

An Everyday Warm Disease Formula: Ascending and Descending Powder (*Sheng Jiang San*)

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Abstract

This article presents an exploration of Yang Lishan's warm disease formula, Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*), including its historical background and examples of how physicians can use the formula clinically for a wide variety of conditions.

A couple of years ago I came across the following insomnia case study by Zhao Shaoqin (赵绍琴) (Peng, 1996).

Tong, a 46 year old, presented on July 6th 1992 with insomnia that had been going on for 20 years. At night he would have to take sleeping pills in order to fall asleep. He had a green-blue complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, heart irritability (*xin fan* 心烦), impatience, many dreams and did not take any pleasure in eating. His tongue was red with a white dry coat. The pulse was wiry, slippery and rapid.

Pattern: Liver and Gallbladder constrained heat,¹ obstruction of the qi dynamic and heat harassing the Heart spirit.

Treatment: Discharge Liver heat and regulate the qi dynamic in order to bring about peaceful sleep.

Prescription:

- Cicadae Periostracum (*chan tui*) 6g
- Curcumae longae Rhizoma (*jiang huang*) 6g
- Bupleuri Radix (*chai hu*) 6g
- Scutellariae Radix (*huang qin*) 6g
- Toosendan Fructus (*chuan lian zi*) 6g
- Aurantii Fructus (*zhi ke*) 6g
- Bambusae Caulis in taeniam (*zhu ru*) 6g
- Bombyx batryticatus (*bai jiang can*) 10g
- Scorched Three Immortals (*jiao san xian*)² 10g
- Polygoni Orientalis Fructus (*shui hong hua zi*)³ 10g
- Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang*) 1g

After taking three packets of herbs his sleep had improved. After 10 packets, the patient was able to sleep without taking any sleeping pills. The above formula was given in a modified form for 30 more packets and the sleep normalised.

I found this formula especially interesting because it did not contain typical sleep medicinals such as Ziziphi spinosae Semen (*suan zao ren*), Platycladi Semen (*bai zi ren*), Albiziae Cortex (*he huan pi*) and Polygoni multiflori Caulis (*ye jiao teng*). I was also curious about the medicinals Cicadae Periostracum

(*chan tui*), Bombyx batryticatus (*bai jiang can*), Curcumae longae Rhizoma (*jiang huang*) and Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang*), as they did not fit into my normal paradigm for treating insomnia. With further reading I realised that these four medicinals constituted Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*). I have since spent some time investigating this formula and have realised how widely used and versatile it is. Consequently I have since used it hundreds of times. Although originally a warm disease formula, I noticed that Zhao Shaoqin and other famous doctors such as Pu Fuzhou (蒲辅周) and Li Shimao (李士懋) have used it for all sorts of internal medicine complaints. Since I could find very little written about this formula in English, I wanted to share some of my findings.

Historical origins

Ascending and Descending Powder is a simple, elegant formula born out of the warm disease tradition. It was recorded in the Qing Dynasty (1784) by Yang Lishan (杨栗山) (Yang Xuan 杨璇) in the *Systematic Differentiation of Cold Damage and Warm Epidemics* (*Shang Han Wen Yi Tiao Bian*). Yang was proficient in the classics and diligently studied *Discussion of Cold Damage* (*Shang Han Lun*) as well as previous warm disease theory. He especially admired Liu Wansu (刘完素) and Wu Youke (吴又可). Although he believed that one should scrupulously abide by ancient methods, he thought that practitioners should be flexible in their application. Nonetheless, Yang greatly admired Zhang Zhongjing's (张仲景) simple and meticulous formula constructions, and his Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*) might be thought of as a development of Zhang's Frigid Extremities Powder (*si ni san*).

