Yi Chema and the Psychosocial Body in Late Nineteenth Century Korea

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Abstract: Conventional understandings of Chinese medicine, and by extension East Asian medicine, are that historical and contemporary discourses on the medical body have essentially revolved around a unitary body perception—the cosmological body as demonstrated by the use of concepts such as qi, yinyang, and the Five Phases. Notably, in this body conception, the material, spiritual and emotional dimensions are not separable from each other but are rather interconnected by means of all-pervasive qi that resonates in the universe.

However, East Asian medicine has in fact provided a far more diverse and dynamic landscape of conceptualizations of the body than has previously been assumed. Addressing this relatively ignored topography, this paper investigates medical thought about body structure that was proposed and practiced by Yi Chema (1837-1900), a physician and Confucian in late nineteenth century Chosŏn Korea. Rather than considering cosmological factors, he brought into play human affairs and agency in his discussion of the medical body. In the framework of his medical system,
later referred to as Sasang 四象 (fourfold imaging) medicine,\textsuperscript{1} psychosocial characteristics—such as affective temperaments, cognitive traits, and behavioral dispositions—are inherently interwoven with the configuration of the viscera and body parts. Importantly, the physiological processes of this psychosocial body are not so much maintained by cosmologically resonating qi flowing throughout the body, but rather, they are activated by the human agent’s psychosocial drive to engage with the world.

Yi Chema, through his conceptualization of the psychosocial body, envisaged an ideal world in which the qualities and differences of people should be acknowledged to the fullest extent. Thus he rejected hierarchical socio-cultural orderings of human beings in favor of a respect of heterogeneity. Yi Chema’s effort to promote the psychosocial body can be understood against the backdrop of late nineteenth century East Asia, where the mechanistic body of what was then seen as modern medicine was encroaching upon the cosmological body.

Prologue

Biomedical practitioners and scholars claiming the wisdom of modernity once took it for granted that the medical body is universal, discrete, material and mechanistic. However, scholarship in the medical humanities has challenged this conventional assumption, arguing that bodies are “historically contingent, deeply informed by culture, discourse, and the political.”\textsuperscript{2} Additionally, medical bodies can be seen as being ‘multiple’ in that they are brought into being through diverse medical practices.\textsuperscript{3} In other words, the body is not singular, nor is it very ‘proper,’ where the ‘body proper’ refers to the discrete, structured, individual body of modernity, but an indeterminate site of natural-psychological-cultural processes impossible to finally delimit—the lived body in its infinite variety.\textsuperscript{4} Furthermore, as was highlighted through the conceptual terms ‘local biologies’ and ‘cultural biologies,’ biological processes and cultural conditions are, in fact, mutually constraining and co-constitutive, which challenges the conventional nature/culture dichotomy.\textsuperscript{5} The medical body,

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\textsuperscript{1} The Sasang 四象 (Four Figures) are: Greater Yang (太陽, K. taeyang; C. tàiyang), Lesser Yang (少陽, K. soyang; C. shaoyang), Greater Yin (太陰, K. taeŭm; C. taiyin) and Lesser Yin (少陰, K. soŭm; C. shaoyin). These terms are traced back to Book of Changes (Yijing 易經).

\textsuperscript{2} Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987).

\textsuperscript{3} Mol (2002).

\textsuperscript{4} Farquhar and Lock (2007).

\textsuperscript{5} Lock and Kaufer (2001); Kirmayer (2006).
seen to be born out of process and contingency, could be better comprehended through the processes of practice, or ‘enactment’ of reality, to use Mol’s language.\textsuperscript{6} Generated by specific social, political and geographical circumstances with their own historical experiences, the materialisms of biomedicine are just one of the various styles of knowing and engaging with the human body. There is no normative way of understanding the human body.\textsuperscript{7}

If we turn our eyes to the cultural history of East Asia, perceptions of the body were more diverse than was previously thought. Researchers or historians of medicine have sought to reveal the dynamic terrain of East Asian medicine, challenging the pervasive dichotomous view of East-West cultural difference.\textsuperscript{8} The binary logic of Orientalist discourse assumed that perceptions of the body and the fundamental medical ideas of East Asian medical practices are the same as those identified in particular classical texts, whilst disregarding other styles of knowing and practice in East Asia as being of little significance. However, in the history of East Asia, we observe a significant number of representations of the body, physical practices and innovative insights into how the body looks and operates. For example, the historical experiences of ‘bodily practices,’ including ‘dissection,’ reveal East Asian practitioners’ knowledge of the body structures and their materiality.\textsuperscript{9} Dissection necessitates anatomically invasive interventions, and other bodily practices include hands-on manipulations such as acu-moxa technique, emergency medical interventions, forensic examinations, external therapies for injuries as well as child bearing and delivery. Beyond these, various ‘internal landscapes’ were visualized or contemplated in the diverse practices of Daoists, Buddhists and Confucians, and in the ‘medication experiences’ of

\textsuperscript{6} Mol (2002), pp. 32-36. With the recognition that “knowledge is primarily about partaking in a reality,” researchers of medical humanities are addressing such topics as the medical knowledge and the medical body more from the practice perspective than ever before.

\textsuperscript{7} See, for example, Kuriyama (2002).

\textsuperscript{8} For instance, these topics were addressed in the international workshop “Comparative Perspectives on Body Materiality and Structure in the History of Sinitic and East Asian Medicines,” October 2-4 2015, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA, co-sponsored by The Wellcome Trust “Beyond Tradition” Project at University of Westminster, London; the American Council of Learned Societies / Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange; and the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

\textsuperscript{9} See, for example, Wu (2015) and Despeux (2005) and (2007).
physicians, who mostly employed medicinal drugs in clinical settings.\textsuperscript{10} 

Despite such complexities, the topics of researchers have mostly revolved around the ‘cosmological body,’ which is spelled out in terms of such cosmological concepts as \textit{yinyang}, the Five Phases and \textit{qi}. Such homogeneity obscures complexity and heterogeneity, leaving much to address.\textsuperscript{11}

In this context, this paper will investigate an understanding of the body developed by Yi Chema 李濟馬 (1837-1900), a Confucian, local magistrate and physician of the Chosŏn 朝鲜 dynasty (1392-1910) of Korea, thereby contributing to revealing the diverse terrain and historical dynamics of East Asian medicine. The argument of this paper moves away from the received cosmological body perception where the body resonates with the cosmic world through the universal flow of \textit{qi}. Instead, Yi Chema implemented a novel notion of the body, namely, the medical body as containing circulating bodily fluids that are driven by the human practices of actively relating to the world. To be more explicit, this medical body was conceptualized in terms of the patterns or ways in which the human agent perceives the world and responds to it. I shall call this medical body the ‘psychosocial body.’\textsuperscript{12} Yi Chema started with an observation that the sentiments or emotions such as delight, anger, sorrow and pleasure could bring about illness in the human body. However, he went beyond emotions to configure the psychosocial body, where the visceral arrangement and the physiological workings are firmly interconnected with the processes whereby the human agent engages with the world. With Yi Chema, the epistemic level of focus shifted from the cosmic universe, or the cosmological principles, to the mundane human world where the agency of individual humans is considered.


\textsuperscript{11}Further extensive researches are to be carried out on the styles of practice in Korea, Japan, Vietnam or Tibet, not to mention those in China at large.

\textsuperscript{12}The otherwise more accurate wording for this medical body might be the ‘body of \textit{sŏng-chŏng}’性情 or ‘body of nature-emotion,’ as will be clear in the discussion below. These phrases are, however, quite alien to readers not familiar with the Korean language, so I adopt as a second best the term ‘psychosocial body.’ This term reminds readers of the ‘biopsychosocial model’ of the body, which puts an emphasis on the intricate, variable interactions of the biological, psychological and social factors in understanding human illness and health care, countering the biomedical model. See, for example, Engel (1980). That being said, I use the term ‘psychosocial’ in this paper more in the sense of ‘of or relating to cognitive and behavioral perspectives’ than just ‘both psychological and social.’
The main source material for this paper is the book *Eastern Medicine [for] Prolonging the World and Preserving People* (Tongŭi Susepŏn 東醫壽世保元, 1894; hereafter *Prolonging the World and Preserving People*). A masterpiece of Yi Chema, this book has operated as a reference textbook of so-called ‘Sasang (fourfold imaging)’ medicine (Sasang Ŭihak 四象醫學), one of the key features of Korean medicine. His distinctive style of knowing and practice can be found in this textbook, which is organized into two main parts along with appended essays. The first part, which addresses theoretical aspects of his understanding of the body, reveals his philosophical outlook on the medical body, accounting for roughly one quarter of the text. The second part is orientated towards his practice and covers therapeutic approaches and clinical strategies in conjunction with ‘disease patterns and medication dynamics.’ This paper draws mostly on the first part of Yi Chema’s text and some of the supplementary essays.

