

STEINER AND THE SIMILIMUM

Homœopathic and anthroposophic medicine: the relationship of the ideas of Hahnemann, Goethe and Steiner

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Abstract

This is an examination of the interlocking ideas and lives of Hahnemann and Goethe, who never met, although the latter was influenced by the former.

Goethe was the major inspiration for Steiner and so for anthroposophical medicine. Anthroposophy and homœopathy seem to be inextricably linked through the writings and practice of a number of physicians, including European refugees to Britain.

Anthroposophy has had a major influence on British homœopathy since World War II. The two practices and philosophies are compared and contrasted. Anthroposophy may be a divergence from normal homœopathy, valuing a simpler and yet more spiritual practice. An overall question, and a particular theme, is whether a medical practice with such a spiritual inheritance can claim to be a science.

Goethe and Hahnemann

This was the medicine; the patients died,
And no one thought of asking who recovered.
So 'mongst these hills and vales our hell-broths
wrought
More havoc, brought more victims to the grave
By many man the pestilence had brought.
To thousands I myself the poison gave:
They pined and perished; I live on to hear
Their reckless murderer's praises far and near.¹

Goethe's description of medicine through the medium of Faustus, if judged as accurate, provides one background picture against which to view Hahnemann's ideas. They were close contemporaries; Goethe lived from 1749 to 1832 and Hahnemann from 1755 to 1843. It is difficult now from the evidence of biographies to judge how much they influenced each other, and even to be certain whether they met. But it is important for an understanding of homœopathy to examine and analyse their relationship, because their intellectual descendants are in a controversy, which did not exist between Goethe and Hahnemann. This will help both to illuminate the central ideas of homœopathy and to extend our understanding of concepts of normal and marginal science. Homœopathy has its own version of orthodoxy, and its boundaries can be

tested by seeing what may be on the margins.

I propose to bring contemporary evidence of any relationship between Goethe and Hahnemann, the persons themselves and their ideas, as developed by their followers. In particular I shall consider the ideas and influence of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the editor of Goethe's scientific writings and originator of the term *Anthroposophy*.

In 1820 Hahnemann was treating Prince Schwarzenberg, the General Officer commanding the allied armies against Napoleon. "The patient's condition improved extraordinarily well under the homœopathic treatment and this, of course, aroused still more the vexation and jealousy of Hahnemann's colleagues."² The Prince did not desist from his gluttonous habits, nor his allopathic physicians from phlebotomising him, probably contributing to his early death from a stroke.

Goethe wrote of both the rejection of Hahnemann's ideas and the Prince's interest:

In this place a curious game is played by refusing and damming up innovations of every kind, eg. ... nobody is allowed to practice by Hahnemann's method.... But now Prince Schwarzenberg, very ill and probably incurable, has confidence in this new Theophrastus Paracelsus and begs leave of absence from the Emperor to seek a cure across the border.³

Later he made a rather laboured joke - which demonstrated his understanding of one aspect of homœopathy, the minimum dose, when presented with an amulet containing a very small gold ornament:

The jewellers of Frankfurt must have heard of the Leipzig Dr. Hahnemann's theory - now a world-famous physician - and taken the best of it for their own purposes. This man's doctrine is that the millionth part of any given potent drug will produce the most perfect effect and will restore any man at once to complete health. The goldsmiths have worked according to this principle in their treatment of the middle jewel, and now I believe more than ever in this wonderful doctor's theory, as I have experienced and continue to experience so clearly the efficacy of a very small administration.... If it should benefit Prince Schwarzenberg just now staying in Leipzig for this very cure, as much as me, the doctor's fame and reward will not by any means suffer.⁴

¹ J W Von Goethe, *Faust*

² Richard Haehl: *Samuel Hahnemann, his Life and Work*, 1922, Vol. 1, pp.110-11

³ J.W. Von Goethe: *Letters*, Weimar edition, vol. 33, 1820. P.18 another reference p.59.

⁴ J.W. Von Goethe: op. cit., p.191.

In a letter written the following day it becomes clear that Goethe was impressed. "You will receive herewith concise confession of faith of a Hahnemannian disciple,"⁵ by which Goethe means himself.⁶

It is clear from another letter in the same period that for a time Goethe had borrowed and, it could be assumed, read a manuscript of Hahnemann's⁷ and followed his dietary prescriptions.⁸

Husemann shows how Goethe was well acquainted with Hippocrates, Aesculapius, Paracelsus, Boerhaave, and other medical authorities, but does not mention Hahnemann. During an illness in 1823 Goethe took Arnica, a well-known remedy for shock and bruising, colloquially "vallkraut" but he took it in a decoction prescribed for weakness, with no mention of a homœopathic remedy selection or potentisation.⁹

Not only by correspondence did Goethe profess to be a supporter of the new theory, but by means of Mephistopheles: "He hurled such severe criticism at the contemporary state of therapeutic science,"¹⁰ and also in the second part of the drama where he says: "To like thinks like, whatever one may ail; there's certain help."¹¹

Hobhouse¹² suggests that Hufeland was a friend of Goethe's; Hufeland was known as a great philanthropic physician, a true friend of the human race. He was open-minded and reconciled himself to Hahnemann's criticism of venesections, which he recognised to be both justified and well-intentioned-although he regarded it as a sin of omission. Hufeland's journal was continually open to Hahnemann's pen. But again there is no evidence that Hufeland brought Goethe and Hahnemann together.¹³

Hobhouse describes in some detail a relationship and correspondence between Hahnemann and a young patient, Jenny Papenheim, whose family were friends of Goethe's.¹⁴ This is the only fresh reference to Goethe, which Hobhouse makes, other than quotations from Haehl. Hers is a more popular

but nevertheless scholarly and well-informed biography. A more recent popular biography which emphasises the historical and domestic context of Hahnemann's life is by Cook¹⁵ and sheds no further light on the possible relationship between Hahnemann and Goethe. A popular German biography of Hahnemann by Martin Gumpert is based on reference to thirty-three of Hahnemann's works, and another forty German sources, including Schlegel, but does not mention Goethe at all.¹⁶

Despite his Lutheran family, Hahnemann followed Freemasonry during his stay with Baron Von Bruckental. Little is known of the depth of his convictions or of the influence of this initiation and participation on his ideas.^{17 18}

It has been suggested that Hahnemann's knowledge of alchemy and of Paracelsus could have been acquired through his participation in Freemasonry;^{19 20 21} similarly this could have been an influence on Goethe of what has been called the Western esoteric tradition.²²

Demarque suggests that Hahnemann and Goethe had the spiritual bond of Freemasonry in common and that they had friendly relations, but the source for this information²³ is not mentioned. Demarque has published the most comprehensive historical study in French of homœopathy. He makes dear his critical viewpoint in relation to the anthroposophists and the occult,²⁴ and he cites the sources of Steiner's homœopathy in Goethe and Paracelsus. But he does not connect Hahnemann directly with Goethe. The other two references by Demarque to Goethe also are unclear.²⁵

⁵ J.W. Von Goethe: *ibid.* p.197.

