

I - From psychic signs to mental signs¹...

Psychic signs... mental signs and then, coming from them... sensation...

Three names referring to different times... Each of them shows an evolution in the way of using the Hahnemannian approach.

Given the vagueness governing their understanding and the theorisations linked to them, they must be fully distinguished.

Their etymological meanings... interesting indications.

Even if one may ask oneself questions about their translation and the different notions associated with it, the knowledge of what emerges behind the very Hahnemannian name of psychic signs and that of mental signs, which appeared with Kent's theorisation², shows how their use is not entirely innocent...

The unconscious has its secrets and, if its language is coded, it is not less active.

An appreciable contribution.

Etymology gives a few clues : even though they are not well known, the latter function as a patrimony present in words and active in everyone far beyond the conscious...

'Esprit'³, 'psyche' derive from 'psukhé', soul, which derives from the Latin word 'anima'. «L'élément psych/psycho réfère à tout ce qui dans l'individu n'est pas réductible à des organes ou des phénomènes biologiques. Or, en fait, tout se passe comme si ce que désigne psy/psycho était aussi un organe, organe immatériel sans doute, mais susceptible comme tout organe d'être en bonne santé ou malade, d'être soigné et guéri. Le terme "psychanalyse" en dérive.»⁴

It is the same for the word 'mental' and for 'mentiri', 'mentir' (to lie), « qui est la manière la plus immédiate de montrer que l'on a de l'esprit et son intelligence, puisque, pour cacher la vérité, il faut la connaître ».⁵

A notable difference between the words 'psychic' and 'mental'...

Certain elements permit to make a distinction between them and to understand what is at work in the name distinction.

Taking into account the temperament and general behaviour, **psychic signs** are obvious, and this is the first point of reference.

¹ First section of a two-part article taken from the book, *Rêves et cauchemars...Un long périple au coeur de l'homéopathie*, published on homeopsy.com under the title « Signes psychiques, signes mentaux, sensation », December 2017.

² And the prevalence given from then to what comes from the psyche - the original sin demands it...

³ 'Mind'. (Translator's note)

⁴ 'The element psych/psycho refers to everything in the individual which cannot be reduced to organs or biological phenomena. As a matter of fact, everything happens as if what is designated by psy/psycho was also an organ - an immaterial organ, of course - likely to be in good health or diseased, to be treated and cured, like any organ. The word "psychoanalysis" derives from it.'

The word 'mens' referred to 'intellectual activity, the thinking mind'. Etymological dictionary, Encyclopaedia Universalis.

⁵ 'which is the most immediate way of showing that one is witty and clever since, in order to hide the truth, it is necessary to know it.'

Sometimes likened to 'general mental' signs, they are visible and perceptible.

'Mental' signs are more difficult to detect : they are often hidden and one must try to find them : this is the second point of reference.

They show the subject's particular way of 'being in the world' and of thinking even though one must remember that 'what is seen is not necessarily what is'...

Psychic signs, sometimes also referred to as 'psychological signs', have been described as 'peripheral'.

Their behavioural and reactional manifestations are various, visible, and more or less marked in their expression.

They reflect the subject's 'mentality' - their way of thinking - and its characteristic features :

Withdrawal, anger, agitation, prostration, sadness, calm, frightened, nervous, jealous reactions, tendency to somatise show an underlying disorder which is more or less profound and marked as time passes. They can be momentary and occasional or repeated and carrying a chronic element which makes one wonder at their real cause.

Some predispositions to a certain character contribute to their appearance in a particular way :

The Lachesis subject's jealousy can be momentary and respond to a situation leading to its birth. It can also be an essential characteristic showing an imagination without a real foundation : it becomes part of the subject's mentality - that is to say, their way of comprehending and seeing the real - and a 'mental' sign.

In the same way, the Argentum nitricum subject's haste can be linked to the stresses of modern life without their being spontaneously troubled if the circumstances do not make them so.

Mental signs, which have been, in contrast, called 'central', underlie psychic signs.