At this juncture, it is worth noting that many of the body perceptions in East Asian medicine, including both psychosocial and cosmological bodies, constitute a form of knowledge that informed what practitioners and doctors believed and how they practiced. In *Prolonging the World and Preserving People*, Yi Chema was able to map out the physical body on the basis of his ideas of the psychosocial body—the visceral characteristics and patterns of the Sasang persons (Sasangin Changbusŏngni 四象人臟腑性理), in his phraseology. This arguably operates as the philosophical underpinning of, and as a fundamental logic for, his medical practice, which accounts for more than two thirds of the text. As is often the case, inspirational imaginations or fascinating insights help to make an epistemological breakthrough, organizing an innovative framework for the understanding of the body, disease and life, and to help form practical knowledge for

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13 The first draft of this book was completed in 1894. By the time of his death in 1900, Yi Chema had been working on its revision. One year later in 1901, this revised draft was first published, using woodblock printing, by his followers in his hometown Hamhŭng 咸興, Hamkyŏng Province 咸鏡道. We have two English translations of this book, one by Choi (2009), the other by Wagman (2016). Choi and Wagman translated the title (literally, ‘Eastern medicine for bringing longevity to the world and preserving what is basic’) as ‘Longevity and life preservation in Eastern medicine,’ and ‘Eastern medical perspectives on longevity and wellbeing,’ respectively. These translations are not quite correct when taking into account both Yi Chema’s intention and the fact that ‘preserving what is basic’ (pŏn 保元) commonly meant ‘preserving people.’ Also of note is the fact that there was a medical textbook titled *Shoushi baoyuan* 壽世保元 (1615, a namesake), authored by the Ming physician Gong Tingxian 龔廷賢. As for the details of the meaning and intent, plus the English translation, of the title “Tongŭi Susepŏn 東醫壽世保元,” I refer readers to Yi (2016b), pp. 207-208. See also footnote 88 below.
diagnostic procedures and therapeutic strategies in clinical practice. In the history of East Asian medicine, the bodily representations, or even the imaginative landscapes of the internal body, had served to carry a specific kind of knowledge, aiming at specialized users such as forensic experts, acupuncturists, medical doctors and Daoist practitioners. However, modern contemporaries claiming a rationalist bent regard these bodily depictions simply as schematic representations or metaphorical imaginings which have little connection with the actual material reality defined by biomedicine. Resisting the constraints of biomedicine, I will try to examine, in their own terms, the operations and meanings of the psychosocial body.

On a related note, the technical terms and phrases that Yi Chema employed in his textbook are to be taken to be ‘deictic,’ where the determination of the meanings or referents of those terms are dependent on the whole discursive context of *Prolonging the World and Preserving People*. Such meanings are not to be found in a single sentence, much less in the terms *per se* in isolation. Yi Chema applied old terms, including some that played a role in Neo-Confucian discourse, to new categories and concepts. As will be demonstrated below, he appropriated those terms when addressing his distinctive ideas, mostly without giving any specific clarifications, let alone their sometimes history-laden multi-layered meanings. Hence, the denotations of those characters or phrases ought to

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14 For example, Yi Chema is illustrative in this regard. Detailed examination of how Yi Chema’s ideas of the psychosocial body were applied and implemented in the practice level must be left for another paper.


16 One can easily find out this kind of rationalist viewpoints in the cultural and political conflicts between Western medicine and East Asian medicine advocates during the last one hundred years. Salient examples include those sparked off by the resolution on the “Abolition of Chinese Medicine” in China in the early twentieth century, and a series of “Confrontations over Korean Medicine Rehabilitation” in Korea in 1934. For recent episodes, see the following: Zhang (2006); Kang and Ko (2010); Barrett (2011).


18 This suggests that he avoided controversial metaphysical discourses such as the “debates on *Li, Qi, Heart and Nature*” (*yikisimsŏngnon 理氣心性論*). Being beyond the scope of this paper, further discussions on his complex social identity,
be determined in the specific context of the overall picture of what he sought to describe in his text. Previous scholarship on Yi Chema, mostly keeping its focus on the Confucian connotations, has not highlighted his novel synthesis that arrived at quite a different vision of the medical body whilst employing age-old vocabularies. In fact, it is commonly observed that doctors and practitioners drew on diverse knowledge sources, sometimes using conventional technical terms, to push medicine beyond where it had been before. In this regard, I will seek to understand his innovative representation of the body conceived in *Prolonging the World and Preserving People* more in terms of medical cognitive practice, less in terms of Confucian philosophy.

idiosyncratic writing style, intellectual mind-set or attitude toward knowledge will certainly require more space than is available here.

19 There is a large (Korean) scholarship on Yi Chema. Thematic topics have primarily revolved around the intellectual (mostly, Confucian) origin of his medical ideas, and whether he inherited the Learning of Change (Yŏkhak 易學) or the theory of *yinyang* and the Five Phases. Sometimes they ask whether he ‘rightly’ apprehended the contents of the medical literature that he quoted, or try to weigh up his modernistic features under the opposing analytic frame of ‘modernism versus traditionalism’. His medical enterprise is also described as constitutional medicine or mind-body holistic medicine. Some have highlighted his viewpoint on the human being as a self-governing subject as compared with cosmological thinking, and from the perspective of Confucianism. Overall, they fall short of investigating his key conceptual ideas (that is, the visceral characteristics and patterns of the Sasang persons) and its sociocultural implications.

20 For instance, Ye Gui 葉桂 (1667-1746) of Qing China had developed an innovative therapeutic approach, the Method of Unblocking, whilst using the conventional term *Luo* 絜. See Scheid (2017).

21 Pending further research on Confucian philosophical aspects of Yi Chema’s medical project, this paper concerns mostly what his conceptual ideas and its medical implications are. Some scholars have raised, and partially answered, such questions as how to figure out Yi Chema’s medical project in relation to the historical context of Confucian philosophy, such as Ancient Confucianism, the Learning of Change, the Study of Mind-Heart (*Simhak* 思學) or Neo-Confucianism, Debates on *Li*, *Qi*, Heart and Nature, and Authentic Learning (*Silhak* 實學). However, their claims still remain divergent, some even contradictory to each other. The disagreement of this previous scholarship comes, in no small part, from the fact that Yi Chema cared little about the context of discovery, inclusive of a specific Confucian lineage. In fact, he mentioned nothing of, as opposed to the conventional writings of scholar physicians, Confucianism-related topics in the treatise “On the Origin of Medicine (*Ŭiwŏnmon* 医原論),” which in effect functions as the author’s
The main body of this paper is organized into three sections. The first section describes the widely received conception of the cosmological body as an intellectual backdrop for the psychosocial body, and highlights Yi Chema’s attitude toward the medical tradition including the cosmological body. The second section describes and investigates Yi Chema’s psychosocial body in detail. The third section addresses his social outlook as implied in the conception of the psychosocial body.

The Cosmological Body

In East Asian conceptions of the human body, physical, emotional, spiritual and social aspects are often seen as being inseparable from each other. This is to be contrasted with the English word ‘body,’ rooted in the perception of a dualistic reality, where the corporeal is pitted against the spiritual. In the Korean language, the corresponding term for the English word ‘body’ is *mom* 個. However, in the written language of pre-modern periods, the term for *mom* is *sinch’e*, the written form of which *身體* (sinch’e in Korean; *shenti* in Chinese) has been shared amongst East Asian countries that use literary Chinese.

Drawing on ethnographic and semantic understandings of *shenti*, *sinch’e* implies “a person or self with all the connotations of the physical, social, and mindful,” where *身* (C. *shen*) implies “a socially informed body-person or body-self,” and where *體* (C. *ti*) accentuates “’embodying’ as a process of knowing and acting.” In this sense, the body contains a subjective, experiential component, especially to the extent that *ch’e* alludes to “an agency of lived body that perceives and acts.” This may be compared with the English word ‘body’ that resonates with an image of objective, anatomical and corporeal entity. Another expression

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22 In large measure, the overall semantics and connotations of *身體* in Korea and in China are quite similar, even though the combinations of the root words and their meanings are slightly different.


24 Zhang (2007), p. 36. As will be shown below, Yi Chema elaborated on this kind of body perception, articulating and implementing the psychosocial body in his writings and practice.

25 As a matter of fact, we see a pre-dichotomous term in Western languages. For example, the German term *Leib* refers “to the living body, to my body with feelings, sensations, perceptions, and emotions, as compared with the term ‘Körper’ referring to the alienated object body.” However, in the course of modernization, *Körper* has epistemologically dominated over *Leib* in the discursive practice. As
of the agency of the body can be seen in the Korean expression for ‘falling/beinng ill.’ In pre-modern Korea, the literary Chinese character .byIdong (C. bing), had consistently been translated in the Korean language as .byIdonghada (literally, to do or perform disease), rather than as .byIdongnada (literally, for disease to arise).26 The semantics of the expression .byIdonghada highlights the agency of the lived body vis-à-vis illness events, and underscores the idea that the human body includes, and is perceived as, the experiencing subject engaging with the world.

