

The Classical Methods of Decoctions, (*Tāngyè Jīngfǎ* 湯液經法):

Explorations into the Six Spirit and Two Dawning Formulas of the *Fǔ xíngjué* 輔行訣¹



Huangdi, Shennong and Fuxi, surrounded by the Guardian Spirits of the Four Directions, the Sun, the Moon and the 28 Lunar Mansions.

The six spirit, 六神 and two dawning, 二旦 formulas come from a text whose full title is Crucial Rules on Using Medicinals for the *Zàngfǔ* Organs: Secrets to Aid in Movement, 《輔行訣臟腑用藥法要》*Fǔ xíngjué zàngfǔ yòngyào fǎ yào* (*Fuxingjue* from here). I gave the title 湯液經

法, *Tāngyè Jīngfǎ* to this article because the contents of the *Fuxingjue* are explicitly about classical methods of decoctions.

In the *Fuxingjue*, there is a single unequivocal mention of a lost text called the *Tāngyè Jīng*, 湯液經, Classic of Decoctions and its author Yī Yǐ n. The *Fuxingjue* states that some of its contents “[reflects] the utterly significant subtlety of the classical methods of decoctions (*Tangye Jingfa*).” The fact that the *Tangye Jing* was mentioned and the phrase *tangye jingfa* 湯液經法 was used should not lead anyone to conclude that the *Fuxingjue* represents Yī Yǐ n’s *Tangye Jing*. As the previous article by the classical Chinese language scholar Sabine Wilms shows, when the character 法 “method” is placed after the character 經 “classic/classical, then the character 經 has to function as an adjective that is modifying the *fǎ* 法 “method.” Therefore *jīng*, “classic” becomes *jīngfǎ*, “classical method,” and is referring to a method and not a text. Without a doubt and in the good company of the academic consensus among medical historians in China, Wilms has shown that, though the formulas may have ancient roots, there is much in the

¹ All translations of the indications for the formulas are taken from Sabine Wilms’s forthcoming translation of the *Fǔ xíngjué zàngfǔ yòngyào fǎ yào*

Fuxingjue that proves it is not an ancient text. At the same time, it is likely that some of the formulas have classical or ancient roots and it is definitely about classical methods of decoctions. As one can tell from Wilms's article, the *Fuxingjue* is a text whose history and content are shrouded in mystery. The origins of its different sections are unknown. No one knows when it was written or who wrote it. Moreover, it is a patchwork of six sections of collected material that seem to be only loosely related to each other. There is evidence that they do not come from any single place, writer or, even era. Wilms showed us that this material was put together some time after the death of the hermit Táo [Hóngjǐng]. Judging by this and from the style and language of the writing and the nature of the formulas, it is very likely that whoever collected the material, much of it is from the Chinese medieval era. Though we don't know who put it there, it was an anthology of material deemed worth putting together and hiding in the *Dunhuang* caves by someone.

As an herbal clinician, I find some of the contents fascinating. In this article, I'll be discussing section five of the text on the major and minor expressions of six spirit formulas and the two dawning formulas. Given that these formulas' names and ingredients closely match many of the *Shanghan Zabing Lun*, their origin is likely more ancient than the material in the rest of the text, perhaps even Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD).

A bit of background to explain my interest in these formulas: Around the year 2005, after almost 25 years of practice, I became drawn to classical formulas². The formula architecture and effectiveness of these formulas set them apart from more modern formulas. I diligently read the *Shanghan Zabing Lun*, looking for a thread of meaning or principles but found it mostly impenetrable. I understood the formulas in a this-for-this and that-for-that kind of way but couldn't find any sense of the text's unifying structure. I studied with various classical formula teachers in China and the United States. Though I learned a lot about classifying and utilizing the formulas, I was still not seeing the one integrative essence.

In 2007, I finally had an insight that completely shifted my understanding of the text. I heard a quote from Liu Lihong, who said: "it's all about tracking the *yang*."³ In a moment, I understood the text as describing the circular dynamics of *yang*, or the life-force, in the body. In my imagination,

² By classical formulas, I mean the formulas from the *Shanghan Zabing Lun* by Zhang Zhongjing

³ My colleague Jennifer Tongren traveled to China to study with Li Lihong and when she returned she showed me this quote in her notes.

