



# Classical face diagnosis

## Mien Shiang 面相





# The face as a diagnostic tool



SW5:

*The acupuncturist who is good at locating and determining imbalances notices the patient's facial colour and takes his pulse and has thereby taken the first steps to determine whether it is a yin or a yang imbalance, a cloudy or a clear qi - imbalance (the clear qi, yang, is found in the upper part of the body, the cloudy, yin, in the lower part of the body).*

*At the same time, he examines which of the internal organs are affected (here the pulse diagnosis will connect with the examination of the five facial colours – green, red, yellow, white, black, which are associated with each organ). He notices the patient's way of moving and his breathing and listens to the patient's voice to identify the patient's imbalance.*

LSJ37:

*Qi Bo: 'Examine whether the five sense organs are able to perform their tasks and can distinguish between colours and smells, and whether there is a wide area on the forehead between the eyebrows. Then examine the nose. If the nose is broad and large, the cheeks protrude on both sides of it, the jaws are high and strong, the ears are large, neat and regular, then all these forms stand as high borders protecting the central area of the face, and if the colours of the face at the same time are normal and correspond to the colours of the seasons, and if the whole face is balanced and broad, then it shows that this person can live to the end of his measured life and live to be a hundred years old.'*





# The 5 zang organs and their facial and body reflection

SW9:

*The heart is the base of life and the place where wisdom and mind (Shen) is located. It's external condition shows on the face, and internally to fill the blood into the vessels.*

SW10:

*The functions of heart and blood vessels are connected and the condition is reflected on the face. Heart is controlled by kidneys*

*The functions of the lungs are connected to the skin and the condition is reflected in soft bodyhair. Lungs are controlled by heart*

*The functions of the liver are connected to tendons and the condition is reflected in the nails. Liver is controlled by the lungs*

*The functions of the spleen are connected to muscles and the condition is reflected in the lips. Spleen is controlled by the liver*

*The functions of the kidneys are connected to the bones and the condition is reflected in the hair. Kidney is controlled by spleen*



# The 5 facial colours 五色 LSJ49

- *The area around the port of the ear: The shield.*
- *The area on the side by the cheeks and cheekbones: the enclosure.*
- *The area between the eyebrows: The watch tower*
- *The area in the middle of the forehead: the court.*

*These areas must be wide, so that you can see them from a distance of ten paces.*





# The 5 facial colours

SW17:

*A healthy red skin colour should be like cinnabar covered with white, not like ochre.*



*A healthy, white skin colour should be like a goose's feathers, not white like salt*



*A healthy green skin colour should be like moist green jade, not blue-green*



*A healthy, yellow skin colour should be blooming yellow and not withered yellow.*



*A healthy black skin colour should be like dark varnish, not like soot.*

SW19: If the facial colours are shiny the imbalance is easy to restore. When complexions are faded without a healthy glow of moisture, the imbalance is not easily remedied.



# The 5 facial colours

SW39:

*Yellow and red colour is a sign of heat, white is a sign of cold, green-blue and black colour is a sign of pain.*