In the intellectual history of China and East Asia, such sophisticated forms of the body are best documented in medical textbooks. This body is conceived of and understood in terms of cosmological processes such as the dynamics of qi, yinyang and the Five Phases, where the body coordinates with the surrounding ecological, social, sentimental and spiritual worlds. In this understanding, the body as a microcosm corresponds to the macrocosmic world through the cosmic notion of qi.27 This perception of the body is found in canonical texts such as Huangdi’s Inner Canon (Huangdi neijing 黃帝內經) of the Han 漢 dynasty (202 BCE-220 CE), as well as in a diverse array of subsequent medical textbooks. At this point, I would like to remind the reader that, while it is the assertion of the current work that East Asian medicine in general, and Korean medicine in particular, is more complex and diverse than has been hitherto described, the cosmological body is often presented as being a key part of East Asian medical thinking. For this reason, it provides a reasonable historical backdrop in order to discuss Yi Chema’s innovation.

I will now consider two texts where the specificities of the cosmological body are brought into relief. The first is A Primer to Medical Learning (Yixue runmen 醫學入門, 1575) by Li Chan 李梴, a Ming scholar physician, and the second is Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine (Tongui pogam 東醫寶鑑, 1613) by Hŏ Chun 許浚 (1539-1615), medical officer of the Chosŏn dynasty. These two medical works, along with Orthodox Transmission of Medical Learning (Yixue zhengzhuan 醫學正傳, 1515) and Recovering from Myriads of Diseases (Wanbing Huichun 病百回春, 1587), are among the most influential medical

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26 Shin (1999), pp. 141-142. The word .byIdonghada was replaced in the early twentieth century with the contemporary phrases such as .byIdong(i) nada (for disease to arise), .byIdong(i) tŭlda (for disease to intrude), or .byIdonge kŏllida (to be hooked onto disease). This shift in register implies a change of the epistemological concern from the human subject to the disease itself in the early modern period, when biomedicine, reinforced with the success of germ theory, was overwhelming East Asian countries.

textbooks on Korean doctors of the late Chosŏn period (c. seventeenth to nineteenth centuries). Not surprisingly, these medical textbooks are quoted or discussed by Yi Chema in his essay “On the Origin of Medicine” (Ŭiwŏnmon 醫源論) and in the clinical discussion parts of Prolonging the World and Preserving People. In the late Chosŏn period, it was common practice that doctors learned to acquire principles of medicine through A Primer to Medical Learning and developed their clinical practices on the basis of Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine.

Li Chan opens A Primer to Medical Learning with a section outlining such cosmological workings as Ultimate Beginning (taiji 太初), yi 易, Mind (xin 心), li 理, qi 氣, yinyang 隠陽, and channels and collaterals (jingluo 經絡). The text begins as follows:

Discourse on the Pre-Heaven (xiantian 先天) Diagram [of the sequence of the eight trigrams]: After learning yi 易, one can talk about medicine. This does not mean learning the trigrams nor learning the yao 爻. Consider this: does the mind indeed have the trigrams, or have the yao? It is just that the primordial li (yuanli 元理) and primordial qi (yuanqi 元氣) are intermingled leaving no clefts between them. The arising of the heaven, the earth, human beings and things are all from this process of generation-cum-transformation. If those who seek to nourish Life realize this, then they naturally watch their angers and constrain their desires, so that Water (shui 水) and Fire (huo 火) interact with each other. If those who seek to save people realize this, then they naturally analyze the situations, and compose prescriptions, so that hard-to-treat diseases are immediately cured.

I dare to say, I have struggled to obtain the mind of Fuxi 伏羲, whereby I have stolen a glimpse of the profound ideas of Xuanyuan 軒轅 and Qibo 岐伯! Thus, here I expound. Li 離 [☲] kan 坎 [☵].

Hundreds of diseases of humans all originate from Water (shui 水) and Fire (huo 火) not interacting with each other.

28 The Chosŏn dynasty reigned in Korea from 1392 to 1910. The late Chosŏn period conventionally refers to the years after the Latter Jin (Houjin 後金) invasion of Korea in 1636/1637, that is, the years from 1637 to 1910. This period approximately corresponds to the Qing period (1644-1911) of China and the Edo (or Tokugawa) period (1603-1868) of Japan.


31 In the original text, these two trigrams, in a large size, are vertically placed in the center of the page as an illustration.
so they had connected these two with 坎 [☵] and 離 [☲] of Post-Heaven (後天). Blood belongs to Water, Qi to Fire; so Blood is 陰; Qi, 陽. The midst of 離 is empty, so true 陰 exists there; the midst of 坎 is full, so true 陽 resides there. The dynamics of 陰, 陽, depletion and repletion constitutes more than half of what one should know about the Way of medicine. 

Turning to the second text, Hŏ Chun begins his Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine with a quote:

Sun Simiao 孫眞人 once said: “Mankind is the most precious of all the things between heaven and earth. The head being round takes after the heaven, the foot being square takes after the earth. Heaven has four seasons, man four limbs; heaven has five planets, man five viscera; heaven has six extremes, man six bowels; heaven has eight winds, man eight joints; heaven has nine stars, man nine orifices; heaven has twelve time periods, man twelve meridians; heaven has twenty four seasonal divisions, man twenty four acupoints; heaven has 365 celestial degrees, man 365 bones. Heaven has the sun and the moon, man paired eyes; heaven has day and night, man sleeping and wakening; heaven has thunder and lightning, man delight and anger; heaven has rain and dew, man tears and snivels; heaven has 陰 and 陽, man cold and hot; earth has springs and water, man vessels and blood; earth has plants and trees, man furs and hairs; earth has metals and stones, man molars and incisors. All of these are just what have been temporarily fashioned out of the Four Greats (四大, K. Sadae; C. Sida) and the Five Eternals (五常, K. Osang; C. Wuchang).”

This suggestion that the human body is a microcosm fashioned from the macrocosm supports the view that “the Heaven and Human correspond or resonate with each other” (天人相應, K. Ch'ŏnin sangŭng; C. Tianrenxiangyin). The key mechanism or theoretical rationale for the physiological workings of such a body is based on so-called ‘correlative thinking,’ or ‘resonance’ (感應, K. Kamŭng; C. Gangyin) theory. Resonance

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33 Hŏ Chun, “Bodily Forms” (Sinhyŏng 身形), Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine, p. 72.
34 A systematic presentation of the conception that “the Heaven and Human correspond or resonate with each other” originated in Huangdi’s Inner Canon.
theory had been built on the idea that “things influence one another not by acts of mechanical causation, but by a kind of ‘inductance’.”35 In other words, “things of the same kind energize each other” (Tongleixiangdong 同類相動) or “things with the same qi seek each other” (Tongqixiangqiu 同氣相求).36 From this perspective, all things in the universe are constituted of cosmological qi, constantly flowing in, through and between the macrocosm and microcosm. The human body is a field of circulating and resonating qi. In this cosmological setting, the physiological processes of the body are generated and sustained by the cosmological dynamics, for example, qi, yinyang and the Five Phases, that are both inside and outside the body. Put crudely, the body moves or operates the way it does because, in a world that is in constant flow, heaven moves in similar ways. In this body perception, the healthy body is to be achieved and maintained through the practice of maintaining harmony with the cosmological principles or the ecological conditions.37 Furthermore, just as it is important for the five viscera to be aligned with the cosmological pattern of the Five Phases, so it is equally important that the Five Emotions (happiness, anger, anxiety, pensiveness and fear) are also aligned with the macrocosm.38

Before moving on to the main discussion of the psychosocial body, I want to address Yi Chema’s intellectual attitude, and scholarly approach, to the East Asian medical tradition at large. Yi Chema kept his distance from the cosmological resonance theory. For example, for Yi Chema the doctrine of three yin three yang 三陰三陽 of Treatise on Cold Damage (Shanghanlun 傷寒論) of the Han dynasty simply “serves as a classificatory scheme for differentiating disease patterns, and the key point lies [only] in [the bodily parts]—abdominal, dorsal, exterior and interior—. One therefore need not inquire into the changing phases of the channels and

36 These phrases are respectively traced back to Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals (Chunqiu Fanlu 春秋繁露) and Book of Change (Yijing 易經).
37 For instance, the healthy body and sound mind essentially follow from staying tuned to the surrounding natural factors such as circulatory phases and seasonal influences 運氣, four seasons 四時, four directions 四方, eight winds 八風, and yinyang. Hŏ Chun, “Bodily Forms: Modulating Spirit to Four Qi” (Sakichogin 四氣調神, “Proper Moderation to Four Seasons” (Sasichŏlui 四時順宜), “Proper Variation in Four Locals” (Sabanggyūi 四方異宜), “Qi Turning into Various Diseases” (Kuichepsyogon 氣為諸病), Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine, pp. 74, 77, 88, 331.
38 Hŏ Chun, “Spirit 神: Five Emotion to Conquer Each Other Becoming Cured 五志相勝為治,” Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine, p. 102. Emotions or sentiments are also understood as arising from the workings of qi.
collaterals.”  A similar approach may be seen in Yi Chema’s consideration of Huangdi’s Inner Canon, where the cosmological idea that “the Heaven and Human correspond or resonate with each other” may be found. Yi Chema states:

The Divine Pivot (Lingshu 灵枢) and Plain Questions (Suwen 素問) [of Huangdi’s Inner Canon] falsely employ the name of Yellow Emperor, using the marvelous and strange to beguile people, and they are unworthy of being called the Way. But the language used by those who busy themselves with the esoteric arts and techniques is sometimes like this, so there is no need to censure it too severely. That being said, these books also represent the experiences of people in antiquity and offer many enlightening ideas in their discussions of the five viscera, six bowels, channels and collaterals, acupuncture methods, disease patterns, and self-cultivation. Therefore, these books are truly the basis from which doctors investigate things to extend their knowledge to the fullest, and from which diverse medical currents thereafter have been derived. Thus, one must not solely enumerate the demerits of their absurdities, and thereby discard the merits of their inspirations. Now, these books also contain the sayings of the intelligent and broadly learned people of antiquity and the expositions on self-cultivation handed down by adepts of esoteric techniques. In their observations, there is some truth to be explored, but one should not believe all their discourses completely.

