

Visions of the *Baojun*

Donald Trump and the Pathological Large Intestine Archetype in Classical Chinese Medicine

BY HEINER FRUEHAUF

PART 3

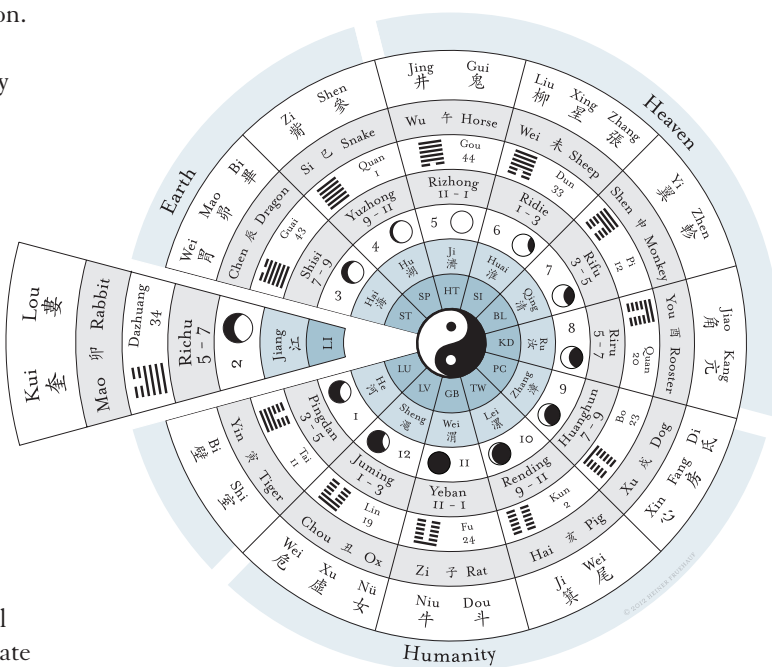
*Beware of the pathological Metal type!
When such a person ascends into a position of power,
the world will be plunged into chaos.*

Wang Fengyi, fl. 1900

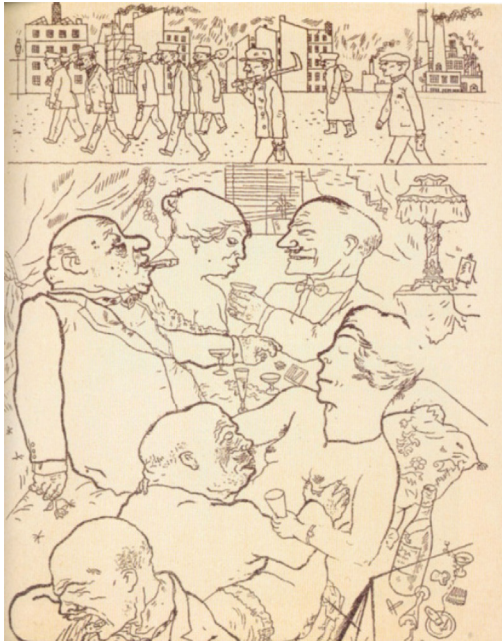
3) Corrupt Business Practices, Environmental Pollution, and Ethnic Cleansing

Purity, cleanliness and refinement are defining features of the Metal element. It is precisely because the healthy Large Intestine is the cleanest of the 12 organ “officers” that it is tasked with handling and expelling the system’s refuse. It represents the body’s premier drainage ditch—just like the associated asterism Kui is described as a “heavenly gutter;” and the Yangzi River, Asia’s longest and most voluminous body of water (directly associated with Large Intestine function in chapter 12 of the *Lingshu* section of the *Huangdi neijing*), has always been China’s primary receptacle for the detritus of the country’s agricultural and industrial production.