I saw the sun's relative movement around the earth as connected to the circulation of the life force or *yang* (from here the life force *yang*) in our bodies. It then made sense that what we in English have come to know as the “Six Conformations” or “Six Levels” but what in Chinese is known as the 六經 *liùjīng*⁴, does not express relative depths in the body from *Taiyang* on the outside to *Jueyin* at the deepest level as I had been taught. Instead, the *liu jing* could be expressing movements of the life-force *yang* within our bodies as directed by movements of the heavens above. Suddenly the text and the formulas within it made great sense to me! The time of this insight was such a revelatory moment for me. I felt like Helen finally connecting the feeling of water with her teacher’s finger spelling. It was the dawning of meaning. Since that time, I have been working with and teaching classical formulas from this vantage point.

As time went on, I found that others had similar insights and wrote about them in various inspiring ways. I was delighted that the last issue of The Lantern included an article by Péng Z ĭ yì on the circular dynamics of ancient Chinese medicine.

When I first saw the section of the *Fuxingjue* that talks about the six spirit and two dawning formulas, it made immediate sense to me that this was an expanded expression of the circular dynamics I had come to see as the core of my approach to the *Shānghánlùn* and East Asian medicine in general. It is for this reason I chose to write an article on this section, which includes a group of formulas and the indications for these formulas.

As I do in my work with and teaching of the *Shanghan Zabing Lun*, I am applying my lens to this material, always with a critical awareness that my narrative about it is not the only correct way to

Everything should be made
as simple as possible,
but not simpler.

Albert Einstein

look at it. That said, when I interpret texts, especially classical texts, I do make sure that my interpretation is consistent with the text and other related texts and, more importantly, that it adds to clarity and clinical relevance. When my interpretation causes complex information

to simplify and fall into place, I always feel I'm onto something.

⁴ See blog post on this topic <https://whitepinehealingarts.org/what-does-經-mean/>

As has been pointed out in Wilms's article in this issue of *The Lantern*, this section of the *Fuxingjue* describes eight formulas, for which there are major and minor expressions. (see appendix). I suggest that we see these formulas as tools to re-establish the patient's right relationship with heaven's movements. The first four of these six spirits represent the traditional Chinese guardian spirits of the four directions (east, south, west, and north, respectively) as well as groupings of stars in the four quadrants of the sky. These are the Green-Blue Dragon, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Dark Warrior. Among the last two, one represents the central axis around the north star called the Hooking Array, and one represents the joining of fire and water in the north and is called the Soaring Serpent.

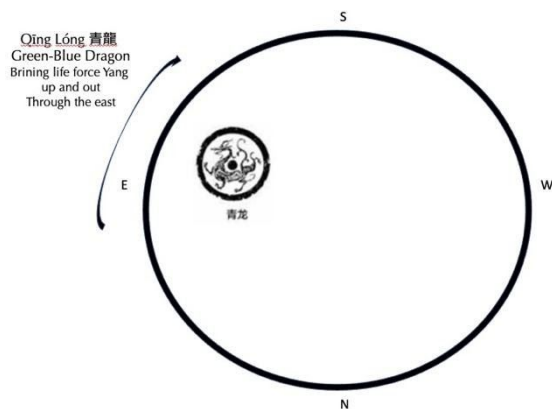
What are the movements of heaven, and how do these movements relate to a human being's physiology and pathology? I would like the reader to consider the image of our life-force *yang* ascending and descending in a circular pathway within our bodies, just as the sun and moon appear to rise and fall around the earth. Imagine that, when a body is in harmony with the circular rising and falling of the heavens, there is health. Health is a result of being in right relationship with the guardian spirits of the directions. Imagine that ascending in my body is related to the east's dynamic, where the sun, moon, and stars all ascend continually. Descending in my body is then related to the west's dynamic of celestial orbs setting. Imagine that the proper ascending of the life-force *yang* in my body is the same as being in alignment with the east's guardian spirit, the Green-blue Dragon, and descending in my body is the same as being in right relationship with the west's guardian spirit, the White Tiger. Failing to be in right relationship with a quadrant's guardian spirit means my body's life force *yang* is too slow or too fast in its rising and falling relative to the ascending and descending of the celestial bodies. We could also call this being sick.

