

THE EXTRAORDINARY FU (2003)**brain, marrow, bones, mai, gallbladder and uterus.****Monkey Press. Claude Larre, Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée**

[In this .pdf file; CONTENTS, FOREWORD, INTRODUCTION. pp. 1-37].

The work of sinologists Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée allows us access to the classical origins of Chinese medicine. Claude Larre's profound understanding of the philosophical and cultural background and Elisabeth Rochat's thorough knowledge of the medical classics provide a unique insight into the the minds of the classical authors. Here they turn their attention to the six extraordinary fu, which are connected with the configuration of a network of essences during the formation of the body. Understanding their six unique natures will bring us closer to the mystery of an individual's vitality, and closer to what is extraordinary, surprising and wonderful about life itself.

CLAUDE LARRE sj. studied in Beijing and Shanghai and also lived in Japan and Vietnam for many years. He gained his PhD from the University of Paris for his study of the Chinese classics. He was the founder of the Ricci Institute and the European School of Acupuncture.

ELISABETH ROCHAT DE LA VALLÉE holds degrees in Philosophy, the Classics and Chinese studies. She worked with Claude Larre for over 20 years and has exceptional knowledge of the Chinese medical classics. Based at the European School of Acupuncture in Paris, she lectures internationally.

They have both written extensively on different aspects of Chinese culture, and translated many daoist and medical texts.

The extraordinary and permanent fu

qi heng zhi fu

'At a very primitive level, the extraordinary fu are a special link with the origin, and for this reason they can ensure the continuity and the development of life, through the movement of the essences.'

Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée

CONTENTS

<p>FOREWORD</p> <p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>The Character Qi</p> <p>The Character Heng</p> <p>Su wen chapter 15</p> <p>Su wen chapter 46</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 76</p> <p>Su wen chapter 11</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 10</p> <p>Su wen chapter 76</p> <p>THE BRAIN</p> <p>Su wen chapter 81</p> <p>Su wen chapters 16 and 17</p> <p>Su wen chapter 17</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 28</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 80</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 21</p> <p>Su wen chapter 10</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 30</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 36</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 52</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 33</p> <p>Su wen chapter 81</p> <p>Su wen chapter 52</p> <p>Pathology of the Brain</p> <p>Su wen chapter 42</p> <p>Su wen chapter 37</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 24</p> <p>Su wen chapter 47</p> <p>Other Texts on the Brain</p> <p>Conclusion</p>	<p>BONES AND MARROW</p> <p>Su wen chapter 5</p> <p>Su wen chapter 9</p> <p>Su wen chapter 10</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 23</p> <p>Su wen chapter 81</p> <p>Su wen chapter 17</p> <p>Su wen chapter 62</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 6</p> <p>THE MAI</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 30</p> <p>Su wen chapter 17</p> <p>Su wen chapter 53</p> <p>Su wen chapter 5</p> <p>Su wen chapters 9 and 10</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 8</p> <p>Su wen chapter 43</p> <p>The Mai and the Eyes</p> <p>Su wen chapter 10</p> <p>Su wen chapter 81</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 80</p> <p>Pathology of the Mai</p> <p>The Mai and the Lung</p> <p>Jin Mai</p> <p>THE GALLBLADDER</p> <p>Su wen chapter 8</p> <p>Su wen chapter 9</p> <p>Ling shu chapter 2</p> <p>Su wen chapter 23</p> <p>Pathology of the Gallbladder</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

THE BAO	The Uterus and Chong Mai
The Bao as the Bladder	The Uterus and Ren Mai
The Bao as the Uterus	The Uterus and Du Mai
Su wen chapter 37	The Uterus and Dai Mai
The Bao as the Inner Protection of Life	The Uterus and Tian Gui
Su wen chapter 44	Menstruation
Su wen chapter 48	Pathology of the Bao
The Bao and Ming men	Amenorrhoea
Female Physiology	Early Periods
The Uterus and the Kidneys	Late Periods
The Uterus and the Liver	Irregular Periods
The Uterus and the Spleen	Treatment
The Uterus and the Heart	
The Uterus and the Lung	CONCLUSION

FOREWORD

In the highly organised, tightly structured vision of the body and its workings which is Traditional Chinese Medicine what do we think when we come upon a set of fu which are 'extraordinary'? Are they merely 'extra' to the 'ordinary' fu, or do they represent some other rare, remarkable and altogether exceptional functions which can take us deeper to an understanding of life itself?

Like the eight extraordinary meridians, the set of six extraordinary fu (the brain, marrow, bones, mai, gallbladder and uterus) connects us with a level within the human being which is more fundamental and more essential than that encompassed by the regular zang and fu. As Elisabeth Rochat writes: 'at a very primitive level, they are a special link with the origin, and for this reason they can ensure the continuity of the development of life, through the movement of the essences'.

This book, a transcription of lectures given in London by Father Claude Larre sj and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée, is an attempt to bring to students and practitioners of Chinese medicine a broader but deeper understanding of the unique nature and functioning of each of the six individual systems, and also to clarify some of the aspects held in common by them as fu which store essences. Much emphasis is placed upon classical sources and commentaries and upon gaining a familiarity with the meaning of the key Chinese characters involved. We have included references to Dr S. Wieger's book Chinese Characters, published by Dover Books, which is a primary source for understanding the etymology and classical use of many characters.

While the eight extraordinary meridians constitute an organization which can be the basis for the beginning of the embryo and the subsequent operation of life, these six extraordinary fu are connected with the composition and configuration of a network of relationships between the essences during the formation of the body. Understanding their six unique natures will bring us closer to the mystery of an individual's vitality, and closer to a real appreciation of what is extraordinary, surprising, remarkable and wonderful about life itself.

