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# From Skin to Heart

Perceptions of Emotions and Bodily Sensations  
in Traditional Chinese Culture

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# Emotions, Body, and Bodily Sensations within an Early Field of Expertise Knowledge in China

Angelika C. Messner\*

## Introduction

Among that which came to be viewed as classical medical treatises throughout the last thousand years until the present day,<sup>1</sup> the *Huangdi neijing* 黃帝內經 (The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon) is the first classic and the most crucial canon; this being the background for my focus on these texts.<sup>2</sup> Recent scholarship has shown that the compilation of the *Suwen* 素問 (Plain Questions) and *Lingshu*, 靈樞 (Divine Pivot) was neither the work of a single person, nor can we determine precisely when it was compiled. The extant versions of *Huangdi neijing* are the last in a progressive series of compilations between the first century BCE and the second century CE.<sup>3</sup> The language and ideas of the respective conceptualizations, however, can be traced back to 400 BCE.<sup>4</sup> Thus, these texts reflect a rather long time span of the creation of local “knowledge-in-formulation”, referring to processes whereby specific “knowledge was created, historically altered, distributed and disseminated”.<sup>5</sup> As such, the whole canon reflects the *development* of concepts which obviously were inseparable from the creation of authority within the field of medicine and of the field of medicine itself within society. These texts also reflect “knowledge-in-use” referring to knowledge as it was articulated in lay and professional views of/and practice. These

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1 I avoid the term Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), since it was created within the Chinese context in the mid-1950s just for use in foreign language publications. It is commonly employed by practitioners of Chinese medicine in the West by referring essentially to the practice of Chinese medicine today, and often it is suggested that the many thousand years old Chinese medicine has remained the same throughout. For a discussion of the variations of this term, see Scheid 2002, pp. 3-4, 35-36.

2 This article is partly based on an earlier study by Messner 2000; see also Chiu 1986; Wang Keqin 1986; Schütz 1991; Qiao Mingqi and Han Xiuzhu 1997; Zhang Hongyin 1998; Wang Fengli 2000; Unschuld 2003.

3 The *Huangdi neijing* is extant in three medieval recensions: the *Suwen*, the *Lingshu*, and the *Taisu* 太素 (Grand Simplicity). For an overview on the textual history of these texts, see Loewe 1993, pp. 195-215; for a detailed discussion of the bibliographic history of the *Suwen*, including the history of its various commentaries, see Unschuld 2003, pp. 1-75.

4 Keegan 1988, p. 64, holds that “the language and ideas in all of the versions of the *Neijing* were composed from 400 B.C. until 260 A.D.” See also Yang 1987, p. 2.

5 Gaines 1991, p. 243.

texts suggest a position of authority which doubled the authority when an authoritative account of reality was established.<sup>6</sup> This authority is visible at several levels throughout the *Huangdi neijing* and its history of reception through almost two thousand years. The present paper is concerned with the principal features of the conceptualizations of emotions, mental processes, and bodily sensations within this canon. Yet, this paper does not explicitly dwell on the very role emotions play in disease. I shall argue that at a meta-level these texts reveal themselves as articulations of a very specific “passion”,<sup>7</sup> namely for systematizing the bodily, emotional, and mental processes along several paradigmatic variables and symbolic numbers.

## 1 Methodological Considerations

The question regarding the relationship between “bodily sensations and emotions” is basically related to the question about the relationship of “body and mind”, denoting the issue of the physical, materialistic basis versus the psychic, mental basis of emotional processes, i.e. the contrast views of dualistic and monistic conceptions.

As we shall see, the *Huangdi neijing* reveals monistic, yet differentiating conceptions. This is detectable in those passages where the differentiation between “physical appearance” (*xing* 形) and “emotion/mood/feeling” (*zhi* 志), between “physical appearance” and “spirit/vital/life force, the mind” (*shen* 神) is discussed.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, even the latter differentiation is based on the concept of *qi* 氣, according to which all phenomena, visible and invisible in the world are nothing else but changing manifestations of *qi*.

The human body within this canonical work appears as a whole of processes which are specified, carefully differentiated, named and defined within the then current theoretical paradigmatic frameworks. Yet, dealing with both the Western conception of “emotion and bodily sensation” which *per se* reflects dualistic separation and the specifically Chinese medical conceptions which are not congruent with this dualistic separation, presents the translator with problems.

Due to this tension, it seems helpful to make use of two concepts taken from a modern body phenomenology,<sup>9</sup> in order to approach the significant features of these descriptions of bodily sensations and emotions. First, “extension and contraction” (*Eng/Engung* and *Weitung*) is used to describe basic bodily (and emotional) states’ and movements’ dimensions (*Befindlichkeiten*) that accompany any acute and intensive emotional (and bodily) experience. Second, the differentiation between “whole-bodily-sensations” and “localized bodily sensations”.

6 For considerations on the history of science, see Jordanova 1986, p. 20.

7 In the sense of “strong motivation” and “deep cognitive concentration”.

8 See, for instance, *Staven*, 1 (1):1-2; 9; *ibid.*, (34):491. The same source (7 [24]:380) offers a discussion of the “five [differentiated kinds of] physical appearance and emotional [states]” (*wuxing:zhi* 五行志).

9 I refer here to Schmitz 1990.

## 2 Terms for Emotional, Bodily, and Mental Processes in the *Huangdi neijing*

In the *Neijing*, emotions appear nowhere as *qing* 情.<sup>10</sup> The term *qing* within the *Neijing* exclusively denotes “situation”, “circumstances”, or “facts” that a physician has to detect for a successful diagnosis and therapy.<sup>11</sup> Five different emotions within one treatise are denoted by the term *wubing* 五并 (five conglomerations).<sup>12</sup> The term *zhi* 志 appears as a general denominator for “emotions”.<sup>13</sup> Simultaneously, *zhi* appears in the sense of “aspirations” or “will”.<sup>14</sup> As such, *zhi* appears as a term whose meaning obviously comprises the whole range of mental and emotional processes, and depending on the context it can be glossed as general emotional state or feeling.<sup>15</sup>

The following is the result of a close reading of the texts in order to extract the exact distinctions that were made. Yet, the translation of various terms is vague and by no means definite, since the authors only rarely describe the circumstances of the “emotional events” in greater detail.

