

HOMOEOPATHY... A SALUTARY 'CRISIS'...?

Providing 'pellets' are only a placebo, they have had, in many respects and for a few months, a very revealing if not 'curative' effect...

To clear up the confusion, to bring to light a lack of knowledge that is as ill assessed as ill perceived, to stress the 'comfort' linked to habit, to make certain forms of thought 'rigidified in the past' or carrying erroneous points of view emerge... The form of crisis that arouses so much passion if not violence may not be pointless...

It has the virtue of contributing to clarifying certain missing elements, of shedding light on the points of view, of revealing areas of ignorance and of bringing to light confusions of levels, of language and of concepts.

All things considered, can it have a salutary effect? It may be the case in various respects except if, under the pretence of 'progress', it suggests one can anticipate some tension over final positions or a step backwards... The followers of 'scientism' and homoeopaths, certain of whom have, for a few years, been fascinated by certain points of view based on conceptions coming from a world dismissed by Hahnemann, are concerned with this.

From everywhere, Science and its contributions... And also its struggle in the name of 'progress'...

From all sides, the same claim : we are at the leading edge of 'modernism'... This is the mark of today's world, where everything is shared, revealed but knowledge is very often used in a superficial and partial manner without the 'world' of the other, their points of reference and language being taken into account or assimilated...

The access to knowledge for everyone, whatever their training or level of comprehension, has the double drawback of often generating a univocal view of issues and suggesting that all the parameters are included in what is put forward and is therefore 'the Truth'...

Besides, as mistaken beliefs die hard, one's critical judgement often has difficulty operating or correcting a point of view, even if it is already widely questioned, out of date or has been spread insufficiently outside specialised circles to be 'heard' at its real value : 'the placebo effect' associated regularly with homoeopathy in spite of the interesting results of serious research, the regular allusion to the never-changing 'water memory' are obvious examples of this... Even though it was only a hypothesis that has been totally invalidated to date, like certain theories which supported its possibility for a while, its attractive conclusions to certain circles, like its damaging effects, endure.

To be at the leading edge of progress... This is what everyone wants... It would be pertinent and engender confidence if it was accompanied by behaviours developing in the same direction : non-univocal literature, openness to different points of view, efforts to remain in phase with the evolution of thought and knowledge, aroused critical judgement are essential.

It would be useful to ask oneself why the experience of so many people runs counter to the eternal 'placebo effect' linked to homoeopathy. There is no question that it has an

impact on the growth and disorders affecting plants. If, depending on the methodology used, the one observed on animals does not seem to constitute sufficient evidence, to tackle the problem differently from by the only criterion of 'scientific evidence' and 'double-blind tests'¹ is the least that could be done.

To refuse at all costs, as a homoeopath, to be 'put into the same category as' and not to try obstinately to fit into the mould suggested - if not imposed, to proclaim the specificity of one's practice, to use pertinent and rightly argued arguments seems to be as important... To avoid venturing on unknown ground or using points of view that are inaccurate or not 'acceptable' to minds with a minimum of rigour is also important... The difference in training is a major obstacle in this respect... Pseudoscience and insufficiently backed up arguments force one to be cautious and not to take what is stated without minimal objectivity...

The obvious ignorance of what constitutes scientific rigour questions the training of many 'modern' theoreticians of homoeopathy. And yet, they fascinate many of those who are enthralled by what they say, which is often attractive through its apparent coherence and reassuring classifications. Unfortunately, many of them have neither sufficient knowledge nor training in certain fields to be aware of it.

The similitude advocated by Hahnemann - and even by JT Kent² - is and remains close and not broadened similitude³. It is important to remind people of this : it will avoid many mistakes that are bound to show their drawbacks one day... It is in no way the similitude advocated by certain trends which have for a few years been mixed without any clearly stated distinction with the homoeopathy practised in France up to now⁴. Vagueness and confusion result from this and make the issue of 'lack of evidence' more complicated...

The modifications made to the conceptual and theoretical basis should at least be explicitly expressed so as to permit everyone to understand the ongoing evolution, use their judgement and choose with full knowledge of the facts...

On many points, there seems to be so much shortage of information on homoeopathy that it has even affected the point of view of a homoeopathy historian recently interviewed on television... Forgetting the role of JT Kent in the disappearance of homoeopathy in the United States and his growing impact in various forms and in different countries, he made the use of the single remedy a rule permitting to distinguish homoeopathy as it was initially. He adopted the point of view of French 'Unicists' who, rejecting the modification made by the - posthumous - 6th version of *The Organon*, confine themselves to the 5th version and omitted to say that a change had then occurred in Hahnemann given the problem posed by chronic illnesses⁵. And yet, it was an important point.

