

Description of the Six Divisions of Yin and Yang: how they may be an effective way to describe behavioral energy patterns

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Introduction

The field of Chinese medicine is vast, its study and practice extends millennia into the past. It is not possible for me to do justice to the extensive body of work known as Chinese medicine in my efforts to answer the above question. I will say that all authors who wish to establish credibility in the field must return to the primary works, namely *Nei Jing* and the well-know commentaries associated with this ancient writing.

As a student of Chinese medical theory, I observe that it is uncharacteristic for an Asian scholar to impose specific personality traits to any one aspect of this system, i.e. assigning behavioral characteristics to the Six Divisions of Yin and Yang, which have classically been used to track stages of disease.¹ A Chinese physician rather focuses on reestablishing balance within the whole and takes for granted the physical nature and personality of his or her patient. However, it is not outside the norm of Chinese medicine to use any of nine methods to identify and treat a pathological pattern, each method utilized according to unique situations.² For instance, Eight Principals theory may explain observable functions of the organs and their interrelationships, but the Five Phase theory may not agree, so it is “simply ignored.”³ A contemporary Western scholar, doctor, and behaviorist Yves Raquena has done the honors of integrating the myriad cues for typing the patient known to Chinese physicians with a model of psychosomatic understanding.⁴

To begin the discussion, I'd like to outline what is known within the Chinese Medicine tradition: first, basic Constitutional Typing, clues from the ancient texts, and why this does not answer the question; second, commonly known matrixes of the human being (known as the Fundamental Textures or Vital Substances); and third, the Yin and Yang Organs, their functions, energetic qualities and descriptions of the Six Divisions meridian Temperaments.

Notes:

1. Maciocia, p. 479.
2. These are identification of patterns according to: Eight Principles; Qi, Blood and Fluids; Internal Organs; Pathogenic Factors; Five Elements; the Channels; Six Stages; Four Levels; and Three Burning Spaces. Maciocia, p. 176.
3. Kaptchuk, p. 442.
4. In his Foreward, Requena entices the reader: “Acupuncture is simultaneously a basic and highly differentiated model of psychosomatic expression. As you will learn, it is a model that includes concepts of constitutions and temperaments not unlike the psychosomatic models proposed by Hippocrates, who inspired the modern theories of biotypology and characterology.” p. iv.

Five Phases and Constitutional Typing

The description of constitutional or physical typing in Chinese Medicine is observed through the Five Elements or Phases. The words “elements” and “phases” are both agreed upon translations of *wu xing*, indicating the five distinct ways energy moves in nature and in the human being. Though the exact translation is somewhat abstract, the five energetic states remain the same: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water. Typing a person according to his or her natural dominant “element” can be used in diagnosis to determine the Organ Network that is most likely to weaken in distress. Constitutional Typing is both a tool to observe the natural, healthy manifestations of human life, and a method to diagnose the root of illness.¹ In general terms a person of each Phase has observable physical qualities and mannerisms.²

The Wood Phase³ person has strong bones and sinews, may be tall, and has broad shoulders. In childhood this person may have specific food allergies, yet engages fully in life with moments of shyness. In adult life a Wood person continues living with gusto, even to the point of staying awake as late as possible. A Wood person has an assertive nature and the capacity for hard work. This person may lack concentration due to mental distractions, have a poor memory and be “simultaneously optimistic and anxious.”⁴

A person with Fire Phase⁵ constitution has a pointed head or chin, which may be bald on the top or with sparse, curly hair. On the rare occasions when a Fire type child is physically ill a high fever is present. Otherwise a Fire type child is identified through emotional and psychological extremes. Hypersensitive and withdrawn or wildly disobedient are the polarities most often seen. Adult Fire people continue to have extreme emotional natures, either being timid or outspoken, and may exhibit acute moments of intellectual brilliance, powerful displays of memory or possibly a mind filled with excessive triviality. A Fire type tends to have a red complexion, a round belly and energetic nature. Because of this person’s powerful connection with his or her heart, hypertension and depression are common.

An Earth Phase⁶ person is big bodied or fat. The large muscle groups, especially the thighs, are notable. An Earth child is large and may be obese before adolescence. Though the Earth child exhibits a carefree nature, he or she is prone to concerns of the mouth and stomach, and speech impediments being common. Early illnesses include viral and parasitic infections, and respiratory concerns similar to those of Metal constitution. The Earth type adult is naturally calm and has no particular ambitions, has a philosophical attitude and works well with ideas. Though he or she possesses stamina and is capable of action an Earth person is inclined toward laziness and may manipulate others to get things done. The Earth type has sudden bouts of fatigue when hunger strikes. If this person develops the habit of satiating hunger impulses with sweets ongoing digestive disorders will become a part of his or her life.

The Metal Phase⁷ person has a pale complexion, triangular face, long nose and a strong frame. In childhood, a Metal child is thin and seems frail, has early episodes of bronchitis, tuberculosis and other respiratory infections. This child may exhibit intolerance to milk and dairy foods at a young age. Though the Metal and Earth constitutions have similar vulnerability in the respiratory system, the Metal type does not contain the same potential for action. The Metal type person voluntarily retires to bed early throughout life, and is characterized in his or her slow and deliberate way of moving. Sudden growth spurts may cause spinal curvature in Metal type teenagers. A Metal type adult comes across as meticulous and rational, striving to conserve energy in all actions. This person tends toward reflective moods, and has a sad temperament. Asthma, colitis and dry skin are common disorders that plague the Metal person throughout life.

A Water Phase⁸ person has a round face, soft body and longer than normal spine, which may be straight or slumped, depending on the sustained level of adrenaline. The Water child, similar to the Metal child, is usually thin. This child is vulnerable to cold environments and prone to infections in the tonsils or pharyngeal area, including ear infection. This child is naturally insular and withdrawn. According to Dr. Requena’s description of Water type people, either hyper- or hypo-adrenal polarities

exist. In the former, a person is more vital and possesses a sharp memory, while that latter is constantly exhausted with poor aptitude for memory. A person with Water constitution is sensitive to cold, both physical and emotional. Physically this person avoids chilly environment, and emotionally is discouraged if an important authority figure disapproves of his or her direction in life. A Water Type person typically wants to be alone.

The above constitutional sketches give an exterior perspective of each Elemental Type, a useful tool for health care providers when approaching clients in various stages of physical and mental balance. Through observing constitutional tendencies a practitioner can predict strengths and shortcomings of an individual. For a more deeply psychological perspective, *Between Heaven and Earth* outlines personal character traits to support the reader in embracing his or her Constitutional Type. The authors name a specific archetype for each phase with inherent strengths and genius to be developed.⁹

Though it is a useful tool, Elemental Typing does not answer the question of how behavioral energy patterns are described through the Six Divisions of Yin and Yang meridians. These Yin and Yang meridian pairs are referred to in *Nei Jing* by the name of each pair, ie. Bladder meridian is *Zu-tai-yang pang-guang-jing*, literally Leg Tai Yang Bladder Meridian. The main reference of how the meridian pairs interact with the patient is the tracking of Cold penetrating the body; the first three pairs are the exterior and the second three pairs are the interior levels of defense.⁹ Within the writings of Maciocia, Kaptchuk and Lundberg are several matching quotations from the *Nei Jing* that describe specific qualities noted in persons with these meridian pairs out of balance or with dominance in a particular pair, however they are anecdotal in context.

The Six Divisions are pairings of meridians, each from two different Elements. The general structure of Typing according to Five Elements does not address the blend of two meridians from different Organ Networks. The Organ Networks, referred to by the Yin Organ within an Element, are basic to any understanding of Chinese medical tradition. An attempt to address the question of interactions among the Organ Networks requires a working knowledge of Fundamental Textures, or Vital Substances, that create and connect the Organs with each other.

