

# Qiao Mai/ Heel (Motility) Vessels. #1

Qiao Mai Pathways, Theory, Pathology, Summary, Symptomology

QIAO MAI 躄脈

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## 圖穴脈躄陽

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Yin Qiao Mai,  
Yang Qiao Mai,  
from the  
Neiwaigong tushuo  
(Larre & Rochat,  
1997).

**LARRE & ROCHAT** (1997)**Introductory Discussion**

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The character qiao has a special radical which is the character for foot, this indicates that the two qiao mai concern the lower limbs and begin at the foot. This radical (zu) is the character that is used to describe the six foot meridians. The right part of the character, the phonetic (qiao), describes a kind of pavilion. The meaning changes with the radical. If, for example, it is put together with the radical for a woman it means something very delicate and fragile and refined. If we put it with the radical for a horse the meaning is an untamed wild creature or person, arrogant and full of fire and violence.

There is a contrast and ambivalence between the two meanings of this character, to be able to rise up very fiercely and also something that is delicate, with the suggestion that if you are at the top you are in the most delicate position.

*Claude Larre:* I would suggest that this ambivalence is in our minds and not in life. Because it is something which is really high, this suggests that it is moving, and when it is moving it is full of grace and refinement, like bamboo in the wind. But if the moving is of someone high in society, this position will create envy around him. If people have these high qualities, there is often a lot of envy and enemies around them. An animal is noble because of its head and hair, and in Chinese thought there is a connection between the horse and the heavenly understanding of life. We understand that if this character is attributed to a horse it is as it should be, but if it is attributed to a man then the meaning becomes that of arrogant, etc.

It is important not to attach a particular word to the translation of this character but to go back to the lively impression that we have when we think of the horse, or a Tang dynasty court dancer, and from that make up our minds according to what we see in life. That is the only way to understand the meaning, it must depend upon the radical and the context. If women wear high heeled shoes and their hair on top of their head they are often the envy of other women and men may easily be seduced!

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The meaning of this character qiao with the foot radical is to stand, but to stand in a dynamic way; to be able to be erect and to attract all the energy from the earth up to the top of the body. It can also mean to stand on tip-toes - to be higher, but also to be less stable. There is always a danger in the fierce impulse, but this impulse is necessary for the strength and springing up of life. There is also the meaning of agility. If you are able to lift up your feet and legs you are able to run, and to run fast, but it is not only to be agile and fast, it is also to be fierce. Another series of meanings is to be robust with a kind of martial temperament, with a certain amount of arrogance and pride.

Generally the explanation for the meaning of qiao mai given by classical commentators is rapid: to be able to run rapidly or to hasten. The commentators of the Nan jing say the ability to run and walk with agility suggests that the qiao mai provide the mechanism for walking; moving with ease and speed because of the rising up movement of the qiao mai, which gives a feeling of lightness.

Sometimes you may find qiao written another way. The etymological meaning here is in Wieger lesson 81C. The top of the phonetic is three times the earth character which suggests earth heaped up, and with the bottom part, meaning high, the complete explanation is a knoll or a mound. This is the name of the very famous Emperor Yao. It is interesting to see that here we have the same idea of

height, but without the notion of being on tip-toes and in danger of over-balancing. This alternative character has the meaning of something very well rooted, very firm and solid, and this is certainly another meaning of the qiao mai to be firmly rooted in the earth - to heap up in order to build the movement of the body.

*Claude Larre:* If we think of the roots of plants and the ability of plants to take sustenance from the roots, we can see that for any extension upwards you have to rely on something. In the Chinese view you can never look at the beauty of life without also looking at the foundations.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* To see the difference between the two characters we can add the radical for a woman to this second character, where the meaning is more of something graceful, without the sense of delicate. With the horse (xiao) it is a finely bred horse, fierce or untamed. With the sun (xiao) it means to become clear, to gain understanding and knowledge: the light of knowledge. With the radical for man it is to be happy, a happy, fortunate man.

*Claude Larre:* It is interesting for those who are studying Chinese to look through the tables of radicals and to see for example which words include the radical for the horse. You will find allusions to the colour and the speed of the horse, but also many kinds of behaviour, for example to be frightened or to be haughty. And because the horse is given many of the attributes of heaven, it is often used to describe psychological traits. With the wood radical it has the meaning of a bridge, especially a very high bridge which allows boats to pass underneath. We see this character in many names of bridges, in Tokyo for example there is Nihonbashi.

## PATHWAYS OF YIN AND YANG QIAO MAI

*Elisabeth Rochat:* These two meridians flow from the heel to the top of the head, with the idea of building something up to a summit. The pathway is given in Nan jing difficulty 28:

*Yang qiao mai arises from the middle of the heel: it passes over the external malleolus and penetrates feng chi (GB-20).*

*Yin qiao mai also arises from the middle of the heel; it passes over the internal malleolus and rises; it reaches the pharynx; it crosses then joins the chong mai.*

The beginning is the same for the yin and yang qiao mai. Both arise from the heel (gen). This character is made with the radical for the foot and if you replace this with the wood radical you have the character for root (gen). The heel when it is written like this is nothing other than a description of the way that the human being is rooted in the earth and is able to keep contact with the earth.

In alchemical texts and in Zhuang zi there is the idea of respiration through the heels. This is a method to take the breath not only from heaven but also to take the influences of the earth and make them rise up into the body. In this case the heel is designated with another character (zhong) keeping the same foot radical (zu) but with a different phonetic. Here we have the idea of a root drawing some kind of sap from the depths of the earth and making it rise up to the trunk and the branches. In this character there is again the idea of a piling up, a heaping up, to make something solid and firm. So the heel has the same double idea: to be firm and solid, by a kind of piling up, and through this accumulation to have an ascending movement.

*Claude Larre:* Elisabeth was referring to the character for heel as a phonetic, but it is also a radical. The meaning of a character depends on both the phonetic and the radical, and sometimes the phonetic is even more important than the radical to ascertain the meaning. If we want to understand what this character gen means we have to study the radical. This is given in Wieger lesson 26L. We can also see that this character gen is the name of the trigram of the mountain, which we can interpret either as a physical mountain or as a representation of the ascending movement. Since there are eight trigrams, the trigrams encompass all types of movement in the universe. As Elisabeth said, it is not only the yang rising but also the yin rising with these two meridians, and it is not only the movement of rising that is suggested, but the ability to have a place to depend on for that rising up movement. It is important to take the yin and yang, not as the final reference, but as a double reference for something which cannot be named. We must return to this blind spot - the unknown from which life emerges. We are not able to understand or describe the unknown, but at least we are able to place things where they are, and from that blind spot we may make further analogies to the yin and yang aspect: the yin and yang aspects of the movement of life, and the transformation of the yin and yang by merging in the third position. So when we are considering the beginnings of the yin and the yang movements here, we must consider what is going before in order to be true to life. Etymology does not always give the meaning as such, but just a suggestion of the meaning. Etymology is more a description of a picture of the manifestation.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* Yang and yin qiao mai begin at exactly the same place: at the heel, not at the malleolus. The centre of the heel corresponds to the function of qiao; it is not just at the heel, but particularly at the centre of the heel. In Unschuld's translation of the Nan jing he just says in the heel, which is correct, but this character zhong is usually used to stress that the qiao mai must remain in the centre, and remain connected with the central organisation of the vitality.

