

## FOUR HUMOURS (ТЕОРІЯ ЧОТИРЬОХ ТЕМПЕРАМЕНТІВ)

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The Four Humours Theory is a very old understanding of psychology, medicine, and nature. By this theory, everything in nature, including our personalities are organized around four elements: earth, air, water, and fire (fig.).



**Fig. Four elements which are base for personality types**

The four personality types are: melancholic – analytic and quiet, phlegmatic – relaxed and peaceful, choleric – short-tempered and irritable, and sanguine – optimistic and social.

Now humourism is interesting, and insofar as it's used to help distinguish personality types it's at least a little helpful. Modern personality tests often use this naming system to identify common personality types: «He's choleric», or «She has a bit of melancholy». Disconnected from the larger worldview of humourism, the personality theory is a helpful contribution that's proven useful over many years. But it survives only as a «soft science» in the untestable and conjectural regions of pop psychology.

But humourism is not just a way to categorize temperaments; it ascribes elemental causes to those personalities, and mystically identifies personality with celestial bodies and seasonal changes. It wholly misinterprets bodily organs and fluids and it just can't stand up to the rigor and testing of modern science. It's important to remember that humourism predates chemistry, forensics, virology, genetics, modern anatomy and physiology, modern medicine, psychology and psychiatry, and modern science entire.

Humourism is an ancient effort to make sense of the world and, perhaps in its time, it was the best that science could offer.