

Translation: Judith Widderich

In this comment the author reacts slightly ironically on articles of Naumann/Wallach and Appell (*Allgemeine Homöopathische Zeitung* 2/2003), in which the objection is stated that the genuine homeopaths are addicted to a "naive realism" as they don't take into account that there is no objective observer existing.

*Uwe Plate, Germany*

### **Homoeopathy or fictitious humbug – that is the question.**

Homoeopathy - and this is undeniable - deals with a medicinal therapy, that is the treatment of diseases with remedies.

What makes a remedy a remedy, are its effects on the organism. Remedies must change something, in order to be able to heal, "they must work". The fact that effects of remedies cannot be distinguished by colour, odour or taste, and much less by „idealische Alfanzen“ (fictitious humbug), as Hahnemann would call it, was already pointed out by the founder of homoeopathy more than 200 years ago, and repetition is undue, because everyone can read up on it.

The signatures were the very reason for the birth of homoeopathy; the reason for no longer attributing medicinal effects to superstition, but rather to investigate (and to apply) them based on scientific criteria. By means of this abolished superstition however, one wants to „extend“, „enrich“ and „perfect“ homoeopathy, because scientists have allegedly recognized the fact that there is no such thing as an objective observation.

"Even many contemporary homoeopathists orientate themselves according to the idea that homoeopathy could function solely based on observation, without any theory or speculation. These ideas are based on epistemological conceptions which were fundamentally false and yet not uncommon two hundred years ago.

Nowadays neither philosophy, nor the natural sciences would still seriously support the theory of an outside world capable of objective observation (the concept of so-called naive realism). Even physics, a long-time stronghold of scientific objectivity, came to the understanding, – and that happened almost 80 years ago – that observation is never independent of the observer“ (Naumann/Walach) (1).

At last we know that as homoeopaths, we are subject to the conceptions of so-called "naive realism" and believe that remedial effects are observable. These observations are incorrect, in fact the entire *Materia Medica Pura* is wrong, because the effects of remedies cannot be observed at all, for the observer changes the object to be observed by his observation. Indeed, Schroedinger demonstrated this absurdity with his cat, nevertheless the arguments are still used to justify the choice by signatures:

"Knowledge, which in the meantime is part of our general background, like the participation of the observer in the observed system, is negated, be it in natural sciences, psychoanalysis or social sciences. Instead of facing the problem of alleged objectivity of symptoms in homoeopathy, one is upholding the idea of a fictitious genuine observation." (Appell) (2).

I have to admit that it escaped my general knowledge, that there is no such thing as a genuine observation, but then again I am not that well educated. Now I know, there is no such thing as an objective observation, neither in psychoanalysis, nor in the social and natural sciences nor in the case of homoeopathy.

If only I had known this decades ago, when I had to „boil analyses“, I would have never given

up my study of chemistry in favour of homoeopathy. We had to find the point of titration with the exact colour change to attain the correct analysis and so had to observe it carefully. The analyses were correct, however what in God's name did we observe? There is no such thing as an objective observation in the natural sciences.

Does light actually belong to the natural sciences, too? I have the red traffic light in mind, because I use to observe it very carefully. A few years ago, I thought I could still make it on yellow, and in my opinion it was definitely yellow. However, the policemen driving behind me had taken a photograph and it showed a red light. What can you say against an "objective" photograph, or does the observing camera alter the observed object as well? Or does the observer change the photo, which he looks at? Was it perhaps yellow after all, but everybody wanted to see red, quite subjectively speaking?

And what about homoeopathy? The symptoms of the *Materia Medica Pura* are not objective observations. We cannot rely on them, we have to use different „observations“, ones which are not observations, so that the observed object does not change. We have to come up with something else, for that is not an observation, and can therefore not be considered as objective. I tried to explain to the police that the light was yellow, but for some reason they did not accept this. They insisted on having „observed“ red, and they also had alleged objective „evidence“ in form of a photo. The fact that there is no such thing as an objective observation, obviously is not considered general knowledge of the German police.