The yang qiao mai passes over the external malleolus and penetrates feng chi (GB-20). The external malleolus is mentioned to make an opposition with the yin qiao. We have the common origin, and then the external malleolus for the yang, the internal malleolus for the yin. In this kind of text, that differentiation is important because all the relationships between the qiao mai are internal. At the origin in the heel we have the communication between the yin and yang, the internal and external. This is the first way to describe that the yin and yang qiao are a unity within a system, but within the system they are responsible for good balance, the equilibrium between yin and yang, of interior and exterior and so on. We will see that through all the other texts. This is one of the main differences with the yin and yang wei mai which have more separate systems. For the qiao mai it is always a question of balance and exchange between the yin and the yang but within the same system. This is just an example of that.

No other points are mentioned but Gallbladder-20, which is the last point of the yang qiao mai and a connection with the nape of the neck, although of course we know that the qiao mai also occupy the space in the inner brain and the area of the head.

In Nan jing 28, the trajectory proper to the du mai was said to rise up to fengfu, (Du-16), where du mai penetrates and takes a belonging relationship (shu) to the brain. So here there is a similarity

between du mai and yang qiao mai, and of course in later texts, they form a couple, as does yin qiao mai with ren mai. In Ling shu 21 we will see that both qiao mai penetrate the brain.

The link with feng chi (GB-20), probably has something to do with the rapidity of the qiao. This kind of chi is a natural gathering-place for something, it is a place which stores but also attracts the wind. And here there is the link with the gallbladder meridian, the shao yang, which is also full of this quality of qi - to be brave, fierce and rapid.

The yin qiao mai rises from the inner malleolus, and it is important to see that within the yin qiao mai there is also great power and the ability to rise up, which is not always appropriate to the yin. The yin qiao is said to have this specific function of enabling the yin to ascend, especially the yin and essences from the kidneys. It is able to take the yin right up to the top of the body, to the eyes and the brain. It is responsible for irrigation and good irrigation is always distributed by this springing up movement.

The qiao movement comes before the yin and yang, and this qiao quality has two sides; the yang being connected with the gallbladder and the wind in this presentation in the Nan jing. The yin also has the ability to rise up; it ascends to the pharynx and the chong mai. We have seen that the yin qiao may be coupled with the ren mai but that is not mentioned here, it is a different kind of relationship. The chong mai is said to be the sea of blood and the sea of the jing mai and at the pharynx we have a manifestation of the ren mai and chong mai. So now we have a reunion of the yin qiao mai with the yin power of the extraordinary meridians shown first in the ren mai and then through some of the yin functions of the chong mai, which we have seen to be the sea of blood, the sea of the jing mai, and to be responsible for the irrigation of the small and great valleys. This text connects the yin qiao with this quality of vitality.

The extraordinary meridians are always concerned with the development of the unfolding of yin and yang, of water and fire, essences and qi. The qiao mai are not just concerned with this basic organisation, but also with a movement, an impetus to create the ability to rise up. And of course if it is controlling and regulating the ascending movement, it is also controlling and regulating the descending movement.

The chong mai and ren mai also penetrate the face, the chong mai to the inside of the nose, the ren mai to the area just below the eyes, so they ensure the complete irrigation of the face and give the pattern for the ascending movement of the jin ye, allowing the watering and irrigation of the orifices of the face, the brain and so on. This watering and irrigating quality maintains and nourishes the muscles, which is very important in the pathology of the qiao mai. Within the muscles we must always have good irrigation coupled with good strength and movement. If there is not a good balance between both, there may be contractions and many other possible pathologies.

It is obvious that because there are two malleoli on two legs, we have two yin qiao and two yang qiao, and therefore the first differentiation between the right and the left within the extraordinary meridians. But what do we mean by the right and the left? It is not only the right part and the left part, but also all the movement and circulation made by the left and the right - the ascending and the descending movements.

*Claude Larre:* The right and left are locations, but the reason why the Chinese designate right and left with ascending and descending is because the left is the position of the rising sun, the right of the setting sun. Life is rising with the rising sun, and setting with the setting sun. It is not necessary to elaborate more, but just to remember that when the Chinese are talking about left and right they are always assuming these connections with the movement of the sun which is the same in the universe as within ourselves.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The malleolus is a very important area for the various pathways of the meridians of the foot. At the internal malleolus, we have the three yin meridians of the foot, and the three muscular meridians of the three yin of the foot. We also have the luo of the kidneys and liver. At the external malleolus we have the bladder and gallbladder meridians, their muscular meridians and the three luo of the bladder, gallbladder and stomach. At the middle of the heel, there is a branch of the kidney meridian, but also the luo of the kidneys. At the external part of the heel we have the muscular meridian of the bladder. We can begin to see here the special relationship between the qiao mai and the bladder and kidney meridians.

According to Li Shizhen:

*The yang qiao is detached (bie) from the tai yang of the foot. This mai surges from the middle of the heel. It comes out under the external malleolus, at the point shen mai (BL-62) on the tai yang of the foot. At the level of the back of the malleolus, it turns around the heel to root itself (ben) at pu can (BL-61). It rises directly, running over the external face of the thigh, runs over the back of the ribs and rises to the top of the back. It meets the tai yang of the hand at nao yu (SI-10). It rises on the external side of the shoulder and above the scapula and meets the yang ming of the hand at jian yu (LI-15). It rises to ren ying (St-9), and surrounds the corners of the mouth. It meets with the yang ming of the hand and foot and ren mai at di cang (St-4). Together with the yang ming of the foot it rises to ju liao (St-3). It meets once more with ren mai at cheng qi (St-1). It reaches the internal corner of the eye where there is a meeting of the five mai: tai yang of the hand and foot, yang ming of the foot, yin qiao and yang qiao, at jing ming (BL-1). From jing ming it rises and penetrates the hairline, it descends behind the ear, penetrates feng chi (GB-20) and ends. In all 22 points.*

