfectly. When the defensive qi is in harmony, then the mass of the flesh is quite receptive to all beneficial influences, the layers of the skin have adequate suppleness, the cou li are therefore well sealed.'

'When the will and purpose are in harmony, the jing shen are concentrated and straight (zhuan zhi), the hun and po do not disperse (san), regret and anger (hui nu) do not arise, the five zang do not receive perverse influences. When cold and heat are harmonized then the 6 fu transform (hua) the cereals, the blockages in function due to wind are not triggered off; the jing mai is in free communication and functions well, the limbs and the energetic relays then remain calm. This is the normal balance of man. The five zang are for storing the jing shen, the xue qi and the hun and po. The six fu are for transforming the liquids and cereals and circulating the jin ye.'

Here you can see the description of the yin side of the vitality in the shape of the ying, and the yang side in the shape of the wei qi. In the first position you have the purpose and the will, making the unity of all this circulation because it is in the first position. It is Chinese logic.

THE EMOTIONS IN SU WEN CHAPTER 39

Elisabeth Rochat: Chapter 39 of the Su wen is a general presentation of the emotions as movements of qi. It is always quoted in Chinese medical texts:

'The Emperor asked: "I would like to know by which qi the one hundred illnesses are produced? When there is anger (nu) the qi rises up (shang). When there is elation (xi) the qi becomes loose (huan). When there is sadness (bei) the qi disappears (xiao). When there is fear (kong) the qi descends (xia). When there is cold (han) the qi is gathered (shou). When there is heat (jiong) the qi flows out (xie). When there is starting with fright (jing) the qi is in disorder (luan). When there is fatigue (lao) the qi is damaged (hao). When there is obsessive thought (si) the qi is knotted (jie). These nine qi are different. How are the illnesses produced ?"

'Qi Bo replied: "When there is anger, the qi goes into counter-current. If it is intense, there is vomiting of blood and even diarrhoea with food. This is how the qi rises up.

"When there is elation, the qi is properly harmonised and the will (zhi) spreads out well everywhere. Nutrition and defence are in free communication and function well. This is how the qi is loosened.

"When there is sadness, the system of the heart is tightened, the lung dilates and its leaves rise up, the upper heater no longer ensures its free communications. Nutrition and defence are not diffused, the warm qi is at the centre. This is how the qi disappears.

"When there is fear, the essences withdraw. Withdrawing, the upper heater closes; closing, the qi leaves; leaving, the lower heater is swollen. This is how the qi does not circulate.

"When there is cold, the cou li close and the qi does not circulate. This is how the qi is gathered.

"When there is heat, the cou li open. Nutrition and defence are in free communication, sweat flows in great quantity. This is how the qi flows out.

"When there is starting with fright, the heart no longer has a place to rely on. The spirits no longer have a place to refer to (gui), planned

thought (lu) no longer has a place to settle. This is how the qi is in disorder.

"When there is fatigue, one pants and sweat goes out. Exterior and interior exceed the normal limit. This is how the qi is damaged.

"When there is obsessive thought, the heart has a place to dwell, and the spirits have a place to refer to. The correct qi remains on the spot and does not circulate. This is how the qi is knotted."

This is quite interesting because we have seven emotions and nine qi. Nine is the proper number for all kinds of different aspects of life. The totality is covered by nine, for example nine times nine is 81, and there are 81 chapters in the Su wen. We have five emotions plus starting with fright (jing) and fatigue (lao). Jing is made without the heart radical. Most of the characters for emotions contain the heart, but jing does not. Fatigue (lao) is not an emotion as such, but is a very general state of internal weakness. And cold and heat manifest all kinds of disturbances coming from the exterior.

So we have the emotions proper to the five zang, to the five elements, and two inner situations, one of yang excitement (jing) and one of yin weakness (lao), and two disturbances coming from the outside, one of a yin nature, cold, and one of a yang nature, heat. Nine represents a totality.

All the emotions here are presented as movements of qi. For example, anger means that in your body the general distribution of the influx is too strong, going upwards with all kinds of physical consequences. It is the contrary movement to fear where jing and jin ye are carried down by an uncontrollable movement of qi. With elation qi becomes loose. This has a double meaning: it is just an absence of tension, or the exaggeration of this relaxation which is to be too full. Sadness makes the qi disappear. The movement of sadness is a kind of tightening, which leads to a blockage of qi as a consequence, and a destruction of qi. In the case of obsessive thought qi becomes knotted.