Archetypal professions that embody physiological Large Intestine function therefore involve the maintenance of cleanliness, appearance, transparency and precision in the largest sense of this word field: i.e., wastewater engineers, garbage collectors, plumbers; environmental professionals; economists, accountants, statisticians, mathematicians; colon therapists, dermatologists, dentists, make-up artists, fashion models, image consultants; loyal and punctilious workers, conscientious educators, clean-handed administrators, incorruptible politicians, virtuous financiers, and upright generals. If this vital function of maintaining cleanliness becomes debased, pollution on all levels occurs. Typical examples for the degenerate Metal type are the big bosses of industry who ignore environmental concerns to maximize profit, unethical politicians with a penchant for pornography, accountants who cook the books, etc. A particularly dangerous category of devolved Large Intestine Metal features an obsession with perverted forms of cleanness, as represented by the fanatic strongman espousing “whiteness” and “racial purity,” in the worst-case scenario accompanied by intentions of “ethnic cleansing.”



Chinese Medicine Holomap (featuring the Large Intestine)
describing the resonance of the macrocosm and microcosm



George Grosz caricature of profiteers, politicians and prostitutes in Berlin, 1920

As is typically the case, most Large Intestine types tend to exhibit traits that are situated at both ends of the spectrum of associated qualities. In Trump's case, his publicized propensities for unethical business practices, the vilification of climate change theory, shady sexual advances and ethnic whiteness are paralleled by the almost obsessive desire to stay "clean": "No alcohol, no tobacco, no drugs, no coffee" is reportedly one of his personal mantras.

The psychologist David Livingston Smith, in his recent book *Less Than Human—Why We Demean, Enslave, and Exterminate Others*, raises another point that is relevant for this part of our discussion about the Metal element in general and Large Intestine pathology in particular. His writings define the essential mindset behind the phenomenon of ethnic cleansing and the denigration of specific groups of people. The parochial pursuit of ethnic homogeneity, he argues, is related to the belief that a person can have human appearance but lack human essence, and the delusion that a thus dehumanized group of people is composed of human-looking creatures endowed with sub-human spirit.

From the perspective of ancient Chinese cosmology, most features related to the evolution and cultivation of the human soul are related to the terms *hun* 魂 (spiritual soul) and *po* 魄 (vegetative/animal soul), of which especially the latter is directly associated with the 2nd month of the year and the phenomenology of the Large Intestine. "The 2nd month of the year marks the birth of the *po* spirits," states a classical text, identifying this period as the birthplace of the material world's physical shell (which at this point is primarily animated and compelled by low-level instincts). Pertinently, the anus was called *pomen* (gateway of the *po* spirits) in ancient medical treatises, a term that can also be translated as the Gate of Low-Level Urges and Their Associated Dregs. The *hun* spirits, in contrast, represent a more refined aspect of the soul, related to higher levels of human consciousness and regarded as the result of mental and spiritual cultivation. *Hun* and *po*, therefore, are ancient Chinese terms for aspects of the higher and lower self. It is important to note, however, that the concept of the *po* spirits includes more than just the instinctual aspects of the corporeal self. In their natural state, the *po* spirits are striving for the uniquely human qualities of restraint, transformation, cultivation, refinement, and evolution—vital agents promoting the Metal destiny of the Large intestine.

It is a life-long danger for Large Intestine types to become mired in the lower echelons of the *po* soul spectrum. Similar propensities, by the way, have been ascribed by Western astrologers to constitutional types influenced by Aries, the Western zodiac period that equates most closely to the 2nd month of the traditional Chinese calendar. The anthroposophical writer John Jocelyn, for instance, describes this tendency most aptly in his classic *Meditations on the Signs of the Zodiac* in 1965:

Unique in this sign is the intense instinct factor, a quality more akin to the animal than to man becoming Christ-conscious [cultivated in one's higher self]. It is through this avenue of instinct that Aries expresses itself in abandoned disorder; in outrushing rashness, ram-headed impulsiveness, changeful activity, and digression; in a riot of rude strength and extreme self-will; in excess and extravagance; in explosiveness, combat, and courage; and even in foolhardy militancy and madness. Willful and headstrong when young, many Aries persons fail to achieve the necessary caution and control even in their mature years and they continue to go to extremes. Self-restraint, calmness, poise and consideration for the feelings of others are not the virtues of Aries souls, unless they have

worked upon themselves for the sake of the soul and spirit... The influence of instinct, so marked in Aries, is at the root of the disruptive, impulsive explosiveness in its natives whenever there is lacking a proper sense of direction because the spiritual self-consciousness is not yet awakened.

