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SPECIAL THEME

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The Physiology of *Xin* (Heart) in Chinese Political Argumentation: The Western Han Dynasty and the Pre-Imperial Legacy

Abstract The term *xin* (心), usually translated as "mind," "heart" or "heart-mind," is considered a major *problématique* in traditional Chinese philosophical discourse, and it is usually analized in conjunction with *xing* (性, human nature). Contemporary scholars consider *xin*—more or less uncontroversially—as a sort of container of emotions and feelings, or, as On-Cho Ng defines it, "the very home of volition, sentiments and intellect" (Ng 1999). This paper aims to further explore the impact of the physiology of heart (*xin*) rhetoric within political discourse during the early decades of the Western Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 9). To that end I will first analyze the importance of physiological vocabulary in political argumentation, focusing mainly on the importance of heart (*xin*), its central role as the ruler of the body, and on the analogy between the heart and the sovereign of the state. I will then analyze the use of the expressions unanimity and duplicity—literally, pitting one heart (*yixin* 一心) against two hearts (*erxin* 二心 or *liangxin* 兩心).

Keywords spirit (*shen* 神), brilliance (*ming* 明), cognition (*zhi* 知), one heart (*yixin* 一心), two hearts (*liangxing* 两心)

Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point[1]

The first decades of the Han empire (202 BC–AD 220) were directly influenced by debates that developed during the Warring States period. This means that political and philosophical terms of early Han argumentation were also infused with pre-imperial vocabulary. Nevertheless, the foundation of the empire brought

[1] Pascal, *Pensées*.

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about a radical change in society, which necessarily transformed horizons for intellectuals[2] and their associated language. The search for the universal benefit of All under Heaven (*tianxia* 天下)[3] was one of the most important topics of the Warring States debate. Differences lay in the methods proposed to achieve it, and one such method was political, social, economical, and geographical unification.[4] Different views on these topics encouraged debates. Disunity and war called for unity and peace, and vocabulary was influenced by physiology: like an infirm body that needed to be cured (*zhi* 治), the world had to be ordered (*zhi* 治).[5] When All under Heaven was unified under the Qin umbrella in 221 BC, the quest was no longer about how to unify, but rather about how to maintain political and social control over the empire. This urgent problem was inherited by the Han dynasty just a few years later, after the collapse of the Qin empire (221–207 BC), and its early decades were marked by fundamental changes in the economic system and social environment. Here, too, in exploring the right methodology for healing All under Heaven and keeping it at peace, many texts resort to analogies with the human body and turn to a language related to physiology. Harmonious interactions within the human body are an image of a society wherein human life and the whole world find fulfillment.[6] In other words, the use of medical terms in early China for political ideas has been already stressed by many scholars, mainly—but not only—in the context of *Inner Classic of Huangdi* (*Huangdi Neijing* 黃帝內經)[7], most likely compiled during the first century BC with additions coming later, and the recovered Mawangdui 馬王堆 medical manuscripts, which appear to have been part of the private library of a member of the Western Han (206 BC–AD 9) aristocracy who died in 168 BC (Harper 1999, 823). There are other texts from early China that are rich in this

[2] I use "intellectuals" for *shi* (士), the active elite members of the society of that time, for convenience. For the definition of the *shi* category as intellectuals, see Cheng (1996); Pines (2009), 163–84.

[3] On the idea of *tianxia* in pre-imperial period, see Pines (2000).

[4] On this topic, see Pines (2012).

[5] This metaphor comes from *Mozi* (墨子). See *Mozi*, "*Jian ai shang* 兼愛上," to wit: "The sage who takes the ordering the world as his business must know what disorder arises from, and then he can bring about order. If he does not know what disorder arises from, then he cannot bring about order. It is like a physician treating a patient's illness, he must know what the illness arises from, then he can treat it. If he does not know what it arises from, he cannot cure it. How is the situation different for him who is to heal the disorder? One must know the cause of the disorder, and then one can bring about order. If one does not know the cause of disorder, then one cannot bring about order" (Johnson 2010, 131).

[6] See also Unschuld (1985); Lewis (2006); Qu (2009), 14–22 (16).