Obsessive thought is thought which is unable to continue itself into a project or plan and end in an act. If you are unable to think about something up to the point of making a plan and realising it, you always come back to the same idea. It is like a ball of wool, it is very good if you knit with it, but if you just play with it like a cat you do not have the same result.

The most important thing to emphasize in the emotions is the circulation of qi, because when you have an emotion, as a result you have a distortion in the good circulation of qi. The second point is that if you are in such a state that, due to other causes, you have these movements of qi and blood, little by little you will feel the emotions. It is your feelings responding to the actual state of your organism. Psychological causes of disease can lead to somatic effects and somatic disease can lead to psychological effects. In Chinese medicine this is all explained by the movement of qi.

SI 思 OVERTHINKING



thought, overthinking, si: One of the FIVE MINDS, associated with the Spleen.

thought causes qi to bind, si ze qi jie: Excessive thought or cogitation can cause binding depression of spleen qi that affects normal splenic movement and transformation, causing glomus and fullness in the chest and stomach duct, poor appetite, abdominal distention, and thin stool.

Overthinking

Discussion

Elisabeth Rochat: Si (overthinking) is made with the heart radical underneath the brain inside the skull. This is, to think, because to think is free communication between the heart and the brain, when something coming from the heart can ascend to the brain, and when something coming from the brain can penetrate and reflect within the heart. We can see that it is not an emotion as we usually think of them. So why is si one of the seven emotions? It is because it is part of what happens in my heart and it builds my inner landscape. Thinking is not only having an idea, it is being able to make the whole process happen and to organise all the subtle work of the spirits following the earth's movement. This is described in a lot of books, for example Ling shu chapter 8, but also in philosophical and language books. What is specific in thinking is this ability to penetrate, to have a good understanding.

Usually in explanations we use the character tong. Tong is to be in free communication, to penetrate deeply in order to really understand the structure of something. This free communication between the heart and the brain is the explanation of the character si. If the heart is in a good state it should be like a mirror for what is passing through the upper orifices and arriving from the brain. If any strong emotion agitates and disturbs this pure mirror of the heart it is unable to consider something and think on it without losing the possibility of doing something efficiently.

The chaining or linking which is also an aspect of thinking, is quite important. To think is to be able to seize information from the exterior, and to seize it with the proper orifices and to interpret it and receive it in good heart and make connections with what is already in one's memory and nature. All that is the beginning of the chaining which is thinking. Afterwards the building of the extension of that thinking can go on to plans and consideration of projects, and after that to the realisation of these projects. In this case, as it says in many classical texts, there is nothing on earth which is out of the reach of a human's thinking and knowledge.

In Ling shu chapter 8 we remember it says that what is called the heart is the ability for man to exist like the crossing of heaven's virtue with earth's qi, and like the merging of essences and spirits, and

the embracing of hun and po. One has a heart when one is able to take the responsibility to ensure the being, with all the elements of one's own person, the body and soul and mind and emotions, and all the living beings under its influence and authority. At the farthest limit is the king or the emperor, having to organize and take responsibility for himself and the empire.

After the description of this central place in Ling shu chapter 8 comes the presentation of the purpose (yi). Yi, as we saw earlier is the presentation to the heart of some image or idea, something which is passing through the mind or the heart, and which the heart just receives and accepts. It is still not thinking, just elements coming from inside which afterwards will compose the thinking.

If an idea or an image comes to the consciousness and remains in the heart because it fits with the situation and with your nature, it becomes the will (zhi). The image is enriched with a tension allowing it to become powerful, and this is will. After that the will must become permanent because this tension is the focused tension of life. It is first focused to be and make life, and secondly, according to all the circumstances of your life, to the particular aim to do something.

But it must be coherent with circumstances and with your nature. If you remain firmly in this kind of tension and orientation towards something or someone you are able to consider and change all the details, and see what is good or bad to continue to go in this direction. That is destiny given to the thinking. When this willpower remains firm with all its vital tension and allows all the changes which are the movement of the mind, all the considered possibilities of all the aspects of a situation in its details, this is thinking. But this is just the first part of thinking because the process continues with, lu, reflection. Reflection is when this kind of thinking, si, is able to extend itself powerfully and far away. It is a conception of plans.

