

Husband/Wife imbalance

Part 1 is a presentation of the teachings of J. R. Worsley and Felix Mann,

Part 2 is a discussion of the foundation of these ideas in the classic texts.

Part 1

The metaphor of the Law of Husband/Wife figures in the work of two main authors in Western acupuncture tradition. Felix Mann and J. R. Worsley. Peter Eckman has shown that many of Worsley's terminology and concepts may be taken from Felix Mann who in turn was often presenting the ideas of Soulie de Morant in English. The basic principles of this model from the work of these authors are:

- The left-side pulses should be slightly stronger in a **qualitative** way (i.e. more Yang) than the right-side pulses.
- If the left side pulses are over-strong this is over-domination - ('tyrannical husband').¹
- If the right side pulses are stronger than the left-side this is known in Five Element practice as the Husband-Wife imbalance. This is considered more significant than the tyrannical husband because it is a reversal of normal, and resistant to change.²

In the teachings of J. R. Worsley as described by Hicks, Hicks and Mole the Husband/Wife Imbalance:

1. Husband-Wife imbalance arises when the Organs represented by the left-hand side pulses (husband) are no longer in harmony with the Organs represented by the right-hand side pulses (wife).
2. This may be life threatening and is a sign that the inner healing resources of the patient are compromised.
3. Sometimes patients with a Husband-Wife imbalance have extreme internal conflict about gender or sexuality or patients are resigned, fearful or disturbed at a deep level.
4. When treating the Husband-Wife imbalance, the practitioner aims to re-establish harmony between the left and right side of the pulses by transferring qi over from the right side Elements [Phases] to the left via the Sheng and Ke cycles.
5. After the Husband-Wife imbalance has been broken a patient will experience fundamental changes in health and well-being.

Hicks, Hicks & Mole (249)

According to J. R. Worsley the treatment for this is based upon the principles of transfer of energy:

¹ I thought I had read this term in Felix Mann, however, on review and reflection I think I may have come up with this after reading the Yi Jing passage mentioned in next footnote.

² An example of this can be seen in the images of the Yi Jing. The topmost line of the most yang hexagram, The Creative is: "arrogant dragon has cause to repent". The topmost line of the most yin hexagram, The Receptive is: "dragons fight in the meadow their blood is black and yellow".

- Bl.67 Tonification of Bladder (via the Sheng cycle)
 - Ki.7 Tonification of Kidney (via the Sheng cycle)
 - Ki.3* Secondary tonification of Kidney (via the Ke cycle)
 - Li.4* Secondary tonification of Liver (via the Ke cycle)
 - SI.4 Yuan-Source point of SI
 - He.7 Yuan-Source point of He
- } Re-establish control of Heart (Emperor)

***Note:** it is a commonly accepted principle in the energetic transfer styles of acupuncture that only Yin organs are directly linked across the Ke cycle. There is an alternative teaching that the Yin and Yang organs relate across the Ke cycle.

If the Husband Wife imbalance still resists change the “Four needle technique” can be used.

Part 2 Origins of the 'Law of Husband/Wife' in the classics

Introduction'

While it is true to say that the received understanding of the Law of Husband/Wife and its treatment is not found fully described in the classics, at least not in any one place, and not in its entirety; however, basic principles and many of its components are found in the classics. The modern idea can be described as putting 'two and two together'. By the 'received' understanding I include what was in the teachings of J. R. Worsley and Felix Mann. The main differences between these two authors is that Mann implies that an imbalance could go either way, and each pair of organs as having an H/W relationship. Although Worsley said that the Tyrannical Husband is not as particularly significant, my own experience is that I have had patients where it did seem significant. I have also seen in related to other constitutional systems as most congruent with the presentation of male pattern high blood pressure and such like.

The Law of Husband Wife is closely bound up with the pulses. I think it is important to understand in general that many idea about the pulse were established in the Nei Jing, but there is a big conceptual step that took place in applying these ideas to the Cun Kou (radial pulse) specifically in the Nan Jing and Mai Jing.