I'll go over spirit formulas for each of the four quadrants, the center, and both the *yin* and *yang* dawnings.⁵ My wish is to give an overview of the structure and relevance of this one section of the *Fuxingjue*. We will see that all of the formulas in this section use the flavor and temperature of medicinals to encourage appropriate movement with time as well as the nature of the herbs, such as their density, lightness, juiciness, hardness, or suppleness.

⁵ The reason these formulas are named "dawnings" is explained further on in the text.

The Green-Blue Dragon is the spirit guardian of the east. Alignment with this quadrant generates our life-force *yang's* rising toward the upper body, Lungs and Heart, and the body's surface. If a person's life-force is going too slow relative to the movement of the celestial bodies in this quadrant, its warmth does not fully reach completion in these locations. The Green-Blue Dragon Decoction, *Qīng Lóng Tāng*, 青龍湯 formulas re-establish the right relationship with the east, which means that the formulas speed up the east to encourage the body to ascend with the eastern quadrant's timing. The *Fuxingjue* describes the Minor Green-Blue Dragon Decoction, *Xiǎo Qīng Lóng Tāng* as "A formula to treat heat effusion and aversion to cold due to movements in the sky, with sweat failing to emerge and panting, generalized soreness and pain, and a tight pulse." The life-force *yang's* failure to ascend and reach the body's surface leaves the surface cold and blocked, resulting in these symptoms. The formula to speed up the body's eastern ascension is *Xiao Qing Long Tang*, which is identical to *Má Huáng Tāng* () from the *Shanghanlun*. This formula uses the light, warm *Ma Huang* (), to support the eastern function of the body's life-force.

The *Fuxingjue's* *Dà Qīng Lóng Tāng*, Major Green-Blue Dragon Decoction, is almost identical to the *Shanghanlun's* *Xiao Qing Long Tang*. This formula has the same ascending and warming action as the previous formula. However, its rising action starts more deeply in the middle of the body using *Gān Jiāng*() and involves pungently warming the lungs to clear cold fluids. This intensely warm and pungent method matches the body's pattern of being even slower in the east, causing it to be unable to bring warmth to the south, in this case, the

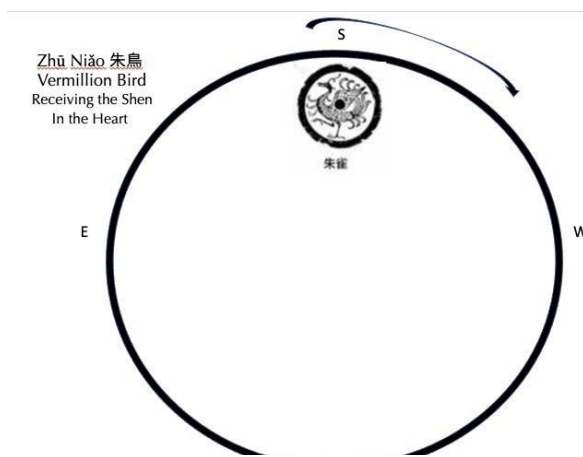


upper body lungs and the surface. The *Fuxingjue* says that this formula is a "treatment for [diseases due to] movements in the sky when the exterior fails to resolve, and there is water *qì* present below the Heart, with dry retching, heat effusion, and panting and cough that will not stop."



The next formulas, in chronological order, are the major and minor *Zhū Niǎo Tāng*, 朱鳥湯, Vermillion Bird Decoction. These formulas treat conditions in which the patient's body is not in alignment with the south's guardian spirits. What does it mean for a person to be out of alignment with the south? The southern direction is the peak of heat, and it is also just beginning the turn to the west. The celestial bodies' movement traverse the southern quadrant, whose guardian spirit is *Zhu Niao*, the Vermillion Bird, but the celestial bodies never stall out. If my life-force *yang* stalls out in the south, failing to move as it should, toward the west, my body will get very hot, and my fluids will start to dry out. In this way, my body is going too slow for time. Time keeps moving from the south toward the west, but my body is stuck in the south, getting hotter and dryer. The major and minor *Zhu Niao* decoctions treat this heat by restoring the circulation of my body's life-force *yang* from the south to the west with primarily bitter cold descending herbs and juicy sweet moistening herbs. The *Fuxingjue*'s *Xiǎo Zhū Niǎo Tāng* is "a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with insufficiency of Heart *Qì*, internal generation of vexation and heat, unease whether sitting or lying down and periodic diarrhea of pure blood like chicken or duck liver:" This formula is identical to the *Shanghanlun*'s *Huánglián Ējiāo Tāng* ().

