

Editorial

An Enigma Called Homeopathy

Jaime Hinzpeter C^{1*}

¹Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Chile, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Clinical Hospital University of Chile, Santiago Chile, Chile

*Correspondence author: Jaime Hinzpeter C, MD, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Chile, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Clinical Hospital University of Chile, Santiago Chile, Chile; Email: jhinzpeter@hcuch.cl

Citation: Hinzpeter JC. An Enigma Called Homeopathy. Jour Clin Med Res. 2023;4(2):1-3.

<https://doi.org/10.46889/JCMR/2023.4216>

Received Date: 02-08-2023

Accepted Date: 23-08-2023

Published Date: 30-08-2023



Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CCBY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Editorial

When I speak of an enigma, I adhere to its definition; the one given by the RAE (Royal Spanish Academy), which means: a statement whose meaning is artificially concealed to make it difficult to understand or interpret. Homeopathy (pathos=disease, homoios=similar); was created by the German Doctor Samuel Hahnemann in 1796. He was a man with a restless spirit and deeply dissatisfied with late 18th century medicine. After multiple verifications, Hahnemann creates the law that supports the homeopathic doctrine, the Law of Similars. It states that: "in order to cure a given illness, a remedy must be taken which, when administered to a healthy subject, will cause illnesses 'and if it is capable of making one sick, it is also capable of curing. This principle of dilution accompanies the Law of Similars [1].

There is also a theoretical basis that dates back to the time of Hippocrates (460-350 BC), where there was talk of two currents: healing by opposites or healing by similars. Homeopathy, in particular, proposes cure by what is equal and adds the principle of dilution of compounds. In the latter, we will also find mention of Paracelsus (1493-1541) who said: "everything is poison. Over time, this was refined, especially with later laws (see Arndt-Schultz Law). It happens that according to many people in the scientific community, homeopathy is a pseudoscience and it has not been proven to be true, neither in its principles nor in its results. Or, better said, the mind can create enigmas.

When I speak of an enigma, I adhere to its definition; the one given by the RAE (Royal Spanish Academy), which means: a statement whose meaning is artificially concealed to make it difficult to understand or interpret. For a few moments, the speeches of the political-socialists came to mind as well as images of fortune tellers interpreting messages in cards or gazing at the starry sky as oracles predicting human behavior. But let us bring the subject back down to the ground and let's lower the probe to explore the depths of the enigma. And see if there is a bottom at all [2,3].

Let Us Define Homeopathy

Homeopathy (pathos=disease, homoios=similar); was created by the German Doctor Samuel Hahnemann in 1796. He was a man with a restless spirit and deeply dissatisfied with late 18th century medicine. We refer to that medicine based on bloodletting, indication of enemas and others. After multiple verifications, Hahnemann creates the law that supports the homeopathic doctrine, the Law of Similars. It states that: "in order to cure a given illness, a remedy must be taken which, when administered to a healthy subject, will cause illness" and if it is capable of making one sick, it is also capable of curing (Cure what makes one ill). In this way, the organism is "stimulated" to respond better and the response is more efficient if the remedy is used diluted or in decreased doses. This principle of dilution accompanies the Law of Similars. Hahnemann said that it was to mitigate the effects [4,5]. (In the search for information, especially on the web, there are numerous accounts of a test that the doctor performed on himself with quinine, a substance found in Cinchona tree bark; a very particular story that I encourage the reader to search for and read).

It is not difficult to understand the good will and spirit of good that encompasses homeopathy. There is also a theoretical basis that dates back to the time of Hippocrates (460-350 BC), where there was talk of two currents: healing by opposites or healing by similars. Homeopathy, in particular, proposes cure by what is equal and adds the principle of dilution of compounds. In the latter, we will also find mention of Paracelsus (1493-1541) who said: "everything is poison, nothing is poison, only the dose counts". Over time, this was refined, especially with later laws (see Arndt-Schultz Law). It's clear so far, however, it happens that according to many people in the scientific community, homeopathy is a pseudoscience and it has not been proven to be true, neither in its principles nor in its results a placebo effect perhaps? We well know that the mind can take us to realms with no physical laws. Or, better said, the mind can create enigmas [6].

Homeopathy and Mesmerism. They occurred almost, almost in the same era. The enigmatic story of the doctor Franz Anton Mesmer, who cured a relative of the musician Mozart, is well known. His theory about animal magnetism was labeled as nothing more than magical bungling and, in the long run, it discredited the doctor and led to oblivion. Today, no one talks about animal magnetism. However, a different case occurs with homeopathy. This has not changed as far as its name is concerned and even less so with regards to the principles on which it is based. We have seen that they are quite clear and have been refined over time. That clarity and "permanence" over time has led it to have a great number of followers and also, by the way, detractors. The scientist, philosopher and physicist Mario Bunge clearly stated that homeopathy and others, are a wide collection of therapies without scientific basis or proof. Despite the latter, Bunge said that a doctor is an individual who philosophizes all the time and it is evident that homeopathic medicine relates well with philosophy and even more so with vitalist philosophy and Aristotelian knowledge. Well, let us philosophize then.

