

LR-13 Character Study & Connection with PC-1

LR-13 章門 Zhang Men – Character Study

Since some of you asked me yesterday what would be my translation of the point LR-13 - currently translated in the Worsley tradition as "Chapter Gate." Here is the analysis of the characters and my take on the translation:

- 章 zhang1
 - **Modern definition:** decorative pattern, colored silk, article/chapter/paragraph, decrees and regulation, clauses, seal, badge metal, flag, written document for the emperor, big timber, remarkable, visible, commendation, camphor tree
 - **200 AD definition:** "that which a song completes is called Zhang"
 - **commentary:** it has 音 (yin1, sound) above and 十 (shi2, ten) - ten is the number that marks the completion. Thus 章 Zhang is a compound ideograph that denotes the completion of a song or music.
 - 10 is the number of postnatal Earth, as the completion of the genesis of the Luo Shu River Diagram.
 - 章 and 意 (Yi4, "intention" of Earth) are quite similar, one has 十 and the other one has 心. This could possibly further link to the Earth conversion.

- **Oracle bone study (1100-1600 BC):**



古陶文



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it is a knife with a wooden handle stabbed into a carved circular object - meaning to carve decorative patterns on a object, where it is shown visibly

- **Other considerations**
 - In the antique time, Chinese characters did not have radicals. So for antique character such as this one, we need to take consideration of other characters that contain the same ideograph in order to bring out the whole meaning of the character. Below are a few of these characters that can help on building the meaning of this character
 - 曠 zhang 1 - ascending sun and light
 - 彰 zhang 1 - to manifest, make visible or significant
 - 障 zhang4 - obstruction, barrier
 - 漳 zhang 1 - the name of a river in the Henan region of China. In Lingshu 12, it corresponds to the Xin-Bao channel ("PC" in modern time, but I would argue it is Heart-Bao meridian, where Bao = uterus for female and essence palace for male). This river has a famous attribute that it starts off clear but once it enters the Loess Plateau, it becomes turbid (So it has something to do with the Xin Bao deep pathway, where it starts around the heart where it is clear, and becomes

turbid as it descends down to the MB and LB through the diaphragm - which fits the channel projection in Lingshu 10).

- Side note: in Lingshu 12, all channels are assigned to a river in China, as these river best represent their quality. For example, LR's river correspondence is Ying River - the only river of the 12 rivers to flow westward (it is the only one that has the "counterflow" capability, as a Jueyin, as the one that "returns from the extreme."). Spleen is the Dong Ting Lake, which receives the Yangtze River (LI) and it is the biggest reservoir of fresh water in China (no need to explain right?). While Lung is the Yellow River, Stomach is the Lop Nor Lake, which is allegedly the source of the Yellow River (CV-12 is the source of Lung channel).
- 樟 zhang 1 - camphor wood.
 - In Nigel Wiseman's Grasping the Wind - he noted, "In *The Book of History* (史記), it is stated that: 'When wood receives the virtue of earth, it becomes a thousand pieces of valuable lumber (木稟土德而成千章之木).'"
 - I really love this quote, however, I was not able to locate it in my copy of *The Book of History* (史記). So I may take this quote with an open speculation - however, this does not negate the character's meaning that Zhang = camphor wood = valuable lumber
- 門 men2
 - it means door/gate... whatever. It is not as interesting, but I'd like to note, that during the translation of the points, something got lost along the way:
 - Some points have the character 戶 hu4: GV-17, ST-13 and BL-37
 - Some points have the character men2: TE-21, BL-12, GV-15, TE-3, PC-4, HT-7, CV-5, KI-21, ST-21, ST-22, GB-25, LR-13, LR-14, BL-47 (TCM#), BL-51 (TCM#), GV-4, BL-63,
 - Some points have the character 關 guan1: GB-3, ST-7, PC-6, TE-5, CV-4, KI-18, ST-22, BL-42 (TCM#), BL-26, GV-3, GB-33, LR-7, ST-31
 - As ideograph:
 - 戶 hu = half of a door, or door inside a house; or it can represent a house within a castle.
 - 門 men = a door, or entrance to a house; or it can represent the gate of the castle.
 - 關 guan = a door with lock, or entrance to a secured area; or it can represent the border gate of a region (not a castle)

So now, how do I translate this point? I don't know. I do not think a proper translation is possible, even if you just look at the 12 different meanings from the modern Chinese definition, and then if you take

consideration of all other things I mentioned above... Every single possible translation would butcher the rest of the meaning from the character itself.

