

Health Achievement and Integration of Medical Ontological East-West Paradigms

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Abstract: Currently, the Occidental Medicine appeals to the achievements of Oriental Medicine and vice versa. It is important to analyze the strong points of the paradigms of both medicine schools in order to use the most efficient approaches of the ontological realities of these systems for improvement of the people's life and health quality. In these terms, the advantage of the Oriental Medicine is that it addresses health in the widest sense. The Occidental Medicine has considerably advanced in the sphere of in-depth study of the organism, the knowledge of pathogenesis of organs and systems' diseases. This literature sources review is intended to substantiate the significance and set out the priorities of the work in order to integrate the achievements of both medicine schools. Summary: the main difficulty that is to be overcome by the Occidental Medicine is to switch the focus from disease to health; and the Oriental Medicine needs to develop its scientific base and to pass testing in compliance with the evidence-based Occidental Medicine.

Key words: Paradigm • Occidental Medicine • Oriental Medicine • Integration • Health

INTRODUCTION

Medicine (Lat: *ars medicina*) means the art of treatment, the art of healing. Healing, achievement of health state is the first priority of the medical science both in the East and in the West since the ancient times. Ontology is the theory of the things existent, of fundamental principles of existence. The medical ontology studies the general essences, the structures and regularities of people's healing. Paradigm is the total of all scientific achievements, *acknowledged by the whole scientific community* at a certain period, the epistemological model of the evolutionary activity – the concept introduced in the XX century by T. Kun [1]. Paradigm can be absolute, scientific, state, personal and generally accepted. The paradigms of the East and the West are the *global generally accepted paradigms* [2, 3]. Development of a science is determined by dialectic interaction of two processes – differentiation and integration. Currently, the Occidental Medicine increasingly often appeals to the achievements of the Oriental Medicine and vice versa [4, 5]. Our review of literature sources intends to substantiate the significance

and emphasize the work priorities in order to integrate the achievements of both medicine schools with the purpose of usage of ultimately efficient approaches of the medical ontological realities of both systems.

Body of the work. Let us consider the differences in the essences of the Western and Eastern paradigms. The *East* is a rather conditional concept; it is not only geographical, but also historical, social and political concept. It covers almost the whole non-European world, except for the countries and regions, which have been populated by natives of Europe [6]. The *Western* civilization has been opposing itself to the *East*, which has been treated as a completely different world, since ancient times. The East and the West are two mainly antipodal, cultural traditions, which differ in the vision and the lifestyle of their peoples in general. Based on the works of multiple authors [6-12], we have normalized the principal differences of the two cultures in Table 1.

Let us consider the peculiarities of medical ontological realities of the West and the East. Three fundamental elements of the Occidental Medicine are known – *pathology*, *clinical nosology* and *the system of treatment and diagnostic measures*. The *general*

Table 1: Comparison of the cultural traditions of the West and the East.

<i>Vision</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>West</i>
<i>Value-related orientation of a personality and the society</i>	Spiritually oriented existence; the highest value is to serve the supreme transcendent essence	Consumer-oriented existence (improvement of the life of a person and the humankind)
<i>Understanding of the structure of the universe, the human nature, the human existence and the mechanisms of the historical process.</i>	The principle of the ocentrism. Acknowledgment of the supreme will; the goal of a human is to learn to recognize and create it as his own one. Through the perfection of his nature, the perfection of the society takes place. This process is stable. The idea of the human existence: the heart of each human is turned towards other people. Personality serves the collective goal. The human must and is happy to serve other people.	The principle of anthropocentrism. The human is already perfect. The ideology of humanism was born – the rightfulness of subordination of everything existent to the purposes of the human. The idea of the human existence: to satisfy as fully as possible one's needs during the life. The historical development goes unevenly; it is oriented to innovations. Career, individualism, sovereignty of a personality and image are valued.
<i>Attitude to the world</i>	It originates from outside the Existence (pre-Existence). The world is perfect. It is important to study the structure of the world and the role of its parts	It originates from the Existence; the focus is on the search of its basis. The idea is that the world is not perfect and requires reasonable improvement
<i>Attitude to the nature</i>	The Human and the Nature are united, the human is integrated into the nature through improvement of his soul and body	Opposition of the Nature and the Human who is treated as the Governor of the Nature as he changes it according to his needs
<i>Interpretation of the existential mission of the human and commitment of the human labor</i>	Spiritual orientation – for the change of the human himself in accordance with the original Sovereign plan. Collective labor is prioritized	Perfection of the world to comply with the human needs in accordance with the human views. Private labor is prioritized
<i>Attitude to the state, the power and the law</i>	The power is above the law; it does not need any reasons. The human serves the state and his management with his body and soul. The position of a human depends on his social status in the social hierarchy	The law is above the power, acknowledgment of a leader depends on the proof of his rights for leadership. The human is subordinated to the state, the position of a person depends on his skills and abilities
<i>Evaluation of cognitive and transformative capacity of a human</i>	Not everything depends on the human, there is something transempirical. The thinking is representational and intuitively avoids strict certainty of ideas; a word is not so important as its context; there is no special conceptual and categorical framework; logic is flexible	Boundless cognizability of the world, total power of the intelligence. Thinking is rational, theoretical, with separated subject and object. The idea is expressed linguistically; therefore, special role belongs to logic and formalization.
<i>Essence and mechanisms of cognition</i>	Cognition – except for the study of objects' properties, their spiritual cognition outside rational study. Cognition – except for the subject's activity, the self-revealing activity of the object ("revelation", meditation).	The process of cognition is narrowed down to the cognitive activity of the subject who researches (or otherwise learns) the object's properties. Intelligence is the ultimate value. The subject is active and the object is passive.
<i>Attitude of a human to the truth</i>	The truth is the Existence itself, which has been given to us. It does not depend on the mind or will of the one who perceives it. A human needs truth, which he would serve and dedicate his life to.	Only that is true, which is perceivable by the mind and will of a human and can be controlled by him. A human needs such truths only, which serve him.