In order to advance his argument, Yi Chema turned to the epistemological authority of philological methodology and the centrality of ‘experience’ or ‘observance’ rather than to medical orthodoxy and lineage reasoning. According to his own account, Yi Chema’s medical ideas had arisen out of an extensive reading of East Asian literature and was confirmed by his personal experiences. In his philological analysis, Huangdi’s Inner Canon (which was widely received as an archetypal medical canon in East Asia), for example, was not knowledge that had come from the hands of Huangdi himself, but was rather composed by various adepts of esoteric techniques in later epochs. Certainly, this kind

40 Ibid., p. 4a.
41 Ibid., p. 2a.
42 Ibid., pp. 1a, 4a.
of intellectual viewpoint had been raised in the intellectual atmosphere of the late Chosŏn period, when the so-called ‘experience’ (hŏm 驗) discourse was widespread in the medical spheres of Chosŏn Korea. In those periods, East Asian countries had seen intellectual upheavals such as intensifying challenges to correlative thinking and cosmology, reassessment of Song scholarship, growing interest in ancient learning, and the emergence of ‘evidential scholarship’ (or ‘philological methodology’) (kaozhengxue 考證學) since the Ming-Qing transition period. In this cultural and intellectual environment, there had indeed developed a number of innovative ways of knowing and practice in medicine across East Asia.

It is not simply because he emphasized ‘experience’ and employed the philological method that Yi Chema facilitated his medical innovation. Rather, it is because he historicized the medical tradition and thereby contributed to its redefinition. Specifically, he viewed the history of medicine not as a process of expanding the orthodoxy of the Way (道統, K. dotong; C. daotong), but as a process of building on ‘medico-pharmaceutical experiences’ (ŭiyak kyŏnghŏm 醫藥經驗) of ‘disease patterns and medicinal dynamics’ (pyŏngchung yangni 傾證藥理). While the general understanding of the history of East Asian medicine is based on the

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43 Shin (2005). A similar tendency was also observed in the fields of astronomy, geography and computational astronomy in late Chosŏn Korea.

44 For correlative thinking and cosmology, see Henderson (1984); for evidential scholarship, see Elman (1984); on the changing dynamics and movements in medicine in late imperial China, see Scheid (2013).

45 We see, for instance, ‘Warm supplementing scholarship’ (wenbuxue 溫補學) and ‘Warm disease scholarship’ (wenbingxue 溫病學) in China; ‘Ancient formulary medicine’ (kohōta igaku 古方派醫學) in Japan; Sasang medicine (sasang ǔihak 四象醫學) and the yang boosting theory (puyangnon 扶陽論) in Korea.

46 For a more detailed argument of this paragraph I refer readers to Yi (2016a).

47 I translate ‘dotong 道統’ into English as ‘the orthodoxy of the Way,’ in which the Way stands for the true intentions of the ancient Sage Kings.

48 When relating the history of medicine in “On the Origin of Medicine,” Yi Chema used the term ‘ŭido 醫道,’ which is conventionally translated as ‘the way of medicine.’ Read in his context, however, ‘ŭido’ is better understood here as “referring to ‘medical activities, endeavors or practices (such as distinguished from the esoteric arts and techniques in ancient times),’ the experiential knowledge of which had been set down in writing.” Indeed, he explicitly stated that what had been handed down was the ‘disease patterns and medicinal dynamics,’ not the ‘orthodox lineage of the Way.’ Remarkably, “Yi Chema did not assume any prefigured normative principle or the orthodox lineage arising therefrom in his descriptive narrative of medical history.” For details, see Yi (2016b), p. 213.
'universalism of ancient medicine,' by which I mean the scholarly position that the medical fundamentals as universal knowledge had already been established by the Sage Kings and intelligent minds of the ancient times, and that the significance or meanings of the individual medical endeavors thereafter should be discussed in reference to the orthodox lineage of the Way, or, only in relation to the classical medical texts (such as Huangdi’s Inner Canon, Shennong’s Materia Medica (Shennong bencao jing 神農本草經) and Treatise on Cold Damage), which are assumed to carry the essence of ancient medicine.

On a related note, Yi Chema historicized the textual medical tradition. He described how classical texts such as Shennong’s Materia Medica and Huangdi’s Inner Canon have nothing to do with the ancient Sage Kings. In his account, Zhang Ji, known as the author of the medical classic Treatise of Cold Damage, was not so much a sagely mind, but rather a doctor who collected effective and proven treatments, and chose to compile his text.

This implies that he had a ‘modern’ or at least ‘proto-modern’ conception of historical progress.

For example, Yi Chema included the disease patterns conceived in Huangdi’s Inner Canon for his clinical discussions in Prolonging the World and Preserving People. Typically, the scholars who rejected the theory of yinyang and the Five Phases abandoned Huangdi’s Inner Canon altogether.

49 By ‘the universalism of ancient medicine,’ I mean the scholarly position that the medical fundamentals as universal knowledge had already been established by the Sage Kings and intelligent minds of the ancient times, and that the significance or meanings of the individual medical endeavors thereafter should be discussed in reference to the orthodox lineage of the Way, or, only in relation to the classical medical texts (such as Huangdi’s Inner Canon, Shennong’s Materia Medica (Shennong bencao jing 神農本草經) and Treatise on Cold Damage), which are assumed to carry the essence of ancient medicine.

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and relationships, which could be seen as bordering on the art and territory of the ancient adepts of esoteric techniques.

The Psychosocial Body

As we have seen above, medical textbooks such as Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine take cosmology as the foundation for medical discourses. Working against these conventions, Yi Chema’s response may be found within his treatise investigating the human body in the first part of Prolonging the World and Preserving People. This treatise consists of four discourses: “On Nature and Life” (Sŏngmyŏngnon 性命論), “On Four Threads” (Sadannon 四端論), “On Expansion and Supplement” (Hwakch'ungnon 擴充論), “On Viscera and Bowels” (Changpuron 肝腑論). These discourses demonstrate his particular style of knowing the human body. In “On Nature and Life,” he structures the human body by employing an analytic framework made up of four categories that I denote as ‘Heaven-Human-Nature-Life’ (ch’ŏn in sŏng myŏng 天人性命). In his second discourse, “On Four Threads,” he differentiates the human body into four constitutional types in terms of the relative dimensions of the viscera such that the physiological workings of the viscera are indissolubly intertwined with the psychosocial parameters. In his third discourse, “On Expansion and Supplement,” he argues for the cultivation of qualities, indicating what people should address or elaborate on in order to achieve and maintain good health. And finally, in the fourth discourse, “On Viscera and Bowels,” he maps out the body’s internal workings or physiological processes by bringing into play the four divisions of the body and physiological materials found within them.

Frameworks for the Body: Psychosocial Perspectives

Yi Chema understood the human body by means of four categories—that is, the Workings of Heaven (ch’ŏnki 天機), Human Affairs (insa 人事), Nature (sŏng 性) and Life (myŏng 命). This appears in the first few lines of the first

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53 An earlier version of the text instead uses the term “Investigating the Human [Body]” (wŏnin 原人) as a heading for what corresponds to these four discourses.
54 The word ch’ŏnki 天機 can be translated, for instance, as ‘heavenly secret,’ ‘heavenly engine’ or ‘congenital characteristic;’ sŏng 性, as ‘human nature’ or ‘personality;’ myŏng 命, as ‘mandate,’ ‘investiture’ or ‘lifespan.’ Very likely, Yi Chema took the terms ‘nature’ and ‘life’ from the phrases “Conserve the Heart-Mind to Nourish Nature” (chonsim yangsŏng 存心養性) and “Cultivate the Body to Institute Life” (susin yipmyŏng 修身立命). As is often the case, Yi Chema appropriated numerous terms, not giving any specific clarifications.
discourse “On Nature and Life” of Prolonging the World and Preserving People.

There are four [aspects of] the workings of Heaven: first one is local matters (chibang 地方); second, human relations (illyun 人倫); third, worldly unions (sehoi 世會); fourth, heavenly seasons (ch’ŏnsi 天時).