Lu is made up with the character for thinking plus the image of the stripes of a tiger. In order to make this extension of the thinking, we have to have a consideration of each aspect of the situation. In lu, you are really able to see what you want and what you must do. Generally at the beginning of something it is very difficult to really see the situation. You must examine the details, and after that you can extend your imagination and your thinking and reflection to conceive a plan. Lu can also be meditation, because meditation is the highest level of thinking, thinking which is not about details but full of the power to extend itself into the dimensions of whatever you are able to reach. The tiger's stripes and his power give this extension.

Claude Larre: The Chinese are very observant of the behaviour and structure of animals because they have the feeling that the different qualities of energy in this world are but a sign.

When you are observing animals you are observing man. Man is so elusive and so complex a meeting of forces that it is difficult to make an analysis of his different ways of doing and expressing his life and activity. For that reason the Chinese have animals as important radicals in the structure of their characters. When you observe the radicals you can see where the language is attached in its origins, to the ox, birds, deer, snakes, tigers and so on. All these animal radicals are there because they express a quality of life which is seen better in animals than in man.

Elisabeth Rochat: How do si lu, worries and concerns, reflect the movement of the elements? Si is linked to the earth and spleen because thought must receive all the information and elements of thinking coming from everywhere, coming from outside and inside. The ability to transform and harmonize and put together in a good way is also the virtue of the earth element, just like digestion. In thinking there is something similar, it receives, treats, transforms and extracts the good things. With lu, this power extends and inflates the effect, and you have something more like the wood movement.

For instance in Su wen chapter 8 where the liver is said to be in charge of the armed forces, from this responsibility comes mou lu, the ability to analyse circumstances and formulate plans. We can see the projection of the wood element as well as the activities of the hunt. All that is in order to lead to the realisation of something. What is pathological in any emotion or in the building of the mental process is to stop somewhere in the process, and to be unable to halt the swelling power of one part of the process. In order not to let that happen you need to have a centre. For instance, if the thinking cannot continue in reflection we are unable to see the whole plan or project. You get fixated on one detail or part.

Another part of the pathology would be to always have plans, but never to be able to do anything with them. The ability to think is this very high expression of mankind, and by means of this to take possession of the universe by knowledge, because the heart of a man is made to expand itself into the dimensions of the universe. This thinking and knowledge and know-how is part of man's ability, as the central being between heaven and earth. But if you are unable to follow your true heart to what is good according to your own natural power, your own natural constitution, your own destiny, and with the precise circumstances of your life here and now, there is something wrong, and as a result the purpose and will become deviated.

Thinking and reflection are unable to lead to real knowledge and they stop somewhere, they cannot embrace the real situation. All kinds of emotions can take place in the heart and vitality and orientation of this man, and thinking and reflection become worries and concerns. For instance if the heart is unable to recognise a good note coming from inside, then the music sounds full of interference and it is hard to listen to it. These things are like weeds in the heart, and make the heart smaller. This is the reason why it says in Daoist texts 'do not think'. This does not mean do not have real knowledge of things, but do not have bad thinking in the form of worries.

This is exactly the substance of the earth's movement, to be able to transform and distribute, to separate what is essential and what is rubbish. Very often in classical Chinese medical texts worries and concerns directly injure the heart. It is also a question of the spleen of course, but very often it is the heart which is prey to worries and concerns. The heart is then no longer free and empty but is saturated by all this thinking.

To think is good if it leads to reflection which leads to something else. If not, it is just a way to use up the blood of the heart and body and the heart's spirits. Because of this great quantity of thinking and worrying in your heart, the yin of the heart is exhausted and its power is empty. You can have vertigo and trouble with the eyes, difficulty in respiration, and cardiac palpitations because of the lack

of the good quality and quantity of blood of the heart. You fret, which in French is 'to make bad blood'. In this case you have to tonify the blood and disperse the heat in the area of the heart. If the process continues, this emptiness of the blood in the heart leads to an inability to be peaceful, and can lead to insomnia. If this kind of agitation continues, all the mental and emotional inner life can be disturbed.