⁶ Richard Haehl: *op. cit.*, p.113

⁷ Richard Haehl: *op. cit.*, p.114

⁸ Richard Haehl: *ibid.* p.271

⁹ Friedrich Husemann: *Goethe and the art of healing.*

Trans. R.K. MacKaye and A. Goudschaal, Rudolf

Steiner publishing n.d. p.159

¹⁰ Richard Haehl: *ibid.* p.170

¹¹ Richard Haehl: *ibid.* p.234

¹² Rose Hobhouse: "*The Life of Christian Samuel Hahnemann*", C.W. Daniel. 1933 p.80

¹³ Richard Haehl: *op. cit.*, p.59

¹⁴ Rose Hobhouse: *op. cit.* P.232.

¹⁵ Trevor Cook: *Samuel Hahnemann*, Thorsons, 1981. p.139

¹⁶ Martin Gumpert: *Hahnemann. The Adventurous Career of a Medical Rebel*, Fischer. 1945.

¹⁷ Denis Demarque: *L'Homéopathie, Médecine de L'Experience*. Editions Coquemard, Angoulême. 1968, p. 99.

¹⁸ Eugen Lenhoff and Oskar Posner: *Internationales Freimaurerei Lexikon*. Leipzig, 1932. p. 656.

¹⁹ Robert J. Withers: *Towards a psychology of homœopathy and the high potencies*. Br. Hom. J. 68. 3. p.141, 1979

²⁰ H. Silberer: *The Hidden Symbolism of Alchemy and the occult Arts*, 1917

²¹ Eugen Lenhoff and Oskar Posner: *op. cit.*

²² Geoffrey Ahern: *The Sun at Midnight: the Rudolf Steiner movement and the Western Esoteric Tradition*. Aquarian Press, Northampton, 1984.

²³ Denis Demarque: *L'Homéopathie Sans Masques*. Doin, Paris 1979.

²⁴ Denis Demarque: *op. cit.*, 1968 Ch XXI. *Les Masques d'Homéopathie*.

²⁵ Denis Demarque: 1968, pp.144 & 238. e.g. "les causes, cet immense probleme des Meres.

Despite Goethe's professed belief in homœopathy, Haehl reports that after a severe haemorrhage in his eighty-second year, Goethe was bled to the extent of two pounds of blood. "Broussais was the fashion and everybody ran after him..."²⁶ despite the warnings of Hahnemann of the dangers of venesection thirty years earlier. Broussais, a former army surgeon, derided by some as a medical Robespierre, was widely popular in Germany.²⁷

Goethe was a student at Leipzig five years before Hahnemann, one of many references to the two men not actually meeting, but a biographer nevertheless finds this non-connection significant.²⁸

Both Hahnemann and Goethe were subjects for Pierre Jean David, whom Haehl names as a celebrated French sculptor, but again there is no evidence that they met. Haehl found no reference to Goethe in Hahnemann's writings,²⁹ nor have I.

What is noticeable is how many references to Goethe are hagiography; they are references cited in such a way as to lend status to Hahnemann, to enhance his reputation in retrospect because of Goethe's unquestioned status as a creative writer and philosopher. Nowhere in these biographies is the possibility considered of any correspondence between them about their two separate and distinct approaches to science. Goethe's approach is now further considered.

Goethean Science

Twentyman considers that Goethe invented the science of morphology through his work on plant metamorphosis. Goethe emphasised that the forms of nature were in continuous transmission, that the phenomena of nature were never still, but that forms were changing, continuously interplaying and transferring themselves. This is in contrast to the static notion of Gestalt, of fixed forms in nature. Goethe was not concerned with the Linnaean notion of the classification of plants into distinguishable species:

He was concerned with the unity, which underlies those manifold forms, with what it is that enables us at once to recognise a certain form as a plant. He aimed to discover what is the "plantness" and to grasp this idea, the concept of the plant, in such a

vital and imaginative way that he could really behold it, not as a verbal abstraction, but as a living dynamic creative archetype which by its innate transformations creates the world of plants about us.³⁰

Twentyman attempts to take Goethe's reasoning further and postulates from this a notion that disease "is a metamorphic form arising out of the very innate nature of the being itself," so that mental and physical illness can be shown as manifestations of the same form.

Goethe, in order to systematise comparative anatomy, proposed the assumption of an "anatomical typus," namely a basic pattern of an archetypal "animal" (also of an "archetypal plant") as a general image in which the shapes of all animals would be contained as potentialities and according to which one could describe every animal in a definitive order.³¹ Those qualities which upon comparison of the different forms are found similar or common would fashion the abstract image of the archetypes.³²

Whitmont suggests that Hahnemann used this method in comparing the symptoms common to most of the *provers* with those of the most similar diseases; out of those common or similar qualities he fashioned the abstraction of the totality of a drug picture. This drug picture contains a very special instance of a proving or similar instance as a potentiality. It is an archetypal image according to Goethe's postulate, since neither any single prover nor any single patient can ever actually exhibit all the characteristic symptoms predicted of a drug totality; every actual case presents a rudimentary and varied aspect of the ideal conceptual totality.³³

The drug picture is drawn to assist the prescriber to perceive the archetype in the patient who confronts him. Goethe and Hahnemann compared shapes with shapes and symptomatology with symptomatology respectively.

Whitmont suggests that the comprehension of the archetype established the common connecting idea, and Goethe can help us understand "the individual variations which account for the manifoldness of natural phenomena," by what he describes as metamorphosis. "In the fact that which is of similar

Selon le belle expression de Goethe, on ete reduites par le materialisme de notre epoque aux seules considerations mecanistes d'un determinisme etroit", (p. 144) and a reference to the Schwarzenberg incident (p.238)

²⁶ Richard Haehl: op. cit., pp, 303-4.

²⁷ Trevor Cook: op. cit., p.40.

²⁸ Trevor Cook: ibid.

²⁹ Richard Haehl: op. cit., p.250.

³⁰ L.R. Twentyman: *Disease as Metamorphosis*, Br. Hom. J. 59, 1961.

³¹ Edward Whitmont: *Towards a Basic Law of Psychic and Somatic Interrelationship*, in *Psyche and Substance*, North Atlantic Books. Richmond California, 1980, pp. 34-35.

³² J.W. Van Goethe: *Morphologie*, Stuttgart collected works, Cotta. 1944. Vol. 14, pp. 173-206.