¹ - which, in the conditions proposed, cannot be put in place for the Hahnemannian approach. Cf. March and April 2019, homeopsy.com

² - whose theory is largely responsible for the destruction of homoeopathy in the United States.

³ - such as accepted in the scientific world -

⁴ Whether it advocates the use of one medicine at the same time or the possibility of alternating them.

⁵ Initially desirous of avoiding mixing the substances, the latter advocated their alternation when necessary. Certain of his prescriptions absolutely showed it.

Ignorance once more and confusion... In France, the unicity of the medicine according to the 5th version of *The Organon* has been gradually, and without anyone realising it, confused with the Unicism advocated by Kent because of 'original sin' - or, today, of what marks a break with Nature. The looking, in the 'mental state', for the original disease responsible for all diseases imposes the single remedy representative of the subject - or, failing that, that of the disorder⁶.

This is an important stage to know and state so as to make people understand that a change in the mode of practice and the therapeutic purposes has also occurred for a few years. This can only complicate the issue emerging again in the present crisis : charlatanism, placebo effect, etc.

A film for all ages that was recently released on the Net to present homoeopathy as a whole with its effects in the field was an obvious example of that shortage of information⁷. Well done even if sometimes somewhat lyrical in comparison with the 'seriousness' of the subject - but the film directors probably also wanted to leave their mark on it, it showed that shortage.

By leaving out what caused various trends which, at first, little affected the way homoeopathy was practised in France, it did not permit to understand correctly the different modes of practice shown... Unicity of the medicine, pluralism... There was still total vagueness since repertorisation seemed to prevail and, without one really knowing why or how, they went suddenly from one mode of approach to the other without the profound reason for that transition being explained, even in a few words⁸...

To deal with veterinary or agricultural homoeopathy, the scientific aspect and then the study of the 'sensations' that obscure the subject's psychic world, to illustrate more or less a practice based on the single medicine and the use of the repertory to come to supportive therapy in patients with cancer may have proved to be most disconcerting.

If, commendably, the presentation chosen was meant to shed light on the various facets of homoeopathy, those who wished to understand the reasons for the present controversy better may have been confused by it. The subject was complex enough to be worth broaching in a serious way.

One can therefore only regret the shortage of essential information on the purposes and causes of the difference observed in the various practices observed. They are bound to generate questions and questioning : the analogical mention of a substance suggested by the words of a patient to show what their psyche is like can only perplex one and muddle the thoughts of those who are accustomed to the Hahnemannian similitude or were trained in the Freudian psychoanalytic perspective... Not to mention those who are scientists, just curious or were trained in psychiatry, psychology or Freudian psychoanalysis and who will discover those aspects of that 'new' approach described as an application of homoeopathy

⁶ The signs coming from the psyche are no longer a means of choosing between two medicines (Hahnemann) but the main point on which attention must be focused. They justify the use of all available means : numerous 'pathogénésies', broad analogies, use of dreams, classifications of different types, looking for 'sensation'...

⁷ This is in no way a criticism - if not a constructive one - but a fact, which the present situation does not permit to pass over in silence given the questions that are bound to be asked and the repercussions on the knowledge of homoeopathy as a whole, on which the directors tried to shed light as best as they could.

⁸ Also, probably a matter of constraints on the timetable of the shooting but also of complexity, perhaps of lack of objectivity towards what may result from it on an uninformed or ill-informed audience looking for a flaw to exploit...

to psychiatry. Its 'psychologising' purpose - which we could analogically compare somewhat to what comes from the Jungian approach⁹ - will fascinate, put off and engender many controversies and, from its opponents or those accustomed to the Hahnemannian view, many questions.

By stating points of view that may seem very subjective, backed up by the reading of patients' words in a theatrical way, the interview of the Indian homoeopathic mentor who is very fashionable in Europe at the moment will inevitably make people wonder. The putting in place of an analogy that he mentioned between what may come from the patient's words and the various kingdoms present in nature will no doubt disconcert people.

Added to the feelings towards what came from the behaviour and words of the latter and from the intuitive knowledge mentioned by JT Kent, it suggested that one may find the most representative substance of one's experience and of the erroneous 'sensation' that obscured one's view of the world. The poetical suggestion of the substance through the patient's words instead of its denomination could only perplex if not puzzle or even make ill at ease the somewhat rational minds.

It should be stressed that, except if one feels somewhat uncomfortable about the form of theoretical vagueness behind the apparent classifying rigour or if one asks oneself - or asks - the question of the pharmacological component of the medicine, the 'aura' of the therapist presented there could only engender interest and attention. If he has obviously not been trained in psychiatry or - Freudian - psychoanalysis or even in Jungian depth psychology, the lack of information on the purpose and bases of the broad analogies used is disconcerting. They were present neither in Hahnemann nor in Kent and this will inevitably cause confusion...