There are four [aspects of] human affairs: first, dwellings (kŏch’ŏ 居處); second, clanships (tangyŏ 党與); third, acquaintance making (kyowu 交遇); fourth, official matters (samu 事務).

The Ears hear heavenly seasons; the Eyes see worldly unions; the Nose smells human relations; the Mouth tastes local matters.

The Lungs train official matters; the Spleen matches making acquaintances; the Liver institutes clanships; the Kidneys settle dwellings.

The Jaw has stratagem (chuch’aek 策策); the Chest, administration (kyŏngnyun 經綸); the Navel, moderation (haenggŏm 行檢); the Abdomen, generosity (toryang 度量).

The Head has discernment (sikkyŏn 識見); the Shoulders, solemn manners (wiŭi 威儀); the Waist, craftiness (chaegan 材幹); the Hip, schemes (pangnyak 方略).

In these statements, Yi Chema associated the categories ‘the Workings of Heaven’ (to be brief, Heaven) and ‘Human Affairs’ (to be brief, Human) with, respectively, the superior-exterior body parts (Ears, Eyes, Nose and Mouth) and the inferior-interior body parts (Lungs, Spleen, Liver, Kidneys). Turning to the third and fourth categories, he related ‘Nature’ and ‘Life’ respectively, to the anterior and the posterior parts of the body. In other words, the anterior parts (Jaw, Chest, Navel and Abdomen) find the corresponding attributes of ‘stratagem,’ ‘administration,’ ‘moderation’ and ‘generosity,’ and get assigned to the ‘Nature’ category. And the posterior parts (Head, Shoulder, Waist and Hip), with their respective attributes of ‘discernment,’ ‘solemn manners,’ ‘craftiness’ and ‘schemes,’ are allocated to the ‘Life’ category. Put more simply, he aligned the categories of Heaven, Human, Nature and Life, and their corresponding attributes, with different aspects of the body.56 (See Table 1 on the following page.)

56 These four reference categories have more attributes attached to than are described here. As shall be explained below, they include the attributes (Sŏng or Chŏng, in his terms) of sorrow, anger, joy and pleasure, and the attributes of self-
Table 1. The Framework of the Body: Superior-exterior (Heaven, 天), Inferior-interior (Human, in 人), Anterior (Nature, 性), Posterior (Life, 命) Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superior-exterior</th>
<th>The Workings of Heaven: Sensory Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Heavenly Seasons / sorrow of Sorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Social Unions / sorrow of Anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posterior</td>
<td>Life: Exercise of Doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Discernment / Waywardness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder</td>
<td>Solemn Manners / Extravagance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waist</td>
<td>Craftiness / Indolence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip</td>
<td>Schemes / Covetousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spleen</td>
<td>Acquaintance-making / sorrow of Anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>Clanships / joy of Sorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidneys</td>
<td>Dwellings / joy of Pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anterior</td>
<td>Nature: Exercise of Knowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anterior</td>
<td>行政/权力</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anterior</td>
<td>确保/永远</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importance and negligence. In Table 1, Sòng refers to the ‘how-to-perceive’ perspective of the human agent in terms of sorrow, anger, joy and pleasure; Chòng, the ‘how-to-react’ facet, as I discuss at a greater length shortly.
Seeking to elaborate on these schematic frames, Yi Chema relates them to 'knowing' (chi 知) and 'doing' (haeng 行). The superior and inferior (or exterior and interior) dyad, the 'Heaven-Human,' relates to what is given inherently. The Heaven category refers to the way one perceives or recognizes (through the sense organs) the outer world, while the Human category relates to the way one acts or behaves (through the visceral organs) vis-à-vis human affairs. Hence, the superior and inferior dyad, the 'Heaven-Human,' is about what one is to 'know.' In contrast, the anterior and posterior dyad, 'Nature-Life,' is concerned with what one should 'do' in the material world in order to live a healthy and wholesome life. Furthermore, this kind of 'doing' ought to be grounded in the full awareness of the inherent attributes of the Heaven and Human categories. In this configuration, the Nature category points to the 'exercise of knowing' (haengkichi 行其知), while the Life category points to the 'exercise of doing' (haengkihaeng 行其行). At first glance, the above formulaic categorizations look similar to the correlative thinking. However, Yi Chema had structured the framework 'Heaven-Human-Nature-Life' in terms of 'knowing' and 'doing,' rather than using the 'confrontational dynamics of yin and yang' (yingyangdaidui 陰陽待對) or the reasoning of the Five Phases.

From the above, it can be seen that Yi Chema enlisted and foregrounded the psychosocial attributes in portrayals of the body, as compared with conventional cosmological thinking. He conceptualized the body in such terms as 'discernment,' 'solemn manners,' 'craftiness,' 'schemes;' 'stratagem,' 'administration,' 'moderation,' 'generosity;' 'dwellings,' 'clanships,' 'acquaintance-making,' 'official matters;' 'local matters,' 'human relations,' 'worldly unions' and 'heavenly seasons.' Additionally, he included words such as 'waywardness,' 'extravagance,' 'arrogance' and 'haughtiness' (see Table 1), as shall be discussed below. Thus he refers to psychosocial matters to the extent that they have to do with describing the ways that men and women engage with the world—through cognition, behavior, affectivity, mentality, personality or faculty. These words are much less cosmological. Even the term 'heavenly seasons' (ch'ŏnsi 天時, literally, 'heavenly time') most likely refers more to social occasions rather than to cosmological events. Suggestive in this regard is the fact that the general topics Yi Chema deals with elsewhere under the same title 'heavenly seasons' are indeed mostly about non-cosmological psychosocial matters. Overall, the human body is depicted in terms of these non-cosmological psychosocial attributes.

57 See Yi Chema, "Heavenly Seasons," Manuscripts on Investigation and Enlargement (Kyŏk'gi'go 極致藁), pp. 29-35. The topics under this heading include 'heaven' (ch'ŏn 天), 'human world' (se 世), 'human' (in 人), 'earth' (chi 地); 'time' (si 時), 'wealth'
Let us briefly turn to the history of science to gain a perspective on Yi Chema’s engagement with the psychosocial. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the great age of classification in the West. Museums became repositories of (dead) animals and plants, minerals, crafts, diseases, medical cases, and even anthropological artifact such as customs and languages. Their scientific activities, which might be called an “extended natural history,” included collection, description, identification, assignment, documentation, categorization, compilation, and exhibition. At about the same period, Korean and East Asian scholarship also saw literati and intellectuals seeking encyclopedic knowledge. Similar to the West, they collected, described, documented, differentiated, commented, annotated, and compiled. Through these activities, these then-contemporary minds, both Western and Eastern, sought to understand the world around them, and their place within it. From this perspective, what Yi Chema did was to register psychosocial matters, categorize them and relate them to the human body. These Western or East Asian contemporaries of Yi Chema described the body in relation to the constitution of the outer world, such as seasonal and regional characteristics dependent on the flowing of qi. However, Yi Chema drew attention to the internal bodily constitution with its interdependence with the psychosocial dimension, highlighting the agency of the human subject, which will be brought into relief below.

**Differentiation of the Body: the Sasang Person Types**

Employing the framework above, Yi Chema grouped the human being into four constitutional types. On the basis of the configurational landscape of the four viscera, he differentiated the human body into *Sasang* Person types—Greater Yang Person, Greater Yin Person, Lesser Yang Person and

(chae 財), ‘talents’ (chae 财), ‘benefits’ (yi 利), ‘wisdom’ (chi 智), ‘ability’ (nŭng 能), ‘aptitude’ (chae 財), ‘power’ (yŏk 力); ‘discussion’ (gŭ 議), ‘scheme’ (mo 谋), ‘exhortation’ (kŭn 勸), ‘endeavor’ (no 勞); ‘arrogance’ (kyŏng 骄), ‘haughtiness’ (kŭng 矜), ‘dominance’ (pŏl 小), ‘brag’ (kwa 夸); ‘mean fellows’ (pibu 鄕夫), ‘narrow-minded men’ (soin 小人), ‘pseudo-gentry’ (byangwŏn 邑士), ‘malign clique’ (ch’ando 謡徒); ‘intention’ (yi 意), ‘thinking’ (yŏk 議), ‘boldness’ (tam 膽), ‘volition’ (chi 志), ‘investigation into things’ (kyŏngmul 格物), ‘enlargement of knowledge’ (ch’ichi 賦知), ‘sincere intention’ (sŏngŭi 慙意), ‘righteous mind’ (chŏngsim 正心). This also implies that the term ‘the workings of Heaven’ (ch’ŏnki 天機)—as constituted by local matters, human relations, worldly unions and heavenly seasons—is also more about human matters, rather than cosmological events.