Dà Zhū Niǎo Tāng is described as a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with repeated malign toxic dysentery, dysentery of pure blood with several tens of bowel



movements a day, marked emaciation to the point of looking like sticks and bones, inability to find ease in the Heart, and wringing tense pain in the center of the abdomen as if being stabbed with a knife."

The ingredients are the same as in *Xiao Zhu Niao Tang* with the addition of *Rén Shēn*() and *Gān Jiāng* (), which restore the *yīn* and *yáng* of the middle. While the *Qīng Long* formulas use light warm, pungent herbs to restore ascension, the *Zhu Niao* formulas restore the body's relationship to the south's movement to the west with bitter cold and moistening herbs.

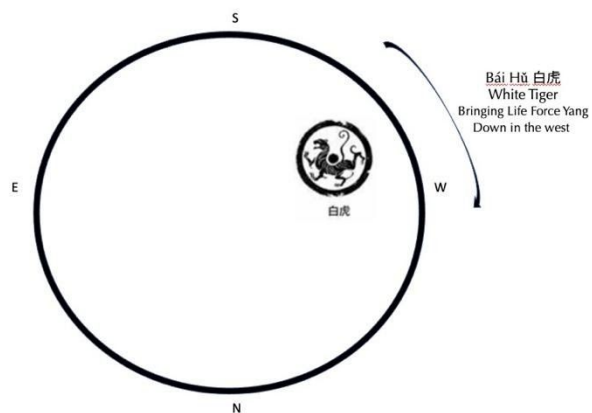


In the west, the guardian spirit is the White Tiger. The west's movement is downward, but unlike the southern direction that descends *toward* the west, the true west descends and dissipates toward the north. To understand the dissipation of the west, consider the characteristics of the Autumn season. Autumn, corresponding to the west, comes with the decaying of fruits and the dying of leaves on the trees. Everything in nature descends toward the ground and disintegrates. When a body fails to be in right relationship with the western direction, it fails to descend and dissipate *yáng's* life-force. There is then a great deal of congested heat backing up into the south's upper body. To help the body be right with time, the *Fúxīngjue's* major and minor *Bái Hǔ Tāng*, 白虎湯 (*White Tiger Decoctions*) use heavy, cool, pungent *Sh ĭ Gāo* (). *Xi ǎ o Bái Hǔ Tāng* is "a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with vexation and heat in the Heart, periodic spontaneous sweating, a dry tongue, thirst with desire to drink water, and periodic wheezing and coughing, [all of which] have lasted a long time without resolving." It is virtually identical to the *Shanghanlun's* *Bai Hu Tang*.

The *Fúxīngjue's* major *Bái Hǔ Tāng* is similar to its *minor Bai Hu Tang*, without the *Zh ĭ M ǔ* () and with the addition of *Mài Mén Dōng* (), *Bàn Xià* (), *Shēng Jiāng* (), and *Zhú Yè* (). It is closely related to the

Shanghanlun's *Zhúyè Shígāo Tāng*. It treats the condition in which the stalling of the body in the west is even more significant, to the

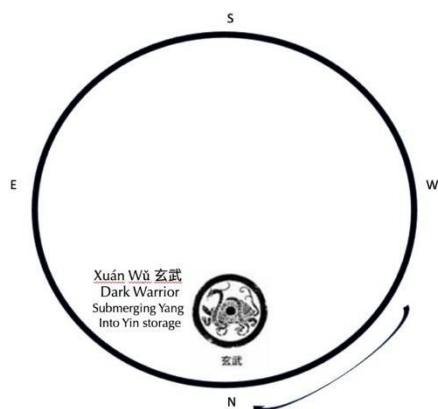
point that there is difficulty breathing. It is "a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with vexation and heat in the Heart, periodic spontaneous sweating, a dry tongue, thirst



with desire to drink water, and periodic wheezing and coughing, [all of which] has lasted a long time without resolving."