In the case of some specific single terms such as anger (*nu* 怒, *chen* 瞋, or *hui* 恚), joy (*xi* 喜), fear (*kong* 恐 and *ju* 惧),<sup>16</sup> sadness (*bei* 悲), hate (*hui* 恚), detest (*zeng* 憎) the meanings are more or less obvious: sometimes they are specified such as in the case of violent anger (*bao nu* 暴怒), great anger (*da nu* 大怒), or excessive joy (*baoxi* 暴喜). Others of these specific terms are difficult to determine: “longing” for instance appears as *mu* 慕;<sup>17</sup> “longing” also comprises terms like *nian* 念 (feeling deeply concerned for)<sup>18</sup> and *si* 思 (thinking of), or *yuan* 愿 (hope),<sup>19</sup> *yu* 欲 (desire/wish; crave for),<sup>20</sup> and *shiyu* 嗜欲 (lust).<sup>21</sup> Fright (*jing* 驚) appears as one of nine factors causing the *qi* 氣 to flow in deviant ways.<sup>22</sup> Within several contexts *jing* 驚 appears in the sense of “great fright/scare” (*bao jing* 暴驚),<sup>23</sup> as the compounds

10 In late Imperial medical writings *qing* 情, or *qingzhi* 情志, generally means “emotions”.

11 See, for instance, *Suwen*, 7 (21):329; 4 (13):196; 8 (25):383; 5 (17):239. See also Graham’s (1990) general discussion of the meaning of *qing* in early philosophical literature.

12 *Suwen*, 7 (23):364.

13 *Ibid.*, 2 (5):68-70.

14 As such, *zhi* 志 is correlated with the kidney as one of the five *shen* 神 (vital forces).

15 See, for instance, *Suwen*, 1 (2):21; 7 (24):379.

16 *Ibid.*, 1 (1):6.

17 See *Lingshu*, 9 (58):152, where it reads: “[The person] detests [something] and admires [longs for something], blood and *qi* are in chaotic conditions” (因而志有所惡, 及有所慕, 血氣內亂).

18 *Suwen*, 8 (25):383. It is Huangdi who “is deeply concerned for the sufferings of the people”.

19 *Lingshu*, 7 (46):37. It is Huangdi who expresses his “hope” to hear more about the various causes of diseases.

20 *Suwen*, 1 (1):2-7.

21 *Ibid.*, 4 (14):201.

22 *Ibid.*, 11 (39):558. In another context, *jing* 驚 appears together with “raving” (*kuangyan* 狂言) as a consequence of excessive heat, see *ibid.*, 9 (32):454. Again, as a further consequence, the patient becomes frightened when he lies on his back because of specific symptoms of the water-illness (*shuibing* 水病). His frightening will cause him coughing in a severe way, see *ibid.*, 9 (33):480.

23 *Ibid.*, 13 (48):685.

*jinghai* 驚駭,<sup>24</sup> *jingkuang* 驚狂,<sup>25</sup> *jinghuo* 驚惑,<sup>26</sup> and *jingzao* 驚躁 show.<sup>27</sup> In the *Huangdi neijing* we do not find the specific correlation of fright to the pericardium, as late imperial texts suggest,<sup>28</sup> but rather the facultative correlation to the heart-vessels.<sup>29</sup> *You* 憂 (worry or brood)<sup>30</sup> in one passage is listed alongside the specific terms joy (*xi* 喜), anger (*nu* 怒), sadness (*bei* 悲), and fear (*kong* 恐):<sup>31</sup> here we may determine it as “sorrow” (*Leid, Kummer*). In other contexts *you* 憂 appears alongside with *si* 思 and can be read in terms of “worry” or “anxiety”.<sup>32</sup> The compound *chou you* 愁憂 together with fear or (probably) worry (*kongju* 恐懼) could imply a complicated emotional state with sadness as the main feature.<sup>33</sup> Then, again in other contexts *you* 憂 clearly is not considered an emotional state, but as deviated manifestation (*biandong* 變動) of the heart’s corresponding sound (*sheng* 聲) which “normally” is “laughing”.<sup>34</sup> Hence the meaning of *you* 憂 here could be paraphrased “being in a ‘crying’ mood”, i.e. “being in sorrow”. Again, another text speaks of *youhuan* 憂患 (anxiety and suffering).<sup>35</sup> The term *si* 思 (“thinking of” in the sense of “pensiveness”) within one context appears as an emotion among joy (*xi* 喜), anger (*nu* 怒), sorrow (*you* 憂), and fear (*kong* 恐).<sup>36</sup> The compound *silü* 思慮 appears as “anxious and fearful brooding”, signifying a kind of distress when a person’s intense

24 Ibid., p. 678.

25 Ibid., 17 (62):118.

26 Ibid., 21 (71):374.

27 Ibid.

28 *Jing* only in late imperial texts is named as one of the seven emotions (*qiqing* 七情). Most probably, Ming-Qing authors referred to the well known *Sanyin zhi yibingzheng fang* 三因之一病症方 (1174) by Chen Yan 陳言 (1131-ca. 1189). This treatise became extremely popular because of his didactic feature. The three causes (*sanyin* 三因) of all diseases include the *qiqing* 七情 as “inner causes”.

29 As in *Suwen*, 13 (48):678. The *shaoyin mai* 少陰脈 (minor *yin* vessel) correlates with the heart; the *shaoyang mai* 少陽脈 (minor *yang* vessel) correlates with the gall bladder, see *ibid.*, 21 (71):374.

30 Here the connection with the heart is suggested, see *ibid.*, 12 (43):619.

31 Ibid., 2 (5):75.

32 Ibid., 12 (43):619.

33 *Lingshu*, 1 (4):83.

34 *Suwen*, 2 (5):84. Zhang Jiebin 張介賓 (1563-1640) comments: “The heart hosts the *shen* 神; if [*shen*] is in a [state] of surplus, then one will laugh, if there is not enough [*shen*] one will worry (*you* 憂)”, see *Leijing*, 3:50.

35 *Suwen* 4 (13):188; 23 (78):487. In both contexts *youhuan* 憂患 appears as a general term denoting “inner anxieties and sufferings”.

36 Ibid., 19 (66):168. In *Lingshu* (2 [8]:174-75) the term *si* 思 and the related term *lü* 慮 appear as different cognitive processes. While *si* refers to thinking in the sense of rationalizing, *lü* refers to thinking in the sense of planning: “What the heart (mind) recalls is called thought/intent (*yi* 意). What thought retains is called intent/will (*zhi* 志). Change of what is retained, in accordance with intent/will, is called *si* (thought). Yearning for something distant in accordance with *si* (thought) is called concern (*li*). Making decisions (*chu* 處) with regard to things on the basis of concern is called wisdom (*zhi* 智)”.

thinking is mixed with anxiety, grief, fear, etc., excessive thinking, brooding.<sup>37</sup> This compound also appears as an emotional state whereby the heart becomes empty and evil can follow (i.e. enter into the heart).<sup>38</sup> We also find compounds denoting mixtures of emotions. *Bei'ai* 悲哀, for instance, might be glossed as “sadness and grief”,<sup>39</sup> whereas *ti* 惕 appears in the sense of “startling”.<sup>40</sup> The compound *chuti* 怵惕 denotes “anxiety and fear”.<sup>41</sup>

The *Huangdi neiijing* abounds with terms that, strictly speaking, might not be glossed as “emotions”. These are terms that indicate a wide range of (whole) bodily states and sensations, such as “irritation”, “agitation” or “excitement”, which sometimes clearly points to depression and grief: *fan* 煩,<sup>42</sup> *fanxin* 煩心,<sup>43</sup> *fanman* 煩滿,<sup>44</sup> *fanmen* 煩悶,<sup>45</sup> *fanyuan* 煩冤,<sup>46</sup> which can be glossed as “highly irritated”, *fanwan* 煩惋 (distress and irritability).<sup>47</sup> The experience of *wan* 惋 (feeling disquieted, discomfited, depressed) appears as one process that makes one dislike people (*wu ren* 惡人), i.e. “to hate, detest” people.<sup>48</sup> *Wu* 惡, moreover, appears as sensation of “aversion” against cold or wind,<sup>49</sup> and as such stands in opposition to “taking delight in, liking” (*xi* 喜) certain states or phenomena.<sup>50</sup> In this context, it is also important to note the abundance of terms denoting the generally sensed or experienced state of

37 Here it appears together with *chuti* 怵惕, fearful and frightening, see *ibid.*, 2 (8):177; 178-79. See also the commentary of Zhang Jiebin to *Leijing*, as quoted in Suwen, 3 (9):51.

