

III - HOMOEOPATHY : revolution, evolution, or deconstruction (2)

In France...

To come back to what is happening in France, we can add an element of exoticism : it is introduced by the work of an Indian doctor who shares with us both his knowledge and his approach of homoeopathy. His writings - which are sometimes most complicated but fascinating - also attach great importance to the notions of 'animal, vegetable, and mineral substance'. When he mentions minerals, he lets himself, it must be said, be carried away and subscribes to the various 'ramblings' about the use of Mendeleev's Table... If his knowledge of materia medica is unquestionable, his search for the 'sensation' that modifies the view of the patient and gives them a distorted way of looking at the world can only, if one takes a closer look at it, be imbued with subjectivity. Even if he lays stress on the need for neutrality in the listening, the latter cannot be freed from the placebo effect inherent in the 'aura' of fame which surrounds him. Inevitably, he cannot entirely abandon what is implied by an interview focused more on the search for mental signs than on those coming from the somatic state of the patient. Therefore, if one wants to prove the action of the medicine in its homoeopathic aspect, what credit can be lent to results that are so marked by the relationship between the therapist and the patient ?

Another homoeopathic doctor does as much to confuse people still more and give homoeopathy an 'aura' which it would prefer not to have, if one wants this approach to retain the spirit in which Hahnemann - who never mixed his beliefs and his theorisation - kept it.

If the religious and philosophical orientations of people are not questioned here, it is difficult to give one's critical point of view without presenting the minimum of elements likely to show how alarmed the view of a scientist or of an opponent of the Hahnemannian discipline can be at certain writings and teachings, such as the following :

As regards the various existing trends, he says : *'certains se sont intéressés à l'aspect transcendantal de l'être humain comme l'argentin A. Masi ou la française M.L Fayeton. Pour ma part, j'ai développé un abord artistique et symbolique du remède....et une philosophie de la vie....Tout ce travail permet au grand public de pénétrer la dimension initiatique que procure l'homéopathie... Quant à la parole du Christ, après avoir lu beaucoup de livres initiatiques des grands maîtres de l'humanité, je me suis aperçu qu'elle était le summum de la profondeur, d'humanité et de simplicité, et je conseille à tous ceux qui auront aimé ce livre de lire ou de relire les quatre évangiles dans le texte.'*¹

¹ 'Some people have taken an interest in the transcendental aspect of the human being, like the Argentinian A. Masi or the Frenchwoman M-L Fayeton. For my part, I have developed an artistic and symbolic approach of the remedy... and a philosophy of life... All that work makes it possible for the general public to grasp the initiatory dimension that homoeopathy brings... As for the word of Christ, after reading many initiatory books of the great masters of humanity, I have realised that it is the height of profoundness, humanity, and simplicity, and I advise all those who will have liked that book (*Le coeur trois fois heureux : Amour et homéopathie*) to read or reread the Four Gospels in the original.' (What is prejudicial here is that the books useful for homoeopathy, which are little known, have always sold badly compared with those arousing the enthusiasm that is always present as soon as the notion of 'mystery' or of 'the marvellous' is mentioned ; this is not a criticism but a simple observation).

As regards the way of treating autism :

"En effet, récemment, des chercheurs en neurophysiologie ont découvert sur des modèles de souris autistes, que le taux de chlore dans leur cerveau gardait les niveaux élevés qui normalement ne s'observent que pendant la vie intra-utérine. Habituellement, à la naissance, les cellules cérébrales perdent leur taux élevé de chlore sous l'effet diurétique des ocytociques. Donc, pendant la vie intra-utérine, en espace clos où la communication est fusionnelle avec la maman et réduite avec l'extérieur, notre cerveau fonctionne avec des taux élevés de chlore et lorsque l'enfant naît, il perd ses taux élevés de chlore dans le cerveau et entre en communication avec le monde extérieur, cela grâce à un effet sur le neuromédiateur GABA (Gamma Amino Butyric Acid).

En fait le chlore active le GABA qui augmente la sensibilité de l'enfant : si le niveau de chlore s'élève, on devient hypersensible jusqu'à se laisser envahir par toutes les impressions et sensations de la vie.

D'où l'idée de traiter les enfants autistes par un diurétique qui chasse le chlore des cellules nerveuses, le Bumetanide®. Le neurobiologiste Yehezkel Ben Ari (INSERM Marseille) et le pédopsychiatre Éric Lemonier (CHU Brest) ont amélioré l'état d'enfants autistes en leur donnant ce diurétique.

Des études sont actuellement menées pour définir la dose adéquate de médicament, car il y a des effets secondaires (fuite de potassium, crampes, troubles du rythme cardiaque). Les effets de cette thérapeutique sont (selon les auteurs) réels, mais cèdent à l'arrêt du traitement.