Claude Larre: Looking at the character we see that yi, has something standing in it, because the top five strokes mean to stand, li. Underneath the character is the heart. The following character in the sequence in Ling shu chapter 8, zhi, is a surge, because the will is different from thinking or from purpose. The will is moving, but the purpose is fixed. Then you have the si, which is some sort of stability. It is made with this square figure and internal crossing which is the same character as the field, tian. Lu takes that position and rolls it on, becoming speculation, meditation, thinking. Finally you get to zhi, the extraordinary ability to move according to life, the know-how of life.

The Chinese are wonderful in the way they manage life. They know how to do things. Whatever they are doing, they know the proper way. It represents an enormous study of relationships and of how things work. This is really the meaning of know-how, the inner way to live your life.

This zhi, is different from the other zhi, which means knowledge. This character is really the arrow and the mouth, so the true meaning is to reach, and when we reach we say that we know. But that is more or less in a straight line. The other is to reach in any possible way, and is more connected with the movement of life. It is the knowledge of life by life itself. Things are proceeding orderly, and that is knowledge. That might be the reason why it comes at the end of the process in Ling shu chapter 8. After this zhi you have a sentence which says 'Zhi is the way to nourish life'. So life is self-conscious and has the meaning and the means to build again and again the force of life. Health is an active thing. Health is not static. Life is a condition of life. Living is wanting to live and not to die. Health is a condition from which you start to have better health.

It is important to cure people in order that the future will be good, not that the present will be good. It is a process. When you give hope to your patient you are already making half of the treatment because you are telling them that you are helping them to restore that quality which will get bigger and bigger. If they know, because they are conscious of their life, that they are able to make a start, then the process is underway and the healing is really done, but not yet accomplished.

I remember that J. R. Worsley gave a very good teaching when he said do not consider your patient as he presents himself now, but as he should be in the future. This comes to the same point, that you have to restore in life the power of being always better and better. And even when people are in the terminal phase of their life, there might be some other way that you can give them hope that tomorrow will not be worse. This is not just to placate people, but comes from your knowledge of life. When you are just talking to people from your sympathy they suspect that you are deceiving them. But if you are talking to them from solid ground you are really helping them. The condition of know-how you have now is really the start of nourishing the life which you have in your hands.

Elisabeth Rochat: If you examine the presentation of thinking, si, and its pathology, there is a good description in Su wen chapter 39:

*'When there is obsessive thought (si), the qi is knotted (jie)',
and
'when there is obsessive thought, the heart has a place to dwell, the
spirits have a place to refer to. The correct qi remains on the spot and
does not circulate. This is how the qi is knotted.'*

What is wrong when the heart has a place to dwell and the spirits have a place to refer to ? What is wrong is to have only one place to refer to. This is how to fix oneself on something. It is not good for the spirits to refer to the same thing over and over again. It is not good for the heart to dwell on the same thought over and over again. This is exactly obsessive or repetitive thinking where only one thing occupies the space. This is the opposite of being able to take charge of all beings or of all that happens in your life, which is the definition of the heart in Ling shu chapter 8. This is the abuse of vitality by trying to think over and over again about a question.

Certain commentators say that the jing shen just gather together and block themselves over these worries and concerns. The will freezes and there is no more free circulation. This is the inability to transform and make yourself adaptable. There is no compenetration or transportation, which is the freeing of the way for other things continuing the process, and to nourish the body and thinking without any blockage.

The character jie, knotted, is made with the silk thread radical on the left (si). The part on the right originally meant to make a note on a rod (ji), marking something, a lucky day, an event or a contract. I think this is the etymology because if you have this sign of good fortune and the thread of silk there are a lot of good interpretations. If something is knotted which should be free that is because there is something wrong. But this jie is used in the jing jin, all the network of animation following the meridians and nourishing the muscular forces. The muscular meridians have a place for the gathering together of the animation and forces, and this is called jie. It is very close to another character which is also jie, and means articulation. This is a stage in the flowing current of animation. We can see that this knot here would be very useful if it is just the way by which you re-invigorate the current. For example, if two people in a marriage are in a knot, it is not necessarily to stop something but to continue something. What is bad is for a knot to stop something. Here in this quotation it is the qi which is knotted.

