

温热论

Ye Tian-Shi's *Wen Re Lun*

Discourse on warm-heat disease

By Charles Chace

THE SECTION IN THE previous issue ended with these words:

Now, in a human body the epigastrium is in the upper abdomen, which is located in the position of the middle [burner]. If it is painful to palpation, if there is spontaneous pain, or there is glomus and distension, one should use bitter draining [medicinals] that will enter the abdominal area.

One must examine [the disease in the context of] the tongue [coat], for instance, whether it is yellow or turbid, [and this condition] can be treated with *Xiao Xian Xiong Tang* (Minor Sink-into the Chest Decoction) or *Xie Xin Tang* (Drain the Epigastrium Decoction) depending on the symptoms.

论舌黄

On yellow tongue [coats]

LGH, p. 105-111

再前云舌黄或浊，须要有地之黄。

As previously stated, the tongue [coat in above condition] may be either yellow or turbid, but it must have a yellow root [to qualify as a yellow tongue coat].

LGH, p. 125

若光滑者，乃无形湿热，中有虚象，大忌前法。

If [the tongue] is glossy and slimy, even though the damp-heat lacks form, the middle has evidently become deficient and the previously mentioned methods are strongly contraindicated [i.e. using bitter draining medicinals].

其脐以上为大腹，或满或胀或痛，此必邪已入里矣，表证必无，或十之存一。

The greater abdomen is above the umbilicus. If there is fullness, distention or pain, this means the pathogen has already entered the interior, and exterior symptoms are either absent or very slight.

亦要验之于舌，或黄甚，或如沉香色，或如灰黄色，或老黄色，或中有断纹，皆当下之。

At this point it is likewise essential to [further] examine the tongue [coat] and if it is extremely yellow, or the color of *Chen Xiang* (Aquilariae, aloeswood) or an ashen yellow color, or an old yellow color, or there are lines in the centre, then in all [of these instances] precipitation should be administered.

LGH, p. 111, 162

如小承气汤，用槟榔、青皮、枳实、玄明粉、生首乌等。

One may administer *Xiao Cheng Qi Tang* (Minor Order the Qi Decoction), and/or use [medicinals] such as *Bing Lang* (Arecae Catechu Semen), *Qing Pi* (Citri reticulatae veride Pericarpium), *Zhi Shi* (Aurantii Fructus immaturus), *Xuan Ming Fen* (Miribilitum) and *Sheng [He] Shou Wu* (Polygoni multiflori Radix non-preparata).

LGH, p. 448, 449

若未见此等舌，不宜用此等法，恐其中有湿聚太阴为满，或寒湿错杂为痛，或气壅为胀，又当以别法治之。

If one does not see tongue [presentations] such as these, then methods such as these cannot be used for fear [that the fullness, distention and pain] in the middle [burner] is due to damp accumulation and fullness in the tai yin. Alternatively, there may

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be a mixture of cold and damp producing pain, or an obstruction of qi producing distension. In such cases, one should use alternate methods to treat [the condition].

再黄苔不甚厚而滑者，热未伤津，犹可清热透表。

When a yellow tongue coat is not very thick and is glossy, [this means] the heat has not yet damaged the liquids; one may still clear heat and evict [the pathogen] through the exterior.

LGH, p. 109

若虽薄而干者，邪虽去而津受伤也。Even though [a yellow tongue coat] is thin yet dry, [this means that] although the pathogen has been eliminated, the liquids have been damaged.

LGH, p. 109, 111

苦重之药当禁，宜甘寒轻剂可也。[In this case], the use of bitter and heavy medicinals is contraindicated. Sweet, cold and light formulas are appropriate and can be used.

论舌絳

On crimson tongues

再论其热传营，舌色必絳。絳深红色也。

As for [conditions where] heat has been passed to the construction aspect, the tongue color will be crimson. Crimson is a deep red color.

LGH, p. 114-116

初传絳色中兼黄白色，此气分之邪未尽也，泄卫透营，两和可也。

If, in the initial stages of the passage [of a warm pathogen into the construction aspect], a yellow/white colored [tongue coat] appears on a crimson colored [tongue], this means that the pathogen in the qi aspect has not completely departed. By draining the defence and evicting the construction, both [aspects] can be harmonised.