[7] See for instance, to mention only a few, Lewis (2006); Lloyd and Sivin (2002), Pu (2003), Robinet (1991), Sivin (1987), Qu (2009); Unschuld (1985); but see also Yates (1997). For the texts recovered at Mawangdui, Changsha (長沙), Hunan Province (湖南省) in 1973, see Ryden (1997), Harper (1997 and 1999).

physiological language, for instance the *Guanzi* (管子), traditionally ascribed to Guan Zhong (管仲, d. 645 BC), prime minister of Duke Huan of Qi (r. 685–663 BC). However, substantial sections of this text are, in fact, from the early Han, especially, in my opinion not coincidentally, those chapters that deal with physiological vocabulary. Among all of the different medical terms at play in political discourse, *xin* (心), a term that is usually translated as "mind," "heart," or "heart-mind," fulfills a special role.

This paper, inspired by previous studies, aims to explore further the impact of the physiology of heart (*xin*) rhetoric within political discourse during the early decades of the Western Han dynasty. To that end I will first analyze the importance of physiological vocabulary in political argumentation, focusing mainly on the importance of heart (*xin*), its central role as the ruler of the body, and on the analogy between the heart and the sovereign of the state. I will then analyze the use of the expressions unanimity and duplicity, which literally pit one heart (*yixin*) against two hearts (*erxin* or *liangxin*).[8] I believe that an analysis of such uses can disclose a new practical—and moral—tension in relation to the new political system. Finally, I will conclude by underlining the use of these expressions in the construction of the monarchic system.

For the sake of precision, in the present context, the Chinese thinkers from the Warring States period and early imperial decades will not be divided into "schools of thought."[9] Here, the use of *xin* within the political rhetoric of the Warring States and early Han periods will be looked at without regard to any putative pedigrees applied after the fact for political reasons.

1 *Xin*: From Physiology to Political Discourse

Xin, a major problematic within traditional Chinese philosophical discourse, is the main organ of the body, in other words the heart.[10] *Xin* also functions as a sort of container for the emotions and the feelings, or, as On-cho Ng defines it, "the very home of volition, sentiments and intellect" (Ng 1999, 89). In English, the translation of *xin* raises many problems: on the one hand, the word "heart" calls attention to Western traditions like the Romantic movement; on

[8] In order to perform a full-text search, I first used the "*Chinese Text Project*" (中國哲學書電子化計畫) website, edited by *Donald Sturgeon* 德龍, and then verified the accuracy of the text cited. Please refer to http://ctext.org for Chinese citations.

[9] The question of schools of thought has already been raised by scholars of early China. See Csikszentmihalyi and Nylan (2003); Pines (2009, 4–5). On the so-called "legalist" label, Goldin 2011.

[10] The *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字 glosses the term *xin* as the organ at the center of the body, the heart.

the other, "mind" does not match the semantic range of *xin*, and risks overemphasizing rational activity.[11] Furthermore, the distinction between "heart" and "mind" can lead to the opposition between question of dualism versus holism, an issue that was not extant in the Chinese language at the time.[12] In order to avoid fueling the argument or using the atrocious expression "heart-mind," in what follows, I will translate the term *xin* as "heart" intended both as the physical organ and the location—or coordinator—of our emotional and mental activities. Depending on the scope of the text, we may find more emphasis on one aspect or another, but *xin* remains an organ of the body, and the abode of both bodily and mental functions. The conception of the heart as a bodily organ and as the seat of emotions and thought was not limited to early China; it was also found in ancient Greece (mainly from the pre-Socratic period)

[11] Contrary to this, it is important to recall Chad Hansen, who states that "heart" and "mind" denote faculties, not organs (Hansen 1989, 97). Actually, the language faculties prove problematic with Hansen's interpretation, because mind is not an organ, but it is a faculty—or a set of faculties—that needs to be associated with an organ, namely the heart.

