

THE FIVE ORGAN NETWORKS
of Chinese Medicine

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PREVIEW

肝木

LIVER

wood

肝木

Promoting Health and Relaxation During the Wood Season: Spring

By the Poet and Medical Scholar Gao Lin, fl. 1575

The three months of spring are the time of renewal: the old and stale dissipates, heaven and earth come to life, and everything blossoms. Rest at night and get up early, stride freely through the courtyard, let your hair down and indulge in the leisurely feeling of a morning stroll; this is how you should raise your spirits in spring. Foster all life and do not kill, be generous and agreeable, give freely and do not punish. This is the way of honoring the qi of spring and nourishing life during this season. Going against these characteristics of the seasonal flow will have harmful effects on the liver network.

The flavor of liver wood is sour. Wood can overcome earth which is the dynamic element governing the spleen, which in turn is influenced by sweet flavors. In spring, therefore, one should eat less sour foods and increase one's intake of mildly sweet foods to nourish spleen qi.

The warming rays of the new sun of spring kindle everything into sprouting growth, including certain diseases that have been hiding beneath the body's surface. The weather is quite erratic during the first and second lunar month (February to April), cold at one moment and hot, the next, and since most of the elderly suffer from some kind of chronic ailment, the advancing qi of spring may cause those people to feel tired and weak. Chronic ailments flare up easily under these conditions. Also, during the winter months people tend to hover near the smoky stove and eat processed food, and these detrimental influences gradually accumulate in the body until they finally come out in spring. They will make the body feel hot and the head dizzy, the diaphragm will plug up and the mouth turn sticky, the arms will lose strength and the legs and lower back will become weak. All of these are ailments which have accumulated during the winter season. When the body exhibits signs of change and one senses that a disease may be coming on, it would be wrong to simply use moving herbs to straighten out apparent stagnation, because remedies of this nature may actually harm the organ networks at this time and cause other diseases to crop up. The appropriate way is to use remedies that extinguish wind and harmonize qi, cool the diaphragm and transform smoldering disease. If one chooses to employ dietary measures one should select foods that are energetically neither too hot nor too cold, possibly slightly cooling in nature, and which prevent stagnation by benefiting the smooth transformation of food and drink. In this manner, all of the body processes will flow naturally. If there are no signs of disease, there is no need to take any medicine.

Spring is the season of harmony. This is the time to roam through gardens and forests, to sit leisurely in scenic kiosks and take in the tranquil sights of nature. Open up your heart, get rid of all stagnant energy, and thus encourage the budding qi of birth, life, and renewal to flow. At this time, it would be against the dynamics of nature to sit around dwelling on things and grow stagnant and depressed. Avoid drinking a lot of alcohol, and show some restraint with those commonly eaten flour products that have a tendency to harm the spleen and stomach networks. They are truly hard to digest.

Especially old people should not give in to the temptation of transient oral pleasure and overeat on an empty stomach, otherwise their health will almost certainly suffer. Also, since the weather switches

The Liver Network: Selected Readings

1) The physician who knows how to harmonize the liver knows how to treat the hundred diseases.

From Zhou Xuehai, Reflections Upon Reading the Medical Classics (Du Yi Suibi), Qing dynasty.

2) Spreading is the nature of wood. The transformation of food qi relies entirely on the spreading and dredging function of liver wood once it enters the stomach. If the liver's pure yang does not rise, it cannot spread and dredge the grain and fluids, and distention and discomfort in the middle region will inevitably result.

The liver is associated with wood. Wood qi is characterized by its upward momentum and its innate desire to be straight. As long as the flow of liver qi is not impeded, the blood vessels will remain open and unobstructed.

The liver is the organ that is in charge of storing blood. It also commands the ministerial fire (xiang huo). If there is sufficient blood, this fire will be warm but not fierce. As a result, the blood can circulate smoothly through the body's three burning spaces; it will reach the pores, and every single place in the body will benefit from its warming and nourishing function.

From Tang Rongchuan, A Treatise on Blood Disorders (Xuezheng Lun), 1884.