*The yin qiao is detached (bie) from the shao yin of the foot. Together with the shao yin, it runs along the internal malleolus under the point zhao hai (KID-6). It rises two cun above the internal malleolus to make jiao jin (KID-8) its reserve, xi (xi cleft point), then it rises directly, running over the anterior internal face of the thigh and penetrates the yin (sexual organ). It rises, running through the thorax and penetrates que pen (St-12), it rises, coming out in front of ren ying (St-9). It reaches the larynx, with which it makes an exchange, jiao and links with chong mai. It penetrates the internal side of the malar bone, it rises to take a dependent relation with the internal corner of the eye, where there is a meeting of the five mai: tai yang of the hand and foot, yang ming of the foot, yang qiao and yin qiao at jing ming (BL-1). In all eight points.*

In the description of the pathways by Li Shizhen we can see that all the indications given stress the difference between the yin and the yang qiao. For instance, the yin qiao runs over the anterior internal

side of the thigh and penetrates the yin, the genitals, but the use of this particular term for the genitals (yin ) emphasises all the power of the yin in the lower abdomen and the function of the kidneys on the yin of the body, essences, liquids and so on. The yin qiao mai has a very important function in this area, and from there it runs through the thorax, making a connection between the yin of the lower heater and that of the upper heater, penetrating que pen (St-12), which as we know is the turning point of many pathways and currents of animation. Then it comes to ren yin (St-9) giving a strong connection with the stomach meridian. Li Shizhen repeats the exchange and connection with chong mai which is given in the Nan jing, always stressing the internal aspect of the body, until we come to the junction with jing ming (BL-1) at the internal corner of the eye. In this description by Li Shizhen, he describes the junction of the two qiao mai at the top of the body at jing ming. We can also see that in Ling shu chapter 17.

Jing ming gives the idea both of light and of the illumination coming from irrigation by the essences. Jing is usually used for the pupil of the eye, but here it is referring to nothing other than the gathering together of the essences (jing) of the five zang and the six fu, as is often expressed in the texts, for example Ling shu 80, or Su wen 81. This is another way to show how all the vitality is brought to the upper orifices and to the brain by the workings of the qiao mai.

In the Nan jing we saw this common origin in the middle of the heel, the inner part and the outer part are the yin and yang qiao respectively. The yin qiao goes through the inner part of the trunk, the yang qiao more to the back and at the top of the back meeting with the tai yang of the hand (small intestine meridian) and the shao yang of the foot (gallbladder meridian). There is a double trajectory of the qiao, one on the inner yin part of the body, through the lower abdomen and the chest, with all the contact with chong mai, and the other trajectory on the yang part, enveloping the back and the external part of the body. At the eyes there is a conjunction of the effort of the qiao mai. And we will see the meaning of all these meetings with the eyes and the brain.

The yin and yang qiao give the rhythm of the yin and the yang in each moment of life; the equilibrium between essences and qi, blood and qi, but also the good balance of yin and yang in our surroundings, for example night and day. All that, and other aspects of the function of the qiao mai are well expressed in the area of the eyes.

The commentators of the Nan jing and other texts suggest that the zang and the innermost are irrigated by the yin qiao mai, and the fu are watered by the yang qiao mai. This is just another way to show the total impregnation in the rising up movement of the yin and yang of the body. This could be interpreted as the zang and the fu or the inner and outer parts of the body, or the front and the back - all interpretations are possible, because the main function of the qiao mai is to rule the exchanges and to create equilibrium between the yin and the yang at every level.

With the conjunction at Bladder-1 we have a kind of circle effect. The first image of circulation between yin and yang was made with ren mai and du mai, enveloping and circling the primary structure of the body, and here with the qiao mai, which are of course linked with ren mai and du mai, we have a larger circle from the feet to the top of the head, and also a circle enveloping the inner and outer at each level of the body. At the eyes they unite in order to start again. Wei qi begins its

circulation at the eyes, it envelopes all the external parts of the body during the day and regulates the innermost during the night. This is an example of the effect of the circulation of the qiao mai.

The anchoring of the yin and yang qiao mai at the heel and malleolus with the kidney and bladder meridians is usually made at Kidney-6 and Bladder-62. The study of the names of these points can give us an idea of the mutual exchange and penetration of the two qiao mai.

### **Bladder-62, shen mai**

The character shen designates the ninth of the twelve earthly branches, and it corresponds to the time of the afternoon between three and five o'clock. Tea time! That is quite interesting because it is the time of the day when the yin begins to manifest. The character also suggests the idea of starting again, doubling up in order to express something. It also has the meaning of to be at ease, a kind of stretching. If we add the radical for a man it means to stretch, but also to straighten up, with the idea of expansion and extension. If you add the character mouth you have a deep sigh: a deep long aspiration coming from the lower abdomen in the area of the kidneys and lower heater in order to restore expansion to a blockage in respiration, as, for example, if there is a blockage in the thorax, hampering respiration.

Another name for this point is yang qiao, because it is the anchoring point of the yang qiao.

The explanation of the name of this point is related to the yang qiao mai which in a rising movement is able to expand and extend its influence for the benefit for the whole body, especially the yang, because this character also has the meaning of 'to distribute benevolence'. This is seen particularly in the Book of Odes.

According to some interpretations the name also indicates the pathology, for example to be able to contract but unable to stretch. This is a later interpretation made through the usual pathology of the qiao mai, but this character to extend, to propagate, to expand, also has the technical meaning in medicine to extend in opposition and to flex. All the musculature is involved here.

### **Kidney-6, zhao hai**

Hai is the sea, with the radical for water on the left. Zhao is to light, to illuminate and to reflect something, as if in a mirror, and has the fire radical underneath. Another name for the point is yin qiao. There is something in the name of this point that suggests both fire and water. Kidney-2 (ran gu) is the special point for the fire element but at Kidney 6 we have the meeting of fire and water. This is the meaning of this point - the reflecting power of the light on a sea of water. The interpretation is that fire and water are reflecting one another to combine the yin and yang of the kidneys and to reflect the unity of the fire and water of ming men. It is very interesting that this point where the yin qiao rises is like a communion between water and fire; the power of the fire being able to raise up the qualities of the water. This alliance creates a balance between the yin and the yang aspects of life. If we look at the movement of the kidney meridian at the malleolus there is a doubling back, but after this point the meridian is able to rise up.

So zhao hai expresses the unity of water and fire in the kidneys, but also the relationship with the origin, and the power of the origin. There are many commentaries on this point discussing the relationship with authentic yang which is able to illuminate authentic yin and so on.

Shen mai was an expression of elevation and the stretching movement, but remember that this also refers to the time of day when the yang is welcoming the yin. This specific time of the day when the yin appears (3-5pm) is also the time of the most powerful activity of the bladder meridian, and of course this point shen mai is on the bladder meridian. These two names are very interesting in that each shows one side welcoming the other. With shen mai the yang is welcoming the yin, and here in zhao hai the yin is accepting the yang, allowing the yang to illuminate and dynamise but still remaining in the quality of yin and water. It is the clarity of the mirror reflecting through the water: the reflecting power of the water.