[12] A few years ago, Angus C. Graham affirmed that: "Fingarette thinks that Confucius can help us to escape other dichotomies with which analytic philosophy is unsatisfied, such as mind/body and inner/outer. Of these the former never emerged in pre-Han philosophy; the word hsin [*xin*] 心 'heart' is sometimes translated 'mind,' reasonably enough in later philosophy influenced by Indian Buddhism, but in the classical period it refers only to the heart as the organ with which one thinks, approves and disapproves (Thinking is not in traditional China located in the brain)" (Graham 1989, 25). This point was called into question by Paul R. Goldin, who has stressed that early Han scholars should reconsider the familiar assessment, "pre-Han philosophy knows nothing of a mind-body dichotomy" (Goldin 2003, 235), and the issue of mind-body dualism in pre-Buddhist Chinese argumentation should be treated with care. Joining the discussion by pursuing this line, Edward Slingerland has recently underlined that the most common approach, regardless of the text and historical period, claims that *xin* refers both to the mind, as it is conceived in Western cultures, and to the physical organ—the heart—related to the body, and points to the lack of mind-body dualism in Chinese thought (Slingerland 2013, 3). This idea, according to Slingerland, has influenced many scholars of Chinese religion, who are inclined to consider early Chinese thought as holistic in contrast with the "other," the dualistic Western, tradition. Slingerland claims that early Chinese thought is characterized by "weak" mind-body dualism at the least (Slingerland 2013, 20). His study is based on a large-scale corpus which analyzes and corrects traditional approaches, and shows that: "Although the *xin* is often portrayed as the locus of emotion as well as other cognitive abilities in the pre-Warring States period (roughly 1500 BC–450 BC) … by the end of the Warring States (221 BC), there is a clear trend whereby the *xin* is less and less associated with emotions and becomes increasingly portrayed as the unique locus of 'higher' cognitive abilities: planning, goal maintenance, rational thought, categorization and language use, decision-making, and voluntary willing. This neatly maps onto a parallel trend in the translation of early Chinese texts: in pre-Warring States texts, *xin* is almost exclusively translated as 'heart,' whereas translations begin to switch to 'heart-mind' (or simply vary among themselves between 'heart' or 'mind') by the early Warring States and then render *xin* almost exclusively as 'mind' by the time we reach such late Warring States texts as the *Zhuangzi* or *Xunzi*" (Slingerland 2013, 20).

and Rome.[13] For the Greeks, it was both the heart and the lungs, for the Romans it was the whole chest (*pectus*) that was believed to be the site of consciousness, and of the mind.[14] It is telling that ancient Chinese texts shared similar ideas: the heart was also the organ of the mind and traditional Chinese medical texts associate it with the lungs.

Xin, which is located in the chest, is where the spirit (*shen* 神) inhabits. By extension, it is the organ of "mind" and thus the location of "thinking" (*si* 思),[15] of "deliberation" (*lü* 慮),[16] and of "desire" (*yu* 欲).[17] Thinking is located in the heart and therefore a person is said to think thoughts and feel emotions and impulses in the heart.[18] The heart, as an organ, controls the system of the five orbs (*wu zang* 五臟, literally "five storehouses") or five organs (*wu guan* 五官), the custodians of vitality: the lungs, liver, spleen, gall bladder, and kidneys.[19] The five orbs were the gateways by which external stimuli led to the emotional responses (*qing* 情) of the mind-body system. *Xin* is the controlling mechanism of the body system, and the seat of emotions and thought, both on metaphorical and physical terms. Thus, in pre-imperial China, the heart, as the master of the body, is used as a metaphor for the unity and longevity of the political power, which was identified with the ruler. The "Black Robe" (Ziyi 緇衣) chapter of the heterogeneous text *The Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記) states:

> 子曰："民以君為心，君以民為體；心壯則體舒，心肅則容敬。心好之，身必安之；君好之，民必欲之。心以體全，亦以體傷；君以民存，亦以民亡。"
> Confucius said: The people take the ruler as their heart, and the ruler takes the people as his body. When the heart is solemn then the body's appearance is respectful. If the heart loves something, then the body will be at peace with it. If the ruler loves something, then the people will certainly desire it. The heart

[13] See Onians (1951, 23–43). Moreover, Agrippa Menenius Lanatus (d. 493 BC), who was a Roman politician, became famous also for his allegory where he explained the Roman social order by comparing it with the human body.

[14] See for instance Ovid: "rudis et sine pectore miles" (a rough and doltish soldier). Also see Melville (1986, XIII). In this example the two terms "sine pectore" mean "without feeling" and "without heart": "pectus" is the chest, but also heart, soul, sentiment, etc.

[15] Starting from *Mengzi*, the term *si* means "to think," with a special moral sense. On this topic, see Goldin (2003, 235). In other contexts, this term means something like "longing, pining" (as for a lover), in other words, something that belongs to the emotional sphere rather than to the rational.

[16] As it refers to *xin*, the term *lü* is used mainly in *Xunzi*, and occurs also in *Guanzi*, *Wenzi*, *Lüshi Chunqiu*, *Liutao* 六韜.

[17] The pair *xinyu* 心欲 is the most frequent words in early China texts.

[18] Thinking is located in the heart and therefore a person is said to think thoughts and feel emotions and impulses in the heart. This is not peculiar just to Chinese thought, but also to ancient Greece and Rome. See Onians (1951).