Aristotle was considered the first vitalist philosopher and he said that the soul is life and energy (and that physical disease is the result of the soul being diseased). He also added that this energy or vital force that moves the organism and that is, the material instrument of life, cannot be conceived separately (although the mind tends to separate realities). It is certainly not objective, of this writing at least, to delve into the disguises of "energy", but rather to review its meeting points. Homeopathy states that the organism is a whole and if one part is affected, its entirety is affected. Life after the Covid pandemic has changed habits and sensitivities (and incidentally, chronic pathologies have increased or existing ones have been accentuated). Sometimes one lets go of beliefs or clings to them. Opponents bitterly refute what they don't agree with or believe in. If we browse the internet and filter out dubious or unreliable pages, we will find many testimonials of "people who have been saved" by homeopathy. Ordinary people with a first and last name who have been healed, for example, of rheumatoid arthritis and even pediatricians who have successfully worked with young children. We can even find renowned voices such as the Nobel virologist, Professor Luc Montaigne, who encourages not to rule out homeopathy. Contrary to this, the WHO has indicated that homeopathy does not protect or cure diseases. There are also testimonials from people who are resigned to the fact that homeopathy was of no use to them. In the cases of success, I take it for granted that it is difficult to verify the mechanism or active principle that cures, but this does not mean that the state of healing of the patient is false [7].

Is it possible to be a good homeopath and not believe in vitalism? I believe there is nothing against having the best of both worlds, knowing that many of the homeopathic physicians come from the allopathic field. The clashes of theories and opinions are nothing new in the history of the world. Worlds that have been opposed in many different eras. We can see that Aristotelian vitalism collided with Descartes' rationalism and was then rescued by Bergson who asserts that the spirit should not be fragmented and that there are no pieces of the soul that correspond to parts of the body. The doctor and philosopher Victor Frankl achieved a sublime level of refinement. He followed that vitalist line with his creation: Logotherapy (therapy that focuses on "what makes sense to you"). Frankl, in the exercise of his profession, faced traditional canons in his unwavering search to follow his own path.

Whichever current you adhere to: strict mechanistic, vitalist, humanist, holistic or translational, homeopathy and although the homeopath is little given to philosophy, is still used worldwide today (more popular in some countries than others, such as in France) and if its success is due to a suggestion, illusion or energy that has managed to materialize into physical matter, there is nothing more left than to celebrate it. Each one will be able to unravel the skein of the enigma. Personally, there is a statement about homeopathy that seems a bit defensive to me and that avoids perhaps deep issues: "homeopathy cures all diseases, but not all patients". To highlight and debate. But, how then? Those who were not cured, do they not share a soul in common with

those who were healed? Or is it that those patients, with their lack of vital energy or involution of healthy habits, are not fit to be healed? and that not even the placebo test tube is enough to fill the existential void (without considering this time the enigma or disguise of energy called Faith) [8].

As a health minister said at the time when it was sought to ban Dr. Hahnemann from exercising the Dr. is a genius and if it were to happen that his theory lacks any value, it will fall on its own. But, it certainly hasn't. It has not fallen. And perhaps the answer to the enigma is much simpler. Homeopathy today, just as over two hundred years ago, seeks the balance of the human being. An objective or an end similar to philosophy, which is: "Philosophy helps us correct things that could make us sick," in addition to building bridges and helping others [9].

Keywords: Enigma; Patients; Law of Similars

Conflict of Interest

The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

References

1. Diccionario RAE, Gebauer GH. La homeopatía: preguntas y respuestas. Ed. Zigzag. 1991.
2. Mario B. La ciencia, su método y su filosofía. Argentina. Ed sudamericana. 1989.
3. BBC News mundo. El mesmerismo, la cura para todo en la que Mozart confió. Enero. 2017.
4. JH Clarke; AG Farrington; K Stauffer; AV Gerhart. Repertorio clínico de homeopatía. 7ma Edición basado en los autores. Hoechteter/Prólogo.
5. BBC News. OMS advierte en contra del uso de la homeopatía. OMS. 2019.
6. Morales PRE. Implications of positivism as a philosophical current in the general and current perception of homeopathy. Homeopathy from Mexico. 2016;86(704):24-8.
7. Lladó A. Vitalism: philosophical foundation of Homeopathic Medicine. Natura Medicatrix: Medical J Study and Dissemination of Alternative Medicines. 1992(28):20-1.
8. Bastidas Martínez L. El objeto como acto de pensamiento hace del cuento abandono y pasividad de Antonio di Benedetto una obra del arte (Doctoral dissertation, Universidad de Nariño). 2011.
9. Frankl V. Logoterapia y análisis existencial: textos de seis décadas. Herder. 2018.

Journal of Clinical Medical Research



Publish your work in this journal

Journal of Clinical Medical Research is an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal publishing original research, reports, editorials, reviews and commentaries. All aspects of medical health maintenance, preventative measures and disease treatment interventions are addressed within the journal. Medical experts and other related researchers are invited to submit their work in the journal. The manuscript submission system is online and journal follows a fair peer-review practices.

Submit your manuscript here: <https://athenaeumpub.com/submit-manuscript/>