I would say whatever the translation for the name of LR-13 is, it needs to convey the following messages:

- It governs the barrier between "clear qi" of the upper burner and "turbid qi" of the middle and lower burner, as shown in Lingshu 12 - it probably has something to do with Xin-Bao Mai (which is the descending part of the "HT-KI axis" - my argument), which I am thinking has something to do with the later conceived notion of "Jueyin"
 - Two aspect of Jueyin: they have a natural "rebel" and "counterflow" capacity
 - PC carries the Heart Yang downward toward the KI/SI. Yang ascends, yet PC makes it go downward.
 - LR defies the gravity and carries Blood/Yin upward (I guess I do not need to further explain this one) - so when people say "OMG it's LR Yang rising, QUELL IT" - maybe we should respect it instead of just killing it. Liver is supposed to do this as a nature
- *"When wood receives the virtue of earth, it becomes a thousand pieces of valuable lumber"* - I really like this passage, even though I cannot find its reference.
- It has the Wood's authoritative power of manifestation. It is the power to create something, and make things visible to be seen by others. Once there is life, it is like a seal stamping on a paper, declaring to the whole world with the statement "I am here! WATCH ME!!"
- I do not know how chapter, song, and their completion comes in here - maybe it denotes the Wood's power to come back after completion as its capacity to "return from extreme" (also completion = postnatal Earth, maybe it has something to do with LR/SP dynamic). It is the Jueyin energetic to start anew every second and every night.

If I have to choose one name, I'd choose "**Camphorwood Gate**" as chosen by Nigel Wiseman. Camphor wood grows in hot, damp climate, which pays tribute the Earth. Its essential oil (camphor) has a strong aromatic scent, which is used as a pest deterrent, antimicrobial, or even explosive. This to me has a separation of "clear qi" and "turbid qi" aspect, also the power of manifestation - that explosive scent and energetic of wood. The aromatic also demonstrates the Wood's energetic to coarsen and drain (the Earth) - so no dampness accumulates and grows stuff.

So... I am simply not satisfied with the translation "Chapter Gate" and its interpreted spirit of the point, since "chapter" only represents about 8% of the character meaning even in just modern Chinese - and it seemingly mislead people easily - as people only think about "writer's block" but nothing else. When I see books struggling to make sense out of the point name and then barrage me with abstraction or fantasy - it is often that they are looking in the wrong places, or they have not got the whole picture.

In the study of Chinese characters - there are a few things I should mention

- Classical Chinese characters have different meanings from Modern Chinese characters, even though they are the same characters (sadly, most books we have nowadays do not recognize this fact, and are still using 2000 AD language to decipher 100 AD passages)
- "Classical Chinese" evolved also - the Classical Chinese from 200 AD are somewhat different from 1700 AD Classical Chinese. There are also many different "Classical Chinese" based on the region - if you ever read Zhuang Zi in Chinese you will know what I am talking about, it felt like a new language for me.
- Before Classical Chinese, there were the oracle bone inscription (1600-1100 BC) and bronze inscription (1100-800 BC) - those are different from the "Classical Chinese"

The thing about acupuncture is that, it is the first therapeutic tradition in Chinese history, which started around 1000 BC. In order to understand the points, I say, we need to develop cultural and language understanding of the time. Knowing modern Chinese simply is not sufficient. Whoever publishes books about point meaning needs to know at least Classical Chinese at 200 AD (Shuowen Jiezi). If possible, they need to further investigate into oracle bones, bronze inscriptions, derivative characters, mythologies, folk stories, history records, so they can bring out the full meaning and potential of the points.