Notes:

1. Beinfield & Korngold, p.136 – 8. The authors prefer the word “Phase,” and thus it is used in this section. They note that a classic form of typing is to tally symptoms describing the Five Phase disorders. The Phase presenting the greatest number of symptoms is considered the patient’s constitutional type. Beinfield and Korngold opine that this may not be the actual constitution of a patient, but the presentation of a Phase injuring or overpowering another.
2. The following paragraphs are a composite of Beinfield & Korngold’s writing, Giovanni Maciocia’s descriptions on pages 320 – 2, and Yves Requena’s chapter 6, *The 5 Constitutions*. These descriptions are common knowledge to those who use physical observation as part of diagnosis.
3. The Wood Element consists of the Liver Organ Network, which includes the Yin Liver and the Yang Gall Bladder Organs. These are both Middle Warmer Organs.
4. Requena, p. 82.
5. The Fire Element is under the rule of the Heart Organ Network, which is in two parts, Absolute and Supplemental Fire. The Absolute Fire are Organs, the Heart is the Yin organ, and Small Intestine the Yang; the Supplemental Fire are a meridian extension and a non-local Organ.
6. The Earth Element consists of the Spleen (which includes the Pancreas) Yin Organ Network and Stomach, its close partner in primary digestive functions. These Organs reside in the Middle Warmer, but the Spleen relates as an Upper Warmer Organs, as will be discussed later in the text.
7. The Metal Phase has the Lung as the Yin Organ Network in the Upper Warmer, Large Intestine Yang Organ in the Lower Warmer. Together they comprise the Metal, also called Air, Element of the body.
8. The Kidney Organ Network governs the Water Element, which corresponds with the Kidney and Bladder organs, both belonging to the Lower Warmer.
9. Beinfield & Korngold give detailed explication of physiological and psychological manifestations of the Five Phase in the human life in Chapters 8 – 12. For a look at the *Powers of the Five Archetypes* see pages 140 – 1.
10. The order in which Cold invades the body through the Six Divisions of Yin and Yang Meridian pairs is given as follows: (three exterior pairs) Tai Yang; Yang Ming; Shao Yang; (three interior pairs) Tai Yin; Shao Yin; Jue Yin. Kaptchuk, p. 308 – 13.

The Foundations of Human Being: Qi, Blood, Essence, Spirit and Body Fluids¹

Qi

According to Chinese philosophers and doctors the foundation of all existence is Qi. Two main observations must be noted: first, Qi is simultaneously spiritual and physical energy; and second, Qi is in constant flux among phases of rarified energy and solid form.² As the source of all matter and motion, Qi is recognized as simultaneously the potential and the manifestation, as well as the energy that transforms the potential into manifestation.

The theories of modern physics showing matter and energy to be alternate descriptions of one reality are very much in accord with the concept of qi and other facets of Eastern philosophy.³

In the human being, Qi in a Yin state manifests as an accumulated, solid or fluid substance, while in a Yang state Qi is movement, activity or dispersion of energy. Three main types of Qi that function within the human body are Original Qi (a refined form of Essence, which depends on Air and Food Qi for replenishment), Air Qi (through respiration) and Food Qi.⁴ Additional types of Qi relating to both internal and external factors include Gathering Qi, True Qi, Nutritive Qi, Defensive Qi,⁵ Deficient Qi, Collapsed Qi, Stagnant Qi, and Rebellious Qi.⁶ Beyond those mentioned above, other forms of Qi known as Organ Qi are considered in the assessment and treatment of human health concerns. The functioning of each Yin Organ is referred to as the Qi of that organ. For instance, Kidney-Qi describes the natural flow of the Kidney Network, Lung-Qi has its natural function, etc.

BLOOD

Regarded as the Yin counterpart to the constant activity of Qi, Blood has a naturally receptive and effortless being.⁷ In the ever-present exchange of Yin and Yang, Blood is entirely dependent on Qi to infuse it with life "...without Qi, Blood would be an inert fluid."⁸ Blood is created within the body through Heart-Fire interacting with Food-Qi (which originates in the Spleen) coupled with pure Air Qi and further enriched with Kidney Essence and Original Qi. The Blood then regulates the Fire that has created it. Heart-Qi transports it through the body.⁹

The primary function of Blood is to physically nourish and maintain moisture in the body. Heart-Blood maintains the moisture of the tongue. Liver-Blood moisturizes the eyes, joints, hair and nails. The Liver stores the Blood while at rest and provides the Blood with an opportunity to regenerate itself.¹⁰

Finally, Blood provides "the harbour within which the Mind (Shen) can flourish."¹¹ When the Blood is adequately nourished memory, thoughts and speech are clear. Under nourished or deficient blood does not allow the Mind to rest, resulting in anxiety, dissatisfaction and the inability to sleep.¹²

ESSENCE - JING

Essence is a dense fluid that resides in the Kidneys, and differentiates living beings from inorganic objects. Jing/Essence is often referred to as Kidney-Essence, and circulates throughout the body. Essence is composed of Pre-Heaven/Prenatal Essence and Post-Heaven/Postnatal Essence. The Prenatal Essence, the genetic gift given at conception, is nurtured through the mother's own Kidneys during pregnancy. Prenatal Essence is the only essence of a fetus, thus it determines the basic constitution, strength and vitality of the life. Postnatal Essence (sourced from food, fluids and air, and refined through the Stomach/Spleen, and Lungs) begins supplementing the Prenatal Essence at birth. Postnatal Essence replenishes both Essence and Original Qi.¹³

The primary function of Kidney-Essence/Jing is the vital force of a human being. In Chinese Medicine, Essence is a hereditary Vital Substance that determines the entire development of the human life from early growth, constitutional health, sexual maturity, parenthood and decline.¹⁴

Essence is fundamental in the movement of heat, fluids in the lower body and sexual energy. Essence is slower than Original Qi yet more rapid than Blood in its circulation through the body.¹⁵

Another function of Essence is in the production of Marrow, "... a substance which is the common matrix for the bone marrow, brain and spinal cord: it has no equivalent in Western medicine."¹⁶ Finally, Essence differentiates organic, animate beings from inorganic beings.¹⁷ Essence combines with Qi to create the foundation for Spirit in humans.

SPIRIT – SHEN

In the Chinese medicine tradition Spirit is unique to human life.¹⁸ Also referred to as Mind, a healthy, clear Spirit can be seen as the light in a person's eyes.¹⁹ The Chinese medical tradition divides the Spirit into the five smaller Spirits which function as specific virtuous human qualities that are "recognizable across cultures and can be absolutely independent of religious belief"²⁰.

Yi (Consciousness of Potentials) is the "Qi aspect of the Spirit,"²¹ which is housed in the Spleen. Healthy Yi can be seen in creativity, loyalty, sincerity and clear minded consideration of options available to self and others. When the Yi is not smooth actions appear obsessive and controlling. The person attempts to manipulate others. On a basic level, Yi is referred to as "thought," which supports study, mental work and the ability to focus. An excessive amount of concentration over time will weaken the Spleen.²² So here within the spirit of the Spleen it is clear how the Earth Element Type gains his or her reputation as an "idea person," yet may be overwhelmed if this faculty is used to extremes. Also, in the character of Yi there are both passive and active qualities, cogitation and manifestation, which provides a broad and flexible foundation for the Earth Organs.

Hun (Non-corporeal Soul) is stored in the Liver. Hun is a Spirit that lives beyond a person's death, thus is the storehouse of good or ill deeds done in life. Human kindness is the primary benefit of the intact Hun, giving a person the awareness of pain as an unavoidable experience in the body through its relationship with the Blood. In fact Hun "is considered the Blood aspect of Spirit."²³ Also referred to as the Ethereal Soul, Hun is said to have less relevance to Chinese medicine than the other spiritual aspects, though signs of Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin distress appear as manifestations that the Hun is ungrounded: a lack of direction in life, mental discord, or a floating sensation and fear of falling just before sleep. Hun is the Yang counterbalance to Po, the Corporeal Soul, discussed below. The former is focused on whole-life direction and the later concerned with the body's immediate needs.²⁴

Zhi (Will) is stored in the Kidney. *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine* makes a simple, straightforward correlation between the Kidney's health and the Will Power.²⁵ Dr. Kaptchuk further divides Zhi into Yang Zhi, seen in definitive, self-informed direction a person takes to guide the life, and Yin Zhi, revealed in hindsight, seen in our specific responses to circumstances that serve to move us toward the path of our destiny. When Zhi is strong a person faces the unknown with wisdom and inner calm, and uses both external and internal resources to overcome obstacles. If Zhi is weak, a person's actions change in relationship with the Yin or Yang depletion. Weak Yin Zhi produces symptoms of restlessness or lack of inner calm, while weak Yang Zhi is active, unrestrained and controlling of the environment. Ultimately, the Yin Will directly affects the Yang Will's strength or weakness. "The Will is considered the Essence aspect of Spirit."²⁶ With this perspective of the spirit housed in the Kidney Network, a deeper appreciation of the undercurrent within a Water Element Type person may be seen.

