

## CLEARING UP SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT HOMEOPATHY

Some of these, widely broadcasted or published in mainstream media need to disappear... Stemming from a lack of information or from widely transmitted but insufficiently researched viewpoints lacking supporting data, these misconceptions become problematic because they “snowball” and become mistaken for reality<sup>1</sup>.

The need to bring back clarity and order where disorder and sclerosis had gradually set in is one of the properties of life in its wholeness. Equilibrium always comes back in the areas where everything threatened to collapse due to a lack of clear and precise building block.

As the Hahnemannian discipline does not escape from this law, certain misconceptions need to be called into question.

### **“Homeopathy is not supported by research” is a common claim.**

Despite its link to the scientific world and its advances, this is an assertion that is often made about the Hahnemannian discipline. Unfortunately, it is often met with very little opposition... Isolated in their ivory tower, many practitioners have little awareness of what is happening in the rest of the world.

Yet, this assertion presents a very peculiar paradox. It shows how a lack of knowledge of factual reality can coexist with an obvious contradiction :

The study of high dilutions like the problem of “water memory” which is always erroneously associated with the Hahnemannian discipline, should have resulted in showing how active research was in that area. Yet, the exact opposite has been assumed...

### **A second assertion often reinforces this wrong idea: “Homeopathy refuses research”...**

In a very recent interview led by a medical journalist for a wide audience, this opinion was expressed and it was not contradicted by the homeopathic doctor<sup>2</sup> who was being interviewed. Yet, it is absolutely inaccurate...

**No! Homeopathy does not “refuse research”;** on the contrary, it strives to help it advance in spite of the obvious lack of funding generally allocated to it...

In various countries, laboratories and universities devote their efforts to it.

In addition, le GIRI, the International Infinitesimal Research Group, an extremely active international scientific organization, which includes researchers from 23 different countries, studies high dilutions and publishes the results obtained by its various research centers after they have been presented at its annual convention<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> They show the necessity of being conscious of the effect of our words and their impact on the overall practice of homeopathy when we are addressing those who have little information and are prejudiced about it : these prejudices will likely be reinforced by any vague statements lacking thoroughness or specificity when they should be bringing clarity about the discipline. A statement made on a nationally broadcasted radio show to explain the meaning of the CH abbreviation of the Hahnemannian centesimals would be laughable if it had not been made by a homeopathic practitioner who was a strong supporter of the practice: he stated that CH represented the initials of Christian Samuel Hahnemann – more commonly known as Samuel Hahnemann. They should incite us to choose our words judiciously and to gain a thorough background knowledge about the method we use: this has always been advocated by the supporters of the art of medicine.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps ignorant on this topic, or hopeful simply inexperienced.

<sup>3</sup> See [www.gri.com](http://www.gri.com)

### **Fundamental or clinical, research about homeopathy does exist...**

It even opens new avenues which can go significantly beyond the never-ending “water memory” or “the homeopathic placebo”<sup>4</sup>...

### **Although some of its aspects are much less advertised, they still definitely exist :**

Even if they maintain a significant importance for shedding light on the particular sensitivities exhibited by some subjects, the research done on the comparison between different pathogeneses and allopathic medications which act in similar ways<sup>5</sup> remains little known.

Research done in the provinces<sup>6</sup> by some homeopathic groups is not any better known. It is primarily oriented toward a pluralistic practice and has appeared concurrently with the unicist practice, which does not really focus on this area<sup>7</sup>.

However, these groups attempt to open and maintain a relationship with the current medical practices. They use the new (scientific) contributions and endeavor to establish a type of clinical research better suited to homeopathy.

Actively involved in the face of obstacles<sup>8</sup>, resistance, oppositions and lack of funding, many of the group’s members, whether from academia or not, have been attempting to validate research protocols that are better adapted to the Hahnemannian specificity.

Although they would benefit from certain adjustments, it should be noted that these protocols become problematic when they have to be followed in traditional ways<sup>9</sup>.

Moreover, in the psychopathological area, not yet very well publicized is the research aiming at shedding light on the reactional mode, the subject’s potential troubles, the therapeutic strategy, or the treatment using allopathy, homeopathy or individual psychotherapy. Yet, even if it is still in its infancy stage, it is starting to take root.

### **It should be kept in mind that a large number of journals and projects attest to the fact that this research is active.**

Some of them regularly publish articles, which, in light of the advances in this science, examine certain principles inherent to the Hahnemannian thinking. The Monaco International Discussions have been more specifically considering it<sup>10</sup>. Reflecting the essence of its various

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<sup>4</sup> See on the site Homeopsy.com : “*Homeopathy compared to placebo*” in the “Books” Section.