I think that it is the ability of yin qiao mai to accept the yang and for yang qiao mai to accept the yin, which is expressed in these two points and the result is visible at the level of the eyes, where the conjunction of the two is made and the work of the two meridians is effective.

In other classical texts, other points are mentioned in relation to the qiao mai. Bladder-59 (fu yang), Gallbladder-29 (ju liao), Du-16 (feng fu) for the yang qiao and for the yin qiao, Kidney-2 (ran gu). This does not necessarily mean that the yin qiao begins at ran gu but that it is taking advantage of the power of the fire and the beginning of this ability to rise that we have at Kidney-2.

Yin qiao has a very strong link with the kidney meridian, and the yang qiao is linked with all the yang meridians except the shao yang of the hand, the triple heater meridian. There is no point of the triple heater given in the trajectory of the yang qiao mai.

## LING SHU CHAPTER 17

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The first part of this chapter presents the length of the meridians in the human body. The calculation is made by adding the length of the twelve main meridians and the du mai and ren mai. Also in these calculations the yin qiao mai is added for women, the yang qiao mai for men. There is then an explanation of the relationship of the five zang in the interior and the upper orifices. Just after that the Emperor asks this question:

**Huang di:** *From where does this qiao mai arise, and where does it stop? How is its qi concerned with nourishing and watering?*

**Qi Bo:** *Qiao is detached from the shao yin, rising at the back of ran gu (KID-2). It rises over the inner malleolus and ascends following the internal part of the thigh, penetrating the yin (sexual organs). It arises following the inner part of the chest and enters que pen (St-12). It exits in front of ren ying (St-9). It enters below the eyes and has a shu (dependence, belonging) relationship with the inner corner of the eyes, where it makes a junction with tai yang and yang qiao and continues to rise. There is an association of qi for mutual exchange - the eyes are moistened. If the qi is unable to make the nutrition, the eyes cannot close.*

**Huang di asks:** *If qi is circulating only in the five zang and is not nourishing the six fu, why is that?*

**Qi Bo replies:** *As for the qi - it is impossible for it not to circulate. It is like water flowing; like the sun and the moon circulating unceasingly. The yin mai nourishes the yin, the yang mai gives*

*splendour to the yang. It is like a circle without end, a perpetual unrolling; when it is finished it begins again. This qi flowing with a great abundance irrigates and waters the five zang in the interior, and in the exterior humidifies and moistens the pores and skin.*

You can recognise the trajectory of the yin qiao mai in the first part of this text. The yin qiao is presented as a detachment from the kidney meridian. One important point is that the emphasis is made on the nutritive or yin side of the circulation. At the same time we have this idea of a kind of splendour. This splendour is to act in such a way that all the magnificent effect of the vitality can be seen in each zang and fu or orifice or part of the body, which is well irrigated and nourished and maintained by all these gifts of the essences. The character rong (splendour) is used several times in this text.

This is particularly relevant to the conjunction at the level of the eyes, at jing ming (BL-1). We know that at this location is the commanding area for the defensive qi and here through the qiao mai we have the rising movement of the other part of the qi, in a dual relationship with the defensive qi, the nutritive qi, the liquids and essences. This is another way to present what was certainly considered the main function of the qiao in ancient times, this perpetual conjunction of yin and yang, a conjunction of the nutritive and the defensive qi. We can see the relationship of the qiao mai with the defensive qi in other chapters. In this chapter there is the obvious relationship with the nutritive.

The beginning the text just says qiao mai. But it says that at the eyes it has a conjunction with tai yang and yang qiao, so here it is especially the yin qiao mai, but more particularly the importance of the qiao function for the yin. The point ran gu (KID-2) is mentioned perhaps to emphasise the power of the fire and the yang giving the yin the possibility to rise. The pathway after that is nearly the same as in the Li Shizhen text.

At the end of the first section we hear that if this all works well we can open and close the eyes. We can follow the normal rhythm of yin and yang in the universe during day and night. Here we have the first mention of the relationship with wei qi, the defensive qi, which is in charge of the manifestation of the rhythms of day and night within human life, like the opening and closing of the eyes. But with this text we can also understand that this is possible only if there is a good watering of the muscles. If there is contraction in the muscles you physically cannot close your eyes. And if there is not a good balance between yin and yang, water and fire, inside your body you can have insomnia or somnolence due to a disturbance of the eyes.

Another commentator, Zhang Zicong, has a very good explanation. He says that the Emperor's question is relating to qi and to nutrition and liquids. This is the reason why Qi Bo answers with yin qiao. It is through the yin qiao and the close relationship of yin qiao with the kidneys and the kidney meridian that there is a nutritive power for the irrigation of the five zang. And there is also a relationship of the irrigation of the five zang with the spirit of the heart, and the formation of the blood.

This commentator also said that as the qi of yin and yang qiao are joined together, the exterior and interior are in an exchange and relationship and penetrate one another. We can see this idea of a luo relationship, like a prototype of the luo function. Behind the interior and exterior relationship we have

the ying and the wei, nutrition and defense. Nutrition is more in the interior and the defense more on the exterior.

The second part of Qi Bo's answer, with reference to the sun and the moon and the cycles of the body, explains the continuity of all circulation as a circle without end. If we have this revolving movement it is in all directions, ascending and descending. And here we have this kind of rising movement of the yin, of essences and nutrition and perhaps, in contrast with the presentation of the trajectory of the defensive qi which is descending from the eyes given in Ling shu 76.

All parts of the body are well irrigated by the qiao mai; the zang and fu and all the internal viscera, and all the parts of the body up to the cou li, the most external structures of the body. All is well nourished and maintained. The images of the sun and the moon are very rich and suggest all the rhythms of life, the regular course of the sun as well as the transformation of the moon and all kinds of effects and correspondences in the body, including the ability to adapt the equilibrium of blood and qi, yin and yang.

That is not all about the qiao mai in this chapter. The Emperor continues and says:

*Qiao mai, they are yin and yang. But which mai enters in the calculation (shu)?*

Shu is to count, a number or a calculation. But also it is to arrive through calculation at a good and effective arrangement of numbers, for example for a good method of treatment. All these meanings are included here. Qi Bo replies:

*For a man the shu is yang, for a woman the shu is yin.*

What is the shu becomes part of the calculation of the length of the meridian system and what is not shu is the luo. The meaning of this text is that if the qiao mai are the first separation within the organism of yin and yang, they also represent the first separation within the species of male and female, and they are one way to understand the difference in the manifestation of the equilibrium between blood and qi in men and women. That is why for a man, when calculating the total length of the mai we count the yang qiao mai, which is called the meridian, because the yang is the norm for men. It is the opposite for women. As a result of this, when you treat through the qiao mai it is different for man and woman.