To complete the four quadrants' formulas, we go to the north's spirit guardian, the Black Turtle, who, in the image of it, is dancing with a snake. However, the formulas are not named after these animals but instead after the Dark Warrior, *Xuán Wǔ*, 玄武. The quality of the north is one of going into the depths and storing. The turtle submerges deep into the water of the north. Our bodies must have the ability to store the life-force yang deeply within the north of our torso, our *Dān Tiān*. When we are not in right relationship with the north, our bodies fail to submerge and store the life-force yang. In this case, our bodies not only become cold due to failure to store yang, but cold fluids are not transformed and so easily accumulate. To restore our relationship with the north's guardian spirit, we need dense, pungent, hot herbs, like *Fù Zǐ* (附子), as well as herbs that help us absorb and store fluids, like *Fú Líng* (茯苓) and *Bái Zhú* (白术). When this lack of alignment with time is mild *Xiǎo Xuán Wǔ Tāng*, which is the same as *Zhēn Wǔ Tāng* from the *Shanghanlun*, is indicated. The *Fuxingjue* says it is "A formula to treat disease due to movements in the sky, with insufficiency of Kidney Qì, internally generated vacuity cold, inhibited urination, pain in the center of the abdomen, and cold of the four limbs."



The *Fuxingjue* recommends *Dà Xuán Wǔ Tāng* as "a formula to treat Kidney Qì vacuity and fatigue, cold in the center of the lower abdomen, heaviness in the lumbus and back, coolness in the four limbs, inhibited urination, diarrhea that looks like duck droppings with more than ten bowel movements per day, choppy Qì and weak strength." We can see that for this latter formula, the lack of alignment with the storage of the life-force

yang is severe to the point that there is extreme leakage from below. This formula can be viewed as a combination of *Zhēn Wǔ Tāng* and *Lǐ Zhōng Tāng*.

⁶ Commonly fúling is considered an herb to drain fluids. However, in my clinical understanding and work, I've come to see it as a medicinal that increases the absorptive capacity of the middle and lower Jī ǎo so that proper drainage can occur.

After the four directions, there is the center, which corresponds to the pole star. In heaven, the constellations move through the four quadrants around this central pole. I think it will make sense to the reader that this central area corresponds to the earth's Spleen and Stomach. They act as an axis or hub for the up and down of the circular movement of our life-force *yang*.



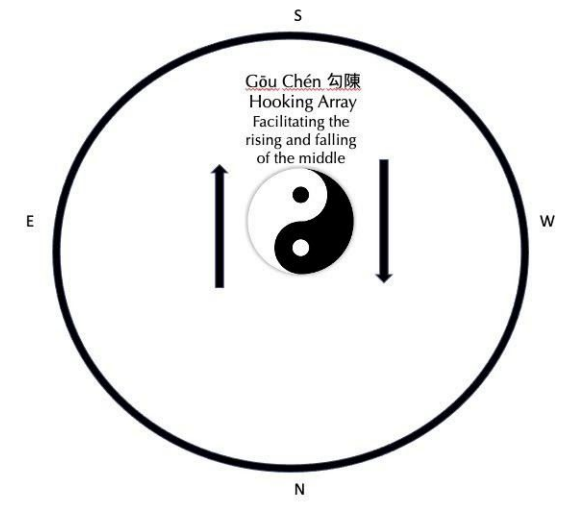
Without the ability to pivot through this transition area, our bodies' entire cyclic motion gets jammed up. In the diagram, we see the yellow emperor sitting in the center, ruling over these movements. He is the yellow emperor because of his association with the central axis. The constellation that includes the group making up *Gōu Chén*, 勾陳, Hooking Array, is inside of the three enclosures, *Sān Yuán*, 三垣. It rotates close to and around the north pole star. Because this position is mandrel-like, it is associated with earth, the Spleen's ascending

function, and the Stomach's descending function.

