

2

Yin Yang

Yīn Yáng

陰

陽

Yin and Yang

If there is one
then it can be divided
and the first division by nature
is into two

A fundamental division into two parts
that is suitable for any situation
and any phenomenon
is the division into material and energy

The Chinese referred to the more energetic part
of every phenomenon as “Yang”
and the more material part as “Yin”

The idea of Yin and Yang
is associated with the naturalist school
which tried to understand the laws of nature
and developed along with other schools
during the Warring States period (476-221 B.C.)

The terms Yin and Yang appear in The Dao De Jing¹
and of course in The Book of the Yellow Emperor² (Nei Jing)

The model of Yin and Yang is a philosophical model
that enables the contemplation of and inquiry
into phenomena in nature

The relationship between Yin and Yang
facilitates an understanding of the basic laws
according to which nature functions

These two contradictory and complementary forces – Yin and Yang
constitute a dynamic relationship

This dynamism gives rise to the forces
of movement and change in nature
including life and all phenomena
the Chinese referred to this force as Qi



The keyword regarding
the number two
and the model of Yin and
Yang is: **Balance**

1- For more on the Dao De Jing, see p. 220.

2- For more on the Nei Jing, see p. 219.

Qi
氣
Qì

In nature there is always a desire for balance
that finds expression in the dynamism between Yin and Yang
although this balance is never achieved

This tension between imbalance and the desire for balance
is the force that stimulates all phenomena
it is the force to which the Chinese referred as Qi
Qi is the product of Yin and Yang
and the expression of the ten thousand phenomena
it is also simultaneously the range that connects Yin and Yang

The relationship between Yin and Yang
can be described using several rules:

Yin and Yang are parts of a whole

Because they describe one

Yin and Yang oppose and complement one another

Because they describe both parts of the whole
two parts that are different
and are contradictory by virtue of their division
but that dynamically complete one another to make one

There can be no Yin without Yang and vice-versa

Because they are part of a whole and are not separate

Yin and Yang are cyclical

Because there is always movement between Yin and Yang
at times Yang reaches its height
and at other times Yin reaches its height

When Yang reaches its height
Yin is at a low point – and vice-versa

It is like a ball that bounces upward
and immediately begins to fall
the moment it reaches its height

and again changes directions and bounces upward
the moment it reaches the ground

Yang reaches its height
and then immediately begins to decline
at the same time Yin increases

When Yin reaches its height it begins to decline
Yang begins to increase
and so on and so forth

Consider for example a cyclical phenomenon from nature:
the Earth's rotation around its own axis

We experience the phenomenon as day and night
day is Yang relative to night
because day has more light and heat energy
than night which is Yin time
it is dark cold and less energetic

The height of daytime at noon is also the beginning of evening and night
and the height of night-time at midnight is also the beginning
of morning and day

Day and night complete one another
the whole is the 24-hour day

Yin and Yang are relative

When I say that something is Yang
I need to specify relative to what

An adult is Yang relative to an elderly person
but Yin relative to a child
therefore an adult can be neither Yang nor Yin
unless it is relative to something else

Something that is hot is Yang
opposed to something that it is cold
but if there is something that is colder
the thing that is cold (Yin)
will be hot (Yang) relative to something that is even colder

The division into Yin and Yang is infinite

Every part that is defined as Yin or Yang
can again be divided into Yin and Yang

In a tree
the trunk is Yin in comparison to the branches which are Yang
the branches can also be divided into Yin and Yang
the center of the branch is Yin and the leaves are Yang
and so forth

Yang fertilizes and Yin holds

Yang fertilizes and stimulates Yin
Yin supports and stabilizes Yang

If Yin is weak
it is unable to anchor and stabilize Yang
and Yang is less stable
if Yang is weak
it does not fertilize Yin
and Yin that is not fertilized becomes devoid of vitality

Yang heats Yin
and Yin cools Yang
if Yin is weak it does not cool Yang
if Yang is weak it does not heat Yin
and Yin becomes too cold

Yang tends to disperse and it tends to move upward
Yin tends to converge and it tends to move downward

Chapter 5 of the Su Wen³ begins as follows:

Huang Di: “The law of yin and yang is the natural way of the universe, the fundamental principles of the myriad of things, mother of all changes and transformations, the basis and beginning of generating life and death. To treat disease, one must understand the root of the imbalance, which is always subject to the law of yin and yang.”

