

II-Cymothoa and modern homoeopathy

I must apologise straightaway for this abstruse title; it will help me to conclude this article.

The fact that homoeopathy has been in existence for nearly 250 years is only justified by Hahnemann's rigour and numerous skills: a chemist, he knew and was in regular contact with Lavoisier; a doctor, he left his profession out of clear-headedness as regards the very poor results obtained in this discipline; a man of letters, his sound studies made it possible for him to earn his living by translating various medical books. It was his impressive erudition, his scientific mind, and his genius that led him to create Homoeopathy, which we shall not, of course, define again here.

The influence of homoeopathy such as he put it in place is so great that all past and present schools and teachers say that they refer to it and remain faithful to it - even though, in order to emphasise the fact that they belong to the community of homoeopaths, many of them move away from it enormously.

If Hahnemann was often in favour of the prescription of one remedy at the same time, I think it was the logical attitude of a researcher who did not have any other way of testing the effects of a substance. This was the reason why he made somewhat categorical statements in the 5th version of *The Organon*. He made less categorical ones in the 6th version, published after his death, and in his treatise on chronic illnesses.

Before going further, let us stress that many homoeopaths advocating the prescription of one remedy and therefore called 'unicists' say that they have remained true to the 5th version of *The Organon*. Faithful to this initial point of view, they often use Kent's repertory, which, I think, is one of the most comprehensive and precise. Certain of them even call themselves 'Kentians', which does not shock anyone since, apart from his repertory, Kent's writings had a low readership, if they were known at all, since they were never translated. Let us thank Doctor Franck Choffrut for his work and to whom we owe the translation of Kent's lectures on homoeopathic philosophy, *Lectures on Homeopathic Philosophy*, a book published after his death. It throws light on Kent's thought and on the confusion which many people have begun to feel.

As the slightest beginnings of what may be seen as a criticism might engender overreactions, I shall content myself with quoting Kent himself:

*« La force vitale est partagée par les animaux et l'homme [...] Il est donc normal que la force vitale ne soit que la vice régence, une sorte de courroie de transmission entre un gouvernement sous la houlette de la matière grise et le corps matériel. Car cette même matière grise n'a pas la même signification chez les êtres supérieurs et chez les êtres inférieurs. Chez l'homme, elle est le siège de l'âme que ne possèdent pas les animaux. Sur un être sain, le bon équilibre est dû à l'effet de l'influx de la force vitale créé et bien dirigé par l'âme ».*¹

¹ 'The life force is shared by animals and man [...] It is therefore natural that the life force should only be the vice-regency, a sort of communication channel between a government under the leadership of the grey matter and the material body. For the grey matter does not have the same meaning in superior beings and in inferior beings. In man, it is the seat of the soul, which animals do not have. In a healthy being, balance comes from the effect of the impulse of the life force created and well directed by the soul.'

The appearance of 'the soul' has made all scientific approach of this way of curing impossible. As a scientist, I shall not hesitate to say to the 'unicist' supporters of the single remedy, who proclaim their faithfulness to Hahnemann and like to think of themselves as being scrupulously true to his most fundamental precepts: 'You who say that you are absolutely faithful to his teachings, has it ever occurred to you that you have moved away from them by ignoring his definition of the life force!' This is a very important first point.

It must be noted that, as surprising as it may seem, infinitesimal dilutions, which are rejected by official science, for which the only paradigm taken into account is the molecular one, can no longer be as peremptory as they were in the past : many official scientists (apart from charlatans, of course) ask for the acceptance of another paradigm².

« Vous pouvez détruire la bactérie et ne pas détruire la maladie... Les bactéries ont leur utilité, puisque rien n'a été envoyé sur terre pour détruire l'homme. La théorie de la bactérie voudrait faire croire que le Très Sage Créateur a envoyé ces microorganismes ici-bas pour rendre l'homme malade... »³

This leads us to the heart of a problem which, in a more or less known or even recognised manner, is present in and underpins Kent's theory: God is love, He could not have created anything that might be detrimental to man. Therefore, a man is in bad health only if he has not respected divine principles - that is to say, what is summarised as good. It is up to the homoeopath to find a way of curing sinners, who are ill only because of themselves. The Kentian thought is closely linked to religious beliefs and, without going into the more or less known details of Kent's life, his writings indubitably show the strength of religion in his life and practice.