***Cela m'a amené à proposer aux enfants présentant des troubles du spectre autistique le remède homéopathique Chlorum en dilutions croissantes de 9CH à 30CH avec l'idée que le remède homéopathique pourrait chasser l'excès de chlore dans les cellules et rétablir le niveau normal de cet halogène : on pourrait alors avoir un effet durable et dénué d'iatrogénie.'*²**

² 'Neurophysiology researchers have recently discovered, on types of autistic mice, that the chlorine level in their brains kept the high levels that are usually observed only during intrauterine life. At birth, the cerebral cells generally lose their high level of chlorine under the diuretic influence of the oxytocics. Therefore, during intrauterine life, in a closed space where communication is intensely close with the mother and restricted with the outside world, our brain functions with high levels of chlorine and, when the child is born, it loses its high levels of chlorine in the brain and gets in communication with the outside world thanks to an effect on the GABA.

In fact, chlorine activates the GABA, which increases the child's sensitivity : if the chlorine level rises, one becomes so hypersensitive as to be overcome with all the impressions and sensations of life.

Hence the idea of treating autistic children with a diuretic that eliminates chlorine from the nerve cells, Bumetanide®. The neurobiologist Yehezkel Ari (INSERM - French national health and medical research institute - of Marseilles) and the child psychiatrist Eric Lemonier (teaching hospital of Brest) have improved the state of autistic children by giving them this diuretic.

Studies are being carried out to determine the appropriate dose of the medicine, for it has side effects (potassium loss, cramp, heart rate disorders). The effects of this treatment are (according to the authors) real but disappear when it stops.

This led me to propose the homoeopathic remedy Chlorum at increasing dilutions from 9CH to 30CH to children on the autistic spectrum, with the idea that the homoeopathic remedy might eliminate the excess of chlorine from the cells and bring back this halogen to its normal level : the result might therefore be a lasting effect without any iatrogeny.

What we know today in homoeopathic research shows that to give preventively a dose of a poison contributes to the elimination of the latter in the blood ; on the other hand, to give it curatively (the remedy is administered after the poisoning) is accompanied by little elimination - and it is the scientist, founder of the GIRI³ (together with Professor Madeleine Bastide) who is saying this.

But, in the example mentioned, everything is simple : not only will a dose of Chlorum given after the event permit the elimination of chlorine in the blood, it will also do so in nerve cells situated in the profoundest areas of the brain which, it is well known, resist all handling of the cerebrospinal fluid. If we wanted to make a witticism, we could say that God must think about everything - or is it 'the spirit' of the remedy ?

The homoeopathic properties of the remedy Chlorum that will follow also pose problems :

"Les symptômes intéressants sont :

La peur de devenir fou : on remarquera que le chef de file des neuroleptiques, le Largactil® est la Chlorpromazine, donc on y retrouve des molécules de chlore.

Ne plus se rappeler du nom des gens : le NOM renvoie au NON du père qui dit à l'enfant, qui dit la séparation et permet d'aller vers les autres («— Non tu ne vas pas rester fusionnel avec maman, tu vas aller vers les autres.»)⁴

This way of playing with words (name and no), which is characteristic of 'the way of curing' of this author, shows that he uses a symbolic language of his own, but also something else... His knowledge of psychoanalysis has led him to make claims : Freud's oral stage would correspond to psora, the anal stage to sycosis, and the Oedipal stage to 'luèse'. This is also a way of 'modernising' the notion of diathesis. But what is confusing is to see that the Freudian certainties put forward here also take into account - by analogy⁵, of course - the development of the brain - Freud's affective development.

Must one therefore conclude that there are as many practices as there are homoeopaths ?

The answer is No : the homoeopaths referred to here have their points of view and many followers who think as they do !

The great despair that may result from this is that all the studies and methods described earlier - and they are not the only ones - are more similar to the ancestral and alchemic approaches and modes of work than to homoeopathy.

Therefore, the real problem would be that the thoughtlessness of many discrepancies put forward - except for the Italian colleague - leads those who espouse their assertions to continue to dare to describe their approach as 'homoeopathy' whereas, in the work

³ GIRI (Groupe International de Recherche sur l'Infinitésimal) : founded by myself, with Professor Madeleine Bastide, it studies the high dilutions of substances including those of homoeopathy and brings together about a hundred researchers from 21 different countries...

⁴ 'The interesting symptoms are :

The fear of going mad : it must be pointed out that the leader of neuroleptics, Largactil®, is chlorpromazine, so molecules of chlorine are found in it.

To have forgotten people's names : the NAME refers to the NO of the father who speaks to the child, who speaks the separation and permits to go towards other people ("No, you will not continue to have too close a relationship with mummy, you will go towards other people.")'

⁵ Let us keep in mind that the analogy is only a tool and not a scientific assertion...

proposed, only the fact of using dilutions of medicines remains of the latter.

If we want to be clear-sighted, let us say that homoeopathy has a prestige due to the fact that it has been in existence for 250 years with, during all this time, many schools and associations that have gradually been structured throughout the world. It would be a pity if this system was changed by theories characterised by ideas that think they are innovative whereas they no longer have anything to do with homoeopathy. Unfortunately, this is almost what is happening today.

