

## **A Common Theory of Oriental Medicine**

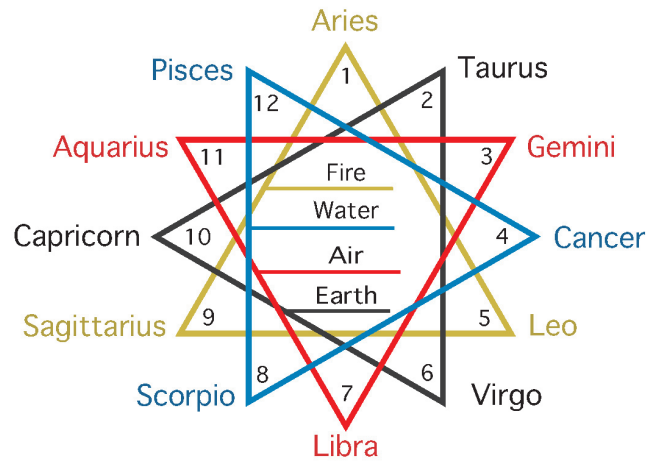
### **An Integral Model for the System of Acupuncture Channels**

#### **Part 4**

#### **12 meridians and 4 Matters of the Body**

The fundamental idea of ancient natural philosophy about proto-substances or basic elements of nature – Air, Fire, Water and Earth – constitutes the core of the Greek, Arabic and Iranian medical systems. Each of these four elements is described as having certain qualities: Air is hot and damp, Fire is hot and dry, Water is cold and damp, and Earth is cold and dry. According to the Greek-Iranian-Arabic medical school, the human body also contains four different matters matching the four elements: Blood is by nature similar to Air (hot and damp), Safra (*yellow bile*) is similar to Fire, Lymph is similar to Water, and Savda (*black bile*) – is similar to Earth. Predominance of any of the four matters predetermines human's personality. This principle adopted by the European medicine persisted throughout the Middle Age and into the Renaissance. According to it, sanguines (Sanguis – Blood) are personalities with dominating blood qualities (heat and dampness), choleric (Kholê – Bile) are personalities with dominating Safra, phlegmatics (Phlegma) are the ones with dominating lymph, and melancholics (Melancholia – Black Bile) are the ones with dominating Savda [5]. The differences in personalities were taken into account in the treatment of patients.

In the East, astrology was an accepted scientific discipline from the ancient times, the concept of proto substances (elements) being a part of it. In the zodiac circle each of the four elements is presented as a triangle (trigon) (Fig. 19), which includes 3 zodiac signs. It determines the character of a person born under particular zodiac sign, as well as the possible pathologies in their body, and imbalances in their energy channels.



**Fig. 19. The Band of Zodiac**

The Table 7 shows zodiac signs correspondences to the basic meridians.

**Table 7. Relevance of Zodiac signs to 12 meridians.**

Zodiac sign		Variations											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Aries	Lu	LI	ST	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv
2	Taurus	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu
3	Gemini	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI
4	Cancer	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St
5	Leo	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp
6	Virgo	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT
7	Libra	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI
8	Scorpio	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl
9	Sagittarius	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki
10	Capricorn	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P
11	Aquarius	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH
12	Pisces	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB

Trigon of Fire consists of Aries, Leo and Sagittarius, that is 1,5 and 9 signs of Zodiac (Fig.19). Let's investigate the relevance of Fire to 12 main meridians (Table 8).

**Table 8. Relevance Variations of Fire and 12 meridians.**

FIRE	Variations											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Aries	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv
Leo	HT	SI	Bl	Ki	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp
Sagittarius	P	TH	GB	Liv	Lu	LI	St	Sp	HT	SI	Bl	Ki

Let's pay our attention to the fact that 1, 5, and 9 variations are identical, they consists of the same meridians (lungs, heart, pericardium), that have different

combinations in each variation. There are also other variations that are identical as 2, 6, 10 (LI-SI-TH); 3, 7, 11 (St-BI-GB) и 4, 8, 12 (Sp-Ki-Liv).

We can see that these combinations are relevant to functional groupings of hand and foot meridians. (Fig. 5) (Table 3).

A biological analog of Fire is *yellow bile* (safra) [5]. Therefore, *yellow bile* is relevant to one of these 4 groups : 3 hand yin (Lu - Ht - P), 3 hand yang (LI - SI - TH), 3 foot yin (Liv -Sp - Ki) or 3 foot yang (GB - St - BI) meridians. We same picture can be seen for trigons of Water, Earth and Air (Table 9).

**Table 9. Astrological and biological aspects of the four proto substances**

Element	Matter of the body	Humour	Grouping of meridians			
			Variations			
			1	2	3	4
FIRE	<b>Yellow Bile</b> (Safra)	Choleric	Large intestine Small intestine Three heaters <b>SI - LI - TH</b>	Liver Spleen Kidney <b>Liv - Sp - Ki</b>	Lungs Heart Pericardium <b>Lu - HT - P</b>	Gall bladder Stomach Bladder <b>GB - St - BI</b>
WATER	<b>Lymph</b>	Phlegmatic	Gall bladder Stomach Bladder <b>GB - St - BI</b>	Lungs Heart Pericardium <b>Lu - HT - P</b>	Large intestine Small intestine Three heaters <b>SI - LI - TH</b>	Liver Spleen Kidney <b>Liv - Sp - Ki</b>
EARTH	<b>Black Bile</b> (Savda)	Melancholic	Liver Spleen Kidney <b>Liv - Sp - Ki</b>	Large intestine Small intestine Three heaters <b>SI - LI - TH</b>	Gall bladder Stomach Bladder <b>GB - St - BI</b>	Lungs Heart Pericardium <b>Lu - HT - P</b>
AIR	<b>Blood</b>	Sanguine	Lungs Heart Pericardium <b>Lu - HT - P</b>	Gall bladder Stomach Bladder <b>GB - St - BI</b>	Liver Spleen Kidney <b>Liv - Sp - Ki</b>	Large intestine Small intestine Three heaters <b>SI - LI - TH</b>

Therefore, '4 matters of the body' represent the links between hand and foot meridians.