## **Colours in the face (SW17)**

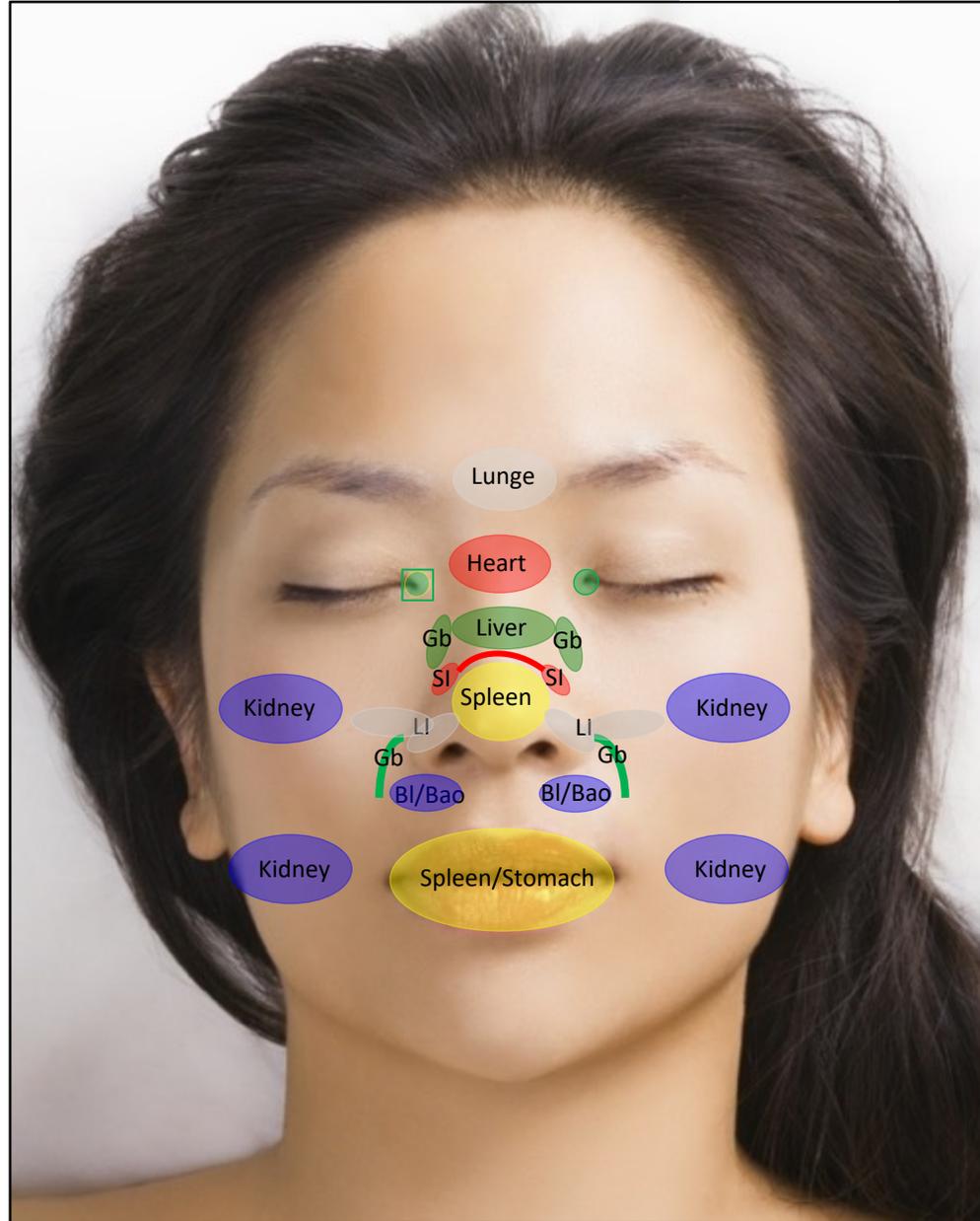
1. Green is a sign of liver-related problems, painful conditions or cold syndrome.
2. Red is a sign of excess or deficiency heat from Heart, Liver or Stomach.
3. Yellow and orange are signs of Stomach or Spleen syndromes.
4. White is a sign of Lung deficiency and Yang- or Blood deficiency.
5. Black is a sign of inner cold, kidney yang deficiency or pain





# The 5 facial colours 五色 LSJ49

Facial analysis and the internal organs





# Facial relationships

## **Hair**

- Kidneys control hair
- Lungs control shine of hair
- Spleen controls dandruff

## **Temples**

- Corresponds to *San Jiao* and Gb
- Receding hairline indicates Gb imbalance
- Dry red forehead indicates Bladder imbalance

## **Lower forehead and between the eyebrows**

- Many horizontal lines - Spleen imbalance
- One deep horizontal line - Small Intestine imbalance

## **Between eyebrows**

- Two vertical lines indicate Liver imbalance
- One vertical line (also known as "suspending needle") indicates Stomach imbalance
- One horizontal line at bridge of nose indicates Heart imbalance



# Facial relationships

## Earth

- Eyebrows divided into three areas
- Most medial, superior to the inner canthus of the eye, corresponds to Kidney
- Outer third, medial to *San Jiao* 23, corresponds to *San Jiao*
- Middle third corresponds to Spleen

LSJ64:

*If the Shaoyang channel has plenty of blood and Qi, the eyebrows will be elegant and long*

## Eyelids

- Upper lid corresponds to Spleen
- Lower lid corresponds to Gallbladder
- Large fluid sacs in this area indicates Kidney problem