[19] For these definitions, see Major et al. (2010, 883 and 900–2).

is completed by the body, and it is also harmed by the body. The ruler is preserved by the people, but he also perishes by the people.[20]

The model of the state that is governed by the heart is derived from the *Mengzi* 孟子 (*Mencius*):

> 公都子問曰：鈞是人也，或為大人，或為小人，何也？
> 孟子曰：從其大體為大人，從其小體為小人。
> 曰：鈞是人也，或從其大體，或從其小體，何也？
> 曰：耳目之官不思，而蔽於物，物交物，則引之而已矣。心之官則思，思則得之，不思則不得也。此天之所與我者，先立乎其大者，則其小者弗能奪也。此為大人而已矣。
>
> Gongduzi asked: "Though we are equally human, why is it that some become greater people, and others become lesser people?"
>
> Mencius said: "Those who follow their greater parts become greater people; those who follow their lesser parts become lesser people."
>
> "Though we are equally human, why is it that some follow their greater parts, and others follow their lesser parts?"
>
> "The ears and eyes, as organs, do not think, and they become clouded by objects. When an object engages [the sense organ], it simply leads it away. The heart, as an organ, thinks. If it thinks, then it obtains [what it seeks]; if it does not think, then it does not obtain it. This is what Heaven has imparted to me. If one takes one's stand first on [the part] that is greater, then the parts that are lesser cannot snatch it away. This is simply the way to become a greater person."[21]

The idea of the heart as the locus of the mind, as a part of the body with a specific function, was not peculiar to the *Mengzi*. This idea was a common theme for discussions of the body in many other texts from the pre-imperial period. For instance, Michael Carr,[22] in his study of *xin* in the *Book of Odes* (*Shijing* 詩經), states: "In Chinese, the heart is not the only viscum [sic-viscus] that is associated with consciousness, other viscera (especially the liver, lungs, and belly) are used metaphorically as seats of emotions or thought" (Carr 1983, 6). Carr notes that: "The heart radical is regularly used in writing words for thoughts and feelings. In the *Shijing* almost all of the 103 characters written with heart radical refer to states of consciousness" (Carr 1983, 6).

The idea of the deliberation of the heart was also advanced in the *Guanzi*. The

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[20] *Liji*, "Ziyi" 緇衣. See Lewis' translation. Lewis (2006, 324, fn. 91).
[21] *Mengzi Zhengyi* 6A 15, 275. Translated by Goldin (2003, 234–35).
[22] I would like to thank Christian Schwermann for pointing out this contribution to me.

"Water and Earth" (Shui di 水地) chapter of this text states:

> 生而目視耳聽心慮；目之所以視，非特山陵之見也，察於荒忽。耳之所聽，非特雷鼓之聞，察於淑湫。心之所慮，非特知於麤麤也，察於微眇。故修要之精。
> At birth, the eyes see, the ears hear, and the heart thinks. What the eyes see is not limited to the sight of mountains and peaks. They may also examine what is indistinct and minute. What the ears hear is not limited to the sound of thunder and drums. They also examine a sigh or a baby's cry. What the heart thinks about is not limited to understanding what is coarse and gross. It may also examine what is fine and subtle. Thus together they provide an understanding of the essence of all that is important.[23]

Another chapter of the *Guanzi*, Part One of the "Techniques of the Heart" (Xinshu Shang 心術上), lists the techniques that are crucial for cultivating the heart, and which bring about the control of the self and, by analogy, command of the world.[24] In this chapter, *xin* is defined as the "royal organ" (Graziani 2011, XXXIII):

> 天之道虛，地之道靜，虛則不屈，靜則不變，不變則無過，故曰不伐。潔其宮，闕其門，宮者，謂心也。心也者，智之舍也。故曰宮，潔之者，去好過也。 門者，謂耳目也，耳目者，所以聞見也。
> The Way of Heaven is unoccupied, the Way of the Earth is still. Unoccupied, it does not bend; still, it does not change. If it does not change, then there is no excess. It is for this reason that it is said that [the sage] does not err. "Clean the palace, open its door." The palace means the heart. The heart is the dwelling of knowledge. For this reason it is called the palace. "Cleaning" is the removal of likes and dislikes. "Door" stands for ears and eyes. "Ears and eyes" are the instruments for listening and watching. (Graziani 2011, 39–40)

"The heart is the dwelling of knowledge" reads the *Guanzi*, and, according to the text *Xunzi* 荀子 (*Master Xun*), ascribed to Xun Kuang 荀況 (c. 310–230 BC), the heart has the faculty of deliberation:

> 性之好惡喜怒哀樂謂之情。情然而心為擇謂之慮。心慮而能為之動謂之偽；慮積焉，能習焉，而後成謂之偽。
> One's natural likes and dislikes, delight and anger, sorrow and joy are called "emotional responses." If "emotional responses" are so, the heart chooses between them, and this is called "deliberation." When the heart deliberates and

[23] Translation by Rickett (1998, II Volume 104). I changed "mind" to "heart."
[24] For an important study on this topic, see Graziani (2011).

