



GEH1070

Traditional Chinese Knowledge of
Health & Well-being


**Principles of balance:
Yin Yang & Five Elements**

Yin and Yang in TCM

- *Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor, Ch.5: “Great treatise on the Proper Representation of Yin and Yang”*

“Yin and Yang are the way of sky and earth, are fundamental to all things, are the parents of change and transformation, the origin and beginning of birth and destruction, the palace of spirits, and are necessarily considered in understanding the basis of treating disease.”

Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor, Ch.4:

- “With respect to the human and yin and yang, the exterior belongs to yang and the interior belongs to yin. When yin and yang are applied to the body, the back is yang while the abdomen is yin. When yin and yang are applied to the **viscera** and the bowels, the viscera belong to yin and the bowels belong to yang.”
 inner organs
- “Why is it necessary to understand yin within yin, and yang within yang? Because **disease attacks yin in winter, disease attacks yang in summer, disease attacks yin in spring, disease attacks yang in autumn,** and needling treatment is applied according to the affected region.”

Yin & Yang

Lao Zi (a. 471-571 BC), founder of Taoism

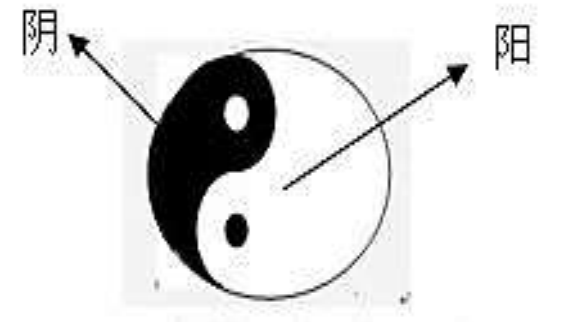
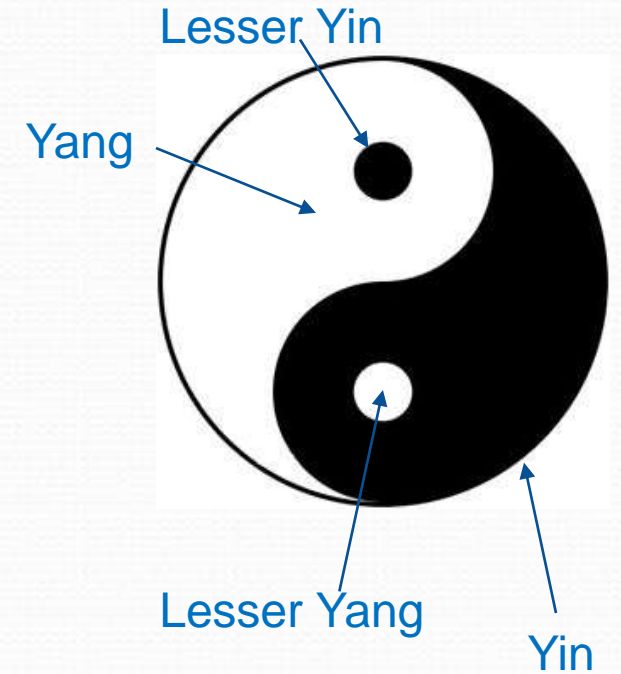
- “All things in the world are born from something and something from Nothing.” (*Classic of Tao & Virtue*)
- “From Tao there comes one. From one there comes two. From two there comes three. From three there comes all things.”



- $O \rightarrow 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow \text{All}$
- **Non-Ultimate \rightarrow Supreme Ultimate/Taiji \rightarrow Yin & Yang \rightarrow New Birth \rightarrow All things**
- **Cambridge University: Professor Joseph Needham**