I was really moved the other day going through the work of Heiner Fruehauf, who explains the Large Intestine channel as the story of the rising Sun - the suns in a Shang mythology, the story of the mulberry tree - there were 10 suns in Shang dynasty. Every single point name on the LI channel has something to do with the suns. Our cherished WoS point LI-18 is the name of the mulberry tree that held the suns in the mythology, before one of them emerges to start the day. With this understanding, we understand Yang Ming already, we understand the ascending life force of the sun (the yang!), we understand how to treat heat... etc. It is only at this level, I'd say, "we've got it!" Otherwise, have you ever seen me being satisfied with any point translation?

Anyway, long enough ranting... I still haven't got you a proper translation. But I hope this has blown your mind about how deep this medicine is. Keep questioning, keep investigating, do not ever settle for mediocrity.

LR-13 Connection to PC-1

Of the various indications listed for LR-13 in Huang Fu Mi's Zhen Jiu Jia Yi Jing (*The Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, ~250-280 AD), in Chapter 7 (*Spleen, Stomach, Large Intestine Disorder with Abdominal Fullness, Borborygmus, and Shortness of Breath*), there is one that states:

腹中腸鳴盈盈然，食不化，脅痛不得臥，煩，熱中，不嗜食，胸脅滿，喘息而衝，**鬲嘔心痛**，及傷飽身黃疾骨羸瘦，章門主之。

Borborygmus with abdominal fullness, indigestion, rib pain preventing one from lying down, vexation, internal heat, lack of appetite, fullness in chest, panting with rebellious ascending Qi, **diaphragm obstruction causing vomit and heart pain**, injury from overeating, jaundice, skinny and bony – [for this pattern] Zhang Men (LR-13) masters it.

This mention of diaphragm does not appear in the later texts such as Sun Simiao's works (650-680 AD) and Arcane Essentials of the Imperial Library (750 AD). It was not even listed among the comprehensive point indications of Yang Jizhou's Great Compendium (1600 AD).

There could be a number of reasons why this specific function no longer appears in the later compendiums:

- The word “diaphragm” could be absorbed into the gross category of “Xiong Xie (chest and ribs)” – so maybe it does not need to be specifically mentioned
- Or maybe other points carry out this function better or more efficiently, such as CV-12, which is said to “master all five Ge,” CV-14, BL-17, or other local points on the abdomen that do specifically mention “diaphragm” in their indications.

Or... maybe there is more to it.

Okay, why do I care about this specific mention of diaphragm so badly anyway?

As I mentioned in the previous section regarding the translation of LR-13, the name of point itself “Zhang Men” hints at its connection with the Arm Jue Yin channel, due to its name having the connection with the Zhang River mentioned in Lingshu 12.

My speculation would be that, LR-13 should have something to do with the diaphragm, and should influence the connection between the two Jue Yin channels. To see that, first, let's cross-examine LR-13 and the only point Arm Jue Yin channel has on the torso: PC-1.

In the Systematic Classic:

- LR-13 is said to be the meeting point of Leg Jue Yin and [Leg] Shao Yang
- PC-1 is said to be the meeting point of Arm Jue Yin and Leg Shao Yang; another notation writes, it is the meeting point of Arm and Leg Shao Yang and Heart [Master].

From here, we can see these two points are directly connected by the GB channel.

Also, here are the point indications for PC-1 in Yang's Great Compendium:

主胸中有聲，胸膈煩滿，熱病汗不出，頭痛，四肢不舉，腋下腫，上氣，寒熱亥瘧，臂痛，目流流不明。

It masters sound in the chest, **vexation and fullness in chest and diaphragm**, fever without sweat, headache, cannot lift the limbs, swelling in arm pit, ascending rebellious Qi, sudden turmoil with chill and fever, pain in arm, and eye sight obstruction.