There are a couple of key warm disease ideas that are important to grasp in order to understand this formula. First is the general concept that all warm diseases, no matter if external or internal, have a component of heat from constraint (Yang, 1784; Li,

1996). The basic treatment strategy for heat from constraint was first discussed in *Basic Questions*:⁴ '[When there is] fire from constraint, discharge it (*huo yu fa zhi* 火郁发之)'. This is also understood as '[When there is] constraint, then discharge it (*yu er fa zhi* 郁而发之)'. That is, one must diffuse constraint and clear (or vent and thrust out) fire to the exterior of the body. This is one reason we often see light venting herbs in formulas for deeper level pathologies, such as those at the qi, blood and nutritive levels. This is especially evident in cases of lurking pathogens where trapped heat is vented out with medicinals such as *Menthae haplocalycis Herba* (*bo he*) and *Sojae Semen preparatum* (*dan dou chi*). In addition, exterior (more superficial) conditions - such as those at the protective (*wei*) level - also have an aspect of constrained heat, for which these same light herbs are used.

However, as Li and Zhao point out, even an early stage (exterior) warm disease will have some element of interior (or qi level) heat (Li, 1996; Peng, 1996). In such cases just releasing the exterior - as we do with wind-cold pathologies - is incorrect. One must also clear heat, which means using medicinals that address the qi level.⁵ This explains why we can use *Rhei Radix et Rhizoma* (*da huang*) even in more superficial acute (exterior) warm diseases.

Quite simply, in warm disease there is constrained heat that blocks the qi dynamic and the body's ascending and descending function. The central strategy of Ascending and Descending Powder is to diffuse heat from constraint. Understanding this pathodynamic allows it to be used in a large variety of ways. In terms of warm disease it can be used for diseases at the protective, qi, blood and nutritive levels. Yang himself used it as a core structure for 15 warm disease formulas.

Ingredient analysis

In this formula, *Bombyx batryticatus* (*bai jiang can*) is the sovereign, *Cicadae Periostracum* (*chan tui*) is the deputy, *Curcumae longae Rhizoma* (*jiang huang*) is the assistant and *Rhei Radix et Rhizoma* (*da huang*) is the envoy (Yang, 1784).⁶

- ***Bombyx batryticatus* (*bai jiang can*)** is acrid and bitter and its qi is thin. It likes dryness and loathes dampness, is light and floating, and ascends the yang within yang. Therefore it is able to prevail over wind, eliminate dampness, clear heat, resolve constraint and with 'like treating like' [with its upward expansive nature], it treats ministerial fire in the Bladder, guiding clear qi upwards toward the mouth, and scatters turbid, bound and stagnant phlegm that is in counterflow (Yang, 1784).
- ***Cicadae Periostracum*'s (*chan tui*)** qi is cold and

nontoxic and its flavour is salty and sweet. It eliminates wind, overcomes dampness, flushes away heat and resolves toxicity (Yang, 1784). It diffuses the Lungs and opens the orifices in order to clear heat from constraint (Wei, 2010).

- ***Curcumae longae Rhizoma*'s (*jiang huang*)** qi and flavour are acrid, bitter, very cold and non-toxic. It promotes the movement of qi, scatters constraint, strengthens the function of the Heart and Spleen and repels epidemic disease (Yang, 1784). It breaks up stasis and drives out blood, disperses swelling and stops pain (Wei, 2010).
- ***Rhei Radix et Rhizoma*'s (*da huang*)** flavour is bitter and it is very cold and non-toxic. It unblocks and promotes movement in the upper and lower [parts of the body]. When yang is very hyperactive and unable to press down then its bitter flavour is able drain fire and settle derangement. However its bitter flavour is also able to tonify deficiency (Yang, 1784). It also unblocks the yang organs, drives out stasis, is outstanding at descending turbid yin, and removes the old to institute the new (Li, 1996).