While uncultivated Large Intestine personalities may exhibit a talent for the creation and administration of material commodities, there is a distinct tendency to view the world's bounty as inanimate matter that can be utilized and exploited for maximum profit. Most problematic is the related propensity to dehumanize individuals or entire groups of people by treating them as *zaopo* 糟粕, “dispensable trash” devoid of *hun* and motivated by low-level *po* urges. Large Intestine types are masters of manipulating mass consciousness, because they tend to look at animated and inanimate things alike as bulk commodities—hordes of people that can be exploited or expunged or shipped off to war without consideration for their human essence.



Modern expression of the phenomenology of *ru* 如 (“uniform horde”): Manipulation of mass consciousness by Hitler and Goebbels in 1943

It is therefore not surprising that the term *po* is part of an etymological word field that reveals all of the relevant topics touched upon in our discussion of the Large Intestine: low-level animal instincts (*po* 魄) linked to the physical body and the ego, worthless trash (*po* 粕 or 魄) and, of particular interest in the context of this argument, the waxing moon's victorious campaign to reclaim authority (*ba* 霸 or 魄) and the associated figure of the tyrannical overlord (*ba* 霸) of the Warring States period.

4) Harebrained Antics, Twisted Facts, and Lewd Manners

The Large Intestine themes of purity and corruption are further perpetuated by the correlated icon of the rabbit/hare. Not only is the hare, in Eastern and Western mythology alike, an emblem of lunar renewal. In the eyes of ancient Chinese observers, the active forces of the 2nd month “spit out” the myriad manifestations of life. The month marker *ru* 如 is composed of the characters for woman 女 and mouth 口, alluding to the myth that rabbits and hares—the zodiac animals marking the 2nd month of spring in the Chinese calendar—deliver their abundant litters orally. Prolific breeding, after all, is the animal's “trick” to survive in a world where every creature wants to hunt it. Another well-known trick is the hare's ability to outrun predators through evasive zigzag maneuvers. In both East and West, the rabbit has therefore become a universal symbol for fertility, sexual desire and vitality. On the negative side, the rabbit image connotes unbridled sexuality, impurity (the Old Testament describes it as a non-kosher animal), and dishonest shenanigans. “Wily rabbit has three burrows,” states a Chinese aphorism, reflecting both the animal's regenerative power—akin to the rising sun and springtime—as well as its ability to utilize strategies of guile and deceit for the sake of survival.

These traits have made the hare a universal motif for the trickster figure that features prominently in the myths of many native traditions. Tricksters are archetypal characters who carry secret knowledge, often utilized to play tricks or otherwise disobey normal rules and conventional behavior. The Olympian god Hermes was a famous Trickster, patron of thieves and inventor of lying. Nanabozho the Great Hare is a powerful figure found in the tales of many Native American tribes. American petroglyphs depicting Nanabozho, incidentally, resemble the pictographic features of the ancient Chinese title for Hexagram 34, Dazhuang (tidal hexagram illustrating the energetic momentum of the 2nd month). He is both a revered culture hero—creator of the earth, bringer of light and fire, and transmitter of

sacred rituals—and a clown, a liar, a thief, a lecher and a cunning predator; an ambivalent amoral character dancing on the line between right and wrong.

The Great Hare's predisposition for dancing on the edge of sacred truth and habitual lying is also found in Western descriptions of Aries personalities. Once again John Jocelyn:

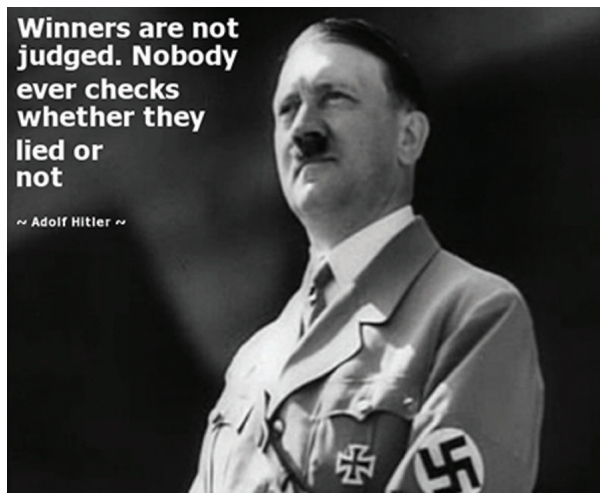
The destiny and genius of Aries is truth, and the truly balanced Aries soul is content with truth only. Ill-direction in thought and action, error, a flair for the false and sometimes for the fatuous become the lot and lesson of Aries persons whose nativities show unbalanced factors or inharmonious aspects.

Parallels between the aspects of Large Intestine typology manifested in the figure of the Great Trickster and Trumpian modes of action are obvious: impervious twister of facts, bounce-back scam artist, celebrity clown, sexual predator. Yet the trickster image may also cast a shimmer of light on the implausible phenomenon of the Trump presidency. Although Nanabozho can unleash disorder upon the world, he is not considered evil by Native American traditions. He is regarded as a necessary catalyst for understanding the sacred, an adjuvant that indirectly spurs us to focus on what is truly important. An emblem for nature's powers of external manifestation, the trickster



Pictogram of Nanabozho the Great Hare on Mazinaw Rock, Ontario

brings to the surface all that is wrong with our world in inescapable fashion. As the custodian of sacred symbols—a function of the Metal element in general and the Large Intestine in particular—the Great Hare can not only play the role of the magician and ruthless propagandist who utilizes subliminal imagery to manipulate mass consciousness, but also become the revealer of crossroad situations at a time when “the shit has hit the fan.”



5) Nepotism, Cronyism, and Conflicts of Interest

The rabbit's fabled capacity to secure its hereditary line, moreover, points us towards the function of transmission, another vital quality attributed to the Large Intestine: “The Large Intestine is the Officer of Transmission,” states the *Huangdi neijing*; continuing with a line that is usually rendered as “change and

transformation emerges from it,” but which can also be translated as “the successional process of ascendance and abdication emerges from it.” In the context of the Confucian classics, the proper transference of power represents one of ancient China's most crucial ethical duties. By first and foremost considering the common good, appropriate transmission in any heritage, medical and *gongfu* lineages included, require the transference of both knowledge and authority to the most capable successor. Despite the common practice of passing on imperial power to one's own offspring, the exemplary Confucian heroes King Yao and King Shun were both hailed for overlooking their ambitious sons in the process of succession, handing over the line of authority to the most virtuous candidates instead.

Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist texts all warn in unison about the dangers of nepotism, cronyism, and widespread conflicts of interest that result when the objective of sublimating the ruler's narcissistic desires becomes corrupted. In this context, it is a clear warning sign that Donald Trump has already taken the unprecedented step to involve his daughter Ivanka in official meetings with foreign dignitaries and requested high-level security clearance for his son-in-law, Jared Kushner.

6) Conclusion

As an American who was born and raised in Germany during the 1960s, it is difficult for me to abstain from paranoid speculation in the face of certain emblematic and historical parallels that are apparent in the rise of the Trump presidency. As promised, however, I will limit myself to my own area of expertise and stay within the boundaries of an academic portrait featuring the pathological Large Intestine type in Chinese medicine.

Naturally, the baffling debut of *The Trickster* exceeds the boundaries of the United States. It is an expression of Large Intestine pathology that has afflicted us on a global scale for quite some time, as well as an urgent call for the contemplation and cultivation of our own Metal virtues. In conclusion, I would like to share the level-headed analysis of Steven Letitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, professors of government at Harvard University:

American democracy is not in imminent danger of collapse. If ordinary circumstances prevail, our institutions will most likely muddle through a Trump presidency. It is less clear, however, how democracy would fare in a crisis. In the event of a war, a major terrorist attack or large-scale riots or protests—all of which are entirely possible—a president with authoritarian tendencies and institutions that have come unmoored could pose a serious threat to American democracy. We must be vigilant. The warning signs are real. (The New York Times, December 17, 2016)