³³ Margaret Tyler: *Homoeopathic Drug Pictures*. Health Science Press. 1952.

concept may appear in its manifestations as like or similar yet even as totally unlike and dissimilar, in this fact consists the ever-changing life of nature.”³⁴

We find that the manifoldness of shapes is accounted for by the fact that a preponderance has been granted over the others to this or that part. For instance, the neck and the extremities are favoured at the expense of the body in the giraffe, whereas the opposite happens in the mole. Upon this consideration we at once meet with the law that nothing can be added to one part without having it subtracted from another one, and vice versa.³⁵

The implication is that when certain qualities become more intense, others are abridged, “leading to a polarity of apparent opposites.”³⁶ Cultivation enhances the blossom of a flower, but its reproductive ability suffers. Grasses have diminutive blossoms, but propagate abundantly in the mental sphere; persons who live in a world of ideas may do so at the expense of their sense of practicality, and the more practically minded often care little for abstract thought.³⁷

Whitmont transfers this idea into a medical context; He calls this an example of the law of complementary balance. Extension and intensification are complemented by contraction and diminishment. Goethe demonstrates this as a metamorphosis in plant forms and in the various animal and human skeletal forms.³⁹ The metamorphosis of plants can be regulated by changing the quality of the soil.

Whitmont finds archetype and metamorphosis as basic dynamic principles of manifestation. But the archetype principle is inaccessible to our direct sense of observation. We feel its manifestations and by reasoning can experience it. He suggests that this resembles gravity and magnetism and our understanding of them. Could it also be analogous to the vital force, the Chi, and the Chakras and our understanding of them? Hahnemann compares the totality of the proving symptoms to the totality of those presented by the patient, and not isolated single symptoms. A totality is represented not by an endless number of details but by the peculiar, unusual and characteristic general qualities that typify the phenomenon.⁴⁰ He shows how to extract

the similar elements of drug and disease; Jung leads one from symbol to psychological problem,⁴¹ and Goethe from symbol to morphology.

Goethe was able to claim the existence of the intermaxillary bone as a scientific postulate in spite of obvious evidence to the contrary. Subsequently it was actually discovered.⁴² Hahnemann applied the therapeutic law of similars. He indicated the effective remedies for persons with the new disease of cholera, before he himself had ever seen or treated a case of it.⁴³

Whitmont suggests that basic archetypal entities are not just a poetic notion:

but an eminently practical approach to a basic encompassing natural law which includes, as special instances, the therapeutic law of similars, the psychic evolution by symbolisation, the laws underlying morphology and biologic evolution, the law guiding psychosomatic relationships, and probably many more- phenomena not yet understandable to us.^{44 45}

The ~~Suppression of physical manifestations of~~ a disorder leads imaginatively pursued by George Adams, whose ideas on projective geometry provide the images from which our understanding of the microdose - will arise. There is a striking similarity between these ideas and those of Paul Callinan, who has been freezing potencies made of water; photographs of these blocks of ice reveal patterns resembling the illustration of Adams' work.^{46 47 48 49 50}

The spread of ideas

In order to make sense of the continued interaction of the ideas of Goethe and Hahnemann, it is necessary to refer to biographic data to trace the

edition reprinted from the 6th American edition. Jain 1982.

⁴¹ Carl G. Jung: *Man and his Symbols*, Aldus 1965.

⁴² Edward C. Whitmont: op. cit., p.37.

⁴³ Richard Haehl. op. cit., p.173.

⁴⁴ Edward Whitmont: op. cit., p.38.

⁴⁵ Rupert Sheldrake: *A New Science of Life*. Blond & Briggs. 1980.

⁴⁶ George Adams & Olive Whicher: *The Plant Between Sun & Earth*, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1952 & 1980.

⁴⁷ George Adams: *Physical & Ethereal Spaces*, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1965 & 1980.

⁴⁸ George Adams: *Potentiation and the Peripheral Forces of Nature*, Br. Horn. J. Oct 1961.

⁴⁹ Olive Whicher (ed.): *George Adams: Interpreter of Rudolf Steiner; his life and a selection of his essays*. Rudolf Steiner, Press, n.d.

⁵⁰ Paul Callinan: *Lecture given at the Institute of Complementary Medicine*. London W.I. Unpublished. 12.11.1984.

³⁴ J.W. Von Goethe: op. cit., p.5.

³⁵ J.W. Van Goethe: ibid, p.176.

³⁶ Edward Whitmont: op. cit., p.35.

³⁷ Edward Whitmont: ibid. p.36.

³⁸ J.W. Von Goethe: *Die Metamorphose der Pflanzten*. pp. 9-139.

³⁹ J.W. Von Goethe: ibid, p.15.

⁴⁰ See Margaret Tyler and John Weir. “Repertorising”. Introduction to James Tyler Kent: *Repertory of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica*, enriched Indian

spread of ideas.

Demarque⁵¹ locates Emil Schlegel (1852-1934) especially as a source for the transmission of occultist ideas from Germany to France through his pupil, Antoine Nebel. Schlegel wrote an influential⁵² text, *Religion der Arznei*.⁵³ Another of Schlegel's pupils, Elizabeth Wright Hubbard⁵⁴ was told that Steiner learned his homœopathy to a great extent from Emil Schlegel. She told Twentyman of Schlegel's long-standing friendship with Steiner.⁵⁵ This connection is confirmed by Demarque and further delineated and located in a definite tradition of the occult, interpreted critically as one of the masks of homœopathy.⁵⁶ Karl König also links Schlegel's *Religion der Arznei* (Religion Medici) with Steiner.

The old doctrine of signatures represents an instinctive recognition of the basic law of homœopathy - *similia similibus curentur* - but becomes a scientific absurdity when applied on the superficial basis of only single attributes, such as Chelidonium - a yellow flower - for jaundice, instead of total phenomena. König suggests that there is a need for a new doctrine of signatures. He characterises Schlegel's attempt at an exposition of signatures as 19th century Pantheism and suggests that only through the ideas of Steiner can we enter step by step into the depth of the various substances, in such a way that their inner nature will begin to reveal itself in the various parts of their appearance.⁵⁷

For König a signature is an aid to understanding the individual substance and its destiny, as a heuristic device for insight into materia medica. Signatures are discussed in a historical context as part of the chain of the transmission of knowledge from Hippocrates, and Paracelsus to Hahnemann and his contemporary, Rademacher.

It is Keller⁵⁸ who not only truly continues the line of the transmission of ideas but puts his finger on the reason why Steiner and some of his followers may be regarded as something other than homœopaths. Paracelsus, Rademacher and Steiner held the view that the physician must first diagnose the organ in

which the disease takes its origin, before the appropriate *organotropic* medicine could be prescribed. Hahnemann, on the other hand, was against such a theoretical approach and depended entirely on the subjective symptoms of the individual *to find a remedy for the particular person, and not for an abstract disease.*

Rademacher was greatly influenced by the teachings of Paracelsus, and his Empirical Medicine⁵⁹ greatly influenced Schlegel. Keller suggests that Rademacher held that only one remedy should be right for one disease, one stage in a disease, or one particular organ that was the site of the primary disease. Rademacher, his predecessors and his followers, believed that once one had identified the nature of the disease it should be possible to deduce the remedy for that disease directly from that identification. (A great English follower of Rademacher was James Compton Burnett,⁶⁰ who practised at the end of the nineteenth century.)