LGH, p. 115, 167

纯絳鲜泽者，包络受病也，宜犀角、鲜生地、连翘、郁金、石菖蒲等。

If [the tongue] is entirely a bright lustrous crimson [color], the Pericardium has become diseased and one should use medicinals such as *Xi Jiao* (Rhino-ceri Cornu), *Xian Sheng Di* [*Huang*] (*Rehmanniae Radix*, fresh), *Lian Qiao* (*Forsythiae Fructus*), *Yu Jin* (*Curcumae Tuber*) and *Shi Chang Pu* (*Acori tatarinowii Rhizoma*).

LGH, p. 172

延之数日，或平素心虚有痰，外热一陷，里络就闭，非菖蒲、郁金等所能开。

If this [condition] persists for several days, or

[the patient] has constitutional Heart deficiency with phlegm, then all the external heat has to do is sink [inward], and it will cause the interior networks to become blocked. Then neither [*Shi Chang Pu* (*Acori tatarinowii Rhizoma*) nor *Yu Jin* (*Curcumae Tuber*)] will be capable of opening [the phlegm heat in the Pericardium].

Illustrative case histories

Case four: Pao, an elderly [person] with vacuity below, [suffered from] spring warmth contracted in the upper [burner]. [He presented with] phlegm-moisture and confusion. His tongue was red with a yellow coat, and his face was red with slight spasms. First, clear the upper warmer.

Tian Zhu Huang (*Bambusae Concretio silicea*)

Jin Yin Hua (*Lonicera Flos*)

Zhu Ye Xin (*Phyllostachys avicularis Folium*)

Lian Qiao (*Forsythia, Fructus*)

Zhu Li (*Bambusae Succus*)

Comment: In this case the phlegm-moisture and confusion were indicative of a phlegm heat pathogen accumulating in the Pericardium. Mister Ye therefore used *Tian Zhu Huang* (*Bambusae Concretio silicea*) and *Zhu Li* (*Bambusae Succus*) to transform phlegm, compounded with *Zhu Ye Xin*, (*Phyllostachys avicularis Folium*) and *Lian Qiao* (*Forsythia, Fructus*) to evict pathogens to ensure that the formless heat did not become bound with the substantive phlegm.

须用牛黄丸、至宝丹之类以开其闭，恐其昏厥为痉也。

One must use medicinals such as *Niu Huang Wan* (*Cattle Gallstone Pill*) and *Zhi Bao Dan* (*Greatest Treasure Special Pill*) to open these blockages, lest this clouding reversal progress to tetany.

再舌絳而舌中心干者，乃心胃火燔，劫烁津液，即黄连、石膏亦可加入。

If the tongue is crimson and the centre of the tongue is dry, then fire flares up from the Heart and Stomach plundering and torching the fluids. Therefore, *Huang Lian* (*Coptidis Rhizoma*) and *Shi Gao* (*Gypsum*) can be added to [the formula].

若烦渴烦热，舌心干，四边色红，中心或黄或白者，此非血分也，乃上焦气热烁津。

If there is vexing thirst and vexing heat, the tongue is dry in the center and red around all four sides with a yellow or white [coat] in the center, this is not a blood aspect [indicator] but a [sign of] qi [aspect] heat in the upper burner torching the liquids.

急用凉膈散，散其无形之热，再看其后转变可也。

If the tongue is glossy and slimy, even though the damp-heat lacks form, the middle has evidently become deficient and the bitter draining medicinals are strongly contraindicated.



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Our elder has twelve sons,
each of whom has
twice thirty daughters;
half of these daughters
are white
and the rest are black;
all are immortal,
and all die.
Who is he?

Be first to answer it correctly
and you will win a year's free
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■ The answer to the previous
issue's riddle was
Dong Chong Xia Cao
(cordyceps).
It was answered first
by Alasdair Reed,
of Greenwich
NSW, who has
won a year's
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One should immediately administer *Liang Ge San* (Cool the Diaphragm Powder) to scatter the formless heat. Furthermore, one should look for [and treat the symptoms of] its subsequent transmission and transmutation.

LGH, p. 261-263, 301 (table)

慎勿用血药，以滋腻难散。

Be careful not to use blood [aspect] medicinals that are enriching and cloying because they make it difficult to scatter [the pathogen].