3) Liver and spleen function by assisting each other. However, people are always quick to point out that an excess of liver wood can injure the spleen earth, and thus have a detrimental affect on the proper digestion of food. But nobody seems to pay attention to the fact that a weak liver cannot circulate the spleen and thereby also cause maldigestion. Below, the liver connects to the Sea of Qi (lower dantian, associated with the kidney), which means that the liver is closely associated with the body's ministerial fire. It can utilize the power of this fire to produce earth. The food which enters the spleen and stomach relies on this power to be "cooked." This is what is meant by saying that the liver and the spleen function by assisting each other.

From Zhang Xichun, A Chinese Doctor Integrates Western Knowledge: A Notebook of Medicine (Yixue Zhong Zhong Can Xi Lu), 1924.

4) The liver is known as both the wood organ and the wind organ. Because it houses the ministerial fire within, we can say that the structure of the liver is yin while its function is yang. Its nature is firm and resolute, and it is in charge of moving and ascending. The liver relies entirely on kidney water to sustain it, on blood to moisten it, on lung metal's clear nature and descending function to keep it in check, and on the generosity of the middle palace's earth qi to nourish it. In this way, a firm and unrelenting

The Liver Network: Pathogenesis

THE LIVER IS UNABLE TO STORE THE BLOOD: if the liver fails to be properly nourished by the spleen/stomach, or if for some other reason the function of storing and regulating the blood becomes affected, symptoms of blurred vision, cramping, inhibited joint movement, dry eyes, night blindness, trembling hands and feet, numb extremities, dry, brittle, malformed, or grey nails, dry and split hair, scanty menstruation, or amenorrhea may occur.

THE LIVER LOSES ITS ABILITY TO COURSE AND DRAIN: if qi gets stuck, the inhibited coursing action of liver qi immediately manifests in the form of mental and emotional symptoms; depression, sensation of emotional pain, or crying are typical examples. If liver qi flares up and upsets the harmonious interplay between body and mind, outbursts of anger, or pain and distention in the sides of the chest may result.

This condition has also immediate consequences in regard to the functioning of the spleen/stomach, specifically the actions of absorbing, transforming, and transporting postnatal essence. Typical signs of a liver qi disorder implicating the neighboring spleen/stomach system are belching, regurgitation of stomach acid, vomiting, and diarrhea.

If serious, body fluids (which also rely on liver qi to be moved) may stagnate, with a potential development of edema or ascites. And very importantly, if liver qi stagnates for a long time the proper circulation of blood will always be implicated. People with chronic diseases, therefore, often present with symptoms of both qi and blood stagnation, such as piercing pain in the chest, tumors and growths, and irregular menstruation.

LIVER DISHARMONY REFLECTING ON THE EMOTIONAL PLANE: a deficiency of liver qi typically causes a person to be undecisive and adrift, with a marked inability to plan his/her life. If gallbladder qi is deficient, the person will be fearful, have a panicky disposition, and have difficulty making decisions.

But emotions are not always just the result of liver qi disorders, they can also be the cause of it. A state of depression brought on by an unexpected event, for example, can eventually cause physical symptoms attributed to liver qi stagnation. An intense outbreak of anger, moreover, can induce sudden headaches, dizziness, chest pain, and other signs of liver qi flare up. As the **Neijing** points out: “When a person is angry, the qi moves up.” Perhaps the best example for this situation is a person suffering a stroke (“qi and blood rushing to the brain”) during or shortly after an outburst of anger. As the emotion attributed to the liver, however, anger is a physiologically normal emotion and will usually not cause disease. The constant suppression of anger can even be the cause of long ranging problems, since it promotes a chronic state of internal qi stagnation.

The Liver Network: Basic Guidelines for the Treatment of Liver Disorders

If the liver fails to store the blood, it needs to be nourished and smoothed with blood tonic substances such as tang-kuei (danggui) and peony (baishao). If liver yin—the liver’s basic physiological substance that gets refined into liver blood—has already been damaged, the liver needs to be moistened with yin tonic substances such as rehmannia (dihuang) or ho-shou-wu (heshouwu).

