

THE BREATH OF NATURE

In a philosophical perspective, nature is imagined and described as a great ‘organism’ that lives and breathes in harmony, spontaneously.

The outward breath, represented by the character 陽 / 阳 *Yáng*, expresses the tone of manifestation, it generates form and energy, open and expansive.

The inward breath, represented by the character 陰 / 阴 *Yīn*, expresses the tone of gathering, it becomes seed and matrix, introspective and reflective.

Within the breath of nature, things, activities, and emotions take shape, life, and character, in the cyclical rhythm of the seasons, in the life of organisms, and in the qualities of the elements.

The harmonious and dynamic interrelation of these qualities generates a condition of balance, where things and phenomena do not settle into static stillness, but interact and live through exchange and relationship.

In this dimension, since antiquity, the figure of the dragon has been associated with the principle and character of 陽 / 阳 *Yáng*, a symbol of nature’s expanding breath, the expression of the vital energy of growth and renewal.

Called 青龍 / 青龙 *Qīnglóng*, the ‘Blue-Green Dragon’, as symbol of Spring and of the awakening of nature, traditionally paired with the ‘White Tiger’ 白虎 *Báihǔ*, symbol of Autumn, of germinative gathering, and of nature’s introspective and reflective phase.

In the correlative system of thought, the dragon is linked to the eastern quadrant of rising energy and to the element wood, revered and invoked as a symbol and auspice of life, vitality, and prosperity.

In philosophical tradition (道家 *Dàoji*) and in the classical aesthetics of Daoist-inspired landscape painting (山水畫 / 山水画 *Shānshuǐhuà*), it is connected to the image of the mountain (山 *Shān*), which symbolically represents another form of the 陽 / 阳 *Yáng* principle of manifestation, firm, solid, and concrete, expressing the tone of expansion and of life taking form in emergence.