

## *Foreword*

The Mai Jing was written about 80 years after the Shang Han Lun was written. Perhaps because of this, the sentence structure and expressions used in the introduction of the two textbooks are very similar. The introduction of the Mai Jing explains that sadly, the knowledge of the Sheng Ren [聖人/ Saint] (like Zhang Zhong Jing) was not passed onto the next generation, and even though there are secret knowledges hidden in the contents of the Su Wen and the Ling Shu, the doctors in that generation didn't try to learn from such Classical texts. Due to this, many passages recorded in the Mai Jing were obtained from the Su Wen, Ling Shu, Nan Jing, Shang Han Lun, and Jin Gui Yao Lue. Most Chinese Classical texts were compiled and edited about 1000 years ago and passed on through generations. It is said that only the Ling Shu was edited and given back to China by the King of Korea. The Classics we can access today are only partially true to the original texts. If you read all the Classics starting from the Su Wen followed by other texts written after it, then read the Mai Jing, you will know what has been correctly passed onto the next generation and what hasn't. This will also allow you to study broadly.

One of the main characteristics of the contents of the Mai Jing is that the text explains each pulse quality. Deeply understanding these explanations will stop us from thinking of, and describing the pulse simply as deficient and excess. For example, the text states; "the deficient pulse is slow, big, and soft. Upon pressure, the pulsations can be felt directly below the fingertips, this means that the pulse does not have strength and it is not big enough to spread over the fingers. The beat is vacant, which means that it feels empty." This suggests that the deficient pulse isn't just weak. On the other hand, the text describes the excess pulse quality as "... feels big and long, lines up

from shallow to deep, and is slightly strong. When pressure is applied, it gathers to the centre of the fingertips and it feels as if it is knotted.” This illustrates that the excess pulse isn’t just forceful. It points out that the excess pulse is slightly strong, and another important key of this pulse quality is “when pressure is applied, it feels as if it is knotted.” So studying and researching these pulse qualities explained in the Mai Jing and confirming them in clinical practice will make this book very valuable. Another point that I would like to mention is that some chapters in the Mai Jing explain the relationship between symptoms and pulse qualities that can appear on each inch, bar, and cubit position. Remembering and mastering these theories will allow you to understand the condition of patients very clearly. However, if the needling method (treatment skill) is poor, of course the treatment outcome will be poor. So I wish for those who start reading this book to always remember that practical skills must also be polished at the same time.

**Masakazu Ikeda**

The first day of spring, 2019

## *Translator's Foreword*

“The pathology of pulse is profound but the diagnosis is puzzling.” The textbook that starts with this simple but relevant preface is the Mai Jing [Pulse Classics]. It is one of the major Classical textbooks in Traditional Medicine. For over one thousand years, it has been read by people who engaged in the medicine with ardor and were part of the huge unceasing flow of the river of Traditional Medicine, which has been in motion since ancient times.

The editor of the Mai Jing is Wang Shu-He. He was a well-known medical practitioner and the director of the medical department in the Jin Dynasty of China [A.D.265 - 420]. He researched the physiology of medicine and pulse diagnosis very intensely from every textbook he could read, represented by the Su Wen, Ling Shu, Nan Jing, Shang Han Lun and Jin Gui Yao Lue, and advanced his knowledge and techniques by giving practical evidence of theories. The Mai Jing is the textbook in which he concentrated his vast range of knowledge.

The Mai Jing is composed of many citations from other Classical textbooks as above, and there are also citations from unknown textbooks that might have been lost before this present time. From the name of this textbook, the Mai Jing [Pulse Classics], people who have not yet read the text may think that it only explains the pulse, but I believe that they will realise that they are wrong after reading it. This textbook explains not only the pulse, but various things related to the pulse, including the pathology of each of the Zang and Fu organs and meridians, diagnosis and treatment of various diseases including obstetrics, gynaecology, and paediatrics. Thus, this textbook is like a box of jewels, full of Traditional Medicine knowledge.

In the beginning, it may be difficult to understand what this textbook really wishes to convey, but by reading it over and over, and as the knowledge and skill of the practitioner improves, it will be revealed as if mist clears. Thus it is important not to give up following the world of the Mai Jing and Traditional Medicine, but to keep going even at a very slow speed and even if the road is not flat. Because you are a part of the river's flow, which has been in motion since ancient times. It will push you forward gently unless you intentionally stop yourself. So I hope that this textbook is helpful for your practice and your steps forward in the flow of the current.