If liver qi is depressed, the liver needs to be treated with substances that restore its coursing function, such as bupleurum (chaihu) or cyperus (xiangfuzi). If prolonged qi stagnation has affected the blood by causing blood stasis, the liver blood needs to be moved and the stasis expelled by using substances like persica (taoren) and carthamus (honghua).

In a situation where an outbreak of rage has triggered a rampant and usually upwardly mobile qi flow, the liver needs to be calmed with gently descending substances such as peony (baishao) or uncaria (gouteng). If liver qi surges upwards and draws blood along with it, calming and descending substances need to be adjuncted by herbs that cool liver blood, such as moutan (mudanpi). If a fit of anger sets liver fire ablaze, liver heat needs to be cleared with herbs like scute (huangqin), or in more serious situations also be addressed with materials that purge liver heat such as gentiana (longdancao).

If wood fails to course and drain earth, the symptoms of stuckness, fullness, and distress in the middle burner need to be alleviated by coursing the liver (e.g. bupleurum/chaihu) and harmonizing the spleen/stomach (e.g. white atractylodes/baizhu).

In the case that wind heat pathogens have invaded the liver channel network, the wind has to be expelled by using substances that course liver wind, such as mentha (bohe) or chrysanthemum (juhua). If the coagulating influence of cold pathogens are obstructing the proper flow of blood in the liver channels, the liver needs to be warmed and the cold dissipated with herbs like artemisia (aiye) or evodia (wuzhuyu).

If upflaring liver fire causes symptoms of heat in the upper burner, liver heat has to be cleared. If a constitutional yin deficiency causes fire and develops into the serious condition of rebelliously upflaring liver yang, the rampant liver yang needs to be subdued by employing a combination of calming (gently descending) and purging (strongly descending) medicinals. Especially the physician Zhang Xichun, however, has cautioned against pushing down and thereby humiliating the liver—the “proud general” of the organ systems—too intensely; small amounts of substances that promote its physiologically upward qi flow, such as germinated barley (maiya) and melia (chuanlianzi), should be included in formulas that sedate the liver.

If there is liver wind stirring internally, the liver should be calmed and the wind extinguished. If wind pathogens block the collaterals causing surface numbness and pain, then substances that can both sweep the wind from the collaterals and move circulation in the collaterals, such as silkworm (jiangchan) or typhonium (baifuzi), should be used.

*Wood Foods: Nutritive Substances
That Cool, Warm, Tonify, Move, or Astringe the Liver Network*

COOLING

celery (liver, stomach)
tomato (liver, spleen, stomach)
carrot (liver, spleen, lung)
spinach (liver, large intestine, stomach)
bitter melon (liver, stomach, heart)
lime (liver, stomach, lung)
plum (liver, stomach)
mint (liver, lung)
chrysanthemum (liver, lung)
green tea (liver, heart, stomach, bladder, large intestine)
ocean snails (liver)

WARMING/MOVING

cinnamon (liver, kidney, spleen)
fennel (liver, kidney, spleen, stomach)
red sugar (liver, spleen, stomach)
alcohol (liver, heart, lung, stomach)

TONIFYING LIVER YIN

carrot (liver, spleen, lung)
mushroom (liver, stomach, kidney)
black mushroom (liver, lung, stomach)
grape (liver, kidney, stomach)
cherry (liver, spleen)
morus fruit (liver, kidney, heart)
lycium fruit (liver, kidney, lung)
lychee fruit (liver, spleen, stomach)
pork (liver, lung, spleen)
oyster (liver, kidney)
turtle, tortoise (liver, kidney)

TONIFYING LIVER BLOOD

black sesame (liver, kidney, large intestine)
liver of pork, beef, lamb, and rabbit (liver)
beef tendons (liver)
squid (liver, kidney)

TONIFYING LIVER YANG

shrimp, prawn, lobster (liver, kidney)
pigeon (liver, kidney)