If most French homoeopaths, supporters or not of the prescription of one medicine, use Kent's repertory every day without making any reference whatsoever to religion, on the other hand, it will have taken the skills of Doctor Geneviève Ziegel⁴, linked to her capacity as both a psychiatrist and a homoeopath, to notice certain particular characteristics of the repertory, which justify its growing interest - that is to say, its abundance of signs connected with the psyche : *"C'est sans doute Kent qui a introduit le plus de signes concernant la psyché [...] Les signes mentaux témoignent d'une pathogénie plus ou moins profonde d'origine diverse, avec une expression sur des plans variés tels que, par exemple, des troubles cognitifs.....Mais quand on en arrive à la maladie, elle se manifeste alors sous la forme de pathologies mentales caractérisées: délire, trouble du comportement, de la sphère intellectuelle ou de l'humeur, manifestations compulsives, perversion, psychopathie témoignant ainsi de la fixation de la pathogénie".⁵*

From the moment that it is about mentality or what is called mental signs, the similitude

All the sentences of Kent that are quoted here come from his lectures on homoeopathic philosophy. The translation comes from the bilingual book by Doctor Franck Choffrut, Ed. Narayana, 2015.

² Helga Nowotny (Ecole polytechnique), Peter Scott, Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University, Michael Gibbons, Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, *Re-Thinking Science*, 2001.

³ 'You can destroy the bacterium and not destroy the disease... Bacteria have their usefulness, since nothing was sent on earth to destroy man. Bacterium theory would like to make people believe that the Creator has sent those microorganisms here below to make man ill...'

⁴ *Rêves et cauchemars - un long périple au coeur de l'homéopathie*, Doctor Geneviève Ziegel, Ed. Homeopsy, 2016.

⁵ 'It is no doubt Kent who introduced the most signs concerning the psyche [...] Mental signs indicate more or less profound pathogeny of various origins expressing itself at different levels, such as neurocognitive disorders... But when illness appears, it manifests itself in the form of clear cases of mental pathologies: delirium, behavioural or intellectual problems, mood swings, symptoms of compulsiveness, perversion, psychopathy showing the fixation of the pathogeny.'

advocated by Kent must only be based on profound but subjective comprehension... The deeper we go into the Kentian thought by mentioning what the miasmatic theory underpins, the further we go from the Hahnemannian thought. *"La psore est due à l'attitude mentale de l'humain. L'esprit perversi de l'homme qui ne pense et ne vit que dans le mal, a déclenché la psore. Par conséquent, les autres miasmes ne sont que des conséquences des actes perversi qui agissent sur une économie psorique..."*⁶

Even though the word itself is not exactly pronounced, the origins of all homoeopathic interpretations referring to the original sin appear here.

Many homoeopathic schools, inspired by Kent's thought and not forgetting the fundamental importance of this conception, have developed across the world, from South America to India including Europe. Even if it means saying it again, those schools teach a type of homoeopathy that is very different from that of Hahnemann. And yet, certain of them refer to it... And we shall see that they are not the only ones!

In most countries, unicism inspired by Kent and Hahnemannian homoeopathy coexist peacefully. Many practitioners prescribe alternately several remedies at the same time - which is sacrilege to unicist homoeopaths and even worse to pure Kentian ones. If the fact of prescribing several remedies at the same time remains compatible with the concept of Hahnemann's life force and the principle of similitude, to the unicists supporting Kent's theorisation, it is a reductionist conception of homoeopathy: the innate complexity of the human being (the original sin for some people, and now the break with natural laws for others) and the complex relationship that the sick person has with their profound illness are disregarded...