38 *Ibid.*, 3 (10):170.

39 “If [one’s] grief (*bei'ai* 悲哀) is too deep, this will harm the pericardium”, see *ibid.*, 12 (44):630.

40 *Ibid.*, 8 (30): 434.

41 See, for instance, *Lingshu* 9 (58):152.

42 See, for instance, *Suwen* 1 (3):36: “When one is invaded by summer heat, he will be sweating, [feel] irritable and breathe rapidly with noise” (因於暑, 汗, 煩則喘喝).

43 See, for instance, *ibid.*, 18 (65):160. Further, “[w]hen [a patient] first [suffers] of fullness in the middle [part of the body] and later [feels] restlessness [and discomfort] in the heart, treat the root [cause immediately]” (先中滿而後煩心治其本), see *ibid.*, 9 (32):455.

44 *Ibid.*, 9 (31):441; 9 (32):455; 9 (33):473.

45 *Ibid.*, 9 (32):454. Here irritation appears alongside with pain of the heart and vomiting.

46 *Ibid.*, 2 (5):94: “[In the case of] overabundance of *yang* [causes] body [suffering of] heat. [but] the interstices of the skin are closed.... the sweat can not leave [the body], [and because the bodily fluids have become dry due to the overabundance of *yang*, even] the front teeth are dry and [the patient] will be highly irritated (depressed)” (陽勝則身熱, 腠理閉……, 汗不出而熱, 齒乾以煩冤).

47 *Ibid.*, 17 (62):118: “[When] the blood concentrates/stagnates in the upper [part of the body] and the *qi* concentrates/stagnates in the lower [part of the body], it will [lead] to irritability and distress and [the patient] will get angry easily” (血并於上, 氣并於下, 心煩惋善怒).

48 *Ibid.*, 8 (30):434.

49 For *wu feng* 惡風, see *ibid.*, 9 (33):475. Aversion to cold (*wu han* 惡寒) is not to be misinterpreted as shivering fits (*zhen han* 振寒), see *ibid.*, 18 (60):80, where both *wu han* and *zhen han* appear as distinguishable phenomena. Besides the combination of “aversion to cold”, the expression “aversion to heat” is used throughout the text. Simultaneously, *e* 惡 means “malign”, as in the expression *e qi* 惡氣, see *ibid.*, 1 (2):26, or *e xue* 惡血, see *ibid.*, 1 (4):83.

50 As, for instance, “liking heat”.



calmness and peace, namely *an* 安, *anning* 安寧,<sup>51</sup> and *le* 樂 (joyful, happy).<sup>52</sup> *Luan* 亂, “confusion”, marks the opposite state, namely a disturbed flow of *qi* and blood.<sup>53</sup> A disordered communication among the five visceral systems leads to confusion in general, or to a confusion of the *shenming* 神明 (*shen*-brilliance).<sup>54</sup> *Luan*, moreover, appears in connection with helplessness (*luanhuo* 亂惑).<sup>55</sup>

### 3 On the Relationship between Emotions and Bodily Sensations

In the following the focus will be on the several passages which offer explicit discussions on the *qi*-flow which in the western conceptual framework would correspond to (whole) bodily processes primarily. The respective passages indicate in an exemplary way how crucial the relations between emotions and bodily sensations for the conceptualizations of medical knowledge were.

#### 3.1 Observations of the *qi*-Flow and Emotional Processes

In *Suwen* 21, Huangdi 黃帝 asks:

人之居處，動靜勇怯，脈亦為之變乎？歧伯對曰：凡人之驚恐，志勞動靜，皆為變也。是以夜行則喘出于腎，淫氣病肺，有所墮恐，喘出于肝，淫氣害脾，有所驚恐，喘出于肺，淫氣傷心，度水跌仆，喘出于腎與骨。故當是之時，勇者氣行則已，怯者則著而為病也。故曰診病之道，觀人勇怯，骨肉皮膚，能知其情，以為診法也。

“Men [live in different] environments, [they are either] still or active; [they are either] brave or timid, will their vessels also change [along with all these different situations/facts]?” Qi Bo answered: “Whenever a person is frightened, fearful, angry, or overworked, active or quiet, all this means changes. Hence, when one travels at night, the [accompanying] panting (breathlessness) comes out of the kidney, and the counter-flowing and excessive *qi* will harm the lung. When something makes one stumble and fear, then the [accompanying] panting comes out of the liver, and the counter-flowing and excessive *qi* will harm the spleen. When something makes one feel frightened

51 Ibid., 1 (2):21. Note that here the peaceful “mind” is denoted.

52 See, for instance, *ibid.*, 7 (24):380.

53 Ibid., 5 (17):228.

54 Ibid., p. 233. *Shen* 神, here clearly can be translated as “the basic power of agency within humans”, as ultimate “life force” or “life spirit” which is confined to the domain of the individual human being. See Porkert’s (1965, pp. 191-92) interpretation as “aktiv konstellierende Kraft” (active energetic constellation) within the microcosm. The second meaning of *shen* is related to the macrocosm, i.e. “spirits of Heaven”, see in this article p. 56n. 95. The third meaning is “spiritual” or “mystical intuition”, which can be seen as interrelation of the first and the second meanings (categories). Hence, it is possible to translate *jingshen* 神明, as “spirit illumination”, or “spirit-like intelligence”, etc. For an overview, see Knoblock 1988, 1:252-55. See also Harper 1998, p. 120. Pfister (2003) translates the term as “Geistige Erhellung”, referring to an extraordinary state of mind as triggered by sexual techniques.

