

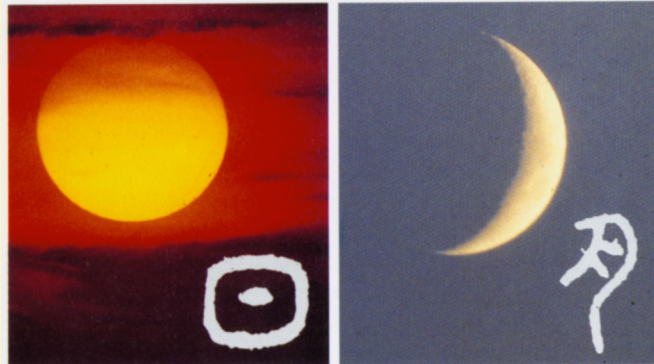


The Chinese Worldview

The Chinese Language



The pictograph for 'tree' or 'wood,' 木 mu.



Pictographic characters, like 日 jih, 'sun,' are graphic representations of physical objects.

The pictograph for 'moon,' 月 yueh.

Yi Jing (I Ching)

- ❖ The framework of the Chinese worldview comes from an ancient book *Yi Jing* (the Book of Change).
- ❖ *Yi Jing* was compiled in the early period of the Zhou dynasty (1123–221 B.C.E.).
- ❖ greatly influenced the Chinese worldview

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Taiji (Taichi)

- ❖ the primordial state in which no differentiation has occurred
- ❖ the origin from which everything becomes what it is
- ❖ the origin relative to which everything is what it is

Yinyang

- ❖ *Yinyang* is a fundamental idea in *Yi Jing*.
- ❖ The Chinese Worldview has been shaped by this idea.

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The yin-yang tai-chi symbol has since ancient times represented the Chinese view of the cosmos.

Yinyang as Binary

- ❖ *Yin* and *yang* originate from *taiji*.
- ❖ When differentiation starts, contrasts will emerge as *yin* and *yang*.
- ❖ *Yin* and *yang* form a binary system and are used to represent the contrasts that show different characteristics of reality.
- ❖ *Yin* and *yang* mutually yield (define) each other:
 Yin = non-*yang*
 Yang = non-*yin*

Symbols for Yinyang

- ❖ *Yin* is symbolized as “– –” and *yang* as “—”.
- ❖ As a binary system, *yin* and *yang* (0 and 1) can be used to represent every state of affairs in reality.