The received teachings of Mann and Worsley can be summarized as:

- The Left-Side pulses are Yang (Husband) in relation to Right-Side pulses that are Yin (Wife)³.
- Organs represented on the left side pulses are said to have a relationship with organs represented in the equivalent position on the right side pulses.
- This relation can be seen as typified by the relation of Heart and Lungs (the complementary officials),
 - Left Side (Heart) rules Blood, Right Side (Lung) rules Qi.⁴
 - Heart is Emperor, Lung is Prime Minister (Twelve Officials)
- Other functional relations are also part of this model, such as Bladder and San Jiao.
- This model is not separate from other relations, several of these relations overlap with Ke cycle relations: for example the dominance of Liver over Spleen can be understood by the ke cycle relation but the Husband/Wife relation explains the common character of this relation, the endangerment of Liver by Spleen.

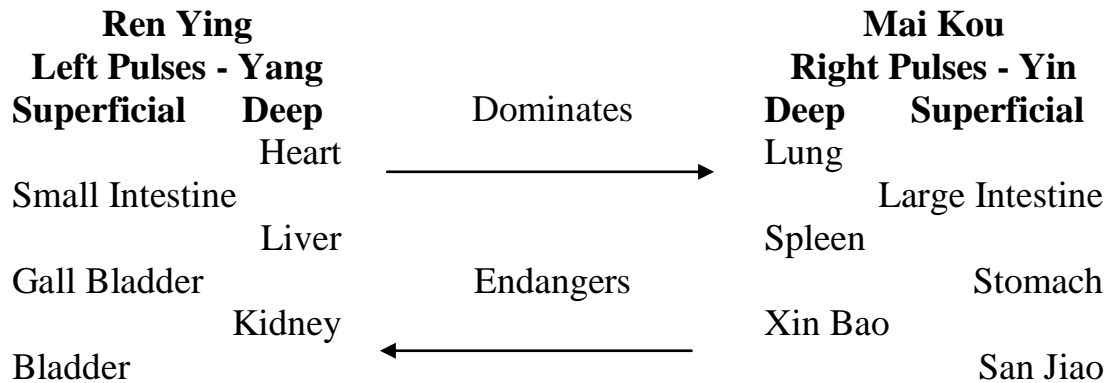
Think of traditional roles as metaphor not to be taken as literally referring to gender roles. Hierarchically the Yang (Heavenly) is considered to dominate the Yin (Earthly).⁵

³ This may seem counter to the common perception of right side (dominant) as yang, and left side as yin. Amongst the Officials the Heart and Liver are characterized as Male Officials (Mu Cang), the Spleen and Lung as a female officials (Bin Cang). This is not to be confused with the usual distinction of organs into Yin and Yang pairs.

⁴ This again seems opposite to what one might expect as Qi is generally considered to be Yang and Blood to be Yin.

⁵ There is also an idea that the left side pulses are stronger in men (who have more Blood) and right side pulses are stronger in women (who have more Qi).

Fig.1 Husband Wife Relations of the pulses



I find it interesting that even though these relations are not mentioned in the Nei Jing there are ideas that are compatible. For example, Bl.53 is said to be the Lower He-Sea point of San Jiao, which is compatible with the Husband/Wife relation of these officials which suggests that the Bladder dominates the San Jiao.⁶

I will present the material in what is assumed to be chronological order (Nei Jing (-100 to +100), Nan Jing (circa 100) Mai Jing (circa 200).

Nei Jing: Cun Kou and Ren Ying

The idea of relations of left and right pulses are mainly found in the Mai Jing, but certain basic principles are established in the Nei Jing, then became transferred to the radial pulse alone.

The Nei Jing presents the basic idea of a relation between the Cun Kou (radial) and Ren Ying (carotid) pulses. Ling Shu 48 serves to introduce this.