## Eye

- Pupil - Heart
- Iris - Liver
- Sclera – Lungs

Little lines lateral to outer canthus of eye

- Upper - Small Intestine
- Lower - Heart





# Facial relationships

## **Area below eye**

- Yellow and drooping - Stomach
- Red cheekbone area - Heart and Small Intestine
- Blue - Kidneys
- Puffy brown - Liver
- Huge sac - Large Intestine

## **Ears correspond to Kidneys**

- Upper part of helix - Heart
- Lower part (lobe) - Kidneys
- Middle – Spleen

## **Nose corresponds to lungs**

- Tip of nose - Spleen
- Nostrils – Large intestine - Lungs
- Nasolabial fold - Gall Bladder

## **Cheek**

- Green color/tinge - Liver
- White face - Metal
- Red face - Fire
- Yellow-grey - constipation
- Left cheek - Lungs
- Right cheek - Large Intestine



# Facial relationships

## **Mouth**

- In general controlled by Spleen
- Circle around mouth - Liver
- Corner of the mouth - Stomach, Duodenum
- Edge of lips - Spleen
- Upper lip - Liver
- Lower lip - Large Intestine

## **Directly below mouth**

- On the midline - Large Intestine
- Slightly lateral both sides – Liver

## **Chin**

Corresponds to Kidneys

Patient's left side - Blue-grey-yellow tinge - Lungs

Patient's right side - same colors – Kidneys

## **Neck area directly below the mandible**

- Left side - Large Intestine
- Right side – Stomach

## **Neck area, lateral and posterior**

Below the occiput in men:

- Pericardium / Heart

Below the occiput in women:

- Small Intestine

Side of neck

- Gall Bladder



# Colours according to Yin and Yang

The four Yin and Yang imbalances appear differently in the face (SW10):

**1. Yin deficiency** faces will show more clear colours and possibly blushing. The face will be more dry and thus lines and wrinkles will stand out more clearly.

**2. Yang deficiency** faces will show less clear colours and the face can be pale and chubby.

The dark colours of the kidneys will stand out more in contrast to the pale colour (Qi deficiency), but the skin often contains more liquid / dampness / oedema and therefore not so many lines and wrinkles show.

Yang deficiency faces have more hanging eyelids, cheeks and chins.

**3. Yin excess** faces will be characterized by rigid cold excess features and thus little facial movement.

If the cold is related to the lungs, the skin will be glowing and white.

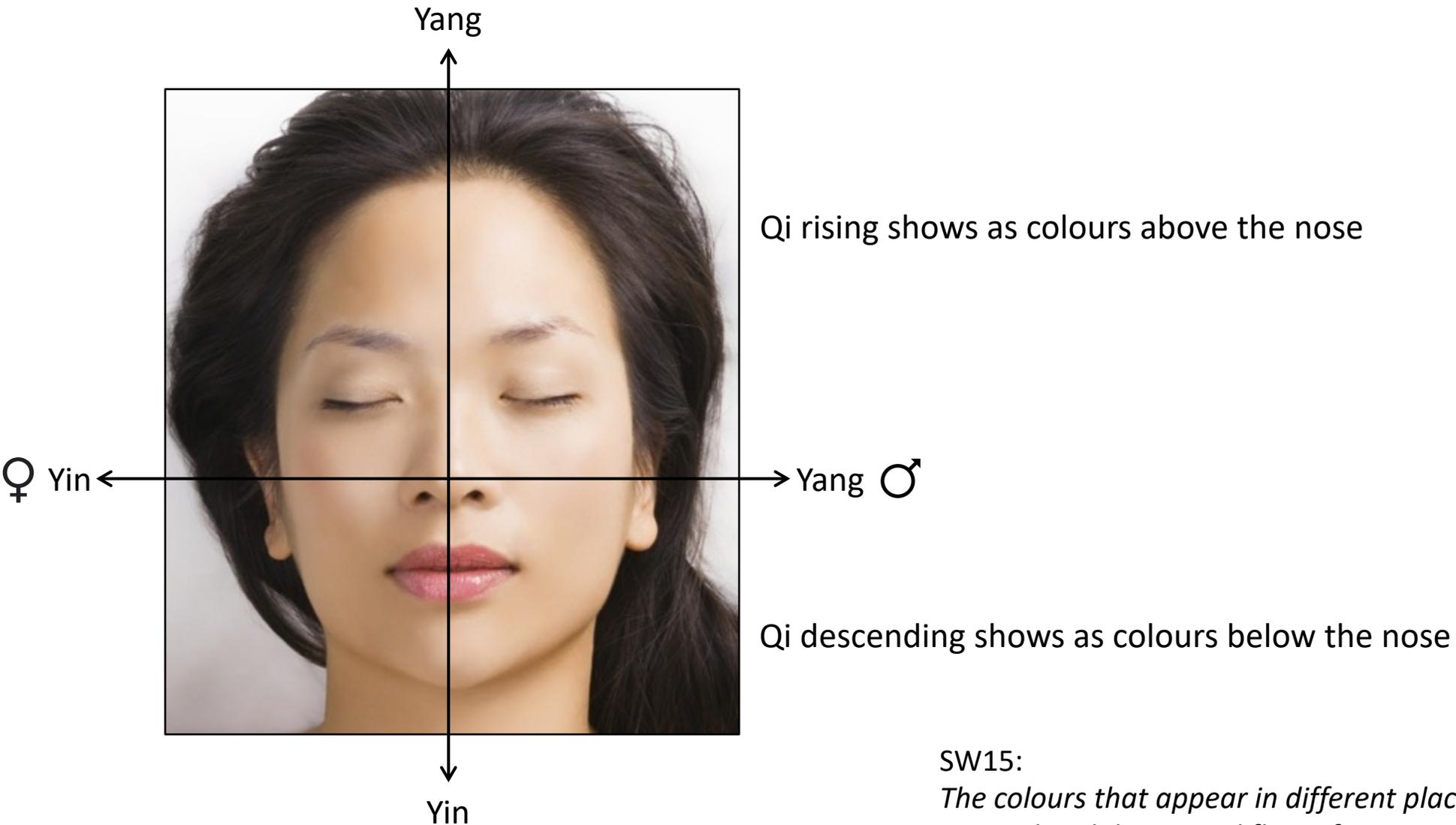
If the cold is related to the Kidneys the colours are darker and black.