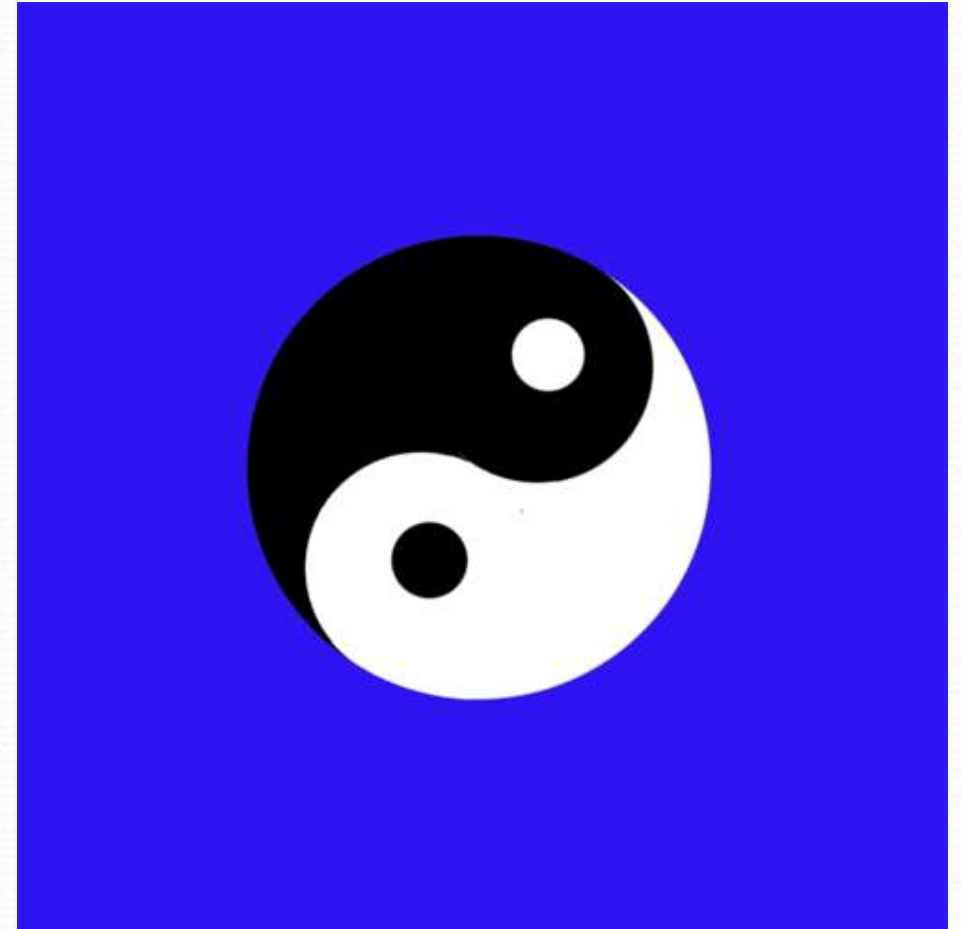
Yin & Yang

- *Book of Changes* 《易经》 :
“The Supreme Ultimate produces the Primeval Pair, the Primeval Pair produce the Four Forms, from which are derived the Eight Trigrams.”
- Yin Yang School & Taoist School of Thought/Taoism
- Cosmological analysis: Harmony & Balance
- Imbalance of Yin & Yang



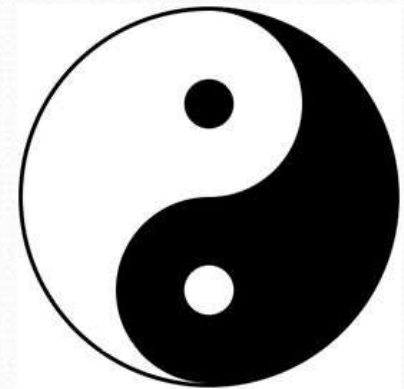
Yin & Yang (阴 & 阳)

- The vital forces of the universe.
- The alternating forms of the creative force.
- The primeval substance in differentiation.
- Two complementary aspects of same reality.
- Two aspects of one and same power.
- Constant active and running forces.



Yin & Yang Attributes

YIN	YANG
Moon	Sun
Night	Day
Earth	Heaven
Negative	Positive
Female/ Feminine	Male/ Masculine
Inward/ Internal	Outward/ External
Cold	Hot
Dark	Bright
Weak	Strong