Caroline Root, Rhodes, 2003

奇 恆 之 腑

Brain, marrow, bones, mai, gallbladder and uterus, these six are produced by the qi of earth. They store the yin and they reflect the image of the earth. Their name is qi heng zhi fu, the extraordinary and permanent fu.

Su wen chapter 11

qi heng zhi fu,
the extraordinary and permanent fu

INTRODUCTION

Elisabeth Rochat: This seminar is on the so-called extraordinary fu, qi heng zhi fu, that is, fu which are qi heng. The character qi is the same qi as in the extraordinary meridians, qi mai. First we will have a look at these two characters qi and heng and then look through the Nei jing to see where the expression qi heng appears and with what meanings. The expression 'extraordinary fu' appears only once in the classics of Chinese medicine, in Su wen chapter 11, in a very particular context. All the other texts on the extraordinary fu in later books are more or less quotations of this chapter. For this reason it is quite difficult to understand the real meaning of these six extraordinary fu from only one chapter, so it is very important to study the characters and what the expression qi heng actually indicates.

[**AcuCentre Editorial Note:** In all four .pdf files on The Extraordinary Fu, the content, style and presentation of Larre and Rochat's excellent book is retained virtually in its entirety. The exception is that most Chinese characters are excluded. For these and all other original and complete content, the reader is urged to refer to the original text.]

THE CHARACTER QI 奇

Elisabeth Rochat: The first character qi has a very wide meaning. According to the classical etymology in Chinese books of the 1st and 2nd century AD, this character can be divided into two parts, upper and lower. The lower part is explained as an exhalation, ke. The horizontal line is some kind of obstacle and the other part is something which is trying to release itself and escape from this obstacle. The small square is the mouth. The first meaning of this ideogram is to send forth an expression of approbation. If you write this ideogram twice you have the character for to sing, ge, and to sing is nothing other than to express satisfaction and contentment.

Claude Larre: Usually you speak your mind through words, but sometimes words are not enough, so then you start singing. It comes from the heart.

Elisabeth Rochat: In classical Chinese this character usually has the meaning of to be willing or to permit, because if you admire something you find contentment and satisfaction with it. Because of that this character takes the other meaning of to be willing or to permit. This is the common meaning, and is found in Wiegier's Chinese Characters (see Foreword) Lesson 58 I.

To this we add the upper part of the character qi which is the representation of a man with two arms and two legs. The first meaning of these together, according to etymological interpretation, is of a man or men uttering exclamations of surprise or admiration at the sight of something surprising and quite strange. From this we get the meaning of something extraordinary, something which is not common or habitual. It is something we were not expecting, something which is strange and extraordinary, uneven or odd. It is something which is not paired or in a couple with anything else. Immediately we think of the ordinary zang and fu which are all in dual relationships. But the six extraordinary fu are not paired within the elements. It is the same for the meridians. The twelve ordinary meridians are in dual relationships, but the extraordinary meridians are not, even if they are in different kinds of relationship one with another. If something is unusual, uneven and different from what is common, we can have the meaning of being surplus or left over, the remaining part from a division or separation. Therefore qi also has the meaning of irregular. It is irregular because it does not follow the usual laws of society or the current of life. To be something extravagant is the negative side of this meaning, the other side is just another way to master the movement of life, not following the usual rules.

The character qi can also be pronounced ji. If you have qi, the meaning is more that of an exclamation of something strange and extraordinary, but when you have ji the meaning is more something uneven, irregular, or something remaining; a surplus.

Claude Larre: The contrary of qi is zheng, regular.

Elisabeth Rochat: If you take the ideogram qi and add another radical you get a different character the meaning of which sheds light on the meaning of qi. For instance if you add the horse radical you get the character qi which means to ride.

Claude Larre: The cavalry is in charge of those operations which attack with surprise. It can go everywhere and has an extraordinary movement. This is quite different from the infantry which has a regular appearance. It is easier to have that element of surprise on a horse.

Elisabeth Rochat: In the book *The Art of War* by Sun zi written in the 3rd or 4th century BC, there are expositions on the qi way to win a battle, and how to estimate exactly if you are in a situation which requires regular or extraordinary action. The qi way of action would be out of the ordinary, not the regular or normal way of doing things. It would also have the element of surprise. The force and strength of the qi strategy is the most powerful, but also the most difficult to manage.

If instead of the horse radical you have the mountain (shan), you have the idea of a very dangerous, narrow way through the mountains, something precipitous and irregular, qi.

If you add jade, yu, you have the meaning of a valuable stone, a jewel, qi. Or if you add the roof of a house you get a character (ji) meaning to lodge at a place, and to lodge with great security because you can have confidence. If you have confidence you can send a message, so the meaning is also to send a letter with the certainty that it will arrive safely. If you add the human being radical (ren) the new character (yi) means to lean upon, to trust. Or if you add the wood radical (mu) you get an armchair or a comfortable seat (yi).

So you can see the two sides of this character. Something irregular which can also mean dangerous and precipitous, but at the same time something in which we can have confidence, lean upon, have trust in and be comfortable with.