**4. Yang excess** faces will give more redness and dryness in larger parts of the face than Yin deficiency. Dryness is seen around the mouth, and redness shows in both the skin and the eyes. Yang Excess is often caused by the Heart and Liver.

Combination patterns affect different areas of the face depending on the organs and phases involved resulting in different facial expressions.



# Qi directions and facial colours



SW15:

*The colours that appear in different places on the face are signs of the upward and downward flow of qi in men and women*



# Acute and chronic conditions

SW17:

*Acute conditions:*

- *When the pulse changes and the colour doesn't, it is an acute imbalance*
- *When neither the pulse nor the skin colour of the face has changed and is normal, it is an acute imbalance that has just begun*

*Chronic conditions:*

- *When the pulse has not changed and is normal, but the skin colour on the face has changed, it is a chronic imbalance.*
- *When both the pulse and the skin colour of the face change and are abnormal, it is a chronic imbalance.*

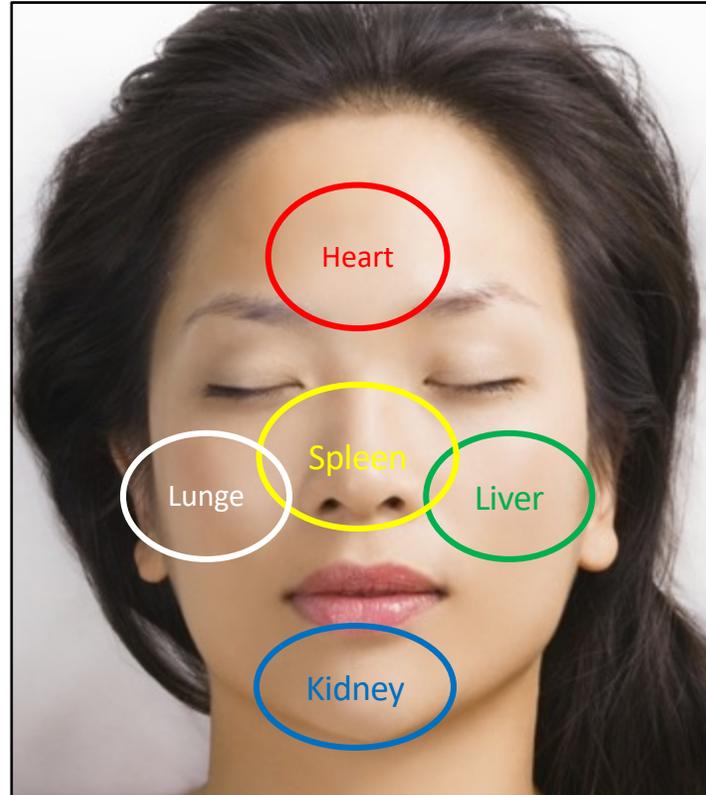




# Zang organs and heat colours on the face

Heat shows as redness (SW32):