> abilities move it, this is called "conscious exertion." When deliberations are accumulated and one's own abilities have been practiced so that something is completed, it is called "conscious exertion." (*Xunzi* XXII. cf. Knoblock 1999, 707)

Insofar as the heart is "the lord of the physical form and master of the spiritual illumination" (心者，形之君也，而神明之主也, *Xunzi* XXI), it is also the abode of thinking, deliberation, and knowledge. Like the *Xunzi*, the *Huainanzi* says that: "Thus, the heart is the ruler of the physical form, and the spirit is the treasure of the heart" (故心者，形之主也，而神者，心之寶).[25] The mechanistically understood body and its organs having to work cooperatively, with the heart as the center, served as the perfect analogy for the newborn empire and its apparatus of control. From a political perspective, since intellectuals were looking to maintain unity, the "body/ruler" analogy inherited from the Warring States period became important as a rhetorical device.

In the earlier years of the imperial period, there was a revival of the use of physiological terms. Compared to texts or portions of texts from the pre-imperial period, it seems that the use of this vocabulary intensified during the first decades of the imperial period. The search for stability was an urgent matter. The world, like the body, needed to be treated, and ideas and practical exercises related to self-cultivation and medical issues influenced the political quest for order. Therefore, the heart's governance of the five orbs, which is very important in traditional Chinese medicine, was applied by extension to the political discussion. The analogy between the heart, being the ruler or master (*zhu* 主) of the living body, and the lord (*jun* 君), being the governor of the state, is clearly developed in ancient Chinese texts. In order to perform the functions characterizing their roles, the heart, like the ruler, must be at peace (*an* 安), they ought not to be confused or troubled. The *xin*, which coordinates the other organs (*guan* 官), is like the ruler, who supervises officials (*guan* 官).[26] In her work, Jane Geaney argues that the metaphor of the senses as officials portrays them as being orderly and controlled. Each sense—she says—occupies its own office, allowing its desires to be restrained by a superior for the benefit of the "government" of the whole (Geaney 2002, 17–18). Considering the "officials/organs" analogy as a device of political rhetoric, I would rather read it as a reminder reinforcing the interdependence between ministers and ruler. The body thus becomes a model of the polity, meaning that the ruler/heart cannot work without the official/organs.

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[25] *cf*. Major et al. (2010, 247). This sentence also occurs in the "Shouxu" 守虛 chapter of the *Wenzi* 文子 (*Master Wen*). The latter is quoted in the *Taiping Yulan* 太平御覽, Section XVII.

[26] Regarding this analogy, see for instance the *Huangdi Neijing*; Needham (2000); Unschuld (1985, 100); Graziani (2001); Lewis (2006, 37).

The opening paragraph of the aforementioned "Xinshu Shang" chapter of the *Guanzi* says:

> 心之在體，君之位也。九竅之有職，官之分也。心處其道，九竅循理。嗜欲充益，目不見色，耳不聞聲。故曰：上離其道，下失其事。
> The heart is located in the body, as though in the position of the lord. The nine apertures have their duties, like the separate allocations of officials. When the heart dwells in its Way, the nine apertures will follow their natural order. But if tastes and desires give way to excess, then the eyes will no longer see and the ears will no longer hear. Thus it is said: "If the superiors diverge from the Way, then the subordinates will fail in their tasks."[27]