In any case, the remarks made speak for themselves and show a singular approach to the subject and a different conception of the use of homoeopathic dilutions, that is to say to treat what is present in the psyche and creates disorder and disease instead of throat infection, varices or trauma.

Added to a form of 'psychoanalytical' aspect, the apparent scientific nature of the bases mentioned and the impact of the therapist can only have a curative effect even if it may confirm the position consisting in saying that homoeopathy is the same as 'placebo'. - And why not?¹⁰

Is it nevertheless possible to put forward an opinion that is bound to be of concern to anyone well-informed on the current recommendations in homoeopathy? Notably if they are a unicist, they are very particular about the risks of prescribing inappropriately or too much. If one accepts the idea of the pharmacological action of the medicine used according to so uncertain criteria¹¹, what impact can inappropriate prescription have? If it is administered at very high dilutions, it is prescribed from 'mental' signs to bring about a change in the 'mentality' of the subject, is it possible to assess its true effect and impact? One is not unaware of psychosomatic interrelations...

Cannot signs coming mainly from the behaviour, the feelings and physical signs that are often vague and imprecisely identified as they are not linked to any information from pathophysiology indicate the possibility of nonpredictable symptoms or disorders? Using the

⁹ Cf. *Rêves et cauchemars au coeur de l'homéopathie*, in which that aspect is fully and clearly described.

¹⁰ As for the latter, time will tell if the practice illustrated here continues to be valid.

¹¹ - and from unpredictable 'pathogénésies' or classifications used in an inappropriate if not erroneous way (Mendeleev's Table, phylogenetic classification of plants).

point of view of Hahnemann, who advised to give the patient only what they needed to be cured of their disorder, did not the theoretician interviewed in the film say one day that one must take care not to mobilise 'roots' that do not need to be? How can one know? If the medicine is active in its pharmacological component, can one be sure of not bringing about disorders? Will they always be linked to their true cause? Will their impact only affect the subject? Are not their descendants likely to be affected by it? The question remains...

Confusion, truncated if not false or insufficiently backed up information, should one conclude that today's world gives the impression that it has knowledge when one has access only to a part of knowledge reported more or less accurately? Certain remarks made on the air perplex one in this respect... One of the fierce opponents, whose behaviour may be understood in the light of the loss of his mother who did not want to treat herself otherwise than with mistletoe¹², showed how much emotion or personal grievances or interests can modify what one says and one's objectivity... But is the doctor of that patient responsible for the refusal to receive the appropriate treatment? Do homoeopathy and homoeopathic practitioners have to suffer the consequences of it?

The violence of the very coarse remarks made by an opposing doctor about the 'dough' got unduly by the main homoeopathic laboratory, the sometimes obvious confusion between the profits and the turnover pose questions all the more as, more often than not, the hounding relayed by social networks and the media is accusatory and uses the same arguments... As in the Middle Ages, people seem to be waiting for the execution of the condemned person at last... It can only be just, as it was decided on by those who Know...

In point of fact, what do these people, who are somewhat unaware of the reality of the other, know? Do they know what is not explained because obvious or only shared by those who have the same language, the same culture and the same training and is totally unfamiliar to those from a different background and not open enough to turn their attention to the 'world' of the other? Only listening and the respect for what is said from a different type of knowledge and the stage where it is can permit an advance, on condition that certain fundamental elements are clearly explained. If this does not necessarily imply adherence to what is said, the resulting questioning can only be positive in terms of calling into question of convictions and decline in ignorance.

So, yes ! The present 'crisis' may be useful : it may lead homoeopaths to take a stand on the close similitude implied by the Hahnemannian view as well as to assert themselves as 'different' with regard to the 'classic' perspective...

It is as useful for its fierce opponents who feel that they must fight a battle against enemies who are so dangerous and disturbing that they even need to attack their integrity and talk about profits and money!... Have 'finance' and materialistic view polluted the world of medicine so much that it has forgotten the subject and even wishes to refuse them the right to choose the way they treat themselves?... When we know that, ultimately, after the various prescription deductions, homoeopathy costs society about 50 million euros, this perplexes us...

¹² - what is more, a treatment that does not concern the field of homoeopathy -

But, perhaps, this present stage will be an opportunity to shake up if not avoid on both sides a form of rigidification or a step backwards in the way of thinking... If such is the case, by forcing people to ask themselves questions, it can only act as a saviour of the 'whole'.¹³

To be continued...

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¹³ Translated by Pascale Tempka