Abstract
For Chinese Medicine, the zigomatic bone (cheek bone) and its variations in shape and color are, at the same time, clinical diagnosis markers and a predictive tool of health/sickness. Both anatomy-physiology and semiological quotations mentioned in Nei Jing Suwen Lingshu are studied here.

Key Words
Bone- Zigomatic bone – Cheek bone- Classical Chinese medicine reference books

Introduction and Goals
The temporomandibular joint is relevant in biomedicine; therefore we consider that reviewing the ancient Chinese medicine books contents is an excellent tool of anatomy-physiological and semiological knowledge.

Nei Jing Suwen Lingshu provides the information this paper is based upon, taking into account the relevance of bones rôle in classical Chinese medicine morpho-physiology.

Chapter 11 of Suwen, sums up the description of body organization and, mentioning them only once, explains about qi heng zhi fu—extraordinary viscera with lasting activity- extraordinary organs also known as curious organs.

All further reference to these organs found in other texts, are more or less accurate quotations from this Suwen chapter. Extraordinary viscera are fu-viscera which function as zang organs, that is to say with yin quality because they store but they do not evacuate.

Such viscera are: nao-brain, sui-marrow, gu-bone, blood vessels-xue mai, gall bladder-dan and uterus-zi gong. They constitute a six-viscerum group which form yinyang pairs in the three levels Heaven- Man- Earth, following a water-fire archetypical combination.

In Heaven, the symbol of macro and microcosmic life order brain and marrow are paired up. The brain represents both fire and water; fire through the heart where Shen, the spirit, is located, and water through the kidneys because they produce the Marrow.

The Earth gathers bones and mai-vessels. Suwen 23 states that bones are ruled by the kidney-water pair. The skeleton is a rigid and protective structure which holds brain and marrows, kidneys and heart and inner genitals and such structure remains after death as the genealogical lineage foundation of human beings. Fire comes from mai (vessels/blood/heart).

At Man level we find the gallbladder-fire, this viscerum is the one in charge of managing both beginnings and decisions and is related to gestation, therefore linked to the uterus which protective membranes are, as water is, source of change.

Gall bladder and gestational dynamics (bao, another word for uterus) belong to the man realm. Chinese language is metaphorical and so are the words it uses, that is the reason for the expression gestational dynamics since it talks not only about uterine fecundation but also about the bao in men, a creational function rather than an anatomical organ. The gall bladder is a decision-making organ and so it takes care of gestation, both physical and spiritual.

Among these six extraordinary organs we are going to focus now on gu-bone which is related to bone and vertebral marrow and any other tissue contained in a bone.

When using the term gu, Chinese refer to alive bones and not to isolated bones. The ideogram which represents this idea talks about bones coated with flesh because they are able to function just due to its union with muscles and tendons.

The definition of bone in ancient Chinese medical dictionaries points out that bone is that which can be found in the depth of flesh, the frame that holds the organism, the trunk of the tree; it also states that it has both a protective and a dynamic function; protective in head, thorax and pelvis and dynamic
because it allows the body movements. 
The anatomical functional metaphor shows that everything that flows needs to be guided; as the 
estones guide the river stream so the bones- due to their firmness- guide liquids, blood, essences and 
energy. 
The sinogram gu is the radical base of other characters as well and in ancient graphic representations 
gu is part of suí-marrow. The relationship between bone and marrow gets established by the common 
source of the kidneys essences producing marrow, which in its turn, nourishes the bones; they form a yinyang pair, the inner and the outer, the hard and the soft, constituting the body structure, the 
natural duration of life. 
Several bones are worth noting in the human body, some of them are: gao-gu eminent bone protruding 
from the mingmen region, the gate of life, second lumbar vertebrae; dazhui…big vertebrae, the 
seventh cervical vertebrae as well as quan ….cheek bone or zigomatic arch formed by the zigoma 
and the malar bone; the SI 18 point called quan liao where the three yang tendinomuscular 
meridians of the foot meet and both arm tai yang and shao yang. Also worth mentioning in the 
cheek bone area are: the prominent bone below the eye, and finally jia che gu (vehicle, supporting 
structure and transport of teeth) which refers to the jaw joint, the area before the ears related to E6 
point. 
Anatomical and clinical information on the Zigomatic bone can be found in NeiJing, this bone is 
considered to be the root of all bones: it protrudes and is the most standing out 
bone before reaching the cranium, it also gives support to the eye and Ling Shu 46 says that “the 
cheek bone shows us the proportion of the whole body right from the face” 
The Zigomatic area, with its changes in color, clinically marks health or disease. 
Suwen 32 says that when it shows a blackish color, clearly different from the forehead or other parts 
of the face color, a kidney condition is revealed; if it’s red the information points to heart pathologies. 
Because of yang predominance due to insufficient kidney water, everything damaging the kidneys, 
especially cold, will have its repercussion for bones and marrows. Excess of heat in spleen will 
produce a heavy head in first place and then sore cheeks and pain in both jaws. 
If reddish tone is moving downwards from cheeks to the cheek bones, an important abdominal 
congestion is marked; if color comes upwards from behind the zigoma, hypochondrium pain is marked 
and if it comes from above the arch, pathology is located at diaphragmatic level. 
Suwen 42 describes the Wind in the Kidneys and mentions that it can be diagnosed through the 
presence of coal black skin especially on cheek bones among other symptoms. 
Ling Shu 49 when talking about the semiology of diseases related to the four limbs highlights the 
cheek bone as a shoulder reference, and we have already mentioned that both TR and ID meet 
under the zigoma. 
The central area of the cheek is related to pathology in large intestine while the area below the cheek 
bone (kidney diseases) reflexes umbilical area suffering. 
Cheek bone prominence and size indicate the strength of the individual and its natural completion. 
Lingshu points out that when the physical body is solid and the cheek bone does not stand out as 
preeminent, the skeleton is too small and a person with an over small skeleton will die at a young 
age. Watching a person’s face we may realize how long he/she will live, if the bones around the ear 
are flat and depressed and they do not reach the muscle in front of it, this individual will die before 
reaching the age of thirty. 

Conclusions 
In order to design a prognosis and a treatment in the practice it is really important to know the 
semiological data clinical observation bring us. Classical Chinese medicine books constitute a 
constant and detailed information source when dealing with a health-sickness approach. 
Their reading and their study are at the base for professional training for Medicine Doctors both in 
Asia and Europe. 
Unlike what happens with their contemporary counterparts in western medicine where respectful 
reading of Classical books is confined to both medicine historians and medicine scholars, reference 
books dating from Ancient China are a day-to-day tool for the new generations of health professionals 
in their formation and training. 
Data and quoting brought to us by such books constitute excellent guidance for clinical practice and, 
im my opinion, this is so because they explain the conceptual theoretical basis of the Chinese medicine 
which has not lost the philosophical references it is based upon.
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