Shen (Spirit) is conducted through the Fire Channels (Heart/Pericardium Network) into the Xin, or HeartMind. "The small Heart Spirit has the responsibility of making sure that the big Spirit connects properly with the world of time and space."²⁷ This statement suggests a few things about the Chinese Medical view of the Human Experience. One, that we are beings connected with a timeless reality, and two, that we exist as such in a physical world that operates in relationship with time and space. To make clear the magnitude of Shen as a component of our humanity, note that twice as many meridians conduct

and balance Fire as any other of the smaller spirits.²⁸ Healthy Shen, referred to as Mind in *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, manifests through a person's appropriate timing and behavior. The state of the Heart and Blood correlate with the state of the Mind.

The Heart influences these five specific non-physical functions: mental activity, consciousness, memory, thinking and sleep. When the Heart does not hold the Mind, through malnourished Blood or other causes, any or all of these functions will be impaired.²⁹ Heart Shen has a specific virtue, *li*, which is propriety, ceremony or ritual. This may be seen in subtle ways, such as making eye contact at the correct moment for a proper amount of time, or overt acts of social responsiveness, such as entering a room politely when the lecture has already started. If Shen is not rooted in the Blood, social awkwardness plagues a person even to the point of delusion. In Chinese medicine, Shen disturbance for whatever reason may appear as mental illness.³⁰ Understanding the spirit within the Heart Organ provides an interesting explanation for a Fire type person's hypersensitivity. Later we will examine the Six Divisions pairs that combine Shen with other spirits.

Po (Animal or Corporeal Soul) is stored in the Lung. In contrast with Hun, Po disintegrates upon corporeal death, and is the "most physical and material part of a human being's soul."³¹ Two specific dimensions of Po are *yi* (justice) and *bao* (preciousness). The former manifests as impartiality and fairness, the later represents the momentary flashes of emotion and reactivity of the human beast. Healthy Po is characterized in the unbiased integrity of self-hood (*yi/justice*), and the ability to use the emotions only to the extent that sudden trauma is released (*bao/preciousness*). "An intact Po has short-term power and assertiveness; a weakened Po is lifeless and lethargic."³² This phrase is an almost direct description of the Metal Type person in health and illness. Breathing is a manifestation of Corporeal Soul, thus the effect of sustained, strong emotions such as grief, sadness, anxiety or depression, constricts the chest and weakens the Lung-Qi.³³ Here again is a possible explanation for the slow, deliberate nature that develops throughout the life of a Metal Type person. The dual nature of Po, explains how the Metal Organs can be joined, but distinct from their Six Divisions partners.

BODY FLUIDS

The Chinese word for body fluids is *Jin-Ye*; *jin* (moist) refers to any liquid, and *ye* (fluid) are the thick, heavier liquids of a living being. Relative to the other Fundamental Substances, Body Fluids are the most superficial. They are derived from food and drink, and interact with specific Organs and bowels in multi-stage processes of separation. According to texture, the Body Fluids are utilized in the Exterior body (the area between the muscles and skin), or the Interior body (the joints, bones, marrow and brain).

The first Organs that regulate the Body Fluids are the Spleen, Lungs and Kidney, which distribute and move the first division of useable fluids. The remaining fluids from this division go downward to the Small Intestine to be further divided. Other than the Stomach, the primary food intake Organ, this is the first time a Yang Organ takes a part in the refinement of a Fundamental Substance. The Small Intestine begins the purification of fluids within the Lower Warmer Organs, which continues in the Bladder and Large Intestine.³⁴ The processing, movement and excretion of Body Fluids happens on all three Organ levels, so "the Triple Burner assist the transformation, transportation and excretion of fluids at all stages."³⁵

The function of the Jin Body Fluids is two-fold. The first is to moisten and lubricate. Primarily, the Lungs need moisture, and the *jin* "mist" of the Upper Burner constantly performs this function. Through the action of the Upper Burner Jin Body Fluids moisten the Exterior body, and produce lubrication in the form of saliva, tears and mucus. The second function of Jin Fluids is to balance the texture of the Blood. If Blood is too thick it will become static, so the Heart transports Body Fluids into the Blood at the layer between the skin and muscles. If the Blood is too thin, the Heart transports out excess moisture in the form of sweat.³⁶

The Ye Body Fluids are more viscous, heavy and remain in the Interior of the body. Ye Fluids are moved through the Middle and Lower Burners. “Their function is to moisten the joints, spine, brain and bone marrow. They also lubricate the orifices of the sense organs, i.e. eyes, ears, nose and mouth.”³⁷

Notes:

1. According to Ted Kaptchuk these are known as the Fundamental Textures, and are Qi, Blood, Essence, Spirit and Fluids. Chapter 2. Dr. Kaptchuk’s inclusion of Spirit reflects the small spirit housed in each Yin Organ as a component of whole-being balance. In Giovanni Maciocia’s text, the Vital Substances consist of Essence, Qi, Blood and Body Fluids. p. 37- 56. Maciocia’s vantage is a widely accepted, modern use of Chinese Medicine, which includes the Spirits in the Yin Organ functions and emphasizes refined divisions of the four Vital Substances. Beinfield and Korngold distill the building blocks of the human being into Blood, Moisture and Qi, focusing their work on how these components interplay with the Five Phases. p. 33-8.
2. Maciocia, p. 37.
3. Pitchford, p. 56.
4. These three types of Qi are agreed upon in all texts of my bibliography. There is slight variation among authors concerning the internal interaction of Qi, however I believe it to be differences in semantics and general approach to health, and does not negate the cohesiveness of each perspective as representative of the whole.
5. Vital Substances, these are healthy functional aspects of Qi. Maciocia, p. 43 - 6.
6. Disharmonies of Qi. Kaptchuk, p. 51 - 2.
7. Kaptchuk, p. 53.
8. Maciocia, p. 48. Four main aspects of the Blood-Qi relationship: Qi generates Blood; Qi moves Blood; Qi holds the Blood; Blood nourishes Qi. p. 51 - 2.
9. A detailed description of the Origin of Blood is given in *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*: First is the Food Qi provided through the Spleen and Stomach Organs. Lung-Qi pushes Food-Qi, through compression and expansion of the chest, into the Heart where it is transformed into Blood and circulated everywhere in the body. Kidney Essence further contributes to the nourishment of Blood through the production of bone marrow. Maciocia, p. 49.
10. Maciocia, p. 50.
11. The strength of the Heart and nourishment of the Blood are interdependent. Health of the Heart and Blood reflect and are reflected in the state of the Mind (Shen). p. 72.
12. Maciocia, p. 50.
13. Maciocia gives the Pre-Heaven/Post-Heaven description according to standard Chinese Medicine scholarship on pages 38 – 40. I personally prefer the words Prenatal/Postnatal, as used in Kaptchuk’s text, which vastly simplifies the same description on page 55.
14. For a description of women’s and men’s transition cycles (translation from *Nei Jing*) see Kaptchuk, p. 56 – 7.
15. “In relation to each other, Essence is Yin and Qi is Yang. When compared with Blood, however, Essence is the more active, or Yang, phenomenon. Blood is associated with the everyday cyclical process of maintenance, nourishment and repair. Essence is tied to ongoing, long-range development.” Kaptchuk, p. 57.
16. Maciocia, p. 40.
17. Kaptchuk, p. 55.
18. “In the same way that Essence (Jing) distinguishes organic life from inorganic material, Spirit separates human life from animal life.” Kaptchuk, p. 58.
19. In contrast, dull or clouded eyes reveal disturbance in the Mind. “This can frequently be observed in those who have had serious emotional problems for a long period of time, or have had a serious shock, even if this occurred many years previously.” Maciocia, p. 41.
20. Kaptchuk, p. 59.
21. Kaptchuk, p. 60.
22. Maciocia, p. 91.
23. When the body is treated well, the Blood flows freely, and roots the Hun. When the Blood is weak or stagnant the Hun cannot be healthy, and responds to physical discomfort by fleeing the body. Emotional and spiritual manifestations are irritability and unkindness. Kaptchuk, p. 61 – 2.
24. Maciocia, p. 80 - 1.
25. Maciocia, p. 98.
26. Kaptchuk, p. 62 - 3.
27. The word for the Spirit that animates the body, the general description for the smaller aspects of Spirit that anchor into Yin Organ Networks, and the Heart’s specific Spirit are all the same. They are all Shen. Regarding the Heart’s Shen: “This small Spirit is said to reside in the Heart... and composes, so to speak, one-fifth of the larger Spirit.” Kaptchuk, p. 63 - 4.
28. Namely the Absolute Fire meridian pair, Heart and Small Intestine, and the Supplemental Fire meridians, Pericardium and Triple Warmer. While the Pericardium is considered an extension of the Heart Organ, the Triple Warmer does not

have a specific connection with the Heart, but has a vital function in circulating Qi and Body Fluids evenly throughout the body, and supporting the Fire aspect of the Gate of Vitality.