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58 See, for instance, Pickstone (2000), pp. 60-82.
59 Ibid.
60 For the Korean case, I refer readers to Noh (2013) and Ahn (2004).
Lesser Yin Person. This constitutes the first statements of “On Four Threads” of *Preserving the World and Preserving People*:

Humans are endowed with visceral dynamics, which has four different types. Those with large Lungs yet small Liver are called Greater Yang Person. Those with large Liver yet small Lung are called Greater Yin Person. Those with large Spleen yet small Kidney are called Lesser Yang Person. Those with large Kidneys yet small Spleen are called Lesser Yin Person.61

On first inspection, the Sasang typology seems to be defined or determined by the physical size of visceral organs. However, it is not clear to the reader what Yi meant by, for example, ‘large Lungs.’ He moves on to explain:

For the Greater Yang Person, the Sŏng of Sorrow (aesŏng 怒性) is distantly dispersing and the Chŏng of Anger (nochŏng 怒情) is hastily pressing. Since the Sŏng of Sorrow is distantly dispersing, qi flows into the Lung and the Lung becomes more flourishing. Since the Chŏng of Anger is hastily pressing, qi oppresses the Liver and the Liver becomes more washed away. This is why the visceral situation (changguk 脏局) of the Greater Yang person ends up with large Lung and small Liver.62

This quote reveals that the terms ‘large’ and ‘small’ qualify the state of affairs or configurational situation of the viscera (changguk 脏局), not just the size of the viscera. In addition, the dimensions of the visceral organs are based on aspects of the sŏng 性 and chŏng 情 of the emotions ‘Sorrow,’ ‘Anger,’ ‘Joy’ and ‘Pleasure’.63 Several questions arise. For example, what is the sŏng of Joy (hŭisŏng 喜性)?

For the Greater Yin Person, the sŏng of Joy 喜性 is broadly tightening and the chŏng of Pleasure 樂情 is hastily pressing. The reason “the sŏng of Joy is broadly tightening” is that, as the Nose of the Greater Yin Person observes the human relations, he/she enjoys the situation that people help each other. The sŏng of Joy is none other

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62 Ibid., pp. 7a-7b.
63 To avoid confusion, I adopt transliteration for the terms 性 and 情. Chŏng 情 has many meanings, including emotion, sentiment, situation, or passion. The literal meanings of sŏng 性 include nature, character and sex. Yi Chema used the same character 性 in the tetrad ‘Heaven-Human-Nature-Life’ (ch’ŏn-in-sŏng-myŏng 天人性命) and in the dyad ‘sŏng-chŏng’.
than smelling. The reason “the chŏng of Pleasure is hastily pressing” is that, as the Kidneys of the Greater Yin Person engage in dwellings, he/she gets pleased that others protect him/her. The chŏng of Pleasure is none other than getting pleased.⁶⁴

Taking these three quotes together, the sensors (Ear, Eyes, Nose and Mouth), the viscera (Lungs, Spleen, Liver, and Kidneys) with their relative dimensions (large or small), and their corresponding emotions (Sorrow, Anger, Joy, and Pleasure) with their sŏng and chŏng perspectives are specified in relation to each other. As the last quote shows, the sŏng of emotions is about the way “one perceives what is happening out there between people” (chiin 知人) when observing the human world; the chŏng of emotions is about the way “one behaves in response to others” (haengsin 行身) when partaking in the human world. To be more precise, the sŏng of Sorrow, Anger, Joy and Pleasure refer to such features that the sense organs ‘Ears, Eyes, Nose and Mouth’ recognize, respectively heavenly seasons, worldly unions, human relations and local matters (pertaining to the category ‘Heaven’). In like manner, the chŏng of Sorrow, Anger, Joy and Pleasure refer to such features that the internal organs ‘Lungs, Liver, Spleen and Kidneys’ perform, respectively seen in official matters, acquaintance-making, clanships and dwellings (pertaining to the category ‘Human’). Overall, Yi Chema incorporated into the medical body behavioral and cognitive dispositions in relationship with the visceral and sensory organs. (See Table 2.)

It is remarkable that, in his delineation of the human body, Yi Chema primarily employed the psychosocial parameters—the cognitive traits and behavioral dispositions—which are observed when individuals interact with the human world. (See Tables 1 and 2.) Conventionally, the human body had been conceived as informed by the cosmological energy/power (kiwun 氣運) of the Heaven-Earth yin yang (ch’ŏnchi ŭmyang 天地陰陽) and the Five Phases, together with the spiritual and material basics inherited from its biological father and mother.⁶⁵ For example, the five viscera arise taking after the five planets in the sky or the five phases. In contrast, Yi Chema brought to the fore the sŏng and chŏng of the emotions instead of the cosmological machinery. He does not mention the Five Phases at all in his

⁶⁵ See, for example, Hŏ Chun, “Beginning of Form and Qi” (Hyŏnggichisi 形氣之始), “Beginning of Conception” (Taeyingchisi 胎孕之始), “Four Great’ Shapes into Forms” (Sadaesŏnggyŏng 四大成形), Treasured Mirror of Eastern Medicine, p. 72.
Table 2. Differentiation of the Body: Features of the Sasang Persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Greater Yang Person</th>
<th>Lesser Yang Person</th>
<th>Greater Yin Person</th>
<th>Lesser Yin Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive Traits</strong></td>
<td>Sorrow <strong>song</strong></td>
<td>Anger <strong>song</strong></td>
<td>Joy <strong>song</strong></td>
<td>Pleasure <strong>song</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>distinctly dispersing;</td>
<td>vastly enfolding;</td>
<td>extensively tightening;</td>
<td>deeply hardening;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anger <strong>chŏng</strong></td>
<td>hastily pressing</td>
<td>Pleasure <strong>chŏng</strong></td>
<td>Joy <strong>chŏng</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hastily pressing</td>
<td></td>
<td>hastily pressing</td>
<td>hastily pressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Traits</strong></td>
<td>Observe Heavenly Seasons;</td>
<td>Observe Social Unions;</td>
<td>Observe Human Relations;</td>
<td>Observe Local Matters;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sorrow over Deception</td>
<td>Anger over Insult</td>
<td>Joy over Aid</td>
<td>Pleasure over Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visceral Configuration</strong></td>
<td>Large Lungs; Small Liver</td>
<td>Large Spleen; Small Kidneys</td>
<td>Large Liver; Small Lungs</td>
<td>Large Kidneys; Small Spleen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

argument. Instead he presents the viscera as being formed through the **song** and **chŏng** of the emotions. In other words, what inform the constitution of the viscera are the ways that one perceives of and responds to the outer world. Hence he put the social experiences of humans interacting with each other at the center of his conception of the human body. Notably, in describing this process, he used the term ’**qi**’ as we saw in the second quote of this section. However, this **qi** is not so much subordinate to the cosmological principles of cosmic resonances or the Five Phases, but is rather subject to the psychosocial activities of the human agent. This means that the term **qi** here refers less to the cosmological aspect, and more to the physiological (as well as psychosocial) situation.

While he employed the terms *yin*, *yang* and **qi** in his accounts, he used them

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66 As seen earlier in a quote, Yi Chema disapproved of the features of ‘the esoteric arts and techniques’ (*fangshu* 方術) contained in Huangdi’s *Inner Canon*. By the esoteric arts and techniques, he probably meant such things as the Five Phases. In fact, his conceptual categorization is based on ‘four,’ not ‘five’.  
67 To take an example, the concept of **qi** is central in the pulse diagnostic theory and three-*yin*-three-*yang* system. However, in Yi Chema’s view, they are just some clues or hints for differentiating disease patterns. See Yi Chema, “On the Origin of Medicine,” *Prolonging the World and Preserving People*, vol. 2, p. 2b.
mostly in reference to internal physiological processes of the medical body, rather than as speaking to cosmic resonances.

In this regard, a remark on terminology merits special note here. As was the case with the terms ‘Nature’ and ‘Life’ amongst others, Yi Chema used the terms sŏng and chŏng in his discourse, without addressing the history-laden multi-layered meanings of these terms, still less elucidating their ambiguous yet connoted shadings. He employed these terms when he was describing the ways people engage with the world. The sŏng relates to the cognitive patterns of perceiving the outer world; the chŏng, the behavioral patterns of expressing oneself. In this respect, the meaning of sŏng and chŏng of the emotions ‘Sorrow, Anger, Joy and Pleasure’ has encompassed diverse psychosocial personalities such as ‘intelligence and aptitude’ (skkyŏn chaeguk 智慧才局) and ‘temperament and talent’ (sŏngchil chaegan 性質材幹).68 This observation also applies to the terms ‘Greater Yang, Greater Yin, Lesser Yang and Lesser Yin Person’. Originally, the term ‘Sasang’—as well as Greater Yang, Greater Yin, Lesser Yang and Lesser Yin—are cosmological. But he employed these terms in his discourse without referring to this cosmological aspect. These conceptual terms are to be apprehended in his discourse on the four viscera intertwined with the sŏng and chŏng of the emotions. In fact, he unequivocally cautioned his readers to read them in his discursive context, not to confuse them with those terms in Treatise on Cold Damage—the three-yin-three-yang disease patterns of the Greater Yang, Lesser Yang, Yang Brilliance, Greater Yin, Lesser Yin, and Reverting Yin Disease.69

In summary, Yi Chema, without recourse to the logic of cosmological resonances, brings into play the sŏng and chŏng of the emotions in his presentation of the medical body. In his account, the variation in the sŏng and chŏng of the emotions, or in the psychosocial parameters, brings about differences in the configuration of the viscera, resulting in the differentiation of the Sasang Person types. Unlike Li Chan and Hŏ Chun, who placed the human body in cosmological settings, Yi Chema conceived the body as built primarily via psychosocial life, rather than as being subsumed by the cosmological dynamics of yinyang and the Five Phases.

