

A

Actinic force see *odic force*.

Acupressure is manual pressure treatment of the acupuncture points and meridians, intended to stimulate and correct the flow of *qi* (see this word). See also *acupuncture*.

Acupuncture (in Chinese *zhenjiu*) is a Chinese method, possibly originating already in the stone age, where needles are used to stimulate energy points and their meridians in the body (see the acupuncture doll image), in order to increase and correct the flow of *qi* (see this word) and thereby cure the patient. The oldest text mentioning acupuncture is *Huangdi Neijing* (Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor) from around 500-200 BC. Acupuncture is traditionally used against a number of diseases, and to ease pain. A similar method of treatment is *moxibustion* (*zhongguo*), the burning of dried leaves from the moxa plant (wormwood) on acupuncture points. See also *acupressure*.



Air has always been a subject of much symbolic thought, because of its intangible nature, and its importance to our survival. Many ideas about a life energy are based on conceptions of the air, and often the term used for the life energy is similar or synonymous to the word for air, such as in the Chinese *qi*, the Hebrew *ruach*, or the Latin *spiritus* (see these words). It is one of the four Greek elements: air, earth, water, and fire – but not one of the Chinese five: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. See *breath* and *oxygen*.

Aither (Aether) see *quintessence*.

Akasha/akasa is the Hindu concept for aether (sometimes translated 'space'), which among other things carries sound. It is not a life energy, which in Indian is *prana* (see this word). Theosophy uses the word akasha for its theory on *astral light* (see this word).

Akashic records see *astral light*.

Akwalu ('a kind of light') is a concept among the Akawaio indians in Guyana, for a spiritual quality in people. Its counterpart is *akwalupo* ('without light'). The word *akwa* means light, shine, life, and is used to describe spirituality.

Alam al-mithal is Arabic for the *World of Ideas* (see this expression).



The alchemist. Woodcut by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1553.

Alchemy ('the chemistry', where the definite article 'al' is of Arabic origin) was, except for research into chemistry, mainly during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance also a complex teaching about the essence and internal truth about matter. Alchemists tried to transform common metals into gold, but also saw this as a symbol for human strife for completion. See *archaeus* and *telesma*.

Alexander technique is a massage technique developed by the Australian actor Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869-1955, see the portrait), where among other things neck massage is used to open for energy to flow through the spine and up to the head, which leads to improved posture, movement, thought, breathing, and speech.



Ambiroa see *andriamanitra*.

Amma see *mulungu*.

Anamorphosis is a distorted image that is seen correctly in a different form of viewing. Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901-1972, see the portrait) used it for his theory from around 1928 about nature's inherent strife for increasingly complex forms – especially in biological bodies. He took both the term and its use from the biologist Richard Woltereck (1877-1944). Although Bertalanffy saw energy flows in this, anamorphosis is far from the idea of a life energy.



Andriamanitra is a concept in Madagascar for a deceased ruler who has become regarded as divine. The Christians of this culture also use this name for the Biblical God. It is sometimes mentioned as a life energy, which is misleading. The human spirit is called *avelo* or *ambiroa*. See also *hasina*.

Angin see *semangat*.

Ani are evil spirits according to the people on the Pacific island Ponape. It is far from the idea of a life energy, although sometimes mentioned as such.

Anima see *soul*.

Anima mundi see *world soul*.

Animal electricity is a theory by the Italian physiologist Luigi Galvani (1737-98, see the portrait). In the 1780's he ob-

served how electric impulses created muscle spasms in frogs, and drew the conclusion that there was a particular electricity within living creatures. He saw it as a liquid flowing from the brain. Thereby he was a precursor to electrophysiology, the role of electricity in living organisms. The word galvanization is from his name. See also *electricity*.



Animal gravitation see *animal magnetism*.

Animal magnetism is a concept used by the Swiss physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815, see the portrait), who treated his patients with magnetism from specifically designed tubs. He developed his theory when he was in his forties, after earlier speculations about *animal gravitation*, where he supposed the celestial bodies to influence people's health. He has given his name to *mesmerism*, which nowadays refers to hypnosis. His theory about magnetism does not come that close to the concept of a life energy, especially since the former is a power outside the body, and outside the control of the will. See also *magnetism* and *electricity*.