Thus we should not observe symptoms in homoeopathy, but rather invent them, for instance like the signature-homoeopaths discovered the opening of the *Pulsatilla* blossom in the evening as a signature for this remedy. What about the postulated correlation of the evening aggravation of *Pulsatilla* (aggravation of the symptoms), with the evening opening of its blossom? How do we know that *Pulsatilla* opens its blossom in the evening? Perhaps because it was "observed"? But that is not objective, for the observer changes the observed object. So, how do these signature-artists know, whether or not *Pulsatilla* really opens its blossom in the evening? Perhaps it does it only, when it is observed, and as soon as the observer turns his back, it closes its blossom again quickly.

And how do those homoeopaths, not adherent to naive realism, know that *Pulsatilla* has an evening aggravation?

Perhaps they adopted it from the observers of *Pulsatilla*'s remedy provings? That would be very unscientific, because the observer changes the object. But even if *Pulsatilla* actually does, objectively, observed or not (how can one know?), open its blossom in the evening; what does this have to do with the effects of this remedy on the organism?

"On the third reading" (Hering writes about the study of the *Materia Medica Pura*) "one should pay attention to the connection of symptoms... beware of general sentences like: worse in the evening, worse by movement and things of that nature; this contributes little to getting to know a remedy and is often detrimental to remedy choice. What we need to know, is: which symptoms become worse in the evening or by movement" .(3)

Having cited this text by C. Hering, which is considered a classic, I now belong to an ideological community, but nevertheless I quote him. It is a matter of respect that I do so, as the knowledge and rules regarding homoeopathy are not mine, rather Hering's, Hahnemann's and so on. I just do not want to pretend that they are mine, even if it is unscientific, for J. Wichmann writes in the AHZ: "The methodology of homoeopathy, considered as an ideological community, will be the interpretation and observance of certain texts understood as „classic“. The methodology of homoeopathy considered as science, will be based on the empirical study of health, disease and remedies as well as on the continued development of appropriate theories." (4)

Thus the quoting of texts, understood as classic, for instance those by homoeopathy's founder, is unscientific and belongs to a sphere of fundamentalism, whereas the empirical investigation of disease, health and remedies is considered to be scientific. Man is to investigate empirically („based on experience“), meaning a method of discovery, which is based on the experience of observation (definition of an etymological German dictionary).

How can this be made compatible with the findings of modern science, according to which there is no such thing as an objective observation, and what did Hahnemann do 200 years ago as an adherent of naive realism? Did he observe and research empirically? Yes, he observed and researched for more than 50 years; he worked on empirical and scientific ground for over 50 years. Yet, whenever we quote the results of this empirical research, it is unscientific. We are not permitted to use such quotations. This is reserved for fundamentalists, belonging to an ideological community. The solution lies in the "continued development of appropriate theories". An "appropriate theory" is e.g. the signature, from which one can conclude remedial effects of plants by their behaviour, as we can perhaps draw conclusions with respect to the effects of Pulsatilla on the treatment of diseases, due to the fact that Pulsatilla opens its blossom in the evening. Thus, we supposedly attain "objective" knowledge of remedies, which is not based on falsified observations (or fundamentalistic quotations), if we go on developing this theory. Therefore, I will develop it further someday like the „illuminist“ Kent did. This is not speculation, as Moskowitz writes: "Even if Kent uses his experiences fancifully, it does not mean that he speculates or goes beyond detailed proving symptoms – he just dramatizes them in connection with real human beings, so that the remedy is no longer just an accumulation of symptoms, but rather a vivid unit, a kind of synthesis of all those who ever took it. In this sense Kent was the first "illuminist" of a proud lineage continued by Vithoukas, Whitmond and Coulter, up to Sankaran and Scholten." (5)

It cannot be that difficult to join the proud line of illuminists, if one has enough imagination, in particular since even the illuminists had false illuminations, e.g. with Pulsatilla, because they interpreted the signatures the wrong way. According to Kent, the Pulsatilla man thinks it condemnable to have sexual intercourse with his wife, (why does he not go beyond the proving symptoms with that?), and according to Sankaran, the Pulsatilla woman is afraid of men and sexuality.