To treat the qiao through the two points Kidney-6 and Bladder-62, we have to be especially aware of the sex of the patient. This is part of a method of treatment according to the Nei jing. The man is ruled more by the yang and the qi the woman by the yin and the blood. So here again this luo relationship is linked with the qiao mai. It is rather complicated and I am not sure whether it is practically useful. It is possibly something that belonged to a particular school in ancient times.

Commenting on this Zhong Zicong says:

*The yin qiao mai rise from the foot corresponding to the rising up of the qi of the earth. This is the reason why the woman has the number (shu) of the yin qiao. The yin qiao belongs to the inner corner of the eye, where it makes a junction with the yang qiao and rises up. The yang qiao receives the qi of the yin qiao and from the border of the hair continues and*

*descends down to the foot corresponding to the descending movement of the qi of heaven. That is the reason why the number (shu) of the man is by the yang qiao.*

This is a special way to explain the perpetual movement of ascending and descending - the ascending movement of the yin and the descending movement of the yang - which is similar to certain presentations of the du mai and ren mai. The rising up of the qi coming from the earth and the descending movement of the qi coming from heaven; yin and yang. It is always this kind of exchange and continual reversing. The yang has a continual expanding and rising up movement but at the same time in the body it is like the lungs which have descending movement to irrigate and impregnate the whole body. And it is the reverse for the yin.

That is certainly part of the qiao mai. The yin qiao mai allows the essences of the water of the shao yin, kidney meridian, to be in free communication with the yang qiao. The yang qiao mai allows the qi of tai yang, bladder meridian, to be in free communication with the yin qiao. It is the same reasoning for the male and the female.

#### THE QIAO MAI IN OTHER TEXTS

Quoting an ancient text Zhang Zicong says:

*Tai yang and shao yin of the foot are the source from which blood and qi yin and yang are originally produced. Yin qiao mai and yang qiao mai master the free communication of yin and yang. Blood and qi from below rise and have an exchange and mutual connection at the eyes.*

Remember that the eyes are sometimes called the gates of destiny. Ling shu chapter 21 gives a description of tai yang of the foot, which takes a shu (belonging) relationship with the root of the eye. It continues:

*...This pathway enters the brain and there is a separation between yin qiao and yang qiao. Yin and yang meet together (jiao).*

This is the kind of meeting which is also a crossing. A meeting with an exchange where the yang penetrates the yin and the yin exits to the yang.

*This meeting and exchange takes place at the inner corner of the eyes. When the yang qi are increasing their power, one opens the eyes and when the yin qi are increasing their power one closes the eyes.*

This is the same idea that we have seen before, but it is not only at the inner corner of the eyes. The inner corner of the eyes is just the external effect and mechanism of an operation taking place in the depths of the brain. The brain is also linked with the kidneys and is the meeting place of the essences and marrow, but it is entirely impregnated and illuminated by the qi coming through all the yang meridians, and also by the presence of the spirits. That is the reason why the brain can work well and enable the functioning of the upper orifices, particularly the eyes.

Remember that ming men is also a name for the eyes, because at the eyes we have this meeting of essences coming from the five zang and the six fu. This text fits very well with Ling shu chapter 17 on the rising up of essences and liquids. The eyes are the meeting point for essences, but also the meeting point for all the yang meridians and also the dwelling place and the reception for the expression of the spirits, the eyes being the messenger and expression of the depths of the heart. The reference to the spirit and the eyes is not only a symbol but also a real and actual place for this function. All the rhythms of nutritive and defensive qi are linked to this area and to the brain, the functioning of du mai and the bladder meridian and so on. That is why this is also given the name of The Gate of Life (ming men), the visible manifestation of how you are able to manage your vitality, the conjunction of the yin and yang at each level, and the expression of your spirits.

Another interesting thing in this text is that it is not exactly the same movement. Yin and yang complete their own movement and turn to one another, the yang penetrating the yin. This is a way to describe the defensive qi entering into the depths of the body at night, and penetrating into the yin. The other movement is the development within the yin going out to the yang and giving the nourishment needed for everyday life to the external parts of the body, for example, the limbs and the orifices. If the relationship is good, one can enrich the other. When the yin is weakening, for example at dawn, there is a movement of the qi and blood towards the exterior, I begin to open my eyes and to move my limbs. This is the normal movement, not a perversion. When the yang qi is powerful, the yin is able to go out to the yang. This is the opening of the eyes. When the yin qi increases in power the yang is able to enter the yin. One closes the eyes.

The later chapters in the Ling shu describe the relationship of the qiao mai to the rhythms of sleeping and waking and their relationship to the circulation of the wei qi, the defensive qi. Chapter 76 describes this circulation of the wei qi which I am sure you know. I will remind you that by diffusion through the yang meridians, the wei qi is directed towards the exterior for movement and communication with the exterior. The last trajectory is through the yang ming of foot and hand (stomach and large intestine meridians) and at the teeth. The text then says that the wei qi goes to the 'heart of the foot' and exits under the inner malleolus, at the area of the shao yin of the foot (kidney meridian). This is of course the place of the yin qiao mai. There is then a meeting at the level of the eyes making one circuit. During the day there are 25 circuits. It is through the qiao mai that there is this rising movement up to the eyes.

We must pay careful attention to the reality of this circulation and the meaning of the rhythms which are underlying it. If we think of the defensive qi as something very material flowing inside one meridian and then another and then through the yin qiao mai going up to the eyes and so on, I do not think we can have a true representation of the mechanism. One of the reasons is that this is one circulation among several others. There are all kinds of variations due to age, to the phases of the moon, to external influences of cold and heat and so on. I think that this description is rather to indicate one of the great rhythms of life, and the way in which to treat the deficiency of this rhythm; through the qiao mai, through the yang meridians or through the zang in the inner part, depending where the deficiency in the rhythm occurs.

In this chapter the yin qiao, which was also mentioned in Ling shu chapter 17 as the vector for the rising up of essences and liquids and nutritive power, is also linked with the trajectory of the defensive qi. It is also through the yin qiao that a passage occurs to the kidneys at night to keep the defensive qi inside the body. You know all the symptoms linked to a bad balance between the yin and the yang in this way, like night sweating.

In Ling shu chapter 71 there is a triple presentation of the ancestral qi (zong qi) accumulated in the middle of the chest, the nutritive qi (ying qi) and finally of the defensive qi (wei qi). It says that the defensive qi exits with the rapidity and agility of a very brave and fierce chief. The defensive qi is always described in this way as very brave and full of courage, fierce and so on. And remember the meaning of the character qiao, which has in some ways a similar meaning of this kind of rapidity and proud courage. The wei qi circulates first to the four extremities, to the mass of flesh and all the cracks and crevices in the layers of the skin, without stopping. During the day it circulates in the yang and at night it circulates in the yin. It is always from the area of the shao yin of the foot (kidney meridian) that it is able to circulate through the five yang and the six fu.