The infirm human body is an effective analogy for the fresh imperial system's need to control the new society. This image of the composite body becomes part of the discussion concerning the relation of the heart to the senses. The analogy between the heart and the ruler, or more generally between physiology and political argument, is well developed in the *Huangdi Neijing*. According to Unschuld, elements of the body in this text were patterned on features of the imperial realm (Unschuld 1985, 79–83; see also Lewis 2006, 37). In contrast to the earlier *Mawangdui* medical texts, the *Huangdi Neijing* discussion indicates the increasing importance under the Han of the new form of polity, not only, as Lewis argues, as a model for structuring space through controlling the flows of substance (Lewis 2006, 37), but also as a new equilibrium in the relation between the emperor and his aids. The bureaucratic division of labor, which is well described by the parallel body/state model, must be led by the heart/ruler in order to guarantee the harmonious distribution of roles. Passages from the "Suwen 素問" section of this text put forth that the heart is the master of the body and other organs, stating: "The heart is the organ of the sovereign and spiritual brilliance emerges from it" (心者，君主之官也，神明出焉). The same chapter similarly states again that: "When the heart is the organ of the sovereign ruler, spiritual brilliance emerges from it" (心為君主之官，神明出焉). In other words, as Graziani points out, the bivalence of the discourse simultaneously speaks of the state in terms of a body, and of the living body in terms of a state (Graziani 2011, 28, fn. 2). Even if the heart is one organ among other organs, it still is the leading organ. In order to have a healthy body, other organs must obey its authority, just as officials cannot do as they please, but must be controlled and guided in order to avoid

[27] *Guanzi* XXXVI. See also Lewis (2006, 37); Graziani (2011, 28). The expression "The heart is located in the body, as though in the position of the lord. The nine apertures all have their duties, like the separate allocations of officials" appears later in the same chapter, *Guanzi* XXXVI.

disorder and recognize that they might avoid disorder and recognize their subordinate position. The political image of the body is also developed in the "Guisheng 貴生" chapter of *Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋). This work was compiled around 239 BC, a few years before the imperial unification, by Lü Buwei (呂不韋) (c. 290–235 BC), the prime minister of the state of Qin, along with a group of scholars. The text maintains that the four organs are the servants (*yi* 役) of life.

> 夫耳目鼻口，生之役也。耳雖欲聲，目雖欲色，鼻雖欲芬香，口雖欲滋味，害於生則止。在四官者不欲，利於生者則弗為。由此觀之，耳目鼻口，不得擅行，必有所制。譬之若官職，不得擅為，必有所制。
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> The ears, eyes, nose, and mouth are the servants of life. Even though the ears desire sounds, the eyes colors, the nose fragrances, and the mouth tastes, if these are harmful to life then you stop. Among the things desired by the four organs, those which are not beneficial to life will not be done. Seen from this point of view, the ears, eyes, nose, and mouth cannot act on their own authority. There must be something controlling them. They are just like officials who cannot act on their own authority, but must have someone controlling them.[28]

The four organs have to obey regulations, just as officials cannot step forward, and must follow the rules.[29] This idea is expressed in other texts, like the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, ascribed to the imperial kinsman Liu An, King of Huainan, and presented to the young Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty in 139 BC:[30]

> 夫心者，吾藏之主也，所以制使四支，流行血氣，馳騁於是非之境，而出入於百事之門戶者也。是故不得於心，而有經天下之氣，是猶無耳而欲調鐘鼓，無目而欲喜文章也。亦必不勝其任矣！
>
> The heart is the master of the Five Orbs. It regulates and directs the Four Limbs and circulates the blood and vital energy, gallops through the realms of accepting and rejecting, and enters and exits through the gateways and doorways of the hundreds of endeavors. Therefore if you do not realize it [your intrinsic nature] in your own heart and still want to control the entire world, this is like having no ears yet wanting to tune bells and drums, and like having no eyes and wanting to enjoy patterns and ornaments. You will, most

[28] Translated by Lewis (2006, 325, fn. 99).
[29] This topic is discussed in Graziani (2011, XXXIII, fn. 24).
[30] *Huainanzi* IX and XX. For a study and complete translation of the text, see Major et al. (2010). This idea is also developed in the recovered text "Wuxing" 五行 from Mawangdui and Guodian 郭店. *Guodian Chu Mu Zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹簡, 151.

certainly, not be up to the task.[31]

This final warning, which was probably directed to the emperor, focuses on the relationship between officials and the ruler. This relationship had to be redefined after imperial unification and this led to tension within the court. According to Graziani, the example of the living body was, at the end of the Warring States period, a typical attempt to imbue the monarchist and absolute government with legitimacy (Graziani, 2011, xxxiii, fn. 24). I would add that the persistence of this approach during the first decades of the imperial period reflects the fact that this idea had not gained full recognition, and that the attention of intellectuals moved to the urgent matter of stabilizing power. Moreover, the new political equilibrium, based on a monarchical system, needed to be secured. In the early Han dynasty, coming after the debacle of the Qin dynasty, the relation between the emperor and his officials was undergoing restoration. I think that, as a political image, the tension between the organs and the heart within the body expresses the need both to discipline the court and to recognize the interdependence between ministers and ruler to bring equilibrium.