NB: In order to avoid any confusion, the author would like to say that he does not think that all natural phenomena can be explained by today's or even tomorrow's science.

This religious and holistic aspect is still spreading today with, drifting and taking various forms, the conceptions of Tomas Pablo Paschero, Sanchez Ortega, Alfonso Masi, and a certain number of Europeans. They have been followed, at the beginning of this third millennium, by many evolutions leading, for the last few years, to forms which certain people call 'modern homoeopathy'.

Let us add that homoeopathy has always had detractors but those with the most arguments have, from the eighties, kept up the use of old books (Hahnemann's, Kent's...), especially materia medica, certain parts of which are more recent but do not contain any new remedies. Everything happens as if each homoeopath wanted to share their experience with the known remedies that they use and then copied out the old texts so as to complete their book...

Let us admit that this is not entirely untrue.

Let us take a first example: like all the other leaders of 'modern homoeopathy', one of them considers that Hahnemann was a pioneer of genius but we should also interpret and modernise his work. This is what Doctor Massimo Mangialavori first suggested when he elaborated his theory of homoeopathy. He feels that similitude is too reductionist an approach : if it is advisable today to take it into account in certain simple cases, more often than not we

⁶ 'Psora comes from the mental attitude of the human being. The perverted mind of man, who only thinks and lives in evil, engendered psora. Consequently, the other miasms are only consequences of the perverted actions acting on a psoric economy...'

should go further : "peut-être que l'information la plus utile concernant une substance est la relation qu'elle a avec son environnement, particulièrement ses processus spécifiques et sa stratégie adaptative. Quand cela correspond de façon profonde au processus propre au patient et à sa stratégie, cela suggère que le remède élaboré à partir de cette substance peut être un *similimum*"...⁷

...."Ce chapitre est concerné par l'élaboration de thèmes analogiques qui existent à l'intérieur de trois domaines analogiques : la substance avec son histoire naturelle et mythologique, le remède avec son image et les informations qui y sont liées - tel que l'indiquent nos matières médicales, et le patient. Ils construisent ensemble une interaction. Ces trois types d'analogie sont comme les trois pieds d'un tripode. Il faut les trois pieds pour tenir debout. Chacun est nécessaire. C'est ainsi que je peux définir ma théorie de la "Méthode de complexité".⁸

To the author, it is a real challenge to carry out 'pathogenetic' studies for one has to take into account the whole organism, the behaviour, the dreams, the emotions and, sometimes, many more elements.

But this has not stopped Doctor Mangialavori and his colleagues from publishing about fifty books in which an incalculable number of remedies concerning the vegetable, animal, insect, and mineral kingdoms were studied.

By analysing this approach, we can note that the analogical thought takes another turn with the use of mythology, the comparison of the illness and the sick person to the experiences of a vegetable or animal remedy in its vital process, not excepting the non-scientific criteria accepted in 'pathogenetic' studies. The author acknowledges the gap separating this from the Hahnemannian similitude. However, and like all the other people we shall refer to, he sees himself as a true homoeopath guided by the pioneer whom Hahnemann was.

The most important approach coming from the interpretation of homoeopathy is worth developing. Its considerable success has appealed and still appeals to a great number of homoeopaths: it was at the beginning of the 2000s that Jan Scholten expounded his first theory about the relationships between homoeopathy and the periodic table or 'Mendeleev's Table'. The analogical reasoning seemed obvious from the start: the periodic table represents all the chemical elements arranged in order of atomic number and organised according to their electronic configuration underpinning their chemical properties. **But should one confuse chemical - and not medicinal - properties with homoeopathy?** Let us take, as an example, the vertical group 17 of the table, that is to say, the halogens. By moving from top to bottom in this group, the physical and chemical properties change according to the atomic weight of the elements, that is to say, their horizontal position in the table : this is the reason why J. Scholten - and many of those who refer to it in their work or prescriptions - take into account **both** the horizontal and vertical positions of the elements to deduce from them different homoeopathic properties, with the mentality characterising them individually and according

⁷ 'Perhaps the most useful piece of information concerning a substance is the relationship it has with its environment, especially its specific processes and adaptive strategy. When this corresponds in a profound way to the process proper to the patient and their strategy, this suggests that the remedy made from that substance can be a *similimum*'...