55 *Suwen* 8 (25):385.

and fearful, the [accompanying] panting comes out of the lung, and the counter-flowing and excessive *qi* will injure the heart. When one wades across water, stumbles and falls down, the [accompanying] panting comes out of the kidney and from the bones. Hence, in such situations, the *qi* flows [continuously] in those who are brave and [the panting] will stop. In those who are timid, [the *qi*] is stuck and this leads to diseases. So, the [right] way of diagnosing diseases [first requires] the [careful] examination [of whether the person] is brave or timid, of the [appearance] of the bones, flesh and the skin, before one can know [the necessary] facts. This is the method of diagnosing disease."<sup>56</sup>

This passage shows the importance the authors attached to emotional matters which nevertheless did not appear separated from other bodily processes and/or states (*Be-findlichkeiten*) like overwork, "a life in quietness or activity", conditions of the bones, flesh, and the skin. Secondly, the passage shows the inseparability of emotional matters from the *qi* flow. Emotional changes *are* changes of the *qi* flow. And, as Huangdi's question suggests, even one's disposition (brave or timid) appears as inseparable from the manner the *qi* moves. Third, it reflects the five phases (*wuxing* 五行) relationship-pattern with its generating and restraining sequences: this pattern allows the physician to detect the very "field" where "counter-flowing and excessive *qi*" occurs at any given time. Fourth, this passage reflects the view of the interwovenness of the human being with his respective environment. The dangerousness of the "outer" situation becomes reflected as irritated, excessive, and counter-flowing *qi*, and manifested as fright and horror in the body. Yet, the ways *qi* flow/s within a person influence the person's "meeting" of such existential danger.

Another passage of the *Suwen* again emphasizes the relation between *qi*-flow and emotions. Moreover, the passage refers to "whole-bodily-sensations" (cold, heat, overwork) and states of mind (pensive). It reads:

帝曰：善。余知百病，生于氣也。怒則氣上，喜則氣緩，悲則氣消，恐則氣下，寒則氣收，炆則氣泄，驚則氣亂，勞則氣耗，思則氣結。九氣不同，何病之生？

The [Yellow] Emperor says: "Well. I know that the hundred diseases are generated by the *qi*. [When one is] angry, the *qi* rises; [when one is] happy, the *qi* relaxes; [when one is] sad, the *qi* dissipates; [when one is in] fear, the *qi* falls. [In the case of] cold, the *qi* contracts; [in the case of] heat, the *qi* flows out; [when one is] frightened, the *qi* is confused; [when one is] overworked, the *qi* is exhausted; [when one is] pensive, the *qi* lumps together. These nine *qi* are not identical. Which diseases generate these [states of *qi*]?"

歧伯曰：怒則氣逆，甚則嘔血及衄泄，故氣上矣。喜則氣和，志達，榮衛通利。故氣緩矣。

56 Ibid., 7 (21):329.

Qi Bo says: “[When one is] angry, the *qi* moves contrary [to its regular course]. In severe cases, [people] spit blood and [undigested] food. Hence, the *qi* rises. [When one is] joyous, the *qi* is in harmony and one’s ambitions are unimpeded, the construction *qi* and the defence *qi* move freely. Hence, the *qi* [moves] relaxed.

悲則心繫急，肺布葉舉，而上焦不通，榮衛不散，熱氣在中。故氣消矣。

[In the case of] sadness the heart connection is tense, the lobes of the lungs spread open and rise, and the upper burner is impenetrable, the construction [*qi*] and the defence [*qi*] do not disperse, heat *qi* is in the centre. Hence, the *qi* dissipates.

恐則精卻，卻則上焦閉，閉則氣還，還則下焦脹。故氣不行矣。

[In the case of] fear, the essence withdraws, when it withdraws, the upper burner closes; when it closes, the *qi* turns around, when it turns around, the lower burner distends. Hence, the *qi* does not move.

寒則腠理閉，氣不行。故氣收矣。炅則腠理開，榮衛通，汗大泄。故氣泄。驚則心無所依，神無所歸，慮無所定。故氣亂矣。

[In the case of] cold the interstices of the skin close, the *qi* does not move. Hence, the *qi* collects. When one is hot, the interstices of the skin open, the construction [*qi*] and the defence [*qi*] pass through, sweat flows out heavily. Hence, *qi* flows out. When one is frightened, then the heart has no place to lean on, the *shen* has no place to return, and one’s ponderings have no place to settle. Hence, the *qi* is in a chaotic [state].

勞則喘息汗出，外內皆越。故氣耗矣。

In the case of overwork, one’s breath is panting and sweat runs, both outside and inside are exceeded [in consumption]. Hence, the *qi* is exhausted.

思則心有所存，神有所歸，正氣留而不行。故氣結矣。

When one is pensive, the heart has a place to dwell, the *shen* has a place to return, the proper *qi* remains [stuck] and does not move [disperse]. Hence, the *qi* lumps together.<sup>57</sup>

It is important to note that among the reported nine different movements of *qi* there are only four processes which we today would clearly call emotions (i.e. anger, joy, sadness, and fear). Obviously, for the very therapeutic practice, the differentiation between experiencing “cold” (i.e. a collecting *qi*) and experiencing pensiveness (i.e. a lumping/knotting *qi*) was of no essential importance. This interpretation is

57 Ibid., 11 (39):558.

supported by various other passages of the *Huangdi neijing*. In this passage, the *qi*-flow is specified by terms of bodily movements which can be grasped with the concept introduced above: “*extensio and contractio*”. When the *qi* rises and relaxes, we can generally speak of an extension (*Weitung*) which might or not be felt and/or sensed by the respective body. When the *qi* dissipates, goes down and contracts, is exhausted and lumps together, we can speak of a contraction (*Engung, Enge*). Both extension and contraction can be felt (and diagnosed) in their mixed forms such as “swelling” and “tension” that may appear in various intensities and rhythms.

### 3.2 *Excursus: Qi and the Wind*

The medical preoccupation with the movement of *qi* had its roots at least partly in the far more ancient tradition of wind (*feng* 風), seen as a demon and as the atmospheric forces which influenced and transformed the human being: winds simultaneously were the key to a good harvest, to floods and epidemics, military uprisings and to fatal famines.<sup>58</sup> The concepts of *qi* and wind even at times when the *Huangdi neijing* was compiled were interchangeable.<sup>59</sup> There are plenty of references in the *Huangdi neijing* that the wind itself exemplified change, since disease essentially meant “change”.<sup>60</sup> Since wind obviously still was feared as a disease itself, the notions of wind were then metaphorical.

At the same time, several treatises in the *Huangdi neijing* mark different conceptual levels, namely the transition from the earlier wind etiology to the newer *qi* etiology. *This transition simultaneously marks a new view of the body-self*, and this again was deeply intertwined with the emotions.

Besides the concept of wind or wind-*qi* as a pathogenic factor,<sup>61</sup> it is especially the notions of “liver wind”, “heart wind”, “spleen wind”, “lung wind”, and “kidney wind” that deserve our attention.<sup>62</sup> *Suwen* 42 expounds upon the possible ways the wind may use to enter into the human body. It starts with the wind invading the body as a whole and continues by delineating particulars, i.e. it specifies the various ways the wind can invade (namely through the *yangming* 陽明 vessel or the *taiyang* 太陽

58 See, for instance, the report of a diviner by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca. 86 BCE): “If wind comes from the south, there will be a great drought. If it comes from the southwest, there will be a minor drought. If it comes from the west, there will be military uprisings. If it comes from the northwest, the soybeans will ripen well, rains will be few, and armies will move. If it comes from the north, the harvest will be average. If it comes from the northeast, there will be an exceptional harvest. If it comes from the east, there will be floods. If it comes from the south-east, there will be epidemics among the people, and the harvest will be bad” (*Shiji*, 27:1340).