29. "According to Chinese Medicine, mental activity and consciousness 'reside' in the Heart. This means the state of the Heart (and Blood) will affect the mental activities including the emotional state." The imbalance also occurs in reverse order; extreme emotional disruptions cause weak Blood. Maciocia, p. 72 - 3.
30. Kaptchuk, p. 64.
31. Maciocia, p. 86.
32. Kaptchuk, p. 65.
33. Maciocia, p. 86 - 7.
34. The Spleen separates the "clean" from the "dirty" fluids, sending the "clean" part to the Lungs. Here some fluid is distributed to the skin and some is sent to the Kidneys. The "dirty" part goes from the Spleen to the Small Intestine to be further separated into pure and impure parts. Pure fluids from the Small Intestine go to the Bladder and impure fluids go to the Large Intestine. The pure fluids sent to the Bladder are further divided into pure and impure parts. The pure fluid from the Bladder rises to the Exterior of the body to become sweat, while the impure moves downward and becomes urine. The Large Intestine re-absorb some the water from the impure fluids it has received and excretes the remainder as waste. Maciocia, p. 52 - 3.
35. The three burning spaces each have a specific mode of interaction with the fluids. The Upper Burner, realm of the Lungs, is called the "mist;" the Middle Burner, where the Stomach masticates food, is the "muddy pool;" and the Lower Burner, final filtration through the Intestines and Bladder, is the "drainage ditch." Maciocia, p. 54.
36. Maciocia, p. 55.
37. *ibid*

The Yin and Yang Organ Networks, their functions and meridian extensions

As can be seen in the above outline of Chinese medicine, no one Organ is independent, and all physical qualities connect with subtle factors. Chinese physicians generally regard each system as a homunculus; one feature is a window to all other components of the human being. In other words, there is no separation between the physical, spiritual, emotional or psychological aspects of a person. In the following section I will incorporate essential factors on all of these levels to connect the Organs with their meridian extensions. I will connect the Six Divisions meridian pairs through their names, given in Chinese pinin, to illuminate this point.

At the outset I will mention that the Tai Yin and Yang Ming meridian pairs are separated into Element (Earth and Metal) components, unlike any of the other pairs. This is a development of Yves Requena's categorization in his book *Character and Health: The Relationship of Acupuncture and Psychology*. The acupuncture portion of this work is founded in the *Nei Jing*, the psychology part is based on a model of Eight Character Types developed by Gaston Berger. As a scholar of Chinese medicine and psychology, Requena had an interest in merging the systems together in a way that maintains equilibrium throughout. Using Berger's model, key statements from the *Nei Jing* and similar descriptions of temperament found in both, Requena determined that Tai Yin and Yang Ming Earth and Metal meridians may be naturally sub-divided, yet remain intact as meridian pairs. I agree with the naturalness of this decision, and will address the meridian pairs in the same way.

SPLEEN ORGAN FUNCTION:

Zu-tai-yin pi-jing, Leg Greater Yin

The Spleen is our main digestive Organ. Both Spleen and Stomach Organs are physically in the Middle Warmer, however the Spleen directs energy upward toward the Lungs, making it more connected with the Upper Warmer while the Stomach directs energy downward through the Middle and Lower Warmers. The Spleen transports and transforms the food essence into that which can be absorbed as nourishment, and separates food into usable and unusable parts. A healthy Spleen Organ absorbs and transforms nutrient to support every part of the body.

Spleen-Qi keeps Blood circulating in the Blood Vessels, and combines Food-Qi with Original Qi from the Kidneys.¹ The direction of Spleen-Qi, up, is typical of a Yin Organ, yet the function of

transporting Qi is more characteristic of Yang Organs.² The Spleen relates directly with every other Yin Organ, which is how it comes to be known as the Mother Organ.

On the spirit level Yi inhabits the Earth element. Yi is distinctly cognitive in nature, operating as a spirit responsible for our creative vision and motivation toward manifestation. In its natural flow, Yi does not dwell in the past yet remains present-oriented. This appears unemotional and only concerned with the moment, openly empathetic yet detached.

In the Six Divisions meridian pairing, Spleen is Tai Yin Earth. The mental and emotional Temperament of Tai Yin Earth is a picture of the Spleen Organ functions personified in an Earth Type being. This person craves contact with others just as the Spleen contacts all parts of the body, desires to interact, but doesn't engage in activity itself. Earth Type personality enjoys the sweetness of life without paying heed to the consequences, so the Tai Yin Earth person may indulge in pleasures but not follow-up with discipline. According to Yves Requena, Tai Yin Earth people may have weight problems, as the main actions of this Temperament are to sleep and eat.³

The Tai Yin Earth person receives the energy of a group and moves toward meeting the needs of everyone. This quality defines them, making the Tai Yin Earth person an objective perspective and listening ear among their friends. The ultimate side effect of giving to others is in not knowing what to keep for oneself. When depletion occurs the Tai Yin Earth Temperament becomes suddenly depressed and retreats away from the group, "but the state passes by itself, as quickly as it appeared."⁴ This Temperament is referred to as Amorphous, and recommended to take action on its considerable mental deliberations and "follow some of your own advice!"⁵

LUNG ORGAN FUNCTIONS:

Shou-tai-yin fei-jing Arm Greater Yin,

In the Chinese medical tradition, the physical function of the Lung is to govern Qi and respiration. On first glance, it can be observed that the Lung Organ is in the Upper Warmer while the Large Intestine bowels are in the Lower Warmer. Looking deeper, we see that common factors between these organs are the movement of Qi, moisture, respiration and elimination. Though it is a Yin Organ, the natural movement of the Lungs Qi is down. The Lungs protect the surface, skin level and mucous membranes of the body. "Clean" Qi comes into the body through the Lungs and "dirty" Qi is exhaled through the Lungs. The Lungs host Gathering Qi and disperse Defensive Qi.⁶

Being the gatherer and consolidator of Qi, healthy Lungs have a quality of unification. As the storehouse of Po this manifests as integrity and open emotional expression.⁷ When the Lung Organ functions correctly it has the persona of someone with clear boundaries, personal conviction, and the ability to feel loss and grief without attachment.⁸ Complete emotional release through the Lungs is like a sneeze, it happens at the moment it is needed and then passes.

If Po is not intact the Lungs are not healthy and the natural movement of Gathering Qi and Defensive Qi breaks down. In this situation a person is more vulnerable to external invasions, which are prevalent in unfamiliar company and environments. If the Po has not experienced the completion of grief, hyper-emotionality soon gives way to emotionless-ness. The force of suppressed emotions stagnate the Lung-Qi, and inhibits the dispersal of Qi and moisture through the body. This gives rise to a common disorder of the Lungs, susceptibility to catching cold.⁹ Rather than resolve the original problem, a person with weak Lungs may isolate into a protective solitude.

Tai Yin Metal is an exemplar of *yi*, the aspect of Po that responds with unbiased justice. Justice rules for and against the individual, and so the Tai Yin Metal Temperament has both romantic and melancholic tendencies. Through the process of maturity the Tai Yin Metal personality learns to give time to ideas before turning them into action. As mentioned in the Metal Type description above, a

person with natural Metal Constitution does not have extra energy to use on mistakes, so a person with the Tai Yin Metal Temperament naturally covets his or her energy, valuing economy, truthfulness and efficiency. Over time, this may lead to over analysis and misplaced tactics to uphold the ideal.