Let us think about all the assailants of homoeopathy whom we have fought. Today, considering what is presented under the banner of this discipline, it would be impossible to give audible arguments. This is not without repercussions for the future... Some day, if no distinction is made or clearly stated, a 'true' scientist will be led to inform themselves about what homoeopathy covers and about that 'new type of homoeopathy'. They will discover that it uses notions that are more similar to ancient, alchemic thought than to the medical way of curing of the 21st century. My dear colleagues, what will become of you then ?

A text by a new author instructed in and converted to the ideas of the different theoreticians mentioned earlier provides a good example of the synthesis that can be made by studying these 'modern' theories of homoeopathy. His book devoted to the work about Mendeleev's Table is enlightening in this respect. Leaving out the mistakes about dates concerning the origins of homoeopathy that are stated, we shall confine ourselves to the quotation of only a few extracts from it : « *Réflexion sur la place de l'art dans la guérison homéopathique: nous devons nous éloigner de notre médecine mécaniste contemporaine (l'homéopathie ..?) et trouver des idées nouvelles pour aborder et comprendre nos patients en utilisant dans ce but notre imagination et notre créativité. C'est cela notre véritable "art de guérir" [...] Le concept de l'intuition sera analysé, ainsi que le rôle qu'il peut avoir dans la pratique médicale de l'homéopathie [...]. Nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre de nous perdre dans des petits symptômes multiples ou dans des dédales d'interrogatoires touffus. [...]. Notre intuition peut alors jouer un rôle primordial. Il nous faut chercher le sens caché des mots.... avec quelques indices et un peu d'habitude,...cela permettra la prescription du traitement adéquat.....Un exemple pratique : Une dame et son fils arrivent en consultation avec un lourd dossier qui sera vite mis de côté et la technique artistique, concise mais intuitive se met en route. La première certitude qui s'impose est rapidement: il y a un animal qui se cache chez cet enfant. En l'auscultant il fait ce que font pas mal d'enfants sur le stéthoscope: il tire dessus et arrache les oreilles. Sur ce la maman dit : 'oh, vous savez Docteur, il adore jouer avec les fils, les tubes et les tuyaux' ! ÉVIDENCE, CET ENFANT EST UNE ARAIGNEE !... »⁶*

⁶ 'Reflections on the place of art in the homoeopathic recovery : we must move away from contemporary mechanistic medicine (homoeopathy ...?) and find new ideas to understand our patients by using our imagination and creativity with this aim in view. This is our true 'way of curing' [...]. The concept of intuition will be analysed as well as the role that it may play in the medical practice of homoeopathy [...]. We cannot afford to get bogged down in many small symptoms or in labyrinths of dense interrogations. [...] Our intuition can play an essential role. We must look for the hidden meanings of words... with a few indications and a little habit, ... this will permit the prescription of the appropriate treatment... A practical example : A lady and her son come to the surgery with a heavy file that will be quickly left out and the artistic technique, which is concise but intuitive, gets under way. The first obvious certainty is quickly this : there is an animal that is hiding in this child. While he is being auscultated, he does what quite a few children do with the stethoscope : he pulls at it and

In consequence and personally as a scientist attached to what homoeopathy may continue to bring to the world of research and medical care, I feel obliged to say frankly what I think. 'Dear novice doctors, choose in an enlightened way the teachings that are proposed to you. You have the choice to turn to the new approaches described throughout this article (**unfortunately, the marvellous always attracts much more than rigour**) or to go to schools that are more in phase with the Hahnemannian teaching and do not use the name 'homoeopathic school' in an inappropriate way. If the latter are described as archaic by all the theoreticians who want to 'modernise' their approach, it must be noted that it is not they that make homoeopathy go back to the Middle Ages, a period from which Hahnemann chose to turn away. **One must keep in mind that the fact that homoeopathy has been in existence for 250 years has its origins in them !** If a change must be made, it is at this level ; therefore, remain rigorous and critical, forget 'the marvellous' and remain as faithful as possible to the teachings that made it possible for homoeopathy to persist through time. In spite of the condemnations expressed by theoreticians that I consider thoughtless and ignorant people if not, for certain of them, 'charlatans', this is possible. It will be up to you to build tomorrow's homoeopathy and it has to remain based on solid bases. If there have been no more 'great masters' to talk about it for a good many years, there are, I hope I have proved it, a good many 'gurus' and many ignorant people... There is a countless number of them to talk about homoeopathy and, most of the time, there are only these sorts of people in the other fields...

And yet, given my interest in homoeopathy, I can only feel obliged to express my point of view even in a clear-cut way and if something inside me says, given the manner in which things seem to develop : *'Ne perds pas de temps avec des explications. Les gens entendent ce qu'ils veulent entendre.'*^{7 8}

Doctor René-Philippe Halm

tears off the earpieces. The mother thereupon says : "Oh, you know, Doctor, he loves playing with wires, tubes and pipes !" OBVIOUS FACT : THIS CHILD IS A SPIDER !... '

⁷ 'Don't waste time on explanations. People will hear what they want to hear.' P. Coelho

⁸ Translated by Pascale Tempka