This can be summarised as follows: *Bombyx batryticatus* (*bai jiang can*) and *Cicadae Periostracum* (*chan tui*) raise the clear yang of the yang (Yang, 1784). They disperse wind, clear heat, ascend and float, travel (*zou* 走) the qi aspect with the aim of discharging the qi of the Triple Burner's clear yang (Duan, 2007). *Curcumae longae Rhizoma* (*jiang huang*) and *Rhei Radix et Rhizoma* (*da huang*) descend the turbid yin of the yin (Yang, 1784). They direct downwards and drain through their bitter cold nature. They not only travel the qi aspect but also promote movement in the blood aspect. Together they descend and drain hyperactive and overabundant yang (Duan, 2007). Thus one pair of herbs ascends and the other descends (Yang, 1784).

Yang's original indications and usages

Yang recorded 22 indications for this formula, of which only a few are listed here due to space; nevertheless this selection should be sufficient to grasp the idea behind the formula.

- Headache, dizziness, stifling sensation and distention in the chest, chest and abdominal pain, vomiting or spitting of food;
- Interior fever leading to thirst, simultaneous vomiting and diarrhoea, but the body has no fever;
- Abhorrence of cold, vigorous heat, the whole body's bones and joints are sore, excessive drinking of water;
- Cold reversal of the limbs, body is cold like ice, breath is like fire, irritability and restlessness, unsettled [spirit];

- Whole body feels as if on fire, irritability, thirst with desire to drink, head and face become very swollen;
- Swollen and painful throat, phlegm-oral mucus⁷ congestion, unable to drink even a drip of water;
- The whole body is red and swollen, with an eruption of lumps like a tumour;
- Eruption of mixed macules and papules, similar to cinnabar toxin wind sore (*dan du feng chuang* 丹毒风疮);
- Raised chest, pain and distention in the flanks, vomiting of blood.⁸

Yang also recommended Ascending and Descending Powder in combination with Virgate Wormwood Decoction (*yin chen hao tang*) for jaundice (damp-heat from constraint in the Spleen and Stomach), in combination with Cool the Diaphragm Powder (*liang ge san*) plus Aurantii Fructus immaturus (*zhi shi*) and Magnoliae officinalis Cortex (*hou po*) for abdominal pain and distention (lingering heat from constraint with constipation), and in combination with White Tiger Decoction (*bai hu tang*) for cough (warm disease lurking heat from internal constraint).

Wei Dawen (韦大文) (2010) put forth a more concise list based on Yang's original indications.⁹

- Dislike of cold with vigorous heat, headache and painful joints.
- Thirst for excessive amounts of water, breath feels like fire, heart irritability and disquieted spirit.
- Sudden swelling of the head and face, swollen and painful throat, phlegm-oral mucus congestion.
- Simultaneous vomiting and diarrhoea, vomiting of blood, cinnabar toxin macular eruption, thunderous rumbling in the abdomen and abdominal pain.
- Curled tongue, retracted scrotum, lower back pain as if broken, fire diarrhoea,¹⁰ painful rough urinary dribbling disorder.

The clinical possibilities of this formula are therefore wide, and require that we understand the pathodynamic of fire coming from constraint. Symptoms may differ dramatically based on the individual - such lists of indications merely suggest potential possibilities. This formula is frequently applied in the modern day clinic for conditions that do not match the original indications, as modern patients commonly present with constraint and a build-up of heat. It is therefore useful to look at how other physicians have used Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*).

Expansions

Pu Fuzhou (1888-1875), a famous late-Qing dynasty doctor, used modifications of Ascending and Descending Powder to treat severe and lingering diseases, and especially seasonal diseases. Pu stated:

'In warm diseases there is a fear that the exterior qi becomes constrained and then blocked and heat is unable to disseminate; there is even more fear that there will be constraint and clumping of the interior qi, and obstruction of foul turbidity; there is also a particular fear that heat will obstruct the Small Intestine and there will be stoppage of the waterways; heat then becomes trapped in the chest and the great qi (da qi 大气) does not move, which results in dysfunction of ascending and descending, consequently blocking all the orifices.'