LS Ch.48 Para.4 Practitioner Cun Kou and Ren Ying

SC Ch.59A Part 1 (cont – one line quoted from para.1 above)

雷公曰：	Lei Gong said:
願聞爲工。	Wish hear act as practitioner (skilled worker).
黃帝曰：	Huang Di said:
寸口主中，	Cun Kou rule interior,
人迎主外，	Ren Ying rule exterior,
兩者相應，	both - mutually correspond,
俱往俱來，	all go in direction all arrive (together),
若引繩大小齊等。	as if guide rope [繩] great small (more or less) simultaneously equal, ⁷
春夏人迎微大，	Spring and Summer Ren Ying inclined (slightly) larger,

⁶ Elsewhere I discuss the differences in function of these entities in Twelve Officials theory compared to Zang-Fu theory

⁷ Also see Systematic Classic Book 4 Chapter 1

秋冬寸口微大， Autumn and Winter Cun Kou inclined (slightly) larger,
 如是者， similar correct -
 名曰平人。 name called balanced (level) person.

I have created an index of classics including paragraph headings. I am also systematizing this information. The full elaboration of this system of comparing Cun Kou and Ren Ying is found in the following texts (paragraph headings are mine):

III	Cun Kou (Qi Kou, Mai Kou) and Ren Ying	Nei Jing	SC
	Practitioner – Cun Kou and Ren Ying	LS 48.4	59A.1
	Cun Kou and Ren Ying Pulse	LS 74.12	-
	Cun Kou and Ren Ying pulses	SW 9.8	-
	Cun Kou and Ren Ying pulses	LS 48.5-6	do
	Mai Kou and Ren Ying pulse	LS.49.5	59A.2
	Ren Ying and Mai Kou	LS 9.3-7	-

Key: SW= Su Wen; LS= Ling Shu; SC= Systematic Classic (i.e. Jia Yi Jing)

The main idea expressed in these passages is that the relative strengths of the Cun Kou and Ren Ying pulses reflect the balance of Yin and Yang (this is elaborated into the six stages of yin/yang). This is also consistent with the statement that Cun Kou rules the interior and Ren Ying the exterior, and the seasonal relations given in LS 48. Ling Shu 18 makes this explicit:

氣口候陰， Qi Kou indicates yin,
 人迎候陽也。 Ren Ying indicates yang {also}.

One thing I note that comparing with other information on Six Regulators (Unions or Channels) is that the order of the Yin corresponds to the most common order as per Su Wen Ch.31 or the Shang Han Lun, however the Yang are not in their usual order (See SW 6,7, 79, 75, 31).⁸

Stronger	Ren Ying			Cun Kou		
One times	Shao Yang	1 st Yang	Pivot	Jue Yin	1 st Yin	Close
Two times	Tai Yang	3 rd Yang	Open	Shao Yin	2 nd Yin	Pivot
Three Times	Yang Ming	2 nd Yang	Close	Tai Yin	3 rd Yin	Open

At this point jumping forward a bit I would note that the Mai Jing reinterprets these Cun Kou (Qi Kou) as the right hand radial pulse and the Ren Ying as the left hand radial pulse.

左爲人迎， Left act as Ren Ying,
 右爲氣口。 right act as Qi Kou.

⁸ This would appear to be an actual inconsistency in models

Nan Jing

The Nan Jing's first 22 difficulties are about the pulse, and again certain principles related to the H/W are found here. However, with an important difference that the yang pulse is said to be above the bar and the yin below the bar. We find here the basic idea that male and female pulse norms are different and so each have a mirrored pathology: 'male obtain female pulse, female obtain male pulse'.

NJ Difficulty 19

-Compare (contrast) with Mai Jing V.1 Ch.7

十九難

論男女脈之順逆

十九難曰：

經言：

「脈有逆順，

男女有恒。」

而反者，

何謂也？

然：男子生於寅，

寅爲木，

陽也。

女子生於申，

申爲金，

陰也。

故男脈在關上，

女脈在關下，

是以男子尺脈恒弱，

女子尺脈恒盛，

是其常也。

反者，

男得女脈，

女得男脈也。

其爲病何如？

然：男得女脈爲不足，

病在內，

左得之病在左，

右得之病在右，

Nineteenth Difficulty

Dissertation Men (and) Women their Pulse Normal (and) Abnormal

Nineteenth Difficulty says:

Classic says:

“pulse possess normal (and) abnormal (contrary),
male (and) female possess constant.”

