

# Glossary

## Definitions of Technical Terms of Chinese Medicine

### Agent

A pathogenic factor eliciting specific signs and symptoms. These may resemble and therefore promote orb patterns.

Agents may be divided up into exterior, interior and neutral agents

- **exterior agents** (reactions of the "as-if-type"), named after environmental (climatic) influences. If these climatic influential forces exceed the body's capacity to compensate for them, they become pathogenic (sic: "climatic excess")
  - **ventus** ("wind", "draught of air", phase Wood); signs and symptoms as if you had been exposed to a draught of air, such as running nose and eyes, reddish mucosa, swollen tonsils, spastic muscles, pain with sudden onset. From a western medical view, these signs may originate from mast cell-substance P reflexes and old reflexes of motor control as known from fish and other species.
  - **algor** ("cold", phase Water); signs and symptoms as if you had been exposed to environmental cold, such as cold skin, stiff (uncompliant) muscles, tearing and localised pain with gradual onset. From a western medical view, these signs may originate from regional deficiencies of capillary blood flow.
  - **humor** ("humidity" phase earth); signs and symptoms as if you had been exposed to environmental humidity, such as swollen limbs and tissues, feeling of heaviness, dyspnoea, generalised pain. From a western medical view, these signs may originate from pre-edema and edema.
  - **ariditas** ("dryness", phase Metal); signs and symptoms as if you had been exposed to environmental dryness, such as dry skin and mucosa. From a western medical view, these signs may originate from water saving mechanisms.
  - **aestus** ("summer heat", phase Fire); signs and symptoms as if you had been exposed to environmental summer heat, such as feeling of heat, dull sensory system, palpitations, nausea. From a western medical view, these signs may originate from mechanisms present in heat stroke.
  - **ardor** ("glow", phase Fire); signs and symptoms as if you had been exposed to "glowing charcoal touching the skin", such as red, swollen, painful, sensations worse under pressure, at times of of pulsating

nature. From a western medical view, these signs may originate from inflammatory processes.

- **inner agents**

- ira ("anger")
- voluptas ("lust")
- maeror ("grief")
- timor ("anxiety")
- pavor ("shock")
- sollicitudo ("worriedness")
- cogitation ("thinking")

- **neutral agents**

- overwork
- malnutrition
- trauma
- infections etc.

**Conduit**

"Connection of a group of points with effect on the clinical signs of an orb, believed to serve as a conduit for the flow of qi and xue".

**Constitution**

A tendency to express the signs of one orb predominantly so that they show in the physical phenotype.

**Directional norm conventions**

Yin, yang and the phases are *directional norm conventions*.

**Emotion**

E-motio = vectorial inner motion/movement out of the balanced emotional state of the center (earth).

**Energy**

En(within) -ergy (work): **Energy is the capacity to exert work** (i.e. vegetative function).

**Guiding criteria**

Main interpretation – matrix of symptoms in TCM, based on four regulatory models of physiology.

- 1) **repletion** ("fullness") / **depletion** ("emptiness"): believed to describe the content of qi of the body by terms such as qi, orbs, and phases. From a western medical view: teaching of the interpretation of clinical signs predominantly originated from the neuro-vegetative system.
- 2) **Calor** ("heat") / **algor** ("cold"): believed to describe the activity of xue. From a western medical view: teaching of the interpretation of clinical signs predominantly originated from the humoro-vegetative system. These signs include the effect of microcirculation within the disease on a systemic and regional level.
- 3) **Extima** ("exterior")/**intima** ("interior"): believed to describe the course of a disease caused by an exterior agent invading the body. Most important model within TCM is the model of six stages of an algor – induced disease (Shang Han Lun). From a western medical view: teaching of the interpretation of clinical signs predominantly induced by neuro-immunological mechanisms.
- 4) **yin/yang** – structural deficiency (yin) or primary dysregulation (yang): believed to distinguish the origin of signs and symptoms. In diseases described by the Guiding Criterion yin, symptoms are due to a deficiency of the functional tissue ("body substance", yin). In yang-diseases, however, symptoms are due primarily to dysregulation described by the first three Guiding Criteria.

#### **Heteropathy** (Latin for "running askew")

in contrast to orthopathy ("running straight")

- a) a *pathological state* of dysregulation
- b) the power which causes this pathological state of dysregulation (e.g. an agent)

#### **Orthopathy** (Latin for "running straight") is

- a) the power to re-establish the well-regulated state and
- b) the well-regulated state as such

#### **Pathogenesis**

Four kinds of mechanisms may cause disease/dysregulation in TCM on a dogmatic level:

- 1) excess of an agent
- 2) transitional problems from one phase to the next
- 3) imbalance of antagonists
- 4) yin deficiency

#### **Perfection**

Physical (structural) expression of the functional competence of an orb. Phenotypical appearance of functions, for example:

Hepatic orb – muscles and tendons

Cardiac orb – conduits and vessels

Lienal orb– flesh and lips  
Pulmonary orb– skin and hair of the skin  
Renal orb – bones, marrow

### Phases

- part of a circular process
- cybernetic (regulatory) terms
- referring to man: vegetative functional tendencies
- the manifestations are called orbs (groups of diagnostically relevant signs)

### Orb

- a) Clinical manifestation of a phase, named after a region of the body (body island)
- b) A group of *diagnostically relevant signs* indicating the *functional state of a body island* (body region),
- c) which correlates with the *functional properties of a conduit*.