Yin-Yang/ Taiji Symbol

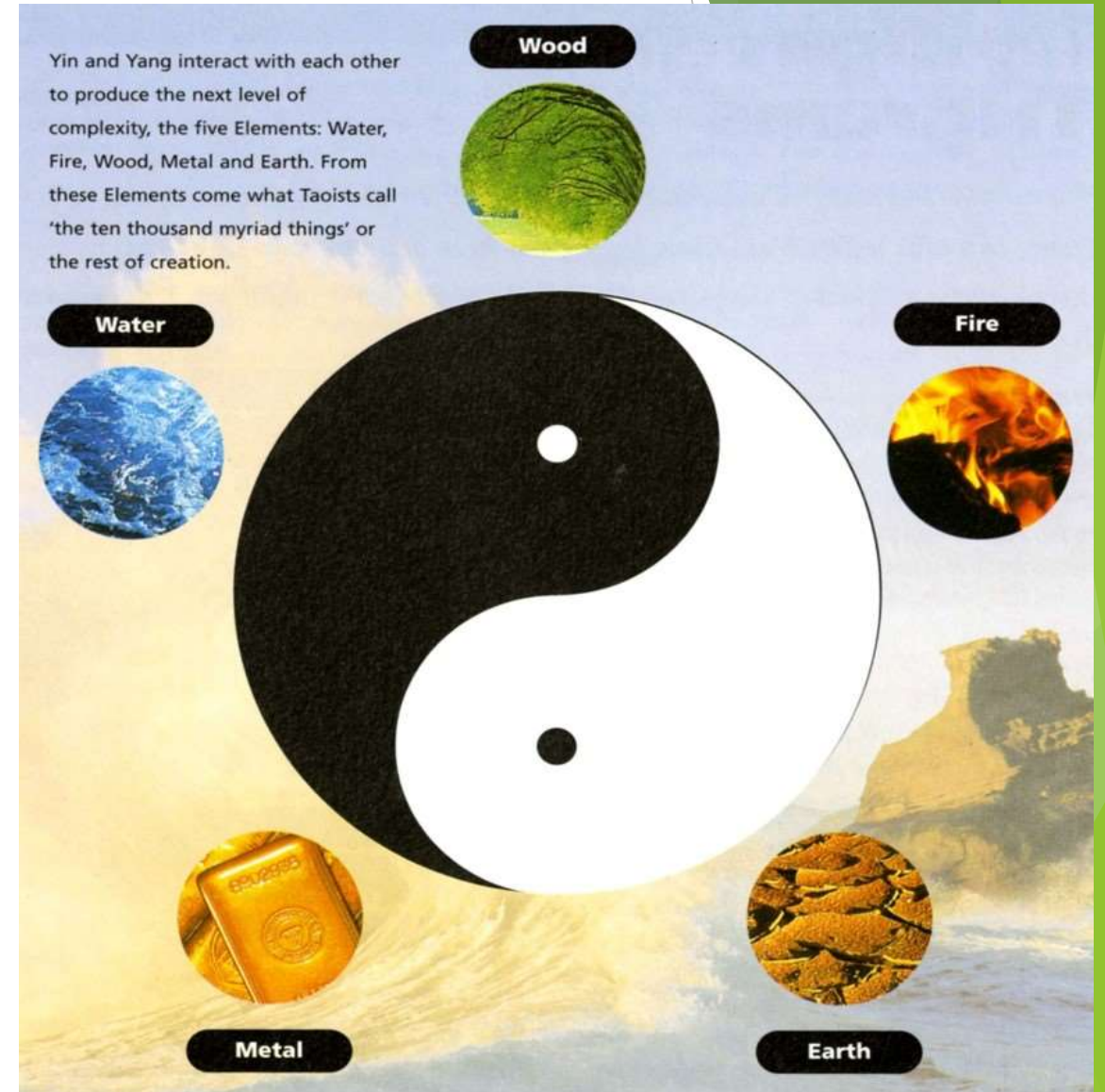
Yin & Yang

Dong Zhong Shu 董仲舒 (c.179-104 BC)

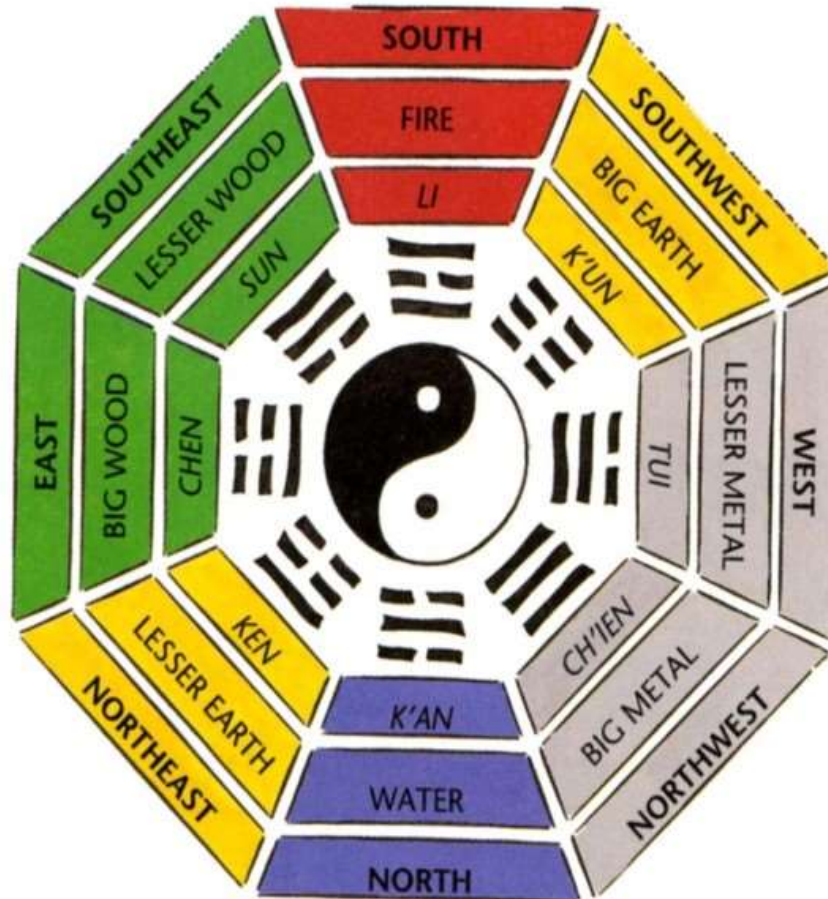
- “Within the universe there exist the ethers of the Yin and Yang, men are constantly immersed in them, just as fish are constantly immersed in water.”
- “In all things there must be correlates. Thus if there is the upper, there must be the lower. If there is the left, there must be the right... The yin is the correlate of the yang, the wife of the husband, the subject of the sovereign. There is nothing that does not have a correlate, and in each correlate there is the yin and yang.
- “The universe has 10 constituents: heaven, earth, Yin and Yang, the five elements of wood, fire, metal, earth and water, and man.”