They show the way the information coming from inside and outside is received and dealt with.

- The hereditary or personal marks and the way of dealing with the emotional contents linked to them play a role here. They leave their imprint⁶ : becoming fixed as successive generations and traumas appear, the latter has an influence on the behaviour and the way of being... The world is seen through a more or less distorted filter.

The fundamental 'What's the point ?' of the Sepia subject, who ends up 'taking a black view of things', the 'melancholic ruminations' of the Aurum subject, the withdrawal inherent in the essential mental state of the Natrum Mur subject, who 'wants to remain alone to think about their problems', the pathological jealousy of the Lachesis subject, bothered by their inner confusion, their wrong perception of reality and their errors of judgement, the rigidity and excessive meticulousness of the Arsenicum Album subject are proof of this.

- The correct assessment of situations is all the more affected - 'mens', to lie - as the

⁶ Justifying both the unicity of the medicine and the fact that, if the pathogenic information goes back several generations and shows a hereditary mark, its persistence in the mind alone may be understood and mental signs may prevail to back the choice of a medicine which, apart from the metaphysical explanation used and the formulation associated with it - which depends on everyone's beliefs - , fully corroborates Kent's point of view.

disorder is profound.

Taken in the literal as in the figurative senses, the process of sclerosis and fixedness which is inherent in it limits the subject's capacity for relationship in such a way that it makes it unadapted : together with the progression of neurocognitive disorders, reality is distorted and clear cases of mental disorders or mental disorders in a latent state in their behaviour become perceptible.

An evolution of concepts...

If they differ from mental signs, the psychic signs described by Hahnemann seem the expression and emergence of a reaction to the pathogeny that is more or less fixed in the subject's 'mentality' : they are supposed to be one of its expressions, which can be detected in their way of being and of behaving.

Apparently born with South American trends, the terms 'mental signs' and 'mentality' bring to light the difference put in place from Kent's view.

Mental signs : a 'way of being in the world'...

What they refer to, what constitutes the basis of their determination, the way of defining and determining its content must be specified.

Like the 'Sensation' mentioned by Rajan Sankaran, they are characteristic of the subject.

The diathetic and traumatic marks which they bear seem to correspond to what is often called 'defective diseases' : the perturbing impact reaches the domain of the mind, changes perception and sensation and gives them a particular and characteristic mark.

Witnessing the 'profound core' of the human being, they affect 'the intellect' and 'memory';

And this must be taken in the literal as well as in the figurative senses of the word⁷.

They bear the marks inherent in every perturbing experience likely to modify the view of the world, the 'mentality'⁸ of the subject.

They are the expression of the inner world and have an influence on the behaviour...

The way of receiving the information from the surrounding environment is affected by them.

They show more or less profound pathogeny coming from various sources put in place at different levels and expressing itself at various levels : at first, it affects cognitive processes, which undergo deviation and then, if the lack of balance is too pronounced, the 'mentality' is affected to the stage where illness appears. It no longer manifests itself in the form of traits or of a way of 'being in the world' and apprehending it but in that of clear cases of mental pathologies : delirium, behavioural problems, disorders of the intellectual domain or mood swings, symptoms of compulsiveness, perversions, psychopathy show the fixation of the pathogeny.

Two homoeopathic types may illustrate the difference between psychic signs and mental signs : Medorrhinum and Argentum nitricum...

They are the victims of time, the feeling of which is not, strictly speaking, a mental pathology. And yet it contributes to their disorder and to their inadequate adaptation to the

⁷ Cf. some videos visible on the Internet.

⁸ The way of thinking.

real. The stressed behaviour and anxiety in anticipation of one, the muddled and forgetful side of the other show underlying pathogeny.

The fear of insecurity-inducing and destructuring emptiness for the former, the guilty desire to be elsewhere and to escape for the latter : each of them expresses their essential problems in their way. Linked to the perturbation inherent in their characteristic diatheses as well as to their impact, which modifies their 'way of being in the world', those problems are part of their mentality, so much so that the environment in which each of them has lived bears their marks transmitted through heredity and education.