至舌絳，望之若干，手扪之原有津液，此津亏，湿热薰蒸，将成浊痰蒙闭心包也。

Once a tongue has become crimson and looks dry, although there is moisture at the root when the tongue is touched with the hand, this indicates fluid depletion and sweltering of damp-heat that will become turbid phlegm, which clouds and obstructs the Pericardium.

再有热传营血，其人素有瘀伤宿血在胸膈中，挟热而搏，其舌色必紫而暗，扪之湿，当加入散血之品，如琥珀、丹参、桃仁、丹皮等。

Furthermore, once heat passes to the construction and blood [aspects], if the patient has an old injury, or there is blood that has been retained in the chest and diaphragm, [this stagnant blood] mingles with the heat and is transmitted [throughout the body]. [In this case] the tongue color must be purple and dull, and [the tongue coat] will feel damp when stroked. One should include medicinals that scatter the blood such as *Hou Po* (Magnoliae officinalis Cortex), *Dan Shen* (Salviae miltiorrhizae Radix), *Tao Ren* (Persicae Semen) and [*Mu*] *Dan Pi* (Moutan Cortex).

LGH, p. 116, 117

不尔，瘀血与热为伍，阻遏正气，遂变如狂发狂之症。

Otherwise, stagnant blood and heat will combine to obstruct the correct qi, the transmutations of which resemble the crazy manner of manic disease.

若紫而肿大者，乃酒毒冲心。

If [the tongue] is purple and swollen, then alcohol toxins have surged into the Heart.

若紫而干晦者，肾肝色泛也，难治。

If [the tongue] is purple, dry and dark, and is suffused with [the associated] colors of the Liver and Kidney [the condition] is difficult to treat.

舌色絳而上有粘腻似苔非苔者，中挟秽浊之气，急加芳香逐之。

If the tongue is crimson and has a thick slimy-

ness on it that resembles a tongue coat but is not a tongue coat, the middle harbors dirty turbid qi and one should immediately add aromatic, fragrant [medicinals] to expel [the turbid qi].

舌絳，欲伸出口而抵齿难骤伸者，痰阻舌根，有内风也。

If the tongue is crimson and is difficult to extend beyond the teeth when one attempts to stick it out of the mouth, then phlegm obstructs the root of the tongue and internal wind is present.

LGH, p. 115-117

若舌絳而光亮，胃阴亡也，急用甘凉濡润之品。

If the tongue is crimson, bright and shiny, the Stomach yin has collapsed. One should immediately administer [medicinals] in the sweet, cool and moistening categories.

若舌絳而干燥者，火邪劫营，凉血清火为要。

If the tongue is crimson and dry, fire pathogens have plundered the construction [aspect, and a treatment strategy] of cooling the blood and clearing fire is essential.

舌絳而有碎点黄白者，当生疳也。

If the tongue is crimson with patches of yellow-white spots, then *gan* is developing.

大红点者，热毒乘心也，用黄连、金汁。

Large red spots [on the tongue] mean that fire toxins overwhelm the Heart. One should use *Huang Lian* (Coptidis Rhizoma) and *Jin Zhi* (golden fluid).¹

其有虽絳而不鲜，干枯而痿者，此肾阴涸，急以阿胶、鸡子黄、地黄、天冬等救之，缓则恐涸极而无救也。

When the tongue is crimson, but not bright [color] and is instead dry, desiccated and wilted, this means that the Kidney yin has evaporated, and one should immediately administer medicinals such as *E Jiao* (Asini Corii Colla), *Ji Zi Huang* (Egg Yolk), *Di Huang* (Rehmannia Radix) and *Tian Dong* (Asparagi Radix) to rescue it. If one delays, then the fear is that the evaporation will become so extreme that it cannot be rescued.

LGH, p. 176

其有舌独中心絳干者，此胃热，心营受灼也，当于清胃方中加人清心之品。

If the tongue is crimson and dry only in the centre, this is Stomach heat, and the construction [qi] of the Heart has been scorched. One should add medicinals that clear the Heart into formulas that clear the Stomach.

否则，延及于尖，为津干火盛也。

Otherwise, [the dryness and crimson color] will extend to the tip, indicating a drying of the liquids and an exuberance of fire.

舌尖絳独干，此心火上炎，用导赤散泻其腑。

If only the tongue tip is crimson and dry, this means that there is a flaring ascension of Heart fire and one should use *Dao Chi San* (Guide Out the Red Powder) to drain its [associated] bowel [ie. Small Intestine, which separates clear from murky fluids].