Schlegel's pupil mentioned above, Elizabeth Wright Hubbard, was responsible for teaching homœopathy to Edward Whitmont. Whitmont graduated in medicine in Vienna and continued his studies in psychology under Adler. He learned about Steiner's ideas from Karl König, before seeking refuge in America. He taught homœopathy at the Postgraduate School of the American Foundation for Homœopathy. He also practised and taught Jungian analytic psychology.

This combination of intellectual backgrounds has led to some formidable insights collected by Whitmont in *Psyche and Substance*,⁶¹ to which reference has already been made.

As in so many aspects of professional life, the enterprise of homœopathy in Britain was enriched by the arrival of a number of refugees from Nazism, before and after the Second World War, some of whom practised anthroposophical medicine.⁶² I believe that this is an important factor in the influence of anthroposophy on homœopathy in Britain. Karl König (d. 1966) founded the Camphill movement of curative education, residential care, and treatment for the mentally handicapped, and practised and wrote for the *British Homœopathic*

⁵¹ Denis Demarque: op. cit., 1968.

⁵² Richard Haehl: op. cit.

⁵³ Emil Schlegel: *Religion der Arznei*, 1915.

⁵⁴ Elizabeth Wright Hubbard: *A Brief Study Course in Homœopathy*, Formur. St. Louis. 1977.

⁵⁵ L.R. Twentyman: *Private Communication*, 1.4.82.

He writes that no other anthroposophist has ever mentioned this connection to him.

⁵⁶ Denis Demarque: op. cit., 1979.

⁵⁷ Karl König: *Sepia*, Br. Hom. J., 49, 1960.

⁵⁸ Georg Von Keller: *Chelidonium and Organ Therapy*, Br. Hom. J., 70, 1981.

⁵⁹ J.C. Rademacher: *Rochfertigung der von den Gelehrten misskanteten verstandesrechten Erfahrungsheillehre der alten Scheidekunstigen Geheinarzte*, 3rd edition, 1948.

⁶⁰ James Compton Burnett; *Diseases of the Liver*, 1891

⁶¹ Edward Whitmont: op. cit.

⁶² A.P. Shepherd: *A Scientist of the Invisible, An Introduction to the life and work of Rudolf Steiner*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1954, p.213.

Journal.⁶³ Karl Nunhofer holds office in the Association of Anthroposophical Medicine but is not a member of the Faculty of Homœopathy. Three other homœopaths who were not, as far as I can ascertain, anthroposophists were also both typical and influential. Manasse⁶⁴ was a general practitioner in the Home Counties; Ledermann⁶⁵ practised naturopathy and psychiatry as well as homœopathy, and Leeser,⁶⁶ who had written extensively before the war on inorganic medicinal substances, established a plant collection and pharmaceutical laboratories in High Wycombe. There were undoubtedly other refugee doctors, but I have no further data.

L.R. Twentyman⁶⁷ was editor of the *British Homœopathic Journal* for twenty-one years to 1979 and has been influential in reprinting not only some

of Whitmont's essays⁶⁸ but many more articles from doctors⁶⁹ and others⁷⁰ influenced by Steiner and anthroposophy.

Anthroposophical writings, particularly those on healing plants,⁷¹ have continued to be published in the *British Homœopathic Journal* since Twentyman retired.

In July 1980 there was a letter in the *British Homœopathic Journal* from Dr. R.A.F. Jack.⁷² He cited a circular letter from the President of the Faculty containing a position statement on anthroposophy. He complained of the number, extent, strangeness and blasphemy of a number of articles on anthroposophy and expressed his embarrassment that these articles were issued publicly, and that authors like Pelican are not medically qualified.

In January 1981 Kamla Datt-Lai⁷³ replied with a spirited defence of broadmindedness in principle and the usefulness of other therapies, including anthroposophy.

Dr. Jack referred to unpublished research by Dr. Frank Bondman (who has contributed a number of historical articles to the *British Homœopathic Journal*), delineating the extent of the influence of

⁶³ Karl König: *The Mysterium of Prescribing*, Br. Hom. J., 40, 1951. *At Four o'clock in the Morning*. Br. Hom. J., 57.

1958. *Embryology and World Evolution*, Br. Hom. J., 68. 1969. *Sepia*. Br. Hom. J., 38, 1960.

⁶⁴ Otto Eduard Manasse: *Homœopathy and General Practice*. Br. Hom. J., 38.1949.

⁶⁵ E.K. Ledermann: All in the Br. Hom. J. *Homœopathy and Natural Therapeutics*, 35, 1945. *Homœopathy's Way to Recognition*, 46. 1957. *Implications of Hahnemannian Homœopathy*, 46. 1957. *Homœopathic and Psychological Treatment in Dermatology*, 47, 1958. *Body, Mind and Spirit*, 50, 1961. *Fundamentals of Medicine. A Critical Review of O. Leeser's Conception*, 55, 1966. *Homœopathy and the Existential Phenomenological Approach*, 55. 1966. *The Vital Force in Homœopathy and in General Medical Science*. 58, 1969. E. K. Ledermann: *Good Health Through Therapy*, Kegan Paul, 1976.

⁶⁶ Otto Leeser: *Textbook of Homœopathic Materia Medica. Inorganic Medicinal Substances*, 1932, Trans. L J Boyd, Jain, New Delhi. 1980. Otto Leeser: All in the Br. Hom. J. *Teaching Homœopathy*, 47, 1958. *Actions and Medicinal Use Of Insects*, 48. 1959. *Functional and Structural Similarity*, 56. 1967.

⁶⁷ L.R. Twentyman: All in the Br. Hom. J. *Miasms & Archetypes*, 41. 1952.. *Left and Right*, 41, 1960. *Disease as Metamorphosis*. 50. 1961. *The Problem of Neurosis*, 50. 1961. *Editorial* (The mystery of Physical Life), 53, 1964.

Cancer and the 20th Century, 59. 1970. *Natrum Muriaticum and our convulsive age*, 62. 1973. *Insanity and Cancer*. 63. p. 61. 1974. *The Place of Homœopathy in Modern Medicine in the Light of History*, 63, p.94, 1974. *The Seven Ages of Man*, 63, p.190, 1174 *Sepia in the Male and the Male in Sepia*, 63. p.267, 1974. *Lachesis*. 64. 1975, *The Evolutionary Significance of Samuel Hahnemann*, 64. p. 137. 1975. *Iron*. 65, 1976. *Homœopathy. an Introduction*, 66, 1977. *Editorial* (The History of Homœopathy). 67, 1978. *The Problem of Life and Potentiation in Homœopathy*, 68. 1979. *The liver and Depression*. 69, 1980.

⁶⁸ Edward Whitmont: *Psychophysiological reflections on Lachesis*, Br. Hom. J., 64. 1975. *Natrum Muriaticum*, Br. Hom. J., 68. 1979.