3- For more on the Su Wen, see p. 219.

People in relation to Yin and Yang

When a person examines their surroundings
it is observable that when they look down
they understand that they are fixed to the ground which is Yin
The ground is Yin relative to the sky
because it is material and denser

When a person looks up
they see the sky which is Yang
because it is airy in comparison to the ground

The person from their perspective
is closer to the earth which is Yin
than to the sky which spreads outward and upward
from them to infinity

Our physicality is Yin
in relation to our consciousness which is Yang



Heaven and Earth

天地

Tiān Dì

The corporeal equivalent of cosmic Yin and Yang is Heaven and Earth

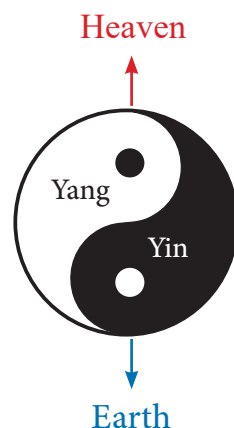
Earth is Yin
and Heaven is Yang

Yang rises upward toward the Heaven
because Yang's natural tendency is expansion

Yin pulls downward toward the Earth
because Yin's natural tendency is convergence

The color red is symbolic of the connection to fire
and blue is symbolic of the connection to water

Water and fire are opposites
as Heaven and Earth are opposites



“In the universe, pure Yang Qi rises upward to converge and create Heaven, whereas contaminated Yin Qi descends and is compressed to create Earth. Yin lacks movement and is quiet, whereas Yang is active and noisy. Yang is responsible for expansion, and Yin is responsible for contraction, connection, and solidification. Yang is energy, life force, and raw material, whereas Yin is material and essence, the mother giving expression to all that is latent.”

Su Wen¹, Chapter 5 (26 AD).

1- For more on the Su Wen, see p. 219.

Sun

日

月

Moon

Su Wen*, chapter 6.

Yang

陽

陰

Yin

Fire

火

水

Water

Su Wen*, chapter 5.

The Elements of Water and Fire are classified
as Yin and Yang, such that Fire is Yang and
Water is Yin.

Su Wen, chapter 5 (26 AD).

Yin and Yang Symbol

The source of the symbol
is the Book of Changes – the I Ching¹
the symbol is called Taiji

The idea appears to have resulted
from the movement of the shadow of an ancient sun dial
The dial was a rod that was implanted in the ground
and the movement of the shadow of the rod
demarcated the outline of the symbol

The symbol represents both parts of the whole
and the energetic flow
from Yin to Yang and vice-versa

The white represents Yang
and the black represents Yin

When Yang reaches its peak (upward)
Yin begins to grow
and vice-versa
when Yin reaches its peak (downward)
it begins to decline
and Yang begins to grow



The black dot in Yang and the white dot in Yin
symbolize the idea
that all Yin contains a bit of Yang
and all Yang contains a bit of Yin
and that they are inseparable

Yin and Yang represent the two parts of the whole
but the emphasis is on unity

Both are part of the whole
and neither can exist without the other

¹- see I Ching, see p. 122

Why is the Right Side Yang and the Left Side Yin

China is located in the Earth's northern hemisphere
and the sun which is the embodiment of Great Yang
crosses Heaven from the south
therefore south is considered to be more Yang than north

In ancient China the emperor served as the high priest
he would pray facing south in the direction of Yang

The emperor faced south – Yang
with the front part of his body - Yin¹
Yin facing Yang

When the emperor faced south his left side faced east
and as east is Yang because the sun rises from it
the left side of the emperor's body facing Yang is Yin
again according to the principle of Yin facing Yang