THE CHARACTER HENG 恒

Elisabeth Rochat: The etymology of the character heng is very interesting. On the left side is the heart radical. The right part of the ideogram is described as a passage, the idea of a crossing between two things or sides. There is an upper and a lower line, perhaps heaven and earth or the two sides of a stream. Between the two something is passing through, like a boat crossing from one bank to the other. If you add the heart to this perpetual movement between two things, or between yin and yang if you like, you get the sense of constancy and perseverance. The heart is crossing from one side to another, from the beginning to the end, from one bank to another, and the heart is like a boat making a relationship between two banks of a stream. From this perspective the heart is performing its function naturally, as the heart has to master both sides of vitality. It has to be able to make a decision and to maintain the constancy and continuity of an individual's life. For this reason the ideogram heng is also the proper character for one of the 64 hexagrams of the Book of Change, the Yi Jing. It is number 32, which is very important because 32 is precisely half of 64, so it is right in the middle of all the hexagrams. The meaning is exactly that of perseverance, continuity, the moment and time when exchange between what is strong and what is weak is very well defined. And because the exchange between the higher and lower parts of man or society or the hierarchy is well defined, harmony is established and the continuity of the development is ensured.

Claude Larre: The construction of hexagram 32 has two yin lines at the top then three unbroken yang lines and a broken yin line at the bottom. This gives the feeling that it has an automatic tendency to be stable and to create balance. The Ricci dictionary says that it is the moment when the relationship between the strong and the weak is going favourably, ensuring the continuity of development. Neither can take the upper hand. The main concern of this text, the Book of Change, was to find a

way to govern the state and to govern oneself at the same time. Therefore if there is a structure which permits that the equilibrium is guaranteed within the movement, it is some sort of reflection of life.

The heng aspect will be drawn to the qi aspect, making qi heng. The establishment of something must always be created by the extraordinary, while the ongoing movement will be taken calmly by the ordinary. The extraordinary and the permanent match together to make one unit which is the basis for the process of life.

Elisabeth Rochat: We see therefore, that there are two ways to translate this expression qi heng.

Either as the permanent, regular rule, or what is extraordinary and different from what is permanent.

There is always an interplay between these two possible interpretations because these two possibilities exist in English, but in Chinese there are just the two characters together. We can think that the extraordinary fu are fu which are different from the regular fu, but we saw that the character heng is not only the regular rule of life but that which ensures the continuity of the development of life between heaven and earth. And we will see how the extraordinary fu are something between zang and fu. They are called fu but they act like zang.

Claude Larre: In addition to that, and referring to what Elisabeth said at the very beginning, when you compare the expression qi jing ba mai, the eight extraordinary meridians, they make a system which is the basis and beginning of the embryo and the functions of life. But when there is more autonomy in the embryo and the limbs begin to appear, then the meridians are attached to the limbs and they are defined as either foot or hand. So they are no longer the eight but the twelve. Two times four is the extraordinary system which is there to start with. Twelve is three times four and is another level or aspect of the activity which is attached to the limbs. With a Chinese text, when we are not able to give a particular explanation we are safe to build up a systematic interpretation in which numbers play their role, names play their role and pertain to different aspects of life. Then we can start to have a larger picture of what life is.

SU WEN CHAPTER 15

Elisabeth Rochat: In this chapter, as in some others such as Su wen chapters 11, 19, 77 or 80, qi heng is an expression which refers to the title of some of the old books on medicine. Unfortunately they were lost even by the time of the construction of the Su wen. We can get additional explanations and information through the text of these chapters which quote the qi heng treatises, and from the commentators on them.

Su wen chapter 15 says:

'Huang di asked: "I know through tradition of sounding and determining (kui duo), the extraordinary and permanent (qi heng). How do they indicate different situations and how does one use them?"

Qi Bo replied: "Sounding and determining is to determine the depth of the illness. Extraordinary and permanent is to speak of extraordinary illnesses. Allow me to tell you about the supreme numbers [zhi shu] of the dao, the five coloured aspects (wu se), the changes of the pulses (mai), the extraordinary and permanent (qi heng), the sounding and determining (kui duo).

"But the way (dao) is in unity and the spirits (shen) impart a movement of rotation without ever turning backwards. If they turned backwards they would no longer ensure rotation and that would be the loss of the mechanism (ji). As to the supreme numbers, the essential thing is to hold as

closely as possible to that which is subtle. This has been recorded on jade tablets. Its natural name is the mechanism inscribed on bound tablets of jade."

Elisabeth Rochat: Sounding and determining, kui duo, is the name given to all techniques to evaluate the state of the patient or the depth of the illness. Using kui duo to make a diagnosis is one way, and to deal with the extraordinary and permanent is another way. You can also look at the complexion, the five coloured aspects (wu se), and appreciate the alterations of the pulse. All of these are means to make an analysis. You can be very good and know each of these means perfectly, or you can just know one or two quite well. The essential point is to create a unity and to ground that unity in the spirits, the shen. The shen appear to be the centre of life, and because they are the centre, they are also the origin of each movement of life. They therefore impart movement and a movement of rotation which is a reflection of the movement of life both in and outside of the body. The spirits of each person impart this vital movement to them. They follow the seasons and because each of the five elements has a period in which it is stronger than the others, the equilibrium is found in a natural succession of each of these periods of domination. After winter is spring, after spring is summer, and so on. In nature you never see winter coming after spring, or spring after summer. Sometimes the weather may be completely unseasonal, but that is just for a very short period of time and it is not the law of nature. In each individual, this movement has to be maintained; we each have to follow our own nature and the external environment outside us, observing the season and the time, and our own internal time, our age. So this movement is always expressed through a movement of rotation, and rotating without ever turning backwards. That would be perverse, like pretending to be 20 when you are 50, or living during the night-time not during the day.

The circulation of blood and qi within the organism is dependent on the correct movement of each zang and fu and the natural rotation of the five elements. We must take care of this circulation, and of the essences (jing) and their renewal through the rhythm of self nourishment and so on. We must be careful about the correct transmission of the spirits coming from the five zang and especially the heart, through all the circulation of essences and blood and qi.