Su wen chapter 5 links thinking with the movement of the central area, of the spleen and earth element. Of course, an excess or a disturbance of this thinking injures the spleen. In case of such a disturbance Su wen chapter 5 says anger dominates thinking. Anger is the movement of the wood element, of the liver, and it enables the thinking to pass to the following stage, the reflection, lu. Sometimes a great anger creates in a person the ability to make a decision, after days and days of oppression. This kind of obsessive thinking is very close to oppression, you.

On the other hand Su wen chapter 5 also says that thinking can dominate fear, because this refers to the real thinking which can analyse the situation and take charge of what is, through the heart and knowledge of the heart. This is a way of dominating irresolvable fear, and reestablishing through the movement of the earth the relationship of the kidneys and the heart.

Su wen chapter 44 is a good example of the pathology, si, or thinking which deviates from the central axis of life and from thinking useful for the maintenance and nourishment of life:

'If thought weighed down with preoccupation (si xiang) carries on indefinitely, one does not succeed in getting what one aspires to. Purpose is scattered uncontrollably on the outside (wai), and one intensively practises the affairs of the bedroom. Then the ancestral muscle (zong jin) is loosened to complete relaxation (shi zong). Then muscular impotence (jin wei) occurs, even causing uncontrolled flowing out of the white substance (bai yin).'

Claude Larre: I have the impression that the Chinese expression, si xiang, is a kind of playing with the thinking. It is a development of the thinking. In colloquial Chinese they never use one character when they can use an expression. This is reflective of the yin yang process. If your experience of life is one of movement it is necessary that there are two characters or an expression. It is not possible for them to say anything if they are not developing something, and what they are developing is life. Thus the yin yang process is the basis of any written Chinese text, because yin yang is one thing, but made of two, so it is two in one and one in two. When you are reading classical Chinese texts you must always see how the unity of the two is represented in the proposition. We have to keep in mind that what is following is in keeping with what is preceding.

Elisabeth Rochat: The translation of 'thought weighed down by preoccupation' is made according to context because the following text describes symptoms of pathology. The great pathology here is to carry on indefinitely, not to be able to stop. This thinking is linked not only with preoccupation but also with desire. All kind of images and stimulations coming from the exterior are entering the heart, and the heart is not able to build real thinking. But it transforms this stimulation into desire. It wants to possess things or beings which it sees or hears. It is unable to stop the process. This way the purpose is uncontrollably scattered on the outside.

If your heart is unable to master good thinking it is because something is wrong with the relationships between the heart and the spirits and the purpose and will. If you follow your desires, and it is impossible to get what you aspire to, little by little there is this accentuation of the deviation. Your purpose is less and less your own. It is more and more in relation with the external stimulation, and pushed outside of yourself. So it is less and less under the control of your centre. In this case I think that there is a general movement of all the circulation of essences and blood and qi and so on inside you which follows the attraction to the exterior.

The worst example, because it implies direct loss of essences, is sexual desire. This creates a kind of agitation in the heart and heat. The heat invigorates this excessive power of the fire element and that also exhausts your vitality and qi. Heat from the heart and damp from the spleen can mix together and

push outwards, and there is a flowing out of the white substance, bai yin, which is spermatorrhea in the case of men and leukorrhoea in the case of women. It indicates that there is also a substantial loss at the end of the process. This fire of desire and inner agitation finally exhausts even the qi and it is this kind of exhaustion which makes the transformation of dampness and the containing of liquids impossible. So if your desires do not fit well with your nature this gap is always pushing you outwards, not only in thinking but in your heart and your purpose and in all your vital movements. The attitude described in Su wen chapter 44 is exactly the opposite of the conduct of the sages in Su wen chapter 1:

'They hold their will and their desires lose their force; the heart at peace without disturbance, the body at work but without exhaustion. Qi in each of them followed natural currents and thus everybody followed their desires and all were happy.'

In this case there is a very inner equilibrium so the sage can follow his desires.