⁶⁹ All in Br. Hom. J. Joanna E. Brieger: Book review "L Kolisko, *Physiologischer und physikalischer Nachweis der Wirksamkeit die kleinste Entitäten*", Stuttgart. 1959, 50, 1961. Peter B. Engel: *Homœopathy & Curative Education*. op. cit., 1960. Rudolf Steiner's *Medical Thinking and its relationship to Homœopathy*, 50, 1961. Norbert Galatzer: *Personality as the Key idea in Homœopathy*, 49. 1960. Norbert Glas: *The Physiognomy of the Temperaments*, 50. 1961. R. Hauschka: *The Physician passes Nature's Examination*, op. cit. Alexander Leroi: *Iscador Therapy of Cancer*, Br. Hom. J. 56, P. 27. 1965. Wilhelm Pelikan: *The Chenopodiaceae*, 65. 1976.

⁷⁰ George Adams: *Potentiation and the Peripheral Forces of Nature*. Br. Hom. J., 50, P. 226. 1961. W. Pelikan & G. Unger: *The activity of potentiated substances*. Br. Hom. J., 62, p.233, 1971.

⁷¹ W. Pelikan: All in Br. Hom. J. *Archetypal Relations between Plant & Man*, 59, 1968. *The Members of Being in Man and Nature*, 59, 1968 (trans. from Heilpflanzenkunde). *Boraginaceae*, 68, p.56, 1979. *Leguminosae*, 68. pp.93 & 155. 1979. *Rubiaceae*, 68. p.188. 1979. *Euopharbiaceae*. 69, p.33, 1980.

⁷² R.A.F. Jack: Letter to the Editor, Br. Hom. J., p. 172. 1981.

⁷³ Kamla Datt Lal: Letter to the Editor, Br. Hom. J. 70. pp.29-30. 1981.

anthroposophy. In 1981 there were 21 members of the Anthroposophical Medical Association.⁷⁴

Another source cites “more than a thousand doctors practising anthroposophical medicine, while probably two thousand medical practitioners are using remedies developed according to anthroposophical principles in Europe, but in the English-speaking world growth has been more gradual.”⁷⁵

Of these 21, nine are cited in the recently-created Homœopathic Handbook⁷⁶ (first published in 1980 and thereafter annually), The handbook lists 175 (1980) and 221 (1982) homœopathic physicians in the U.K. Anthroposophists are not a large group by comparison but certainly produced a substantial volume of written contributions to the journal. These contributions have ranged on a variety of subjects, with polemical, philosophical, heuristic and practical implications, some of which have been referred to in detail. There is now a therapeutic residential community run by anthroposophic doctors at Park Attwood, near Bewdley in Worcestershire.

The ideas of Rudolf Steiner: Anthroposophy*

Steiner has been characterised as possessing a faculty of spiritual imagination in advance of other human beings, for which the physical eye is no longer required (this is a faculty of the mind-not the physical eye).⁷⁷ This imagination was acquired on a path of training which is said to be the direct continuation and development of the Goethean path. To understand Steiner we need to retrace our steps back to Goethe, and to Hahnemann.

Steiner delivered a number of lectures on the theme “From Zarathustra to Nietzsche: The story of the development of man as reflected in World philosophies, from the earliest oriental times up to the present, or anthroposophy.” This was the first time he used the word, which he was later to apply to his own brand of spiritual science: anthroposophy. It had already been used as a word and as a designation by Immanuel Hermann, the son of Johann Gottlieb Fichte. One of Steiner’s tutors at The University of Vienna, Robert Zimmerman, had taken the word as the title for his standard work on aesthetics.

⁷⁴ *The Anthroposophical Medical Association in the United Kingdom*. January 1981. Rudolf Steiner House.

⁷⁵ James Dyson and Charlotte Hollman: *Anthroposophical Medicine* in Ann Hill (ed.): *A Visual Encyclopaedia of Unconventional Medicine*, New English Library, 1979.

⁷⁶ *The Homœopathic Handbook*. A. Nelson. 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984. I cannot ascertain its reliability.

⁷⁷ Ernst Lehrs *Man or Matter*, Faber and Faber, 1951, p.317.

At the age of 22 Rudolf Steiner was given the formidable task of editing the scientific writings of Goethe. He later edited the works of Schopenhauer, the philosopher, and became associated with another philosopher, Haeckel. He edited the German *Literary Journal*. He became a theosophist, a member of a Rosicrucian Society. He was a prolific writer on spiritual life, drama, speech, aesthetics, painting, sculpture and architecture. He devised a new form of movement, “eurythmy,” which was later developed as a form of therapy. The literature suggests he gave “indications”⁷⁸ on the mode of transmission of ideas for both eurythmy and for particular medicaments. This gives a notion of a charismatic figure whose “indication” is sufficient to reify an idea. He has been accorded unqualified adulation by his followers.

In extending his spiritual science to medicine, it is made dear that he admitted only doctors and medical students to his courses on therapeutics, “with a few carefully chosen exceptions.”^{79 80}

*The divine wisdom (Sophia) found in the knowledge of the true being of man and of his relation to the universe.

Steiner describes the dynamics of the healthy human organism as the result of three autonomous, yet interacting and interpenetrating, systems of organs:

the system of *nerves* and senses, extending throughout the body with its main activity focussed in the head, providing the physical basis of sense perceptions and thinking;

the system of metabolism and limbs, which provides the physiological basis for the life of will;

the rhythmic system of circulation and respiration, which is the physiological basis of the life of feeling.

The existence of these three systems is the basis for a classification of illnesses into those with an over-activity of the metabolic pole (inflammatory conditions) and those in which there is a preponderance of the nerve sense pole (degenerative conditions and tumours), so that the three systems are underlying notions of both physiology and pathology. The indications given by Steiner for medicaments assume a correspondence to these systems, rather than to the chemistry of active ingredients.

⁷⁸ Victor Bott: *Medicine Anthroposophique, Un Elargissement de L’Art de Guérir*. Triades. Paris. 1972. p.30.

⁷⁹ Johannes Hemleben: *Rudolf Steiner*, Rowohlt, Hamburg 1963. trans. Leo Twyman, Goulden. East Grinstead 1975, p.127.

⁸⁰ James A. Dyson & Carlotta Hollman: op. cit.

The three systems are further elaborated by a concept of humanity as having a body of formative forces, termed the *etheric* body; by a concept of humanity as sentient beings experiencing an inner life of emotions and drives and so possessing what Steiner calls an *astral* body; and a concept of humanity as being self-conscious, possessing an *ego*.

Various attempts have been made to provide evidence for the existence of these forces, for example, through the existence of “sensitive crystallization of minerals.”⁸¹

In addition to these three levels, there is the physical body. We can now build up some correspondences with the medieval humours and elements:

the *ego* is seen as spirit, as heat organism and fire; the astral body is seen as soul, air organism, and air; the *etheric* body is seen as water organism, as water; and the *physical* body as universal organism, as earth.

