Huangdi Hama jing
(Yellow Emperor’s Toad Canon)

Just below an image of a three-legged bird-in-the-sun in the preface to the first section of the extant Huangdi hama jing, we read:

If, as the day closes, [the sun’s] hue is fire-red yet lacks lustre, the yang qi will be in great chaos. On such days it is not fitting to cauterize or pierce. It will damage a person’s various yang tracts, and ultimately make them crazy. (See figure 1.)

Of yin and yang, the opposing yet necessarily co-existing aspects of all being, yang corresponds with fire, heat and the sun; thus any treatment while the sun is setting will damage the yang parts of the body. The thirty images of the human body that follow, in fact, map the course of “human qi” as it moves according to the lunar cycle around the body. We might think of the movements of this entity around the human body as analogous to a sort of imperial progress, such as the putative seasonal movement of the emperor around the ritual chambers named Ming.

Figure 1: Huangdi hama jing, Section 1
After Huangdi hama jing (Beijing: Zhongyi guji, 1984).

On many occasions I have lamented not being able to discuss this paper with Michael Loewe, my first teacher of classical Chinese and principal adviser on the Han period. Fortunately, other scholars have been very generous with their time and I have to thank, in particular, Penelope Barrett, Timothy Barrett, Christopher Cullen, Donald Harper, Keiko Daidoji, Li Jianmin, Ma Kanwen, Roel Sterckx, Hermann Tessenow, Volker Scheid, Paul Thompson and Sumiyo Umekawa. I am also grateful to the editors and anonymous referees of this festschrift for their invaluable suggestions. All errors, naturally, are entirely my own responsibility.

1 Huangdi hama jing, sect. 1, “Huangdi hama tu sui yue shenghui bi jiupan fa” (Yellow Emperor’s Toad Chart: Method for Avoiding Cautery and...
tang 明堂 (Numinous Hall), or of Tai Yi 太一, supreme deity and brightest star in the Han (202 BC–220 AD) sky, around the Nine Palaces of the Heavens.² Here, it seems, we have an embodiment of celestial movements, the Han preoccupation with correlating the sky with human society made flesh and blood. The place where human qi lodges each day becomes prohibited for cautery and piercing for that day. Each entry carries the warning that transgression will result in symptoms of varying degrees of ferocity – from numbness of the toes to withering of the genitals.

The Toad Canon has survived to modern times only by way of a single Japanese book (the structure and dates of which are discussed in detail, below). Although it is generally accessible elsewhere, the most eminent modern historians of Chinese medicine have left it in obscurity because of its “superstitious” nature.³ Yet in China, correlative thinking, exemplified in yin-yang and Five Agent cosmology, extends easily into what, in other contexts, might be thought of as sympathetic magic. Thus yin-yang divisions of the body, astronomy, astrology and the planetary gods and spirits exist on a continuum, and are all embraced within the same natural order.

The received compilation of Hama jing in nine sections presents a variety of ideas about circulation, aimed at protecting elements of the inner body through keying them to cosmic regularities. A physician could then diagnose normal and pathological physiology. This was a medical manifestation of the macro-culture of shushu 数術, or the arts of determining regularities, which were pervasive in Han thought, common to techniques of divination and to the computation and description of “celestial patterns” at the very foundation of the astro-calendrical traditions.⁴ As a significant body of acupuncture and moxibustion writ-
ings, it is fascinating that *Hama jing* barely acknowledges the structuring of the medical body into yin and yang tracts containing circulating *qi* that was familiar from Han times.

Given its many variant calendrical and divinatory schemes, it is easy to conclude that this was an over-determined field lacking coherent threads of interpretation. Yet, taken as a whole, the compilation acquaints us with a plurality of agencies involved in early and medieval medical practice; some of the skills, instruments, ritual, images, beliefs and knowledge systems that aligned in and constituted medical doctrine and practice over an unknown period of time. There is no authorial voice, no explicit social context, no description of individual moments of practice, and no verifiable date. But compared to other sources in the received medical literature, the combined treatises of *Hama jing* offer a vivid and complex account of medieval practice related to cautery and acupuncture, as well as the vestiges of much earlier practices.

TECHNIQUES

In the history of acupuncture and related techniques there have been many methods of piercing the body, and what exactly is meant by *pan* 割 is uncertain. It is most likely that it is a printed variant of the graph 割 seen in the Japanese medical compilation *Ishimpô* 醫心方 (*Remedies at the Heart of Medicine*, ca. 912–95 AD), a scribal variation of the more common acupuncture term *ci* 刺 (to pierce). In *juan* 1 of *Huangdi neijing lingshu* 黃帝內經靈樞 (“Jiuzhen shier yuan”), “turtle and milfoil,” physiognomy, determination of auspicious times and places, as well as exorcisms, omenology, etc.; see Li Jianmin, *Sisheng zhi yu* 死生之域 (*Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2000; revised in 2001*). See my review in *Medical History* 47.2 (2003), pp. 250–58. See also Michael Loewe, *Divination, Mythology and Monarchy in Han China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1994), and Marc Kalinowski, “Les Instruments astro-calendériques des Han et la méthode liu ren,” in *BEFEO* 72 (1983), pp. 399–419.


6 When discussing this sentence with Michael Loewe some years ago, Michael suggested that *pan* 割 in this context might be the result of a scribal error for *ci* 刺, the more common medical phrase being *jiuci* 炙刺 (cautery and piercing), the term for moxibustion and acupuncture. This is the most likely explanation and a variation to which Professor Zheng Jinsheng 鄭金生 adds further definition: one print of a hand-written copy of *Ishimpô* (Beijing: Renmin weisheng, 1993) in his possession commonly uses the graph 刺 for *ci* 刺 and 刺 are so close in form that the former may simply be a Japanese printing idiosyncracy. *Jia*, the component to the left hand side of the graph 刺 is a common simplification of 夷. When paired with the knife radi-
“Nine Needles and Nine Origins”), Huangdi, the Yellow Emperor, expresses dissatisfaction with crude methods associated with stone lancets. The earlier treatises that describe treating the channels do indeed use a stone instrument to move qi and equally to lance abscesses. Yet, despite emphasis on qi work, much of the therapy described in “Jiuzhen” itself involves petty surgery and massage; later discussions of the yuan zhen (round needle) and pi zhen (splitting needle), two of the nine needles described in Lingshu, continue to refer to treatment respectively here for abscesses and bloodletting. We should therefore not discount the possibility that pan may refer to petty surgery on the locations indicated, “a cutting out” of abscesses, or bloodletting in the sense of “splitting open” blood vessels, rather than to more subtle medical interventions involved in moving qi.

Ci (piercing) and qu (literally “taking”) are common technical designations in the Huangdi (Yellow Emperor) corpus. Both verbs are used in connection with bloodletting and moving qi, although instances of needling to move qi are the most common. Since the various primary and secondary networks of mai by this time were thought to contain both blood and qi in diff-
Different quantities, bloodletting co-exists with qi therapy in varying degrees. Different techniques are also expressed through bu and xie, methods to supplement or drain the body’s essences. Bloodletting is an interpretation of ci supported for Tang times, and our Hama jing verb (be it pan or ci), by the inclusion of xue ji rt 血忌日 (blood taboo days) in section 6, most likely refers to days when bloodletting was prohibited. Thus, from the time of the Huangdi corpus onward we may understand the verb ci to refer to the use of different kinds of incisive medical tools.

In the surviving technique termed jiu, what here is translated “cautery” refers to the burning of the dried and ground leaves of mugwort (ai; artemisia vulgaris) on or over the body to stimulate a response that is theoretically mediated via a system of primary and secondary networks (jingluo 經絡) of mai in the acupuncture body. The aim is to influence qi, to ease pain, to expel “wind” or other causes of disease. Mugwort is referred to in Hama jing, but what we find in the texts and images following our three-legged bird-in-the-sun is evidence of a much richer, more diverse practice, with various conditions and prohibitions set forth by hemerological calculations concerned with the movement of spirits and souls in the body.

A monograph dealing specifically with the history of cautery in its own right is long overdue. Li Jianmin maintains that “mugwort had been used to ‘attract’ solar fire since at least the Warring States (475–221 BC).”

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11 Suwen (SBBY edn.) 4.16, pp. 8–9, for example, states, “one should stop the therapy when blood appears.” In contrast, other treatises such as Suwen 11.41, pp. 7–11, give detailed instructions for piercing combined with bloodletting but forbidding the letting of blood in certain seasons. Suwen 17.62, p. 1, recommends bleeding the smaller vessels to level a surplus of spirit, but not for a weakness of spirit. Following the contemporary analogy with du “channel” or “canal” found in the Maishu 脈書, I have always translated mai, the earliest word associated with pathways around the body, as “channel”; see Jiangling Zhangjiashan Hanjian zhengli xiaozu, “Jiangling Zhangjiashan Hanjian (Maishu) shiwen” 江陵張家山漢簡脈書釋文, WW 7 (1989), p. 74. Harper translates “vessel,” which draws out the early association with the arteriovenous system; Donald Harper, The Mawangdui Medical Manuscripts (London and New York: Keegan Paul International, 1998), pp. 82–84. More elaborate theories of jingluo 經絡 and jingmai 經脈, and many subsidiary vessels and tracts are found in Huangdi neiijing; Nathan Sivin, Traditional Medicine in Contemporary China (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1987), p. 122, n. 11, and pp. 133–47.

12 Huangdi hama jing, p. 48.

13 Winds were recognized as an independent source of illness from very early times. Kuriyama isolates lack of regularity and sudden change in the Winds as the characteristics that qualify it to be the “origin of one hundred diseases,” disorders of time and space that can be manipulated by diviner and physician alike. See Kuriyama, Expressiveness of the Body, pp. 233–70.
period, and burning it became the standard method of moxibustion.”