Five Elements 五行

- ▶ Five Agents
- ▶ Five Energies
- ▶ Five Powers
- ▶ Five Forces
- ▶ Wood, Metal, Fire, Water, Earth



Yin & Yang / Five Elements / Directions / Trigrams



The five mountain types

The five Elements (and Planets) and the shape of their associated mountain forms:

Fire (Mars):
sharp or
conical



Wood (Jupiter):
round top
and high



Earth
(Saturn):
squarish



Metal (Venus):
rounded or oblong



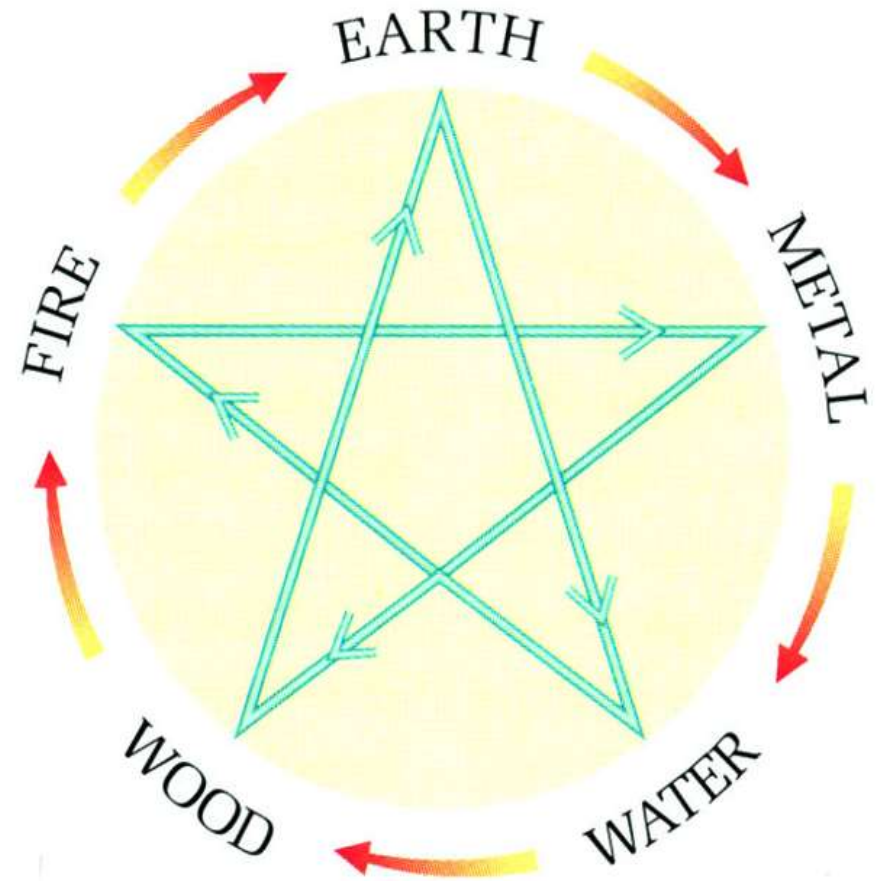
Water (Mercury):
crooked or wavy

Five Elements & Nature

Element	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Colour	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Black
Direction	East	South	Center	West	North
Season	Spring	Summer	Late Summer	Autumn	Winter
Taste	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Spicy	Salty
Sense Organ	Eye	Tongue	Mouth	Nose	Ear
Body Organ	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lung	Kidney