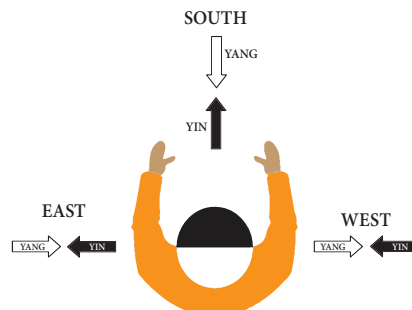
The right side of the emperor faced west
the Yin side where the sun sets
therefore the right side is Yang – Yin versus Yang

In all of the diagrams that appear further on in this book
south appears at the top

Choosing a side for treatment

One principle of treatment in Chinese medicine
is to try to avoid touching a person's strong Qi
and to instead prefer balancing it
through the use of counter Qi

As the left side is Yin and women are Yin
we apply acupuncture
to women on the Yang side – the right
and to men on the Yin side – the left



The south is Yang

1- See the next page.

Yin and Yang as Reflected in Humans

Yin and Yang are reflected in humans in several ways
the upper part of the body is Yang relative to the lower part
because the upper part is closer to the sky
and the lower part is closer to the earth

The internal part of the body is Yin
relative to the external part which is Yang

The rear part of the body is Yang
the front part of the body is Yin

The fetus is in a position in which the front part is converged
and the rear part is exposed and more external

The right side of the body is Yang¹
whereas the left side is Yin

Man is Yang relative to woman
because man's very essence reflects Yang

The sperm cell is active – Yang
it swims toward the egg
the egg passively awaits the penetration of the sperm – Yin

The penis penetrates
whereas the vagina contains

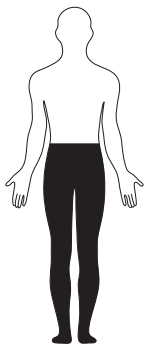
The man is the Yang fertilizer
as opposed to the Yin - containing and fertilized woman

A child is Yang compared to an adult who is Yin



**In people – the right side is Yang
and the left side is Yin**

1- See: Why is the Right Side Yang and the Left Side Yin, p. 39.



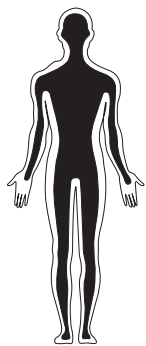
Top – Yang
Bottom – Yin



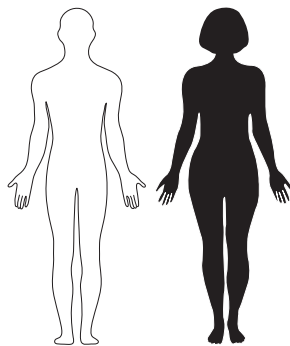
Back – Yang
Front – Yin



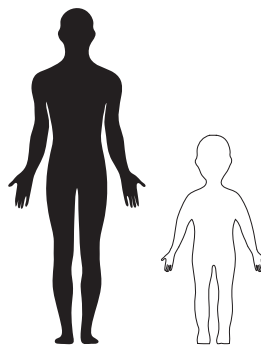
Right – Yang
Left – Yin



Outside – Yang
Inside – Yin



Man – Yang
Woman – Yin



Child – Yang
Adult – Yin

Pre Heaven and Post Heaven Qi

先天與後天

Xiāntiān Yǔ Hòutiān

The concepts of Pre-Heaven and Post-Heaven
reflect the idea of a difference
between Heavenly Qi and Earthly Qi

Pre-Heaven reflects Heavenly Qi
and Post-Heaven reflects Earthly Qi

In humans Pre-Heaven reflects
the period in which the body is developing
and the fetus is connected to the mother by the umbilical cord

Post-Heaven reflects life – post-natal Qi
from the moment of birth when the umbilical cord is cut
and the person starts to develop independently
until his or her dying day

Post-Heaven Qi
relates to one's way of life
and supports Pre-Heaven Qi
which is our basic congenital Qi

Yin and Yang – Numerology

Odd numbers are less stable
and therefore bring about change
and are classified as Yang

Even numbers on the other hand are more stable
and are therefore Yin in essence
and classified as stabilizing and balancing

“Odd numbers stabilize the Heavenly Yang,
whereas even numbers stabilize the Earthly Yin.”