In Su wen chapter 13 it says that when one is in possession of one's own spirits, which means allowing them to govern you, there is a great radiance and splendour of life. Your complexion is very good, the circulation of blood and qi is perfect, and you have no diseases.

In Su wen chapter 14 it says that when the spirits leave, a disease becomes incurable. There is no way to treat a disease like this because even an excellent practitioner cannot go against the condition of an individual who has lost the centre and pivot of the circulation, and no longer has the ability to direct life.

Su wen chapter 26 says that blood and qi are the spirits of mankind. For this reason we have to take care of them. Su wen chapter 1 says that the condition necessary for becoming a sage is to have a good connection between the bodily form and the spirits. Through this we see that the spirits are precisely this innermost and deepest pivot of vitality, and that through the maintenance of blood and qi you give the spirits the opportunity to rule your life. This allows you to fulfil your life and fulfil the natural number of years that you have to live.

Going backwards is to lose that good rhythm and is the same thing as being unable to follow the 'supreme numbers', zhi shu, which are the laws and the expression of the natural cycles of life. To follow them is to be able to live harmoniously with all the cycles which make up life, for instance your own vital cycles of defence (wei) and nutrition (ying), or the cycles of the year and seasons. There are numbers or laws for all of that.

In short, at the most subtle and intimate level you have spirits which govern your life and impart a good rhythm and circulation. This good rhythm and circulation is nothing other than the natural transmission from one zang to another, one zang to another fu, and the distribution of blood and qi within the organism. It is also all the exchanges between the interior and exterior. If just one of these transmissions is not done well, then disease can appear.

We have several ways to determine or perceive how this movement can be disturbed. For instance, by observation of the complexion, or pulse diagnosis. With all that and with these more mysterious ways of diagnosis called kui duo and qi heng, you can perceive where and in what way the spirits are unable to impart a good movement of life. The important thing is to return to the unity. If you do not go right to the spirits, as we saw in Ling shu chapter 8, you will be unable to bring about a proper cure. You may remove the pain but you will not be able to establish this good circulation and movement of rotation which never turns backwards. The maintenance of this subtle mechanism is so important that the Emperor asked Qi Bo to inscribe it on bound tablets of jade.

Claude Larre: If something is written in golden letters on jade it is like the colour of heaven, gold, being inscribed on the earth, the jade. It gives the impression that this teaching is the most valuable teaching you may have. So it is always important to see not only what is said but in what sort of context it is said. If things are preserved in a special library, the 'orchid', which is the personal library of the Emperor, and are written on jade, this tells you that it is a very important teaching.

Elisabeth Rochat: I would just like to mention a quotation from the Book of Change. It says 'if you are able to perceive change and transformation, you are able to perceive the spirits'. The spirits (shen) themselves are imperceptible, they are only perceptible through the manifestation of the whole mechanism of which they are the heart and pivot, and also the guarantee. Therefore, one commentator says through the pulse one can perceive the mechanism of the spirits inside each person. One can perhaps see the same things in other ways, through the complexion for instance. The only important thing is to reach to the shen through their manifestations and qi heng is a way to do that.

We cannot say exactly what qi heng is, but chapter 46 is clearer.

SU WEN CHAPTER 46

'The Canon of the Superior (Shang jing) teaches the communication of the qi with heaven. The Canon of the Inferior (Xia jing) teaches the changes and transformations of illness. The golden casket (jin gui) is what decides between life and death. The sounding and determination (kui duo) is the accuracy in making the determination. The extraordinary and permanent (qi heng) is what teaches about the extraordinary illnesses (qi bing). When one teaches about the extraordinary (qi), it is that in these extraordinary illnesses death does not come through the four seasons. When one teaches about the permanent (heng) it is that death does come through the four seasons. When one teaches about sounding (kui) it is to place things just by touching and searching the intimate structure of the vital circulation and pulses (mai). Determination (duo) is to reach the specific place of the illness through the four seasons.'

Elisabeth Rochat: We have here a presentation of the Canon of the Superior (Shang jing) and the Canon of the Inferior (Xia jing). The meaning of jing here is not meridian but classic, a classical book or canon. We have several translations of jing in English and French, sometimes it means meridian and sometimes a classic, because it is about the way to lead and to give the circulation of life celestial and natural health. In the human body, health is the circulation of qi. The model and norm for this circulation is the meridian system. But in society it is the classical books which are able to give the right current of life, and the five classics of Chinese civilization do this. If a book is called a classic, like the Huangdi Neijing it is because it gives the norm and model and good direction for this science or technique. A book which is a medical classic is a book which is able to give a model and interpretation for all the circulation of life within medicine. So the Shang jing and Xia jing are classic books of medicine.

Shang is above, in the highest position, and xia is the opposite, the lowest position. But what exists in the heights? In the human hierarchy it would be the Emperor, but in the universe it is heaven and in the lowest position it is earth. For this reason the Shang jing are classical writings dealing with the relationships of man with heaven for the maintenance of his health, and the Xia jing are classical writings dealing with the relationships with earth. A relationship with heaven maintains a good circulation of qi, as we can also see in Su wen chapters 1 and 3, or 3 through 9. These chapters discuss the good rhythm of life through yinyang and the five elements according to the impetus given by heaven. Classical writings about our relationship with earth explain the manifestation of disease, and in the Su wen we have chapters 28 through to 49 on diseases. The quotation from Su wen 46 above actually says 'the Xia jing teaches the changes and transformations of illness.'

The golden casket (jin gui) is what decides between life and death'. This is also mentioned in Su wen chapter 4. Sometimes you can see according to the pulse or the state of the zang whether the illness is progressing towards death or life.