59 Unschuld 2003, p. 149; Kuriyama 1997, p. 236.

60 The *Suwen* again and again asserts that the “The wind is the chief [cause] of the one hundred (i.e. all) diseases” (故風者，百病之長也) (1 [42]:602); “[t]he wind is the origin of the one hundred diseases” (故風者，百病之始也) (1 [3]:43; 16 [60]:80); “[t]he wind is the master of the one hundred diseases” (是故風者，百病之長也) (6 [19]:295).

61 The other “climatic phenomena” like “cold”, “heat”, and “dampness” should only be mentioned here.

62 *Ibid.*, 12 (42):602.

vessel, etc.). The physician could detect every stage of invasion from bodily signs and perceptions (i.e. skin complexion, sensations of cold or heat or aversion to wind) to the signs of leprosy (*li* 疔),<sup>63</sup> and so on. The author goes on to explain the various symptoms of the disease of “five-zang-wind” (*wuzang feng* 五臟風). When it comes to the point that the wind invades the liver, he says, the patient will sweat a lot, have an aversion to wind, be slightly green in complexion, have a dry throat, grow angry easily (*shan nu* 善怒), and sometimes will have an aversion against women (*shi zeng nüzi* 時憎女子).<sup>64</sup> Among the symptoms of wind in the other four *yin* viscera, “the feeling of fullness”, headache, and whole body pain are mentioned; the heart-wind is expressed by frightening (*xia* 嚇) but also by *shan nu* (growing angry easily).<sup>65</sup>

### 3.3 Heat, Cold, Fatigue, and Pain

Emotional changes are changes in the *qi*-flow, so bodily sensations in the sense of phenomena perceivable and/or visible by the physician and/or the patient are also changes of the *qi*-flow. An excellent physician knew not only how to differentiate between various patterns of diseases, but also how to read the various signs their patients’ bodies showed, respectively. Hence, the physician’s diagnostic expertise depended on his ability to interpret signs which an ill body sensed and expressed. These bodily sensations, as signs and appearances of *qi*-flow imbalances, were readable and interpretable according to the given theoretical framework. The angle from which bodily sensations within the *Huangdi neijing* are described, was strictly based on the practical “sense”, expressed bodily sensations made for the sake of curing and healing.

The following once more concerns itself with heat, cold and fatigue, which, as whole-bodily sensations, are not significantly differentiated from localized bodily sensations such as pain or ache. Yet, on the level of observation, physicians differentiated clearly between both localized and whole-bodily sensations and offered careful descriptions of both kinds of bodily sensations. At the same time, both kinds of sensations, again, appear as specific imbalanced flows of *qi*.

Bodily sensations, like feeling hot (fever) or cold (chills) could be sensed by and through the whole body-person, as the chapter on malaria (*nüe* 瘧) describes:

是太陽之瘧，令人腰痛頭重，寒從背起，先寒後熱，熇熇暍暍然，熱止汗出，難已。

63 The problematic translation of *li* as “leprosy” can not be discussed here. For a brief overview on leprosy in China, see Unschuld 1986, pp. 163-84.

64 *Suwen* 12 (42):606.

65 Moreover, it is important to note that within this treatise certain feelings like “restlessness” (*men* 闕) or the expression of crying appear also in stages where the wind has not reached one of the five inner viscera yet. Crying here does not appear clearly as a manifestation of sadness, but more likely a manifestation of cold in the middle burner. So it is said: “If the person is thin [her *yang-qi* will easily] be dispersed to the exterior, and the cold [will remain inside], consequently the cold will occupy the middle [warmer] and the tears will fall [frequently]” (人瘦，則外泄而寒，則為寒中而泣出) (*ibid.*, p. 598).

The malaria of the foot *taiyang* [conduit]<sup>66</sup> causes the person to have lower back pain and a heavy head. Cold rises from the back. [The person] feels cold first and then he feels hot. The heat is intense [as in] harm caused by summer heat. When the heat stops, sweat leaves [the body]. [This disease] is difficult to bring to an end.

足少陽之瘧，令人身體解肌，寒不甚，熱不甚，惡見人，見人心惕惕然，熱多汗出甚。

The malaria of the foot *shaoyang* (conduit)<sup>67</sup> causes a body/person to feel extreme fatigue, he does not feel too cold and not too hot. [but] the person feels an aversion of meeting people and he [his heart] being frightened when meeting people, the duration of the hot [fever] is [comparatively] long, and [the patient also suffers] profuse sweating.<sup>68</sup>

Like malaria, coughing is also differentiated along the five *yin-/zang*-viscera and the six *yang-/fu*-viscera. The physician had to observe the patient carefully in order to understand where the coughing took place. His adequate application of therapy strategy depended on the respectively detected “coughing” organ-system. Here too, the bodily appearances (*zhuang* 狀) are bodily (perceivable) sensations, whose “perception” obviously strictly followed the matrices of the five phases paradigm, the *yin-yang* theory, and the concept of repletion and depletion.

In the case of the various kinds of malaria, the bodily sensations of feeling hot and/or cold belong to the body as a whole. Yet, the physician has to locate the exact conduit (channel or vessel) where the disease takes place. Hence in his observational task, he often switched between localized bodily sensations and whole-bodily-sensations.

In other contexts, as for instance in the discussions about the various cases of coughing, the focus is exclusively on parts of the body. *Suwen* 38 reads:

心咳之狀，咳則心痛，喉中介介如梗狀。

The appearance of heart cough: when [people] cough, their heart aches; they have an obstructing sensation in the throat, as if there was a stick.

肝咳之狀，咳則兩脅下痛，甚則不可以轉，轉則兩肱下滿。

The appearance of liver cough: when [people] cough, they feel pain below the thorax; in severe cases, they cannot walk. If they walk, their two feet will swell.

脾咳之狀，咳則右脅下痛，陰陰引肩背，甚則不可以動，動則咳劇。

66 The bladder channel.

67 The gall bladder channel.

68 *Ibid.*, 10 (36):517. Here again, I will not dwell on the somewhat problematic translation of *nüe* as malaria and leave out the instructions for piercing.

The appearance of spleen cough: when [people] cough, they will feel pain in the right side of the thorax, they will [suffer] from recessive pain attacking the shoulders and back. In severe cases they cannot move; as soon as they move, they will cough.<sup>69</sup>

*Suwen* 41 discusses a wide range of different causes of the disease lower back pain (*yaotong* 腰痛):

足太陽脈令人腰痛，引項脊尻背如重狀……

“When the foot *taiyang*<sup>70</sup> vessel lets a person’s lower back ache, [this pain] is pulling on the neck, the spine, the sacrum, and the back as if there was heavy [weight]....