The formulas, major and minor hooking array, *Gōu Chén Tāngs*, are named after the hooking array asterisms that move in a circle close to and around the north star. *Xi Āo Gōu Chén Tāng* uses the middle warmer pungent warmth of *Gān Jiāng* (干姜) to open the center and sweet moistening *Gān Cǎo* (甘草), *Rén Shēn* (人參) and *Dà Zǎo* (大棗) to nourish the soil of middle earth. The *Fuxingjue* considers this "a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with insufficiency of Spleen Qi, failure to transform food and drink, lumbar pain, and diarrhea."

If the earth's weakness is more severe or long lasting, there is an increase of stasis in this rotating wheel in our bodies. Our bodies then fail to match the constellations' turning around the central north star leading to stasis in the central epigastric area. This, in turn, leads to heat. The body continues to need the pungent warmth and sweetness and, also, needs bitter cold yellow herbs to descend and parch stasis in the middle.

Dà Góu Chēn Tāng is very similar to the *Shanghanlun's Shēng Jiāng Xiè Xīn Tāng*. The *Fuxingjue* says it is "a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with Spleen Qì vacuity, evil heat entering the interior, rumbling noise and cutting pain in the center of the abdomen, and retching and vomiting that will not stop." Based on the placement of this formula's action in the central area of the sky as well as in our bodies, I find it very helpful to think of these types of formulas, that are often very difficult to categorize, including *Wu Mei Wan*, *Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang*, *Gan Cao Xie Xin Tang*, *Jiao Mei Tang* and even *Zuo Jin Wan* as what I call Central Axis Formulas. These are all formulas that treat blockage in the middle of the body with heat and cold symptoms.

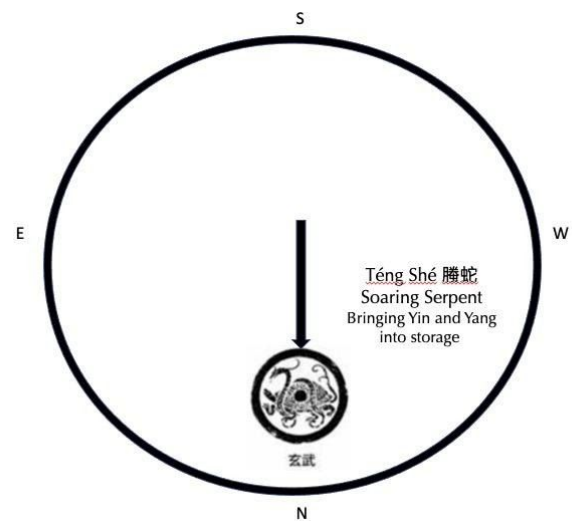


Given that we've now covered formulas for each of the four directions plus the center, it could seem that we are complete. However, we have one more spirit formula pair to go. For me, the major and minor versions of this formula are fascinating and speak to some profound concepts in understanding the circular dynamics of Chinese medicine. In a way, the Soaring Serpent formula, *Téng Shé Tāng*, pulls the whole wheel of the sky together.

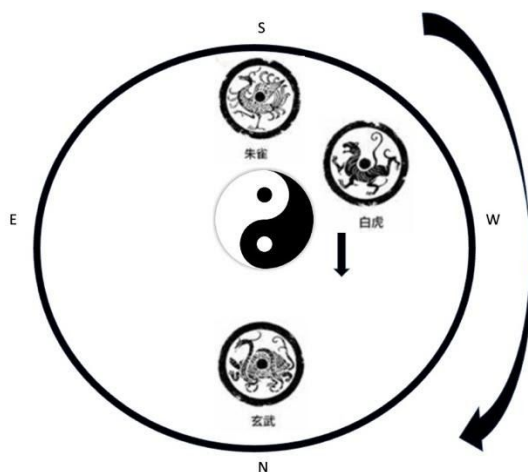
I hope that this article has encouraged the reader to imagine that our body's life-force yang coordinates with the turning of the celestial orbs in the sky around us. Now I will go a step further to explore the mechanism at play in our bodies. It is not just that my life-force *yang* is cycling within me. My body is a mechanism for taking in influences from heaven and earth into the depths of my body, processing those influences, discarding that which is unnecessary, and turning the rest into myself as a living being. What are these "influences" we are all receiving, processing, and expressing? From heaven, we receive Shen, which, for now, I will also call the life-force *yang*. We receive this into our Hearts from the southern direction. From the south, for the life-force *yang* to enter me entirely, it must travel downwards, through the west, all the way