The text then mentions a situation of jue qi. This means that the qi are unable to reach the area of their responsibility, creating an empty space and a countercurrent of perverse energy flowing in to fill the empty space. If this situation occurs in the five zang and six fu, the defensive qi is only able to defend the exterior and circulate in the yang, but is unable to enter the yin. Circulating only in the yang, there is an increase of the power of the yang qi. If the yang qi increases in power, which here is a pathological overflowing, the yang qiao is congested (man). If all the yang meridians and the superficial pathways of the body, for instance the luo, are congested with a pathological fullness, we can see that as a result the yang qiao is congested. This is because there is not only one pathway involved, but a general condition of the yang.

If the jue is generating a countercurrent, the yang is unable to enter the yin and that is the particular pathology of the qiao. There is no communication or exchange between yin and yang. In this situation where the yang qiao is congested, there is no possibility for the yang qiao or the defensive qi to enter the yin. And by the same mechanism, if the yin is empty, the inward movement is too weak, and wei qi cannot enrich the power of the yin part of the body. This is the reason why the eyes cannot close. The eyes manifest the weakness of the mutual exchange of yin and yang, essences and qi and so on. It is also because of the imbalance in sleeping and waking that there is weakness of the balance of the zang themselves.

Later in the text Huang di asks what the treatment should be. Qi Bo replies:

*You have to tonify where there is deficiency and disperse where there is excess; to harmonise emptiness and fullness in order to restore the free communication of all the pathways and to expel the perverse. When the yin and the yang are again in free communication you can sleep.*

Ling shu chapter 80 presents the same idea. At the beginning of the chapter there is this sentence:

*The essences and qi from the five zang and the six fu rise to pool in the eyes and make the essence (jing).*

It is the same thing as to create the ability to see. There is no possibility for eyes to express the light of life without this conjunction of pure essences and qi from the five zang and the six fu. Later in the same chapter:

*The eyes are the essences of the five zang and the six fu, the permanent place for the nutrition and the defense and for the hun as well as the po. It is the place where shen and qi are produced....When yin and yang are in a good conjunction, and in an harmonious relationship there is this phenomenon called jing ming.*

This is the jing of essences and the ming of illumination. And illumination is the radiation of life, coming from the spirits and from the root of life. It is not only a play of words, it is a play with all the communication of reality. If we have all these phenomena in the eyes it is because it is a special place where all the conjunctions of life are well manifested. This jing ming is a way to express the operation needed for the working of the subtle upper orifices. You need essences, which are brought through the forces of the qi, and you need the illumination coming from the spirits, not only to have good sight but to have sight full of discernment. There must be the presence of the spirits, the presence of the heart, at the level of all the orifices and especially of the very subtle orifices of the eyes and the ears. This conjunction has something to do with the function of the qiao mai.

Just after that the quotation continues saying that the eyes are the messenger of the heart and that the heart is the dwelling place of the spirits. Then there is the presentation of these two phenomena, the great pattern for insomnia and sleepiness, which is the same as in chapter 71. This is a very important part of the pathology of the qiao mai.

*When the defensive qi is unable to enter the yin but stays continuously in the yang, the yang qi is congested. If the yang qi is congested, the yang qiao increases its power and is unable to enter the yin. Consequently the yin qi are empty and the eyes are unable to close. Conversely, when the defensive qi stays in the yin and is unable to circulate in the yang the yin qi increases its power. When the yin qi increases its power, the yin qiao is congested and is unable to penetrate into the yang. The yang qi is in emptiness and the eyes remain closed.*

#### PATHOLOGY OF THE QIAO MAI

Nan jing difficulty 29:

*When yin qiao gives rise to illnesses, the yang is relaxed or loosened (huan) and the yin is tense (ji). When yang qiao gives rise to illness, the yin is relaxed or loosened (huan) and the yang is tense (ji).*

There is an obvious parallel here between the symptoms of the yin and yang qiao mai, and it is not the only case. We can often see this in other texts; just the same symptoms reversed for the yin and yang qiao mai. The two wei mai do not have the same pattern, it is quite different, but this kind of parallel is very common for the qiao mai. There are two characters here, one is huan which means

loose, and the other is ji. Huan can have positive meanings in other contexts but generally ji has the negative meaning of cramped, and can be used for muscular contractions. Huan means to be loose or without enough tension to ensure circulation and communication. The text can be interpreted in two ways depending on whether you choose the normal or the pathological meaning of this character huan.

The symptoms are presented as a couple; when the yang is in this situation of cramps, the yin is relaxed and loose, without force and animation, because here there is not enough yin and irrigation. The separation of yin and yang and blood and qi and essences is separation instead of cooperation. That is the pathology of the qiao mai here and that is the reason why it is not the pathology of a particular area of the body.

There may be congestion in the yang, and as a consequence an emptiness in the yin through the mechanism of the yin qiao. Or there may be congestion of the yin qiao causing congestion in all the yin circulation with contractions in the yin qiao, and a lack of power in all the yang circulation.

Some commentators say that if the yin is ill first, if the yin is congested or in pathological fullness, the symptom of cold will be predominant, and if the yang qiao is in this state of fullness, tension and congestion, the symptoms of heat and agitation will be predominant.

That brings us to another kind of pathology linked with the qiao mai, the two sides of fury and madness, agitation and inertia, which are also effects of this lack of communication between yin and yang; the bolting of the yang or the overflowing of the yin. Classically, fury is a doubling of the yang, and dementia with prostration is a doubling of the yin. Another symptom often linked with dementia or fury is convulsions. With these convulsions there are symptoms of contraction or alternating contraction and cramps which are part of the pathology of the qiao mai.

Su wen chapter 62:

*When the disease is with pain but one is unable to locate the pain, the best is (to treat) the two qiao.*

The character used for two is liang which means a couple or a pair. The character shows two together under the same yoke, which is a good representation of the qiao mai. Some commentators see here a reference to all kinds of blockage due to damp, because in this case it is very difficult to localise the pain.

The commentator Wu Kun says if the two qiao mai are related to the kidneys and bladder meridians, they are also related to the cold and to the water. And it is normal that the best way to treat is by tonification or moxibustion in case of dampness due to cold and water in the body. But this is a particular interpretation.

The general interpretation is that if the two qiao mai control the general relationship of the equilibrium of each muscle inside the body and each mass of flesh, they are always acting to restore good communication. The points obviously are shen mai (BL-62) and shao hai (KID-6) and, according to many commentators, both together. This kind of pain may be very acute, or a kind of numbness and paralysis depending on the case.