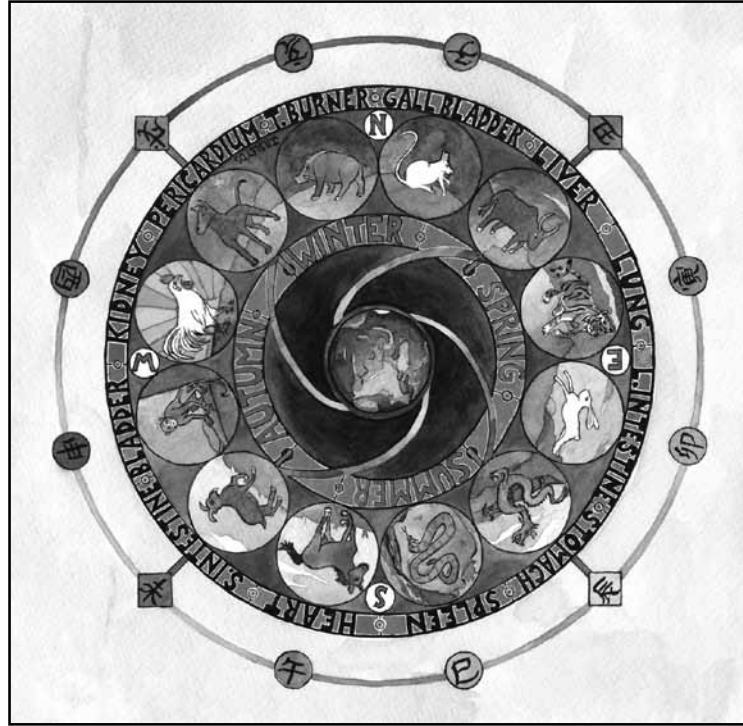
MOVING/EMOLLIATING

onion (liver, spleen, lung)
hawthorne berry (liver, spleen, stomach)
papaya (liver, spleen)
tangerine seed (liver, heart)
vinegar (liver, stomach)

ASTRINGING

mume (umeboshi) plum (liver, spleen, lung, large intestine)

PREVIEW



APPENDIX
& articles

Correlative Cosmology: Months, Jieqi & Wuhou

12 MONTHS	24 SEASONAL NODES (JIEQI)	72 MATERIAL MANIFESTATIONS (WUHO)
<p>1st Month</p> <p>正月</p> <p>(February 4/5)</p>	<p><i>Lichun</i> 立春 (Beginning of Spring)</p> <p>(315°)</p> <p><i>Yushui</i> 雨水 (Rain Water)</p> <p>(330°)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dongfeng jiedong</i> 東風解凍 (The East Wind Liberates From Icy Shackles) • <i>Zhechong shi zhen</i> 蟄蟲始振 (Hibernating Insects Begin to Stir) • <i>Yu shang bing</i> 魚上冰 (Fish Rise Up to the Ice) • <i>Ta ji yu</i> 獺祭魚 (Otters Sacrifice Fish) • <i>Hongyan lai</i> 鴻雁來 (Swan Geese Appear) • <i>Caomu mengdong</i> 草木萌動 (Vegetation Sprouts)
<p>2nd Month</p> <p>二月</p> <p>(March 5/6)</p>	<p><i>Jingzhe</i> 驚蟄 (Awakening of Insects)</p> <p>(345°)</p> <p><i>Chunfen</i> 春分 (Spring Equinox)</p> <p>(0°)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tao shi hua</i> 桃始華 (Peach Trees Begin to Blossom) • <i>Canggeng ming</i> 倉庚鳴 (Orioles Sing) • <i>Ying hua wei jiu</i> 鷹化為鳩 (Hawks Transform Into Cuckoos) • <i>Xuanniao zhi</i> 玄鳥至 (Swallows Arrive) • <i>Lei nai fasheng</i> 雷乃發聲 (Thunder Starts Resounding) • <i>Shi dian</i> 始電 (Beginning of Lightning)
<p>3rd Month</p> <p>三月</p> <p>(April 4/5)</p>	<p><i>Qingming</i> 清明 (Clear and Bright)</p> <p>(15°)</p> <p><i>Guyu</i> 穀雨 (Grain Rain)</p> <p>(30°)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tong shi hua</i> 桐始華 (Tung Trees Begin to Blossom) • <i>Tianshu hua wei ru</i> 田鼠化為鴛 (Field Voles Transform Into Quails) • <i>Hong shi jian</i> 虹始見 (Rainbows Begin to Appear) • <i>Ping shi sheng</i> 萍始生 (Duckweed Begins to Grow) • <i>Mingjiu fu qi yu</i> 鳴鳩拂其羽 (Cockoos Flutter Their Wings) • <i>Daisheng jiang yu sang</i> 戴勝降于桑 (Hoopoes Land on Mulberry Trees)