Yin — — 0

Yang — 1



Yinyang and Contrast

Yin

cold
moon
night
winter
death
water
soft
gentle
female
feminine

Yang

warm
sun
day
summer
life
fire
hard
robust
male
masculine

Yinyang and Change

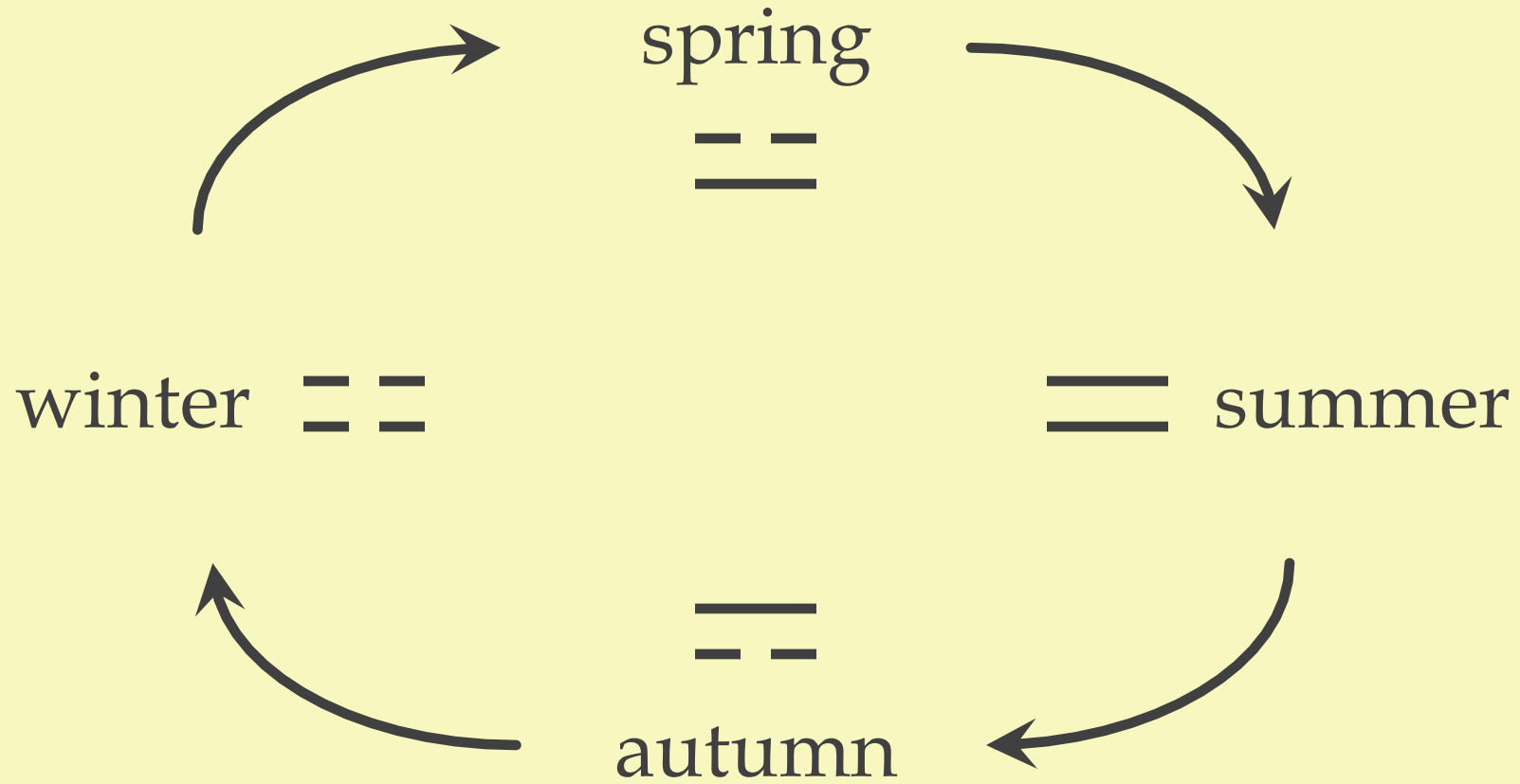
- ❖ The Chinese people comprehend things in the universe in terms of the interaction between *yin* and *yang*.
- ❖ Things in the universe are constantly changing.
- ❖ A change occurs when one state of affairs leads to another state of affairs
- ❖ Changes are understood in terms of the rise and decline of *yin* and *yang*.

Binary, Contrast and Change

- ❖ If there are only two states of affairs, we can call one state *yin* (- - or 0), and the other *yang* (— or 1).
- ❖ If there are four states of affairs, we can number them using two bits of 0 and 1:

State 0	State 1	State 2	State 3
00	01	10	11
			

The Change of Seasons



Binary, Contrast and Change

$$1 + 2 = 3$$

001 $\longrightarrow$ 011

 $\longrightarrow$ 

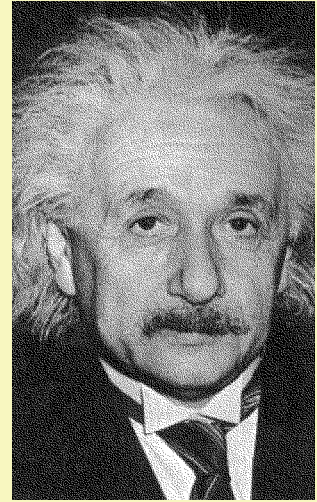
0	000
1	001
2	010
3	011
4	100
5	101
6	110
7	111

Bits and Bytes

- ❖ 8 bits = 1 bytes
- ❖ An 8 bits system can be used to represent 256 symbols.
For example, in ASCII codes, the code number of the letter 'a' is 97. In binary form, 'a' is represented as '01100001'.
- ❖ The English word 'dog' can be represented as 3 bytes of data:
011001000110111101100111

Binary and Representation

- ❖ Reality can be represented using series of 0 and 1.
- ❖ The picture at right is made up of a series of black and white dots (pixels).



Harmony

- ❖ the *dynamic* balance of *yin* and *yang* — good
- ❖ the *dynamic* unbalance of *yin* and *yang* — bad

Yinyang and Harmony

- ❖ How does *yin yang* lead to the ideal of harmony?
- ❖ *Yin* and *yang* mutually define each other. As a binary system, one cannot exist without the other.
- ❖ *Yin* and *yang* are used to represent contrasts in reality.
- ❖ *Yin* or *yang* on its own is neither good nor bad.
- ❖ The long-term dominance of one over the other is dynamic unbalance — disharmony.

The Equality between Yin and Yang

- ❖ The attribution of *yin* or *yang* does not mean that one is better, or more desirable than the other.
- ❖ It does not make sense to claim that day is better than night, or winter is better than summer.