Yamada finds early evidence that *artemesia vulgaris* was also used in atropic techniques to protect the household from attack by demons. Its use, or more accurately misuse, is attested in analogies made in Warring States literature, for example, when *Zhuangzi* puts the idea of “cauterizing where there is no sickness” into Confucius’ mouth, as an analogy for useless effort; or when *Mengzi* likens inadequate preparation in government to the futility of using insufficiently mature *ai* to treat chronic illness. At that time, *jiu*, an early graphic form for *mai*, features as one of the earliest known methods of treating bodily “(pulsating) channels” as they emerged in the medical texts excavated from both Mawangdui and Zhangjiashan tomb libraries. By Han times we also know that cautery with mugwort was a part of front-line first aid, serving to treat the sick officers and soldiers of the Dunhuang military complex who where unable to consult physicians.

Despite early references to *ai* in a number of therapeutic contexts, we cannot presuppose that it was always *artemesia vulgaris* in the practice of premodern cautery associated with *jiu*, or how widely it was available. Sui and Tang medical texts include examples of the use of realgar for cautery. The last text in the *Hama jing* contains a cautionary treatise entitled “Bian jiu huo mu fa” (Technique to Differentiate Cautery Firewood); it relates the different types of wood used to prepare or ignite the cautery to various degrees of iatrogenic damage. We learn of eight bushes or trees that harm blood and channels, muscles, flesh, bone and marrow: pine makes for a difficult recovery, cypress has a lot of sap, bamboo harms the sinews, orange wood harms the skin and

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17 Xie Guihua, Li Junming 李均明, Zhu Guozhao 朱國炤 (1987), *Juyan Hanjian shiwen hexiao* 居延漢簡文校釋 (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1957), special issue, pp. 22–23, contains the following record: “Private soldier attached to Danggu Beacon Unit, Qu Fanzhi Qu樊子, in the first month day fell ill for four days, the office did not , three days later, , Officer in Command of Wansui Beacon Unit, applied moxa to his back in two places, after within several days the physician at the Commandant’s Office came, and he drank one dose of drug and disposed...”
muscules, elm causes withering of the bone, bramble makes the vessels sink, mulberry damages flesh, jujube damages bone and marrow.\(^{18}\)

**PROBLEM OF DATING**

The problem of dating *Hama jing* lies in understanding the extent to which the extant version of the text, an 1823 Japanese woodblock edition known as *Weisheng huibian* 衛生療編, contains the same content as various *Hama* titles cited in earlier literature and textual analogues in the transmitted medical literature.\(^{19}\) Chinese scholars often imply a Han dating, and this is an assumption that requires further study.\(^{20}\)

According to Urayama, *Weisheng huibian* is extant in five nineteenth-century Japanese manuscripts,\(^{21}\) (See figures 8 and 9.) Two of these manuscripts are cross-referenced to each other, with comments partially concerning quotations from *Hama jing* in chapters 2 and 28 of *Ishimpo*, the Japanese compilation of Chinese medical material by Tanba

\(^{18}\) *Huangdi hama jing*, pp. 55–56. It is not clear whether the wood itself is used therapeutically or simply in the preparation of the cautery material. Variations of this passage are to be found in *Waitai biiyojuan* 39 and in a section of *Ishimpo* 2 entitled “Methods to Prepare Cautery” 作艾法, the latter being attributed to a lost text *Xiaopinfang* 小品方 (*Lesser Grade Remedies*); *Ishimpo* 2, p. 58


\(^{20}\) See for example Yu Ying’ao 鈞瀛, *Zhong yi wenxian cidian* 中醫文獻辭典 (Beijing: Beijing kexue jishu, 2000), p. 610. Guo Shiyu 郭世餘 admits the compilation date and author are unknown, but categorizes the content as belonging to Qin and Han acupuncture; see *Zhongguo zhenjiu shi* 中國針灸史 (Tianjin: Tianjin kexue jishu, 1989), pp. 62–63.

\(^{21}\) Kokkai Toshokan 国会図書館 (National Library); Kyōdai Fujikawa Bunko 京大富士川文庫 (Fujikawa Library at Kyoto University) (with commentaries by Mori Yakushi 森鶴之 dated to 1860); the private Tokyo Mukyūkai kan-narai Library 無窮會神督文庫 (edition with commentaries by Mori Risshei 森立之 ca 1830, privately owned by Ota Shojirō 太田照之助); an unknown location (formerly in the possession of Tomioka Tessai 富岡鉄斎, 1836–1924). Both editions with commentaries refer to a further lost manuscript owned by *Ishikado* 某修堂. The fifth edition, in hanging scroll form, dating to 1831, was rediscovered by Nagano Hitoshi 長野仁 in the archives of the Naitō Kinen Kusuri Hakubutsukan 内藤記念薬博物館 (Naitō Memorial Museum for Medicine). This may be a copy of Tanba no Motoyasu’s original text, since it attempts to copy his original seal (i.e. “陳氏” and “丹波元簡”). The “rediscovery” and naming of this copy is described in Nagano Hitoshi, “Koutei Gamakyo’ Rinmo Insha Kyū Shohon no Shutsugen” 黄帝鍼灸經臨模影写旧鈔本の出現, *Shinkyu Osaka* 鍼灸大阪 17-1 (2001). In general, see Urayama, “Koutei gamakyo,” p. 414, the main source for knowing the location of all five 19th-c. manuscripts cited.
no Yasuyori 丹波康頼. In his 1797 postface to Weisheng huibian, the prolific medical author and physician to the Shogun, Tanba no Motoyasu 丹波元裕 (1775–1810), apparently a descendant of the earlier Tanba, states that the text that he copied in scroll form was passed down through the family of Wake (probably Wake no Hiroyo 和気広世 (781–806), head of the Ministry of Medicine) and lent to him by the Marquis of Shirakawa 白河侯.

Tanba believed that his text was the Huangdi zhenjiu hama ji 黃帝鍼灸蝸蟆忌 (Yellow Emperor's Toad Prohibition for Acupuncture and Castration) referred to in the bibliographic treatise contained in Sui shu 《History of the Sui; completed in 656》. He states that in the intervening time it had fallen into obscurity, and this is the reason for the absence of a Chinese commentarial tradition. The remaining, and larger, part of the postface was written in 1821 by Tanba’s third son, Tanba no Mototane 丹波元胤 (1789–1827), another prolific medical scholar. The son laments the many mistakes in the old manuscript and the lack of other editions with which to compare it.

Tanba no Mototane also cites an entry in the Song-era Taiping yulan 太平御覽 (Encyclopaedia Compiled in the Taiping Xingguo Era for the Emperor’s Perusal), which in turn lists a citation in Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283–43) Baopuzi 抱朴子 (The Master of Holding-to-Simplicity, ca. 320) referring to a Hama tu 蝸蟆圖 (Toad Chart) in a now lost Huangdi yijing 黃帝内經 (Huangdi medical canon). Unfortunately, the citation is missing in the transmitted version of Baopuzi,

22 Ishimpó is preserved in a woodblock print edition from 1859. This study cites Ishimpó (Beijing: Huaxia, 1993). Mori Risshi’s edition uses blue dots to cross reference the comments in red ink in the copy by Mori Yakushi (see previous note).


24 Wei Cheng 維盛, comp., Sui shu 《History of the Sui; completed in 656》, p. 1047. There is one other relevant entry in the treatise: Ming tang hama tu 明堂蝸蟆圖 (Numinous Hall Toad Chart), in one scroll.

25 In Isekikō 醫籍考 (An Examination of Medical Texts), Tanba no Mototane refers to the scroll manuscript that had been handed down through the Wake family of imperial physicians. Isekikō (Tokyo: Kokuhon shuppansha, Showa 8–10 [1933–1935]). The “old manuscript” he refers to may be the original copy of Wake’s text made by his father, now lost, and possibly the same referred to by Risshi and Yakushi, as owned by Ishūdō. Alternatively, and as Urayama convincingly argues, the Ishūdō text is a different, and lost, manuscript scroll prepared by Tanba no Mototane on the basis of the original copy of Wake’s text. The original scroll from the imperial library text may have disappeared, or been otherwise unavailable, in the interim period, making it difficult to identify original graphs. He therefore amended the original copy before making a woodcut, and it is this lost amended version that forms the source material for our extant editions of Weisheng huibian.

but this does not rule out *Hama tu* as a fourth-century chart, since *Taiping yulan* is among the most reliable encyclopaedias for its accuracy of quotation.\(^{27}\)

Another factor hinting at an early origin of the *Hama* material is the large number of textual analogues quoted from a variant version of *Hama jing* recorded in chapter 2 of *Ishimpō*. A number of these quotations, such as “four hasty days” (*si ji ri* 四激日), are missing in the current *Weisheng huibian* edition; additionally, the auspicious days for treating men or women are not consistent and the dwelling locations of human spirit (*ren shen*) and human *qi* sometimes vary. Indeed, on the latter point the compiler of *Ishimpō* used the contents of this different edition of *Hama jing* as footnotes to its main text, which is recorded as quotations from the texts “Fan Wang Fang” 范王方 (“Fang Wang’s Remedies”) and “Hua Tu fo” 華陀法 (“Hua Tu’s Method”). The text-footnote relation between the variant editions suggests that despite inconsistent content there is a coincidence of format.\(^{28}\) Neither the invocation of the third-century legendary Hua Tuo, nor the eminent physician Fan Wang (308–372?) tells us anything concrete about the date of this material. Nevertheless we begin to build the impression of a structured literature of prohibition common to different medical traditions and readily available to scholars in the tenth century.

Evidence of a seventh-century origin, if not this specific text version, is found in the textual parallels from two compilations of medical texts, Sun Simiao’s 孫思邈 *Beiji qianjin yao fang* 便急千金要方 (*Essential Prescriptions Worth a Thousand for Emergency*, compiled between 650 and 659) and Wang Tao’s 王蕡, *Waitai biyao* 偏臺秘要 (*Arcane Essentials from the Imperial Library*, 752).\(^{29}\) As we see below, both these texts also refer to missing acupuncture and moxibustion charts, some concerned with prohibitions. Both a preliminary survey of the structure of the text and some of its linguistic features suggest a literary culture akin to that of Sun Simiao’s work.