#	Branch	Theme Nature	Organ	Season	Year	Day	Animal	Element	Node	Wuhou
2 nd Month 二月 (March 5/6)	Mao	Release/ Bursting the Gate	LI	2 nd Month Spring		5-7 AM	Rabbit	Wood	Jingzhe 驚蟄 (Awakening of Insects) (345°) Chunfen 春分 (Spring Equinox) (0°)	Tao shi hua 桃始華 (Peach Trees Begin to Blossom) Canggang ming 倉庚鳴 (Orioles Sing) Ying hua wei jiu 鷹化為鳩 (Hawks Transform Into Cuckoos) Xuanniao zhi 玄鳥至 (Swallows Arrive) Lei nai fasheng 雷乃發聲 (Thunder Starts Resounding) Shi dian 始電 (Beginning of Lightning)
3 rd Month 三月 (April 4/5)	Chen	Engorgement of nature	ST	Transformation/ Transition		7-9 AM	Dragon	Earth	Qingming 清明 (Clear and Bright) (15°) Guyu 穀雨 (Grain Rain) (30°)	Tong shi hua 桐始華 (Tung Trees Begin to Blossom) Tianshu hua wei ru 田鼠化為鴽 (Field Voles Transform Into Quails) Hong shi jian 虹始見 (Rainbows Begin to Appear) Ping shi sheng 萍始生 (Duckweed Begins to Grow) Mingjiu fu qi yu 鳴鳩拂其羽 (Cockoos Flutter Their Wings) Daisheng jiang yu sang 戴勝降 于桑 (Hoopoes Land on Mulberry Trees)
4 th Month 四月 (May 5/5)	Si	Taking care of business	SP	Summer		9-11 AM	Snake	Fire	Lixia 立夏 (Beginning of Summer) (45°) Xiaoman 小滿 (Minor Fullness) (60°)	Louguo ming 螻蛄鳴 (Mole Crickets Croon) Qiyin chu 蚯蚓出 (Earthworms Emerge) Wanggua sheng 王瓜生 (Snake Gourds Grow) Kacai xiu 苦菜秀 (Sow Thistles Are in Seed) Micao si 靡草死 (Shepherd's Purses Expire) Xiaoshu zhi 小暑至 (麥秋至) (Minor Summer Heat Arrives)

ZANGXIANG: THE ORGAN NETWORKS AND THEIR SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS

Correlative Cosmology: Energetics of the First Month of Spring and Lung Function

(A comprehensive collection of relevant classical sources)

According to the five phase element system, the lung is classified as a metal organ. Modern Chinese medicine discourse, therefore, has exclusively focused on this organ's association with the metal season of fall. In original *Neijing* cosmology, however, the five phase system is paralleled by a more complex and inclusive system of twelve functional entities that correlate the twelve months of the year with the order of the twelve channel systems that we now refer to as the "organ clock." In this system, which does not contradict but rather amend the simpler view of lung metal function, lung function is likened to the energetics of the first month of spring. By studying classical sources about the first month, therefore, we can recover valuable and clinically practical information about deeper aspects of lung physiology/pathology that are otherwise not overtly expressed in the *Neijing* itself.

Theme of heaven and earth intercouring and spawning life:

- Liji, Yueling: 6. 8是月也, 天氣下降, 地氣上騰, 天地和同 “In this month the vapors of heaven descend and those of earth ascend. Heaven and earth are in harmonious co-operation.” (Legge, 255)
- 正月二月, 天氣始方, 地氣始發 “During the first and second month, the heavenly *qi* begins to release, and the earthly *qi* begins to spring forth” (Huangdi neijing, chapter 16)
- Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han sanguo liuchao wen: 乾坤交泰 “[During the first month] Qian (heaven) and Kun (earth) are intercouring.” (見《書鈔》一百五十五, 《藝文類聚》五, 《白帖》)