(Pu, 2006)

Pu emphasised the treatment method of 'venting out to the exterior and diffusing the Lungs, dispersing and unblocking the interior qi, and clearing the Small Intestine'. Thus his main objective was to prevent heat from sinking internally or becoming constrained and blocked. For example, in cases where wind-heat is blocking the Lungs he would often use Mulberry Leaf and Chrysanthemum Drink (*sang ju yin*) plus Bombyx batryticatus (*bai jiang can*) and Cicadae Periostracum (*chan tui*) to diffuse the Lungs and dispel wind, and lightly clear and vent the exterior.

Zhao Shaoqin (1918-2001) used Ascending and Descending Powder formula not only to treat heat from constraint patterns in warm-heat disease, but also in a variety of internal medicine conditions, such as the insomnia case above. In addition he expanded its application for the treatment of damp-heat disease. Here are some modifications he used based on treatment principles:

- To aromatically transform damp add Pogostemonis / Agastaches Herba (*huo xiang*), Eupatorii Herba (*pei lan*) and Perillae Folium (*zi su ye*).
- To use acrid warm [medicinals] to diffuse and vent out add Acori tatarinowii Rhizoma (*shi chang pu*), Saposhnikoviae Radix (*fang feng*), Sojae Semen preparatum (*dan dou chi*) and Armeniacae Semen (*xing ren*).
- To use bitter cold [medicinals] to dry dampness and clear heat add Coptidis Rhizoma (*huang lian*), Scutellariae Radix (*huang qin*) and Gardeniae Fructus (*zhi zi*).
- To promote the resolution of dampness with bland, leach-out [medicinals] add Lophatheri Herba (*dan zhu ye*), Akebiae Caulis (*mu tong*) and Talcum (*hua shi*).

Zhao was especially successful in using the formula in the treatment of childhood bedwetting, withdrawal and epilepsy, anaemia, low fever and reduced platelets in newborns (Wei, 2010).

Li Shimao (1936-present) created the following useful list of modifications:

- For trapped dampness and heat from constraint add

Artemisiae scopariae Herba (*yin chen*), Talcum (*hua shi*), Eupatorii Herba (*pei lan*) and Acori tatarinowii Rhizoma (*shi chang pu*).

- For a warm pathogen assailing the Lungs add Sojae Semen preparatum (*dan dou chi*), Gardeniae Fructus (*zhi zi*), Forsythiae Fructus (*lian qiao*), Menthae haplocalycis Herba (*bo he*) and Arctii Fructus (*niu bang zi*).
- For emotional constraint with heat add Rosae rugosae Flos (*mei gui hua*), Daidai Flos (*dai dai hua*), Mume Flos (*lu e mei*) and Toosendan Fructus (*chuan lian zi*).
- For static blood causing constraint add Paeoniae Radix rubra (*chi shao*), Moutan Cortex (*mu dan pi*), Persicae Semen (*tao ren*), Carthami Flos (*hong hua*) and Arnebiae Radix/Lithospermi Radix (*zi cao*).
- For phlegm turbidity collecting and obstructing with heat from constraint add Trichosanthis Fructus (*gua lou*), Fritillariae cirrhosae Bulbus (*chuan bei mu*), Clam Shell Powder (*dai ge san*), Armeniacae Semen (*xing ren*) and Bambusae Succus (*zhu li*).
- For food accumulation obstructing the middle (with heat from constraint) add Scorched Three Immortals (*jiao san xian*), Gigeriae galli Endothelium corneum (*ji nei jin*), dry-fried Aurantii Fructus (*chao zhi ke*) and scorched Arecae Semen (*jiao bing lang*).
- For excess heat-stasis in the yang ming organs add Natrii Sulfas (*mang xiao*) and Aurantii Fructus immaturus (*zhi shi*).
- For severe heat from constraint add Gypsum fibrosum (*shi gao*), Anemarrhenae Rhizoma (*zhi mu*) and Scutellariae Radix (*huang qin*).
- For heat from constraint damaging the fluids add Phragmitis Rhizoma (*lu gen*), Trichosanthis Radix (*tian hua fen*) and Dendrobii Herba (*shi hu*).
- For qi and blood both ablaze add Gypsum fibrosum (*shi gao*), Anemarrhenae Rhizoma (*zhi mu*), Scutellariae Radix (*huang qin*), Bubali Cornu (*shui niu jiao*), Rehmanniae Radix (*sheng di huang*), Moutan Cortex (*mu dan pi*) and Paeoniae Radix rubra (*chi shao*).
- For heat from constraint with simultaneous qi deficiency add Panacis quinquefolii Radix (*xi yang shen*), Astragali Radix (*huang qi*) and Dioscoreae Rhizoma (*shan yao*).
- For heat from constraint in the Liver channel harassing the upper part of the body add Mori Folium (*sang ye*), Chrysanthemi Flos (*ju hua*), Ilicis latifoliae Folium (*ku ding cha*), Gentianae Radix (*long dan cao*), Gardeniae Fructus (*zhi zi*) and Haliotidis Concha (*shi jue ming*).