Five Elements

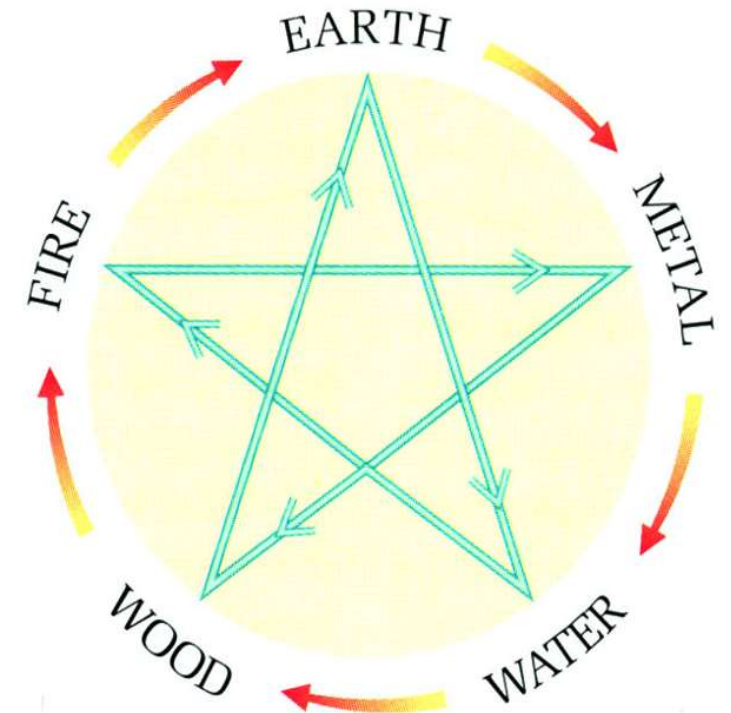
- **TWO PRIMARY ORDERS**
- **Order of Mutual Production:**
- Wood → Fire → Earth → Metal → Water
- **Order of Mutual Destruction**
- Wood → Earth → Water → Fire → Metal



Two Secondary Orders

Order of Control:

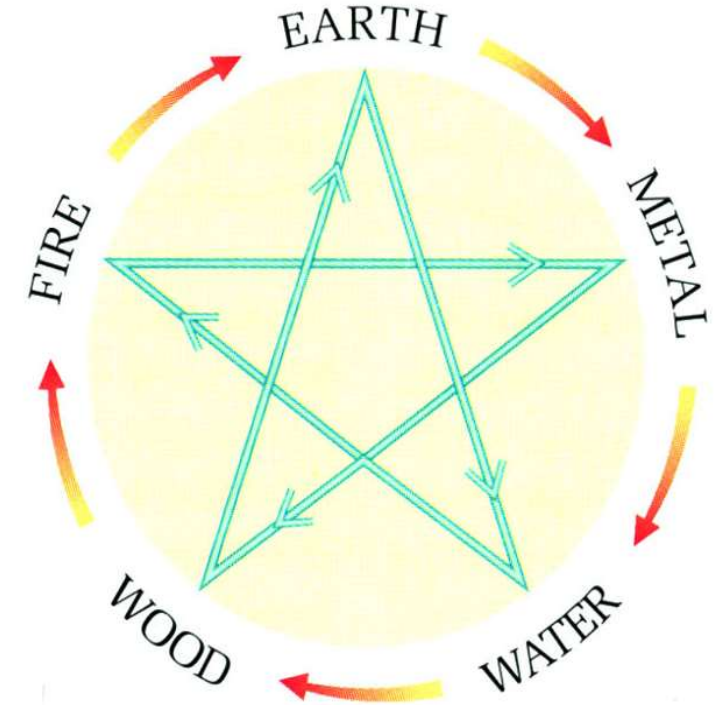
- Wood destroys Earth, but Metal (x Wood) controls the process.
- Metal destroys Wood, but Fire (x Metal) controls the process.
- Fire destroys Metal, but Water (x Fire) controls the process.
- Water destroys Fire, but Earth (x Water) controls the process.
- Earth destroys Water, but Wood (x Earth) controls the process.