Completion of the Body: Exemplars for Great Gentlemen

Given Yi Chema’s understanding of the psychosocial body, as described above, an obvious question is how this relates to his therapeutic guidelines for the attainment of a wholesome body. To this effect, Yi Chema suggests

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that, in order to achieve a healthy and ideal medical body, one must first understand and differentiate the visceral configuration (or better, the disproportions of the sŏng and chŏng of the emotions), and then practice and enlarge on such cultivation strategies as pertinent to one’s own Sasang Person type. This is the topic of the discourse “On Expansion and Supplement.”

In this discourse, Yi Chema elaborates on the bodily organization to the extent that, given the inherent distinctive configurations or disparities in the cognitive and behavioral domains (the categories ‘Heaven’ and ‘Human’), these predispositions could be modified or supplemented by exercising appropriate strategies in the mental and bodily practice domains (the categories ‘Nature’ and ‘Life’).

Firstly, Yi Chema introduces into his discussion other psychosocial attributes or qualities which may be characterized as hindrances that might arise in the process of relating to the human world. They are ‘self-importance’ (sasim 傲心) and ‘negligence’ (taehaeng/taesim 懶行/懶心). Self-importance is demonstrated by the presence of Arrogance (kyo 骄), Haughtiness (kŭng 傲), Dominance (pŏl 伐) and Bragging (kwa 夸); and Negligence is comprised of Waywardness (ch’ŏn 懶), Extravagance (ch’i 侈), Indolence (na 懶) and Covetousness (yok 慾). He ascribes self-importance to the anterior part (the category ‘Nature’) of the body, with Arrogance to Jaw, Haughtiness to Chest, Dominance to Navel and Bragging to Abdomen, while he sees negligence in the posterior part (the category ‘Life’), with Waywardness to Head, Extravagance to Shoulder, Indolence to Waist, and Covetousness to Hip.\(^{70}\) (See Table 1.) Put crudely, these characteristics and qualities refer to various self-centered tendencies, indicating poor engagements with the social and human world. To illustrate, Greater Yang persons, for example, are good at perceiving ‘heavenly seasons’ and doing ‘acquaintance-making,’ but they are liable to fall into ‘dominance’ and ‘covetousness’ when they are exercising and developing their own good points in the social world.

With these conceptual categories and further discursive formulations established, Yi Chema arrives at the following: if people exercise and expand their good points and are watchful not to fall into self-importance

\(^{70}\) Yi Chema, “On Nature and Life.” Yi Chema was keen to select the proper words in his formulations of the psychosocial body. Looking at self-importance and negligence, Yi Chema ascribed self-importance (or bragging) to the anterior part of the body, whereas negligence (or indulgence) is assigned to the posterior part of the body. This categorization aligns fairly well with the common sense of the body parts and the body-related (at least Korean) language experiences. However, he is not generous in giving detailed explanations. Hence, when it comes to specific details about self-importance and negligence, much has to be inferred.
or negligence, they can relate to the world far and wide (pakt’ong 博通) as well as engaging resolutely with it (tokhaeng 獨行). This subsequently leads to a physically and mentally healthy person—a world-prominent figure or a great gentleman. In case of Greater Yang persons, if they try to enlarge their own faculty in knowing ‘heavenly seasons’ and ‘acquaintance-making’ while they are attentive not to be ‘dominant’ and ‘covetous,’ they can finally get unparalleled ‘moderation’ and ‘schemes’ (in the categories ‘Nature’ and ‘Life’), only to become great minds in the world. Notably, this body conception implies that individuals are urged not to seek to improve their weaknesses, but rather to cultivate and develop their strengths while keeping a watchful eye out for problems that might arise in this process. This conception of the psychosocial body also operate as a basis for his social outlook for an ideal world, where all people can live their own lives based on their talents and the diversity of expertise is fully appreciated.

Physiology of the Body: Structures, Materials and Workings

Yi Chema systematized the physiology of the whole body by extending the internal workings of the four viscera into those of the four-part bodily terrain, the landscape of the psychosocial body, thus finishing off his presentation of the psychosocial body. This constitutes the contents of the discourse “On Viscera and Bowels.”

First of all, he divided the whole body into ‘Four Divisions’ (sach’o 四焦) in the vertical direction: Upper Division (sangch’o 上焦), Upper Middle Division (chungsangch’o 中上焦), Lower Middle Division (chunghach’o 中下焦) and Lower Division (hach’o 下焦). The four viscera ‘Lungs,’ ‘Spleen,’ ‘Liver’ and ‘Kidneys’ each belong to one of these four divisions as a chief member of its coterie. To each division, he also allocated the physiological structures and what might be called ‘circulating vitalities’ or ‘material metabolites.’ (See Table 3.) He described how all four divisions are to be found along the digestive canal, and all the constituents in one division are, in turn, interconnected with each other through the movements and

73 Ibid.
74 See below the section “Promoting Individual Agency and Acknowledging Social Diversity.”
workings of circulating vitalities or material metabolites. For example, the ‘coterie of the Lungs’ (p'yŏndang 肺黨) in the Upper Division comprises Esophagus, Jaw, Ears, Head and Lungs as material structures, with Liquid (chin 津), Spirit (sin 神) and Grease (ni 膩) as physiological objects. In his account, the physiological objects, such as Liquid, Spirit and Grease, are circulating in their own divisions and transforming themselves into one another. These ‘circulating vitalities’ or ‘material metabolites’ can be categorized as “body fluids” in a broad sense. Of note here is that Spirit (sin 神) and Ki (氣, C. qi) are more fluid-like than these characters conventionally imply, and that the Ki here flows only in the Upper Middle Division, unlike the cosmological qi flowing and resonating in the whole universe.

For Yi Chema, physiological processes are driven and energized by the psychosocial activities of the human agent, rather than by the cosmic resonances of the universe. His formulation suggests that, in the course of exercising precautions against self-importance and negligence, the physiological constituents of each division can operate or circulate quite

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76 His observation here gives us an inkling of the material reality that might drive his medical innovations.


78 In this case, I transliterate the character 氣 as Ki, not qi. As is often the case, the meaning of the same character 氣 varies depending on the context.
favorably throughout the body. This is the logical extension of the previous section on the physiology of the four divisions of the psychosocial body. In addition to this, he made an explicit statement that what energizes the physiological processes in each division is the vigorous cognition activity of the sensory organs and the enthusiastic social practice of the visceral organs:

The Ear, with the listening power to extensively observe the heavenly seasons, brings out the clear qi of the Liquid Sea, fills the Upper Division with this qi to form the Spirit, supplies the Head-Brain with this Spirit to form the Grease, and has the Grease accumulated to form the Grease Sea. The Lungs, with the Sorrow power to proficiently do official matters, suck out the clear juice of the Grease Sea, push this juice into the Lungs to nourish the Lung Primordia, and, in the inside, defend the Liquid Sea to get the qi aroused and the Liquids accumulated. ..

Therefore, the Ear should listen distantly; the Eyes, see vastly; the Nose, smell extensively; the Mouth, taste deeply. If the operations of the Ear, Eyes, Nose and Mouth are deep, distant, extensive and vast, then the Essence, Spirit, Ki and Blood will build up; if they are shallow, near, narrow and small, then the Essence, Spirit, Ki and Blood will diminish.

In short, the discursive logic here and elsewhere is that the physiological processes are driven by the psychosocial (as well as physical) activities such as perceiving and behaving in the human world. Here again, Yi Chema accentuated human agency in bodily workings, just as in the bodily configuration. As mentioned earlier, the physiological operation of the cosmological body is basically actuated by the cosmic resonances, as stated in the phrase: “Things of the same kind energize each other.” With Yi Chema, the medical body has moved from the cosmic universe down to the human world.