<sup>5</sup> Some of this research has been done in theses at the University of Montpellier, Pharmacy Department.

<sup>6</sup> Many of these have been supported in their actions by some of the most active laboratories.

<sup>7</sup> Except to put into place new pathogeneses.

<sup>8</sup> Considering the problematic reactions observed in patients recently vaccinated against Hepatitis B, a proposed analysis of subjects considered “at risk” by homeopathy practitioners had been advocated for by a group of physicians from diverse fields: homeopaths, osteopaths, oncologists specialized in allopathic treatments, immunologists and hepatologists. Under the leadership of Professor Madeleine Bastide at the University of Montpellier School of Pharmacy, they had decided to attempt to determine and analyze the common characteristics of the subjects considered as particularly reactive, to prove their reality, and to set up the necessary protocols... Alas, this attempt failed due to the sudden and unexplained defection of the hepatologist from the university, though he had originally requested this meeting and had been the driving force behind this experiment.

<sup>9</sup> An experiment realized in Switzerland on children suffering from hyperactivity produced very interesting results: just like in a traditional protocol, several parameters were evaluated. The difference was that it was not the effects of one medication for all the children that were being evaluated, but the effects of one single or several medications successively tried in consideration of each child and his/her development. See “*Hyperactivity and New Pathologies*” Ed. Homeopsy.

<sup>10</sup> Which unfortunately had to end, due to lack of funding.

conventions, its website maintains the initiative set in motion in its early stages. Throughout its publications, and loyal to the goal that has always been assigned to it, an exploration of its concepts - as well as the terminologies associated with them, has been established.

Without preconceptions, a “critical” analysis of the ideas put forward, with varying degrees of accuracy, has been initiated with an objective and “scientific” look. What concerns this pseudo-science, or problematic confusions have been stated and even denounced in order to avoid the use of language lapsing and drifting from its original concepts and opening itself to various confusions and amalgamations.

### **A larger deepening of the Hahnemannian thought is taking shape.**

Mixed at the beginning and connected to a lack of knowledge about what might have induced its occurrence the transformations that have taken place over the years make it necessary to do so. They invite us to even more rigor and verifications because of the increasing ease of their transmission, which can lead to a risk of unfortunate misinterpretations, and deserves to be analyzed in light of the advances in our knowledge.

Among these are similarity and analogies; mental and psychological signs; sensitive types, etc... These deserve to be examined with a new perspective. This leads us to realize how Hahnemann never left anything to chance, and used each word with a remarkable precision.

### **A multidisciplinary approach is an asset here...**

The observations made by specialists in various relevant disciplines – history, medicine, biology, psychology or basic sciences have proven to be most valuable: they show the accuracy of a thought system whose perspective deserves to be identified in order to grasp its evolution and measure its accuracy in light of new contributions in the field.

Thus, the analysis of the changes that have occurred over the years allows for a new questioning. It enables us to better comprehend the factors that can lead to erroneous statements.

The maturation that has taken place over the years, the meetings and the cultural context where the Hahnemannian discipline has unfolded, the discovery of the factors that have altered or transformed its essence, its evaluation through experience and the advances of knowledge have helped bring it about.

The critical and questioning mind exhibited by Hahnemann throughout its evolution challenges us to do so, if only to avoid betraying a thought and a way of thinking influenced by medicine and especially by a training as a chemist.

### **“Homeopathy is only reserved for benign illnesses or functional disorders”: this is a third misconception that has tenaciously persisted :**

It is absolutely inaccurate.

If homeopathy cannot claim to cure on its own serious pathologies such as cancer, psychosis, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, heart diseases and acute infections that are beyond patients’ ability to overcome on their own, it proves to be a valuable complement to traditional treatments as it helps patients cope with side effects, arrive at a better diagnostic, and understand particular reactions. Its contributions to the treatment of these serious conditions are thus far from being negligible.

In a way, it opens new avenues to research, especially research that it is currently stumbling against obstacles such as undesirable side effects.

**Pluralism, unicism...: two concepts that are rarely understood in depth ;**

Which is why they prove to be a source of prejudices and unwelcome ideas. A fundamental divergence linked to a difference in theoretical conception is a factor here ; not only for the practice of homeopathy, but also in what constitutes its profound reality...

**Homeopathy equals “Unicism”...”The practice of homeopathy can only be unicist”... : this is an erroneous point of view, a source of trouble as well as confusion...**

This statement is all the more problematic that it is inaccurate, and as a form of language lapse, it transforms itself into an assertion stated as an evidence, and at times even as an unavoidable reality. Even if this statement is made in a way that is often dogmatic by many practitioners who have chosen this type of practice (a choice that no one can criticize), it does not reflect an everyday reality.