Case example 2

Here is a case by Li Shimao:

Ma, a five-year-old boy, started to feel cold early one morning. By nightfall he had a temperature of 39.5 degrees Celsius. He presented with cold hands and feet, no sweating, headache, nausea and runny nose. The tongue was slightly red with a white coat. The pulse was deep,

agitated and fast. The family was worried and wanted to hospitalise their son. Dr. Li said there was no need, and promptly gave him some medicine. He thought that the condition was not going to become tragic because even though the pulse was deep and rapid, the agitation was not severe and the overall appearance was mild.

Prescription: Modified Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*)

• Bombyx batryticatus (<i>bai jiang can</i>)	8g
• Cicadae Periostracum (<i>chan tui</i>)	3g
• Curcumae longae Rhizoma (<i>jiang huang</i>)	5g
• Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (<i>da huang</i>)	4g
• Sojae Semen preparatum (<i>dan dou chi</i>)	6g
• Scorched Gardeniae Fructus (<i>jiao zhi zi</i>)	12g
• Forsythiae Fructus (<i>lian qiao</i>)	10g
• Menthae haplocalycis Herba (<i>bo he</i>)	5g
• Lophatheri Herba (<i>dan zhu ye</i>)	4g

Two packets were given, with one packet taken over four hours. The patient was instructed to stay warm and avoid the wind and cold.

The morning after taking the two packets of herbs, the whole body had a sweat, the fever reduced and the extremities warmed. That night after midnight the sweating had stopped and by morning the fever was gone; the pulse was mostly calm and the boy wanted to eat. Because the pulse was not fully calm, there was still some residual heat. Therefore the remaining herbs were to be consumed. By the next day the boy was back to normal and outside playing (Li, 1996, p. 82).

Discussion

As we have seen, later generations of doctors since Yang Lishan have used this formula for a wide range of conditions. Some Western diseases in which this approach has been successful include various acute infectious diseases such as epidemic cerebrospinal meningitis, measles, high fever, viral pneumonia and other diseases such as bronchitis, cholecystitis, paratosis (mumps), schizophrenia, neurogenic tinnitus, deafness, suppurative tympanitis (otitis media), (naso-)sinusitis, sore throat, as well as a wide range of dermatological diseases such as herpes zoster, acne, psoriasis, seborrhoeic dermatitis, allergic purpura and erysipelas of the face. In fact, if one understands the core pathodynamic involved and applies proper pattern identification then this list of Western diseases could go on and on, as the application is so diverse. Although I now use this formula for all sorts of complaints, I first started applying it to skin disorders. Below are some additional thoughts on how I conceptualise and use these herbs in clinical application, especially for skin conditions.