2 One Heart *versus* Two Hearts

The model of the body as state deals with the relation between the heart, which plays the role of the ruler, and the other organs, which play the role of officials. The heart and the senses have to master the health of the body just as the sovereign has to guide officials and their loyalty. Erica Brindley underlines that texts from the Warring States period needed to legitimate the central authority and power of the throne and its direct control over the people. This specific focus, Brindley says, on the sovereign's authority over the people is an explicit appeal to the centralizing aspirations and policies of the day, and it is inspired by the state reform promulgated in Qin from the time of Shang Yang 商鞅 (d. 338) (Brindley 2010, 52). However, I think that the centralizing tendencies expressed by the body/state analogy reveal how the intellectuals demanded that the relationship between the sovereign and his officials be increased and stabilised, but also—and most importantly—their influence at court.

The persuasive expressions *yixin* and *erxin* or *liangxin* also recur in pre-imperial texts, however mostly in early Han ones. They are conventionally translated, respectively, as "unanimity" or "one heart," and "duplicity" or "treachery," and also "fickle feelings." These expressions are used in political argumentation, and are significant relate to people, officials, and rulers.

[31] Translated by Major et al. (2010, 71). I exchanged "mind" for "heart."

"Superiors and inferiors share one heart" or "Unanimity between superiors and inferiors" (*shangxia yixin* 上下一心) is quite common as a slogan in early Chinese political literature. As we saw above, the importance of having a clear heart—which is the master of the organs and their functions—in order to maintain a healthy body provides an incisive analogy to good government: just like the organs of a living body that must defer to the heart, officials, who are like the organs of the living body, must defer to the ruler in order to work properly. Even though we find *shangxia yixin* in *Xunzi*, it mostly occurs in texts that are traditionally dated back to the Qin and early Han times: in *Han Shi Wai Zhuan* 韓詩外傳 (*Outer Commentary to the Book of Odes by Master Han [Ying]*), *Xin Xu* 新序 (*New Arrangements*), and the *Huainanzi*. A similar expression, "ministers and rulers share one heart" or "unanimity between minister and ruler" (*chenzhu yixin* 臣主一心) relates to the *Xin Shu* 新書 (*New Writings*)[32] and *Shiji* 史記 (*The Grand Scribe's Records*). The ruler can have many officials, but only when they defer to him, when they all think with one heart, will the world be prosperous.[33] The physiological vocabulary is efficient: having one heart means that both ministers and emperor must share a common goal in order to guarantee a political and social equilibrium within the empire, and cannot pursue the satisfaction of personal desires at the expense of others. I see here the attempt to give a sheen of legitimacy to the monarchist and absolute government, which is still present at the beginning of the imperial period. If an official were to serve two hearts, causing the birth of duplicity, the empire would fall, because its organs would no longer be able to function. This is what happened, according to Han analysis, to the Qin dynasty: inner tensions, due to the search of personal power of some, caused the collapse of the body/state system.

The *Shuoyuan* 說苑 (*Collection of Explanations*) from the Han dynasty follows the same reasoning and is also quoted in the *Fengsu Tongyi* 風俗通義 (*Comprehensive Meaning of Customs and Habits*) and in the *Kong Cong Zi* 孔叢子 (*Masters of the Kong Family Tree*). Within this discussion it stands as an exemplar, saying: "One heart can be used for serving one hundred rulers, but one hundred hearts cannot be used for serving one ruler" (一心可以事百君，百心不可以事一君). The first part of this sentence is also found in the *Huainanzi*, but with a difference:

故兩心不可以得一人，一心可以得百心。

For this reason, having two hearts, it is not possible to obtain [even] one

[32] The title of this compilation does not refer to the content of these texts, but simply denotes a new edition with annotations. The title *New Writings* thus means "New Edition of Jia Yi's Writings."