Then we have the explanation of the qi heng:

'The extraordinary and permanent, qi heng, is what teaches about the extraordinary illnesses.'

This is not exactly clear, but the following sentence says more:

'When one teaches about the extraordinary, it is that in the extraordinary illnesses death does not come through the four seasons. When one teaches about the permanent, it is that death does come through the four seasons.'

We can see here that ordinary illnesses develop according to the seasons in reaction to influences coming from outside, too much cold or heat and so on. The important point is that the evolution of these kinds of diseases follows the rhythm of the seasons, the normal circulation of transmission from one element to another and from one zang to another. The evolution of the disease is quite mathematical and predictable. This is illness following the heng, the permanent, because its evolution is following the permanent world of the circulation of vital movement through the seasons, elements, and zang. Extraordinary illnesses are less dependent on this rhythm. The causes of these diseases are not in correspondence with the four seasons. Perhaps they are illnesses coming from inner emotions

or pressures, and the movement of life is completely disturbed by these passions. In this case the spirits are unable to ensure the continuity of the development of life because the emotion is like an obstacle and a movement which dominates all the time, throughout all seasons. That could be an example of an extraordinary disease.

From this we can see that the extraordinary is capable of causing and bringing the kind of disease which removes all the normal rhythms of life which would usually be well established through the twelve meridians, the twelve months of the year and so on. If the extraordinary is able to bring this disease, the extraordinary is also able to maintain life at the same level behind and beyond all the rhythms of life on earth.

Claude Larre: It is like some sort of protective net or higher organization.

Elisabeth Rochat: The important point for diagnosis is to evaluate if the disease depends on the extraordinary or on the permanent and regular. Is the illness inscribed within the normal cycles of life? Is it a fatal disease or is it coming from behind these cycles from the deepest aspects of life.

Claude Larre: It seems to me that the point is that death is not the only consideration. If it is time for you to die, then why not, but if it is not time for you to die then you should not die, and this depends on the diagnosis. It might be that the cause of the disease is nearly within your reach, you can find it because it is something which happened to you. But it might also be that the cause is beyond the ordinary diagnosis.

Elisabeth Rochat: Are the five zang and the spirits within the five zang following the cycle of adult life, or is this rhythm of life disturbed by the disease? In that case you are in a qi situation, with an extraordinary disease. This is the bad side of qi, but the good side is the maintenance of life before and behind all the circulation and correspondence with the exterior world. This is also seen with the extraordinary meridians, which do not have the same correspondence with the seasons as the regular meridians. So with the extraordinary, qi, we are at a level which is closer to the origin and the original qi than the twelve viscera are.

LING SHU CHAPTER 76

Elisabeth Rochat: The circulation of defensive qi (wei qi) is very well-regulated according to the differences between day and night, following the movement of the sun. This circulation is described every 15 minutes, because this was a unit of time in ancient China, being three times five. There is also a description of this circulation throughout the day and throughout the year and so on, but a day is not exactly 12 times 120 minutes, and you know that a year is not exactly 365 days. The name given to the remaining time in this text is ji. This ji allows us to live with a rhythm which is the best for us, because this little 'surplus' ji allows us to go to bed a little earlier or later in order to remain exactly in our own rhythm. It allows a kind of flexibility, and life is like that. We have norms and rules in China and Chinese medicine, but we also have flexibility at the same time. This ji allows the regularity of rhythms and cycles, and also the flexibility.

SU WEN CHAPTER 11

Elisabeth Rochat: In this chapter the expression qi heng zhi fu appears for the only time in the Su wen.

'Huang di asks, "In the world of the recipe masters (fang shi) the brain and marrow are zang, the intestines and stomach are zang but sometimes they are fu. Dare I question you on this series of contradictions? Everyone claims to be right. I do not know which it is. Can you explain it to me?" Qi Bo replied: "Brain, marrow, bones, mai, gallbladder and uterus, these six are produced by the qi of earth. They store the yin and they reflect the image of the earth. Their name is qi heng zhi fu. The stomach, large intestine, small intestine, triple heater and bladder, these five are produced by the qi of heaven, their qi reflects the image of heaven. This is why they make outward flow and do not store.

They receive the unclear qi (zhuo qi) in order to keep it away from the five zang. Their name is chuan hua zhi fu, the fu for transmission and transformation. They cannot keep something for long without transmitting it so as to finally make it flow out of the body. The door of the po (po men, the anus) is also a distant servant of the five zang because the liquids and grains cannot remain stored for a long time.

The five zang store the jing qi and do not produce outward flow. This is why they are said to be full with man fullness and cannot be full with shi fullness.

The six fu transmit and transform and so do not store. This is why they are full with shi fullness and cannot be full with man fullness.

When liquids and grains enter through the mouth the stomach is full and the intestines are empty. When the food has descended then the intestines are full (shi) and the stomach is empty (xu). This is why they are full with shi fullness and not man, and man fullness and not shi fullness."

Elisabeth Rochat: This text presents two groups of fu. The regular fu which are called chuan hua zhi fu, the five fu for transmission and transformation, and then the other group of qi heng zhi fu, which are the fu of the extraordinary and permanent, and are six in number. One group reflects the image of heaven, the chuan hua zhi fu, and the other reflects the image of earth, the qi heng zhi fu. The earth masters all movement of keeping and storing, the movement by which the earth itself was formed at the genesis of the universe. It is a movement of condensation and binding together. But after that, the expression of the earth can only be a rising movement. For this reason vapour from water on the earth rises up to the sky to form clouds. This is an image of the influences coming from earth and rising upwards to heaven. On the opposite side heaven masters all transformation and deployment, the circulation and distribution of influx. The formation of the heavens at the genesis of the universe is exactly this movement. It is everything which is animated by this movement of expansion and rising up. Heaven can only act by a movement of descending after that, making rain fall for example. This is exactly the movement you see in the human organism, for instance between the lower and upper heaters and between lung and kidneys.