**No, homeopathy is not necessarily “Unicist”...**

Even if the fact that this statement more and more frequently found in the media or on the Internet would have us believe it, and even if it is true in many countries outside of Europe<sup>11</sup>, it is not accurate.

**Prescribing a unique medication at a time is not necessarily “Unicist”...**

As a chemist and an experimenter, Hahnemann would prescribe a single medication at a time to verify the effects of the chosen substance and to avoid antagonisms; yet he did not make this an absolute rule : he never imposed the rule that there should be a single remedy for a particular condition or for a particular subject...

If he tried to avoid as much as possible the mixing of substances that can inherently alter the therapeutic effect, he never refused, especially in the case of chronic illnesses, to have several remedies administered successively and alternatively and synergically reinforce each other's actions...

**“One single medication at a time does not mean “One single medication for a particular condition or a particular subject”.**

This is an important point around which confusion and erroneous statements often arise.

**Uniqueness of medication and “Unicism” are however often amalgamated...**

If, for Hahnemann – as for most of the homeopaths and allopaths- the fact of giving a single medication, or a single one at a time, is preferable – and intellectually appreciable- it is important not to mistake the way of proceeding stemming from it with the one advocated by the “Unicism” initiated by James Tyler Kent.

**The theorisation that is implied has a totally different foundation...**

For those who espouse his point of view, the theoretical trend initiated by James Tyler Kent which erects the concept of a unique medication as an absolute rule is totally conceivable, yet it is important to note that it implies reasons that are its own.

However, these reasons have nothing to do with Hahnemann.

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<sup>11</sup> Where many homeopathy practitioners are not physicians and have not received medical training.

They remain particularly ill-known<sup>12</sup> because they are only made explicit in annex writings. Moreover, reflecting what Kent himself advocated, the “Kentist” current in France has remained rather close to Hahnemann’s teachings in its methodology.

**The real points of divergence, which are often vague and unspecific, form the basis of many misconceptions and erroneous information**

In many minds, the need to keep the effects of medications from mixing and the need to stay as close as possible to an adapted similarity are the only factors in cause, and they are worth highlighting...

This is the only way that could perfect the knowledge of the Hahnemannian discipline... We should keep in mind the increasing degree to which it finds itself dealing with its past and the fascination stemming from its “Traditions”; dealing with its present characterized by fuzziness and confusion and with its future and the immense possibilities linked to it.

**From the “past” stems the present...**

Indeed, just like the lessons which, based on observation, translate the mode of defense and adaptation to a hostile environment and the transformations that can modify its message, have their importance. In no case do they take away the interest of what “comes from the past” Even if the interpretation that has been made – and which the modern advances have validated or invalidated – has not always generated an adequate response, it does not alter its value.

**Unicism... an imprint from the past re-emerges ...**

If the “Unicist” practice often claims to be the only expression not of the Kentist but of the Hahnemannian thought, it seems important to remember that it is essentially a message from the past :

If, soon after Kent and his connection between psora and the original sin, he espouse diverse views and terminologies in function of the times and the places where it appeared, the metaphysical dimension, if not religious which becomes part of it, contrasts sharply with the “scientific” side of Hahnemann.

It is remarkable that, in opposition with the ideas emanating from the so-called classical or “Traditional” medicine which was prevalent at the time, Hahnemann always challenged his own point of view. Resisting ready-made ideas and complacency, he never tried to make his discoveries fit into any pre-established mold.

Pluralism is a proof of this...

If, in France, it still remains the expression of an approach which followed many of the reflections and changes Hahnemann made when confronted by the problem caused by chronic diseases; even if the medias have lately seemed to be circulating the opposite, in many countries, pluralism is alive and well, if not prevalent.

**Pluralism<sup>13</sup> : an evolution in the world of Hahnemannian practice...**

Grasping the reasons which led Hahnemann to no longer confine himself to a single medication, and eventually modify his practice over time in consideration of his observations and of the understanding of chronic diseases and diastheses; perceiving the importance of

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<sup>12</sup> Sometimes even denied in the depth of their origin, which causes us to question the reason Kent had to modify the Hahnemannian principles, and to devote a good part of his life to develop new pathogenesies.

<sup>13</sup>And in some countries complexism, which can only have a particular status in regard to the Hahnemannian thought.

physical symptoms without overemphasizing psychological symptoms; using these for the only purpose of choosing between two medications is useful: this allows us to understand the choice given to pluralism.