论舌苔

On tongue coats

LGH, p. 108–110

再舌苔白厚而干燥者，此胃燥气伤也，滋润药中加甘草，令甘守津还之意。

If a tongue coat is white, thick and dry, this means that there is Stomach dryness and damage to [the Lung] qi. In addition to medicinals that enrich and moisten, one should add *Gan Cao* (Glycyrrhizae Radix). This is based on the idea that *Gan [Cao]* (Glycyrrhizae Radix) protects [the Stomach] and restores the liquids.

舌白而薄者，外感风寒也，当疏散之。If a tongue [coat] is white and thin, there is externally contracted wind-cold, and one should course and dissipate it.

LGH, p. 107

若白干薄者，肺津伤也，加麦冬、花露、芦根汁等轻清之品，为上者之上也。

If [a tongue coat] is white, dry and thin, the Lung liquids have been damaged. One should add medicinals in the light clearing class — such as *Mai Dong* (Ophiopogonis Radix), *Hua Lu* (Indigo Naturalis) and *Lu Gen* (Phragmitis Rhizoma) juice — that ascend to the upper [part of the body].

若白苔絳底者，湿遏热伏也，当先泄湿透热，防其就干也。

If there is a white tongue coating covering a crimson tongue body, there is suppressed dampness and lurking heat. One should first drain dampness to evict the heat while protecting [the liquids] from desiccation.

勿忧之，再从里透于外，则变润矣。

One should not worry [about the dry tongue]. Once [the pathogen] is evicted from the interior outward, then [the tongue] will change and become moist.

初病舌就干，神不昏者，急养正，微加透邪之药。

If, at the beginning of the disease, the tongue is just dry, but the spirit is not yet clouded, one should immediately nourish the correct [qi] while adding small doses of pathogen evicting medicinals.

若神已昏，此内匮矣，不可救药。

If the spirit is already clouded, this reflects an internal exhaustion, and [the patient] cannot be saved with medicinals.

又不拘何色，舌上生芒刺者，皆是上焦热极也，当用薄荷水揩之，即去者轻，旋生者险矣。

Regardless of [the tongue's] color, if prickles have developed on it, there is extreme heat in the upper burner. One must rub down the body with a black cloth soaked in cool mint water [to dissipate heat toxins]. If this is effective, then [the condition] is mild. However, if [the prickles] return, then [the condition] is critical.

舌苔不燥，自觉闷极者，属脾湿盛也。

If the tongue coat is not dry, but [the patient] feels extreme [gastric] oppression, this pertains to an exuberance of Spleen dampness.

或有伤痕血迹者，必问曾经搔挖否，不可以有血而便为枯症，仍从湿治可也。

[When the tongue body] exhibits scarring and bloodstains, [the physician] must inquire whether or not [the patient] has scratched at [his tongue] in the recent past. Hence, one cannot simply take the bleeding as a symptom of desiccation, and can still treat as dampness.

再有神情清爽，舌胀大不能出口者，此脾湿胃热，郁极化风而毒延口也，用大黄磨入当药剂内，则舌胀自消矣。

If [the patient's] spirit-affect is alert and relaxed, but the tongue is so enlarged that the patient cannot stick it out of his mouth, this is an indicator of Spleen dampness and Stomach heat causing extreme constraint transforming into wind and toxins extending to the mouth. One should add *Da Huang* (Rhei Radix et Rhizoma) powder into a prescription which otherwise suits the patient and the tongue swelling will disperse on its own.

再舌上白苔粘腻，吐出浊厚涎沫者，口必甜味也，为脾痺病。

When there is a sticky, slimy, white coat on the tongue with expectoration of thick, turbid spittle, there will be a sweet taste in the mouth. This is a Spleen impediment disease.

If the spirit is already clouded, this reflects an internal exhaustion, and [the patient] cannot be saved with medicinals.

乃湿热气聚，与谷气相搏，土有余也，盈满则上泛。当用省头草，芳香辛散以逐之则退。

Therefore, when there is an accumulation of damp-heat qi mingled together with grain qi then there is a surplus of earth, and this [pathological] fullness floods upward [producing the above mentioned symptoms]. One should use aromatic, acrid and dissipating medicinals such as *Xing Tou Cao* aka *Pei Lan Ye* (*Eupatorii Folium*) to expel [the pathogen], thus causing [these symptoms] to abate.