Question: It sometimes seems strange that the extraordinary fu are linked with the earth and the ordinary fu are linked with heaven.

Claude Larre: This is not only our problem. It is the problem stated by the Emperor and Qi Bo. The ambiguity is in the text.

In Huainanzi chapter 3 there is a description of how heaven came to be heaven and how earth became earth. First heaven dissociates itself from the chaos. So what we call heaven could not be called heaven before it started to exist by separation. Huainanzi chapter 3 says that heaven is the movement of expansion, whatever expands from the chaos and rises up in expansion is called heaven. So when there is separation, what is not expanding and rising up is falling and condensing. This makes earth.

At that level we are just talking of rising and expanding and descending and condensing. These two movements are natural to heaven and earth. They are really the definition of what they are. But this is all about separation. However, we know that heaven and earth work together, so there must be a movement of heaven towards earth and vice versa, which is a secondary movement logically speaking. In order for something to appear it is necessary that something comes from earth under the influence of heaven, and that it should rise. But this is a secondary rising compared to the first rising which is natural to heaven. The rising upwards is stopped when the influx from heaven is moving towards earth and descending.

The question is what about the distinction between fu and zang, between the five and the six, and between the man fullness and the shi fullness?

Question: Can you say something about the character for shi?

Elisabeth Rochat: There is a roof at the top of the character shi. A roof indicates an empty place where something can be brought. Below you have the cowry shell which is the symbol of richness. So you are putting your richness under a roof for security. This is prosperity for your house because you have richness and therefore your family and dependents can produce in the manner of a fruit. A fruit has richness coming from the tree and becomes shi. It becomes ripe and full. It is solid and you can touch it.

In this text we have the six fu related to the earth. The earth and the movement of earth are the model and image for these six extraordinary fu.

Claude Larre: 'Image' is the only word we have to translate xiang. And this image is not a visible image. Xiang is really an analogy, a symbol. It is just the relationship of something to heaven or to earth.

Elisabeth Rochat: The extraordinary fu act like the earth, storing and closing up, but at the same time allowing what is pure and essential to rise up. If we follow this image of the vapours and clouds and rain and so on, what rises up to the sky is purer than the mud which remains on earth. On the other hand, for the five fu for transmission and transformation the movement is in the likeness of heaven, with a descending motion.

There is also a play between the numbers six and five, because we can have five zang and six fu in the ordinary way of presenting the internal organs. In this case the zang have a yin movement and are represented by the yin meridians, while the fu have a yang aspect, represented by the yang meridians. In this case we have the five as the crossing of life on earth, allowing the beginning of new life, like the vital knot from which life bursts out. The six is the network of relationships between the exterior and interior and what goes to maintain and constitute the life of the essences inside the zang. The movement of expansion and circulation through the six fu mirrors the yang distribution.

In the same chapter we have another kind of reality presented: the six extraordinary fu which reflect the image of the earth and are yin, and the five fu for transmission and transformation, which reflect the image of heaven and are yang. The explanation is the secondary movement of interplay between heaven and earth. The aim of this in the text is to show through this interplay of five and six the real and complex interplay between heaven and earth.

Six remains the number for the network of relationships in charge of the maintenance of life. These six extraordinary fu are fundamentally the constitution and the building up of the network of relationships at the level of the essences during the formation of the body. But it is a kind of stabilization through these six, a concentration and conservation of what is pure. What is impure and unclear is conducted through the anus. If something remains inside the body it is always pure and full of vitality and acting for the renewal and maintenance of life. The name for that is essences, and only the essences must be stored in the body through the five zang and the six extraordinary fu.

Another way to see the difference between zang and fu and the two kinds of fu is given in the text by the opposition of the two characters man and shi. The meaning of both of them is fullness, but they are not the same kind of fullness. With man you have a total impregnation. Nothing is visible, there is not a big block of matter which is visible somewhere. It is just like water in a sponge, the water is there, but you only see that the sponge is not dry. With shi in this text the meaning is that you have something which takes place in an empty space, like the stomach. You have transformation, digestion, assimilation, and afterwards transmission from the stomach to the intestines. The shi fullness is when the stomach, which is like an empty space or a pouch, is full of food or chyme, and afterwards the intestines are full, and then when digestion is finished, they are empty again and waiting to receive more food.

The five ordinary fu for transmitting and transforming, chuan hua zhi fu, are full with shi fullness, and the five zang are full with man fullness. This means that they are able to keep and store, and to release qi from the transformation of the essences. It is obvious that the qi heng zhi fu, the extraordinary fu, do not receive essences like a block of food, because essences are so subtle and fine that they can penetrate and infuse something with this man kind of fullness. The problem is that the extraordinary fu are rather like an empty space which is full of something, while the zang are like a mass completely full of essences. If you take the gallbladder it is like a little pouch which is full of special essences in the form of bile. But the bile is the visible aspect of the essences stored in the gallbladder. The brain in the skull is exactly the same. The skull is like an empty space, and in this space the brain, in the shape of the grey matter, takes its place. It is a manifestation of the power of essences and their storage. We can see this process in each of the extraordinary fu.