\(^{27}\) The Wang Ming 陸明 edn. of *Baopuzi neipian* simply records the citation as a missing fragment, of which it is clear that there are many; Wang Ming, *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi* 抱樸子內篇校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), p. 362. Since the larger part of *Taiping yulan* is taken from a pool of source material thought to reflect texts extant in the sixth century, we might assume that there was a Toad Chart circulating before that time. The editors of *Taiping yulan* consulted some large encyclopedias that were still extant until quite a late period, but have subsequently disappeared. See Timothy Barrett, “On the Reconstruction of the *Shenxian zhuan*,” *BSOAS* (forthcoming).

\(^{28}\) I am grateful to an anonymous referee for this analysis.

The nine sections of *Hama jing* are linked together by an overall theme, yet each is a coherent text in itself with an integral and consistent structure, quite different from the more heterogeneous and sometimes internally contradictory character of early-imperial *Huangdi neijing* treatises. This consistency of structure is not seen in acupuncture and moxibustion texts until the advent of medical books by a single named author, beginning with the late-third century physician Huangfu Mi’s Yellow Emperor’s *AB* Canon, hereafter *Jiayi jing*. Other significant features of *Hama jing*, however, are not mirrored in this latter text. As we will see later in this paper, acupuncture prohibition material was circulating before Huangfu Mi’s time, yet it does not feature as a separate category in his text. Nor do specific linguistic devices such as *you* 右 “the aforementioned (to the right)” serve to gather up items in a list in the way they organize *Hama jing* and, for example, Sun Simiao’s seventh-century medical and alchemical texts.

Apart from the *Ishimpō* 養心方 citations of a *Hama jing* 蝸蟆經 (Toad Canon) and a *Hama tu* 蝸蟆圖 (Toad Chart), dating to three centuries later than the Sui catalogue, and the odd quotation in twelfth- and thirteenth-century acupuncture texts, nothing more is known about the fate of *Hama jing* until it turns up in nineteenth-century Japan, possibly edited by Tanba no Motoyasu. As Sivin points out, the absence of a particular title in orthodox literature may in a Daoist text indicate a period of secret transmission. The circumstances of its later preservation in Japan suggest the same might be said for missing medical texts, but evidence set out later in this paper suggests the contrary for the prohibition literature of the medieval period in general. This is as far as we can get for the moment towards a date of our *Hama jing* through textual analysis without embarking on an in-depth linguistic dating, which is outside the scope of this present paper. The sections that fol-

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31 Ma, “Yixinfang,” pp. 326–71, discusses the range of medieval sources selected for *Ishimpō*.

32 In *Keiseki Hōkoshi Hoi* 經籍訪古志補遺 (Supplements to the “Examination into Bibliographical Antiquities”), Mori Risshi asserts that statements in Tanba no Motoyasu’s edn. correspond directly with those quoted in *Ishimpō*. However, he claims there are many missing lines in Motoyasu’s version and that our surviving text is therefore an edited version. See Urayama, “Koutei gamakō,” p. 90, who points out that as early as 1856 Mori Risshi had noted in *Keiseki Hōkoshi Hoi* that although many of the *Ishimpō* quotations are identical in the extant editions of *Hama jing*, there are a considerable number which were then unique. It is possible that Tanba no Motoyasu edited the text at the point at which he borrowed and copied the Wake scroll.

low explore the content of the text from the point of view of the imagery, medical theory, positions of the prohibited locations, calendrical priorities, illnesses, and names. They remain tangentially concerned with dating inasmuch that it is possible to identify specific features with the medical culture of a period or place.

THE IMAGES

Animals

Sarah Allan emphasizes that in ancient China rivers, mountains, and heavenly bodies were by extension the spirits of those phenomena. Spirit and substance, undifferentiated in many contexts, formed the object of cult offerings. Taiyi (the Great One) is thus both the polestar and the spirit with which that star was identified.34 Taken together with the animal spirits associated with the four quadrants and their constellations, Vermilion Bird, Black Warrior (a tortoise), Blue-green Dragon, White Tiger, as well as Gouchen (Angular Arranger) representing the center,35 the images of the bird in the sun and the toad and rabbit-in-the-moon from Hama jing give us a comprehensive guide to how intimately the human body was also embraced within the influence of, and inhabited by, the planets, stars and their spirits. Schafer’s elusive Vermilion Bird was partially a trope to convey Tang (618–907) images of the tropical south as a mysterious, exotic, sensual, and therefore dangerous, realm. It also serves to highlight the many dimensions that each animal simultaneously inhabits. One of the Vermilion Bird’s many manifestations was the red planet Mars emerging from the velvet black of the tropical night. To the medieval Chinese it was the spirit ‘Anger of Red Sparks’ or the ‘Dazzling Deluder.’ His place is in the ‘Southern Quarter’...The Fire red God is embodied in a Vermilion Bird’. ...The northward drift of the sun, inhabited by a red crow (a cousin of the Vermilion Bird), to its ultimate goal, the Tropic of Cancer...36

We first hear of a three-legged bird in a quotation attributed to the fourth-century BC astronomer Gan De 甘德:


35 Gouchen are six stars close to the five stars of beiji 北極, the north pole asterism located in Ursa Minor; John Major, Heaven and Earth in Early Han Thought (Albany: SUNY, 1993), p. 81.

Since the cock has three feet and the crow has two feet, the cock 
dwells within the sun and the essence of the crow, becomes a star 
which controls the orbit of the Grand Yang.37

Contrarily, our bird is rather a sparrow with three feet. But the 
image certainly speaks of the bird’s mastery of his domain, perhaps 
through his essentially yang nature.38 The three-legged bird illustrated 
and cited frequently as a constellation spirit in Hama jing has many 
analogues in the Han on various TLV mirrors and in tomb iconogra-
phy. With the toad and the hare-in-the-moon, a crow-in-the-sun (with 
two feet) crowns both richly illustrated silk funeral banners that were 
draped over the coffins in Mawangdui tombs 2 and 3 (closed 168 BC).39 
By the first century AD the three-legged bird-in-the-sun became a stan-
dard trope,40 and is sometimes seen as messenger to the Mother Queen 
of the West, ultimately surviving as the three birds in her entourage. References to auspicious red birds, crows or sparrows continue to ro-
maticize a geographically indistinct southern realm, the Kingdom of 
the Red Bird in Tang literature and beyond.41

In comparison with the three-legged bird, less has been written 
about either the toad or the hare-in-the-moon (see figure 2). Indeed, 
if it were not for the fact that the term hama itself clearly identifies a 
toad, we might even question the translation of toad and hare, since


38 Translating a passage from Yilin 易林, “The lonesome three-legged bird cries efficaciously to the Local Inspector. It presides over mistakes and punishes evil, but ruin and destruction have caused it to grieve,” Roel Sterckx describes the abusive bird as a “judgmental arbiter of human affairs”; Sterckx, The Animal and the Daemon in Early China (Albany: SUNY, 2002), pp. 63, 266 (n. 85).


40 See for example Can tong qi 參同契 (Concordance of the Three; 1420?), “The vermilion bird is the germ of fire”; Can tong qi is a philosophic treatise that applies the 64 hexagram structure of the Book of Changes to stages of alchemical process. It is translated in Fabrizio Pregadio, Zhouryi cantong qi: Dal Libro dei Mutamenti all’Elisir d’Oro. Con un’edizione critica e una concordanza della recensione di Peng Xiao (947 d.C.) (Venezia: Cafoscarina, 1996); see also Sivin, Chinese Alchemy, pp. 36–49.

41 Schafer, Vermilion Bird, pp. 261–65. The three-legged bird still features in illustrations from many time periods ath are concerned with contemplative and medical practices of Dao-
the images themselves suggest a frog and a rabbit. Tu 兔 on the other hand refers to both rabbits and hares, so this identification is less clear. Regardless of zoological accuracy, all four of the animals are prolific breeders and this may be significant in their association with the moon inasmuch as the moon relates to cycles of fertility. The apocryphal Chun qiu yuan ming bao 春秋元命包 identifies the toad and hare as yin and yang respectively. The hare being a fast runner and inclined to excited noises is warm and yang in nature. The “toad” is the seventh of ten sexual positions related to animal movements, as recorded in the second century bc Mawangdui literature. It is also evident in Western Han physical therapies, known as daoyin (guiding and leading) techniques. Daoyin is aimed at treating pain and keeping all the joints mobile as well as at cultivating inner qi, the essential “stuff of life” that animated and invigorated the body. In contrast to the sexual technique, which can only be surmised, we are given fine detail of the daoyin technique: “Leaping Toad. With hands parallel, wave them up and down to right and to left.”

We also find the name recurring in medieval daoyin literature. But unlike the toad and hare of Western magical and healing traditions, our animals in the moon are not otherwise used here for therapy, or in the substance of ritual and remedy, but chart the passage of time. In the Can tong qi 参同契 (Concordance of the Three) we hear that the “spirit of the toad and the rabbit together illuminate the qi of sun and moon; the toad divines the divisions of time and the soul of the rabbit spurs forth light.”

In the first images of the moon in Hamajing 1, the prohibited locations (that is, locations of human qi) might seem to be plotted according to the parts of the toad’s body that are emerging from shadow each day, but close examination soon reveals that this is not the case.