LGH, p. 108

若舌上苔如碱者，胃中宿滞挟浊秽郁伏，当急急开泄。

If the coat on the tongue is soda-like, there is long-standing stagnation harboring foul turbidity that has become confined and lurks in the Stomach. One should immediately administer opening and draining [methods].

LGH, p. 110

否则，闭结中焦，不能从募原达出矣。

If one fails to do so, and [the pathogen] binds in the middle burner, then it cannot be expelled from the membrane source.

舌有烟煤

On coal-coloured tongues

若舌无苔而有如烟煤隐隐者，不渴，肢寒，知挟阴病。

If the tongue lacks coat but has a faint coal color, and the patient has no thirst and cold extremities, [the condition] is a captive yin [cold] disease.

如口渴烦热，平时胃燥舌也，不可攻之。

If there is thirst and vexing heat and a tongue typical of Stomach dryness, one cannot precipitate [this condition].

若燥者，甘寒益胃；

If [the tongue] is dry, [then administer] sweet cold [medicinals] to boost the Stomach.

若润者，甘温和中。

If [the tongue] is moist, [then administer] sweet warm [medicinals] to harmonise the middle.

此何故，外露而里无也。

Why is this? Despite the appearance [of heat] on the outside, there is none in the interior.

若色黑而滑者，水来克火，为阴症，当温之。

If the colour [of the tongue coat] is black and glossy, water is overcoming fire. This is a yin pattern and one should [administer] warming [methods].

LGH, p. 112

若见短缩，此肾气竭也，为难治。

If [the tongue] appears shortened and shrunken, this means that the Kidney qi is exhausted and [the condition] is difficult to treat.

欲救之，加人参、五味子，勉希万一。

One may make a long shot effort to salvage [the condition] with the addition of *Ren Shen* (*Ginseng Radix*) and *Wu Wei Zi* (*Schisandrae Fructus*).

舌黑而干者，津枯火炽，急急泻南补北。

If the tongue [coat] is black and dry, there is liquid desiccation and a flaring of fire; immediately drain the South [ie, Heart] and supplement the North [Kidneys].

LGH, p. 113

若而中心厚者，土燥水竭，急以咸苦下之。

If [the tongue coat] is dry and thick in the middle, earth has dried out and water has become exhausted; immediately [administer] salty and bitter [medicinals] to purge [the turbid heat pathogen].

论舌淡红无色

On colourless pale-red tongues

舌淡红无色者，或干而色不荣者，当是胃津伤而气无化液也。当用炙甘草汤，不可用寒凉药。

If the tongue is pale-red and colourless, or dry with a lustreless hue, it reflects damage to the Stomach liquids and a failure of the qi to transform humours. One should use *Zhi Gan Cao Tang* (*Honey Fried Licorice Decoction*). Cold or cool medicinals cannot be used.

论舌白如粉

On white powder-like tongues

若色白如粉而滑，四边色紫终者，温疫病初入募原，未归胃腑急急透解。

If the [tongue coat] is white, powder-like and slippery, and all four sides are a purple-crimson color, this means that a warm epidemic disease has begun to penetrate the membrane source and is not returning to the Stomach bowel. One must immediately evict and resolve [the pathogen].

莫待传陷而入，为险恶之病。

Do not wait or it will shift and penetrate [more deeply], becoming an ominous condition.

且见此舌者，病必见凶，须要小心。

Moreover, when one observes this tongue [coat], the disease is inevitably grave, and one must take great care [in administering proper therapy].

LGH, p. 109

Endnote

1. Ye Tianshi (葉天士), *Case Histories as a Guide To Clinical Experience* (臨証指南醫案 *Lin Zheng Zhi Nan Yi An*), in *The Complete Case Histories of Ye Tian Shi* (葉天士醫案大全 *Ye Tian Shi Yi An Da Quan*), edited by Pan Hua Xin (潘華信) and Zhu Wei Chang (朱偉常) et al., *Shanghai Zhongyiyao Daxue Chubanshu*, Shanghai 1997:232.

■ This is the second of a three part translation of Ye Tian-Shi's *Wen Re Lun*; the third and last section will appear in the next issue of *The Lantern*.