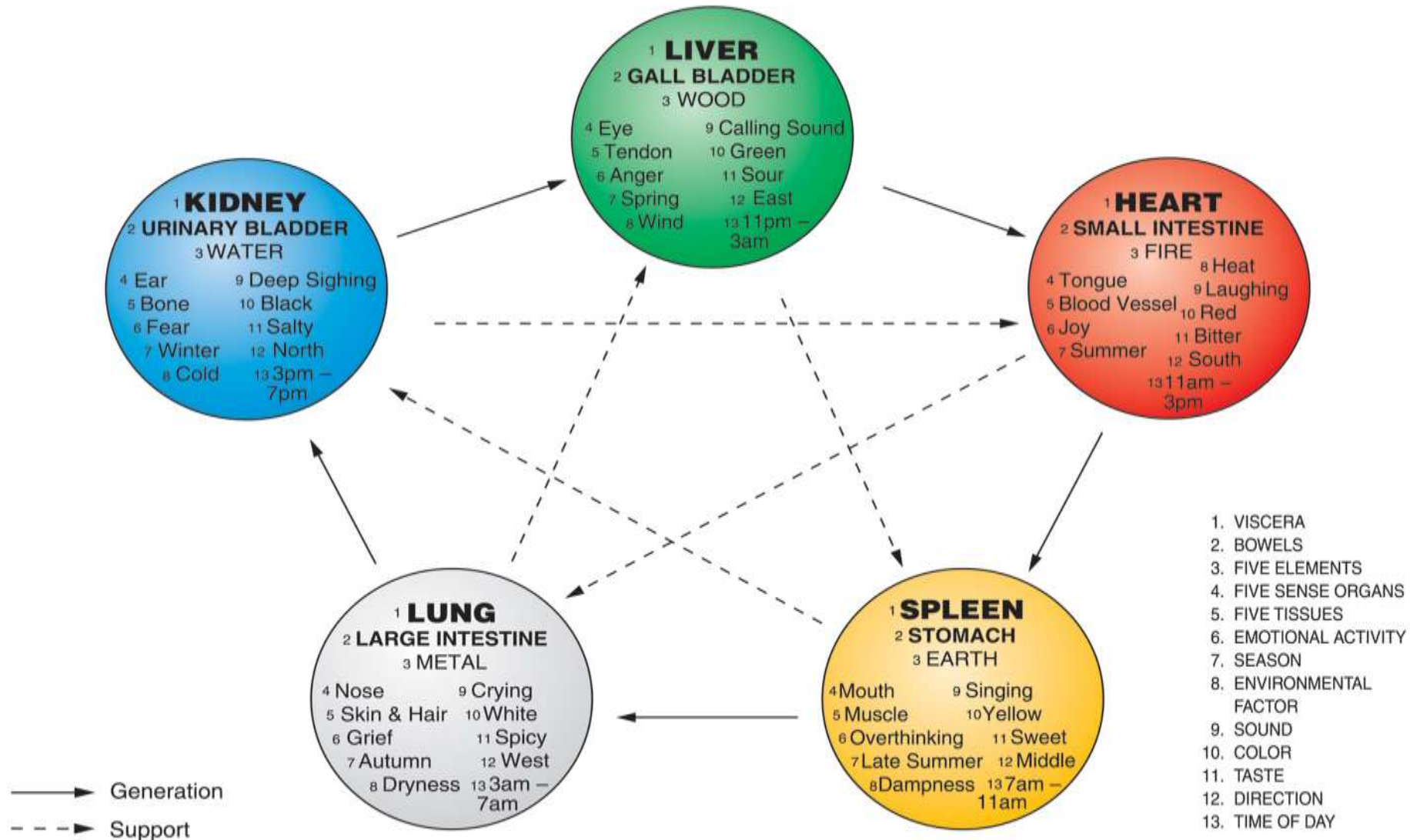
Two Secondary Orders

Order of Correction:

- Wood destroys Earth, but Fire (\rightarrow **Earth**) interrupts the process.
- Metal destroys Wood, but Water (\rightarrow **Wood**) interrupts the process.
- Fire destroys Metal, but Earth (\rightarrow **Metal**) interrupts the process.
- Water destroys Fire, but Wood (\rightarrow **Fire**) interrupts the process.
- Earth destroys Water, but Metal (\rightarrow **Water**) interrupts the process.