- Liver on the left cheek.
- Heart on the forehead
- Spleen on the nose
- Lungs on the right cheek
- Kidneys on the the chin





# Facial colours and climates

## **The face and the five climates (SW42)**

Wind and heat attacking the:

- Lungs creates a white colour and the body hair withers
- Heart creates a red colour and redness on the lips and tongue and the small blood vessels stand out (spider naevi)
- Liver creates a green colour and a green/blueish colour under the eyes and the nails wither
- Spleen creates a yellow colour and a yellowish colour on the nose and spasms in the muscles
- Kidneys makes the face swollen and a black glow on the cheeks and the teeth wither

## **Exterior and interior syndromes (LSJ49)**

Exterior (yang) syndromes give more superficial and shiny colours.

Interior (yin) syndromes give more rooted and pale colours.

## **From exterior to interior**

When you notice that coloured areas in the face change character and go deeper into the skin and spots become darker, it is typically a sign of exterior problems (Yang) descending to deeper layers/meridians/organs (Yin) of the body.

During course of treatment, the opposite should be experienced.





# Looking at the condition of the 5 Zang – LSJ29 and 47



## Lunge

- Look at the width of the shoulders and depth of the area above the chest bone (Ren22)
- The lungs are strong when the muscles of the back and chest are thick.
- The lungs are weak when the muscles of the back and shoulders are thin.



## Spleen

Spleen supports and nourishes the body's defence from the food we eat

- Look at the shape of the tongue and lips and what people like to eat
- The spleen is strong when the lips are strong (literally: firm).
- The spleen is weak when the lips are large but not firm.



## Liver is the general watching the enemy

- Look at the size of the eyes to see if the liver is strong or weak
- The liver is strong when the chest and ribs have grown in a strong and mature way.
- The liver is weak when the ribs are weak.





# Looking at the condition of the 5 Zang – LSJ29 and 47



## Heart is the emperor

- Look at the collar bone on each side of St12 to see if the heart is strong or weak
- The heart is strong when the lower tip of the sternum is long.
- The heart is weak when this tip is weak, narrow and thin.
- The heart is balanced when the lower tip of the sternum points straight down without bulging.



## Kidney is an intelligence resource in control of hearing

- Look at the shape of the ears and what the hearing is like
- The kidneys are strong when the ears are strong (literally: firm).
- The kidneys are weak when the ears are thin and not firm.
- The kidneys are balanced when the ears look good and sit in front of the angle of the jaw.





# Looking at the condition of the 6 Fu – LSJ29



Stomach is the sea of water and grain

The condition of the stomach is read from the size of the bones, the thickness of the neck and the width of the chest, as their size corresponds to the Stomach's ability to draw nourishment from the five types of grain.

Large intestine

- The condition of the large intestine is read by the length of the nose.

Small intestine

- The condition of the small intestine is read by the thickness of the lips and the distance between the upper lip and the nose.

Gallbladder

- The state of the gallbladder is read by the size of the lower eyelid.