And contrary –

what is meaning {also}?

Answer: male created with regard 3rd Earthly Branch[寅],

3rd EB) act as Wood,

Yang {also}.

Female created with regard 9th Earthly Branch [申],

9th EB act as Metal,

Yin {also}.

Therefore male pulse located Guan (bar) above,

female pulse exist Guan (bar) below,

correct therefore male's Chi pulse constantly weak,

female's Chi pulse constantly flourishing,

correct this normal {also}.

Contrary –

male obtain woman pulse,

female obtain man's pulse {also}.

(Q) This act as disease how about?

Answer: male obtain female's pulse act as not sufficient,

disease exist interior,

left obtain it disease exist left,

right obtain it disease exist right,

隨脈言之也。
女得男脈爲太過，
病在四肢，
左得之病在左，
右得之病在右，
隨脈言之。
此之謂也。

complying pulse call it {also}.
Female obtain male's pulse act as greatly exceed,
disease exist four limbs,
left obtain it disease exist left,
right obtain it disease exist right,
complying pulse call it {also}.
This their meaning {also}.

Paraphrase and [Comments]: Men and woman have different normal pulses, and they have contrary pulses. Man is engendered with regard the third Heavenly Stem which represents Wood and Women with regard the ninth Heavenly Stem which represents Metal. (The correspondence here is astrological, Flaws says it is based upon numerological ideas about development). Therefore the man's pulse in the Chi position is constantly weak (suggesting stronger above the Bar – see Chapter 1 where above the Bar is Yang). The woman pulse in the Chi position is constantly flourishing (see Chapter 1 where below the Bar is Yin. The Mai Jing gives a different understanding). The contrary is when a man has a woman's pulse and a woman has a man's pulse.

These indicate disease in the following ways, if a man has a woman's pulse [flourishing below the Bar, presumably weaker above the Bar – relatively speaking] it indicates deficiency and interior conditions. If the pulse is found on the left it indicates disease is on the left, if on the right the disease is on the right. If a woman has a man's pulse (weaker below the Bar, presumably strong above the bar, – relatively speaking) it indicates disease of the four limbs, if this pulse is found on the left it indicates disease is on the left, if it is found on the right it indicates the disease is on the right.

Commentary; In the Mai Jing V.1 Ch.5 the difference between men and women's pulses is said to be left and right, but the further ideas expressed here are not included. Further significance of the left and right pulses is described in V.1 Ch.7. A combination seems to be the basis of the received concept of husband and wife.

Mai Jing

V.1 Ch.5 includes the basic idea of male/female relations. This represents a change from the Nan Jing's model of above and below the Guan (bar).

男左大爲順，
女右大爲順。

Male left big (greater) act as normal (flow),
female right big (greater) act as normal (flow).

Mai Jing Volume I Chapter 7 gives the male/female relations of the officials as per the received understanding of Law of Husband/Wife. As with the Nan Jing the norm of male and female is said to differ.

MJ V.1 Ch.7

-Compare with Nan Jing Difficulty 19

兩手六脈所主五臟六腑陰陽逆
順第七

**Both Hands Six Pulses Place Rule Five Zang Six Fu Yin
Yang Contra-Flow And Flow #7**

《脈法贊》云：

肝心出左，
脾肺出右，
腎與命門，
俱出尺部，
魂魄穀神，
皆見寸口。
左主司官，
右主司府。

左大順男，
右大順女。
關前一分，
人命之主。
左爲人迎，
右爲氣口。
神門訣斷，
兩在關後。
人無二脈，
病死不愈。
諸經損減，
各隨其部。
察按陰陽，
誰與先後

（《千金》云：

三陰三陽，
誰先誰後）。
陰病治官，
陽病治府。
奇邪所舍，
如何捕取？
審而知者，
針入病愈。

心部在左手關前寸口是也，
即手少陰經也，
與手太陽爲表裡，
以小腸合爲府。

Mai Fa Zan ‘Pulse Law and Method Eulogy’ says:

Liver (and) Heart assume office left,
Spleen (and) Lung assume office right,
Kidney together with Ming Men,
all assume office Chi section,
Hun (and) Po grain (Gu Qi) (and) Shen,
all apprehended (at) Cun Kou.
Left rule charge (department) officer (government official),
Right rule charge (department) mansion (government
department).