CLASSIFICATION OF THINGS ACCORDING TO THE THEORY OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS

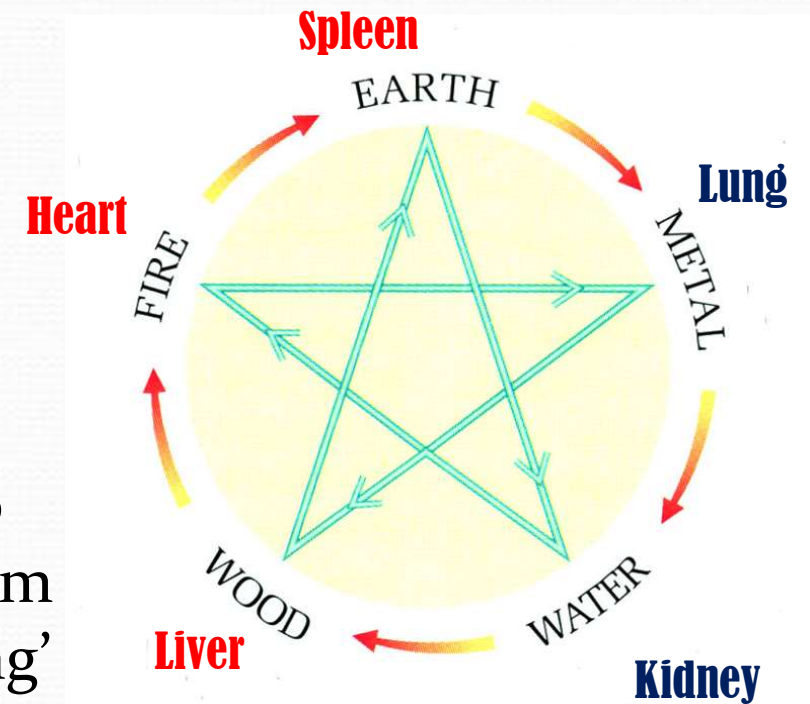


Application of 5 Elements Theory to TCM

- “The functional activities of the five zang-organs are not isolated but interconnected. The attribution of the five zang-organs to the five elements is helpful for the discussion of the functional characteristics of the five zang-organs, as well as the intrinsic connection among the physiological function of the viscera. The five elements are inter-generated and inter-restricted, so are the five-organs.” (Wu Hongzhou, *Fundamentals of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, p.62)

Application of 5 Elements Theory to TCM

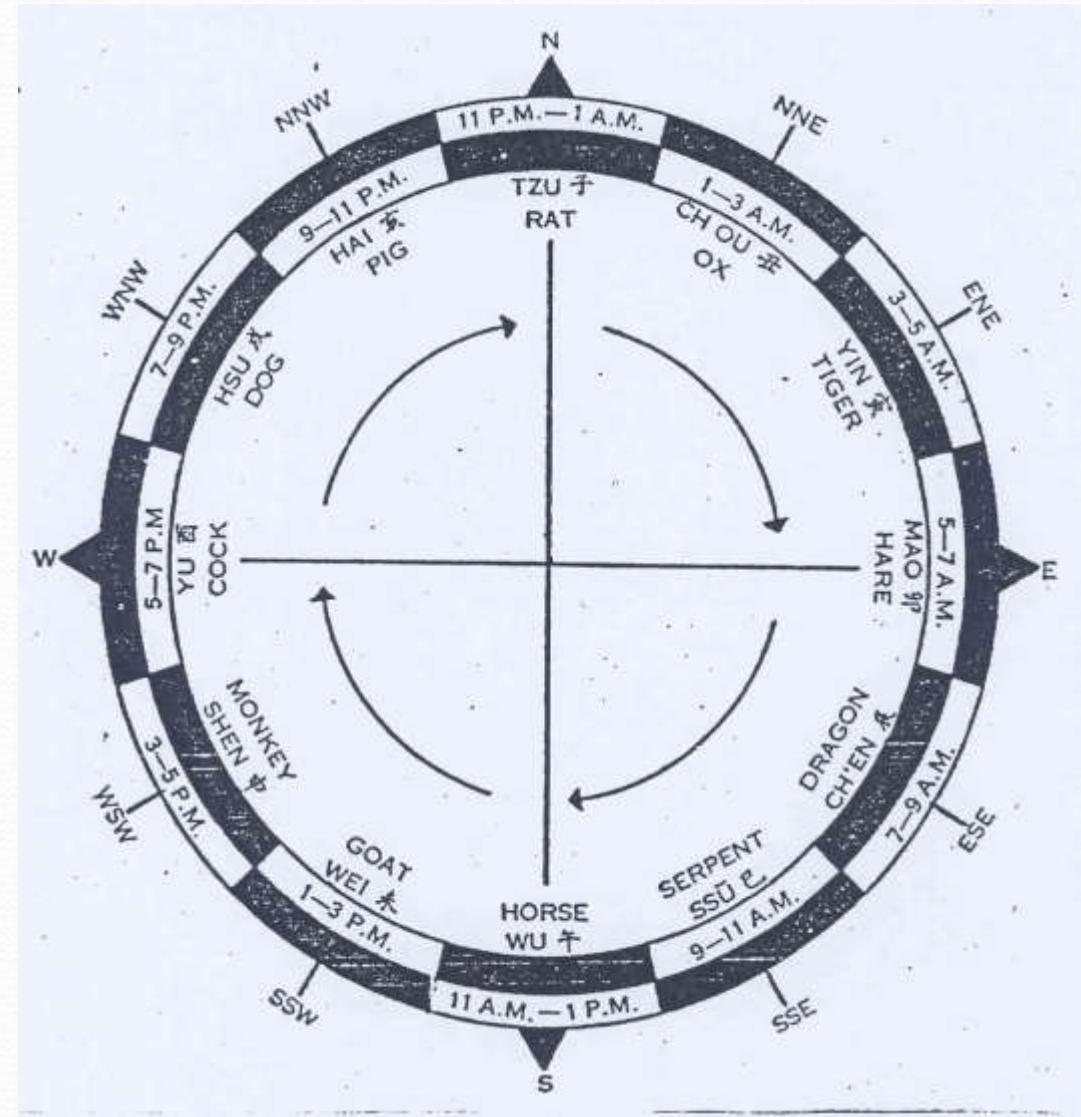
- “Each element restrains the next element two steps down the clockwise ring; for example wood (liver) restrains earth (spleen), and fire (heart) restrains metal... This relationship is useful in TCM for explaining instances when restraint is overdone. For example, an excess syndrome (‘exuberance’) of the liver, which may be induced by pent-up anger or excessive consumption of alcohol, suppresses (over-strains) the functions of the spleen, causing it to underperform its functions. It also suggests that certain problems of the spleen arising from over-suppression by the liver can be treated by ‘claiming’ the liver.” (Hong, *Principles of Chinese Medicine*, p.102)