### ("Chinese Trinity")

### Orthopathy (Latin for "running straight")

(see also heteropathy)

- a) the state of eu-regulation
- b) the capacity to maintain or restore the state of eu-regulation

### Qi

- Immaterial energy with a qualification and direction (Porkert).

- Auxiliary vegetative definition (Heidelberg model):

**"Vegetative capacity to function of a tissue or organ which may cause the sensation of pressure, tearing or flow".**

Example of kinds of qi (qualifications of qi):

- **Qi originale, original qi:** qi directly originating from the yin (renal orb). This process includes the formation of qi from jing (structive potential, "essence", see below) under the influence of shen. Original qi is the power to create the vectors of the phases and is then processed to form further functions of the orbs such as their diagnostically relevant signs.

- **Qi defensivum, defensive qi:** form of qi located outside of the conduits within the tissue. Predominantly residing within the extima (surface) its distribution is believed to be dependent of the pulmonary orb. Considered to ward off exogenous pathogenic influences. It originates from all three functional sections (three calorics, sic: "three burners").

Defensive qi shows by shivering/chills like in goosebumps.

Auxiliary vegetative definition (Heidelberg model): vegetative activation of the skin and mucosa in order to protect from invading reflex patterns (e.g. algor)

- **Qi nutritivum, nutritive qi:** qi originating from food.

### Shen

- constellating force (Porkert) which originates from the cardiac orb.

Auxiliary vegetative definition (Heidelberg model):

**Functional capacity to put order into mental associativity and emotions, thus creating "mental presence".**

The functional state of shen is evaluated by signs as the coherence of speech, the gloss of eyes and fluent fine motorics (control of motor functions).

Shen is comparable to the capacity to exert certain higher brain functions in western medicine.

### TCM

Chinese Medicine is a system of findings and sensations designed to establish the functional vegetative state of the body

This state may be treated by e.g. Chinese pharmacotherapy, acupuncture, Chinese manual therapy (Tuina), Qigong, or dietetics.

### Xue

- moved structivity (Porkert)

Xue ("blood") belongs, like qi or shen, to the untranslatable concepts of TCM, as blood in TCM and western medicine have quite a different functional concept.

Auxiliary vegetative definition (Heidelberg model):

**Form of functional capacity ("energy") bound to body fluids with functions such as warming, moisturizing, creating qi and nutriting a tissue.**

From a western medical view: the clinical effects of xue can be are comparable to the western concept of the **effects of microcirculation**, including the functional

relations of microcirculation, blood cells, plasma factors, endothelium and parenchyma.

Another definition therefore: "The effects of microcirculation and the flowing substance needed".

**Double nature of xue as yin and yang:**

One aspect of xue is, that it is a substance and part of the yin, and – at the same time – it is a form of energy (yang) with the above effects. This double nature of xue becomes obvious i.e. in the functional relation of xue and shen, as xue (yin) "checks"/or "controls" shen (yang).

Energy forms /functional capacities running with xue or forming divisions of xue are shen, constructive qi (ying), and fluids such as jin (passive fluids moisturizing the tissue) and ye (active fluids such as sweat).

**Yin deficiency**

Term describing a structural deficiency within the context of the 4<sup>th</sup> Guiding Criterion. In the water basin model, such reduction of substrate leads to instable regulation with an extreme course of the regulatory curve. There are four kinds of yin deficiencies commonly occurring in clinical practice:

| Chinese type of yin deficiency | Comment from western medical view   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| yin deficiency "sui generis"   | lack of "functional tissue"   |
| lack of xue                    | "lack of microcirculation within the tissue"  |
| lack of body fluids jīn yè     | "lack of milieu- factors" such as in dehydration  |
| lack auf jing                  | "functional deficits like in impaired functions of the cell nucleus (i.e. radiation, chemotherapy) or in genetic deficits |

**Yin / Yang**

**Pair of terms used to describe functional relations in Chinese culture and language**

Primary meaning: sunnier side of a mountain (yang) in comparison to shadier side of the mountain (yin).

Metaphorical meanings include thousands of possible meanings, i.e. in philosophy. Within the regulatory (cybernetic) context, yin and yang may have the following meanings:

| <b>yang</b>                              | <b>yin</b>                                    |
|--|---|
| Above target value                       | below target value                            |
| Rising values, such as in upregulation   | Descending values, such as in downregulation  |
| Functional, primarily regulatory problem | Lack of substrate causing instable regulation |

Within the medical context, we tend to restrict the usage of these terms to the most important functional concepts. Four of these most important metaphorical meanings

| <b>yang</b>                     | <b>yin</b>                      |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| more vivid, more qi (repletion) | less vivid, less qi (depletion) |
| Warmer, calor                   | Colder, algor                   |
| outside , exterior, extima      | Inside, interior, inima         |
| Function                        | structure                       |

See also: Guiding Criteria.