Su wen chapter 47 emphasises the support the wood element gives to a healthy dynamic thought process. It says:

'The liver is the general in the centre, and he relies for decisions on the help of the gallbladder... When a man has numerous analyses of circumstances and multiple conceptions of plans, but is unable to take any decision, this is an emptiness of the gallbladder. As a result the qi flows up to the mouth and there is bitterness in the mouth.'

Here the pathology linked with the emptiness of the gallbladder has consequences through the ke cycle on the good balance of the earth element. This is why the bitterness appears at the mouth. In this case the treatment is on the shu and mu points of the gallbladder.

Su wen chapter 10 gives a description of disease related to the heart.

'The complexion is red and the pulse is like dyspnoea in the respiration with a kind of hardness and irregularity. The diagnosis is a piling up of qi in the central area. Very often there is illness due to bad digestion. The name of the illness is a blockage of the heart (xin bi). It is caused by external injuries, but before that worries and concerns emptied the heart. This is the reason why the perverse qi can take advantage of this void'.

We can see also a symptom involving heart and spleen linked with thinking and its preoccupation. The first thing is worry and concern, and the heart becomes empty, and incapable of resisting the perverse qi. Because of that its functioning is without force, like a blockage, bi. Here the following stage is that the stomach is not able to make things descend well and transform the nourishment effectively. This is the reason why we have all these symptoms in the middle heater and the digestion. If the heart is occupied by worries and concerns one can become unable to think about eating. It is like anorexia, and a complete block at the level of the chest.

In Ling shu chapter 8 we find again the heart prey to worries and concerns:

'Apprehension and anxiety, worries and preoccupations injure the spirits. When the spirits are injured, under the effect of fear, there is a flowing and overflowing without stopping... When the heart is prey to apprehension and anxiety, worried and preoccupied, then an injury to the spirits is produced. The spirits injured under the effect of fear, one loses possession of oneself, well-rounded forms becomes emaciated and the mass of the flesh is ravaged. The hair becomes brittle and one gives all the signs of premature death. One dies in winter'.

We can see the two types of injury here. The first is at the level of the heart, and the loss of possession of oneself because of the bad use of thinking. Consequently the inability to transform and transport is visible in the form of the body, and there is emaciation. We can also say that the fire of the heart is unable to generate the earth of the spleen. The yang of the spleen needs the contribution of the heart to be able to distribute. If that is true for the circulation of qi it is also true for mental activity. Death comes in winter because it might be after years and years where the fire of the heart is quite extinguished. Winter is the period when fire and heat is needed, and that is why it is the fatal period for this man. You can have thinking with oppression, si you, affecting the free circulation coming from the heart, and creating a situation very close to sadness. In Ling shu chapter 28 in such a situation of exhaustion due to oppression, treatment should be on the shao yin of the hand and xin zhu of hand, and the shao yang of the foot. These represent the fire and the yang aspect of the organism. The treatment is to invigorate the patient and the spreading out and springing up of the yang.

Fear and the Stomach

Elisabeth Rochat: The stomach is also a basis and foundation for all the essences and qi coming from the middle to the upper heater. That is why in Ling shu chapter 10 when the stomach meridian is penetrated by perverse qi there is also some kind of apprehension, anxiety and the fear of all things related to wood. It is the sign of a weakness of the stomach and the earth element which are afraid of what is coming from the wood, its dominating element.

In Su wen chapter 23 the stomach is also related to fear. The special symptoms are counter-current of qi, hiccups and fears. This fear can be explained by the lack of support coming from the stomach to the upper heater and the heart. If there is no basis or foundation then panic enters the spirit of the heart, and you have the attitude of fear. Another explanation of the same symptom would be that if the stomach and the kidneys are empty there is this kind of cold water power entering the upper heater, and affecting the heart.

Fear and the Spleen

Elisabeth Rochat: Su wen chapter 21 says:

'The Emperor asked: "In a man, activity and rest, movement or quiet, courage or cowardice, cause alterations in the pulse, is that not true? Qi Bo replied: "When a man is subject to fright and fear (jing kong), irritation and trouble, movement and rest, all that causes changes... If

one falls and is afraid (duo kong), the panting comes from the liver and the infiltration of qi injures the spleen."

This is quite an interesting point in the Chinese approach. When you are falling you can injure your bones or muscles, but you are not to forget the injury due to the feeling or impression that you have at the very moment of the fall. This is the physical injury, and the inner feeling which causes all the consequences.