As a final word, I must thank the editing team of this textbook, especially Takashi Furue and Momoko Hashimoto. They gave me a chance to do this work and gave me much advice while working on it. I would also like to thank my wife, Ayako, and our little kids, Nanayo and Koutaro. Ayako, who is a very experienced practitioner, always encourages me in tough times, and gives me advice from a different viewpoint. Our little kids always give me big smiles which make me feel relieved. In the end, I must thank Masakazu Ikeda sensei. He is my Master, not only as a practitioner, but also as a person. Without him, I would not be who I am as a practitioner and as a person.

**Yasunori Noine**

Spring, 2018

# Introduction

## *Translation*

Pulse diagnosis is very sophisticated in both its theory and practical application; thus, the shape of the pulse can be very difficult to assess<sup>1</sup>. For example, the shape of a wiry pulse and a tight pulse feel very similar to the touch. The shape of a floating pulse and a hollow pulse are also very similar. Even for practitioners with a good understanding of theory, it can be difficult to assess the pulse through the fingers' sensations. Misjudging a deep pulse for a hidden pulse can lead to a treatment that is the complete opposite to what the patient needs<sup>2</sup>. Misjudging a moderate pulse for a slow pulse can lead to the application of a treatment that aggravates the patient's condition and may even cause them to fall into a critical condition. There are also situations where two patients present with the exact same pulse quality but complain of different symptoms<sup>3</sup>.

Medicine can influence a person's life. It can save a life but it can also kill. The ancient, famous doctors medicine is mysterious<sup>4</sup> and great. Zhang Zhong Jing [張仲景] spent countless hours on research in order to disclose the theory of pathology and symptoms. In this process, a few questions arose and he began to treat patients using traditional methods. He cautioned against the use of herbal formulas like Cheng Qi Tang, and suggested that vomiting disease and spasmodic hiccup disease are related to the lower heater.

Almost a century has passed since the Shang Han Za Bin Lun [傷寒雜病論] was written, and it is rare to find people who truly understand its theories; the secret techniques of the Su Wen and the Ling Shu have since been forgotten<sup>5</sup>. Modern

doctors cannot even read the original texts of the Classics, and they tend to judge each other. Some doctors even go so far as to say that they are superior to other doctors. However they make mild diseases worse and may even kill patients. This is why I have summarised the Classical textbook which was written in the generation of Qi Bo [岐伯] and Hua Tuo [華佗], and compiled ten sets of textbooks. I have classified all diseases, summarised pulses and symptoms, and described the patterns of voice tone and colour. I have also summarised theories left by all the famous ancient doctors<sup>6</sup> including Wang [王], Ryan [阮], Chuan [傳], Dai [戴], Wu [吳], Ge [葛], Lu [呂], and Zang [張]. No one will die in their youth if doctors focus and study very hard to reveal the truth and follow the ancient knowledge<sup>7</sup>.

晋太医令王叔和撰

Written by Wang Shu He, the director of the medical department (court physician) in the Jin Kingdom.

### *Commentary*

<sup>1</sup> The theory and the practical application of pulse diagnosis is very sophisticated, thus the shape of the pulse can be very difficult to assess.

It is said that pulse diagnosis is very difficult to master, but I (Masakazu Ikeda) think if the practical technique to learn pulse diagnosis is correct, it is not so difficult. However, it is a fact that the sensations of a wiry pulse and a tight pulse are similar, so in order to distinguish these similar pulse qualities certain training is required. Even if you understand the theory, it is the actual practice that is challenging to master.

<sup>2</sup> Misjudging a deep pulse for a hidden pulse can lead to a treatment that is the complete opposite to what the patient needs.

Normally, a deep pulse appears when there is a vast amount of water (fluids), Blood stagnation, or an internal disease in the body, whereas a hidden pulse is classified as a deep pulse presenting when there is Qi and Blood deficiency. So the treatment methods for these two pulses are different. If these pulse qualities are misjudged, the treatment will be counter effective for the illness.

A moderate pulse appears when Qi and Blood circulation is smooth or when there is a problem of the Spleen and Stomach, whereas a slow pulse appears when the

body becomes cold due to the lack of Qi and Blood. It is said that if these pulses are misjudged, one can make the illness fall into a critical condition.

<sup>3</sup> There are also situations where two patients present with the exact same pulse quality but complain of different symptoms.

For example, a wiry pulse can appear when there is a vast amount of water stagnation, fatigue, or heat in the body.

<sup>4</sup> The ancient famous doctors medicine is mysterious...