In the treatise on divination by tortoise and milfoil in the first dynastic history Shiji 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian; 104–87 bc), the

42 I have not been able to discover what this title means.
43 Isho shûsei 經書集成 (Tokyo: Kan-Gi bunka kenkyûkai, 1963), vol. 4a, p. 35.
44 Harper, Mawangdui, p. 432.
45 There are a number of animal forms detailed in Yinshu (pulling book) transcribed in Zhangjiashan Hanjian zhengli zu, “Zhangjiashan Hanjian Yinshu shiwen” 張家山漢簡 引書釋文, WW 10 (1990), pp. 82–83.
47 Pregadio, Zhouyi cantong qi, examines the history of the text from its origin in the world of diviners and cosmologists working on the Han exegetical tradition of the Book of Changes to the commentaries found in the Taoist Canon.
toad appears together with the three-legged bird, together humiliating the celestial bodies:

The spirit tortoise knows the auspicious and inauspicious, yet his bones merely become hollow and desiccate. The sun is potent and rules over all under heaven, yet is disgraced by a three-legged bird. The moon is the law and assists the officials, it is eaten by a toad.48

The moon’s humiliation by the toad is confirmed in the collection of essays composed at the court of Liu An 劉安 (ca. 180-122), the *Huainanzi* 淮南子:

In the sun there is a lame bird, yet in the moon there is a toad. The moon illuminates all under heaven, yet is eaten by a toad. The crow is strong and overcomes the sun, yet is overcome by the sacrificial zhui bird (??) 49

With the bird, both toad and hare are associated with the Mother Queen of the West. Michael Loewe’s description of the hare draws on lore from all over the world, linking the hare to the moon, to procreation, to Buddhism, artful cunning, wisdom. He attributes some of these qualities to the observation that the hare is to be seen on moonlit nights, its short and prolific breeding cycles, and its strange attraction to the naked flame, concluding:

There could be no clearer link between the hare and the cycle of birth, death and re-birth, than the image of the animal pounding the drug of immortality under the benevolent gaze and supervision of the Queen Mother of the West.

*A Comparison with Images from Dunhuang*

Moving northwest in the general direction of the Kun Lun mountains, the home of Mother Queen of the West, we find at the Dunhuang Mogao cave shrines (carved into a cliff face between fourth and tenth centuries), many three-legged birds in another religious context. Perched in the suns of the Buddhist cave murals and in some manuscripts are three-legged sunbirds, more fanciful creatures than our little crow or sparrow. Yet the birds link us to another dynamic between the content of the Hama jing and the Dunhuang scroll manuscripts. Among the tens of thousands of manuscripts recovered from cave 16 are the earliest extant Chinese moxibustion charts catalogued as S6168 and S6262, and known as the “Jiufa tu” 灸法圖 (“Charts of a Cautery

48 *Shiji* 128, p. 3237. 49 *Huainanzi* (SBBY edn.) 7, p. 2; and 17, p. 16.
Method”), and P2675 “Xinji beiji jiujing” 新集備急灸經 (“Canon of Emergency Moxibustion Remedies, Newly Collected”).

Before concentrating on detail from the texts alone, we will do well to consider what the images in the charts S6168 and S6262 tell us themselves. The Dunhuang charts are simple line-drawings of a well-built male body, structured with detail of the ribs, sternum, nipples and the supra-sternal notch outlined on the torso almost in the style of the leaner meditating Buddhas (see figure 3). The bone structure of the larger, more well-covered figures of the Hama jing is less distinct, and the whole impression more characteristically Han Chinese. The only surviving fragment of the figure in P2675 affords a view of the head with elongated earlobes, again suggesting the Buddhist context of Dunhuang within which the image may have been copied. This image is particularly interesting for its title “Ming tang 明堂” (“Numinous Hall”) which, to my knowledge, identifies it as the earliest extant example of a “Ming tang tu” 明堂圖 (“Chart of the Numinous Hall”), such as the one referred to in the preface to Ming tang 明堂, juan 39 of Waitai biyao 外臺秘要 (Arcane Essentials from the Imperial Library, 752; see figure 4). Wang Tao argues for the interdependence of canonical writings and charts in combining, “clarity about where the mai ([pulsating]channels) meet and come together” and “discussing the essentials of the 100 afflictions.”

Whereas neither Dunhuang charts nor Hama jing have much to say about the mai, both discuss the essentials of affliction, signs, symptoms and details of therapy.

Apart from the loincloth in S6168 and S6262, the figures are naked, as they are in Hama jing, sections 1 and 2. In this respect all four sets of figures can be compared to the completely naked elderly, frail man drawn in P3589, a treatise on physiognomy. In the context of the general modesty characteristic of early and medieval Chinese art, where nudity is exclusive to the portrayal of Daoist hells, the candor of S6168/6262 and P3589 is extraordinary (see figure 5). Indeed, if it wasn’t for the Dunhuang charts and the Song bronze acupuncture figures, this fact alone might have suggested Japanese intervention at the point that the Hama jing woodcut was made for printing. Yet the anterior views on S6168 all show the face in detail with hair tied in topknots, one to each side of the head and the topknot is single and

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50 The Dunhuang manuscripts, some hundred or so which have medical content, are primarily held in the British Library and Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
51 Wang, Waitai biyao 39, p. 779.
52 For the Song bronzes see Lu and Needham, Celestial Lancets, pp. 160–63.
Figure 2. The Toad and the Hare: Hama jing, Section One

After Huangdi hama jing (Beijing: Zhongyi guji, 1984).

Figure 3. S6168

Courtesy of the IDP, British Library; © The British Library, Or.8210/S.6168.
Figure 4. P. 2675
Courtesy Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Figure 5. P. 3589
Courtesy Bibliothèque Nationale de France.
Figure 6. Hama jing, Section One
After Huangdi hama jing (Beijing: Zhongyi guji, 1984).

Figure 7. Hama jing, Section Two
After Huangdi hama jing (Beijing: Zhongyi guji, 1984).
Figure 8. 1830 Rinmo Edition of Hama jing
Held in the Naitō Kinen Kusuri Hakubutsukan 内藤記念薬物館 (Naitō Memorial Museum for Medicine) (see note 21).

Figure 9. Copy of Tanba no Motoyasu’s Original Seal, i.e. and 丹波元簡 on the Rinmo Edition
Reproduced with the kind permission of Professor Li Jianmin.
central in *Hama jing*. No concessions seem to have been made to nineteenth-century Japanese hair fashions (see figure 6).

Both *Hama jing* and the Dunhuang charts show a remarkable similarity in the relationship between the image and the legend on the image. The text is integrated in and around the image with the explicit aim of facilitating the process of practice. On all the Dunhuang charts treatment locations are marked on the figures with lines drawn to separate legends which record the name of the location, indications for use, and instructions for application of moxibustion. The legend on the *Hama jing* is shorter, mainly recording the name of the location, but the text to the side of each image gives comparable information, in this case instructions for the times of avoidance and the consequences of transgression. Both legend and text are in a similar hand and suggest a Japanese scribal tradition.

As with the moxibustion sites in S6168, S6262, and P2675, the forbidden locations in *Hama jing* are given without systematic reference to, or illustration of, the yin and yang vessels or channels of the acupuncture body that are associated with the inner viscera and bowels. Given the lack of scholarly acupuncture theory evident in these charts, and the sole use of moxibustion and not acupuncture, we might be forgiven for concluding that their manifest accessibility and popular appeal meant that they were designed for sale exclusively in a domestic, less educated market and not destined for the same readership as copies of the canonical treatises of Chinese medicine. Certainly, when compared to the latter texts, these are manuals that provide quick and easy reference, and require little education to use. Indeed the intention of the compiler of P2675 is made clear in the preface: he suggests that he is abridging the moxibustion techniques of a number of *jia* 家, “schools” or teaching lineages, in order to provide a practical medicine for those who live in outlying regions and cannot get hold of sophisticated drugs.

Yet these texts were by nature destined for a literate audience and might well have served as one part of the complex equipment of military or monastery medicine, or of household first aid, for an official and his family posted to a remote position. After all, we can find references to the original presence of lost charts in transmitted texts such as Sun Simiao’s *Beiji qianjin yao fang*, and it may simply be that the comparative difficulty of committing diagrams faithfully to wood-block print, rather than to manuscript, accounts for their omission in the received scholarly medical traditions.\(^{53}\) With research demonstrat-

\(^{53}\) *Beiji qianjin yao fang* 29, pp. 508, 513. See also Catherine Despeux, *Prescriptions*
ing the eclectic mix of Dunhuang society, and indeed Tang medicine in general, we must be cautious in our judgement about the circulation of the charts.

On the other hand Hama jing, section 1 forms a counterpoint to the Dunhuang cautery charts and may serve to establish the latter as part of the more popular tradition. The prohibitions seem to represent a response to the type of quick and easy medicine exemplified in the Dunhuang manuscripts. In the simple therapeutic directives of the three cautery charts, and the more accessible practice that they appear to serve, we can perhaps detect the kind of medicine that was itself the target of Hama jing prohibition. Indeed this particular relationship may suggest a way of approaching the wider prohibition literature that relates to other fields such as nutrition and sex.

THE PROGRESS OF THE SPIRITS

The dissemination of ideas and images concerned with medicine, astronomy and the calendar brings us to consider the social and educational structures in medieval Dunhuang. Many of the manuscripts found in cave 16 at the Mogao grottoes were copied at the official school complex of the Dunhuang prefecture, located to the west of Dunhuang town. Some were copied as a part of the education of local pupils and show us that subjects like divination, astrology, and the calendrical arts were part of the curriculum. The Prefectural School (zhouxue 州学) of Dunhuang was therefore an important center for the transmission of the technical traditions and also included an Institute of Medicine (yixue 醫學). Each Prefectural School had one hundred students and a director titled “Erudite” (boshi 博士). The latter “who were also members of the government, were not only versed in the astro-calendrical and occult sciences but were also in charge of the redaction and diffusion of the annotated calendar,” employed in various sectors of the administration. And it is this preoccupation with the calendar that situates Hama jing’s cycles of the spirits and of qi together with the wider

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55 Ibid.

technical literature of the divinatory and occult practices founded in medieval *shushu* culture.\(^{57}\)

In the same spirit as *Hama jing*, sections 1 and 2, three Dunhuang manuscripts specify taboos relating to the passage of human spirit (*ren shen* 人神) around the body according to the lunar cycle. S\(^{5737}\), “Jiujing mingtang” 炎經明堂 (“Numinous Hall of the Moxibustion Canon”), prohibits piercing with needles (*ci* 刺); P\(^{3247}\) sets out an alternative thirty-day human-spirit cycle, equivalents of which are to be found in *Beiji qian jin yao fang*.\(^{58}\) The text on the verso of P\(^{2675}\) describes the circulation of human spirit according to the lunar calendrical cycles as determined by the sixty-day *ganzhi* 千支 (stems and branches) system and *jianchu* 建除 calendrical systems.\(^{59}\) The human-spirit prohibitions are located after several texts concerned with predicting and influencing the future through understanding the importance of the birth year, or the implications for prognosis of illness based on the day on which one falls ill, the selection of auspicious days (and avoidance of inauspicious days) for suppressing the demons of illness, and the like. Other sections of this text correlate human destiny with the seven stars.\(^{60}\)

The nine sections of the received compilation of *Hama jing* present a variety of calendrical cycles and ideas about circulation. After the set of thirty images mapping the monthly rotation of human *qi* there are also another nine images each charting one position of the *shen* 神 (spirit) in nine distinct sectors of the body for a set of twelve ages from age one to 108 years, for example, in the first, tenth, nineteenth, twenty-eighth, thirty-seventh, forty-sixth, fifty-fifth, sixty-fourth, seventy-third, eighty-

\(^{57}\) In his article “Dunhuang Iatromantic Manuscripts,” Harper has conveniently tabulated different hemerological systems and their relationship to parts of the body, the prognosis of illness, and auspicious days for therapy as they are set out in *Hama jing*, *Beiji qianjin yao fang* and earlier literature; Donald Harper, “Dunhuang Iatromantic Manuscripts: P\(^{2856V}\) and P\(^{2675}\) in Lo and Cullen, eds. *Mediaeval Chinese Medicine* (forthcoming).