Left greater normal male,
right greater normal female.

Guan forward one division,
persons destiny its ruler.

Left act as Ren Ying,
right act as Qi Kou.

Shen Men (Spirit Gateway) part break,
both sides exist Guan behind (proximal).

Person without two (these) pulses,
disease death not recover.

All Jing-conduits decrease deduct,
each comply the section.

Examine press Yin (and) Yang,
who bound up with before (and) after,

‘Thousand Gold’ says:

three yin three yang,
which before which after.

Yin disease treat officials,
Yang disease treat mansions.

Unusual evil locate residence,
like seize choose?

examine and know,
needle insert disease recover.

Heart section located left hand Guan forward cun kou correct
{also},
assume hand shao yin jing-conduit {also},
together with hand Tai Yang act as exterior (and) interior,
accordingly small intestine combine act as fu.

合於上焦，
名曰神庭，
在龜（一作鳩）尾下五分。
肝部在左手關上是也，
足厥陰經也，
與足少陽爲表裡，
以膽合爲府，
合於中焦，
名曰胞門（一作少陽），
在大倉左右三寸。
腎部在左手關後尺中是也，
足少陰經也，
與足太陽爲表裡，
以膀胱合爲府，
合於下焦，
在關元左。

肺部在右手關前寸口是也，
手太陰經也，
與手陽明爲表裡，
以大腸合爲府，
合於上焦，
名呼吸之府，
在雲門。

脾部在右手關上是也，
足太陰經也，
與足陽明爲表裡，
以胃合爲府，
合於中焦脾胃之間，
名曰章門，
在季脅前一寸半。

腎部在右手關後尺中是也，
足少陰經也，
與足太陽爲表裡，
以膀胱合爲府，
合於下焦，
在關元右，

Combine with regard upper jiao,
name called Spirit Courtyard,
located turtle (one write turtledove) tail below five fen.
Liver section exist right hand Guan above correct {also},
foot jue yin jing-conduit {also},
together with foot shao yang act as exterior (and) interior,
accordingly gall-bladder combine act as fu-mansion,
union with regard middle jiao,
name called Bao Men (one writes Shao Yang),
exist Great Granary (CV.12) left right three cun.
Kidney section exist left hand Guan behind Chi within correct
{also},
foot Shao Yin Jing-conduit {also},
together with foot Tai Yang act as exterior (and) interior,
accordingly Pang Guang combine act as Fu,
union with regard Lower Jiao,
exist Guan Yuan left.

Lung section exist right hand Guan before cun kou correct
{also},
hand Tai yin jing-conduit {also},
together with Yang ming act as exterior (and) interior,
accordingly large intestine combine act as fu-mansion,
union with regard upper jiao,
called inhale (and) exhale its fu-mansion,
exist Cloud Gate.

Spleen-pancreas section exist right hand guan above correct
{also},
foot tai yin jing-conduit {also},
together with yang ming act as exterior (and) interior)
{also},
accordingly stomach combine act as fu,
combine with regard middle jiao spleen stomach its space
between,
name called Chapter Gate (Li.13),
exist last rib forward cun half.

Kidney section exist right hand Guan behind (proximal) Chi
within correct {also},
foot Shao Yin Jing {also},
bound up with foot Tai yang act as exterior locale,
accordingly Pang Guang combine act as Fu,
combine with regard Lower Jiao,

左屬腎，	exist Guan Yuan right,
右爲子戶，	left category Kidney,
名曰三焦。	right act as infants door,
	name called San Jiao.

In a footnote from a translation of the Mai Jing the author describes the relations implied but does not explicitly state the idea of Husband/Wife.