⁸ 'This chapter is concerned with the elaboration of analogical topics existing within three analogical fields: the substance with its natural and mythological history, the remedy with its image and the information that is linked to it - such as *materia medica* indicates - and the patient. Together they construct an interaction. Those three types of analogy are like the three legs of a tripod. It needs the three legs to stay upright. Each of them is essential. This is how I can define my theory of the "Method of complexity" '.

to the fact that they belong to a certain group. After defining that of the elements taken individually, he defined that of the combinations of a positively charged anion and a negatively charged cation. Let us take a simple example: Na⁺, which is short of 1 electron and Cl⁻, which gives it an electron to form a molecule to which new properties are given.

Nothing is forgotten in the interpretation of Mendeleev's Table!

The discovery was too good! Hundreds of homoeopaths have put themselves into it and have sometimes created research groups to supplement Jan Scholten's observations: various properties of anions, of cations; properties of the molecules combining anions and cations, with variable characteristics according to the predominance of each of the components. New medicines are appearing...

It is also important to point out that, given the revitalisation of the phylogenetic nomenclature, the latter has recently started applying to plants the conclusions that are drawn from it, abandoning the previous one based on their sexuality. The cladistic analysis considers the characteristics of all scales to be of the same value: the macroscopic and microscopic characteristics coming from comparative anatomy and embryology, the molecular characteristics coming from biochemistry and molecular biology as well as the data coming from palaeontology are used. Is there anything more scientific? It is the whole of this that is used as the base for the establishing of this classification.

But can we draw any medicinal property from this latest classification?

Only a year after the first edition of this classification came out, a book was published, in which vegetable remedies were studied in accordance with the harmony of the classification with, opposite it, the homoeopathic properties corresponding to it... Jan Scholten announced in it that he had understood that, when one knows how to read modern scientific - mineral and vegetable - classifications, it is easy for one - at least to him - to deduce the homoeopathic properties! If only he is responsible for what he says, it is important to stress that it only commits him and all those who, since they do not have the appropriate training to grasp its subjectivity devoid of scientific foundations, are filled with wonder at this assertion - which Hahnemann would no doubt have condemned. The modernism of homoeopathy that he announces as capable of evolving into the direction of the evolution of scientific research is still, it must be said, to be established!

This would not pose any problems if various types of work were not actively carried out after him, with numerous books mentioning new 'pathogénésies' and, above all else, new - physical, psychological, or mental - homoeopathic characteristics. This work, widely spread, backed up with case studies, poses problems not as such - it remains the responsibility of those who espouse its assertions - but because it is also associated with homoeopathy and **claims to be its new evolution!**

This is all the more confusing as many homoeopaths and teachers now claim to be '**modern homoeopaths**'. They seem to be caught in this sphere of influence and take the place of the ageing traditional homoeopaths. Therefore, they make the Hahnemannian approach far removed from its most fundamental foundations...

In a similar and simultaneous manner, an Indian homoeopath bringing with him all the mysteries and supposed knowledge of his continent seems to have won over many homoeopaths.

His experience of observation would have brought him to define 7 levels of experience in man. Roughly speaking, the first level mentioned is that of the recognition of simple forms

(lines, circles) ; the second one, that of reproduction (copy) ; the third one, that of the appearance of feelings ; the fourth one, that of imagination and illusion ; the fifth and sixth ones are those of (mental and physical) sensation and energy ; the seventh one, everything that has not been mentioned before. According to the author, disease can be experienced at different levels, from the simplest to the most complex.

