

## Chapter One: Preface

### 序例第一

(5 paragraphs, 2 formulas, essay on  
"Selecting a Wet Nurse" attached)

論曰：

- (一) 夫生民之道，莫不以養小為大。
- (二) 若無於小，卒不成大。故《易》稱積小以成大；《詩》有厥初生民；《傳》云聲子生隱公。
- (三) 此之一義，即是從微至著，自少及長，人情共見，不待經史。
- (四) 故今斯方，先婦人、小兒，而後丈夫、耆老者，則是崇本之義也。
- (五) 然小兒氣勢微弱，醫士欲留心救療，立功瘥難。
- (六) 今之學者，多不存意，良由嬰兒在於襁褓之內，乳氣腥臊，醫者操行英雄，詎肯瞻視。
- (七) 靜而言之，可為太息者矣。

## I.1 Essay

### Line I.1.1

(1) Among the *Dào*<sup>1</sup> of engendering humans, none fail to nurture the small to constitute the big. Without [care] for the small, death ensues before the big is completed.

(2) For this reason, the *Yi Jīng*<sup>2</sup> says: “[Enable] that which is small to come together so as to complete that which is big”; the *Shī Jīng*<sup>3</sup> mentions the very first birth of the people, and the *Zuǒ Zhuàn*<sup>4</sup> cites the fact that Shēngzǐ gave birth to Yǐngōng.

(3) The single significance of these quotes lies in the fact that from a tiny start to completion, from childhood to adulthood, human emotions manifest universally and did not wait [to be discussed until the later date of composition of] the Classics and Histories.

(4) Now the present collection of treatments is arranged by placing the treatments for women and children first, and those for husbands and the elderly afterwards. The significance of this structure is that it venerates the root.

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1 *Dào* 道: As most readers may know, *dào* means much more than just the literal translation of “path,” including notions like “method,” “teachings,” or even “art.” You could fill a whole library with books that have been written on this key concept in classical Chinese culture and philosophy. To give interested readers just two of the major sources, see A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (Open Court, 1989) and Chad Hansen, *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought: A Philosophical Interpretation* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

2 *Yi Jīng* 《易經》 (Classic of Changes): This is a reference to one of the earliest classics in Chinese history. Originally a manual of divination, its significance as a philosophical or cosmological guide goes far beyond that. It is one of the five Confucian classics (*wūjīng* 五經).

3 *Shī Jīng* 《詩經》 (Classic of Poetry): Sometimes also known as the “Book of Songs,” this is another one of the Five Classics of Confucianism that dates from an extremely early time in Chinese literary history, even quoting some ritual songs from the Shāng dynasty (second millennium BCE). It is a collection of ancient songs and poetry that Sūn Sīmiǎo and his contemporaries quoted extensively to illustrate their points and to drive home moral and philosophical arguments in particular.

4 *Zuǒ Zhuàn* 《左傳》 (Chronicles of Zuǒ): This is another ancient and oft-cited text that chronicles the political events in China’s central states during the Spring and Autumn period (722-468 BCE).

論曰：

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- (七) 靜而言之，可為太息者矣。

## I.1 Essay

### Line I.1.1, cont.

(5) Nevertheless, the force of qì<sup>5</sup> is still feeble in small children, and medical gentlemen<sup>6</sup> need to take great care to rescue and cure them and meritoriously offer their services to help them recover from serious conditions.

(6) The majority of present-day scholars fail to hold on to this intention. For this reason, when infants in swaddling clothes are concerned, surrounded by the foul stench of breast milk, how dare we look down on those doctors who carry out heroic acts?

(7) But in reference to [those doctors who] retreat/remain still,<sup>7</sup> all I can do is sigh deeply!

### Commentary I.1 ▷ Brenda Hood

When spirit incarnates in a body, there is a process that takes place as defined later in this book as episodes of steaming and transformation. As a child is newly born, the strength of his or her qì is necessarily weak as a consequence of both the newness of the child and the fact that the child is still gathering in the resources to grow and become larger. Additionally, the new being is not yet fully able to regulate itself and so there will be swings in the relative strength or weakness of the power underlying its life processes and the processes of growth. As practitioners, we must take both of these aspects into account in the treatment of newborns and infants and not interfere overly in processes that are just beginning to come on line.