The last two are almost exactly coincident in space and only separate at death. The first two are not material, but are particularly evident during sleep.⁸²

Steiner criticised what he saw as a lack of rational relationship between disease and cure in homœopathy, and he tried to do something about it. The remedy, he argued, should be based on a proper understanding of pathological processes. A single, diagnosis should cover all the aspects—that of the disease process and that of the healing process. He sought to bridge this gap not only by deeper understanding of disease process and the relationship between physiology and pathology, but by comprehending the equivalent process in nature and the spiritual world; he claimed scientific insights into the spiritual world; he and his followers applied these to interpretative remedy pictures.

In the last of his *Lectures to the Medical Profession* Steiner said.⁸³

On the other hand, however, I must ask you to forgive me if I point out that a scrutiny of homœopathic medicine does not always furnish satisfactory results. True, homœopathy attempts to handle the human being as a whole: it forms a -comprehensive picture of all the symptoms and attempts to build a bridge to therapy. But the professional literature of homœopathy brings to light

something else calling for comment. At the first glance one is almost in despair, for especially in the therapeutic literature we find the remedies enumerated one after another, and each recommended for an entire legion of illnesses. It is never very easy to discover specific indications from the literature, for everything is beneficial for so much! I will admit that for the present perhaps this is unavoidable. But it is also a source of danger, and this danger can easily be avoided if we proceed as we have sought to do here, even if on elementary lines, and by indications rather than in detail. Therefore, I have selected elementary facts as the content of these lectures and not, so to speak, the very summit of the finished structure. This can only be remedied if through such an inner study of human and extra human nature one ascends to the narrowing of the compass of a medicinal remedy to its delimitation.

Steiner’s aim in medicine was different from that of “classical” homœopathy: wanting to achieve the purely practical aim of curing the one particular patient who is sitting in front of us, we are prepared to forego the full knowledge of the deeper context.” On the other hand, he was concerned to convey this very knowledge. His intention was not to deal with the more technical details of finding the homœopathic remedy, which he assumed his listeners were already familiar with.⁸⁴

For homœopaths, however, the very details are important. In order to find the similar remedy in the individual case, the symptomatology must be considered in great detail. The more the distinguishing details of symptoms agree with the record of the provings, down to the actual words used to describe them, the more certainty there is that the right remedy will be chosen.

“It is the inability to take the step into individualisation which is one of the keys to the identification of a physician who has not fully adopted homœopathy,”⁸⁵ wrote Keller. When Steiner wrote that he could not discover specific indications and that everything was beneficial for so much, he was admitting he was not fully comprehending or adopting homœopathy.

It may be possible, nonetheless, to use the insights of anthroposophy as another facet or viewpoint to help us discover the similimum, so that an exploration of the practicalities of anthroposophical medicine may be revealing.

⁸¹ E Pfeiffer: *Sensitive Crystallisation Processes: A Demonstration of Formative Forces in the Blood*. Anthroposophic Press. 1975.

⁸² Victor Bott: op. cit.

⁸³ Rudolf Steiner: *Spiritual Science & Medicine*, Rudolf Steiner Press. 1920 and 1948.

⁸⁴ George Von Keller: op. cit.

⁸⁵ George Von Keller: *ibid*.

The application of Goethe's and Steiner's ideas to healing

There is no anthroposophical materia medica or pharmacopoeia as such. The nearest to this would be the Weleda* Medicines List.⁸⁶ Weleda UK incorporated many materials from the homœopathic materia medica,⁸⁷ but Weleda of Germany and Switzerland tend to be more exclusively anthroposophic with respect to single substances. Weleda does have lists of inorganic, organic, plant and animal materials, where the materials or processes of preparation differ from specifications in the homœopathic pharmacopoeias.^{88 89 90 91} Also, some of the materials used with an anthroposophical rationale are listed alphabetically, with the specific cases for which they were indicated by Rudolf Steiner, together with quotations from his works, lectures and private communications bearing on the rationale for use of each of these substances, or groups.

*Weleda was a Druid Priestess, immortalised by Francois Rene de Chateaubriand, the priestess of the Celtic Warrior Aristocracy of North West France. The name has been taken by the anthroposophical manufacturing pharmacy.

Because of the nature of classical or normal homœopathy - simple drug picture matched to symptom picture-it is relatively easy, and necessary, to have and to use a *Materia Medica* such as Clarke or Boericke; it is not so easy or relevant to anthroposophical therapeutics in most cases, particularly for simple substances such as naturally occurring minerals, where substance is regarded as process, according to the anthroposophical picture of man. By comparison, homœopathy is empirical. It appears that the form of anthroposophical knowledge is more elusive, in that it is not amenable to codification⁹² or, by implication, computer repertorisation.

The anthroposophical movement has developed its own pharmaceutical manufacturing company, Weleda, established separately in many countries. In

England it produces both homœopathic simple substances and also mixtures used by anthroposophists. But for the simple substances, "one could expect the rationale for prescription to be 'anthroposophic' rather than to be based on the homœopathic materia medica."⁹³

Snook suggests that there is virtually nothing written on the distinction between different methods of potentisation, that is, techniques differing from those in Hahnemann's work. There are certainly no experimental results (in the allopathic sense) or provings (in the homœopathic sense). There is very little on potentisation compared with *dilution* (i.e. without succussion or triturating), except for the work of Kolisko⁹⁴ and Pelikan,⁹⁵ specifically concerned with anthroposophical medicines.

In homœopathy, in order not to make nonsense of its fundamental principle, indications for single materials are largely fixed by the provings in the materia medica and related clinical experience.

The differentiation between the potencies used in anthroposophic medicines is not easy to explain. One could say that the potency is selected in order to work selectively on a particular functional domain of *the threefold* man-the lower potencies, for instance, on the "metabolic-limb system", and the higher ones on the "nerve system".⁹⁶

This differentiation ranges between mother tincture and 30x in general, hence the individual steps are more specifically signified than in homœopathy, where the tendency is to use a few standard potencies-low (6X, 12X), intermediate (30C, 200C) and high (the M range of potencies),⁹⁷ in which different distinctions are observed. Consequently, it has been said that homœopathic potencies tend to act on disorders of and originating in the *nerve sense sphere*, coupled with the cold extraction procedure used for preparing homœopathic tinctures (maceration and percolation only). The distinction between the Similia principle and the process of potentisation is relevant here in gaining a dear picture of why potencies may be mixed in anthroposophical medicine.

The fundamental principle of homœopathy, *similia similibus curentur*. could be seen as separate in

⁸⁶ Weleda UK: *Medicines List*, 18th Edition. 1976, Arlesheim.

⁸⁷ J.H. Clarke: *Dictionary of Materia Medica*, 3 Vols. London 1900-03. W. Boericke: *Pocket Manual of Homoeopathic*

Materia Medica. Boericke and Tafel, 1927.