The same idea is found in Ling shu chapter 73, with nearly the same words:

*If one is unable to localise the pain one needles the two qiao, (liang qiao) below. If one needles the yin for a man and the yang for a woman, one does something forbidden to a practitioner of a high level.*

This is an application of the theory that the yang qiao is an expression of that which is strong and able to regulate for a man and the yin qiao an expression of that which is strong and able to regulate for a woman. It is better to treat where there is strength, where there is the best response and the best reception able to produce an effect. Some commentators suggest applying moxa to these two points of yin and yang qiao mai. This kind of pain is often linked to cold and damp which is the reason why moxibustion is the best treatment.

The problem with this text is that some commentators interpret it in the opposite way, saying that you must treat the yin in the man and the yang in the woman. I don't think that it is very important. It is probably safer to treat both, as it says in the commentary on chapter 62 of the Su wen! Or we may use Kidney-6 and Bladder-62 together. It is also possible for example to tonify Kidney-6 and disperse Bladder-62, or the opposite, which is a common way to use these points. Of course it depends on the diagnosis and also on the time of day. You can use moxa on the yang qiao mai treating a patient in the morning for instance. Perhaps it is one of the best cases when the time of the treatment is of great importance, especially in the treatment of insomnia. You can change the treatment according to the time of day. This non-communication between yin and yang is the first aspect of the pathology of the qiao mai.

Another aspect of the pathology is related to the eyes, and particularly pain and redness in the eyes, with the treatment in the qiao mai, as we can see in Ling shu chapter 23:

*When there is redness and pain at the middle of the eyes, beginning from the inner corner of the eyes, one needles at the yin qiao.*

The commentators indicate that treatment is to tonify the point zhao hai (Ki-6). This is a situation of non-communication between the yin and the yang, between the lower and upper part of the organism. Because there is redness, there is too much yang at the eyes, and you must tonify the rising power of the yin to balance that. There is a similar description in Su wen chapter 63:

*When the perverse are lodged in the yang qiao mai that causes pain in the eye which begins from the internal corner of the eye. One needles half a cun under the external malleolus. Each time one makes two insertions. For the left, one takes the right, for the right one takes the left. In the time it takes to walk ten li, it is finished.*

This is another interesting example. This chapter is about miu puncture. Miu puncture is a special kind of treatment on the luo used when the disease is located in the luo but has not yet reached the meridians themselves. You needle the points at the extremities, the jing well points, to evacuate the perverse. And in the needling technique there is usually a crossing between the left and the right. If the symptoms are on the right, treatment is often on the left side, to use the rapidity and facility of circulation proper to the luo, which is another link to the role of the qiao mai - this kind of rapidity of communication and the ability to move from the right to the left and from the left to the right. This

relationship of left and right is also one of the qualities of the qiao mai, so we have another similarity with the luo function.

What the Chinese call luo are not only the twelve or fifteen great luo. They are just one particular network of relationships. Everywhere in the area crossed by each meridian there is a provision, made by the meridian, of a complete network of animation which is also called luo. The luo occupy the territory with branches covering all the space. The luo are everywhere. If you can see symptoms in the territory under the authority of a particular meridian, but the perverse qi is not in the meridian itself but in the luo, you must treat with this quality which provides rapidity of movement. Because in this area there is the yang quality of the defensive qi at the exterior of the meridian, and the ability to move and go through is the main quality of this qi.

This chapter of the Su wen describes many of these symptoms in its definition of miu puncture. A complete healing with one treatment can be assured within this short time because the perverse qi are superficial and in the yang, and especially at the upper part of the body where the yang expresses itself. There is pain at the eyes which is caused by tension at the connections of the eyes, and perhaps there is also dryness. You have to evacuate this super-abundance in the yang. Because it is not specifically in one meridian, and because it is at the level of the eyes, you can treat this superficial perversion through this point of the yang qiao (BL-62) by dispersion; giving the order through the yang qiao, to the yang circulation within the luo. This is another way to see the relationship between the qiao mai and the luo.

In Su wen 63 there are two examples of the pain at the eyes related to the yin and yang qiao. Here we have to disperse, but when the symptoms are at a deeper level you must tonify the yin. The pulses are probably the best way to decide which is the best treatment. This is a question which arises with the qiao mai.

*Claude Larre:* With reference to walking ten li, walking oils the muscles and bones and also warms the whole body. It may be that walking is a way to rebalance the yang qiao mai, because while walking the pain is diminishing and the whole body becomes balanced.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* Li Shizhen sums up all the symptoms linked with the qiao mai. Particularly quoting from the Mai Jing, the Classic of the Pulse, he says that with the yang qiao there are pains in the back and in the lumbar area. There may also be convulsions with madness, in which the patient falls down, stiff, with a fear of wind and a possibility of hemiplegia, and also a kind of bi syndrome which has been going on for a very long time; paralysis, stiffness and inability to move.

For the yin qiao he also mentions convulsions with madness, and we have seen the distinction between the two, and also bi syndrome with pain in the yin, the sexual organs. It is also said that in the case of yin disease, fullness of the yin and congestion of the yin qiao, the best treatment is to warm by using moxa on zhao hai (KID-6) and yang jiao (GB-35). In the case of yang disease the treatment is to cool, and to needle fengchi (GB-20) and fengfu (DU-16).

There is also some differentiation made according to the time of day when the symptoms occur. For instance for convulsions due to madness, if the convulsions occur during the day, the treatment is on the yang qiao, and if they occur during the night it is on the yin qiao.

If the yang is super-abundant at the level of the eyes there may be insomnia, and if the yin is super-abundant at the level of the eyes there may be sleepiness, but this is not exactly the case with cold and heat. For example there can be a fullness of heat which can cause loosening of the muscles and particularly of the muscles in the area of the eyes, and the muscles are unable to keep the eyes open. Conversely, cold in this area can cause a kind of contraction where it is painful and difficult to close the eyes. It is not exactly the same mechanism here.

The symptom of having the eyes open or closed is not as simple as it looks, it could be something other than insomnia or sleepiness. It can also be due to an attack on the muscles in this area. But there will always be other symptoms which make the diagnosis easier. For example, the yin qiao mai may have a blockage of the qi at the pharynx, or there may be difficulty in urination, with pain in the bladder. For the yang qiao mai there may be stiffness, especially in the lumbar area and the back, swelling in the legs, fear of wind, spontaneous sweats, headache, or sweating on the head, with red painful eyes, or pain at the occiput, numbness and paralysis with cramps of the muscles and so on.

### SUMMARY OF THE QIAO MAI

*Elisabeth Rochat:* The qiao mai represent the first division and repartition of yin and yang, with a common origin and affecting the inner and the outer part, with a meeting point not only at the inner corner of the eyes but also in the depths of the brain. Beginning in the middle of the heel they touch the power of the earth. They provide a kind of rooting in the earth, and taking from below the forces to make all the earthly qi, the yin, essences, water and nutritive power rise up inside the body. Through this pathway, on the external and the internal parts of the body, they express, on the left and on the right all this compenetration and inter-communication of yin and yang at each level; with the particular relationship with defensive qi but also with nutritive qi.