The extraordinary fu are exactly like zang because they store essences, but they are not zang because they have an emptiness to fill similar to the fu. The ordinary fu act to evacuate out of the body, while the extraordinary fu act to conserve and keep essences inside the body. They are an intermediary between the zang and the fu, and also between heaven and earth or top and bottom. They keep essences but they also allow essences to rise up. Perhaps they are the first phase in the circulation of essences throughout the body. We see that in Ling shu chapter 10. They are the first stage of the development of the body, and we are reminded of the six junctions between heaven and earth which are the first definition of that vital space. Six is not only the network of communication, coming after the organisation of life through the centre with five and before the bursting out of life with seven. Six is also the constitution of the vital space for all the ten thousand beings or for one's own individual life. At the level of the circulation, there are the jing bie, the six divergent pathways which separate from each of the twelve meridians.

The extraordinary fu only appear in this chapter and are linked to the world of the recipe masters, the fang shi. These are daoist priests or practitioners who perform special practices such as embryonic respiration. Embryonic respiration appears several times in the commentaries, even to explain the extraordinary fu. We are in a world where the daoist masters only want to be pure. They want nothing to do with food or with refuse and waste. They make the division between zang and fu only at the level of the purest releasing of qi and concentration of essences in order to make the so-called spiritual embryo appear inside their lower abdomen, the lower dan tian. They have to release the purest activity of life up to the top of the brain, and thereby become immortals.

The commentaries also say that the extraordinary fu function closer to the origin than the ordinary twelve meridians or the viscera, for example. There is the same thing with the extraordinary meridians which appear in the practice of internal alchemy and embryonic respiration and all those exercises which are intended for those in very good health, searching and trying to reach their own original purity. One commentator says that communication with the Original Female can be made through the activity of the six extraordinary fu, so these masters could use the extraordinary fu to reach the same result. The point is that, at a very primitive level, they are a special link with the origin, and for this reason they can ensure the continuity of the development of life, through the movement of the essences. We will see that for each of the six. These extraordinary fu are active in each human body all the time, exactly like the extraordinary meridians. They have special activities to stabilize and to regulate vitality when it is deficient and too weak or when it is attacked by external seasonal influences, for example. They also have a third function which is to permit those in good health to return to the origin through specific exercises, so that they can be faithful to the original pattern of the essences.

Claude Larre: These fu are extraordinary, but they ensure the continuity of life. When we are discussing medicine, we are concerned with illness, but here we are talking about people in perfect health who want to protect their health and maintain it at a superior level. You never really live well if you do not live from your origin and move back towards your origin. There is always this circular way to present life.

Elisabeth Rochat: The return to the origin is a return to the mastering of the spirits, and this explains the commentaries on Su wen chapters 15 and 46 which say that if you are unable to affect the spirits you are unable to really cure, because your patient cannot return to his origin, which is also his own nature and his own rhythm of life.

Question: Can you say something more about the six junctions between heaven and earth?

Elisabeth Rochat: The first thing is the difference between odd and even numbers. Each odd number is like a centre, a concentration or a knot for spreading out. For instance, five is the first organisation of a particular life around a centre, and six is the extension of that and the building up of the vital circulation at the first stage necessary to maintain life. So each odd number belongs to heaven and each even number belongs to earth. Heaven gives the impulse and earth gives it form. Heaven and earth are always in relationship and at the level of the median you have to see this exchange through the interplay of numbers.

Claude Larre: This question of six is usually expressed in texts by the six junctions, liu he. This is seen not only in the Nei jing but in Zhuang zi as well. What is within the six junctions is something which we cannot really understand but which we can participate in. What is outside this model of the six reunions is too much for the human mind or consciousness. The immensity of the Chinese mind is such that they make a clear distinction between what we can reach and what we cannot reach. They suppose that something exists which is beyond our reach, and that is beyond the six reunions. At the level of human life we are at a level of organization where it is normal to speak of five for the compenetration and of six for the relationships.

LING SHU CHAPTER 10

Elisabeth Rochat: This is a very beautiful text on the constitution of the human body, and it is interesting to look at it before we start with the study of each fu.

'When the human being starts its life, first the essences become perfectly composed (cheng). When the essences have thus been perfectly composed, the brain and marrow (nao sui) are produced (sheng). The bones (gu) make the framework, the vital circulation (mai) nourishes (ying), the musculature (jin) makes what is hard. The flesh (rou) makes the partitions (qiang), the layers of skin are firm and the body and head hair grow in length. The grains enter the stomach, the animating pathways (mai dao) establish free circulation (tong), and blood and qi (xueqi) can then circulate (xing).'

It is obvious that following the essences we have brain, marrow, bones and mai, the four first extraordinary and permanently fu which appear in the composition of a human being.

Essences come first because they are nothing other than the compenetration and composition of essences from the father and mother, giving the model for a new life. These are the essences of anterior heaven. In Ling shu chapter 8 it says that when life appears we can see that there are essences. There is no life without essences. In Ling shu chapter 30 we find it says that when two spirits (shen) interlock they make a junction, and through this they constitute the building up of a bodily form. So in the life of a body, that which is there first is called essences. The essences are the starting point for a new life.

Question: Would the meeting of essences at that level be considered heavenly or earthly, yin or yang?

Elisabeth Rochat: The essences are related to heaven when they are the model of what will form the structure of the body, as in Su wen chapter 5. But they are mainly considered as yin, because they are also that which is transformed to build up and maintain the form. They are not the impulse, the impulse comes from the qi.

Claude Larre: To be active is to be yang, to rely on something is to be yin. You are relying on the essences here, and you rely on them to live.

Elisabeth Rochat: We have seen that the six extraordinary fu store the essences, and now when you look at this text describing the making and the constitution of the human body, first of all we have the essences. Remember that the kidneys are the zang which store the essences, not only their own, but also essences coming from all the other zang and the essences of anterior heaven for the continuity of the development of life. This first model of the construction of the human body remains the same. You do not change your face or the constitution of your body throughout your life, you continuously

maintain your bodily life and this first, natural composition. Essences ensure the continuity and permanency of the unfolding and development of life. This is another point that they have in common with the extraordinary fu.