Concerning this reference to offices and mansions, there are different interpretations. The translator believes that the most plausible one has to do with the fact that, in Chinese culture, the left is believed to be superior to or more respectable than the right. Therefore, the viscera that the left pulse reflects are offices, while the viscera reflected by the right pulse are mansions. This point is made clear by the following comparison: Heart (fire)-lung (metal); liver (wood) -spleen (earth); kidney (water)- life gate (ministerial fire). The pairs are arranged in order of the cun-guan-chi, and the first viscus of each pair corresponds with a position on the left hand, while the second is relegated to the right hand.

The Pulse Classic A Translation of the Mai Jing by Wang Shu-he translated by Yang Zhouzhong. Blue Poppy Press Boulder, 1997

Further Discussion:

One crucial idea in the Law of Husband/Wife would seem to be the hierarchical relation of Yin and Yang rather than their simply complementary opposite nature the contrast of ‘male and female’ is used here which at least would indirectly suggest this, however the most explicit terms are the ‘officer’ and the ‘mansion’. One could even construe this as ‘secretary’ and ‘secretariat’ The dynamics of this hierarchical relation is best illustrated by the Yi Jing text given below. Adding to the above the general context of East Asian thought I find the I Jing particularly significant.

Hexagram One The Creative

上九：	Topmost nine:
亢龍有悔。	arrogant Dragon possess regret (repent).
上九曰：「亢龍有悔」，	Topmost nine says: “arrogant dragon possess regret”，
何謂也？	what is meant by this?
子曰：	Master says:
「貴而无位，	“noble and/yet not rank,
高而无民，	elevated and/yet not class,
賢人在下位而无輔，	virtuous people exist lower rank and not assist,
是以動而有悔也。」	correct accordingly moving and possess regret {also}.

Topmost nine says: 'The dragon exceeds the proper limits – there will be occasion for repentance?' The Master said: 'The position is noble, but it is not that of office; (its occupant) dwells on high, but he has no people (to rule); and the men of talent and virtue in the positions below will give him no aid - should he move in such a case, there will be occasion for repentance.'

<http://ccontext.org/book-of-changes/qian>

Hexagram Two The Receptive

上六：

龍戰于野，
其血玄黃。
陰疑於陽必「戰」，
爲其嫌於无陽也，
故稱「龍」焉。
猶未離其類也，
故稱「血」焉。
夫「玄黃」者、
天地之雜也。
天玄而地黃。

Topmost six:

dragons fight with regard wild regions,
their blood is black (and) yellow.
Yin deceitful with regard Yang necessarily 'contention',
act as the dislike (suspicion) with regard not yang {also},
therefore fitting (it says) 'dragon' herein.
just as not depart their category {also},
therefore fitting (it says) 'blood' herein.
Now 'black & yellow' –
Heaven (and) earth its mingling {also}.
Heaven black and Earth yellow.

(The subject of) the yin (or divided line) thinking himself equal to the (subject of the) yang, or undivided line, there is sure to be 'a contest.' As if indignant at there being no acknowledgment of the (superiority of the subject of the) yang line, (the text) uses the term 'dragons.' But still the (subject of neither line) can leave his class, and hence we have 'the blood' mentioned. The mention of that as being (both) 'azure and yellow' indicates the mixture of heaven and earth. Heaven's (colour) is azure and earth's is yellow.

<http://ccontext.org/book-of-changes/kun>

Although it would seem like the least directly connected the discussion of 'courage and timidity' in the classics would seem to have some bearing on the mix of ideas associated with the Husband/Wife. Su Wen 21 says:

黃帝問曰：

人之居處動靜勇怯，
脈亦爲之變乎？

The Yellow Emperor asked:

Person he resides state (of) movement or quiet, courage or
timidity,⁹
pulse also act as its change (alteration)?

Ling Shu 50 enlarges on the meaning of courage and timidity:

⁹ The two sides of the coin of a Five Element diagnosis

LS Ch.50 Para 4 – Courage and Timidity:

Courageous Person

黃帝曰：
願聞勇怯之所由然。

少俞曰：
勇士者，
目深以固，
長冲直揚，
三焦理橫，
其心端直，
其肝大以堅，
其膽滿以傍，
怒則氣盛而胸張，
肝舉而膽橫，
眦裂而目揚，
毛起而面蒼，
此勇士之由然者也。

Huang Di said:

Wish hear courage (and) timidity their place caused
nevertheless.