Bladder

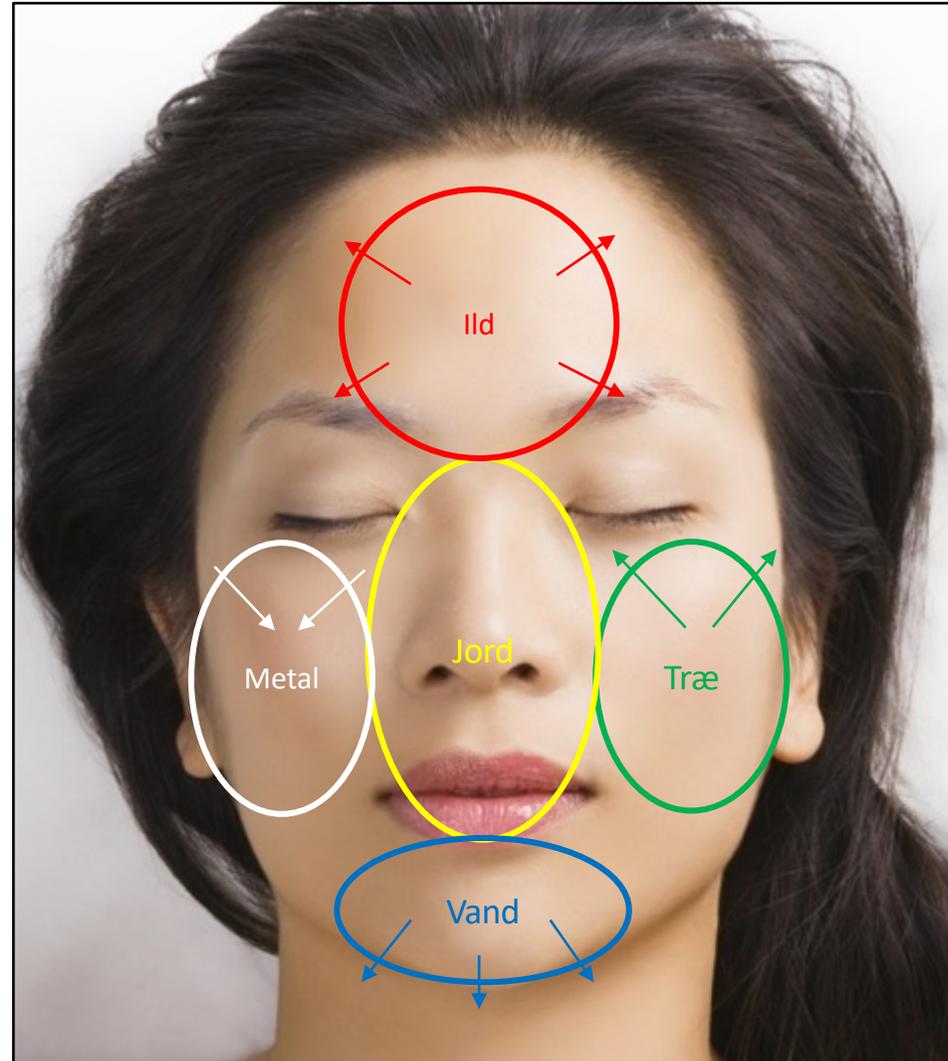
- If the nostrils turn outward, the bladder leaks urine.

SanJiao

- Whether the sanjiao works well or poorly can be read from whether the bridge of the nose is high.



# Wu xing qi directions of the face

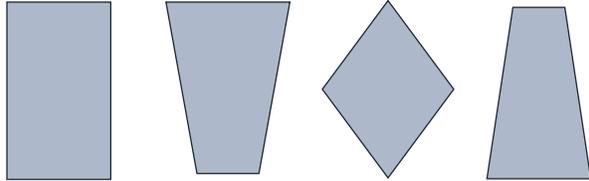




# Shape of head and Life lines



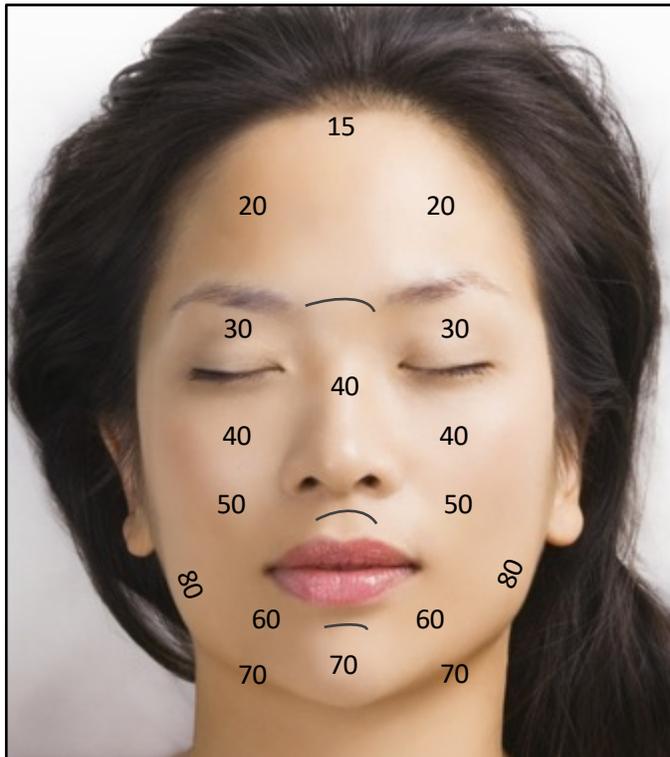
Shape of head according to age



Childhood - youth

Adulthood

Old age



The three facial zones are read from top to bottom – the upper, middle, and lower zones.