Then there are three - plant, animal, and mineral - songs. The plant song corresponds to sensitive people, who are afraid of being offended or hurt or, conversely, of offending and hurting. The animal song is concerned with people attracting attention by coloured - or at least noticeable - clothes. Their essential need is to attract attention, to be cheerful and, sometimes, brutal. The mineral song characterises qualities such as resistance, stability, strength, tenaciousness, and performance. The mechanics of our actions, characterised by ten types of reactions, are also defined: panic, crisis, possible, uncertain, persecuted, frozen, claustrophobic, chaotic, isolated, impossible! There is also the meaning of scrawls, which I refuse to detail, since I know, as a former member of the Société française de graphologie, the lack of rigour prevailing throughout the interpretation of those 'signs'.

All those definitions and states are, of course, repeated and detailed in many pages in which the interpretation of dreams is not forgotten.

To conclude, let us quote the author : *"Nous localisons le chant dans la nature qui correspond à celui du patient aussi précisément que possible en utilisant les descriptions des familles pour les plantes et les animaux et l'intersection des séries et des étapes du tableau périodique des éléments pour les minéraux..."*⁹

It is a safe bet that, before long, the families of plants will be replaced in pieces of writing by the complex numbering of the latter, as we find it in phylogenetic books and in the pieces of writing by J. Scholten. 'Modern' homoeopathy is obviously advancing in perfect harmony with scientific progress!

To conclude, let us take another example, that of Germanium.

The German scientist Clemens Winkler discovered germanium on 6 February 1886. Winkler isolated and identified it from the mineral argyrodite coming from the Himmelsfürst silver Mine near Freiberg, Saxony. In 1871, Dmitri Mendeleev had predicted its existence (he had called this unknown element 'ekasilicon Es') and some of its properties **by basing himself on its position in his periodic table.**

Winkler named the new element after his country by analogy with the name Gallium (from 'Gallia', France) chosen by the French scientist Paul-Emile Lecoq de Boisbaudran. But the origins of the name gallium are controversial. It might come not from the name of the country but from the Latinised form of the name of its discoverer 'gallus', 'coq' ('cock') in Latin. Winkler would therefore have been the victim of a semantic mistake. And yet, this theory is opposed to the assertion of Paul-Emile Lecoq de Boisbaudran himself since, in his article about his discovery, he said that he had given the element this name 'in honour of France'.

This approach is very interesting since we have seen that, from a scientific point of view, this metal should, according to Mendeleev himself, have been called 'ekasilicon'.

The name germanium therefore comes from this. It is difficult to link this element to an

⁹ 'We locate the song in nature which corresponds as precisely as possible to the patient's by using the descriptions of families for plants and animals and the intersection of the series and stages of the periodic table for minerals...'

Egyptian or Greek ancestral tradition, to alchemical properties, or to other cultures to define in a modern way, as with the other elements, its physical, psychic, and mental properties... As I do not dare to give too categorical an answer, I shall state a few lines of a recent case study :

... 'A whole context of the Second World War weighs on that family. On the mother's side, the Jewish grandfather was sent to and came back from Auschwitz. On the father's side, the Viennese family escaped into the Austrian Tyrol at the same time... G. says that they regularly dream about the war, about Germans and enemies... This is a caricatural picture of Germanium (since this remedy is linked to Nazi influences)'...

My dear colleagues, this is how modern homoeopathy works.

The medicines are chosen according to the ancient Egyptian, Paracelsian, or other traditions. As Germanium cannot be linked to any old tradition and does not engender recurrent dreams, the last thing that remained to be done was to be able to associate it with the mark of Nazism, since Germanium calls to mind the Germans...

What is terrible - the word is not too strong for me - is to see that many homoeopathic schools train entire year groups of young homoeopaths who consider Hahnemann the father of homoeopathy. And yet, what the supporters of that 'modern' homoeopathy are likely to teach them will encourage them to use a sort of medical science not only far removed from the Hahnemannian rigour but, above all else, very similar to alchemical teachings or to those, even more regressive, which Hahnemann had rejected. Fortunately, certain teachers - notably Doctor Mangialavori - are honest enough to admit it.