Finally, I want to draw attention to the four-part body landscape, the ‘Four Divisions,’ which is novel and worth noting in the history of East Asian medicine. First, the term ch’o 焦 (C. jiao) in ‘Four Divisions’ (sacho 四焦) reminds us of the ‘Triple Burner’ (san ch’o 三焦, C. sanjiao). The triple burner, which divides the body vertically, usually refers to an internal organ of the body, or a three-part body configuration used as a basis for a diagnostic method for warm disorders. The latter divides the body into

80 Ibid., p. 17b.
three groups: the heart and lungs; the spleen and stomach; the liver and kidneys. Grounded on the system of 'channels and collaterals,' this body partition was conceptualized for understanding disease patterns. In contrast, Yi Chema’s Four Divisions comprise the Lungs, Spleen, Liver and Kidneys, with the Heart being notable by its absence, and is conceptualized in relation to human agency rather than disease patterns. These distinctive characteristics also figure prominently when compared with the more commonly observed body partition, the interior-exterior division. In line with the conception that the body is composed of the exterior visible form (hyŏng 形) and the interior invisible qi, the body has been perceived as the site where the pernicious qi, or the pathogenic factor, intrudes from the outside in and fights with the benign qi inside. In this respect, the body is sometimes regarded as partitioned into several sectors, depending on the progress of the disease. Looking at the disease ‘cold damage,’ for instance, we see many interpretative analyses for the body divisions and their clinical realities over the course of history, and yet their background picture is mostly about the interior-exterior division. Unlike this body partition, each of the Four Divisions contains both interior and exterior parts. This is because the psychosocial body is conceived in terms of the social practice of the human agent and its active engagement with the world, with social practices being performed through the whole body, be it internal or external.

**Promoting Individual Agency and Acknowledging Social Diversity**

Yi Chema appended to the text an essay titled “On Salvaging the World” (Kwangchesŏl 廣濟說), which sheds light on his own psychosocial beliefs. Ostensibly, the content of this essay does not seem to fit with general medical texts. By placing it at the end of the text, he is likely to have attributed importance to it. So despite the lack of resonance with the rest of

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81 It is remarkable that Yi Chema did not put the Heart into his formulation of the psychosocial body. As is the case with most Confucian scholars, he certainly took the Heart as the Heart-Mind, a thing on a higher level than that of the rest of the viscera.

82 See, for example, Scheid (2013).

83 This essay is mostly composed of such themes as cautioning against alcohol drinking, sexual indulgence, valuable materials and influential powers, and also exhorting people to exert an effort on learnedness, thriftiness, diligence and precaution as may be appropriate. He had probably written this essay independently of the textbook *Prolonging the World and Preserving People*. 
the text, or maybe because of it, this essay is important for understanding Yi Chema.

Hence I would like to address two observations that he made. The first comes at the end of “On Salvaging the World,” and the second constitutes the epilogue to *Prolonging the World and Preserving People*.

No other bad things in the world occur more frequently than to deride judicious minds and ridicule competent minds (*t’uhyŏn ch’iillin* 嫉賢嫉能); no other good things in the world are greater than to cherish judicious minds and appreciate able minds (*hohyŏn yosŏn* 好賢樂善). ... As I have extensively surveyed the writings of the past, the cases of the world having become sick all arose from deriding judicious minds and ridiculing competent minds; the world having become cured, all from cherishing judicious minds and appreciating able minds. To deride judicious minds and ridicule competent minds causes myriads of troubles in the world; to cherish judicious minds and appreciate able minds serves as a great remedy for the world.84

As to plowing, sowing, pottery-making and fishing, Shun the Great in all instances considered it as a virtue to obtain those skills relying on folks. Confucius once said, “If there are three people traveling on the road, one of them is sure to be a mentor for me.” In view of this, as for the faculties of various folks in the world, Sages had definitely learned them widely and inquired into them thoroughly, finally to acquire them, and thereupon they became greatly cultivated. Speaking of the intelligence and aptitude of the Sasang Persons [or all the people in the world], each of them has his/her own well-versed field—such as writing, calligraphy, archery, horse-riding, singing, dancing and courteous manners, through to small skills such as board games, and meticulous crafting and various artistrys. Largely, what they are good at doing or making differs from person to person. All persons are to improve on their ingenious faculties in their own styles, so that the diversity of various people’s flair should go flourishing in the world.85

Reading these two quotes together, we can see that Yi Chema intended to convey a social message: people should promote their own agency and

acknowledge social diversity, which is also a logical conclusion of his conceptual formulation. The first quote suggests that social sicknesses arise from disparaging judicious or able men, and the best remedy for these problems is to cherish and appreciate them. In the second quote, he envisions a world in which all can identify and develop their own positive qualities to the fullest extent, such that they can engage with the world in all its diversity. In his view, every individual has his or her own field of experience and expertise, and each field or profession has its own worth with no predetermined hierarchy existing between them. Incidentally, Yi Chema composed some poems, which speak of his awareness of the fact that all the things in the world have their own inherent significance and value. In this context, his dictum “to cherish judicious minds and appreciate able minds” can be read as meaning that one must acknowledge other people’s faculties or abilities, whatever they are. This social perspective is better understood in the context of the organizational logic of the psychosocial body. As explained above, the psychosocial body is organized such that a medically healthy body is achieved through the process of knowing his or her Sasang Person type, that is, what he or she is good at in engaging with the world, as well as by cultivating his or her faculties whilst heeding what might ensue from this course, for example, self-importance and negligence. Here the psychosocial body is defined by psychosocial dimensions, not by social position or by cosmology. This implies that the human (body) is no longer a passive object, but an active subject. This is indeed what he emphasized with the terms ‘knowing’ and ‘doing’ in his presentation of the psychosocial body. In this sense, people are to promote their individual agency as well as to value their own qualities and skills. In addition to this, Yi Chema urged people to acknowledge social diversity in “On Salvaging the World.” In conceptual terms, there is no hierarchy between the four Sasang Person types. In the epilogue he stated his ultimate desire that a healthier world would be realized through his medical enterprise.

86 In fact, in a memorial to the government, Yi Chema had proposed appointing judicious ministers and excellent generals as the best solution to the then current problems. Yi Chema, “A Memorial to the Great Minister (Kim Pyŏngsi),” Posthumous Works of Yi Chema, pp. 6b-8b.

87 Roh (1999), p. 46.

88 He expressed his unequivocal aspiration for “prolonging the world and preserving people” in the epilogue to the text. As a side note, 保元 is sometimes incorrectly translated into “preserving primordial qi.” As Gong Tingxian explains in his preface to his book Shoushi baoyuan, the terms shoushi 寿世 and baoyuan 保元 have the same meaning of “preserving or protecting people in the world,” which refers to the office of prime minister.
Epilogue

As we have seen so far, Yi Chema presented a medical body that actively relates to, or engages with, the human world, one in which the psychosocial disposition, constitutional physicality and internal workings are closely intertwined with each other. The psychosocial dimensions, including human agency, come into play in the picture of this body perception and in the medical practice. This I have called the psychosocial body. The cosmological body, on the other hand, resonates with the macrocosm and is energized through the cosmology. However, the psychosocial body is energized by the active social practices of everyday life. Physiologically, the psychosocial body comprises Four Divisions along the vertical axis, with the physiological process of each division being driven by the psychosocial practices of the human agent. The more commonly observed body partition is between the exterior and the interior, which was conceptualized on the perception that the body is composed of form and qi or that the pernicious qi or disease penetrates the body from the outside. Overall, the psychosocial body conveys more of human agency, social practice or biography compared with the cosmological qi, Five Phases or seasonal influences. In sum, Yi Chema shifted the medical body from the heavenly universe down to the human world.

The psychosocial body, as might be expected, carries with it social messages and ethical precepts. Yi Chema praised individual agency and social diversity: he encouraged people to realize and develop their own distinctive faculties and potential in their social practices, and, in addition, urged people to appreciate the various talents of others. This is not just a rhetorical device but also a logical consequence of the psychosocial body. He did not just look at moral probity revolving around unrestrained desires and sentiments, but rather envisaged an ideal world where human diversity would be acknowledged to its fullest extent. The late nineteenth century saw people, both Eastern and Western, being classified on the basis of an assumed sociocultural hierarchy or treated simply as physical objects at the mercy of those with more power. Viewed in this context, Yi Chema seems to be talking of human subjectivity and social egalitarianism, even though he himself made no express references to these issues.\(^{89}\)

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\(^{89}\) It is worth noting that literary elites from the northwest region of Korea aspired to ideals of universal inclusiveness, not local specificity, in spite of having experienced persistent socio-political discrimination. Yi Chema was a native of the northwest region, a social and political periphery in Chosón Korea, which in turn was a political periphery vis-à-vis China and the West.
The perspective of the psychosocial body illuminates the historical dynamics and epistemological diversity of East Asian medicine. Having lived in the East Asian medical tradition, Yi Chema interpreted the history of East Asian medicine as a process of accumulating medical experiences which are necessarily open to new analytical frameworks that help to move it forward. Taking the viscera as a principal thread, Yi Chema deliberately organized psychosocial matters, bodily structures, physiological processes and treatment methods, finally reaching medical innovation. Both the psychosocial body and the cosmological body make clear cases against the claim of modernity to be the holder of true knowledge, the search for which has resulted in modernity separating ecological interaction, human subjectivity and social experiences from material bodies. Rather, as the current research has shown, the body is not simply an isolated entity. It is the place where communication occurs through the visceral language between mind, affectivity, nature, society and culture.

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In fact, the whole picture of Yi Chema’s style of knowing and practice portrays how the inherited tradition of East Asian medicine was interpreted, reconfigured and synthesized by a local agent to produce a novel style of practice in response to ever-changing clinical settings.
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