The upper zone: hairline to the top of your eyebrows. Corresponds to your health of early life.

Where signs of aging first start showing, especially if you had a difficult childhood.

The middle zone: eyebrows to your nose's tip. Corresponds to your health in the middle stages of life. A large middle zone can indicate that your middle age will be the best stage of your life.

The lower zone. Bottom of nose down and lower cheeks.

Corresponds to your health in the last stages of life. People with larger lower zones may experience true health and happiness as they advance into the later stages of life.



# The face and the five substances



## 1. Jing

- Jing is seen in the bone structure, jaws and teeth.
- Jing deficiency results in a smaller face, smaller ears, thinner bone structure and brownish and possibly porous teeth.



## 2. Blood

- Blood gives the skin of the face its healthy colour, and the facial muscles their moisture and elasticity.
- Blood brings out Shen and gives the face radiance.
- Blood deficiency results in a grey, pale or white face with dryness.
- Blood stasis results in darkened skin, blood vessels that show and dark spots in the skin.
- Blood heat results in warm, dry skin, rashes and eczema.



## 3. Body liquids

- Liquids provide moisture to the skin.
- Blocked liquids result in puffiness, saggy cheeks and eyelids.
- External wind can block the water passages of the face.





# The face and the five substances



## 4. Qi

- Qi brings life and movement to the face.
- Qi deficiency results in a pale face with less motion.
- Qi stagnation and wind results in muscle stiffness especially around the jaw, mouth and eyes.



## 5. Shen

- Shen gives radiance and glow to the face and eyes.
- When a person is sad, worried or full of grief the Shen cannot shine and the eyes look down.
- An agitated spirit makes eye contact difficult.





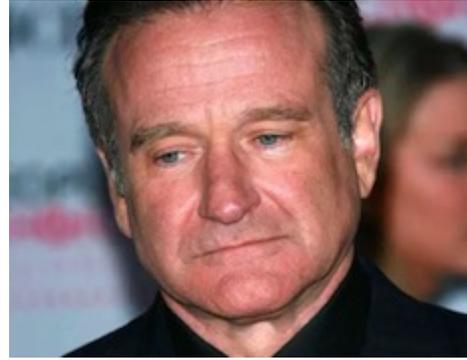
# Signs of the five phases



Phases ->	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
<b>Affected regions</b>	Neck and head. Muscles and tendons	Hands. Chest. Ribcage.	Middle of back and abdomen.	Skin, body hair. Upper back and shoulders.	Lower back. Hips, knees, brain .
<b>Body type</b>	Tendons and muscles showing.	Small narrow hips. Reddening of neck.	Round shapes. Heavy built.	Light skin. Square, flat chest.	Dark areas of skin. Strong bones. Wide hips.
<b>Facial signs</b>	Eyebrows and bone under the eyebrow. Temples.	Eyes -> shen. Sharp lines, angles and edges.	Mouth, lips, lower cheeks, upper eyelids.	Straight symmetric nose. Cheeks Cheekbones.	Hair, ears, forehead, chin.
<b>Colors</b>	Green. Greenish.	Red, light red.	Yellow, orange, brown.	White, metallic.	Blue, black.
<b>Voice</b>	Yelling, shouting, loud.	High pitch, hysterical, laughing.	Singing. Whistling. Humming.	Complaining, crying	Moaning Gasping
<b>Involuntary activity</b>	Clinched fist.	Anxious look.	Spitting.	Coughing.	Shaking.
<b>Behaviour. Mental state</b>	Emotionally well-balanced. Fantasy and real life. Good planner. Good at making decisions.	Relating to others. Happy. Behaves accordingly. Gives and receives love.	Empathetic, caring. Service minded. Focused and concentrated. Good learning abilities.	Ability to take in let go. Being yourself in the present time. Personal borders.	Strong will. Persevering Seeking results. Reflecting
<b>Deviating behaviour</b>	<b>Anger.</b> Aggression. Irritability. Envy, jealousy. GB: indecisive. Shy. Lack of initiative	<b>Joy. Shock</b> Vulnerability. Problems with closeness. Stress. Talking a lot or not at all.	<b>Worry.</b> Pensiveness. Speculation. Depression. Clinging or possessive. Caring too much or too little.	<b>Grief, sadness.</b> Negative. Baring a grudge. Cannot let go. Cries easily.	<b>Fear. Shock.</b> Fright. Anxiety; too little too much. Phobias. Hidden agendas. Passivity
<b>Basic needs</b>	Planning and structuring life to evolve. Activity. Focus. Intensity.	Love, warmth, laughter, joy. Playfulness. Lightness. Talking and communicate.	Help, support. Nutrition. Family, friends. Comfort. Material goods.	Recognition. Attention. Order. Purity. Borders. Space. Breathe. Take in - let go.	Security. Safety. Stability. Time alone. Time to reflect.