Theme of beginning, commencement, initiation:

- Liang Yuan Di zuanyao (梁元帝纂要): 正月曰孟陽, 孟陬, 上春, 開春, 發春, 獻春, 首春, 首歲, 獻歲, 發歲, 初歲, 肇歲, 芳歲, 華歲 “The first month is called First Yang, First Gathering, Top of Spring, Opener of Spring, Issuer of Spring, Presenter of Spring, Head of Spring, Head of the Year, Presenter of the Year, Issuer of the Year, First of the Year, Commencer of the Year, Fragrant Initiator of the Year, Blossoming Bud of the Year (see SKQS, Suishi guangji)

Theme of North-East (corner where yang *qi* is first born):

- 8. 7. 1正月為陬 “The first month is represented by the Fish Corner” (Erya, chapter 8). This passage from China's oldest extant dictionary, which continues to give one-character epithets for each of the remaining months, is perhaps one of the most meaningful in terms of symbolic information on the first month from pre-Han times, yet it is also most difficult to interpret (due to the archaic nature of the characters used). It has been demonstrated that the twelve characters used in this passage are names for twelve archaic month gods that presided over the functions of each month (see Noel Barnard, “The Twelve Peripheral Figures of the

The Material Manifestations of the First Month of Spring (Zhengyue wuhou)

1.1 Dongfeng jiedong 東風解凍 (The East Wind Frees the Frozen Forces of Life)

- The character for dong 東 (east) is a picture of the sun coming behind a tree (wood)—marking the return of the sun/light/warmth in the East, or at spring time (both of these space/time coordinates traditionally belong to wood). The Shuowen dictionary says: 東, 動也 ” East, that is impulse/movement.” The character for feng 風 (wind), also associated with wood and the wood number 8, contains the image of a bug/worm/insect. [note that the organ primarily associated with “making wind” and being affected by external wind invasions is the metal organ lung; the liver is associated with so-called internal wind, a much later concept in Chinese medicine]
- 東風飄兮神靈雨 “The East Wind blows—Spirit manifests as rain” (Jiuge of Chuci, quoted in Wenxuan)
- 子曰東風, 卯日雨. 丑日東風, 辰日雨. 寅日東風, 巳日雨. 卯日東風, 午日雨. 辰日東風, 未日雨. 巳日東風, 申日雨. 午日東風, 即日雨. 未日東風, 申日雨. 申日東風, 子日雨. 酉日東風, 丑日雨. 戌日東風, 寅日雨. 亥日東風, 辰日雨.” When there is east wind on a *zi* day, it will rain on a *mao* day. When there is east wind on a *chou* day, it will rain on a *chen* day. When there is east wind on a *yin* day, it will rain on a *si* day. When there is east wind on a *mao* day, it will rain on a *wu* day. When there is east wind on a *chen* day, it will rain on a *wei* day. When there is east wind on a *si* day, it will rain on a *shen* day. When there is east wind on a *wu* day, it will rain on the same day. When there is east wind on a *wei* day, it will rain on a *shen* day. When there is east wind on a *shen* day, it will rain on a *zi* day. When there is east wind on a *you* day, it will rain on *chou* day. When there is east wind on a *xu* day, it will rain on a *yin* day. When there is east wind on a *hai* day, it will rain on a *chen* day.” (Quan shanggu) [direct relationship between east wind and rain]
- 東風謂之谷風 (孫炎曰: 谷之為言穀, 穀, 生也. 谷風者, 生長之風也) “The East Wind is called Valley Wind (commentary by Sun Yan: the character *gu* for valley is synonymous with *gu* for grain, and grain means growth. The Valley Wind, therefore, is the Wind of Generation and Growth).” (Erya)
- 立春祀青帝于東郊, 立春後五日祀風師于國城東北 “During the first day of the Beginning of Spring offerings are made to the Blue-Green Emperor in the Eastern Suburbs. Five days into the Beginning of Spring period, offerings are made to the Wind Master in the North-East corner of the city wall.” (Kaiyuan li) [direct relationship of First Month, North-East, and offerings to the wind spirits; the East Wind is the first movement that leads all others, is the wind of winds]
- 易通卦驗曰: 立春條風至. 宋均注曰: 條風者, 條達萬物之風也. “At the Beginning of Spring, the Outstretching Wind (Tiaofeng, alternative name for Dongfeng) arrives (Song

fei

AN ETYMOLOGICAL
ANALYSIS OF THE
PICTOGRAM FOR
'LUNG'