Yin Yang, Sexes and Genders

- ❖ Women are *yin* and men are *yang*.
- ❖ Women and men are different but equal. None is better than the other, just as *yin* is not better than *yang* and *vice versa*.
- ❖ Women and men are codependent.
- ❖ Each has certain strength and weakness.
- ❖ Women and men should cooperate with each other to form harmony, and not to compete with each other.

Um, Sorry About That

WHEN THE FRENCH ROMAN CATHOLIC Church apologized last week for collaborating with the Nazis, it felt a little late. But it turns out a half-century is a rather prompt turnabout. Here's how long it has taken the church to vent its guilt:



Nearly 2,000 years. 1995: Pope regrets church's stance against women's rights



450 years. 1995: Pope asks forgiveness for Counter-Reformation stake burnings



450 years. 1993: Pope expresses guilt for church's condoning slavery

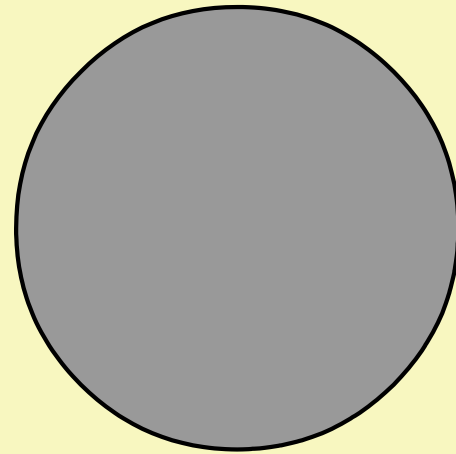
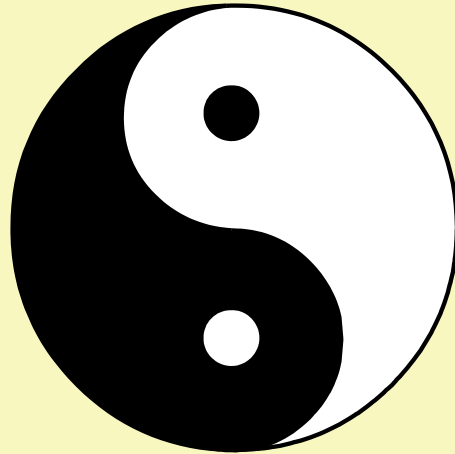
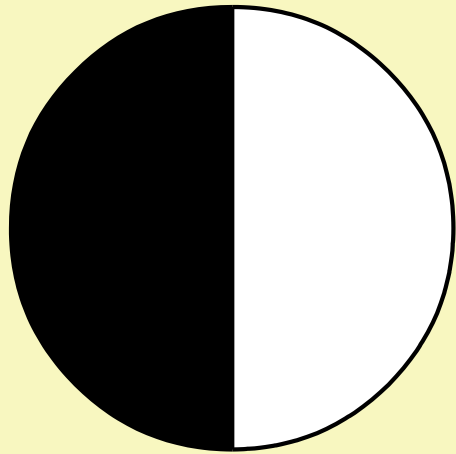


359 years. 1992: Church begs pardon for arresting Galileo Galilei in 1633



57 years. 1997: Church apologizes for its silence during 1940 Vichy regime

Yinyang Diagram



Characteristics of the Chinese Worldview

1. good/bad, virtues/vices are understood in terms of the balance/unbalance between *yin* and *yang*
 - ❖ focus on good/bad, not good/evil
 - ❖ does not postulate some supernatural being or higher power to represent good or evil
2. emphasizes harmony and cooperation, not conflict and competition

Characteristics of the Chinese Worldview (2)

3. dynamic, not static

- ❖ does not regard changes as bad or undesirable;
- ❖ leads to a progressive outlook and worldview

4. The focus is on this world and this life.

- ❖ The concern is not on the other world and afterlife such as Heaven or rebirth;
- ❖ does not regard the present life as somehow secondary to the afterlife

The Goal of the Chinese Worldview

- ❖ The goal is to achieve harmony within human society and between humans and nature so that everyone can live a good life.
- ❖ Both Confucianism and Daoism (Taoism) subscribe to this goal, but they differ in how such an ideal should be implemented.

Dao (Tao)

- ❖ *Dao* — literally means “the way”
- ❖ The way of change
- ❖ the principle that governs the rise and decline of *yin* and *yang*
- ❖ the principle that explains and “predicts” changes



Dao and Harmony

- ❖ To achieve harmony, we need to know how *yin* and *yang* interact with each other.
- ❖ *Dao* is the principle that governs how *yin* and *yang* interact.
- ❖ To know how *yin* and *yang* interact, we need to know *dao*.
- ❖ Therefore, to achieve harmony, we need to know *dao*.
- ❖ How to know *dao* is the main focus of both Confucianism and Daoism.