# Wu xing emotional faces



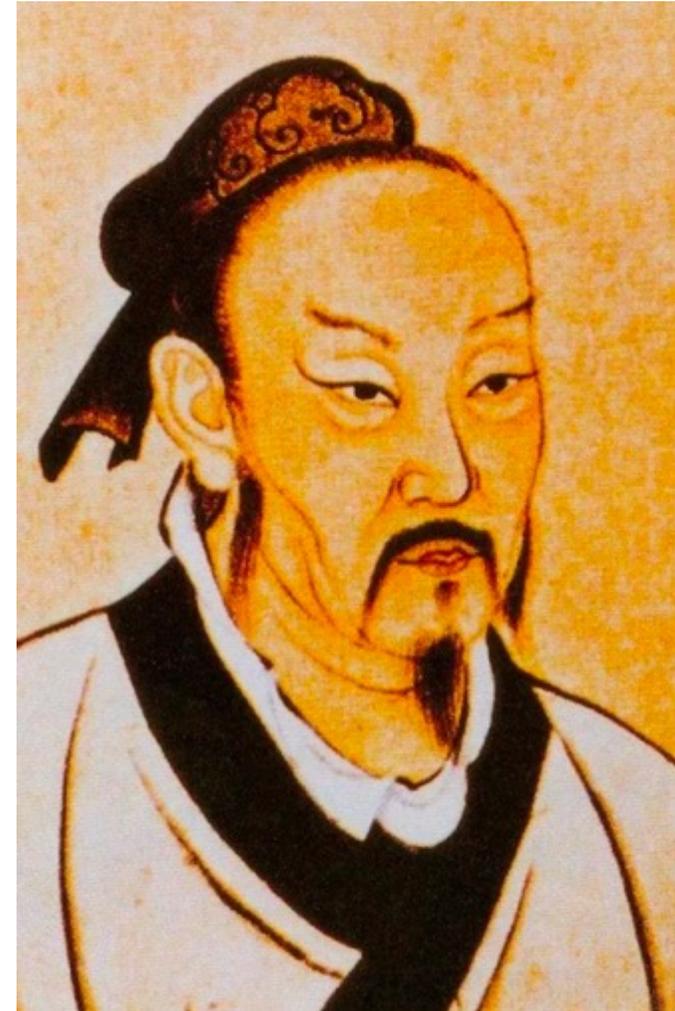


**Zhuangzi** (Zhuang Zhou, 400 BCE)

‘Who can associate in non-association and cooperate in noncooperation?’

Who can ascend to heaven and wander in the mists, bounding through infinity, forgetting themselves in life forever and ever without end?’

(6, V. Mair 1994:59)





# References for 25 personalities and facial diagnosis



1. Jia Yi Jing. The systematic classic of acupuncture and moxibustion: Huang-Fu Mi. Translated by Yang Shou-Zhong and Charles Chase
2. Liji – Book of Rites. Confucius
3. Maciocia, G. (2019) Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine, London, Churchill, Livingstone, Elsevier.
4. Nan Jing, The classic of difficulties. Translated by Paul Unschuld
5. Willmont, D. (2009) The five phases of acupuncture in the classical texts, Marshfield MA, Willmountain Press.
6. Yang Ji Zhou: Zhen jiu da cheng. The great compendium of acupuncture and moxibustion vol 1. Translated by Sabine Wilms
7. Yang Ji Zhou: Zhen jiu da cheng. The great compendium of acupuncture and moxibustion vol 5. Translated by Lorraine Wilcox
8. Yellow Emperors Inner Classic, Huang di nei jing, Essential questions - Su Wen, Spiritual Pivot - Ling Shu.
  
9. Lectures from Dr. Li jie