少陽令人腰痛如以針刺其皮中，循循然不可以俛仰，不可以顧。……

When the foot *shaoyang*<sup>71</sup> [vessel] lets a person’s lower back ache, [his pain] is like the pricking of [his] skin by a needle, and [the person] is continuously unable to bend down and up and cannot look back;....

陽明令人腰痛，不可以顧，顧如有見者，善悲。

When the foot *yangming*<sup>72</sup> [vessel] lets a person’s lower back ache, [this is so painful] that he can not look back, if he looks back, he seems to have seen something [horrible], [moreover, the patient] tends to feel sad.<sup>73</sup>

The various described situations are clearly sensations which the body-person felt and perceived as a whole or in or at one certain part of the body. The discussed *Huangdi neijing* passages lack explicit, sophisticated considerations about how bodily sensations are related to the emotions. The question of directive causality (whether bodily sensations cause emotions or vice versa) nowhere appears within these writings as a matter of question. Yet, we can detect mutual influences. The very last quoted phrase (lower back ache caused by the foot *yangming* conduit) could serve, for instance, as an example for a bodily sensation which in turn caused a certain emotion. Yet, late Ming and early Qing commentators interpreted this phrase in another sense. Because the *yangming* vessel (in this very case) is very hot, but the *shen* 神 (vital force) scatters, sadness occurs.<sup>74</sup> Thus, this interpretation lacks any view of one single *locus* (in the sense of a soul or a psyche) which would lead a person to derive a certain emotion. The same is true for the other phrase quoted above (p. 51): “foot *shaoyang* (conduit) malaria” causes a body/person to feel

69 Ibid., 10 (38):541.

70 The bladder channel.

71 The gall bladder channel.

72 The stomach channel.

73 Ibid., 11 (41):579.

74 See Wu Kun 吳崑 (1551-1620), quoted in *ibid.*, 11 (41):581.

extreme fatigue, feeling neither too cold nor too hot, [but leads] the person to feel an aversion of meeting people and he [his heart] being frightened when meeting people". An early explanation of this situations stems from Wang Bing 王冰 (fl. 762). The gall bladder (which corresponds with the foot *shaoyang* conduit) is connected with the liver,<sup>75</sup> because the liver [in this very case] is depleted, fear occurs, and the evil (*qi*) weakens his *qi*, hence [the person in this case] feels an aversion to meeting people and [his heart] is frightened by meeting people.<sup>76</sup>

Thus, if we would interpret the expression *wu jian ren* 惡見人 in the sense of "suspicion" or "arrogance", or in the sense of "feeling" in a certain way "shame", this would be speculative and would us lead nowhere. The respective quoted medical interpretations do not offer any fundament for such speculations, since the theoretical frameworks along which they observed patients refrained from giving any further opinion on this question. Their ultimate aim was to relieve the body-person from those bodily sensations and emotions, which were painful, uncomfortable, and even could lead to death.

#### 4 Channelling the Emotions within the Body

In the *Huangdi neijing* we find traces of older views according to which human beings' states (including emotional states [*Befindlichkeiten*]), were induced by outer influences such as winds.<sup>77</sup> The expressions *bazheng sishi* 八正四時 (the eight winds and the four seasons) and *jiugong bafeng* 九宮八風 (the nine palaces and eight winds) both appear in the *Huangdi neijing*,<sup>78</sup> indicating the view of the inseparability of place (palaces) and time (four seasons). These expressions reflect the concept of the eight winds (*bafeng* 八風), each of them ruling one forty-five-day segment of a year (i.e. the year was divided into eight segments of forty-five days each) focussed on the movements of the deity Taiyi 太一 (The Grand One) around the nine palaces (symbolizing the eight directions and the centre).<sup>79</sup> The respective direction the wind came from indicated the respective palace the deity was occupying at that particular period. Empty winds indicated that Taiyi was absent at the palace from where this wind came from. Therefore, proper winds (*zheng feng* 正風) were full winds (*shi feng* 實風), and irregular winds were called evil winds or empty winds (*xie feng* 邪風, *xu feng* 虛風).<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the winds basically carry the concept of "emptiness and fullness" which in the *Huangdi neijing* find their reflection as

75 The liver is the corresponding *yin*-organ system to the gall bladder (*yang*).

76 *Ibid.*, 10 (36):519.

77 On this issue, see also Linck 2001, pp. 112-14.

78 *Lingshu* 11 (77):372-74; *Suwen* 8 (26):391-93. For a detailed discussion of these passages, see Unschuld 1982, pp. 102-4; see also Harper's (1999) discussion of the symbiotic connections between medical and divinatory practices, as evidenced in the *Huangdi neijing*.

79 The deity Taiyi played a central role in the imperial cult system of Qin and Han, based on non-organized religious precedents. See Li Ling 1996 for archaeological evidence; for its importance in early Daoist cults, see Campany 2003, pp. 142-43.

80 Kuriyama 1997, pp. 254-56.



depletion wind (*xu feng* 虛風)<sup>81</sup> or as depletion-evil (*xu xie* 虛邪)<sup>82</sup> or evil wind (*xie feng* 邪風) and thief wind (*zei feng* 賊風), respectively.<sup>83</sup> The binary concept of *zheng* and/or *shi* 正/實 (proper or full, i.e. repleted) winds against *xie* and/or *xu* 邪/虛 (evil or empty, i.e. depleted) winds found their reflection within the concept of repleted (*shi* 實) or depleted (*xu* 虛) states of the *qi* within the body.

This concept most obviously served as the foundation explaining the development of the emotions within the body. *Suwen* 23 explains the transformations of essence *qi* within the respective five *yin* organ systems as follows:

精氣并於心則喜，并於肺則悲，并於肝則憂，并於脾則畏，并於腎則恐，是謂五并。

When essence (and) *qi* conglomerate(s) in the heart,<sup>84</sup> it will give rise to joy; when it conglomerate(s) in the lungs, it will give rise to sadness; when it conglomerate(s) in the liver, it will give rise to worry; when it conglomerate(s) in the spleen, it will give rise to dread, when it conglomerate(s) in the kidney, it will give rise to fear. Such are the five conglomerations.<sup>85</sup>

*Bing* 并 could also be translated as “accumulating”, “knotting together”, “mingling”, “concentration”, but also as “coming together” and “simultaneous”.<sup>86</sup> The interpretation of *bing* depends on whether the emphasis is on *shi* 實 (repletion, fullness) or on *xu* 虛 (depletion, vacuity). Conglomeration of essence (and) *qi*, i.e. accumulating within one visceral system, means a “superabundance” (*shi*) of essence (and) *qi* there, one that manifests itself as “excessive” emotion. The state of depletion/vacuity (*xu*) in a *yin* organ system leads to the state of “stuck” or “knotted” *qi* within; this again becomes manifested as “excessive” emotion. Both explications can be found explicitly stated in late Ming commentaries and implicitly in Qing medical writings.<sup>87</sup> This passage, however, does not testify that emotions *per se* were seen as pathological processes. Emotions are essential bodily processes just as heat, cold,

81 *Lingshu* 8 (51):101-3.

