

III - ANSWER OF A HOMOEOPATHIC PSYCHIATRIST TO THE REQUEST OF MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE AND THE ACADEMY OF PHARMACY FOR HOMOEOPATHY TO BE NEITHER REIMBURSED NOR TAUGHT¹.

While many French people claim the right to express themselves, to be listened to in their difficulties, how can one, once again, not 'hear' their experience, deny it and, in a way, 'know for them' and for their own good without trying to take their observations into account ?

Is science at the service of human beings, or are human beings at the service of science and certain of its convictions ? One doubtless knows how much they can be questioned... The work of Professors Madeleine Bastide, an immunologist, and Agnès Lagache, a philosopher, which is still too little known, has not been invalidated for the time being... And yet it is worth bringing to light so as to avoid deciding too hurriedly on the 'placebo effect' associated with homoeopathy.

It is important to say again that homoeopathic doctors, trained in the same basic melting pot as their 'conventional' colleagues, espouse the same values, the same diagnostic and therapeutic constraints as them. Therefore, they are anxious that homoeopathy should remain within the scope of medicine and strictly medical care. If certain detrimental drifts come from American theorisations, they are not due to Hahnemann : he always advocated the strict application of similitude such as that used in the scientific world and always had a firm stance towards the occult, esoteric or pseudoscientific fascinations. In fact, unlike what happens in many other countries where homoeopaths are generally not doctors, the French homoeopathic world, for the most part, still has total respect for what constitutes the basis of its teaching. As far as they are concerned it is not 'the case' that matters most but the subject and what comes from their day-to-day observation with, for the last few years, a very new adaptation to certain specialised medical fields (dermatology, cancer treatment, ophthalmology, psychiatry, gynaecology, obstetrics, endocrinology, dentistry...), which brings about the broadening of the comprehension of - notably iatrogenic - phenomena against which the view of the 'conventional' person often comes up...

The practice of homoeopathy, too, - but no more and no less than another type of medication - has certainly a placebo effect ! But to reduce it to that effect alone because the mechanistic paradigm and the experimental models cannot be applied to it would be precipitate : it would run counter to what day-to-day clinical observations in human beings show in the animal or plant field... It would also give too little place to the subject and to what constitutes them as a particular individual in the approach they justify and the care to be given to them... If, in psychiatry, the era of more and more decried diagnostic classifications brought about clarifications and common language permitting to situate the subject better within the pathology presenting, one knows this is not the only way of getting to understand what is really happening... Medicine, it should not be forgotten, is an art and not a science. A chemist and a doctor, Hahnemann was a contemporary and friend of Lavoisier. He always combined two types of qualities : those of the researcher decried by the institutions of his time and those of the doctor attentive to the words of his patient to

¹ Third part of an article entitled, *Une réflexion sur les modes d'approche actuels face aux 'Fondamentaux' de l'homéopathie* published on homeopsy.com in April 2019.

observe their signs, the changes brought about as time passed and they took medications and to put them back in the context of the somatopsychic whole.

To brush all this aside on the only pretext that there exists no proof of any action except that of a placebo whose 'therapeutic' effect should be taken into account is detrimental in many respects. On the one hand, it means denying the experience of many subjects who are not all 'gullible' and ready to follow the first well-known guru. On the other hand, it means not only depriving them of the possibility of treating themselves at a lower cost but also and, above all, running the risk of leaving them in noncompetent - even though often listening and benevolent - hands... This is a problem of public health... The ardent supporters of homoeopathy will not change their minds, those disillusioned with conventional medicine will go towards it in worse conditions - with not inconsiderable risks in many respects - and what may contribute to research in this field will no longer be used... until... 'Homoeopathy cannot die', Professor Madeleine Bastide always said. 'It will come back one way or another since it obeys the laws of life'... Let us not forget this : no 'charlatanistic' medicine has ever survived for more than 20 years and homoeopathy is already - and only - 240 years old and its practice in psychiatry, no more than 45 years old...!!²

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² Translated by Pascale Tempka