A Tai Yin Metal person will eventually be confronted with his or her own double standard, withdraw, and “in this isolation they assemble their contradictions and abstract them to a personal philosophy.”¹⁰ The personality that emerges is a cohesive yet non-emotional persona who remains on the periphery of social groups. In Requena’s typology model, Tai Yin Metal gets the name Apathetic and is known to be both kind and cutting. Due to a natural self-sacrificing quality, Tai Yin Metal people often forget that other people have different responses, and need to be supported in their unique ways. A Tai Yang Metal person is cautioned, “you are meticulous and precise in your analysis, but you judge too quickly.”¹¹

STOMACH ORGAN FUNCTION:

Zu-yang-ming wei-jing, Leg Sunlight Yang or Bright Yang

The Stomach is the Yang, transporting vessel for food into the body, and is commonly referred to as “the center for rotting and ripening.” As a primary digestive Organ, Stomach is often treated together with the Spleen its partner in the Earth Element, to produce the body’s foundation of Qi and Blood.¹² The direction of the Stomach is down, it being the main mulching device for food and drink as it begins the process of refinement into Nutritive Qi.

Just as the Spleen is uncommonly Yang the Stomach is unusually Yin for a Yang Organ. While other Yang Organs deal with the Body Fluids as part of the transporting function, the Stomach produces and requires moisture to function properly. In *The Function of Yang Organs* chapter, Maciocia points out some of the Stomach’s Yin qualities: it craves wetness, a Yin environment; Stomach Meridian is on the front body, the Yin side; and “the Stomach often suffers from Yin deficiency, whilst the Spleen seldom suffers from Yin deficiency...”¹³

The Stomach is commonly considered the governor of large muscle groups, the flesh of the body. An Earth Type person often has large thighs and well-developed muscles, which reminds us that even though the Stomach has Yin-like qualities, it is still a Yang vessel. The Earth Type body contains power to activate, and combined with Yi spirit, the Consciousness of Potentials, Earth people consider the options thoroughly before moving into action. He or she is intellectually keen and has no need for drama in either social or personal relationships. For this reason a Yang Ming Earth person is at ease with other people, in fact needs human contact.

A Yang Ming Earth person is distinctly Sanguine, which is the name Requena gave this Temperament. In contrast with the more exacting Yang Ming Metal counterpart, Yang Ming Earth key words are “lusty” and “robust,” descriptors of Blood and the enjoyment of what nourishes the body. A Yang Ming Earth person is diplomatic and objective but has no particular ambition other than peace and enjoyment. “The ambition of Yang Ming-earth person, when they have it, is geared to success.”¹⁴

Jovial, the life of the party, this person is the picture of social grace and rarely reveals his or her inner self. As with the Stomach Organ, the Yang Ming Earth Temperament may be too enthralled with pleasure to notice inadvertent errors in judgment. The less-than-favorable consequences prompt “peevish and nagging”¹⁵ expressions of anger, but he or she is resilient in all situations. In fact, a Yang Ming Earth person is advised to be more aware that other people are not so durable, and “to help others to communicate and to be at peace.”¹⁶

LARGE INTESTINE ORGAN FUNCTIONS:

Shou-yang-ming da-ching-jing, Arm Sunlight Yang, or Bright Yang

As a Yang Organ, Large Intestine is more involved with transporting than transforming, though it does have a specific function regarding the Body Fluids. The principle action of Large Intestine is to re-absorb water from impure fluids, though forming solid waste into feces is the most commonly noted action of Large Intestine.¹⁷ Abdominal pain due to loose bowels and constipation are commonly associated with poor dietary choices, however unexpressed sadness and worry are equally valid causes of these symptoms.¹⁸

In terms of meridian function, Large Intestine is a prime example of psycho-emotional action mingling with physical experience. Key words are “retention and release,” which occurs on multiple levels. In Shiatsu therapy, Large Intestine treatment serves most effectively in sinus congestion, the areas corresponding directly with the points on the meridian. When the Organ itself is stagnant, treating Upper and Middle Warmer Yin meridians to restore Qi and moisture is often more effective than direct treatment on the Large Intestine meridian.¹⁹

Yang Ming Metal is the Qi-oriented counterpart to Yang Ming Earth. Dr. Requena outlines the Yang Ming Metal person as one who enjoys predictability of structure and willingly supports the continuation of whatever provides new input. Precise in outcomes, a Yang Ming Metal person is generally calm, but will respond to emotional situations in moments of understated expression, as suggested in the precious (*bao*) dimension of the spirit Po. This is often a paternal, supportive person, with deliberate, methodical patterns of movement.

Like the Yang Ming Earth, the Metal Temperament enjoys fun and maintains a rational stance in the face of disturbance. “Yang Ming-metal persons are rarely upset, and then only when an exceptional event threatens the principles on which they have built their lives.”²⁰ These are the only times a Yang Ming Metal person loses footing, and is prone to become lethargic and mired in failures. Requena names the Yang Ming Metal Temperament as Phlegmatic displaying few emotions and deadpan humor. Others aren’t comfortable expressing emotions in his or her presence. The advice given a Tai Yin Metal person is to give space for others to feel.²¹

LIVER ORGAN FUNCTION:

Zu-jue-yin gan-jing, Leg Terminal Yin or Middle Yin

The Liver is a highly active organ with multiple functions. It resides in the Middle Burner along with the digestive organs. Its physical functions are intricately involved with the movement of Qi, Blood and Moisture. The Liver hours in the daily cycle, 1am to 3am, are when its primary function, storing the Blood, occurs. Upon waking, the Liver begins to move the amount of Blood needed for activity, and throughout the day regulates the flow of Qi and Blood through the body.

A healthy Liver delegates Blood to the muscles during exercise, stores it when the body is at rest, earning its nickname “Free and Easy Wanderer.” This natural, smooth flow allows the Blood to move in only the amount needed, returning to the Liver to rest and regenerate in stillness. This results in adequate moisture and Qi at the skin level, giving the body physical resistance to external pathogens. The Liver governs sinews, releases Blood to moisturize the joints and muscles during activity. The state of Liver-Blood is seen in the nails, an extension of the sinews, and the capacity of the eyes to see. Regular cycles, especially the menstrual cycle, are influenced strongly by the Liver, which can be another indicator of Liver organ health.²²

The direction of Liver-Qi is upward and out to the borders, which is analogous to the spirit, Hun, housed within the Organ. As a main trademark, Hun is sensitive to physical pain and aware of inner timing. In this we see qualities of the Jue Yin Temperament, particularly as life affects the ability to

nurture physical needs. A person with dominant Jue Yin may exhibit acts of humanity if Hun is receptive, belligerence if Hun is damaged, and self-degradation if Hun is ungrounded. “Because the Non-Corporeal Soul (Hun) is responsible for human kindness or benevolence, it is sensitive to the boundaries that make for the recognition of self and others.”²³

Jue Yin is composed of the Liver and Pericardium meridians and, unlike the Tai Yin and Yang Ming meridian pairs this is a consolidated Temperament with shades of Wood or Fire dominance seen in the individuals.

PERICARDIUM ORGAN FUNCTION:

Shou-jue-yin xin-bao-jing, Arm Terminal Yin or Middle Yin

The Pericardium as an organ is not differentiated from the Heart Organ in classical literature even though there is a separate Pericardium meridian.²⁴ Known as the Heart Governor and Heart Protector, this meridian functions as “the first line of defense against External Pernicious Influences attacking the Heart.”²⁵ The Pericardium meridian is often treated in place of the Heart meridian, which is treated sparingly and quite delicately. Though it corresponds with a physical fibrous sac around the Heart Organ and has its own functional point system, the Pericardium is not regarded as an Organ in its own right. The main damaging external factor to the Heart is excessive Heat, thus the Pericardium Meridian absorbs heat to protect the vital Organ. Indications that the Heart is being shielded by Pericardium are impaired speech (stuttering or aphasia), delirium, or coma.²⁶

Most of the points along this Channel reduce hot symptoms associated with Heart or Blood disorders, and its last three points are specifically used for high fevers with great thirst, delirium, hallucinations and restlessness, or prostration (e.g. sunstroke).²⁷

Treatment along the Pericardium alleviates tension in the chest, whether the cause is physical, emotional or mental. The meridian itself is given as much clinical importance as any other channel.