As an interesting aside to this, up until the age of about six (and perhaps even later), the qì of the child is still connected to the mother and on this level they are not fully separate. This means that clinically, in certain situations, it is possible to treat the child through the mother. This aspect of the mother - child relationship is also relevant to the discussion of intrusive upset, covered in chapter 4 of this book.

5 See Commentary I.1

6 *Yī shì* 醫士: I choose to translate this phrase literally here as members of the literati elite involved in medical matters.

7 *Jìng ér yán zhī* 靜而言之: The *Sūn Zhēn Rén* 《孫真人》 edition (see preface) has *tùì* 退 while modern editions have *jìng* 靜 here. Another edition from the Sòng period has *jìng yān sī zhī* 靜言思之.

- (一) 《小品方》云：凡人年六歲以上為小，十六歲以上為少，三十以上為壯，五十以上為老。
- (二) 其六歲以下，經所不載，所以乳下嬰兒有病難治者，皆為無所承據也。
- (三) 中古有巫妨者，立小兒《顛囟經》以占夭壽，判疾病死生，世相傳授，始有小兒方焉。
- (四) 逮於晉宋，江左推諸蘇家，傳習有驗，流於人間。
- (五) 齊有徐王者，亦有小兒方三卷。
- (六) 故今之學者，頗得傳授。然徐氏位望隆重，何暇留心於少小。
- (七) 詳其方意，不甚深細，少有可采，未為至秘。

## I.1 Essay

### Line I.1.2

(1) The *Xiǎo Pǐn Fāng*<sup>1</sup> states: All humans are considered “small” from the age of six *sui* on. From the age of sixteen *sui* on, they are considered “young.” From the age of thirty *sui* on, they are considered “adult.” From the age of fifty *sui* on, they are considered “old.”<sup>2</sup>

(2) The classics record nothing on children younger than six *sui*. As a result, diseases of breastfeeding infants that are difficult to treat are nowhere recorded or attested.

(3) In mid antiquity, there was a person named Wū Fáng who wrote the *Lú Xīn Jīng*<sup>3</sup> for small children, to divine their premature death or longevity, and to judge whether diseases would end in life or death. Passed down to posterity, this is the first text to contain treatments for small children.

(4) Arriving at the Jin and Liú-Sòng periods,<sup>4</sup> the region to the east of the Yangzi River held the various members of the Sū clan in high esteem, transmitting and collecting their experiences and passing them on among the population.

1 *Xiǎo Pǐn Fāng* 《小品方》 (Sketched-Out Formulas): Sometimes translated into English as “Digest of Formulas,” this text is a brief collection of treatments that was written in the late fifth century CE by the famous physician Chén Yánzhī 陳延之.

2 *Sui* 歲: In China, human age is counted in *sui* 歲, beginning from the moment of birth. A child who is four *sui* old in China is therefore three years old in English. The present phrase means literally translated “older than six *sui*,” or in other words past their sixth birthday. Other early Chinese medical literature, like the *Zhū Bīng Yuán Hòu Lùn* 《諸病源候論》 (Discussion of the Origins and Signs of the Various Diseases) from 610 by Chāo Yuánfāng 巢元方 and the *Wài Táì Mì Yào* 《外臺秘要》 (Essential Secrets from a Border Official/the Palace Library) from 752 by Wáng Tāo 王燾, define youth as beginning at age eighteen and adulthood at twenty.

3 *Lú Xīn Jīng* 《顛函經》: The “Fontanel Classic” is an only partially transmitted text from either the late Zhōu or Eastern Hàn period that discusses etiologies and treatments for children so young that their fontanels have not closed yet, hence the title of the text. It is recorded in the Sòng dynasty bibliographic record as a two-volume text. In the *Zhū Bīng Yuán Hòu Lùn*, the author’s name is written as Wū Fāng 巫方, which could arguably also be translated as “Treatments by Shamans.”

4 *Jīn Sòng* 晉宋: These dynasties date to the third to fifth centuries BCE.