History 170A
Blood, Breath, and Body
Basic Concepts of Chinese Correlative Cosmology

- **Qi 氣**: comprised both matter and energy
- **Yin/Yang 陰陽**, female/male principles of growth & decay
- “Five Phases” (*wuxing 五行*): originated as cyclical scheme of human history; developed into series of correspondences between human and natural worlds
## Five Phases Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zang Organ System</th>
<th>Yin/Yang Configuration</th>
<th>Five Phases</th>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Cardinal Direction</th>
<th>Seasons</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Planet</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Smell</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Sense Organ</th>
<th>Secretion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>yang within yin (lesser yang)</td>
<td>wood</td>
<td>zujueyin</td>
<td>east</td>
<td>spring</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>sour</td>
<td>sour/sweaty</td>
<td>anger</td>
<td>eyes</td>
<td>tears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>yang within yang (greater yang)</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>shoushaoyin</td>
<td>south</td>
<td>summer</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>Lord</td>
<td>bitter</td>
<td>scorched/burnt</td>
<td>joy</td>
<td>tongue</td>
<td>sweat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spleen</td>
<td>“arriving at yin,” or equilibrium</td>
<td>earth</td>
<td>zutaiyin</td>
<td>center</td>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>Saturn</td>
<td>sweet</td>
<td>aromatic</td>
<td>worry</td>
<td>lips</td>
<td>ordinary saliva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>脾</td>
<td>土 足太陰</td>
<td>中</td>
<td></td>
<td>黄 鎮星</td>
<td>甘</td>
<td>香</td>
<td>思</td>
<td>唇</td>
<td>涎</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung</td>
<td>yin within yang (lesser yin)</td>
<td>metal</td>
<td>shoutaiyin</td>
<td>west</td>
<td>autumn</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>pungent</td>
<td>rank</td>
<td>sorrow</td>
<td>nose</td>
<td>nasal mucus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>肺</td>
<td>銀 手太陰</td>
<td>西</td>
<td>秋</td>
<td>白</td>
<td>太白星</td>
<td>相傳</td>
<td>辛</td>
<td>腥</td>
<td>憂</td>
<td>鼻</td>
<td>涕</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney</td>
<td>yin within yang (greater yin)</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>zushaoyin</td>
<td>north</td>
<td>winter</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>salty</td>
<td>rotten</td>
<td>fear</td>
<td>ears</td>
<td>saliva produced at base of tongue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>腎</td>
<td>水 足少陰</td>
<td>北</td>
<td>冬</td>
<td>黑</td>
<td>辰</td>
<td>鹹</td>
<td>腐</td>
<td>恐</td>
<td>耳</td>
<td>涎</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Blood and Qi (Breath)

- *Yin/yang* forces within body often described in terms of Blood & Qi (Breath)

- Sea of Blood: located in lower abdomen, draws sustenance from food
- Sea of Qi/Breath: located in chest, draws sustenance from air
Circulation Tracts of the “Liver”

- The body was believed to contain eleven circulation tracts associated with the principal organs and vital functions of the body
- Qi circulated through these tracts to enable body to function
- From a 17th-century treatise on medicine
Daoist Vision of the Cosmic Body

- Illustrates circulation of Qi energy along the spinal column
- Emphasizes paths of flow rather than flesh and bone anatomy
- *Chart of the Side View of the Inner Realm* (from Ming Daoist Canon)
Body Landscape

- Internal alchemy establishes analogies between the inside of the human body and natural landscapes
- Nodes for circulation of Qi are represented by buildings & landscape features
- 13th-century chart reprinted in *Chart of the Ascent & Descent of the Yin/Yang Energies* (from Ming Daoist Canon)
Ming Alchemical Body

- Unity of Essence (*jing* 精), Qi, and Psyche (*shen* 神) corresponds to Body, Heart, and Consciousness and is central to a vigorous long life

- From treatise on internal alchemy published in 1615
Yin Blood in Women

Specific to women’s reproductive functions:

- Menstrual blood
- Blood nourishing fetus via placenta
- Breast milk to feed infants
True Essentials of Drink and Food
Guidebook for Nutrition and Health, published in 1456
Postpartum Recovery

- New mother rests upright, with blankets for support
- After birth, mothers remained in seclusion for 30 days to allow their bodies to recuperate
- From 18th-century Japanese treatise on Qing customs