Bombyx batryticatus (*bai jiang can*) and Cicadae Periostracum (*chan tui*) are light medicinals that enter

the Liver and Lungs, expel wind and stop itching. They unblock and vent out toxins, fire from constraint and wind-heat from the qi and blood collaterals (*qi xue luo mai*). Bombyx batryticatus (*bai jiang can*) primarily enters the deep blood collaterals, whilst Cicadae Periostracum (*chan tui*) the more superficial qi collaterals and clears heat from the skin. Thus, one works more superficially and the other more deeply, forming an effective herbal pair to expel pathogens stuck in the collaterals.

Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang*) is another very effective medicinal for skin disorders, which is able to resolve toxins. I use various herbal preparation methods (*pao zhi* 炮制) based on presentation. For example, steamed Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*shu da huang*) may be used if there is Spleen deficiency and the herb's strong purgative effect is not desired, although it will still move the bowels. It should be pointed out that Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang*) can still be used even if there is diarrhoea, if it is caused by internal heat. When the heat is removed then the diarrhoea will stop on its own. If there is diarrhoea from other causes, or there is a propensity towards loose stools (e.g. due to deficiency), then I opt for a prepared method or smaller dose (notice the dosage in Zhao's case above). Charred Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang tan*) is more astringent, enters the deeper aspect of the blood level, and is very mild so that it can be used with the weak or elderly. It is useful if there is bleeding or if there is sticky diarrhoea or loose stools. It can help reduce inflammation and repair the intestinal walls. Wine-washed Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*jiu da huang*) is useful if there are carbuncles, pus or acne, especially if the disease is located in the upper body. It enters the blood level and has the ability to descend fire from the upper body. It is cooler than charred Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang tan*) and warmer than steamed Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*shu da huang*). I almost always use all Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang*) and its various preparations as a full cook (rather than adding it at the end of cooking the decoction).

Curcumae longae Rhizoma (*jiang huang*) enters the Liver and Spleen. It is acrid, slightly warm,¹¹ and enters the deep organs, channels and collaterals. It regulates the qi within the blood. It can expel toxins outward as well as descend qi and blood downwards. With Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (*da huang*) it embodies the treatment method of 'bitter descending acrid opening' (*ku jiang xin kai* 苦降辛开).

Ascending and Descending Powder is therefore similar to Frigid Extremities Powder (*si ni san*), but is used for presentations involving more severe and systemic heat. Both formulas disperse qi constraint with an ascending and descending strategy to regulate the qi dynamic.

Case example 3

Here is a dermatological case from my own clinical practice:

A 35-year-old woman presented with red, swollen, painful, itchy skin under and around her eyes. The skin looked dark, wrinkled and irritated, and resembled a dry eczema. She also felt generally unwell, fatigued and muzzy-headed. This had started two weeks previously following a stuffy nose and feeling of 'getting sick' which she considered to be due to allergies. She self-prescribed the patent herbal formula AllerEase,¹² which contains exterior-resolving herbs plus many tonic and astringent medicinals such as Astragali Radix (*huang qi*), Chebulae Fructus (*he zi*) and Schisandrae Fructus (*wu wei zi*). After taking this formula her stuffy nose and allergic malaise immediately went away, although the above symptoms started and she felt that the cold felt as if it was trapped in her eyes.

Upon examination her pulse was deep, wiry and jumpy (agitated on the arrival of the beat). This was constrained wind generating heat, which had arisen due to incorrect treatment. I gave her modified Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*) to resolve the lingering pathogen:

• Bombyx batryticatus (<i>bai jiang can</i>)	6g
• Cicadae Periostracum (<i>chan tui</i>)	6g
• Curcumae longae Rhizoma (<i>jiang huang</i>)	6g
• steamed Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (<i>shu da huang</i>)	2g
• Chrysanthemi Flos (<i>ju hua</i>)	9g (add)
• Paeoniae Radix alba (<i>bai shao</i>)	9g
• Moutan Cortex (<i>mu dan pi</i>)	6g
• Angelicae dahuricae Radix (<i>bai zhi</i>)	2g
• Trichosanthis Pericarpium (<i>gua lou pi</i>)	12g