pathology discipline was fundamentally developed by I.V. Davydovsky [13]. Later on, the work was enhanced and revised from the perspective of philosophy by D.S. Sarkisov and others [14]. The fundamental basic concepts of the general pathology are the basis of the *clinical medicine*. Understanding of the increase of the versatility and specialization of organs', tissues' and cells' functions during the process of evolution allowed advancing very much in the sphere of organism study and knowledge of

disease pathogenesis. But, at the same time, it caused dividing the organism structure into multiple "parts" in the system of *treatment and diagnostic measures* [15]. This "dividing" approach is now dominant and clinicists receive more and more nosological standards [16]. We can describe in detail the elements of an organism. But where is the description of their interdependence? Synthesis of the divided known essence unexpectedly becomes harder. It is important, as an organism is a united integral

structure. In order to forecast the consequences, caused in an organism by versatile actions, i.e. variants of the course of regulatory answers, which are oriented to returning an organism to homeostasis, to balance, *must be started with the individual and not the general* [15]. The study of the problems of diseases and longevity is ineffective, unless the reasons and forces are identified, which unite the total of standalone structures into an integral organism. This is the pressing objective of the Occidental Medicine. The other global problem of the development of the contemporary Occidental Medicine is the *domination of the pathology study*. Pathological functional changes can return to the standard values or negatively progress. Where is the boundary between the physiological and pathological? There is no understanding of the boundary between health and disease [13, 17, 18, 19, 20]. As the human is a united integral system, it is important to highlight the role of *mental regulatory processes*, which we just state, but not explain. The role of mentality must be acknowledged at least equal to the general biological processes [21-23]. In the Occidental Medicine, psychosomatic paradigm has already appeared, yet only theoretically. According to a series of authors [13, 24, 25-27], the theory of the traditional Occidental Medicine has not been formed yet and the current medical paradigm hinders the development of our knowledge. Therefore, healing, achievement of health currently remains barely achievable being the main priority of the medical science.

Considerations "inside" the Western system about the Eastern medical knowledge will remain misunderstood due to the differences between their paradigms. It is important to consider the principles of the Eastern medical paradigm extrinsically. D. Katchmer called China a culture based on the energetic paradigm [28], in which the basis of vision is the *concept of energy*. Being the creative energy of divinity, it determines both the cosmic processes and the human existence in Hinduism and Buddhism [6, 7]. Many authors [6, 7, 11, 29, 30] identify the similarity of the main concepts in India, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and other Eastern countries: Chi and Prana, Chakras and Dan Tien, energetic meridians of organs and their points [28, 31-37]. Three main sources of energy: prenatal Chi (transferred from parents, is stored in kidneys), Chi of food and Chi of air. Other sources of Chi have less importance in the routine life [32]. It is alluring and quite material, according to the Western understanding, to bring the concept of energy to the "habitual" energy – the gravitational and electromagnetic energy, the energy exchange of cell membranes, etc.