\(^{59}\) In the *ganzhi* cycle the basic unit of time was the day counted from midnight to midnight. Days were numered in a cycle of 60 produced by combining a set of ten “heavenly stems” with 12 “earthy branches”. The method was also used to enumerate years. *Jianchu* is the conventional way of referring to the astro-divinatory method that indicates twelve types of circumstance in human affairs, each being designated by a single character term, of which *jian* and *chu* are the first two. The system, a major cycle of twelve years and a minor cycle of twelve days, is common in the Shuihudi, Yunmeng tomb manuscripts as well as the Dunhuang manuscripts. *Jianchu* is thus not a meaningful word in itself. For the *jianchu* system, see Michael Loewe, “The Almanacs (Jih-shu) from Shui-hu-ti,” rpt. in idem, *Divination, Mythology*, pp. 221–26.

\(^{60}\) I am very grateful to Donald Harper for an advance copy of his notices of the iatromantic texts prepared for the first volume of Mark Kalinowski, ed., *Divination et sciences traditionnelles dans la Chine médiévale* (forthcoming).
second, ninety-first and one hundredth years of life, the spirit resides in the sector of the *shen gong* (spirit palace), sometimes called “*qi* fish,” four *cun* (hereafter, inches)\(^{61}\) below the navel opposite middle extremity (*zhong ji*), a term which refers to the area of the uterus in women and a comparable place in the male (see figure 7).\(^{62}\)

The legend to section 2 of *Hama jing* states that, according to Qi Bo 岐伯, legendary interlocutor of the Yellow Emperor in the *Huangdi* corpus, the nine sectors refer to the lodging of the spirit in a particular organ during the year in question when inappropriate cautery on the marked location might prove fatal. Sections 3 and 4 also locate the spirit according to calendrical cycles: the former text, does so according to the *ganzhi* cycle of sixty days, here known as *liu jia ri*. The latter text differentiates five types of spirit and soul, the *shen* 神 itself, but also the *hun* 魂, *po* 鬚, *zhi* 志, and *yi* 意:

At dawn to mealtime the *hun* 魂 is in the *zhongfu* 中府 (middle storehouse), the *po* 鬚 is in the *muzi* 目眥 (canthus of the eye), the *shen* 神 is in the *pangguang* 潘光 (bladder) the *zhi* 志 is in the *dacang* 大倉 (great granary), the *yi* 意 is at *yin jiao* 陰交 (yin crossing).\(^{63}\)

These spirits and souls are often translated as “the ethereal soul,” the “earthly soul” “the will” or “ambition” and the “intention” respectively. In *Lingshu* 8 each of these entities is given a fixed lodging in one of the five viscera, the heart, liver, lung, kidney and spleen respectively.\(^{64}\) Here we find them roaming around the body according to the twelve times of the day and taking up lodging in locations that are both at the surface of, and deep within, the body. If pierced with the incising tool, death would not be immediate. For the *hun* it takes eight years, the *po* six, the *shen*, seven, the *zhi* four, the *yi* nine, and the *jing* 精 (essence) ten years.

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\(^{61}\) One *cun* is approximately equivalent to an English inch or 2.5 cms; Sivin, *Chinese Alchemy*, p. 253.

\(^{62}\) Here we should probably understand the “middle extremity” as designating the uterus, or commensurate with that place in the body thought to be a vessel for the transformation of the reproductive essences in *He Yin-yang* 合陰陽 (Harmonising yin and yang), the Mawangdui sexual cultivation text. Eventually the same terminology is used for *ren* 3, an acupoint just below the skin on the lower abdomen which has a powerful effect on acute genito-urinary problems. See the discussion in Ma, *Mawangdui guyishu kaoshi*, p. 1002, n.15.

\(^{63}\) *Huangdi hama jing*, p. 43.

\(^{64}\) The *hun* 魂, and the *po* 鬚, for example, are aspects of the human being that scholarship has traditionally seen as separating at death and as the object of early funerary practice. Ken Brashier has shown that *hun/po* dualism is not at the foundation of Han burial practice and is best described as a scholastic convention. He suggests that the pair are more closely linked to medical states of anxiety and illness; Ken Brashier, “Han Thanatology and the Division of ‘Souls’” *EC* 21 (1996), pp. 125–58.
Some lodging places are also the names of acupuncture loci that survive in the received traditions; others such as the bladder and the canthus of the eye are more general terms. The “middle storehouse,” like “middle extremity” above, is variously the designation of an acupuncture locus on the Lung Taiyin channel or a term that refers generally to the inner organs in the canonical treatises of acupuncture, or a site for the transformation of bodily essence in early Chinese sexual cultivation.65 “yin crossing” in the acupuncture and moxibustion traditions is consistently placed just below the navel on the lower abdomen. The canthus of the eye is on the route of at least five of the earliest extant descriptions of the mai.66

The concept of spirits resident in the organs exists in Taiping jing (Canon of Heavenly Peace), which may be datable in part to the Eastern Han.67 A similar idea seems to have developed independently in the Daoist meditation traditions at least from the fifth century AD, if not much earlier. The Huangting jing (Canon of the Yellow Court), two meditational manuals used in the Shangqing (Supreme Purity) tradition of Daoism, and later as an integral part of the practice known as “cultivating perfection” (xiu zhen 修真), describes radiant gods resident in both the inner and outer body.68 Illustrations from the Yun ji qi qian editions of Huangting material focus on the outward appearances of the creatures dwelling in the body.69 Basic notions of cosmology, theories related to classical medicine, and visualization of the human body as an administrative system governed by inner gods all come to bear on the adepts’ practice. Medical analogues of the visions of spirits and colored qi in the meditations of the xiu zhen tradition can also be found in parts of section 5 of Hama jing, which describes how different colored qi fill the five viscera in the inner body and flow to the surface through various mediums: “Red qi on the inside stores in the heart, and on the outside travels in the blood…”70

The tradition is shared in the fourth-century Baopu zi and in Sun Simiao’s medical compilation Beiji qianjin yao fang, which records a
mid-seventh-century account of breath meditation that combines the technique of moving bodily qi with breath control, as well as with daoyin techniques and the visualization of colored essences flooding through the body.\(^{71}\)

In sections 5 and 6 of *Hama jing* we also find seasonal prohibitions which include one passage that gives a day related to each of the spirits/constellations of the viscera according to the ancient ganzhi cycle:

The liver is the *qing long* 青龍 (Blue-green Dragon); spirit is at *ding-mao*. The heart is the *zhu que* 朱雀 (Vermilion Bird); spirit is at *gengwu*. The spleen is the *gouchen* 勾陳; spirit is in the center. The lung is the White Tiger; spirit is at *guiyou*. The kidney is the *xuan wu* 玄武 (Black Warrior) constellation; spirit is at *jiazi*.\(^{72}\)

How are we to understand this passage? Apparently the inner dimension of the body is an image of the Heavens. But are these five different spirits belonging to the five different viscera flourishing in sequence according to the sixty-day ganzhi calendrical cycle; or is it one spirit moving around the body according to the time or position of the person and animating its visceral residence?\(^{73}\) All of the terms that identify the five viscera refer in some way to groups of star formations through the rubric of the *si xiang* 四象, the animals of the four directions, that we know from Han astronomical theory and observation. Four of the directional animals then may form a group of constellations that are seven of the twenty-eight *xiu* 宿 (lodges). The Black Warrior is the tortoise depicted with the other three animals in Han motifs. The tortoise is evidently elevated to heavenly status through carapace divination, and associated with war through the image of its armour. The fifth direction, the six stars of *gouchen*, is needed to correlate to the power of five governed by the five agents, earth, water, metal, wood and fire, and manifest here in the five viscera. It refers to the center, and is part of a conglomerate of eleven stars including the five of the *beiji* 北極 (north pole asterism) in Shi Shi’s 石氏 star catalogue.\(^{74}\)

*Hama jing*’s concern for the safe passage of the spirits and souls of the human body is part of an elaborate tradition of medical prohi-

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\(^{71}\) *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi* 抱朴子内篇校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985/88), p. 275; *Beiji qianjin yao fang* 27, p. 483.

\(^{72}\) *Huangdi hama jing*, pp. 43–44.

\(^{73}\) The anonymous referees make a strong case for the former reading, but the passage itself is ambiguous.