⁸⁸ E. Gould: *British Homœopathic Pharmacopoeia*, 3rd edition 1882. British Homœopathic Society.

⁸⁹ *Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the USA*, 1961, Boericke & Tafel.

⁹⁰ *American Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia*. 1928. Boericke & Tafel.

⁹¹ *Homoeopathischen Arzneibuch*, 1958. Schwabe.

⁹² Alan J. Snook, Quality Control Pharmacist. Weleda UK: *Personal Communication*, 1982.

⁹³ Snook: *ibid*

⁹⁴ Lily Kolisko: *Physiologischer und Physikalischer Nachweis der Wirksamkeit die Kleinsten Enitäten*, Stuttgart. 1959.

⁹⁵ W. Pelikan and G. Unger: *The Activity of Potentised Substances*, Br. Hom. J. 65. 1971, p.233.

⁹⁶ Victor Bott: *op. cit.*

⁹⁷ James Tyler Kent: *Lesser Writings*, reprinted Jain. Delhi, 1980. Francis Treuherz *The Origins of Kent's Homœopathy* Jain. 77, 4, 1984.

itself, apart from potentising, as it was in fact first applied by Hahnemann, but in practical terms it must be coupled with potentising, in order to reveal the “medicinal virtues” of a substance, such as with metals and minerals or the many poisonous materials used. Various experiments on so-called “potency curves” are recorded, giving basis for the choice of potency in anthroposophical medicine.^{98 99 100 101}

The process of potentization of remedies is one of dematerialisation, rhythmically and systematically getting rid of physical matter, a removing of that which is measurable in quantity, and enhancing that which has a dynamic healing character. Steiner would call it leading matter back into spirit.¹⁰² Even Hahnemann called it “almost spiritual.”¹⁰³

The anthroposophical remedies

Anthroposophical medicine has ways other than the classical - *succussion* and *trituration* with serial dilution as a means of potentising medicines, and other variations in the mode of preparation and prescription. These include:

- *changes in gravitational condition of the remedy by rotation in a high velocity centrifuge
- *allowing a mineral substance to be potentised by a plant which has a special affinity to that mineral; for example: *Ferrum per Chelidonium*, or *Stannum per taraxacum*
- *repeated exposure to light or heat, including the melting of metals
- *taking into account the phases of the moon in the choice of time and date for collection and potentisation
- *ingestion by the patient as itself a form of potentisation
- *the use of injections to place the remedy in the appropriate level of the threefold being
- *combination remedies of more than one simple substance, tincture, or potency.¹⁰⁴

The anthroposophical medicaments are typically prepared to correspond to “take hold of and manage disturbances of an organ, disorders of an organic sphere, from various sides. They should not be regarded as the sum of their individual components, but as unfolding a new therapeutic activity as a

unity, as, in a sense, an intensification of the actions of their individual constituents”. Their names are revealing as possible specifics: *Anaemodoron*, *Choleodoron*, *Dermatodoron*, *Digestodoron*, *Gencyde*, *Hepatodoron*, *Menodoron*, *Pneumodoron*, *Renodoron*, *Scleron*.^{105 106}

The suffix *doron* in the Weleda medicines is attributed to a Dr. Palmer, a colleague of Steiner in the 1920's, and is derived from the Greek *to doron* - the gift. Although anthroposophists claim to see every illness from its individual manifestation, they justify such wide-ranging basic remedies when disorders are considered to be not only the result of individual destiny, but from the nature of the modern age and civilisation. These disorders affect many people similarly and enable the formulation of “gifts” to counteract the pressures and destructive tendencies of our age, as medicines for typical diseases. They were worked out by Doctors Knoll and Eisenberg.¹⁰⁷

Their content is not always in potency but often in tincture, and attention is paid to the ingredients themselves, to the formative forces in their growth, and to the correspondence to the human system, so that *Anaemodoron* comprises *Fragaria vesca* (*Fructarium*) with *Urtica Dioica* (*Planta Tota*).¹⁰⁸

These “natural” forms of potentising have been suggested in a quite different - almost frivolous - way by the French homœopath Maury. He suggests that the growth of the grape and the fermentation of the wine potentises the mineral salts of the earth in different ways in different regions of France. So that a study of the soil will reveal which wine is the best remedy for which organ!¹⁰⁴

The activity of both plants in this preparation depends in essentials on the dynamics of their iron and silica processes; the iron process acts on the blood - forming and circulating forces of the organism and finding through the silica forces its formation right into the periphery of the organism. The sulphur present in the *Urtica* brings about the union of these processes in the metabolic sphere. The indications are the stimulation of iron absorption in hypochromic anaemic conditions, especially in cases where mineral iron preparations cannot be tolerated.^{109 110}

⁹⁸ Fredrich Husemann: *Das Bild des Menschen als Grundlage der Heilkunst*, Freiesgeistesleben, Stuttgart, 1956.

⁹⁹ Victor Bott: op. cit.

¹⁰⁰ Weleda UK: *Medicines List*, op. cit.

¹⁰¹ Lily Kolisko: op. cit.

¹⁰² Rudolf Steiner and Ita Wegman: *Fundamentals of Therapy*, London, 1925.

¹⁰³ Samuel Hahnemann: *Organon of Medicine*. trans. Künzli et al., J.P. Tarcher, Los Angeles, 1982, para. 9

¹⁰⁴ E.A. Maury: *Wine is the best Medicine*, 1974. Editions du Jour, Paris and 1976. Souvenir Press. London.

¹⁰⁵ Victor Bott: op. cit.

¹⁰⁶ Weleda UK: op. cit.

¹⁰⁷ Rudolf Steiner: *Spiritual Science & Medicine*. Lecture 10. Rudolf Steiner Press, 1924.

¹⁰⁸ Walter Bopp: *Eisen und Anaemia. Menschenwesen und Heilkunst* Band 3. Verlag Freiesgeistesleben Stuttgart 1962.

¹⁰⁹ Wilhelm Pelikan: *Heilpflanzenkunde*, op. cit.

¹¹⁰ Fredrich Husemann: *Das Bild des Menschen als Grundlager der Heilkunst*. op. cit.

Not all the pictures are straightforward; for example, *Pertudoron* includes *Belladonna 3x*, *China 3x*, *Coccus Cacti 3x*, *Drosera 1x*, *Ipecac 3x*, *Mephitis 5x* and *Veratrum Album 3x* as whooping cough remedy.

Engel provides an example of iron-deficiency anaemia. The patient may, in homœopathic terms, present a *Ferrum metallicum* picture.¹¹¹

But a reflection on what iron does in nature, the importance of iron to human endeavours in industry, for example, or in warfare; the kind of spiritual forces out of which iron has materialised; all these considerations can tell us more than the microscope and the haemoglobinometer. They can tell us that iron draws human ego down to earth in a particular way, and helps the spiritual nature- of man to work through the power of his will and to make his mark on the earth.¹¹²

Steiner is using a symbolic language to find a correspondence or signature of a medicament. Homœopathy uses the results of the proving evidence from the systematic observations of healthy volunteers ingesting controlled quantities of the substance.