The contemporary physics does not know what the biological energy is. The Eastern knowledge about acupuncture points, changes of their electric potentials at physical and psychological impact, used by the Occidental Medicine, have generated the image of acupuncture as a therapy of pathological states of separate organs – we can distinguish here the habitual for the Occidental Medicine "separating" approach. But the East can use extensionally the knowledge of the Chi energy for recreation of physical and mental health of a human. The role of Chi is universal. Like a harmonious baseline of all processes in an organism (microcosm) and the surrounding world (macrocosm), it ensures our existence as a form (the body) and an individual (the mentality) [32]. In addition, the individual himself can control this energy. The traditional concept "leading-involving" (Xun Yue) is based on the delivery of Chi to the sick place. "Thought is the Chi driver – Chi comes where the thought comes. In every place of the body, if it is not calm, Chi is locked on the micro level. The thought is used to attract Chi to the sick place" (Zhang Shui) [32]. Not only the thought is used to control *Chi*, there are energetic practices to control Chi by *visualization*. This is the obstacle to reasonable explanation. The key to understanding of the visualization of Chi and all energetic ideology resides in the indivisibility of the physical and the mental – they are the different displays of the same energy [3]. The whole theory of the Oriental Medicine is narrowed down to the affirmation of the *harmonious free flow of energy* of certain level and its pureness as a *health criterion*. If the flow is limited, the Chi pureness is disrupted, the level of Chi is insufficient or too high and then diseases and organ damages occur [28, 32-38]. The interaction of energy in an organism takes place according to the Wu Xing system – the universal classification scheme. There is no Western explanation of the Wu Xing concept. The global concept in the East is Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang make sense only when interacting with each other and are determined using each other. For the West, it is in the organism: the right and the left, the distal and the proximal, the lateral and the medial. The functions of the Yin organs are manufacture and accumulation of the main vital substances; and of the Yan organs – taking-in, breaking-up, absorption and discharge. The organs' functions explain all manifests of vital activity including the mentality. During a certain period (of a day, a year), some systems are ultimately active and the other are passive. The external and internal impacts, including the life style, emotional and physical stresses can become the causes of the energy destruction

and diseases [39]. After providing the diagnostics, including history taking, general surveying, palpation, smelling, measuring body temperature and pulse diagnostics, the received data are interpreted in the *Yin and Yang* and *Wu Xing* systems with account for the time activity of the organ systems. All obtained information allows to make a conclusion on the nature, the extent and the category of a disease. Every part here influences other parts, thus making the single energetic integrity, in which the reason is the result and vice versa. The *remedial approach* in the Oriental Medicine is *equally oriented* to both the *pathogenic origin* and the *cause* and the *type of the appearance*, while separation of the affected part from the *single unity* is not a goal. Thus, a disease becomes a symptom. The principles of the treatment selection fully conform to the energetic paradigm. The task of a doctor is to diagnose and correct the Chi disorders. The toolkit of the Oriental Medicine includes nutrition, herbs, acupuncture (cautery, acupressure), massage, methods of respiratory and physical gymnastics, etc. Due to the high clinical efficiency of the Eastern knowledge, the West's interest to it has increased.

Conclusion. Generally, the medical paradigms of the East and the West complement each other: the in-depth study of particularities (the West) with account for the integrity of an organism as a system and the environment (the East). The Oriental Medicine proceeds from the general to the individual and has more opportunities to adopt the achievements of the Occidental Medicine [3, 40, 41]. The Occidental Medicine, which studies details and pathology more thoroughly, moves away from the general essence. As a result, it is more difficult for it to *return to the general* to enable the organism to achieve homeostasis, harmony and health. For the Occidental Medicine, integration with the Oriental Medicine is a more difficult task. The second problem is the difficulty of efficiency assessment and *total incomparability* of both nosologies and results. The Occidental Medicine is a product of the Western natural science, in which the thought is oriented to the external phenomena – the objectivity in the sense of "seeing, touching, measuring and assessing". Observation, hypothesis, forecast, experiment, assessment – this is the standard experimental model in the Occidental Medicine and, according to the T. Kun's theory, it can be applied when the studied problems belong to the same paradigm, when all participants of the scientific community agree to the conceptual (in our case – medical) affirmations [42]. The Eastern and Western sciences are equal only in some degree: both of them are empirical and experimental. The difference is that

Occidental Medicine is the impersonal knowledge only (that is confirmed by external factors) and the Oriental Medicine is a combination of the personal and impersonal, its thought is simultaneously oriented to the external and internal perception. The third problem of the integration for those who practice the Occidental Medicine is the difference in approaches to the treatment process. The Occidental Medicine "gives" treatment to a patient and in the Oriental Medicine, the methods of respiratory therapy and physical exercises require making efforts. This requires preparing a patient for treatment, rebuilding of his personality.

Summary. As the history of the science evidences, a breakthrough in the theory takes place when the ordinary view is expanded and goes beyond the frames of the routine vision, therefore:

- The East-West integration is important as their medical paradigms complement each other;
- The main difficulty for the Occidental Medicine to overcome is the shift of the focus from disease to health;
- The Oriental Medicine needs to develop its scientific basis and undergo testing in compliance with the evidence-based Occidental Medicine.

It is important for us to pass this way together for the sake of achievement of health of a human and the humankind.

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