\(^{74}\) The star catalogue is attributed to a tradition following and partially authored by the 5th-c. bc astronomer Shi Shen 石申 of the state of Wei 貂 (445–225 bc), but probably compiled in E. Han; Sun and Kistemaker, *Chinese Sky*, pp. 42–52, p. 50 (n. 3), and pp. 113–46.
bitions, including those concerned with food and sex. With the Tang medical school’s courses listing “Ming tang” texts together with titles from canonical literature and a potential of one hundred students at the Dunhuang Prefectural School engaged in copying such technical literature, it is clear that the knowledge the texts contained was far from a secret tradition. Since we know from P2675 that the prohibition texts were part of a written tradition used in far-flung places with no formal medical provision, they may represent a formalized response to the shared perception of acupuncture and moxibustion as a widespread, undocumented, potentially unorthodox practice that existed beyond the range of literate healers and the penetration of state patronized medical literature and training. The recovery of manuals such as S6168, S6262, and P2675, representing manuscript traditions that were not chosen for inclusion in surviving medical compilations, may also indicate the existence of an undocumented and widespread practice. With texts of prohibition to be found in all the major acupuncture treatises that date to Jin and Tang times, we might assume that the medical elite styled themselves as guardians of this unruly medical practice.

Yet the depth of the penetration of these texts into society also testifies to a surprising alignment of technical culture: however popular and widely distributed the prohibition texts, they were also an integral part of the scholarly medical traditions in medieval times. Despite Sun Simiao’s stated ambivalence about the therapeutic value of the prohibition literature in the event of an emergency, two of seven treatises in part 1 of his section on acupuncture and moxibustion record the prohibitions and they are well represented in the surviving tenth century acupuncture manual *Zi wu jing* 子午經 (*Noon and Midnight Manual*). A lack of scholarly theory and a utilitarian format do not necessarily mark a text as exclusively designed for a lay market. There were other barometers, such as the mastery of case histories, for judging the qualifications of a physician. And one only has to investigate the range of literature available for modern medical workers of any persuasion to know the value of easy reference manuals in practice. At the beginning of the acupuncture and moxibustion section of chapter 2 of *Ishimpō*, Tanba no Yasuyori himself mentions that he has redesigned the layout of the acupuncture loci to facilitate consultation and avoid wasting precious therapeutic time. Thus, if we deem acupuncture charts for practice or

75 *Beiji qianjin yifang* 千金翼方 (Suzhou Wuxian: Xu min puji, 1878) 28 (pian 10), p. 11.
for prohibition as "popular" it can only be in the sense of "widespread" and available across temporal, social and cultural boundaries, for neither seem the exclusive property of one social class.

The next question for this paper is, can we trace the history of this technical tradition in texts prior to the seventh century?

A: Thoroughfare for the Spirits

Despite convincing evidence in the transmitted medical collections, as well as the Dunhuang material, that situate our texts of Hama jing in the Tang period, there is plentiful evidence of similar iatromantic traditions in early China. Indeed, even the earliest reliable evidence of acupuncture at named loci was buried together with texts that prohibit treatment according to the patient’s age, ensuring the safety and free flow of the hun 魂 (soul) and shen 神 (spirit). From the flowering of hemerology and correlative cosmology in the fourth and third centuries BC to the medieval world of Dunhuang there are well-defined continuities in a range of medical texts that synchronize the spirit world with hemerological and calendrical systems. Medical practice in this culture often included sacrifice, exorcism, and talismans.

Han acupuncture texts associate the movement of human spirits and qi with both solar and lunar cycles, the stars, planets, the climatic influences, and the ba zheng 八正 ("eight regularities"). The circulatory amble of human qi around the network of twenty-eight acupuncture tracts in the physiology of Lingshu 15, for example, matches a map of the heavens primarily concerned with divination: the dividing of what are naturally uneven lodges in quantitative astronomical observation and calculation into 36 equal divisions is a measure of the divinatory analysis of time sequences rather than the observation of actual angles or times.

77 Most of the text on wooden and bamboo strips and wooden boards excavated at the Eastern Han tomb at Hantanpo 旱灅坡 in Wuwei 武威 (close to Dunhuang in the Gansu corridor of northwest China) relate to medicine, largely of a pharmaceutical nature; Zhang Yanchang 張延昌 and Zhu Jianping 朱建平, eds., Wuwei Handai yijian yanjiu 武威漢代醫簡研究 (Beijing: Yuanzimeng, 1996), pp. 21–23.

78 Li Ling 李零, Zhongguo fang shu kao 中國方書考 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin, 1993); Harper, “Dunhuang Iatromantic Manuscripts.”

79 The ba zheng are the harmonious winds from the eight directions which should arrive at the right time if the environment is to remain healthy; Hanyu da cidian 漢語大辭典, vol. 1, p. 741; Suwen (SBBY edn.) 3 (pian 26), pp. 5–6.

80 Lingshu (SBBY edn.) 4 (pian 15), pp. 5b–6. At the period in question, the basic spatial division of the heavens was into 365 and ¼ du 度 (degrees), close to the Western degree. We can see different divinatory priorities taking precedence over astronomical priorities on a number of early cosmographs: the one excavated at Fuyang is a round plate marked with the lodges at equal intervals, each marked with 12 numbers representing the months in which the
In the astronomical and numerological considerations that dominate ideas about the circulation of human *shen* (spirit) and human *qi*, we are faced with a view quite different from that which we find in other traditions, such as medical ideas of the heart influenced by the Western Han meditation and self-cultivation traditions. The *neiye* (inward training) treatise of *Guanzi* describes the proper seat of the spirit in the heart (but it can come and go), from whence it manifests in a radiance and acuity of the senses. Unlike the free water-like flow, common to the imagination of *qi* in physiological models that remains popular in the modern theory of “traditional” Chinese medicine, the prohibition literature seems to envisage the human *shen* or the *qi* as a smaller, more self-contained, discrete entity taking up residence around the body rather slowly, day by day. There are clear analogies with the way spirits, both benign and malevolent, make the body their dwelling place in both religious and medical literature. Significantly, the text of Dunhuang P3247 uses the verb *zhu* (literally “to pour in”) when referring to how the human spirit takes up residence in different parts of the body: “Every month the human spirit takes possession of the bottom of the foot appropriate to the day...” 每月人神注在當日足下. *Zhu* is often translated “possession” since it also describes how demonic entities occupy and possess the body.

Paying careful attention to the passage of the spirit in and around the body is a fundamental concern of the medical literature of Han times. *Qi Bo* describes the 365 places where the *jie* (joints) intersect, “where the qi of the shen 神 ‘spirit’ (or alternatively ‘qi and shen’) travels in and out.” He differentiates crude and skilled practitioners by the quality of their attention to the acupuncture loci. Superior practitioners do not simply pierce the body randomly at the *guan* (joints). Responding with the speed and agility necessary to treat the spirit, they needle the *ji* (trigger/mechanism), a term that associates acupuncture with the movement of a trigger in a crossbow, with the

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81 *Guanzi* is a miscellany of different writings mainly on political and philosophic themes, some which may date to the 5th c. BC. It is also a rich source of early references to ideas about yin-yang and *qi*; W. Allyn Rickett, “Kuan tzu” in Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Texts*, pp. 244–46.


83 See the discussion in Sivin, *Traditional Medicine*, p. 103.

power motivating critical moments of change in astronomy, and with
the name of a star.\footnote{Hanyu da zidian, p. 546; Xu Shen 許慎 (ca 55–149), Shuowen jiezi 說文解字, in Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1776–1807), comp., Shuowen jiezi zhu 說文解字注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1981), p. 262. Wang Bing, glosses ji in Suwen 60 (Gu kong lun 骨空論 “treatise on the spaces between bones”) as the places on either side of the “hip bone.” In later medical commentaries the same location is associated with the concavities of the buttocks which are the sites of the acupuncture loci huan tiao 鬚跳. See Hanyu da zidian, p. 546, example 6. The articulations of the body – ultimately the sites of the vast majority of xue 洞, variously translated as the “caves” “loci” “points” “holes,” are primarily located in the cavities around joints. A pair of acupuncture loci in the received tradition, di ji 地機 (the ji of the earth) still bear the term.}

\textit{Huainanzi} 20 describes how, “one who attains the \textit{dao} 道 Way” uses the \textit{ji}. When calm and contained, with \textit{shen} (spirits) lodging in their heart and no perverse \textit{qi},

on the four limbs, at the joints and intersections, the pores of the
hair and skin steam and flow out, so the \textit{jishu} 橕樁 “trigger pivots” are free in movement, then of the one hundred channels and nine orifices, not one is not smooth.\footnote{Huainanzi (SBBY edn.), p. 3.}

\textbf{B: The Acupuncture and Moxibustion Loci}

Certain distinctive features of medieval acupuncture and moxi-
bustion locations shared with \textit{Hama jing} also invite a comparison with
Han medical literature. Although \textit{Hama jing} only gives locations that represent places where it is prohibited to cauterize and pierce at certain times, by default they are also places where treatment can be given, and they are therefore taken to be potential moxibustion locations. The culture of naming the locations is quite unlike the extant tradition of acupuncture locations, which we can trace to Huangfu Mi’s \textit{Huangdi jiayi jing} of the late-third century.

Twenty-three of some sixty-eight locations recorded as the site of human \textit{qi\textsuperscript{in}} \textit{Hama jing}, section 1, correlate exactly with the moxibustion locations and prohibitions in the Dunhuang texts. Most have a rather mundane anatomical character such as: bridge of the nose (\textit{bizhu} 鼻柱), teeth (\textit{chi} 齒), hairline (\textit{faji} 髮際), or thigh (\textit{gu} 股). Twenty of the \textit{Hama jing} locations are also listed as landmarks on the \textit{mai} 脉 (pulsating) channels as described in the Mawangdui and Zhangjiashan channel texts.\footnote{See the index of physiological terms in Harper, \textit{Mawangdui}, pp. 511–29.} In the transmitted traditions, most of these locations are general areas containing a number of specific acupuncture and moxibustion loci. The teeth seem to be one exception, although there is one location in the surviving traditions on the upper gums which might be the place indicated here. Only the points with such names as \textit{shou yangming} 手陽明 (\textit{yangming} of the hand) and \textit{zu yangming} 足陽明 are remarkable. Together
with zu taiyin 足太陰, or shou shao yin 手少陰 in Hama jing, these are well known to us as titles of channels of acupuncture. Yet, we know from the illustrations in section 1 and 2 that they can also be the names of individual loci in their own right.  