The **Argentum nitricum** subject has difficulty, at many levels, in assessing proportions and limits, which increases their insecurity in which 'Tuberculinisme'⁹ and 'Luèse'¹⁰ closely combine their effects. Essential fragility and the obsessional fear of not being able to assume their tasks in time predominate.

If the psychic sign constituted by agitation does not hide very well the fear of 'emptiness' in all senses of the word, perhaps one must try to grasp its hidden meaning : the fear of being abandoned to it in total insecurity and without any points of reference prevents them from being able to eat without hurrying, eructating, vomiting, or making their stomach 'hollow'...

Have they been afraid, from the moment they were a newborn baby, that their mother, also often anxious, tense, and agitated, might get away from them when they tried to suckle impatiently ? Stomach ulcers and gastritis seem to bring to light this hidden anxiety and emptiness.

They sometimes try to regain stability through something else but that is not ideal : phobia, the loss of autonomy and the dependence which it means forces them to try to find in the outside world the stable and structuring support that they have not had¹¹ and to permit themselves a limitation...

Based on a particular mentality which makes them think 'that their intellectual capacities will and must fail', they show a 'fearful and nervous, weak, timid, impulsive' psyche subject to 'fear', 'anxiety', 'bad memory', 'misperceptions' and the desire to 'do things very quickly'. 'The fear of being affected by an incurable disease, the feeling that time passes too slowly', with a tendency to 'melancholy with an impulse to throw themselves out of the window', the 'strange mental' ones with 'irrational and hidden motives for their actions' show the intellectual disorders and psychopathological risks inherent in their mentality.

The **Medorrhinum** subject has the profound desire to be 'everywhere and nowhere' : they refuse to accept time and space constraints but feel guilty about it... Psora, 'Luèse', and Sycosis¹² combine all their different types of pathogeny in them.

⁹ Pathogenic impregnation responsible for physical delicateness in the domains of ENT and, notably, lungs and for the tendency, at the psychic level, to disorders with psychasthenic, cyclothymic, borderline, or psychotic aspects and a propensity to escape the real...

¹⁰ Pathogenic impregnation responsible for physical pathologies of deformity, tissue destruction, and sclerosis and, at the psychic level, for deviance, bipolar or melancholic depressive pathologies and various types of psychopathy.

¹¹ A very 'luétique' - that is to say, adaptive - process intended to give the organism a new form of stability, even through shaky or problematic strategies.

¹² Pathogenic impregnation responsible, at the physical level, for immune pathologies, tumorous disorders of all types and, at the mental level, for depression with a tendency to obsessional ruminations.

Often agitated, like the Argentum nitricum subject, they, too, are caught in the feeling that 'time passes too slowly'. 'Hurried', subject to 'bad memory, to the losing of the thread of conversation, to the incapability to talk without crying', they essentially suffer from 'concentration problems' and 'great nervousness with hypersensitivity'. Combined with the 'idea of committing suicide', the 'fear of going mad', 'of being in the dark and of feeling someone behind them' with, ultimately, the risk of reaching a 'melancholic' state 'without any hope of recovery' show the way they see the world and the real, as if 'in a nightmare'.

Like the Argentum nitricum subject, they see life through the filter generated by their anxious haste : they exaggerate its constraints and the dangers inherent in the fact of not being able or of refusing to obey outside and inner imperatives - 'Luèse' - and in the ensuing guilt - Sycosis.

This can only contribute to their constant feeling of malaise and to the impregnation of their mentality.

The particularity of Kent is that he emphasised this aspect of the psyche.