Twelve Chinese Hours

(Earthly Branches 地支)

• Zi 子	Water	Rat	11 pm–1 am
• Chou 丑	Earth	Ox	1 am–3 am
• Yin 寅	Wood	Tiger	3 am–5 am
• Mao 卯	Wood	Rabbit	5 am–7 am
• Chen 辰	Earth	Dragon	7 am–9 am
• Si 巳	Fire	Snake	9 am–11 am
• Wu 午	Fire	Horse	11 am–1 pm
• Wei 未	Earth	Goat	1 pm–3 pm
• Shen 申	Metal	Monkey	3 pm–5 pm
• You 酉	Metal	Rooster	5 pm–7 pm
• Xu 戌	Earth	Dog	7 pm–9 pm
• Hai 亥	Water	Pig	9 pm–11 pm


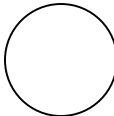
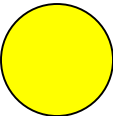
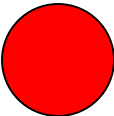
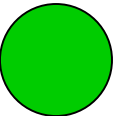
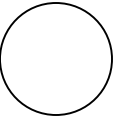
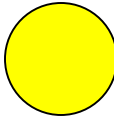
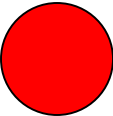
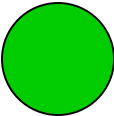

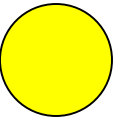
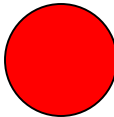
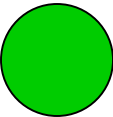

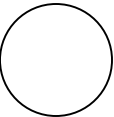


→ Production

→ Destruction



Five Elements and Colours

Water	Metal	Earth	Fire	Wood	
 Black	 White	 Yellow	 Red	 Green	Native
 White	 Yellow	 Red	 Green	 Black	Favourable
 Yellow	 Red	 Green	 Black	 White	Unfavourable

Summary & Conclusion

- 1. Yin-Yang and Five Elements theories are reflected and deep rooted in all aspects of Chinese culture.
- 2. The theories manifested ancient Chinese understanding of the universe, nature and transformation.
- 3. All internal regions and organs are under the general classification of yin, because everything hidden inside the body is considered yin with respect to the outside, However, within this yin category the organs are further differentiated into either yin or yang depending on their nature, function or position within the body cavities.

Summary & Conclusion

- 4. “There is a promoting, declining, and transforming dynamic aspect of yin and yang. Some conditions or situations can be viewed as yin or yang when compared to a dominant counterpart. Later the balance of this relationship can change when either feature is strengthened or transformed, or its counterpart declines. The yin or yang nature of a situation or condition is thus dependent on the relationship of each yin-yang component to the other at any given moment.”
- 5. The balance of yin and yang, as well as the five elements, in many situations is in a continuing state of change. Because of their mutual opposition and interdependence, any change in one affects the other....This promoting, declining, or transforming of one quality over the other is one aspect of the body's internal physiological balance.

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- How important are Yin-Yang & Five Elements concepts in our understanding of the body and natural environments?
- Is Yin-Yang & Five Elements beliefs or science?
- How Yin & Yang are reflected in our daily life?
- Do we classify our fruits, food, things etc. into Ying & Yang?
How?
- Modern application of the 2000 years old system?