

IS HOMEOPATHY A SCIENCE?

G. Vithoukas

International Academy of Classical Homeopathy, University of the Aegean, Mytilene, Greece

If we all agree that every symptom produced by an organism under stress is a sign of defense and therefore useful in preventing a deeper damage, then we have already established a solid base for our common understanding.

If we agree that temperature (Fever) is raised in order to kill the bacteria, the production of mucus in the bronchii to limit spreading the virulent effect of the bacteria, the cough to get rid of the mucus so that the organism can breath freely, if we agree that the tonsils are useful as the guardians of the respiratory system and their first line of its defense and should not be suppressed when inflamed, if we agree that an inflammation, in general, is commencing in order to re-establish the lost balance or the homeostasis, that an anxiety is produced in order to prevent the mind from facing a deadly dilemma that could lead to a suicidal decision, then I may be able to proceed in a more daring idea. That of "the continuum of a unified theory of diseases acute or chronic".

According to such a theory, any acute disease not treated properly and therefore suppressed in its expression before its completion of its curative cycle, will force the organism to raise a second line of defense on deeper levels -in inflaming important organs or systems- and start a process of a sub-acute inflammation which we usually call "chronic degenerative diseases -like the systemic diseases. Such diseases are nothing else than a substitute of the original inflammation and a continuation of the acute disease that was never parted from the organism, never really cured.

Homeopathy, a system founded by the German Physician S.C.F. Hahnemann.

The name originates from the Greek words "ὅμοιος" "homoeos" (similar) and "πάθος" "pathos" (disease, suffering). THE

LAW OF SIMILARS: LIKE CURES LIKE:

The whole system is based mainly upon the principle that the cure of a disease is accomplished by drugs that are capable of producing in a healthy individual, *similar* symptoms (suffering) to those of the disease to be treated.

For instance, it is well known that Belladonna causes mydriasis, i.e. enlargement of the pupil. In a case of mydriasis, the homeopathic doctor will prescribe Belladonna in a highly diluted potency to bring the pupil to its normal state. Another example is Digitalis, widely used by orthodox medicine to reduce tachycardia, Digitalis in high potency will be used by the homeopath in some cases of bradycardia.

This principle was expressed by Hahnemann with the Latin motto "*Similia Similibus Curentur.*" "Let similars be treated with similars."

THE PROVINGS

To ascertain the curative virtues of the drugs Hahnemann suggested that they should be "*proved*" upon healthy persons - that is to say, they should be taken by individuals of both sexes in gradually increasing doses, but not beyond the subtoxic levels.

The manifestations of drug action thus produced were carefully recorded. This record of "drug-symptoms", the signs and symptoms produced on relatively healthy organisms, after being verified by repetition on many "provers", constitutes the distinguishing feature of a voluminous homeopathic pharmacopoeia called "Materia Medica".

THE MAIN THEORIES OF HAHNEMANN

Based on the "Law of Similars" and the provings of the drugs upon human organisms, Hahnemann proceeded to develop an entire medical system.

Some essential points of Homeopathic theories that complement "the Law of Similars" are:

1. That there are no diseases as such, but only *diseased individuals*.
2. That the indicated remedy should fit the symptoms of each individual case and not of the disease.
3. That the necessary amount (dose) of the remedy needed to bring about a cure is the smallest possible one, indeed an infinitesimal one.
4. That the symptoms of a disease, during the process of a cure disappear in the reverse order of their coming.

INDIVIDUALIZATION OF THE CASE

An important concept that Hahnemann introduced, differentiating homeopathy from main stream medicine, was *individualization*; the treatment of the sick should be aimed at the cure of the individual rather than his disease.

The prescription of the drug for each case should be guided by the similarity of the drug pathogenesis, "the provings", and correspond to the individualized specific and peculiar symptomatology of the patient.