肺

The word 肺, in a more specific reference to the specific function of this organ system, is classified by the component 市 *po* (in its seal script form, composed of the pictographic components 屮 and 八), meaning “abundant foliage in the wind” (this is a clear reference to the anatomical appearance of the lung lobes, as well as to traditional descriptions of this organ: Chinese texts describe them as “leaves”; see Shijing: 東門之楊, 其葉肺肺 “The poplars at the Eastern Gate, their leaves flutter lung-like in the wind;” Neijing: 肺熱葉焦 “When the lung is hot, its leaves become charred”); note that the rain forest with its prolific canopy of leaves is considered to be the lung of the earth.

By itself, the word *po* constitutes the radical for the character 南 *nan* (South), referring to the ancient (Liji) association of the lung with the element of fire and the direction of South (Liji, chapter 6: 仲夏之月, 御明堂正室, 牲先肺 “During the 2nd month of summer, the emperor rules from the Central Hall inside the Mingtang Building—during sacrificial rituals, the lungs



All Disease Comes From the Heart: The Pivotal Role of the Emotions in Classical Chinese Medicine

MOST MODERN CLINICIANS FIND THAT A MAJORITY OF their patients suffer from the symptom complex generally referred to as “stress.” Emotional stress, however, is usually regarded as a confounding rather than a causative factor in pathophysiology. This assessment is contrary to the tenets of classical Chinese medicine, which originally regarded emotional imbalance as a spiritual affliction of primary significance. While ancient Chinese philosophy considered emotional sensibility as our greatest asset in the process of fulfilling human destiny, it also regarded human temperaments as our greatest liability due to vast pathogenetic potential.

While Western medicine has encountered psychosomatic theory in the 20th century, the subtle and non-quantifiable nature of the emotions continues to be viewed as a nebulous factor by the purveyors of materialist science. The result is that modern physicians generally ignore or simply medicate symptoms of stress, depression, or anxiety. This bias has affected how institutionalized Chinese medicine views the topic of the emotions today. While the contemporary brand of Chinese medicine, exported by the People’s Republic of China under the trade name “TCM,” acknowledges that the treatment of non-local and non-structural symptoms belongs to its therapeutic domain, textbook TCM theory lacks both a cohesive and in-depth approach to the nature and dynamics of human feelings.

Through a review of relevant ancient sources, this essay intends to heighten awareness about the original complexity and significance that classical Chinese medicine bestowed on the subject of the emotions. Written more than 2,000 years ago, many

of the texts cited below remind us that most diseases in urban human beings are caused by emotional stress. This is pertinent clinical advice that more than ever applies to the realities of contemporary Chinese medicine practice.

The Relationship of Body and Spirit

“I believe that there are two different human methodologies of knowing: one is time oriented, and the other is space oriented.”¹ Thus begins an analysis of the differences between Chinese medicine and modern science by the contemporary philosopher Liu Changlin. He goes on to describe how Chinese medicine is time therapy, based in the ancient science of energy dynamics, while Western medicine is space therapy, rooted in the modern science of matter analysis. Indeed, the major distinction between modern and ancient physicians is how they viewed the nature and relationship of matter, energy, and consciousness. What came first, the chicken or the egg? All medicines rooted in scientific materialism as well as Marxist materialism answer resoundingly in favor of matter. It is no accident that the modern Chinese term for psycho-somatic medicine is *xingshen bingxue*, literally the science of how (primary) physical form and (secondary) spirit relate in the disease forming process. A 1991 TCM primer on body-mind connections elaborates: “In the relationship of matter (*xing*) and spirit (*shen*), matter takes the leading role, while the phenomena of the mind and the emotions are secondary to it; first there is matter, then there is consciousness; consciousness is born of matter.”² Within this paradigm, the philosopher Xunzi is generally regarded as a