Pericardium governs the expression of the inner self, and manifests through clear communication and recognition of feelings. When personal relationships enter difficult phases, the Pericardium buffers the Heart from emotional pain. Paul Lundberg notes calming of the Mind (Shen) as a function of Pericardium Channel during times of heartbreak.²⁸ The Pericardium is as much a conductor of Shen as the Heart, and thus is imbued with the qualities of appropriate timing and connection when healthy, and demonstrations of dis-associative or bizarre behavior when out of balanced.

To consider again the Jue Yin Temperament, there is a clear tendency for a person with Liver and Pericardium dominance to pass through several mental and emotional phases during a day. External factors have a strong influence on the Jue Yin person, there being so many variables to disturb the equilibrium. Hun roots into the Liver-Blood and grounds physical sensation into the body, Shen connects with the Blood and roots the Mind into the present moment. If the Blood or Liver-Yin is weak, a Jue Yin person is highly challenged to focus on mental tasks, physical sensations and exactly how to conduct him or herself in the moment.

Requena regards the Constitutional Type as Nervous, and notes that a Jue Yin person with strength in Wood has remarkable eyes, “gazing near and far simultaneously,” while the Fire dominant Jue Yin type tends to be “the red, chattering, agitated person.”²⁹ In both cases there is potential for inspired creativity and a person who can lead high-level group encounters. The combination of Hun and Shen create emphasis on humanity and harmonious connection in the balanced Jue Yin person.

In states of imbalance this personality exhibits unpredictable moods, sudden outbursts, and moments of extreme introversion. The desire to escape through substance abuse, intense experiences and impulsive behavior is a response to perceived obstacles. “In terms of health, Jue Yin individuals suffer

from various troubles that, though disturbing or annoying, are not serious.”³⁰ Despite these tendencies, a Jue Yin person is naturally positive, infinitely imaginative, creative and original. Dr. Requena advises that a Jue Yin person engage in exercise to help stay grounded in his or her own boundaries.³¹

TRIPLE WARMER ORGAN FUNCTION:

Shou-shao-yang san-jiao-jing, Arm Lesser Yang

The Triple Warmer (also Triple Burner or Triple Heater, translated from *san-jiao*, meaning “three that burn/scorch”) is the sixth Yang Organ in classic medical texts yet does not actually have a condensed, physical location as do all other Organs. The Triple Warmer is not a known Organ in Western medicine, but is most closely associated with the lymphatic and immune systems. As its name suggests, the Triple Warmer transports heat and fluids among the Upper, Middle and Lower Warmers, regulating whole-body temperature and maintaining the smooth flow of Exterior level fluids. The level of this fluid pathway is the subcutaneous layer, where it conducts Qi and Body Fluids among the burning spaces to regulate temperature and assist the Kidneys.

Ted Kaptchuk describes the Triple Warmer in the following way:

It may best be understood as the functional relationship between various Organs that regulate Water. These are mainly the Lungs, Spleen and Kidneys, but they also include the Small Intestine and the Bladder. The Triple Burner does not exist as an entity outside of these other Organs, but rather it is the pathway that makes these Organs a complete system.³²

In the history of Chinese medicine, the Triple Warmer has been referred to as a function rather than an Organ, the motive force that transforms, transports and “lets out” Qi into its proper burning space.³³ Although a controversy exists around its exact nature, there is no question in the Chinese classics that the Triple Warmer interacts closely with the Kidneys and the Gate of Vitality, which provides heat to the digestive system.

Treatment of the Triple Warmer meridian is effective in stabilizing the body temperature and bolstering the immune system against external pathogens. Treatment along the meridian is effective for relieving acute pain in the proximal areas. It is also effective for moving stagnation of fluids in the Lower Warmer. As for the specific internal organs, Lundberg advises treatment of the organs residing within the relevant burning space.³⁴

The Six Division pair, Shao Yang, groups Triple Warmer with Gall Bladder, a logical reflection of the Yin partners of the Jue Yin pair. However, as Yang meridians the Shao Yang pair is distinctly more external and active. Triple Warmer as Supplemental Fire, a Shen vessel, interacts through connection.

GALL BLADDER ORGAN FUNCTION:

Zu-shao-yang dan-jing, Leg Lesser Yang

The Gall Bladder Organ stores and releases bile, controls decision-making, and functions with the Liver to control the sinews.³⁵ The relationship of the Gall Bladder and Liver are seen in both physical proximity, the Middle Warmer, and their interaction through the proper secretion of bile.³⁶ The sinews are dependent on the smooth flow of the Wood Element Organs (the Liver through Blood and the Gall Bladder through Qi) to support their suppleness and ability to move properly.³⁷

The Gall Bladder is both a Yang Organ and one of the six Curious Organs, its description spelled out succinctly by Kaptchuk: “Yang because it is involved in the breakdown of impure food; curious because it alone among the Yang Organs contains a pure substance: bile.”³⁸

Where the Liver plans life direction, the Gall Bladder controls decisiveness, which frees the path toward action. Psychologically, this manifests in a person's ability to courageously move toward the goals. If the Gall Bladder function is impaired decision-making is not committed, resulting in incomplete actions. If the Gall Bladder is excessive, a person is too committed and can be unyielding, resulting in unnecessary resistance or errors of judgment, which could affect the physical body.

Shao Yang is composed of two Organs unique in the Yang Organ group. The Triple Warmer as a much-debated Organ/function, and the Gall Bladder is both Yang Organ and a Curious Organ. Both of these have a particular motivating effect on the entire body, and as such have a naturally physical quality in combination. Yves Requena recognizes the Shao Yang Temperament as "a sports devotee who practices several physical activities" and enjoys competing.³⁹

A Shao Yang person is endowed with a strong immune system and mental sharpness, the effects of Liver-Blood and Qi flowing freely and anchoring the Shen and Hun. Hun embodies the tolerance and patience to accept the discomforts of physical experience, and Shen connects with others in appropriate timing, making the Shao Yang person a natural leader. But due to these dominant Spirits in Yang meridians this person has the ability to take on multiple interests with no hope of fulfilling them all.

A particular trademark of the Shao Yang Temperament is a tendency to face conflicts directly and move through obstacles impulsively. This may back fire as an error in taste and poorly placed verbal timing. When he or she dispels frustration through outbursts of expression, the Shao Yang person's anger passes as quickly as it arrived, leaving others bewildered. The Character Type is referred to as Enthusiastic, which sums up the positive and winning Shao Yang personality. Requena advises the Shao Yang Temperament to discover whether he or she is a Wood or Fire dominant type. The Wood type will benefit from containing impulses to anger when other people seem slow to respond. The Fire type can learn to refrain from acting out of enthusiasm, and to put time into more thought-out plans.⁴⁰

KIDNEY ORGAN FUNCTION:

Zu-shao-yin shen-jing, Leg Lesser Yin

The Kidneys, located in the Lower Warmer, are commonly referred to as the Root Organ or the Root of Life. The Kidney Organ has a close relationship with both Essence and Original Qi. The Kidneys govern the flow of Water, especially in the Lower Burner, where pure fluids are separated from impure liquid waste in coordination with the Small Intestine and Large Intestine.

In relationship with Essence, the Kidneys are involved in the natural development of life, and everything that flows from the Marrow, namely the spinal cord and brain matter, thus the relationship between healthy Kidney-Essence and mental acuity. A person's sense of hearing and the shine of a person's hair reflect the health of his or her Essence.

In relationship with Qi, the Kidneys root the Qi that descends from the Lungs so that it can disperse throughout the Organs.⁴¹

The space between the Kidneys and just below the navel is the Fire of the Gate of Vitality, which is where we see the polarity of Water and Fire in the body.⁴² The Kidneys house and govern the substance of our vitality, yet without the warming balance of the Heart, there is no spark to animate life. The ancient Chinese physicians grouped Kidney and Heart Networks into the Shao Yin meridian pair. The pairing blends Zhi with Shen. The Yin aspect of Zhi, represented in the Kidneys, is an illusive, hindsight perspective of the Will. Yin Will reveals itself over long phases, inevitable choices and knowledge learned in order to pass beyond what seems like predetermined events. This aspect of our humanity awakens a sense of the mystery of life, the awareness that we are bound to fulfill our own destiny.⁴³

HEART ORGAN FUNCTION:

Shou-shao-yin xin-jing, Arm Lesser Yin

The main vital function of the Heart is to govern the Blood and Blood Vessels. The physical circulation of Blood happens through the constant pumping of the Heart Organ, so the quality of a person's pulse directly reflects the state of his or her Heart.⁴⁴ Less known to Western medicine, the transformation of Food-Qi into the Blood occurs in the Heart Organ.