to the north. As we've seen, the life-force *yang* submerges in the north, just as the sun is beneath us during the night. This downward movement of *yang* from heaven depends on the south's openness, the west's downward movement, and the central axis's free movement. In other words, our discussion above of the movements of the south, west, and center, we can now see as important, not just for good Qi circulation but for the very reception of life into me.

What does this have to do with the Soaring Serpent guardian spirit? What does the Soaring Serpent guard? The major and minor expressions of the *Téng Shé Tāng* 騰蛇湯 include herbs that purge the Large Intestine such as *Máng Xiāo* (芒硝), *Zhǐ Shí* (枳實) and *Dà Huáng* (大黃). The *Fuxingjue* says that *Xiǎo Téng Shé Tāng* is "a formula to treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with constitutional repletion of Stomach Qi, failure to eliminate evil Qi, abdominal fullness and panting, and sweating that will not stop." *Dà Téng Shé Tāng* is a formula "To treat heat disease due to movements in the sky, with failure to eliminate evil heat, constipation in the large *fǔ* organs, great fullness and repletion in the middle of the abdomen, sweating and panting, and periodic clouded spirit with failure to recognize people." Of course, these are reflections of the *cheng qì* or purgative type formulas of the *Shanghanlun*.



Here is where we revisit the fact that the northern quadrant represents two guardian spirits, the black turtle and the snake. It is essential to point out that the character translated as serpent, 蛇



Shé, is the character meaning snake. The tracts representing the *Shen*'s pathway, life-force *yang*, from the south to the north include the vermilion bird of the south, the Heart, the white tiger of the west, the Lungs, and the hooking array, the center. The final tract along this pathway is in the Large Intestine, which resides in the lower torso. The Large Intestine is not

just the body's mechanism for discharging what is not needed in the body. It is also the end stop on the pathway that allows the life-force *yang* to come down from heaven into the *dantian* of the body to become the *mingmen*.

The Large Intestine is an organ associated with dryness. Its job is to steam moisture out of the digestate into the body. In this way, it is also a vital mechanism to receive *yin* into the body. I see this lower, northern completion of the *Yangming*, expressed by the Soaring Serpent formulas, assuring that both *yang* and *yin* enter into and achieve storage in *Shaoyin*.

The Soaring Serpent group of stars are also found in the north. For me, the placement of this guardian spirit in the north illustrates the critical relationship between the lower tract of *Yangming* and the function of *Shaoyin* to store *yin* and *yang*. In terms of the clinical application, a patient who needs to develop a relationship with the north's Soaring Serpent guardian spirit has a blockage in the Large Intestine. In this case, the treatment principle is to apply the Soaring Serpent to complete the downward movement.



Finally, we get to the major and minor dawning formulas, *Dàn Tāng*, 旦湯. There are the dawning of *yang* formulas and the dawning of *yin* formulas.

The dawning of *yang* formulas seem to belong squarely on the eastern horizon, just below the Green-blue Dragon formulas. The formulas are variations on *Gui Zhi Tang*, a formula whose movement is up and out, reflective of the eastern direction. Of course, the east is also where the sun rises, which is *yang*'s ultimate dawning. *Xi ǎo Yang Dàn Tāng*, (Minor Yang Dawning Decoction) is mentioned in the *Jīnguì yàol ǔ* and is almost identical to *Guizhi Tang*. The *Fuxingjue* describes the presentation much like the *Guizhi Tang* presentation is described in the *Shanghanlun*: "For treating heat effusion caused by movements in the sky, with spontaneous sweating and aversion to wind, noisy breathing from the nose, and dry retching." *Dà Yang Dàn Tāng* (Major Yang Dawning Decoction) is very similar to Zhāng Zhòngjǐ ng's *Xi ǎo Jiàn Zhōng Tāng*, which is itself extrapolated from *Gui Zhi Tang*. In the *Jīnguì Yaolue Xiao Jian Zhong Tang* is in the section of deficiency-taxation. In the *Fuxingjue Da Yang Dan Tang* is described this way "To treat all cases of suffering from sweating that will not stop, with gasping breathing,