The man falls. Perhaps he has broken his leg, or just bruised himself badly. In both cases there is a relationship between kidneys and liver, with the bones and the bone marrow. When a bone is broken the mending power comes from the power of the kidneys. When there is a haematoma, especially in the muscle at the level of the muscular articulation, you summon the mending power to come from your liver. At the same time you can have a great fear, and this is a double injury to your kidneys because at the very moment when the power of the kidneys and the blood of the liver are very much needed, you, by your feeling, are just countering the influence coming from the kidneys.

This is the reason why there is a weakness in the liver and kidneys. There is a kind of injury caused by the movement of fear present in the blood and liquids from the kidneys, going through the liver and all the transformations and so on. You have a deficiency of blood at the level of the liver, and as a result a super-abundance of qi rising up to the upper heater which causes panting because of the pressure. And of course, on the way up it injures the spleen. 'The panting comes from the liver and the infiltration of qi injures the spleen.'

QUESTIONS

Question: When translations talk about 'sadness and grief, is it bei ai?

Elisabeth Rochat: Bei ai is certainly sadness and affliction and the most common expression in classical Chinese for the violence of the injury by sadness. The association of you with bei is possible for an oppressive sadness and, more often, with chou for an overwhelming grief and sorrow. Of course, there are seven characters for the seven emotions but there many characters and hundreds of expressions with two characters to describe all the nuances of psychology and all the inner movements of the psyche in classical Chinese.

Certainly the best and most systematic text is Su wen chapter 39 where nine disturbances in the movement of qi are given. Nine is the way to make a complete expression of this movement, it is the way to put all this movement of qi into a total organisation. At seven you have the spreading out of vitality, then at nine you have the total organisation of the thing.

Question: Is there anything said about the emotion of sympathy in relation to the earth element?

Elisabeth Rochat: I think the ordinary meaning in English is to suffer with. It could be the Chinese character for compassion. It depends on the date of the text because the Buddhists brought a lot of nuances into Chinese psychology, especially ideas of compassion and sympathy. But this notion also existed before Buddhism, although not with exactly the same meaning. I do not think they were very

eager to suffer with others! They were interested in having correct relationships and ruling themselves and others.

Claude Larre: From what I know, apart from the texts, in life as such, the Chinese are able to feel very strongly and deeply what is going on in the minds and hearts of other people. So compassion and sympathy are on the same level as benevolence (ren), which is a cardinal virtue, and comes before the virtue of justice (yi). Sympathy is the fact that a living being is necessarily in tune with any other living being, be it an animal or a man. We are sharing life which is coming from on high, and which is distributed through all the structures of the universe, so since we are integrated and we have the feeling of being at one with so many of the ten thousand beings, the only normal way we do that is through sympathy. We just do not like it when people hit us. Weaker people dislike being hit. Higher people say, as a saintly person would, I am like the way (dao) and the virtue (de), I am providing good fortune for the people who do not like me. I am distributing my life and all my goods and everything to anybody. That would be the normal state of affairs. So sympathy with the meaning of compassion is called the virtue of heaven, and is represented by any saintly person, which actually means every normal person. So it is impossible that it would enter any pathological pattern.

But compassion coming from a partial inclination towards somebody is wrong. Whenever you are engaged in compassion you must have the ability to withdraw. If you do not do that it is blindness. Freedom of movement is no longer possible if by compassion you have a specificity and partiality. If you are giving too much of yourself to one and not giving to the universal then you are wrong, and you are engaged in sympathy without being able to control your mood. And that will be too strong in your mind. What sort of zang would be concerned with that? I think that the spleen would be called in as the central distributor of emotions too. The function of the spleen has not to be over giving. The spleen is a regulator.

Caroline Root: I think historically si has been mistranslated as 'sympathy'.

Elisabeth Rochat: There is a Chinese character for sympathy which is ci. The pronunciation is nearly the same as si and perhaps there has been a confusion. Ci is affection and compassion. It occurs in medical texts but it is not related to one zang or to a theory of the five or seven emotions. In fact, si creates links for knowledge and relationships, and thinking is the earthly ability to make connections.