Sweat is the Body Fluid needed to balance the thickness of Blood. Thus sweat is a manifestation of the Heart balancing through the Blood Vessels. The Heart and Blood health are seen in the color of the skin. Abundant flow and vitality of the Blood produces a reddish glow, while deficiency and weakness gives a person a pale and lack luster complexion.

A common phrase connecting the Heart and our ability to communicate clearly states simply "the Heart opens to the tongue."⁴⁵ Fluidity of speech and expressions of laughter are manifestations of the Mind/Shen and its smooth union in the Blood. This relationship also indicates our ease of communication, natural use of eye contact, timing and propriety. The emotionality of the Heart Organ is more than merely reactive expressions, but also sensitive attentiveness to unique situations and emotional stability. As a Shao Yin meridian, the Heart maintains conscious awareness while the Kidney maintains willpower for growth.

Together the Zhi of the Kidneys and Shen of the Heart, animate the Shao Yin Temperament. This personality is a counter balance to the Shao Yang person. Rather than the outward expressiveness of Triple Warmer, Shao Yin has a natural introverted sensitivity. The Heart, as the anchor of Shen and governor of Blood Vessels, focuses within the being to maintain balance between the outside and inside. In this pair, Zhi is a subtle undercurrent of awareness that tracks events of the past, and where they may lead in the future. This emphasis on internal awareness gives Shao Yin people a calculating nature.

There is a natural caution to a Shao Yin person. The Kidneys govern the adrenal system, so with all Water Type people fear is an integral part of the physiology. Dr. Requena considers the Shao Yin Temperament to be Sentimental. He makes note that previous experiences are the basis of their "emotional memory," and the intellect is under-emphasized. Physically the body of a Shao Yin person is notably frail. "They do not like to act; action is costly. But they are conscientious and scrupulous, and this is sometimes their only impetus for pursuing a particular endeavor."⁴⁶

There is an over developed sensitivity to human interactions, as is characteristic of Fire Type people. A Shao Yin person is more sensitive than most people around them but is not aware of this. Inevitably situations will arise where another person displays total lack of awareness toward a Shao Yin person's sensitivity. This will substantiate the fear of exposure. This Temperament has a tendency to be motivated by envy and distain, which eventually plays havoc on the Shao Yin person's conscience.

When a Shao Yin person attains equilibrium, he or she may transform from a story of melancholy and defeat to one of optimism.⁴⁷ Dr. Requena strongly advises brisk walks, sports and wearing fewer layers of clothing while in the out of doors. He encourages Shao Yin people to observe the natural world to gain perspective on what is real in life.⁴⁸

BLADDER ORGAN FUNCTION:

Zu-tai-yang pang-guang-jing, Leg Greater Yang

The Bladder Organ is the lowest Organ in the Lower Warmer. In marked contrast with the myriad, deeply Yin functions of the Kidneys, the Bladder has few Yang functions. Short-term storage and transportation of fluid waste directly out of the body are the primary Bladder Organ functions. To

perform these functions, the Bladder interacts with the Kidney Organ and Small Intestine bowels. Qi needed to transport fluid comes from the Kidneys.⁴⁹ The Small Intestine assists the Bladder in clearing the “dirty” and “clean” fluids from the Lower Warmer.⁵⁰

“The Bladder Channel connects with the brain and helps integrate intelligence with the functions of the nervous system,”⁵¹ thus weak Bladder function causes reduced nervous system function. Due to the connection between Bladder and Zhi, overwork and excessive sexual activity can perpetuate disharmonies.⁵² Manifestations include weak mental focus, obsessive thinking and restlessness. Conversely, a hyperactive Bladder function produces extreme energetic output, such as convulsions and psychosis.

To elaborate on the psychological and emotional qualities of the Bladder, a Water Type person tends to be comfortable alone in part because the Water Organs connect with the hearing, more specifically, the inner ear. A person who has dominant Bladder meridian constitution is therefore, a listener. To a certain degree the listening is to the outside world for input and answers, but for the most part, this person is listening to his or her inner guidance. Emotionally, the adrenal glands and spinal cord dictate the mood of Bladder dominant people. Both of these physical regions are highly affected by fear, thus we see emotional expression motivated by self-protection and conservation of personal resources.

According to Requena, a Tai Yang person with Water dominance can be picked-out physically. The length and upright bearing of the spine are main clues. “This carriage of the head, its elegance, its thoroughbred air, makes Tai Yang persons appear to have a high opinion of themselves.”⁵³ The general demeanor is of superiority, as Tai Yang people have strong focus on their objectives and intend to achieve them. Key words “force, self-determination, and arduous effort”⁵⁴ describe the Bladder meridian contribution to the Tai Yang personality.

SMALL INTESTINE ORGAN FUNCTION:

Shou-tai-yang xiao-chang-jing, Arm Greater Yang

The Small Intestine Organ is physically located in the Lower Warmer and is the Yang partner of the Heart Organ. This Organ relationship is physically distant, similar to the relationship between the Lung and Large Intestine. The Heart and Small Intestine relate through Body Fluids, the Mind, and the dispersion of Heat. The primary function of the Small Intestine is to support the digestive process, which it does through separating the nutritive, pure fluids from the impure fluids and solid waste. The clean fluids extracted by the Small Intestine go to the Spleen to be further distributed. The unusable portion of the fluids are moved to the Bladder Organ, the unusable solid matter passes on to the Large Intestine.

The mental function is similar to the digestive function. The Small Intestine separates usable ideas from unusable ones, or from the perspective of the individual, the true from the untrue. The useable, true thoughts are processed through the Gall Bladder.⁵⁵ In this way the Small Intestine Organ is an active, emotional buffer for the Heart, supporting the Mind by discerning which experiences need to be processed and which need to be released as metaphorical waste.

Hypersensitivity is a quality of imbalanced Small Intestine energy, and is part of the description of Tai Yang characteristics. It is easy to understand how a person with Small Intestine dominance might become easily inflamed under too much pressure or in chaotic situations. The act of discernment occurs on all levels. In unfamiliar situations this person may feel like he or she survived a walk through a minefield. Tension in the shoulders and neck (the Small Intestine meridian pathway) are characteristic of Tai Yang disorder, and explains Requena’s comment that “the person is obliged to turn their entire body to look to the right or left.”⁵⁶

The constant discernment process is the Small Intestine contribution to the Tai Yang personality. This Temperament is known as Passionate due to the strength of will and emotional focus coming

together. As an extension of the Water Type person who is easily damaged by authority figures, the Tai Yang person actively rebels against authority. This person works hard to control aggressive tendencies, yet ironically succeeds in becoming a dominant authority figure him or her self. When confronted a Tai Yang person withdraws, internalizes and eventually develops not only a strong feeling of being misunderstood, but jealousy and inability to recognize his or her wrong doings.