All the connections are intra-systemic, within the same system, there is not yet a separation into two systems of yin and yang, but a double sense of yin and yang in the reality of the animation of qiao with all the upsurging spring of life. They are the first bilateral meridians, and they are also resuming the cyclic circulation through the whole movement of ascending and descending, the right and the left also representing this movement of going down and rising up.

*Claude Larre:* This seems very important to me from a logical point of view, because it shows that the qiao mai follow the same pattern as the du mai and ren mai which are circling in a closed circulation. They are just a development of the du mai and ren mai.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* This is the reason why they concern the zang and the fu, the jing and the luo, the blood and the qi and the relationship of compenetration and good balance between one and the other. The relationship is not only in space, but also in time. Not only the good balance in any space of the body, but also the good rhythm of time, for example the day and the night, and the way that one welcomes the other; the way that the yin is able to welcome the yang, and the yang welcomes the yin in space and time.

*Question:* But the relationship with ren mai and du mai came at a later stage?

*Elisabeth Rochat:* I think that it is easy to understand why they made this kind of couple, though it is never actually referred to in the Nei jing and the Nan jing.

*Question:* Is there a relationship made between the yang qiao mai and the liver? A lot of symptoms seem to be related.

*Elisabeth Rochat:* Any relationship that is made is because there is an analogy between the movement of the liver and the proper movement of qiao, this kind of uprising, which is also part of the nature of the gallbladder and liver. It is not by chance that the yang qiao mai finishes its trajectory at Gallbladder-20, and it is this point which is mentioned in the very short description in Nan jing difficulty 28. This is the point feng chi with a relationship to the wind, and to the gallbladder. The other point which is often mentioned is Gallbladder-29.

Some secondary texts give other points on the gallbladder meridian on the pathway of yang qiao mai and in the treatment of yang qiao mai, for example Gallbladder-38 (fu yang). There are also all the relationships with the muscles, the muscular forces, and the pathology of the muscles, because the same movement is expressed by the qiao mai and by liver and gallbladder so we would expect to find similar symptoms.

## **MATSUMOTO & BIRCH (1986)**

### **Yin and Yang Qiao Mai Symptomology**

In discussing a disease of the yang qiao mai and its treatment, the Su Wen explains exactly why BL-62 was chosen as the yang qiao starting and treatment point:

*If evil visits the vessel of the yang qiao, the person has eye pain, which starts at the internal canthus of the eye. Insert the needle half a division below the lower part of the external malleolus. For the left, insert to the right; for the right, insert to the left. One hour later, the pain will be cured.*

This treatment point has the same location as BL-62. The needling instructions are brief though interesting, as we find one of the earliest references to an asymmetrical or topological treatment. The Ling Shu describes more symptoms of the yin and yang qiao mai with reference to the eyes:

*If the qi of the yin qiao mai is excess, the eyes are closed and unable to open. If the qi of the yang qiao mai is excess, the eyes are opened and unable to close.*

This may be related to a thyroid condition, for example, hyperthyroidism. A modern commentary, the Nei Jing Jie Po Sheng Li Xue, states that these symptoms are related to the tonus of the optic nerve. The Su Wen and Ling Shu describe other symptoms related to the yin and yang qiao mai. When the Su Wen describes how to treat lumbar pain where the patient is unable to raise the legs while laying down, the instructions are to treat BL-61 or BL-62. These points are in the same area that the Su Wen recommends for treatment of yang qiao symptoms. The Ling Shu describes a treatment for red eyes with pain around BL-1 by suggesting for treatment that we "choose a point" from the yin qiao mai trajectory. Li Shi Zhen states that the point referenced is KI-8, the accumulation point of the yin qiao mai.

The Nan Jing defines diseases of the yin and yang qiao mai in terms of the relative tension of the medial and lateral muscles of the legs above the malleoli.

*In yang qiao mai disease, there is tightness of the yang side, and looseness of the yin side. In yin qiao mai disease, there is looseness of the yang side and tension of the yin side.*

This was interpreted by Wang Shu He as tightness of the muscles above the external malleolus with a relative tension of the muscles above the internal malleolus, for the yang qiao mai. For the yin qiao mai, he indicates tightness of the muscles above the internal malleolus, with relative looseness above the external malleolus. Interestingly, he also proposed treating KI-6 with moxa for hot diseases of the yin qiao mai. Often in modern practice, when hot conditions are found, moxa is contraindicated. This has not always been so. In modern Japanese practice the recommendation is to find a corresponding cold or cool condition elsewhere in the body and use moxa to treat the hot condition indirectly. For diseases of the yang qiao mai, he says:

*If each of the yang meridians becomes full or excess, the excess energy goes to the yang qiao mai, which receives the evil, but the disease stays at the yang part of the extraordinary vessels. This is why the yin becomes loose, and the yang tense; this is the disease. If the yang disease is cold, treat GB-20.*

If the pulses on both sides are floating (a yang pulse), thin and tiny, and if a yin pulse (deeper) is undetectable, this is a yin or yang qiao mai pulse. Accompanying symptoms will be: attraction to ghosts, demons and evil beings, "wind death," trance states. If a close relative dies, and the patient misses the deceased terribly (over-grieving), this too can bring another misfortune. Yang qiao disease is also indicated by tension or tightness as described in the Nan Jing. The modern text, the Nei Jing Jie Po Sheng Li Xue, comments that this idea of relative tension and looseness of the muscles might be muscle spasms resulting from changes at the level of the spinal nerves.

When Li Shi Zhen comments on diseases of the yin and yang qiao mai, his treatments are surprisingly similar to those of Wang Shu He:

For the yang qiao mai one will find symptoms of:

- wiriness of the anterior portions of the radial pulses
- lumbar or back pain
- epilepsy
- apoplexy
- crying like a sheep
- dread of cold
- hemiplegia
- numbness or tightness of the body (if the radial pulse is tiny and rough, this is wind epilepsy)

The treatment point for the yang qiao is GB-39, however if the yang disease is cold, needle GV-16 and GB-20.

For the yin qiao mai one can find symptoms of:

- wiriness of the posterior portions of the radial pulses
- epilepsy

- hot or cold symptoms
- numbness of the skin
- pain in the lower abdomen
- pulling pain from the lumbar and iliac crest areas to the sexual organs
- continuous discharge in women

Yin diseases are always hot, even if no heat is apparent. Moxa KI-6 and GB-34. For daytime epilepsy, moxa a point on the yang qiao mai. For night-time epilepsy, moxa a point on the yin qiao mai.