Animatism (from *anima*, Latin for 'soul') is a concept used by the English social anthropologist Robert Ranulph Marett (1866-1943) for the belief in a supernatural force independent of a soul or will, like *mana* (see this word), which he studied in Melanesia. He also called it *preanimism*, because he believed – in opposition to Edward Tylor (see *animism*) – that prehistoric people were too primitive to imagine a world with souls or spirits. See also *soul*.

Animism (from *anima*, Latin for 'soul') is the theory that all animal life is created and filled by a soul of life energy. The term was introduced by the German physician and chemist Georg Ernst Stahl (1660-1734). The English anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917, see the portrait) used the word for a theory about the birth of religions, which he pre-

sented in 1871. Tylor thought that through sleep and dreams, primeval people had gotten the impression of a world soul, and the worship of that soul was the source of religion. See also *animatism* and *soul*.



Ankh is the old Egyptian name for life, or life spirit. The concept also included the



idea of eternal life through this force. Its hieroglyph is a picture of one particular part of a sandal, which is pronounced with the same consonant sound as ankh. See the image. See also *sekhem*.

Antigravity is a name for theories on isolating gravity, so that travel between celestial bodies can be done with minimal power. See also *electrogravity*. It has little to do with life energy, although it is sometimes mentioned as such.

Anut is a concept from the island Kusaie (Kosrae) in Micronesia, which seems to refer to spirits and medial ability, but is not a life energy. The priesthood was called *tomon anut*.

Apana see *prana*.

Archaeus was by the Neoplatonic Paracelsus (1493-1541, see the portrait) and the alchemists regarded as an ordering life-principle, similar to what Aristotle (384-322 BC) called *entelechy* (see this word).



Arcaheus really means 'the oldest principle' or 'the oldest'. Paracelsus thought of archaeus as evenly spread in the human body, a *spiritus vitae* (life spirit) that nourished from *spiritus mundi* (world spirit). Paracelsus also spoke about *mumia* (see this word), a healing "balm" of the body, attached to the blood. See also *spirit*.

Arealoha is sometimes mentioned as a life energy, and was introduced by Francis Nixon. But the concept she used was *vivaxis* (see this word).

Arunquiltha is a concept used by the Australian Aborigine.

It is sometimes mentioned as a life energy, but they seem rather to have used the term *churinga* (see this word).

Astral body is the expression for a part of the human being, which is supposed to be able to leave the body in *astral projection* or *astral travel*, where the mind senses places and perspectives far away from where the body is. The expression astral body is used among many movements within New Age, and occultism of the last centuries. See also *astral light* and *life ether*. It is comparable to the soul, since the personality is included in it, or follows on its travel.

Astral light is the Theosophy concept for a cosmic ether of light, which is an ordering principle for the universe. The Theosophists also use the Indian term *akasha* (see this word). The concept may have been invented by Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891, see the portrait), one of the founders of Theosophy. Theosophists also regard this ether as a kind of catalogue of everything that has happened, a complete history of the universe and all its creatures. They call this the *akashic records*.



Astral projection see *astral body*.

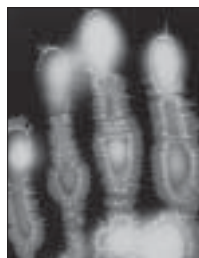
Astral travel see *astral body*.

Ata see *atua*.

Atua is the word for spirits or ghosts among the Maori on Easter Island. It is far from the concept of life energy. *Atua* is also used about the traditional deities. Spirit is called *ata*. The Maori concept that is the closest to ideas about life energy is *ha* (see this word).

Aura (Latin for air or wind, Greek for breeze – the meaning charisma or halo is of later origin) is frequently used within New Age. One example is Kirlian photography, where lights in different colors are said to radiate from living beings, varying in brilliance and proportions according to mood and health (see also *HEF*). See the image with a Kirlian photograph of a hand. The first claim to have documented such

color radiation came from the London physician Walter Kilner (1847-1920) in 1911. He also introduced the term *aura* for this. Kirlian photography was commenced in 1939 by the Russian electrician Semyon Davidovich Kirlian (1900-1980). In Antiquity Greece, *Aura* was the goddess of the morning wind. Ideas about a body of light, and the light's effects on man, existed already with the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (c.582-500 f.Kr.), who also claimed that this energy could have a healing effect. The Swedish mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) regarded each human being as surrounded by a spiritual sphere.