Likewise, PC-1 also mentions vexation and fullness in chest and specifically the diaphragm – which does not make much sense for the point's anatomical location alone, unless we investigate into PC's deep pathway or channel connections. The indication also mentions the rebellious ascending Qi – which is also mentioned in the indications of LR-13.

Anatomically, LR-13 does fall within the projection of PC-1 traveling directly downward, where the PC deep pathway supposedly reaches the three burners after it goes through the diaphragm. Historically, both LR-13 and PC-1 actually first belong to the GB channels before they got assigned to LR and PC channels (see Appendix).

My speculation would be that LR-13 (and LR-14) does have a connection with PC-1 through the diaphragm, most likely through the (modern day) GB channel, or perhaps through the PC or TE deep pathway.

This connection serves as a bridge between the two Jue Yin channels. So that when Qi enters the Jing well point of LR channel, it rises up to the torso, and part of diverts through LR-13 to reach PC-1, as a continuous stream of Jue Yin channel from the big toe to the middle finger. I believe all 6-stage pairing channels have such bridge connections that await us for discovery.

In addition, If such connection exists, then undoubtedly it will affect the function of the diaphragm, which the Jue Yin connection passes right through. According to the indications, when such connection is in dysfunction, there may be vexation, chest fullness, and possibly rebellious ascending Qi.

As a side note:

The research from this assignment brings up many questions to me. The biggest ones would be, "why does any point belong any channel? Who made that decision? Why did that happen? What was the motivation behind it?" (see the appendix for my findings)

LR-13 did not belong to any specific organ-channel from the beginning, then it was assigned to GB, and ultimately it was assigned to LR. Why is it? Was it due to the advancement of medical knowledge as people discovered more in practice? Or was it motivated by political reason?

I am speculating the following (do read the Appendix first):

- At first, torso, neck and head points – either due to the complicated inter-connections of the channels making the channel assignment difficult, or due to the historical emphasis on the limb

points resulting in these points less understood – either way, or with any other reason, these points were not officially assigned into any channel.

- Later on, people attempted to assign channel based mostly on region of the body.
 - By 600 AD, shoulder points were assigned to channels (most anterior and superior points to LI and posterior points to TE).
 - By 750 AD, all points are assigned to the channels. They are quite different from today's assignment. In my speculation, they are mostly based on anatomical location.
- By 1000-1100 AD, points were assigned to modern day assignment, as Song imperial academy published Sheng Ji Zong Lu, *aka TCM 1.0*, which is heavily based on the earlier Tong Ren Shu Xue Zhen Jiu Tu Jing. We have been following the same channel assignment since.

Going back to the question, “why is such point assigned to such channel”

I think it is always important to think... why? (I should *mention, it is not about being dogmatic and rejecting any progression of knowledge after the source of knowledge (I do that from time to time). The important question would always be about the motivation.*)

Doing such informs me much more than simply taking it for granted. As channels were assigned to specific channels, the grey areas disappear, and something was lost. I do not believe that Qi flow through body in just 12 thin linear lines as we are often fooled by the textbooks or bronze men.

I believe the channel flow through the entire body like rivers with great width; they overlap one another, intersect with one another, and cover the entire body. Rivers do not only have one line of stream. It is the river, with various depths, with banks, with the moisture and tiny fluid movement in the soil, with the underground waterways, and with the entire regional geographical movement of energy (known as the Dragon Vein). These gray areas have much disappeared in the modern linear thinking and practice. With this loss, many things become “obsolete” and fall into obscurity, such as the connection between LR-13 and PC-1 as per my speculation, or the connection between the 6 stage pairing channels. We can see such connection being hinted when we compare the 750 AD channel assignment with the modern channel: such as BL-1 used to belong to SI channel, LU-1 and LU-2 belonged to SP channel, LI-20 belonged to ST channel, and GB-2 belonged to TE.

Another thought is that – when we study points and channels in the classical texts, maybe it is important to take in great consideration of the channel trajectory and points in context of the time of the writing.