Anthroposophists may give *Ferrum* alone or as a plant potentised preparation or a salt. There are 26 variants in the *Weleda Medicines List* (pages F1 to F3).

A different example of a combined remedy is *Carbo cum methane* as a treatment of steatorrhoea, or intra-intestinal putrefaction. *Carbo vegetabilis* alone may be used by homœopaths for persons with such a condition (if the symptoms fit). Anthroposophists combine heat destruction and moist decay in the absence of oxygen leading to air hunger!¹¹³

Combined remedies have often been viewed with disfavour because they have sometimes been used on the principle that if one of the constituents does not help, then another will. This is not only bad homœopathy, but it is also known that certain remedies weaken or annul one another if given together.

There is a possibility that through Steiner's teaching the very notion *homœopathic* as similar is distorted and confused with *potentisation*, the dynamic release of energy parallel with dilution, so that the core of homœopathy is lost. Husemann, an anthroposophic

physician and psychiatrist, writing of Goethe and the art of healing, suggests that when the human organism is given an allopathic medicine it may destroy the substance, and "the organism itself 'homœopathizes' (potentises). In this sense, the medicine used by the allopathic doctor heals, when it is helpful, only by reason of this 'homœopathic process.'" The homœopathic doctor, through the process of potentising the remedy, relieves the sick organisms of a task for which it very often no longer has strength."¹¹⁴

All mention of homœopathy as "similar" is submerged under homœopathy as an undefined form of potentisation.

The remedy which appears to be the archetype of anthroposophy is *Iscador*,¹¹⁵ *Viscum album* is well known in traditional herbal medicine and has had homœopathic provings. The core symptoms are epileptic and choreic, "a trembling heart, twitching of the limbs at night, severe shaking fits, catelephoid state of insensibility for hours."¹¹⁶ Clarke also mentions epilepsy, chorea, ear troubles, spleen and uterine diseases. He includes a number of curious mental as well as physical symptoms, including premonitions, "feels as if going to do something dreadful while the tremblings are on,"¹¹⁷ and there is mention of a sensation as if a spider were crawling over first one hand and then the other. Tyler, in her inimitable fashion, emphasises that "the symptoms and not the names merely of diseases are to correspond with the remedies."¹¹⁸

By 1980 the anthroposophic literature comprised 111 references to *Iscador*,¹¹⁹ many of them in the *British Homœopathic Journal*.¹²⁰ They refer not to the provings but to *Iscador* as a near specific for cancer, especially as a cytostatic drug in post-operative states and with no side effects.

We can imagine the reasoning even with our elementary exposition of anthroposophy so far. Cancer is a disease of cell proliferation and loss of control. Mistletoe in a parasitic plant of proliferating cells. Here is an obvious signature.

¹¹¹ Weleda UK: op. cit.

¹¹² Peter B. Engel: *Rudolf Steiner's Medical Thinking and its relationship to Homoeopath*, Br. Hom. J. 1961. Vol50. Part 1.

¹¹³ Friedrich Husemann: *Goethe and the Art of Healing*. op. cit. p.159

¹¹⁴ Rudolf Steiner and Ita Wegman: *Spiritual Science & Medicine*. 1920.

¹¹⁵ Mrs. M. Grieve: *A Modern Herbal*, Cape 1931.

¹¹⁶ TF Allen: *Encyclopaedia of Pure Materia Medica*. 1874, Vol. 10.

¹¹⁷ John H Clarke: *Dictionary of Materia Medica*, 1900-1903, 3 vols.

¹¹⁸ Margaret Tyler: *Homoeopathic Drug Pictures*, Health Science Press, 1942, pp.867-8.

¹¹⁹ The Society of Cancer Relief. *Future Plans - The Past Years' Work*, 1980, Arlesheim, Switzerland.

¹²⁰ Alexander Leroi: *Iscador Therapy of Cancer*, Br. Hom. J. 56. 1965.

It has a spherical form; we do not find in it, as in plants growing in the soil, that orientation between upper and lower parts, between forces of gravity and of lightness. Whatever may be the site of attachment of its sucker, mistletoe grows perpendicularly to the branch which bears it, increasing in accordance with its own laws and its own rhythm, freed from the conditions to which other plants must submit. It remains green the whole year long, independently of its exposure to light. Even its sucker stores up chlorophyll in the darkness of the wood in which it has buried itself. The berries of mistletoe ripen in winter without warmth; the leaves themselves are indifferent to their orientation to the light. Thus mistletoe is neither geotropic nor phototropic and has freed itself from both solar and terrestrial forces equally, and this confers on it a very special place in the vegetable kingdom. It is in a way an anachronistic plant which has remained behind from the earliest evolutionary past. That is why it cannot grow directly in the soil but needs an intermediate host. "We could say that it repulses the terrestrial forces and thus behaves in a manner which is the opposite to that of a tumor which opens itself to them. it resists the action of etheric proliferative forces indicated by Rudolf Steiner."¹²¹

The idea is taken further by Hauschka, who suggests that the healer must add to the melody and the symptom picture "Paracelsus's signature of the remedy - he must pay Nature's examination." His example is the remedy *Disci lumbales* CPS, a new medicament for the treatment of intervertebral discs; its chief component is the node of the bamboo cane. It has an "imponderable quality of the creative organising force which gives form and substance..." The primal gesture of the bamboo plant is its uprightness. He cites Paracelsus as mentioning the stone-producing reeds of India, and again refers us to Goethe's teaching of the metamorphosis of plants.¹²²

König considered that there is a correspondence between the drug picture of the classical homœopath and the "true melody" or archetypal plant in nature, as depicted by Goethe. "If homœopathic physicians would become earnest pupils of the Goethean way of nature study, then we should be able, in true Hahnemannian spirit, to celebrate ... this path of approach which was indicated by Rudolf Steiner."¹²³

Anthroposophy should not be regarded as an alternative or rival to orthodox medicine, suggested Steiner, but as an extension at the core of the

concern with formative forces. While the similimum has been partially discarded, the potentised minimum dose in reaction with the vital force is still very much in evidence.^{124 125}

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Note

This article was typed for a computer some years after publication. If any reader finds a mistake, please contact the author: fran@gn.apc.org.

¹²¹ Otto Wolff: *Anthroposophically orientated medicine and its remedies*. Arlesheim 1977.

¹²² R. Hauschka: *The Physician Passes Nature's Examination*. Br. Hom. J. 49. 1960.

¹²³ Karl König: *The Mysterium of Prescribing*. Br. Hom. J. 40, 1951.

¹²⁴ Michael Evans: *Extending the Art of Healing*, in John Davy *Work Arising from the Life of Steiner*, Rudolf Steiner Press. 1978.

¹²⁵ Steiner & Wegman: op. cit.