Did the insider not understand the signature of the blossom? Pulsatilla does however open its blossom after sunset, which correlates with the evening aggravation of this remedy. The blossom's opening serves pollination and thus reproduction. In this sense, the blossom's opening is conducive to pollination and, corresponding to Pulsatilla's evening aggravation, indicates an aggravation for the "shy Pulsatilla" being, because it is to be pollinated (fertilized). The blossom opens in the evening, the opening serves pollination, and the opening is an aggravation, because it is our job to distinguish medicinal effects from the plant's behaviour. Otherwise we just get an "accumulation of symptoms" and not a "vivid unit." Accordingly, the fear of sexual intercourse (pollination) arises in the evening. But what if the blossom closes during rain? That is the opposite of opening, and so the opposite of aggravation (because based on the behaviour of plants we are to distinguish their effects on the human organism), and therefore improvement. Consequently, the Pulsatilla person experiences an improvement of sexual fear during rain and hence desire while raining. However, this cannot infer that Pulsatilla is shy, when it has sexual desire while raining. Miss Wet-T-shirt was a Pulsatilla person!

Inhibited sex only in the evening, if possible after sunset in the dark. This is the time of aggravation, this is when Pulsatilla has no desire. During the day, when it is light outside, preferably barefoot in the rain with a wet T-shirt, that is the "shy" Pulsatilla person. But this

is by no means a demonstration of shyness. Ultimately, the "Materia Medica" should be corrected. Pulsatilla cannot be shy, just as a wise old saying goes: "Still waters run deep". We have to integrate the wisdom of our ancestors in our Materia Medica; only then will we be able to cure illness.

Do we really want to carry on with this humbuggery, working "scientifically", "developing theories", or should we not rather turn to Hahnemann's homoeopathy, and make sick people healthy, which is called healing?

We slowly but surely have had enough of what so many doctors have wasted time and energy on up until now in their thirst for fame, enough of nonsense ideas („Pulsatilla has fear of men and of sexuality“) and hypotheses ("the observer changes the observed object"), disguised in incomprehensible words and a torrent of abstract phrases ("naive realism"), supposed to sound scientific ("scientific science theory"), in order to impress uninformed people, while the sick world is sighing for help in vain. It is this kind of learned fanaticism – they call it the "academic art of medicine" and it even has professorships of its own and illuminists, too, and "pharmacologies" of its own – which we have had enough of by now (we have had enough of it for hundreds of years!), and it is about time that those who call themselves homoeopaths, finally stop deceiving the poor people by their idle talk. ("Man is not alone when speaking – the universe speaks too – everything speaks – infinite language/theory of the signatures" (2) or perhaps Starship Enterprise – infinite space?). Instead, the homeopath should begin to act, that is to really lend a helping hand and heal.

### References:

- Johannes Nauman, Harald Wallach: „Entwicklung ist nötig - Antwort auf ein Manifest“, Allg. Hom. Zeitung 2/2003
- Rainer G. Appell: „Jeder verlässt Hahnemann auf seine Weise - Über homöopathischen Pietismus und Erkenntnistheorie für freie Menschen“, Allg. Hom. Zeitung 2/2003
- K.-H. Gypser: „Herings Medizinische Schriften“, S.611, Ulrich Burgdorf, Göttingen 1988
- Jörg Wichmann: „Homöopathie - Wissenschaft und Magie“, Allg. Hom. Zeitung 2/2003
- Richard Moskowitz: „Die fundamentalistische Reaktion - ein Wiedersehen mit einem alten Problem“ (Original: „The Fundamentalist Backlash: Revisiting an old Problem“), HANP-website (2002)

Uwe Plate is author and editor of the books "Hahnemanns Arbeitsweise mit dem Symptomenlexikon" and "Symptomen-Lexikon der Materia Medica", based on an idea of the founder of Homoeopathy, S.Hahnemann.

(To be purchased under [www.symptomenlexikon.de](http://www.symptomenlexikon.de))