Stylistically, the terminology in these four collections reflects the concrete physical locations of the body observed, and is quite unlike the microcosmic body found among Huangfu Mi’s Huangdi jiayi jing locations. The latter are characterized by lyrical names that weave together imagery from imperial architectural and social structures, and ideas of cosmology, together with the natural topography of the known universe. There are yin articulations (yinxi 陰郄), yin valleys (yingu 陰谷), yang valleys (yanggu 陽谷), yang ponds (yangchi 陽池). The metaphor of water, which constantly informs us about the movement of qi, also gains full maturity in the acupoint body in Jiayi jing, where seas and oceans swell in the abdomen and fill the knees and elbows. Further on down the limbs there are rivers, springs, streams and wells, as the qi flows in different shapes and speeds towards the extremities. Together with the those location names that mirror the heavens: heavenly pivot (tianshu 天樞), body pillar (shenzhu 身柱), “sun and moon” (riyue 日月), spirit hall (shenting 神庭), and illuminated sea (zhaohai 照海), we find in Huangdi jiayi jing the system of points that has largely survived as the modern repertoire of acupuncture points.

In contrast, the descriptions of the locations in Hama jing and the Dunhuang prohibition literature gives us a much more mundane vision of the body, which is shared in the Mawangdui and Zhangjiashan channel texts. The terms are much more anatomical in flavor, only hinting at the vividly described microcosm conjured up by the classical acupoint names, and providing few leads towards understanding the development of a body so landscaped.

There is one exception in section 4 of the Hama jing, titled “Technique for Avoiding Moxibustion and Piercing, Selecting according to


89 Huangfu, Huangdi jiayi jing 3, pp. 53–87.
Where the Five Spirits Are in Lodging” (Ze wushen suo she shi bi jiupan fa 擇五神所舍時避灸判法). Where the spirits are in lodging, we find terms such as the tian chuang 天 (Window), ren ying 人迎 (Meeting with People), qi jie 氣街 (Qi Thoroughfare), yin gu 隱谷 (Yin Valley), da yin 大陰 (Great Yin) and qi men 期門 (Gate of Anticipation), chi ze 尺澤 (Foot Marsh), jing men 精門 (Gate of the Essence), zhong fu 中府 (Middle Palace), all names of loci found in Huangdi neijing, with the exception of qi men and jing men. The use of these lyrical terms to differentiate the lodgings of each of the spirit may suggest a specific religious context for the development of the acupuncture loci that we know in the modern repertoire. But this is a hypothesis that will require extensive research to verify and falls outside the scope of the present paper.

Strangely, the Huangdi corpus, widely acknowledged to contain the earliest canonical treatises of acupuncture, actually records very few of the acupuncture locations evident in the Jiayi jing. Even the locus classicus of the acupuncture channels and tracts, Lingshu 10–13, is peculiarly devoid of acupuncture loci and lays out the system in the style of the earlier excavated channel texts insomuch that they are presented in one treatise like a roadway, in another a system of waterways, or simply a record of a somatographic tour around the muscles. Lingshu 12, for example, matches the circulation tracts of acupuncture to the rivers of China, which can be found on maps of the early Han period. Sarah Allan describes how, in Chinese mythology directing water was the first step to a civilized world. Channeling qi into routes around the body, like digging irrigation ditches and flood control canals, marks a significant stage in bringing the body, conceived as natural process, under human control. In Lingshu 12 the rivers and streams of the body reflect the natural, rather than man-made, waterways of China. But once the analogy between the channel and man-made watercourses has been made, all the qualities and techniques of directing and controlling water can then be applied to the movement of bodily qi.

In the way yin and yang structure the body, we can see a reflection of early Chinese belief about the underlying structures of the universe. At the same time, they also illustrate aspects of skeletal, muscular, and arteriovenous structures: they map the experience of pain and of associated points for stimulating and relieving that pain. Here in the Han prototypes for the Yellow Emperor prohibition literature, such as

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Lingshu 15, we find the channels as the central architecture of the body designed for the habitation of human qi. Elsewhere we find different spirits and souls resident in the organs, and other individual parts of the body. By the time of the Jiayi jing, that architecture is extended to acupuncture loci that structure the dwelling of the spirit: shendao 神道 (spirit path), shenzhu 神柱 (spirit column), shentang 神堂 (spirit hall), and shenting 神庭 (spirit courtyard), each with specific and individual functions.

Later medical literature attests an alternative architecture of the inner body designed for the habitation of ghosts. In Beiji qianjin yao fang, Sun Simiao describes the thirteen gui gong 鬼宮 (palaces of the ghosts), for treating the “one hundred xie ” (variously translated deviants, heteropathy, perversities, evils, noxiousness), a therapy attributed to the legendary physician Bian Que 扁鵲. Treatment involves needling well known acupuncture loci, which are given additional designations such as “ghost heart,” “ghost pillow,” “ghost bed,” “ghost rampart,” “ghost road,” “ghost market,” “ghost hall, and the like.

LUNAR DISORDERS

Hama jing makes explicit statements that parallel the development of sexual-cultivation and acupuncture and cautery practice, a relationship that is a recurring feature of both early and medieval medicine.

92. Sadly a related chart is missing in the text; Beiji qianjin yao fang 14, p. 261. Historians of Chinese medicine working in different historical periods and contexts still have difficulty translating xie 邪. Treatment of xie sometimes involved medical drugs, stones, needles or exorcism and could refer to ridding the body of goblins or purging an unhealthy type of wind or qi. The term xie in medicine is frequently opposed to zheng 正, literally meaning “upright,” as opposed to “slanting” or “deviating.” Here the term refers to malevolent or deviant entities invading the body from outside. Elite medical theory, as well as state-sponsored medical compilations continued to implicate demonic infestation as a cause of illness right through the Ming and Qing periods, but by relegating it to a category equivalent to “wind” or “cold” pathology, they denied the spirit world transcendence. At the same time and in much of the classical medical literature, the term has less animistic qualities, and especially when combined with qi, or with “wind” the concept xie becomes “as featureless a term as ‘infectious agent’”; Sivin, Traditional Medicine, p. 102. See also Li Jianmin, “Contagion and Its Consequences,” in Medicine and the History of the Body (Taipei: Academia Sinica, Proceedings of the 20th, 21st and 22nd International Symposium on the Comparative History of Medicine–East and West, 1996), and Lo and Schroer, “Deviant Airs in ‘Traditional’ Chinese Medicine” (forthcoming).

In the Mawangdui medical texts (tomb closed 168 BC), which juxtapose early forms of cautery and lancing with hygienic cultures such as sexual cultivation and therapeutic gymnastics, there is evidence that jiu was a technique to stimulate and replenish qi in early Chinese sexual practice. The same combinations can be found in the Han and Sui bibliographical treatises as well as medieval medical compilations.

In contrast there is a marked absence of sexual cultivation literature in the Dunhuang manuscript cache, although references to symptoms of failing genito-urinary health are common. Six of forty-seven illnesses in the Dunhuang moxibustion charts S6168 and S6262 can be classified as illnesses of the genito-urinary systems, such as “loss of essence/semen” (shi jing 失精) or “the five physical exhaustions and the seven injuries in men” (nanzi wulao qishang 男子五勞七傷).

One lone quotation from Hama tu 蝌蝜圖 (Toad Chart) in Ishimpô 28 solely concerns sexual prohibitions and is an intriguing hint at a lost tradition. Section 4 of Hama jing may provide us with a clue the character of that tradition. It is specifically concerned with how yin and yang days relate to treatment according to gender (treat women on yang days, men on yin), and likens the cautery and acupuncture prohibitions to those prohibitions for sexual intercourse on days when the light of the sun is obscured. The prohibitions are illustrated graphically in the first section where the days of full moon are a time of great prohibition for sexual relations. Here “harmonizing yin and yang” is a euphemism for sexual intercourse:

It is not fitting to harmonize yin and yang, women will be struck by wind illness. Greatly prohibited, not insignificant. On the sixth day of the lunar month sex will bring on carbuncles and ulcers.

Cauterizing or piercing on the wrong days of the month causes all sorts of ailments, from redness of the eyes to violent death, but by far the most common symptoms are related to the sexual and reproductive system. Of eighty separate symptoms recorded in the legends to the charts in section 1, eighteen refer to problems of infertility, menstruation, and sexual incontinence. These occur when treatment is given on the dark days of the moon at the residences of human qi, that is the twenty-fifth day of the lunar month until the sixth day of the next lunar month.

Of the other symptoms caused by harming human qi, of those three that are fatal, two are the result of disorders of the inner organs expressed

94 Mawangdui Hanmu boshu, p. 164.
95 Ishimpô 28, p. 475.
in terms such as “inner chaos” (neiluan 内亂) and “uneasiness of the five viscera” (wuzang bu an 五臟不安). The constellation of other symptoms: loss of consciousness and sensory disturbance (5 of 80), locomotive difficulties and pain (9), disorders of the digestion (6), disorders of the ears and eyes (3) abscesses and ulcers (8), wind diseases (3), prolapse and hernia (6), fever and heat disorders (4) are generally reminiscent of illnesses treated in medieval gymnastic and acupuncture texts. Writing of medieval daoyin, Catherine Despeux states:97

The problems treated are mainly related to the locomotion and digestive systems, the two pathological areas about which most gymnastic literature was assembled in the succeeding centuries. Other common indications were deafness, inflammation of the testes and spring fevers.

Her analysis of illnesses treated by daoyin in and after medieval times echoes the treatments that we can see in the Dunhuang moxibustion charts: 17 of 47 identified are locomotive illnesses of the musculature, or of different pain and sensory disturbance, and 15 of 47 are various gastro-intestinal disorders. Of the locomotive and sensory disorders there are three syndromes related to wind. In a series of articles I have argued that there was an interlinked development of the sexual cultivation and acupuncture and moxibustion traditions in early-imperial times. The unusual predominance of sexually related diseases in Hama jing, together with the sexual prohibitions interspersed throughout the text, mark its medical culture out as distinct from the medical literature of late medieval Dunhuang where, perhaps because of the monastic context for the preservation of the manuscripts, there is a virtual absence of sexual medicine.