Shao Shu said:

courageous person –
eye penetrating accordingly firm (resolute),
long rush straightforward raise,
San Jiao natural laws transverse (horizontal, unrestrained),
their Heart upright straightforward,
their Liver big accordingly firm,
their Gall-Bladder full accordingly draw near,
anger normal Qi flourishing and chest open (thrust forward),
Liver raised and Gall-Bladder transverse (unrestrained),
eye (corner) split and eye raised,
hair rise and face green,
this courageous person he cause nevertheless – {also}.

In next passage it says 其焦理, their Jiao (anxiety?)

LS Ch.50 Para 5 – Timid Person

黃帝曰：
願聞怯士之所由然。

少俞曰：
怯士者，
目大而不減，
陰陽相失，
其焦理，
縱鬲筋短而小，
肝系緩，
其膽不滿而縱，
腸胃挺，
脅下空，
雖方大怒，
氣不能滿其胸，
肝肺雖舉，
氣衰復下，
故不能久怒，
此怯士之所由然者也。

Huang Di said:

Wish hear timid person their place caused (raison d'être?)
nevertheless.

Shao Shu says:

timid person –
eye large and not reduced,
Yin Yang mutually lose,
their Jiao natural laws,
vertical breastbone xyphoid lacking and small,
Liver system slack,
their Gall-Bladder not full and vertical,
Intestine Stomach stiff,
ribs below (hypochondrium) hollow,
although square (just) large anger,
Qi not able fill their chest,
Liver Lung although raised,
Qi decline return below,
therefore not able for a long time (sustain) angry,
this timid person their place caused nevertheless – {also}.

The primary relation of the above would appear to be to the Wood element in its excess or deficient state however, something less specific such as an apparent constitutional state seems intended. However, the heart is also mentioned in regard to courage there is thus some emphasis on the organs represented on the left side that are described as 'male' in some passages of the Su Wen.

Conclusion

The basics of Husband/Wife relations in the energetic physiology and the pulses are established in the Nei Jing, Nan Jing and Mai Jing. What is not made explicit in the medical classics is the particular construct of an HW imbalance per se, and the modern psychological ideas (pertaining to gender identity and responsibility) that are associated with this, and the specific treatment taught by J. R. Worsley. The biggest contrast is probably the idea in the Nei Jing and Nan Jing and Mai Jing that male and female norms are different, and departures from these norms are described in mirrored form rather than one form applicable to male and female. This is not necessarily incompatible with the received teachings. The idea of the 'Tyrannical Husband' and the specific 'Husband/Wife imbalance' are also not incompatible. Worsley said that the former was not a special case because it could be resolved in the normal course of treatment. The Husband/Wife was of particular significance because of its resistance to treatment. The idea of the two possible extremes as described by Felix Mann, and the specific major block of Husband/Wife described by Worsley is implied. In terms of treatment the application of the principles of the Nan Jing to a Five Element based treatment with the intent of the 'creation of harmony' would result in a treatment similar in principle to received Five Element, with the use of tonification and sedation principles (and points), but not necessarily exactly the same. Nan Jing Difficulty 75 would even suggest a treatment similar in principle to the 'four needle technique'. It seems to me that the modern teachings of Husband/Wife is a compatible with the ideas presented in the classics and general understanding of Yin and Yang and with treatment principles of the Nan Jing.

Final Thoughts

The gender related metaphor of husband and wife would seem somewhat problematic in light of modern understanding of gender. I do believe that we should take the terms 'husband' and 'wife' without the assumption of respective male and female. Perhaps the metaphor presented in the Mai Jing of the official and the mansion or secretariat could be the basis of an alternative metaphor. In clinical practice this model does seem to have implications in relation to gender identity, but I think we should think of this with a chicken egg question: is the imbalance causing the problems or a result of societal and cultural norms causing stress in individuals who do not fit these norms. It is also the experience of this practitioner that what I have called the 'Tyrannical Husband' can be a significant clinical finding.

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