We have returned not to the era of similitude but to that of analogy which, it must be repeated, has none of the qualities corresponding to any scientific rigour (symbology, esotericism, Paracelsian studies, structural analogy...).

I must repeat the words of Professor Hélène Metzger, whom I have already quoted in a previous article, but all her strength lies here : "La ressemblance qui permet de classer ensemble plusieurs choses différentes ne resterait jamais à l'état simple ; elle veut être simultanément ordre et action ; elle devient à la fois analogie formelle et analogie agissante bien que, ces deux qualités hétérogènes soient incapables de se réunir pour former une image homogène du monde ; qu'elles sont à la réflexion, incompatibles, et que le savant qui analyse sa pensée ne saura comment les concilier".¹⁰ (It must be noted that Doctor Mangialavori quotes Professor Levy-Brühl, the uncle of Madame Metzger¹¹, the first person who defined the limits of the analogy that was much used by her uncle).

If Hahnemann remains the father of homoeopathy, let us forget similitude now and even the notion of wholeness when we see treating people making the bulk of their diagnoses from the interpretation of a dream, of a mentality and not from a psychic sign, as Hahnemann had taught.

¹⁰ 'The similarity which makes it possible to classify together several different things would never remain simple ; it wants to be order and action simultaneously ; it becomes both formal analogy and active analogy although those two heterogeneous qualities are incapable of being united to form a homogeneous image of the world, they are, on second thoughts, incompatible and the scientist who analyses their thought will not know how to reconcile them'.

¹¹ Hélène Metzger (Chatou, 1889 - Auschwitz?), *Les Concepts Scientifiques*, a publication of the Académie des Sciences.

What is there left of homoeopathy: the diluted remedy, the only Hahnemannian principle used for 200 years by an almost unimaginable multitude of charlatans?

Why the fact of moving away from similitude is a betrayal of homoeopathy: true similitude rests on similitude.

Professor Paul Ricoeur gave us a very simple example that permits to understand it:

- 'Horace is brave like a lion' **is an analogy**. Everything is precise, clear and only concerns one field, since the two comparisons, 'Horace is brave' and 'like a lion' constitute an easy comparison.

- 'Horace is a lion' is a metaphor! Is the lion cowardly given that it only attacks weaker animals or is it brave because it is not afraid of anything? Therefore, is Horace cowardly or brave? This is confusing...

There is **similitude** when the elements that permit to compare the two fields must be obvious.

In what we call 'new homoeopathy', the place given to psychic signs (which are so difficult to identify as identical in two patients) has developed so much that today, through the programme 'Radar', the most comprehensive existing computerised database, it is possible to load the modules corresponding to the somatic studies of a famous 'new homoeopath' and thus to find several different treatments for the same patient. Therefore, how can one make one's choice?

Let us now turn to Cymothoa: this parasite eats the fish's tongue and, above all else, will take its place. The fish will live on and, probably for hormonal reasons that have not been studied given that this parasite has no interest for man, it will manage, to some extent, to control the movements of the fish on which it lives as a parasite.

It is my turn to make an analogy: homoeopathy has developed according to Hahnemann's criteria of rigour for over 200 years; it is hard to imagine the number of homoeopathic organisations that have developed across the world: books, journals, schools, conferences, meetings... To date, there are very few organisations which '**new homoeopathy**' has not infiltrated. But the word is not strong enough, we must say '**infiltrated**' and into which it has not developed to the extent that it has sometimes even managed to control them!

You must now understand better my analogy with Cymothoa!

I shall add that if I were an assailant of homoeopathy, such as there were brilliant ones in the past century, I do not see which arguments you could use against me!

Must homoeopathy, in the ill-defined future, join the troop of the types of medicine of the marvellous or of charlatanism and leave the world of medical degrees?... The situation is serious... But it is not too late to put things back on an even keel... As a scientist, biologist, and founder member of the GIRI convinced of the importance of the place of homoeopathy in the world of medicine and research, it was my duty to express myself on that point.¹²

¹² Translated by Pascale Tempka