CONCLUSION

The last three sections of Hama jing, and in particular a concluding incantation, draw together many elements discussed in this paper, bringing us neatly to a conclusion. Here we find a practical demonstration of belief in the influence of the spirits of the constellations, prohibitions on treatment, the power of effigies, and the importance of location in the ritual performance of healing.

These three sections introduce three spirit patrons, Tian Yi 天醫 (Heavenly Physician), Tian Shi 天師 (Celestial Master) and Bian Que 扁鹊. The latter two characters are well known from Han texts. A biography of Bian Que written by Sima Qian in Shiji probably represents the historicizing of an earlier cultic figure. Unlike the following biography of the physician Chunyu yi 淳于意, Bian Que’s biography is redolent of the existence and assistance of gods or spirit teachers. He is said to have received secret recipes from his teacher – as well as texts he is given a potion, which confers upon him extra-sensory vision allowing him to see through walls. The record says that his teacher was probably not human.98 The title Celestial Master features as the name of one of the Yellow Emperor’s interlocutors in the self-cultivation text known as Shiwen 十問 (Ten Questions) from Mawangdui, as well as in another title for Qi Bo in Suwen 1. In the Mawangdui text, Tian Shi is depicted as an expert on how to consume yin and attain a state of spirit illumination. By the second century AD, Celestial Masters was the title of a new Daoist organization, originally based in north China, and which came to be identified with the healing arts. Religiously eclectic, Sun Simiao, although well-known for absorbing material from both Buddhist and Daoist sources, may himself have been a Daoist initiate, and he uses formulae in his prohibition texts that begin, “I am a Celestial Master.”99

Less is known about the Heavenly Physician who also appears in the titles of sections 7 and 9 of Hama jing. His name is used as a function in one of the eight trigram (ba gua 八卦) sequences as listed in a Dunhuang divination manuscript.100 Here in the Hama jing text, the name of the Heavenly Physician is taken as a rubric in divination, as it is also in Sun Simiao’s Beiji qianjin yao fang 和 Tanba no Yasuyori’s Ishimpō prohibition texts. His influence is felt in different years and months on different days of the ganzhi cycle.

In the concluding incantation we find that Bian Que and the Heavenly Physician correspond with branches on opposite sides of a compass, thus to face Tianyi means simultaneously to turn the back on Bianque, and vice versa:

98 See Shiji 105, p. 2785. Bian Que is depicted on Han reliefs as a human headed bird; Lu and Needham, Celestial Lancets, p. 86.
100 The ba gua are eight symbols which, in combination, are used to represent the process of change and transformation in the world. The symbols are used in divination, each combination obtained by manipulating and counting yarrow sticks.
“Incantations Used with Directional Orientation for Treating Various Medical Disorders” (“Zhi zhubing xiang bei zhou”)

The ill person sits facing “living qi” (a specific direction). The therapist sits with his back to the Heavenly Physician to administer the treatment. The moxibustion fire is placed at the position of Bian Que to prepare the mugwort. The person [preparing the mugwort] sits with his back to the Heavenly Physician. The person treating raises both hands and first calls the Heavenly Physician and the Heavenly Master. He lowers both hands and administers to them. The incantation states: Heavenly Master, Heavenly Physician. I keep guard and have come to treat the one hundred illnesses. I must apply needle and moxibustion to the sickness and do not treat the spirit illumination. The poisons of malevolent spirits, the poisons of ghost essence, the poisons of wind and cold, the poisons of eating and drinking, the ten thousand poisons of the one hundred qi quickly disperse and be destroyed. Urgent, urgent, in accordance with the statutes and orders.

The incantation states: Red as a Flame, Red as a Flame: The sun emerges from the east. To the left, the empress, Mother Queen of the West. To the front, the Vermilion Bird. To the rear, the Black Warrior (the Herdboy?), and Weaving Girl cause me to moxa you. Physician of Lu, Bian Que, at this moment has them. Sickness and illness, quickly be gone. Urgent, urgent, in accordance with the statutes and orders. The incantation states: Heaven and Earth open and stretch out. The Yue King, who magically charms, grips the Golden Gang (handle of the dipper). The needle does not encounter the spirit. In piercing I do not cause harm or injury. Sickness and illness quickly be gone. Urgent, urgent, in accordance with the statutes and orders.

In all cases when treating illness recite the incantation thrice, and afterwards moxa and needle them.

This last text in the Hama jing compilation opens a rare window onto the culture within which many practitioners must have used acupuncture and moxibustion treatment to exorcise malevolent entities and protect the spirit and qi – here observing the cautery and needle pro-
hibitions to carefully avoid damaging the *shenming* 神明. *Shenming* “spirit illumination,” or “spirit brilliance” may refer to a state of the patient’s spirit, a kind of “spirit-like intelligence” or equally to quite separate and external spirits. Indeed sometimes the term *shenming* itself refers specifically to an effigy.

From the outset of *Hama jing*, we know that the strategic choice of days determines when healing might be best supported by the spirit physicians. In the incantation we find explicit instructions explaining how to facilitate that communication: through the careful positioning of his body, a practitioner could simultaneously call upon the assistance of the spirit patrons of the medical arts, the Heavenly Physician and Heavenly Master, together with Bian Que, addressed as Physician of Lu. All may be present as effigies, but simultaneously as the representative deities who channel the power of the directions and the constellations into the healing encounter.

Last, but by no means least, we should return to the question of dating. We know from comparisons with the Dunhuang medical manuscripts and with Sun Simiao’s work that the kind of material that constitutes *Hama jing* was circulating in medical society at the center and periphery of China between the seventh and tenth centuries. We also know from the Han dynasty medical canons and excavated texts that acupuncture and moxibustion prohibitions were a part of early-imperial medical culture, with the caveat that there is nothing that would mark *Hama jing* as an early-Han compilation. It is certainly the product of a medical culture that had begun to flower in the first centuries AD, and there is no reason to doubt that a Toad Chart could have existed in the third century when Ge Hong was compiling *Baopuzi*. There is also no evidence to refute the possibility that the *ren shen* prohibition material quoted in *Ishimpō* might indeed date to Fan Wang’s lifetime in the fourth century. But the *Hama jing* closely mirrors Sun Simiao’s format, in the parallel systems of cycles of human qi and human spirit, in the evocation of the Heavenly Physician, the format of the text and the combination of text and chart, even if the latter are missing in the

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103 It may also be that *ming* 明 is a popular taboo avoidance for *ming* 冥, that replaces the dark and baleful associations of the latter with the brightness of the former. We might then render *shenming* 神明 simply “spirits” or “spirit effigy.” The association between *shenming* and spirit effigies is also made in Edward Machle, “Shenming: Gods or Godlike Intelligence,” in A. S. Cua, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Chinese Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 703.

104 In each of the thirty illustrations in section 1 of *Hama jing*, we find the statement *tong shen* 同神 (13 days), or *bu tong shen* 不同神 (17 days). The graph here written *tong* is likely to be a variant of *tong* 通, 通神 *tong shen* (communicating with the spirit[s]) being a trope commonly found as the aim of early Chinese self-cultivation techniques.
received editions of his work. It allows us to imagine quite clearly the kind of images that would have originally filled Sun’s manuscripts. In the absence of more detailed textual analysis, which no doubt will eventually provide a closer dating of our text, a reasonable conclusion is that the compilation of *Hama jing* dates to early in the Tang period, and is a repository for a good deal of ancient wisdom.

The charts of the *Hama jing* and the rather formulaic prohibition literature of early and medieval periods are a valid and yet underused resource that can be a spur to the slow progress towards reconstructing the technical, social and intellectual worlds aligned in constituting medical practice in early and medieval China. When set against the diverse, sometimes chaotic acupuncture and moxibustion literature of Han times, they might give the impression of a lifeless tradition concerned with senseless calculation. Yet, understanding how the prohibition texts slot into a culturally adapted and coherent body of practices, essential to the proper and effective conduct of medicine in their time and fully supported by social institutions that emanated from the imperial offices and spread to the remotest parts of the empire, allows us to appreciate them as an integral part of a vibrant healing tradition. The combination of a deeper understanding of early Chinese mantic culture, and of popular acupuncture and moxibustion manuals, with a new focus on transmitted literature is now beginning to build a multi-dimensional approach to the history of medical practices in China, where *Hama jing* has pride of place. In the set of texts that make up *Hama jing*, and in particular this last incantation, we can appreciate the large variety of written traditions that came to bear on the literate medical practitioner at the point of practice. With an internalized knowledge of canonical texts, with reference manuals, hemerological calendars locating the positions of spirits and souls, incantational literature, effigies, and perhaps the manuscripts themselves as sacred objects, all and any of these might exert their influence simultaneously in the clinical encounter as the practitioner aligned his body with the celestial spheres and deities and applied cautery and needle to a patient.

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

*Lingshu*  
*Huangdi neiijing lingshu* 黃帝內經靈樞

*Suwen*  
*Huangdi neiijing suwen* 黃帝內經素問

*Taisu*  
*Huangdi neiijing taisu* 黃帝內經太素
Appendix

I am grateful to the anonymous referee who pointed out the following set of references.

“Round” and “splitting” needles can also be found in Gujin luyanfang 古今錄驗方 (Beijing: Zhongguo yiyao keji chubanshe, 1996), p. 428, and Shang Zhijun 尚志鈞, ed., Buji zhouhoufang 補輯肘後方 (Hefei: Anhui kexue jishu chubanshe, 1996), juan 6, p. 310. (This matter is discussed above, under the sect. “Techniques.”)

Evidence of realgar as a substance used in cautery can be found in Qianjin yao-fang 千金藥方, Waitai biyao 外臺秘要 (see footnote 29, above), and in Gujin luyan 古今錄 (see discussion further down in sect. “Techniques”).