She was given three bags (one bag for every two days). Immediately after drinking the first dose she started to feel better. The next morning the swelling and darkness around the eyes resolved. She continued taking the herbs for the next five days, after which almost all of her symptoms were eliminated. Only some slightly scaly dry skin remained under her eyes that was difficult to notice. The previous formula was given with minor modifications to bring about a complete cure. In retrospect her 'allergy' symptoms were likely caused by an external attack (probably by a simple wind pathogen) and the proper treatment would have been to use a light, acrid, dispersing strategy. The patent formula contained inappropriate tonifying, astringent medicinals that 'locked in' the pathogen, which became constrained in the channels, superficial network vessels and upper burner. This then generated heat, which produced the pathology in the skin.

Conclusion

This exploration demonstrates an important idea in Chinese medicine: that understanding the pathodynamic

behind a herbal formula can open up uses of the prescription that were not necessarily intended by the original author. Ascending and Descending Powder (*sheng jiang san*) was originally a warm disease formula used for quite severe presentations (e.g. epidemics), but is today used for more common complaints such as chronic insomnia. We also see the flexibility that is required to skilfully apply such ideas in the clinic. That is, one must accurately evaluate the individual patient (not the disease) and modify the formula appropriately. ■

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- 3 *Polygoni Orientalis Fructus* (*shui hong hua zi* 水红花子) is salty and cold. It clears heat, softens hardness, eliminates stasis, breaks up accumulation, strengthens the Spleen and promotes the resolution of dampness. It is useful in cases of abdominal swelling, swollen lymph glands in the neck and diabetes. It also treats accumulations in the rib-side and abdominal region, ascites, stomach pain, reduced appetite with abdominal distention, swollen sores and scrofula.
- 4 *Great Treatise on the Regular Principles of the Six Origins* (*Liu yuan zheng ji da lun* 六元正纪大论)
- 5 For example, if one examines Ye Tianshi's case records even when treating exterior warm diseases he uses deeper heat-clearing medicinals, such as *Gardeniae Fructus* (*zhi zi*), *Forsythiae Fructus* (*lian qiao*), *Scutellariae Radix* (*huang qin*) etc.
- 6 The original formula also contains *Oryzae Vinum* (rice wine) (*mi jiu*), which is the conductor (引) and *Mel* (Honey) (*feng mi*), which is the guide (导). These are rarely used in practice.
- 7 *Phlegm and oral-mucus* (*tan xian* 痰涎) refers to phlegm and saliva which is especially thin, white, usually profuse, and ejected from the mouth. The term may also refer to phlegm in general.
- 8 For a complete list of indications please see <http://www.chinesemedicinedoc.com/misc-chinese-medicine-articles/sheng-jiang-san/>
- 9 One might assume that these are the most useful indications according to Wei.
- 10 *Fire diarrhoea* (*huo xie* 火泄) is sudden diarrhoea with tenesmus, a burnt yellow colour and a strong odour. There is often abdominal pain and rumbling in the intestines.
- 11 There is ongoing debate about the temperature - notice that Yang above states it is very cold. I currently view it as slightly warm.
- 12 From Blue Poppy Enterprises: <<http://bluepoppy.com/cfwebstore/index.cfm/product/1280/allerease.cfm>>

Endnotes

- 1 This is 郁热 (*yu re*), which is literally 'constraint of heat' or 'constrained heat'. However the specific pathodynamic used in describing this formula is heat coming about from constraint. Therefore throughout this essay 'heat from constraint' is used, which is also heat that is locked in or constrained.
- 2 Scorched Three Immortals (*jiao san xian*) contains scorched *Crataegi Fructus* (*jiao shan zha*), scorched *Hordei Fructus germinatus* (*jiao mai ya*) and scorched *Massa medicata fermentata* (*jiao shen qu*).