82 *Suwen* 4 (13):188.

83 *Ibid.*, pp. 188-90.

84 Both *qi* and essence can be thought of in terms of plural and singular simultaneously which the translation seeks to convey.

85 *Ibid.*, 7 (23):364.

86 When *Suwen* (8 [25]:386) says *wanwu bing zhi bu ke liang* 萬物并至，不可量，we may translate: “The ten thousand things come into the world simultaneously and they cannot be measured”, but we may also translate “The ten thousand things come into the world in a concentrated/condensed [form]”, namely as “condensed” (*verdichtetes*) *qi*.

87 “If the essence *qi* [of all five *yin* viscera] accumulates in one organ system, an overabundance of [evil] *qi* will arise, and depending on the particular *yin*-organ system, emotion will appear in an extreme manner”, see Wu Kun, quoted in *Suwen* 7 (23):364-65. Another view holds that if a state of depletion occurs in a *yin*-organ system, essence *qi* will stuck there and there will be no way to control the corresponding emotion. See Ma Shi 馬蒔 (fl. 1586), quoted *ibid.*

and wind are essential heavenly processes. The paradigmatic correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm reads as follows:

天有四時五行，以生長收藏，以生寒暑燥濕風。

Heaven has four seasons and five phases/processes [in order to promote] birth, growth, gathering, and storage, and to generate cold, summer heat, dryness, dampness, and the winds.

人有五藏化五氣，以生喜怒悲憂恐。

Man has the five *zang* (depots) which transform the five *qi* in order to generate joy, anger, sadness, anxiety, and fear.<sup>88</sup>

The passage clearly defined the development of the emotions within the body; this development is declared to be transformations of the five respective *qi* within the inner viscera. As such, the *Huangdi neijing* suggests the intent of emancipating the human being from the outer influences which have been crucial to older concepts,<sup>89</sup> while internalizing them by channelling the emotions within the body, within the five *yin*-viscera, respectively. Their explanations are linked with new views of the human being. And, this respective conceptualisation of the emotions forms a core element within.

## 5 Emotional Powers and the Power of Channelling the Emotions within the Inner Bodily Environment

The act of internalizing the emotions by channelling them along the five-*yin*-viscera systems was supported by the thoroughly discussed principle of living consciously according to and in synchronization with the cosmic principles. These principles included keeping one's behaviour in line with the law of the waxing and waning of *yin* and *yang* and the subsequent changes of the four seasons in order to accumulate one's essence and to complete one's spirit (*ji jing quan shen* 積精全神).<sup>90</sup> It was the proposition of the ultimate goal of nurturing one's original heavenly nature which

88 Ibid., 2 (5):75.

89 An older view on the emotions is expressed for instance within the following *Zhuangzi* (4th-3rd century BCE) "Qiwulun" 齊物論 passage: "Joy, anger, grief, delight, worry, regret...come to us like music from the empty (*xu* 虛) [holes]...Day and night they alternate within us but we don't know where they come from...Without them [the feelings mentioned above] there would not be I. And without me who will experience them? They are right near by. But we don't know who causes them", *Zhuangzi*, 2:20; cf. Watson 1968, pp. 37-38. To be sure, this is not to state that emotions were not seen as being located within the inner body at all. Yet, the passage suggests that they are strongly influenced and undividable from outer atmospheres. This specific historical question, namely on the ways emotions "changed" their appearances and shapes in ancient times, needs further research. Linck (2001, pp. 112-17) made first explorative steps in this direction. See also the discussion of the meanings of *qing* 情 in *Zhuangzi* by Mcgrath 1996, pp.18-20, esp. pp. 17-18.

90 *Suwen* 1 (1):16. See also p. 46n. 54 above, with a brief discussion of the translation of *shen* 神.

fostered the discourse of nourishing the *qi*.<sup>91</sup> *Suwen* 1 explains the deep connections of this discourse with the mythic concept of the “sage”: As a sage, one kept one’s heart free from indignation (*hui* 恚) and anger (*chen* 嗔), lived in such a way that “the outside (body) was free from exhaustion due to [excessive] physical labour and the inside was free from suffering due to [irritating] thoughts and longing” (外不勞形于事，內無思想之患).<sup>92</sup> By always keeping oneself in a cheerful mood, “by keeping a leisured aspiration and reduction of desires” (以志閒而少欲), the heart will be calm (*xin an* 心安) and will not be afraid [even when something terrible happens]. “Consequently the proper *qi* will flow favourably and the desires will be satisfied easily” (氣從以順，各從其欲，皆得愿).<sup>93</sup>

Within the context of such general advice in the *Huangdi neijing*, emotions clearly appear in their facets as “wishes”, “desires” and “ambitions”. If such an alignment dominates the heart, the *qi*-flow will become instable and distracted, evil *qi* can enter, fear and bad thoughts will develop. Within this discourse, the heart plays an implicit, predominant role as a leader of men’s bodily and spiritual alignment. In this discourse we also find hints for the differentiation of “spirit” on one side and the “body” on the other.<sup>94</sup> These respective *Huangdi neijing* passages differentiate two distinguishable states or conditions whose areas of “activity” are the whole body-self (*shen* 身).

Yet, the systematic differentiation between the physical *appearance* (*xing* 形) and the mood/feeling/emotions (*zhi* 志) *appearance* seems of little or no importance if we concentrate on the advice given for treatment. Of all the five methods mentioned there is not even one that does not focus on the concrete body.<sup>95</sup> Such passages show how the differentiation between body and mind were applied: it should help the physician to focus his attention exclusively on the patient.

91 On the influence of the early sexual cultivation/nurturing life (*yangsheng* 養生) literature on the medical practice as presented in the *Huangdi neijing*, see Lo 2001.

92 *Suwen* 1 (1):16.

93 *Ibid.*

94 *Ibid.*, 1 (1):1-2 explains that people in ancient times “were able to keep their shape and spirit complete” (故能形與神俱).

95 The translation of *zhi* as “emotions” is supported by the commentary of Zhang Jiebin in his *Leijing*, 12:240. Interestingly, the *Huangdi neijing* in other contexts, where such differentiations are mentioned, mostly refers to advices regarding the proper attitudes and measures an excellent physician has to take when diagnosing diseases and treating patients: “Inspect the patient with a calm mind/mood without looking at things around you....To set right his [the patient’s] mind means to watch attentively his eyes in order to control his vital forces [shen] so that the *qi* can flow easily” (靜志觀病人，無左右視也。……必正其神者，欲瞻病人目制其神，令氣易行也), see *Suwen* 14 (54):25. Further, “The former kings put great importance to [the inspection of the patients’ complexion and pulse according to the principles of the “four seasons” and the “five phases”], as it is in conformity with the divine brilliance (*shenming* 神明)” (此上帝之所貴，以合于神明也), see *ibid.* 4 (13):191. My translation of *shenming* as “divine brilliance” denotes the correlation (and communication) between human and external spirits, i.e. the second meaning of 神, see p. 46n. 54 above.