Like the Shao Yin pairing of Yin partner meridians, Tai Yang is able to recall emotional experiences, and unlike Shao Yin, is known to have a sturdy intellectual memory. This person has great capacity for work, and a singular focus on achieving his or her goals. “The work undertaken, to which they are prepared to dedicate themselves life-long, is one for which they will sacrifice everything to achieve perfect realization.”⁵⁷ In the Tai Yang Temperament, determination and self-sacrifice are taken as given. Requena advises this personality to consider that other people do not share these qualities, and are less ambitious. “You would do well to learn from others some modesty, humility, patience.”⁵⁸

Notes:

1. Maciocia, p. 90.
2. *ibid*, p. 113.
3. “This is the most gourmand of the temperaments.” Requena, p. 116.
4. Requena, p. 118.
5. Requena, p. 137.
6. Gathering Qi is the resource from outside our bodies that supports the correct function of everything within our bodies. Gathering Qi descends to and roots in the Gate of Vitality between the Kidneys. The Gate of Vitality returns heat upward into the chest, where Defensive Qi is then disperses through the body. Maciocia, p. 83 – 4.
7. “The Animal Soul is the animation, emotional reactivity, and pressing urges of human life. It can be erratic and untamed. It lacks the deliberation of reason. Without a healthy Animal Soul (Po) a person can be either emotionless or hysterical.” Kaptchuk, p. 91.
8. Pitchford, p. 347 - 8.
9. *Healing With Whole Foods* and *The Web that Has No Weaver* both name excessive sensitivity to cold as the main disturbance pattern of the Lungs. *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine* states that the Lungs are the “first organ to be affected by exterior pathogenic factors such as Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat.” Maciocia, p. 231.
10. Requena, p. 121.
11. Requena, p. 138.
12. Lundberg, p. 86
13. Maciocia, p. 113
14. Requena, p. 110 – 112.
15. Requena, p. 112. As is characteristic of Earth Type people, the Yang Ming Earth person may struggle with weight due to his or her characteristic carefree nature.
16. Requena, p. 136.
17. In the section *The Organs of the Body*, Kaptchuk follows food through the bowels, using characteristic Chinese medicine description to note how our bodies reclaim all the usable substance that we ingest and excretes the unusable, “turbid parts.” p. 96.
18. “Worry depletes Lung-Qi which fails to descend and to help the Large Intestine in its functions. This results in stagnation of Qi in the Large Intestine, with ensuing symptoms of spastic abdominal pain and constipation with bitty stools alternating with diarrhoea.” Maciocia, p. 277.
19. Lundberg advises shiatsu students to treat Large Intestine from elbow to nose for proximal physical symptoms and treat the meridian from elbow to index finger for physical congestion in the colon. p. 83.
20. Requena, p. 114.
21. Requena, p. 137.
22. Maciocia, p. 77 - 81.
23. Kaptchuk, p. 82.
24. My three Chinese medicine resources all source the *Nei Jing*. It is noted at the Pericardium section of each text that the classic literature refers to 5 Yin and 6 Yang Organs, the Pericardium as the Heart’s protector. “However, the theory of the twelve Channels eventually demanded a symmetry that led to the pairing of the Pericardium with the Triple Burner Channel.” Lundberg, p. 128.
25. Kaptchuk, p. 90.
26. Maciocia, p. 75.
27. Lundberg, p. 128.
28. *ibid*.

29. Requena, p. 98.
30. Requena, p. 101.
31. Requena, p. 134.
32. Kaptchuk, p. 96.
33. Maciocia follows a centuries-old debate in ancient texts describing the Kidneys and their relationship with the Gate of Vitality, a commonly known physical location between the Kidneys and below the navel. This is also the place where Original Qi dwells. As it is commonly understood that the Triple Warmer conducts Original Qi through all the Organs, there is validity in the premise that the Gate of Vitality belongs to the Triple Warmer. Maciocia, p. 118.
34. Lundberg, p. 129.
35. Maciocia, p. 116.
36. “Any disruption of the Liver’s flowing and spreading activity will affect the Gall Bladder’s bile secretion. Disharmonies of the Gall Bladder will affect the Liver, possibly resulting in such symptoms as vomiting bitter fluid.” Kaptchuk, p. 95.
37. Maciocia, p. 116 - 7.
38. Kaptchuk, p. 78.
39. Requena, p. 94.
40. Requena, p. 134.
41. Maciocia, p. 97.
42. “The Fire of the Heart descends to the Kidneys to warm them; the Water of the Kidneys rises to the Heart to nourish its Yin aspect. The descending of the Fire of the Heart and ascending of the Water of the Kidneys keeps the fundamental balance between Fire and Water, Yang and Yin, Above and Below. There is a direct connection between Heart and Kidneys and the two have to communicate with each other and be harmonized.” Maciocia, p. 60.
43. Kaptchuk, p. 62.
44. The Heart’s relationship with Blood is a secondary indicator of constitutional strength. The quality of Kidney and Essence relationship is the primary indication of a person’s constitution. Maciocia, p. 71 - 2.
45. Dr. Maciocia enumerates these other manifestations of the Heart in his chapter *The Functions of the Heart*. Maciocia, p. 71 - 5.
46. Requena, p. 106.
47. Requena, p. 107 – 8.
48. Requena, p. 136.
49. Maciocia, p. 287.
50. Maciocia, p. 117.
51. Lundberg, p. 108.
52. Lundberg, p. 108 – 10.
53. Requena, p. 102.
54. Kaptchuk, p. 62.
55. In *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, Maciocia notes this as a main link between the Heart and the Small Intestine Organs. Otherwise the relationship is distant, and “can sometimes be observed in certain pathological situations when Heart-Fire can be transmitted to the Small Intestine, with such manifestations as thirst, bitter taste, tongue ulcers and blood in the urine.” p. 114 – 5.
56. Requena, p. 102.
57. Requena, p. 101 – 5.
58. Requena, p. 135.

Conclusion

It has been my sincere intention to satisfy the assignment of describing how Six Divisions of Yin and Yang may be an effective way to describe behavioral energy patterns. In my understanding of scholarship, it is not sufficient to use a single source or opinion to satisfy any advanced level assignment, thus I have ventured to connect as many factors of the Chinese medicine model to the modern psychological patterns of Eight Temperaments as possible. Through the process of research for this writing I have discovered two conclusions beyond the original assignment; one, the interdependence of life as an avenue for assessment, and two, the prototype human matrix.

Anyone who studies the nature of health quickly comes upon the awareness of health as interdependence. All aspects of the human experience relate in some way to all other aspects. In the current example, we see that Qi creates and forms life in a natural way, yet has direct relationship with a state in which Qi does not create, but inhibits life, which is also in its nature. Similarly, each of the Vital

Substances and Organs has a unique relationship with Qi in healthy and diseased states, and with each other. In the current research, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that this ancient study of health includes multiple perspectives of the unique circumstances under which a disorder originates, and that the act of supporting the body in its return to health is equally variable. For example, treatments using either Body Fluids or Eight Principles do not “cancel out” one another, nor do they negate a completely different treatment theory, such as the Five Elements patterns. Simply put, they each have their own indications of effectiveness and correct application.

Auxiliary to this expanded dimension of treatment methods, and prerequisite to effective application of any one of them, is the thorough understanding of how each system works within the whole. With this said, a complete mastery of the most esoteric, subtle aspect of health is not necessary to effect positive change in a disease. So even if a practitioner does not have the ability to detect imbalances in a subtle system, such as Extraordinary Vessels, that practitioner can still give effective treatment on a level that he or she has a complete understanding, such as the regular Twelve Meridians.

Another conclusion I made in this research is that we all relate with every Type because we all contain every part of the human matrix. That is how we can know all Types. In Chinese medicine, the most basic form of assessment is to visually sum up the Yin-Yang balance of a person’s physical form (using well-known guidelines of determination) and that person’s Elemental Constitution. Only when a practitioner has impartially acknowledged his or her own Yin-Yang balance and Elemental Constitution (or whatever model of Typing is at hand) can that practitioner effectively use this knowledge to help another person. It is through curiosity about the self and the study of ones self as a thread in the tapestry of humanity that a practitioner becomes effective.

As a final note, in reality we cannot change our essence, our genetic code. These are the specific qualities that come with us into life. Everyone is a blend of more than one dominant or recessive factor. Through the millennia of human study all systems of Typing have a concept of “wing” or secondary types, some view the dominant Type as a wheel around which all other aspects revolve, acknowledging the matrix of humanity within all people. Bienfeld and Korngold take great pains in their book to recognize both “soma and psych” as two distinct inner hubs of our being, theorizing that we have a physiological type and a psychological type, which are very likely different Elemental Phases*. In this respect, it is advised that anyone who would look at humanity in terms of Six Divisions Temperaments return to primary sources. Learn all the aspects and reasons for these Temperaments thoroughly. And take time to study yourself within this system. Know as much as possible about the complete system before attempting to apply that knowledge to another person, especially in a clinical or therapeutic setting.

*From Chapter Seven, *Who Am I: Five-Phase Archetypes*.

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