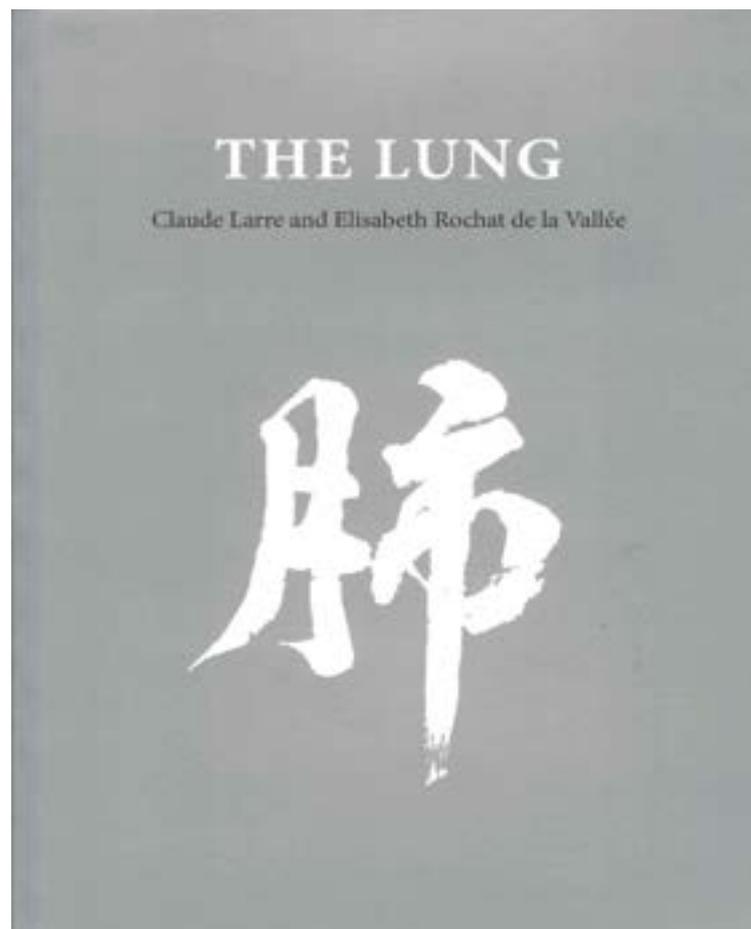




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**The Lung**



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# THE LUNG

Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée



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## THE IDEOGRAM FOR THE LUNG

*Elisabeth Rochat:* When we studied the spleen and stomach we were able to grasp an idea of their functions from the ideograms of their names. With the lung and metal it is not exactly the same situation. It is more complicated to show the movement and characteristics of metal from the Chinese texts, or to grasp the function of the lung from the ideogram. So we will try to use other ways to understand the lung, autumn and metal, and the very specific function of the lung inside the body.

The ideogram for the lung, *fei* (肺), is made with the radical for flesh. You can find the etymology in Weiger lesson 79G. The other part of the ideogram is a representation of plants branching up from the soil, part of the ideogram for earth, *tu* (土), is contained in it, but without the lower horizontal line. It is not an image of plants which stand up straight from the soil but of creeping plants which spread out, multiplying indefinitely. By extension this ideogram also has the meaning of multiplication or something like fibres, and I think it is like an anatomical aspect of the lung, which is why it was chosen for the ideogram of the lung. It

is impossible to interpret this ideogram any more than that, but we can show some others with the same construction with another radical.

If we add the radical for general vegetation to the upper part we then have an ideogram with the meaning of bushy vegetation providing shade. If we add the radical for rain we have the idea of rain falling with great heaviness. The idea of something luxuriant, for example, luxuriant vegetation, can always be found in this right-hand part of the character. It appears in the ideogram for south, with some transformation, because the south is the area of very luxurious vegetation. Sometimes you can find the same ideogram with the pronunciation *shi* meaning a market, a place for exchange, and according to Su wen chapter 52, this market, *shi*, is a special name for the stomach. This is quite unconnected with the ideogram's other meaning of bushy, creeping vegetation.

## SU WEN CHAPTER 2

The three months of autumn are called  
overflowing and balancing.

The *qi* of heaven becomes urgent.

The *qi* of earth is resplendent

One retires early, one rises early.

One 'does the cock'.

Exerting the will peacefully and calmly,  
to soften the repressive effect of autumn.

Gathering in the spirits and storing up the *qi*.

Pacifying the *qi* of autumn,  
without letting the vitality be scattered outside.

Making the *qi* of the lung clear and fresh.

This is the way that is proper to the *qi* of autumn,  
which thus corresponds to the  
maintaining and gathering-in of life.

To go counter-current would injure the lung,  
causing diarrhoea in winter through  
an insufficient contribution to storage.



## THE LUNG

Transcribed and edited from a seminar given in London by Claude Larre and Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée in 1987, the value of these teachings has not diminished with time. Since Claude Larre's death in 2001, the Chinese Medicine from the Classics series stands as a testament to the authentic and eloquent voice of one of the most significant teachers of Chinese philosophy of the past decades.

Rooted in Elisabeth Rochat's deep knowledge of the classical Chinese medical texts, this book provides an understanding of the function of the lung as master of qi and residence of the po. Its resonance with the qi of autumn and the metal element is discussed through study of Suwen chapters 2, 4 and 5. Classical pathology from the Nei Jing and the Nei Jing Jingyi is also presented.

*"The lung is the trunk in which the qi is rooted, it is the residence of the po. It flourishes in the body hair; the power of its fulness is in the skin. It is the tai yin within the yang."*

Suwen chapter 9



MONKEY PRESS

ISBN 978 1 872468 01 3