The introduction to the Shang Han Lun states that Zhang Zhong Jing was very impressed when Bian Que [扁鵲], the author of the Nan Jing [難經], revived the Prince of Guo [虢] and diagnosed the King of Qi [齊] by only observing their facial complexions. This is the reason why it is mysterious and great. But Zhang Zhong Jing was unsatisfied by these mysterious methods of the Classics, so he spent countless hours researching in order to compile the Shang Han Za Bin Lun, and he cautioned against the use of Cheng Qi Tang. He also stated that vomiting disease and spasmodic hiccup disease are related to the lower heater. Cheng Qi Tang refers to Da Cheng Qi Tang [大承氣湯/ Major Ordering the Qi Decoction] which should not be used if there are external symptoms, such as the sensations of chills. This formula should be prescribed once the condition has completely turned into heat of the Yang Ming Fu organ. Misjudging this can cause the patient to fall into a critical condition, but it is actually quite easy to make this mistake in clinical practice. There are many people who tend to use purgative herbs when there is heat, so Chapter 8 in the Shang Han Lun cautions practitioners against such practice.

Vomiting or spasmodic hiccup disease tends to occur when the communication of Yin and Yang between the upper and the lower heaters is sluggish. In this case there is cold in the middle and lower heaters, and heat in the upper heater. When there is cold in the middle and lower heaters, one will tend to experience diarrhoea, and if there is heat in the upper heater, one will tend to vomit. This pathology is the same as Jue Yin syndrome [厥陰病], which means that if a patient has symptoms of vomiting or spasmodic hiccup disease, practitioners must consider the lower heater and apply treatment. This topic is also explored in the Jin Gui Yao Lue Chapter 17.

<sup>5</sup> Almost a century has passed since the Shang Han Za Bin Lun [傷寒雜病論] was written, and it is rare to find people who truly understand its theories; the secret techniques of the Su Wen and the Ling Shu have since been forgotten.

According to medical history texts, the Shang Han Za Bin Lun (Shang Han Lun and Jin Gui Yao Lue) was written by Zhang Zhong Jing around 200AD, and the Mai Jing (Pulse Classics) was written by Wang Shu He about 80 years after. Zhang Zhong Jing appears in the story of the Kingdom of Shu [蜀], which is one story in The Annals of the Three Kingdoms [三國志], and the Kingdom of Jin [晉] was built right after the period of The Annals of the Three Kingdoms. This suggests that this period may have been the time when Wang Shu He was born and Zhang Zhong Jing was still alive. However, by the generation of Wang Shu He, the will of Zhang Zhong Jing had almost disappeared, and no one was capable of reading Classical texts like the Su Wen, the Ling Shu, and the Nan Jing, which was used and quoted in the Shang Han Za Bin Lun.

There are many doctors who are prejudice and arrogant. These doctors cannot apply proper treatments, so they may make what should be a mild illness worse. From this, Wang Shu He decided to summarise the theories that were established in the generation between Qi Bo and Hua Tuo, to make ten sets of textbooks.

These are the reasons why Wang Shu He decided to write the Pulse Classics, which uses the same writing methodology as the introduction of the Shang Han Lun.

<sup>6</sup> I have also summarised theories left by all the famous ancient doctors...

It is thought that Wang [王], Ruan [阮], Chuan [傳], Dai [戴], Wu [吳], Ge [葛], Lu [呂], and Zang [張], are all names of famous ancient doctors. For instance, [吳] Wu, refers to the name of Wu Jin [吳晉], who is a figure in the story of the Three Kingdoms period and he is said to have learnt medicine from Hua Tuo. Lu [呂], refers to the name Lu Guang [呂廣], who was a court physician in the Wu [吳] Kingdom. He also wrote a textbook that explains the Nan Jing. Wang [王], refers to the name Wang Sui [王遂], Ruan [阮], refers to the name Ruan Bing [阮炳], Ge [葛], refers to the name Ge Xuan [葛玄], and [張] Zang, refers to the name Zang Miao [張苗]. However, there are no established theories yet so we should wait for more evidence from medical history researchers.



<sup>7</sup> No one will die in their youth if doctors focus and study very hard to reveal the truth and follow the ancient knowledge.

This sentence is also related to the introduction of the Shang Han Lun, which states; “my heart hurts because there are no methods in medicine which prevent people in youth from dying. So I have researched the ancient knowledge in order to write the Shang Han Za Bin Lun.” This is why Wang Shu He explains that if you follow the Pulse Classics people will not die in their youth. This sounds very confident but it is also reassuring, as Wang Shu He was the director of the Emperor’s court physician. He was at the highest position as a doctor in the Kingdom of Jin [晋].