It is important not to limit its true scope by reducing its field of action and reserving it to minor injuries or to “familial” usage: homeopathy must neither be deprived of its essential elements nor be voided of its profound essence.

It should not either be transformed into a science centering on an omnipotent mental level which, bearer of an “original defect” (a concept which has varied according to times and countries), could be the origin not of all suffering but of all illnesses.

### **Highlighting the bases upon which “Unicism” implicitly lies allows us to dispel a great deal of misconceptions**

This is only possible if we understand the factors linked to historical, societal and undoubtedly religious currents that allowed “Kentism” to appear.

If in giving meaning to it<sup>14</sup>, Kent added to his intellectual mentor’s his own vision of the origins of disease and of the importance of the life force energy, it is worth noting that he has on the other hand followed it to the letter in the observance of similitude and in the way materials from pathogeneses are utilized.

Now, this is not the case of many trends which, in forms as diverse as varied have espoused some of the precepts.

### **New theorisations: a new source of troubles...**

If they originate from various aspects of the “Traditions”, claim to be “revolutionary” as compared to Hahnemann, whom they depict as “out-of-date”; if they often avail themselves of quantum medicine<sup>15</sup>, some of them are very obviously getting away from Hahnemann as well as from Kent.

### **Post-Kentist approaches and Kent’s teachings, a difference...**

If, in order to give more weight to that notion of “sin”, certain trends deviated from Kent’s thought by adding a sort of classifications of “defects” affecting humans: it is a complete falsehood to assimilate them to what Kent put into place. Like Hahnemann, he did not mix his personal point of view with his theorisation: he viewed disease differently, and he gave a response that he saw as better adapted to the way disease, stemming from a “polluted” mental plane, came into being to express itself under different forms.

And he went no further than this...

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<sup>14</sup> In substance and found in his annex writings: the “original sin” as evoked by Swedenborg, responsible for all human maladies, that can be tracked in the psyche ; hence the prevalence of signs emanating from that zone, and the need for new pathogenesies able to offer the most complete and precise reflection of the real, if not “essential” trouble that afflicts the subject...

<sup>15</sup> Which, as reported by an expert in the field, is still at its infancy stage...

However, as his teachings were becoming known in the United States, some more or less perceptible variations or additions have little by little modified the perception of his approach: the Masi<sup>16</sup> and Pashero Latin American trends in particular, have initiated various aspects one of them religious and influenced by the Thomist classifications; the other one “psychologizing” and doubtless linked to the Jungian influence prevailing across the Atlantic...

Their theorisations were disseminated at the same time as those from the schools teaching Kent’s point of view.

The form of universality that is part of it is in this case linked to the fact that the concept of “original sin” has been declined under other forms influenced by the culture of the various countries where the hahnemannian discipline was being spread.

As far as Europe– notably France, is concerned, the Freudian influence, the unwelcome side of what could appear to be a mixture of medicine and religious viewpoints<sup>17</sup> has allowed the “purest” side of the Kentist approach to be maintained concurrently with pluralism.

**Mixing “Kentism” with the trends deriving from it is thus another misconception...**

It is important to remember this here, if only to dissipate the growing confusion which befuddles many because it has not been analyzed in its historical and societal contexts, and has not been explicitly stated...

The following should be added here :

**Just like Hahnemann, Kent has limited himself to the mere comparison of signs...**

He has always kept to a form of semiology...

Like Hahnemann, he simply used the theme of dreams, at times along with the feeling stemming from them ... Nothing more...

**He never compared dream narratives to other stories, nor linked plant families or metal groups to a state of being<sup>18</sup> ...**

And yet this has quickly happened, and, as a source of methodological and theoretical confusion, can only increase an already present trouble...

**This is another reason to try to dissipate certain conceptual mix-ups which are responsible for a great deal of erroneous ideas about homeopathy.**

As much as we can, we need to keep it from falling into the trap of obscurantism, or the practices that have more or less been transmitted by the “diviners and sages” from the past, which Hahnemann would have probably not appreciated: this is an important task.

But the ability to continue bringing its assistance to healing, to research and to medicine justifies this effort, and the health of present and future generations fully warrants it...

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<sup>16</sup>Reported in France by the school of Dr. Marie Luc Fayeton

<sup>17</sup>The homeopathy which is part of pharmacopeia is in France as now in Belgium, prescribed by doctors, veterinarians, midwives and dentists.

<sup>18</sup> See “*Homeopathy in 2014. A State of Affairs*” Homeopsy.com October 2014.