generalized taxation, and physical frailness, aversion to wind and coolness, hypertonicity in the abdomen, and no interest in drinking and eating, this formula is always suitable. If the pulse is vacuous and large, it is even more of a closely fitting pattern" The more warm, light and pungent a formula is, the more its action is upward and outward. Unlike the *Qing Long* formulas, along with the pungent, warm herbs, herbs, *Shēng Jiāng* (生薑), and *Guì Zhī* (桂枝), *Yang Dan* formulas contain ingredients that are sweet and/or sour, and very juicy. These herbs slow down the formulas ascent in the east, keeping close to the transition zone on the horizon rather than further toward the south like the *Qing Long* formulas. Another way to express this is to say that the *Yang Dan* formulas harmonize *yin* and *yang*. *Da Yang Dan Tang* emphasizes the enrichment of *yin* and infusing that *yin* with *yang*. *Xiao Yang Dan Tang* harmonizes *yin* with *yang* by harmonizing *yīng* and *wei*.



The dawning of *yin*, in terms of time, is dusk. *Yin* dawning formulas represent the western horizon, the transition area from *yang* time to *yin* time. I place it in contrast to the *Yang Dan* formulas on the eastern horizon. The *Yin Dan* formulas resemble some well-known *Shaoyang* formulas. *Xiao Yin Dan Tang* is almost identical to *Huangqin Tang* and, according to the *Fuxingjue*, is "for treating generalized heat and sweating due to movements in the sky, with pain in the head and eyes, pain in the abdomen, dry retching, and diarrhea." *Da Yin Dan Tang* is very similar to *Xiao Chaihu Tang* and is "a formula to treat all cases of suffering from dizziness in the head and eyes, dryness in the throat, constant tendency to dry retching, inability to get down food, vexation, and fullness in the Heart, propping pain in the chest and rib-sides, and alternating cold and heat."



How do these formulas then relate to the western horizon? One way to think of this is to consider the direction of the ministerial fire. This is the fire that resides

in the *dantian*, and it must burn upward. It is like a fire under a cooking pot burning upward to make soup. Yet the fire, as we have seen, comes downward into our bodies from above. To become the ministerial fire, it must pivot so that the fire can then radiate upward into the body. This pivoting action is from the *yang* conformations into the *yin* conformations. The *Yangming* is responsible for bringing the life-force *yang* down from heaven, the *Shao Yang*, as a pivot, is responsible for pivoting this life-force *yang* into position and, once in place, the *Shaoyin* is responsible for storing it. When I think of it this way, it makes perfect sense to situate these formulas in the west at *yin's* dawning. I have come to think of *Chai Hu* () and *Huang Qin* () as particular herbs for helping the *Shaoyang* pivot move smoothly. Symptoms associated with these formulas are due to the heat that should be in its physiological position in the *yin* conformations stagnating as pathological heat in *yang* conformations.



Conclusion

We can see these formulas are named after the animals of the four directions, dawn, and dusk. Interpreting my patients' suffering in the context of their body's relationship with space/time motions has helped me understand the symptoms that arise and apply the appropriate method. I had already been seeing the structure of the *Shanghanlun* as an expression of celestial movements when I first came across these formulas in the *Fuxingjue*. However, this text gives alternate names to already familiar formulas that connect them with space and time coordinates. Given that the quadrants have been named after these animals for many thousands of years, it seems likely that these formulas are very ancient and do indeed pre-date the *Shanghan Zabinglun*.

Though I don't have concrete evidence, these names feel like the formula's true and ancient names. Given the *Huangdi Neijing's* emphasis on the relationship of the human body's dynamics with celestial body's dynamics, I don't think it's a stretch to see these names as perhaps the true names. They invite an interpretation of the body as an instrument for receiving and working with heaven's influences and the formulas as helpers in keeping this instrument in good working order. I hope the readers might look into the starry skies, at luminous dawn or a beautiful sunset and be inspired to reflect on these great turnings.