Alan Hext: Worsley tends to use 'sympathy' in relation to obsessive thought, in terms of somebody worrying about others more than their own essential needs. So it is linked to worry.

Claude Larre: Ci is a mother's feeling for her offspring. Heaven is like a mother in its conduct. Heaven is not a father. So since everything comes from heaven and earth, it is normal that heaven would be protective. We know that the normal thing is that earth is ascending and heaven is covering and 'brooding' over earth. Each life-giver is giving more than life. Giving life and entertaining life, is not oppressing or opposing, it gives indefinitely as a mother would do, not as a father would do.

In our own Western civilisation we expect from our mother that she would go on giving life. We expect this less from our father, because we usually oppose these roles. The Chinese are not like this. They say that since the mother is like that it is because she is the mother. And what does the father give, because he is the father ? It is a different sort of view. The mother and father have compassion because of the weakness of the new life which is coming out of their own being.

Heaven being responsible for everything has this role, and earth too. But they divide their ways to match those duties. Compassion is used for that. It is difficult to say that compassion would be wrong. At the level of heaven and the saintly person who acts in the same manner as heaven, there is no distortion. But if your compassion goes to one person and not to another, it is no longer compassion. So it is destructive when you go too far in that direction, and you exhaust the thing itself.

Elisabeth Rochat: It appears for example in Su wen chapter 81: 'When the tears do not come out, it is because one sobs without being saddened. No tears: it is because the spirits have no compassion (ci), if the spirits have no compassion, then the will has no sadness, yin and yang maintain each other: how could only tears come ?'

Is this situation good or bad ? If you try to deceive another by manifesting a sadness which you do not feel, it is of no use because you do not create good relationships this way. If you are just able to express compassion for a while then it is good. If you are hampered by compassion and you sob without control, it is of no help to the other person and it exhausts your own vitality.

Question: What about guilt?

Claude Larre: Guilt would be one example of obsession. But not guilt as such. Because if you are really guilty, it is difficult to say that in itself it is wrong. If you are wrong and you do not admit you are wrong then you are not so much suffering from the emotion, you are suffering from being wrong. If you correct the fact that you are wrong maybe you will have no more place for the emotion. It is difficult to compare guilt and emotion because in themselves they are not on the same level.

Elisabeth Rochat: If the feeling of being guilty leads to damage of the essences and vitality and is the beginning of a blockage of something, it is necessary to treat this like obsessive thought, as a deviation of thinking.

Claude Larre: Whenever you detect that the thinking is not correct then you may be sure that it has become obsessive. But if you are a reasonable person, and you think there is no special distortion, then there is nothing to say. But if there is a distortion it might be that your thinking is too quick or under the influence of something or someone, and it might damage your body.

Elisabeth Rochat: We saw that the knowledge of the past was something very useful and important in the art of healing. But in Su wen chapter 77 we have the example of a patient having a memory of their own past in a negative way, only with regrets. This memory is not helpful for the future or for adaptation to the present circumstances. It is just the contrary. It just draws attention to the difference

between the glorious past and the poor present condition. That would be the beginning of very serious diseases.

Sandra Hill: There seems to be a lack of rites or methods to cope with the circumstances that produce these feelings of guilt which are difficult to define as emotion. Maybe the feelings are justified, but there is no accepted way to resolve them in society.

Elisabeth Rochat: It is necessary to start a process with an analysis of circumstances and put each thing in the right place in the consciousness and selfjudgement. To do that and to exchange that with something else is always the central schema according to Chinese theory. You are guilty, but what are you doing with this feeling of guilt?

Claude Larre: In the sort of society where what to do and what not to do are clearly understood by the majority of the people, the instability is less and the diseases are different. In the West we are suffering from a lack of reasons to be consistent with society as such. We go to our friends and we ask what they would do in certain circumstances because there is no model for the society. Or if there are models, or if they are old models, people in the new age say it is not possible to do that anymore. That is why you go to your psychotherapist, and maybe even he does not know. Better to go to your acupuncturist! Chinese medicine deals with specific points which achieve certain effects, and that is not the case with words alone. I am sure that touching the body is always effective whereas just to talk to someone does not necessarily effect a change. The acupuncturist is more regulated by his perception of the patient's body than the psychotherapist by his perception of the patient's words.