'When a human being starts its life, first the essences become perfectly composed, cheng.'

To be perfectly composed is this interlocking of two kinds of essences, and the perfect achievement of the starting point for a new life. When the essences are thus composed then the brain and marrow are produced. The connection between brain and marrow is very strong because the brain is the sea of the marrow, or the sea of essences. The connection with the kidneys is also very strong because essences come from kidneys, and through the spinal cord invigorate the brain and the brain marrow. The connection between the kidneys and the bones and marrow is also very strong. The kidneys invigorate and produce bones and marrow and give them suppleness and strength.

Question: At this point the text has not mentioned the kidneys, so does the marrow precede the kidneys?

Elisabeth Rochat: It is impossible to make this distinction because there is no classical medical text giving the complete process of the unfolding of an embryo detailing all aspects. We just have some particular texts like this one showing the unfolding of the human being from essences to blood and qi. It is very dangerous to want to put all these texts together because the Chinese never did that. So, the first three extraordinary fu have a special relationship with the kidneys, and the kidneys are related to the origin and original qi, and according to other texts to ming men, the gate of destiny. This shows that we are authorized to make these relationships between the extraordinary fu and the first construction of the human body linked to the origin. It is not by chance that we have four of the six extraordinary fu in the construction of the body through essences. And the two others, the gallbladder and the uterus, are perhaps at the level of the differentiation between male and female. We will see that later on.

Claude Larre: If you look at the beginning of Ling shu chapter 10 you see that it starts by speaking of places where you are not allowed to use acupuncture, and then turns to explanations of the zang and fu. But that is finished before you get to the text we have quoted. This is very typical of the Chinese presentation of things, that they have one series of items followed by another. In order that the presentation should be clear, they do not mix the issues. So when you ask 'do the kidneys precede the marrow', you are asking a question which is in your mind but cannot be found in the text, so it is impossible to answer from the text.

Elisabeth Rochat: The movement obviously starts from the most intimate part of the body and reaches to the most external part. From the bones making the framework there is a progression to the vital circulation, the mai, the whole movement of animation nourishing and maintaining life. Then the musculature appears with strength, tension and the possibility of movement, and then the flesh, which is more external and gives a form to the body. Finally you have the layers of skin and hair. So all this is just another way of saying that the extraordinary fu are really in the depths of the body and the vitality. But even at the level of the skin, at the exterior, you have to take care not to lose your essences.

You can see the power of the essences everywhere, and through the essences, the blood and qi. It is quite strange to call the vital circulation a fu, but the mai are nothing other than the circulation of essences in the shape of blood animated by qi. The muscles also need the nourishment and irrigation of all the essential fluids of the body and of blood and qi in order to work. We even see the same thing with the flesh, and the hair is the visible expression of the good state of the essences and their circulation and the super-abundancy of blood.

After all this movement, there is a description of food entering the stomach. I think the meaning of this is that the embryo has been in the belly of the mother, but when the child is born, food finally enters its own stomach and it is able to maintain and produce life on its own. The animating pathways, mai dao, establish free circulation because now this child's circulation no longer belongs to its mother. Blood and qi can then circulate. So this new-born child begins to enter into resonance with its cosmic surroundings because it is no longer in its mother's belly. It is like the activation of all the viscera and meridians which were already prepared to receive the information and stimulation coming from the exterior through the seasons and atmospheric influence. But the shield and filter of the mother is no longer there.

It is not that at the actual moment of birth the viscera and meridians start to work. This is not true. But birth is a very important passage to entering into resonance with the cosmic surroundings. Nor do the extraordinary meridians or fu stop activity at this time.

Claude Larre: We are talking of the measurement of time, but in fact time has nothing to do with the measurements we take of it. Time is just differences of movement. There is a movement, something develops, something changes. But all that is just at the level of the differentiation of qi

SU WEN CHAPTER 76

Elisabeth Rochat: In chapter 76 of the Su wen we have another text on essences and all the shapes taken by them.

'Five zang and six fu, gallbladder, stomach, large and small intestines, spleen, uterus (bao), bladder, brain and marrow, nasal secretions and spittle, tears from sadness and sorrow, it is by these that waters circulate and that a man is alive.'

The interesting aspect of this quotation is that the kidneys are really the storage place for essences and water, but the work of the stomach is also necessary; and through digestion and assimilation all these liquids and waters can be renewed. The spleen participates in the movement of assimilation and distribution of these liquids, and the large and small intestines also have special relationships with the bodily liquids and fluids, jin and ye, as does the bladder of course. After this we have the brain and marrow with nasal secretions, spittle and tears. These are also different forms of the essences, visible because they flow out, like the jinye, and they are a sign that the essences are working in the upper orifices, the nose, the mouth and the eye. All this allows the complete circulation of water and enables us to live.

A commentator said that the essential waters are like sources, but they have to rise up in free communication with heaven. What this means is that we have essences which by definition are in a movement of concentration and are kept in the interior of the body. But every element of our body

needs essences to remain alive, and therefore we also need a movement of rising up by the essences, and of a circulation and expansion by them. Perhaps that is done particularly through the extraordinary fu. Marrow and bones are everywhere inside the body and the mai ensure the circulation of blood and qi, and the brain is the ultimate, highest part of the body where the conjunction of essences and qi is at the purest level. This rising up and circulating of essences is the secondary movement for them after their condensation, and for that purpose we have six extraordinary fu. They are fu because they are distributing something in a network of relationships, but they are like a zang in first storing up essences for that.