[33] See also *Guanzi*, "Xing Shi Jie 形勢解."

person; having one heart, it is possible to obtain one hundred hearts.[34]

The moral meaning would be that when the heart is at peace (*anxin* 安心), the state will be too. The idea of monarchism is thus developed through the idea of the parallel between *xin* and the emperor. Similarly, in order to control and maintain this condition, the ruler and his assistants need to obtain the *xin* of the people (*de minxin* 得民心 or *de min zhi xin* 得民之心).[35] Only then will the empire be orderly and secure. The political importance of the people was already crucial in the pre-imperial period: if the ruler lost the people's heart, he loses control of the state. Only by attaining the people's heart could the sovereign keep his power and forestall rebellion.[36] To be more precise, obtaining the heart of the people is not a mere recognition of the value of public opinion, but it enables a mitigation of their excesses and desires in order to control them. To put it differently, this is the significance of "sharing one heart." If inferiors are motivated and "share one heart" with their superiors, the state will be safe. And when this is the case they will not rebel, but would rather be willing to join the army against the enemy. When inferiors "share one heart" there will be no divisions, tensions, or abuses of power. Just like a healthy body whose organs cooperate, so too in the state everything will be in order. By contrast, "having two hearts" can lead to disorder and destruction. For instance, the *Huainanzi* says that if you have two hearts, you cannot serve the lord (二心不可以事君). The moral sense and practical function of this sentence is that if one agrees with his master and follows him, one can obtain the allegiance of many people and, probably, their loyalty too. However if one's heart is duplicitous, he will not obtain the allegiance of no one. The text *Xunzi* is very clear when it says: "There are not two Ways in the world, there are not two hearts in the sage" (天下無二道，聖人無兩心) (*Xunzi* XXI). Having one heart is an expression of loyalty; if you have two hearts, you are fickle and that means that you will be untrustworthy. This idea does not end with imperial unification; on the contrary, the concept developed further. For instance, the *Xinshu* remarks that if the emperor is moderate and moderate in decisions, then his assistants will not dare to have two hearts (*Xinshu* 8.1/55/4). The idea expressed through *erxin* or *liangxin* is related

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[34] *Huainanzi* 10/86/9–10. Major et al. offer the translation: "Thus, when of two minds, you cannot obtain [the allegiance of even] one person; when of one mind, you can obtain [the allegiance of] a hundred" (Major et al. 2010, 365).

[35] See *Mengzi* "Jinxin Shang" 盡心上, *Guanzi* "Xiao Kuang" 小匡, *Lüshi Chunqiu* "Shun Min" 順民, *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 "Xian Xue" 顯學, Huainanzi "Ren Jian Xun" 人閒訓 and "Taizu Xun" 泰族訓, *Xinshu* "Taijiao" 胎教, *Lunheng* 論衡 "Dingxian" 定賢, *Shuoyuan* "Zunxian" 尊賢.

[36] On attaining the people's heart, see Pines (2009, 203–10). On the people as the root of the state, see Sabattini (2012).

to the loyalty of inferiors towards their superiors and by extension towards the state. One person cannot have two hearts, because otherwise his body will be weak; moreover this kind of person cannot be used as official because he could put the state in danger.[37] It is telling that this expression occurs in military texts such as the *Liutao* 六韜 (*Six Bow Cases*):

> 親其所愛，以分其威。一人兩心，其中必衰。廷無忠臣，社稷必危。
> Cultivate close relations with your enemy's favorites in order to dissipate his majestic power. If one such person is of two hearts, your enemy's internal situation will be weakened. If his court is lacking in loyal ministers, his altars of Soil and Grain [a synecdoche for the state] are certain to be endangered.[38]

The *Liutao* states this idea clearly: "When there is loyalty, there are not two hearts" (忠則無二心).[39] If a minister has two hearts, he cannot serve the ruler, because he would not be loyal to him.

In conclusion, in pre-imperial times and during the early decades of the imperial period, the physiologically inspired use of *xin* within political discourse is part of the vocabulary for constructing ideology. In early imperial times, the analogy between the heart and the sovereign was still part of rhetorical debate. The importance of centralizing political power fits perfectly with the image of the living body depending on the proper operation of its organs and controlled by the heart. The feeling of loyalty towards the imperial system had to be mastered and legitimized, and this would be possible only with "unanimity between superiors and inferiors." Even if the vocabulary used was not peculiar to the early decades of the empire, but was part of the insight of the pre-imperial era, it is revealing that most of the texts that emphasize such an analogy can be ascribed to the early Han period, a time when the legitimation process and the construction of monarchism were still in progress.

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[37] See for instance *Guanzi* "Jin Cang" 禁藏.
[38] Rickett's translation is presented here with few emendations (Rickett p.224, fn. 59). There is a similar passage in the "Jin Cang" of the *Guanzi*.
[39] *Liutao* "Li Jiang" 立將.

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