Autocracy see *dynamis*.

Avelo see *andriamanitra*.

Axé/asé/aché is a magical force behind all movement and change in the universe, according to African traditions in Brazil. This force is everywhere and can be handled with rituals. In the martial art *capoeira*, the term is used for energy developed through training.

Ayik is the name of a subterranean spirit that creates fear, in the African tribe Elgonyi. They call spirit and breath *rono*. The psychoanalyst C. G. Jung (1875-1961) studied the tribe in 1925 and wrote about ayik, which is sometimes mistakenly mentioned as a life energy, whereas rono seems to be quite similar.

B

Badi is, among the original population Temuan in Malaysia, the evil spirit from dead animals, especially the elephant, rhinoceros, and tapir. It is also called *jemoi*. Badi is sometimes mistakenly mentioned as a life energy. Spirit or ghost is called *hantu*. The Malaysian and Temuan word for life energy is *semangat* (see this word).

Baraka is the word for God's breath in *sufism*, a mystical and

philosophical movement within Islam. Baraka stands for spiritual strength and can be transmitted between people, who have it to differing degrees. Those who have plenty of baraka are blessed, and able much more than others.

Biefeld-Brown effect see *electro-gravitation*.

Biocircuit see *electro-gravitation*.

Biocosmic energy is sometimes mentioned as Oscar Brunler's term for life energy, but he called it *mental radiation* or *brain radiation* (see this expression). The term biocosmic energy is sometimes used in parapsychological research. See also *HEF*.

Biocosmology is a scientific term used for cosmic influence on Earth biology. See also *heliobiology*.

Biodynamic ether see *life ether*.

Bioenergy is a term that in modern use stands for fuel from natural materials, such as peat. During the 20th century it has also been used as term for all kinds of theories about a life energy, within such research.

Biofield is an expression used by, among others, the Russian scientist Yu Tszyan Kanchzhen, who in 1991 patented a BCI, *Biomicrowave Communications Installation*, which was supposed to transmit information on DNA level. Biofield refers approximately to a radiation that is fundamental and instrumental in living bodies, and that different therapies claim to influence. Compare *aura*. The thought of a biofield operative on embryonic level was introduced in 1944 by the biophysicist Alexander Gurwitsch (1874-1954, see the portrait), who talked about *biophotons*. See also *mitogenetic radiation*.



Bioheliology see *heliobiology*.

Biological energy see *psychotronic energy*.

Biomagnetism is a term used for ideas about every living body emanating radiation, expressed by George de la Warr

(1904-1969), among others. See for example *HEF*, *aura*, *radionics* and *prephysical energy*.

Biophotones see *mitogenetic radiation* and *biofield*.

Bioplasma is a term for the life energy used by Russian and Czech parapsychological researchers in the 20th century. See also *HEF*. The term may have been introduced in 1944 by the Russian biophysicist V. S. Grishenko, or in 1967 by him and his colleague Viktor M. Inyushin.

Bios see *life*.

Blood has in most cultures been regarded with the same amazement and interest as *breath* (see this word). It has also often been regarded as the carrier of life force, for example in Paracelsus' ideas about *mumia* (see this word). Bloodletting was the dominating treatment against most diseases, up to the 19th century. Before the discovery of the circulatory system (see the image) in 1628 by the English physician William Harvey (1578-1657), the function of the blood and its way through the body was a mystery, which caused a lot of speculation and theories, but rarely with much likeness to ideas about a life energy flowing into and out of the body – since blood normally does not. Still, its crucial importance to living creatures, and its circulation in the body, may have influenced such ideas indirectly. See for example *ch'ulel*. See also *menstruation*.



Blow in the meaning of breathing on someone or something, such as blowing on a wound, is a traditional remedy without great presumptions, but also in many cultures a way of healing, such as among some North American Indians.

Boha/poha/puha is a term among the Shoshon, a North American Indian tribe, for a power that permeates nature, and that people can acquire to different degrees. Compare *manitou* and *orenda*.