Su Wen, chapter 20 (26 AD).

Pre Heaven and Post Heaven as Reflected in Pulse Diagnosis

In pulse diagnosis
 the left arm reflects Pre Heaven Qi
 and the right arm reflects Post Heaven Qi

Left Wrist - Pre Heaven

The Yin left hand reflects the “deeper” whole (Yin) organs
 those with no direct physical connection to outside of the body
 Heart (HT) Liver (LIV) and Kidneys (KI)

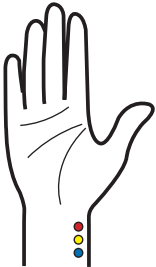
See: The Five Viscera, p. 84 and The Ten Organs, p. 85

	Deep Level Yin	Superficial Level Yang	
Upper Position Distal	HT	SI	
Middle Position	LIV	GB	
Lower Position Proximal	KI	BL	

Right Wrist - Post Heaven

The Yang right arm reflects the whole Yin organs
 which reflect the processing of Qi acquired everyday

The Lungs (LU) provide the Qi of the air
 the Spleen (SP) provides that Qi of food
 and the Pericardium (PC) provides the emotional nourishment
 we need from the environment

	Deep Level Yin	Superficial Level Yang	
Upper position Distal	LU	CO	
Middle position	SP	ST	
Lower position Proximal	PC	TH	

Pre Heaven's and Post Heaven's Reflection in the Direction of the Flow of Qi

Pre-Heaven reflects Heavenly Qi¹
According to the model of Fu Xi²
Heavenly Qi flows counter-clockwise

Post-Heaven reflects Earthly Qi
which according to the model of King Wen³
moves in a clockwise direction

The models of King Wen and Fu Xi
serve as axioms in the Chinese energetic approach



From the point of view
of the Earth
Heavenly Qi moves
counter-clockwise
and Qi on Earth
moves clockwise

In the clinic

Tonification technique

When we wish to strengthen the quality represented by the point
we rotate the needle clockwise

Dispersion technique

When we wish to disperse the quality that is typical of the point
we rotate the needle counterclockwise

Post Heaven
後天 - Hòu Tiān
Earth - Clockwise



King Wen (1,099 - 1,050 BC)

Pre Heaven
先天 - Xiān Tiān
Heaven - Counterclockwise



Fu Xi (2,825 BC)

1- See: Qi, p. 32.

2- See: Fu Xi, p. 118.

3- See: King Wan, p. 120.

Diagnosis Using Yin and Yang

Diagnosis using Yin and Yang is general
but ensures that treatment is in the right direction
using Yin and Yang is like using a compass when navigating

Using more detailed models
is like using a map
the map is detailed and precise
but the many details can lead to confusion and error

The compass is never wrong
but it specifies the direction
not the path
the more we limit ourselves to a direction that is correct
the less we are liable to err

One way of using Yin and Yang in the clinic
is to diagnose whether the patient is suffering from deficiency or excess

In cases of deficiency – we tonify

In cases of excess – we stimulate movement or disperse

This simple distinction
serves as a basis for building treatment strategy

After choosing the direction
we can choose the path
that is right for the case at hand

A practitioner that is skilled in diagnosis
contemplates the patient's Shen, skin and face
color, and pulse. The first thing to do is to
determine whether the illness is Yin or Yang.

Su Wen, chapter 5 (26 AD).

Yin and Yang in the Clinic

Treatment with two needles
is linked to the model of Yin and Yang
and facilitates balance

Even numbers stabilize
and odd numbers stimulate

The treatment facilitates balance
through the synchronization of two focal points
with one another

When treating with two needles
we can balance two opposite focal points

- ☯ Treatment of both sides of the body
- ☯ The upper part of the body vis-à-vis the lower part of the body
- ☯ A Yin meridian point and a Yang meridian point
- ☯ A point on the front side of the body and a second point on the back side
- ☯ A joint vis-à-vis an opposing joint – for example:
the right knee vis-à-vis the left elbow