It is like, when studying the Classics, we need to know what some key Chinese characters meant at 200 AD, rather than at 2000 AD; when studying over some point name, it is important to look up into 200 AD text, seal scripts, bronze scripts, oracle bones, and ceramic scripts. What was the culture like back then? What did they believe in? What was their story about the world? This way, we can be a bit closer to understanding what people were thinking back then, what their rationale was, and what their motivations were.

Otherwise we would be like Americans eating at Panda Express, reviewing it at yelp, and pretending that we know everything about Chinese cuisine.

Appendix: A Brief Exploration of Historical Point Assignment to the Channels and LR-13

250-280 AD

針灸甲乙經 Zhen Jiu Jia Yi Jing (*The Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*) by Huangfu Mi

- None of the head or torso points is officially assigned to any channel. Though some points do mention their channel affinity, or their meeting channels.
 - E.g. all contemporary ST points state: “足陽明脈氣所發 (Emitting of the channel Qi of the Leg Yang Ming)”
- LR-13 is not assigned to any channel. It does, however, note that it notes “Leg Jue Yin and Leg Shao Yang meet here”
- All channels start from extremities and end at hips and shoulders.

652-682 AD

備急千金要方 Beiji Qian Jin Yao Fang (*Essential Formulas for Emergencies [Worth] a Thousand Pieces of Gold*) & 千金翼方 Qian Jin Yi Fang (*Supplement to the Formulas of a Thousand Gold Worth*) by Sun Simiao

- At the time of Sun Si Miao’s publication, LR-13 was not assigned to any channel, either.
- Posterior and superior shoulder points are assigned to LI, SI, and TE channels (mostly LI and TE)

752 AD

外臺秘要 Wai Tai Mi Yao (*Arcane Essentials of the Imperial Library*) by Wang Tao

- All points are assigned to channels – anatomical location of the points seems to dictate which channel they belong to.
- Torso
 - From the most medial on the anterior surface of the torso to the lateral surface, then back to the posterior median line: KI → ST → SP → GB → BL.
 - LU, LR, PC, and HT channels only have points on the limbs.
 - All torso and neck CV points belong to KI channel
 - Modern day LU 2, LU1, GB 24, and LR-4 belong to SP channel
 - Modern day PC-1, SP-21, LR-13 belong to GB channel.
 - There are 7 (extra) points (*that I cannot find in any other reference in my limited research*) on the latero-posterior surface of the flank area that belong to the GB channels, between the modern day GB and BL channel

- All torso, neck and head GV points belong to BL channel
- Head, neck and shoulder areas are more complicated, which awaits more research effort.
 - Shoulders
 - Modern day TE-13 and TE-14 belong to LI
 - Modern day SI-9, SI-12-15, GB-21 belong to SI
 - Head
 - Modern day GV 24-26 belongs to LI
 - Modern day CV-24, LI-20, GB-3, and TE-21 belong to ST
 - Modern day ST-8, TE-19, TE-23 belong to GB
 - Modern day GB-2, SI-17-19 belong to TE
 - Modern day BL-1 belongs to SI
- As mentioned, the modern day LR-13 belongs to the GB channel.

1027 AD

銅人俞穴針灸圖經 Tong Ren Shu Xue Zhen Jiu Tu Jing (*The Classical Acupuncture and Moxibustion Illustration of the Bronze Man Shu Points*) by Wang Wei Yi of the Imperial Medical Academy of the Song court

- Everything is in line with the modern channel assignment
- Du Mai and Ren Mai appeared for the first time
- Most point locations are the same as today's point location
- Bronze men were made to illustrate and define point location

1117 AD

聖濟總錄 Sheng Ji Zong Lu (*Collected Prescriptions for Divine Relief from Suffering*) compiled by Zhao Jie and Co. of the Imperial Medical Academy of the Song court

1601 AD

Zhen Jiu Da Cheng (*The Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*) by Yang Jizhou

- Follow the arrangement of Sheng Ji Zong Lu