

# Introduction to Veterinary Acupuncture

## What's Acupuncture?

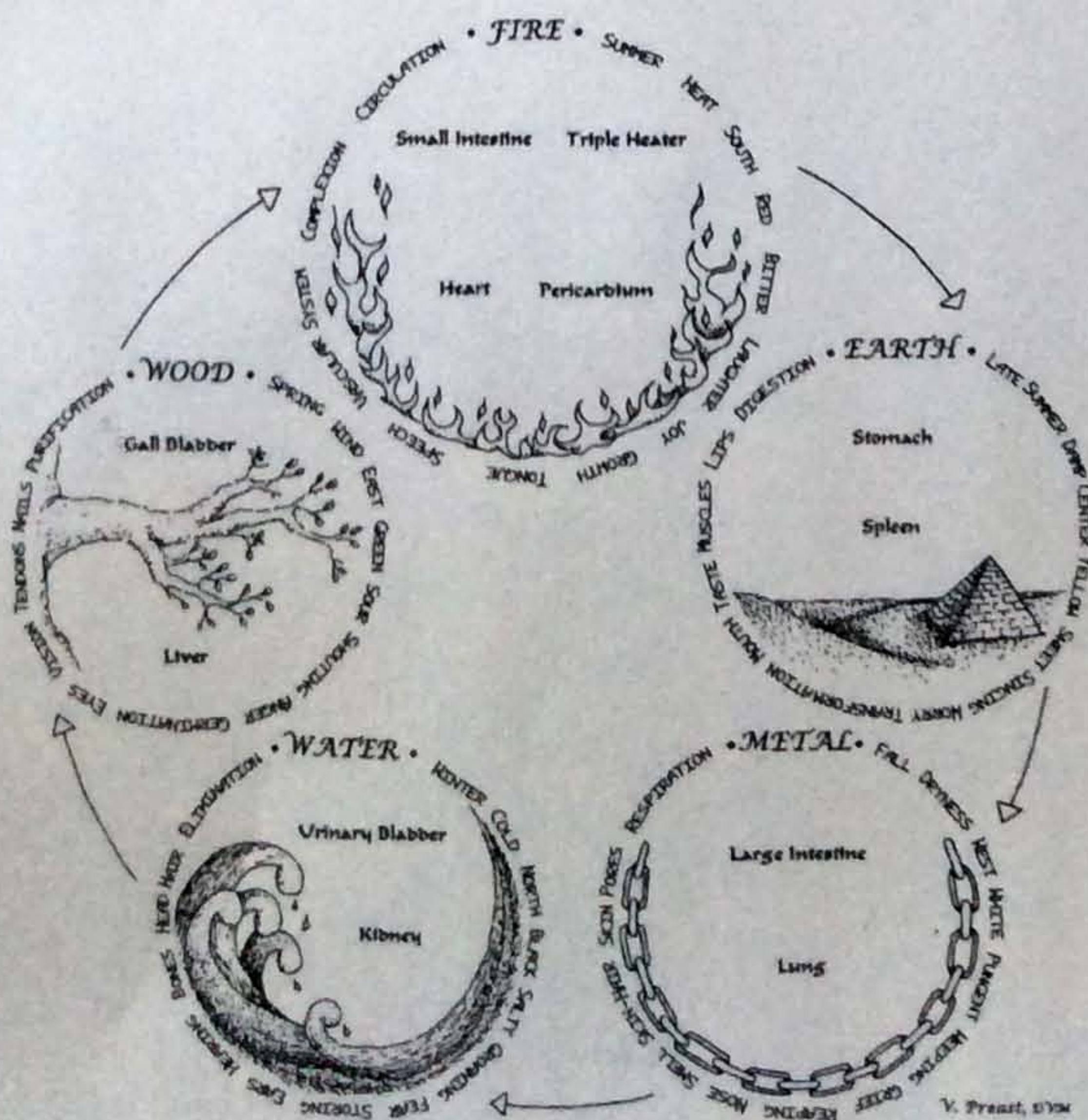
Acupuncture has been practiced in both animals and human beings for thousands of years in China. The earliest veterinary acupuncture book "*bo le zhen jing*" (*Bole's Canon of Veterinary Acupuncture*) is believed to have been written by Dr. Bo Le in *Qin-mu-gong* period (659 B.C. to 621 B.C.). Since then, acupuncture was and is still a part of the mainstream veterinary medical system in China.

Acupuncture may be defined as the stimulation of a specific point on the body with a specific method, resulting in a therapeutic homeostatic effect. The specific point on the body is called "Shu-xu" or acupuncture point (acupoint). The ancient Chinese people discovered 361 acupoints in human beings and 173 acupoints in horses.

Modern research shows that acupoints are located in the areas where there is a high density of free nerve endings, mast cells, small arterioles and lymphatic vessels. Most acupoints are motor points. A great number of studies indicate that stimulation of acupoints induces release of beta-endorphin, serotonin and other neurotransmitters. Therefore, acupuncture for pain relief is well supported by these scientific studies. As more studies are conducted, the mechanism of this ancient therapy will be better understood.

## Vital Energy or Qi

The ancient Chinese discovered that the health of the body depends on the state of *Qi* (pronounced chee). *Qi* is the life force or vital energy. There are two opposite forms of *Qi*: Yin and Yang. Physiologically, *Qi* flows throughout the body 24 hours per day, maintaining a balance of Yin and Yang. When the flow of *Qi* is interrupted by any pathological factor (such as virus or bacteria), the balance of Yin and Yang will be lost and consequently a disease may occur. Pain is interpreted as the blockage of *Qi* flow (or no free flow of *Qi*). Acupuncture stimulation resolves this blockage, freeing the flow of *Qi* and enabling the body to heal itself. Homeostasis is restored when Yin and Yang *Qi* are in balance.



## Physiological Effects induced by Acupuncture:

Numerous studies show that acupuncture stimulation can induce the following physiological effects:

- . Pain Relief; regulation of gastrointestinal motility
- . Anti-inflammatory effect; immunoregulation;
- . Hormone and reproductive regulation
- . Anti-febrile effect, enhancement of performance

## Indications:

- Musculoskeletal problems: muscle soreness, back pain, disc problems, osteoarthritis, degenerative joint disease
- Neurological disorders: seizure, laryngeal hemiplegia, facial nerve paralysis, radial nerve paralysis.
- Gastrointestinal disorders: diarrhea, gastric ulcers, colic, vomiting, constipation and impaction.
- Other chronic conditions: renal failure, congestive heart failure, anhidrosis, heaves, asthma, cough, uveitis, behavioral problems, cushing's disease, hypothyroidism, infertility, hyperthyroidism, geriatric weakness, skin problems.
- Performance Enhancement and prevention of disease