

THE YANG AND THE YIN

Before the beginning of day – before the earth was formed or the sky – there was Tao, the Great Original Cause. All things came from Tao and on Tao all depend.

Tao reached everywhere. Tao was smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest.

In Tao was the power to change all things.

So it came about that Tao brought into being the two great elements, the Yang and the Yin.

Just what the Yang and the Yin are it is hard to explain, for no one can see either one of them.

Whatever they are, they are very important, since from these two powers all else has come.

The Yang and the Yin are the opposites of each other.

The Yang is like man. The Yin is like woman.

The Yang is active. The Yin is at rest.

The Yang is like the day. The Yin is like the night.

The Yang is like the summer. The Yin is like the winter.

The Yang is like a blossoming flower. The Yin is like the fading leaf.

The Yang is like being born. The Yin is like dying.

The Yang is not better than the Yin. Nor is the Yin better than the Yang. They are both good.

Yang, the light, active, masculine principle, and *Yin*, the dark, passive, and feminine, in their interaction underlie and constitute the whole world of forms (“the ten thousand things”). They proceed from and together make manifest *Tao*: the source and law of being. *Tao* means “road,” or “way.” *Tao* is the way or course of nature, destiny, cosmic order; the Absolute made manifest. *Tao* is therefore also “truth,” “right conduct.” *Yang* and *Yin* together as *Tao* are depicted thus:



Tao underlies the cosmos. *Tao* inhabits every created thing.