Even if one does not subscribe to the religious and metaphysical aspect associated with 'mental' signs, one must recognise that he contributed to their being taken into account, which leads to an observation not entirely devoid of interest and of importance :

The subject's 'way of being in the world' is undeniably linked to what comes from the notion of diathesis,

With the miasms associated with it, which influence the psyche of those who show its particularities in a specific and recognisable way : combined with the aspects inherent in the subject, it reveals which elements contributed to its putting in place :

A tendency to escape the real for 'Tuberculinisme', evanescent in many respects, guilt and ruminations for Sycosis, prone to fixedness and lack of motion, transgressive behaviour caring little about other people for 'Luèse'... Those are a form of illustration of it.

Pure, impure... Diatheses refer to this

What had been implicit since the sacred and the profane were separated appears in a particular light and so do various facets of medical care.

A cortical process...

By being introduced in a system going beyond the observation of facts to give them a meaning, the sin and spiritual disease put forward by Kent give their role in the setting in motion of vital energy a less reflex and more 'corticalised' aspect.

Deadly sins : the 'real' disease included in the mind of the subject...

They might probably shed light on certain aspects of it. It seems that their list - which arouses interest in the light of what emerges from Masist points of view - was influenced by Thomas Aquinas¹³ in the 13th century : « Certains d'entre eux ne sont pas en eux-mêmes, à proprement parler, des péchés, mais plutôt des vices, c'est à-dire des tendances à commettre certains péchés. »¹⁴

¹³ Somme théologique (question 84, Prima secundae)

http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C3%A9ch%C3%A9_capital#Les_p.C3.A9ch.C3.A9s_capitiaux

¹⁴ 'Certain of them are, strictly speaking, vices rather than sins, that is to say, tendencies to commit certain sins.'

Pride, miserliness, envy, anger, impurity or lust, gluttony, sloth are the best known and most marked facets of it.

Through the intermediary of a diathesis or of a trauma, they act and modify the subject's stability.

If one refers to the notion introduced by the phrase 'mental signs', they perturb the intelligence¹⁵ and memorisation processes.

They perturb them in the sense that they engender a form of confusion of time : the past remains present and involves the future, hence the anxiety inherent in the miasms of the different diatheses.

They do so in a more or less long and profound way before being fixed more or less profoundly in the subject's mentality.

They affect the subject and their descendants : 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'. The biblical message is explicit... The 'defect' is transmitted until the seventh generation, probably the time after which, in the past, words - and pathogenic information, freed through this - could not be transmitted...

The perception of and 'feelings' about the world concerned go so far as to cut the subject off from their true nature and to create disharmony in their relationship with themselves and with the surrounding world.

By helping them to become aware of the points in which their view of the real is perturbed, the taking of the appropriate medicine may help to correct it.

Those sins gradually modify the way of thinking :

They alter the perception and behaviour and undeniably call to mind the mentality of certain homoeopathic types.

Their way of being and of reacting and their pathologies bear the marks of them.

The pride of the Aurum or Sulphur subject, as soon as they begin to have a pathology marked by the inflation of the self and manic expansion.

The miserliness of the Arsenicum Album subject, who goes so far as to have a delirious fear of being robbed or murdered...

The more or less hidden envy of the Staphysagria subject, who tries to deal with their suppressed emotions, which must not be expressed, or else of the Palladium subject, who is incapable of saying what its real content is...

The anger of the Nux Vomica subject, with their difficulty in accepting obstacles and their secret feeling of hidden passivity...

The lust of the Fluoric acid subject, indifferent and flighty...

The gluttony of the Sulphur subject or, in a more unobtrusive manner, the greediness of the Lycopodium subject for sweet things...

The sloth of the Calc Carb and Graphites subjects when, like the Psorinum or Sepia subject in a phase of unbalance, they are asthenic and give in.

They shed light on the 'inner core' of many types of behaviour.

Revealed in psychic signs - with the mentality supporting them - , all their expressions can be detected.

¹⁵ Intelligere : to link together.

Taken in the etymological sense, the word 'mental' goes much further than what it implies in the literal meaning.

Even if its users have probably not assessed its impact and if it is translated in various ways, it has certainly not emerged without good reason...¹⁶

To be continued...

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¹⁶ Translated by Pascale Tempka