Different from the major part of the usage of *zhi* 志 as “emotions/feeling” or as “will/ambition/aspiration”,<sup>96</sup> or as one of altogether five active or vital forces (*shen* 神) correlated to the kidneys,<sup>97</sup> *zhi* 志 in *Suwen* 34 and in *Suwen* 24 obviously denotes *the* essential life force.<sup>98</sup> Notions like the following could even mislead as to assume that *zhi* held the meaning of a single static substance: when a patient “talks in rage, this means loss of the mind (consciousness?), loss of the mind [means] death” (狂言者是失志, 失志者死).<sup>99</sup> But in light of passages speaking, for instance, of the loss of strength and power of the viscera meaning death (失強則死),<sup>100</sup> or of the viscera’s loss of the ability to guard meaning death (失守者死),<sup>101</sup> *zhi* 志 quickly loses this meaning. The *flowing, processing, and relational* character of every single bodily element, including the emotions, is clearly exposed in *Suwen* 62 where Qi Bo explains that vital force (*shen* 神), *qi* 氣, blood (*xue* 血), shape (*xing* 形), and the emotions/will (*zhi* 志) are the five conditions (*wuxingzhi* 五形志) whose state of “being in surplus or being insufficient” is as a physician important to know:

神有余則笑不休，神不足則悲……氣有余則喘咳上氣，不足則息利少氣……血有余則怒，不足則恐……形有余則腹腸……志有余則腹腸澹池不足則厥。

When there is a surplus of *shen*, one will laugh continuously, when *shen* is insufficient, one will be sad....when the *qi* is in surplus, there will be rapid breathing, cough and up-reversing of *qi*; when *qi* is insufficient, there will be difficult respiration and shortness of breath;....when there is a surplus of blood, one will get angry; when there is insufficient blood, one will be in fear....when the shape has a surplus, swelling of the abdomen and difficult urination will arise;....when the emotions/will are in surplus, abdominal swelling and diarrhoea of undigested food, when the emotions/will are insufficient there will be extreme cold in the hands and feet.<sup>102</sup>

Here again, we find the very concern for the two major states of *qi*, repletion or depletion, which again can be grasped in terms of “contraction and extension” at the level of observing, experiencing and feeling two fundamental bodily dimensions, or

96 Ibid., 11 (39):558.

97 Ibid., 7 (23):372.

98 Ibid., 9 (34):491, focuses on the mutual relationship between the body and *zhi*: “When men’s *body and emotions/will/ambitions* are not mutually [congruent], this means death” (人身與志不相行，曰死). Ibid., 7 (24):380 lists “five [differentiated kinds of] physical appearance and emotional [states]” (*wuxingzhi* 五形志). Of course, the occurrence of this significance of *zhi* for life (*the* life force) within these two passages does not necessarily imply the claim that we read it in the sense of an overall authoritative statement within the respective time and place these texts stem from.

99 Ibid., 9 (33):470.

100 Ibid., 5 (17):235.

101 Ibid., p. 233.

102 Ibid., 7 (62):110-16.

bodily sensations. The described states of surplus of the bodily shape for instance clearly indicate that these sensations simultaneously had a spatial dimension: the “extended” shape could be seen from the outside and at the same time felt. Since extension and contraction could be felt by the respective person and could be seen by the observer, both, that what one saw and that what one felt, was identical.

Moreover, this passage exposes “swelling and contracting (in the sense of a tension)” which we have interpreted above as mixed states of extension and contraction. These basic bodily phenomena are not comprehensible without the experience of rhythm and various intensities. It is the concern for balance between the states of repletion and depletion, extension and contraction and their various mixed states that had to be achieved and maintained through finding and keeping in synchrony with the outer cosmos.

### Conclusion

The authors of the *Huangdi neijing* pretended to know exactly how emotions developed, how they were experienced and how humans could get rid of them when they were disturbing too seriously the rhythm of life. Emotions like joy, anger, sadness, and fear, and bodily sensations like hot, cold, fatigue and pain as presented in various *Huangdi neijing* passages are processes or temporary states (*Befindlichkeiten*) which arise entirely within the body; in contrast to earlier models of perceptions they had almost nothing to do with outer atmospheres seizing man abruptly, and they were not thought of as localized within one single place within the human body (as the philosophers had suggested in referring mostly to the heart).

The analysed texts offer maybe the most careful and differentiated descriptions of bodily sensations and emotions within the respective synchronic coherence in the Chinese context: bodily processes such as joy, anger, sadness, and fear, and sensations of feeling cold, hot, pain are presented as *qi*-flow processes. As such, they are rooted in the continuous movements and changes of the various body fluids, in which *shen* 神 (“spirit/vital/life force, the mind”) also “flows”. When focussing on the movement of fluids, on the changes of the *qi*-flow, then emotions and other bodily processes, sensations and states (*Befindlichkeiten*) like “feeling exhausted”, “feeling overworked”, or even one’s disposition (brave or timid) including the processes of thinking, appear as undividable processes. No explicit qualitative separation of emotional processes and bodily sensations is offered. Yet, difference did count in significant ways: the various highly differentiated descriptions of bodily sensations (including localized bodily sensations and whole-bodily sensations), emotions and states of mind based on the “difference of movement”, the “difference of repletion and depletion”, the “difference in the two basic bodily (and emotional) states’ and movements’ dimensions, i.e. “extended and contracted” emotional and sensational experiences. These differences between equals counted significantly for proper diagnosis, finding and applying therapy strategies.

The observed internalization of the emotions into man’s body realm can be seen as an act towards medicalization, in the sense that this knowledge system obviously

pretended to be authoritative in any realm of human beings. This might be interpreted as an act towards “somatization”.<sup>103</sup> The *Huangdi neijing* texts, however, suggest that the power of the internalization of the emotions was crucially based on the specific “channelling of the emotions” via the movements of *qi* along and within the five *yin*-viscera, which in turn indicated decentralized, reciprocal and moving processes. As such, the emotions had nothing to do with individualistic private states within one single “place” (such as a “soul” or a “psyche”) within the body. This specific channelling of emotions simultaneously contained the necessity of moderating the emotional processes (and manifestations), since the harmonic and balanced flow of *qi* was the utmost goal in any attempt to keep healthy or remain healthy. This respective claim for moderation could be interpreted in the sense of “emphasizing suppression” of emotional experience. The *Huangdi neijing* texts explicitly denote the “general freedom” from any worldly desires as the most beneficial “state of being” for health and longevity. Such statements, of course, are well known from earlier and later philosophical treatises.

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103 As, for instance, Kleinman and Kleinman (1985, p. 430) and Kleinman (1986, p. 53) do. Although Kleinman does not refer to that what I have called the “internalization” of the emotions, he uses the term “somatization” as a general characterization of the attitude of Chinese physicians towards emotional “crisis”. Because this term essentially is based on the binary category of soma on the one side and psyche on the other, it should not be used in trans-cultural research.

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