

Philosophy in Homoeopathy of AYUSH

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Abstract

Dr. Shankar Raghunath Phatak (1896-1981) in his *Materia Medica & Repertory* books mentioned in the preface of these two books about how homoeopathy is a science as well as an art. [1,2] A homoeopath is only successful when he/she uses his/her scientific & artistic skills. Here, in homoeopathy through the art, enters the philosophy. This is the main focus of the article where in the philosophical aspect of homoeopathy has to be understood & applied in therapeutics. The background of the therapeutics of homoeopathy rests on philosophy. The article looks into the background, history & its journey into the 2025 year of 21st century. The article also examines the influence of philosophy towards the developments of Homoeopathy not only in India but at the global level. Touching upon the basics of philosophy, the article also traverses through the academic progress & curriculum development in Under Graduation of homoeopathy academics & education in India.

Keywords: Homoeopathy, Philosophy, *Materia Medica*, *Organon of Medicine*, Theology.

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INTRODUCTION

We humans occupy a patch of light in a great darkness of ignorance. Each of the special discipline has its station on an arc of the circumference of that patch of light straining to see outwards into the shadows to descry shapes & there by to push the horizon of light a little further outward. Philosophy patrols the whole circumference making special efforts on those areas where there is no special discipline trying to formulate the right questions to ask in order that there might be a chance of formulating answers. [3]

Philosophy is a retrospective construct. The subject had the general meaning of rational enquiry.

Philosophy is divided into moral philosophy & natural philosophy. In fact, the word scientist was coined in 1833. Philosophy is general whereas science moved from general enquiry to specialism & technicality. The principal areas of enquiry are epistemology, metaphysics, logic, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, political philosophy, history of debates in these areas of enquiry, philosophical examination of assumptions, methods & claims of other field of enquiry in science & social science.[3]

Metaphysics & epistemology are the physics & chemistry of philosophy. Logic is the general instrument of philosophy as mathematics in science. The scientific

reasoning that has deductive or inductive logic in fact gave birth to the 'Materia Medica' of homoeopathic therapeutics in 1790. Prior to that in 16th & 17th centuries, philosophy gave birth to science. In the 18th century, it gave birth to psychology, in the 19th century to sociology & empirical linguistics. In the 20th century, it developed Artificial Intelligence (AI) & cognitive science. Currently, we see that it is trying to influence human behavior in the era of predominant use of Information Technology (IT). [3]

The challenge of homoeopathy lies in finding out the scientific validity of the therapeutic system as the system uses very high dilutions as medicines. Here, it is prudent to cite Paul Valery who said 'a difficulty is a light whereas an insurmountable difficulty is a sun'. Efforts to solve the unsolved teach us an enormous amount as the history of philosophy attests. Thus, philosophy encourages homoeopaths & the scientific fraternity to solve the homoeopathic puzzle. [3]

Philosophy is to theology what agriculture is to gardening. Philosophy is much bigger, broader & varied enterprise & theology is the particular, localized & focused one that talks & theorizes about a god. This is the meaning of the concept of Theologus. The following section describes how theology impacted the philosophical aspects of the homoeopathic therapeutic system. [3]

Charles J. Hempel, chair of Materia Medica & therapeutics at the Hahnemann medical college of Philadelphia developed the phrase 'Correspondentia Correspondentibus Curantur on the lines of Similia Similibus Curantur'. In the United Kingdom, James Garth Wilkinson co-related the doctrine of degrees which states 'greater the number of dilutions in homoeopathy, the greater the potency of medicines. Similarly in Theology, higher the level of spirituality, closer someone is to god'. [4]

Dr. James Tyler Kent, a homoeopathic stalwart followed the philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg, who led a mystical Christian religious sect & believed that illness had spiritual causes. Swedenborg mentions 'you cannot divorce medicine & theology. Man exists all the way down from his innermost spiritual, to his outermost natural'. [4-6]

Kentian homoeopathy followers were Margaret Tyler & John Weir in the United Kingdom, Pierre Schmidt in Germany & Denis Demarque in France. Dr. Kent wrote his 'Lectures in Homoeopathic Philosophy' book through the 36 lectures in the book. All the philosophical aspects in the book are attributed to the teachings of Swedenborg. [6-8]

Philosophical Homoeopathy

Following Kent, other homoeopaths like Stuart Close, H. A. Roberts wrote extensively on the

philosophical aspect of Homoeopathy. The art of homoeopathy flourished in 19th & 20th centuries. Similarly in India, another homoeopath named B.K.Sarkar wrote Hahnemann's Organon of Medicine while dealing with philosophy extensively. The book is a milestone in homoeopathic philosophy & its therapeutic reflection in 20th century. [9-11]

In the 21st century, another homoeopath, Professor Laxikant Nanda wrote the book 'Science & Philosophy of Homoeopathic Materia Medica'. The book was a tool to help establish the Post Graduate curriculum of Homoeopathy in India. The application of homoeopathic philosophy in therapeutics is from the point of evaluation or gradation of the symptoms. In homoeopathy, when the word 'general' symptom is used, it means that the symptom affects the person as a whole. This means when the patient uses the word 'I' in describing a subjective symptom, it indicates a general symptom. [10-13]. As an example, the patient says 'I am thirsty & not that 'my tongue or mouth is thirsty'.

To elaborate further, the patient says 'I' am hungry & not 'my' stomach is hungry. Hence, Appetite is a general symptom in homoeopathy. Similarly, the patient uses the word 'I' for catching a cold, craving for any food, disliking for any food, intolerance for any food, sleep & dreams, sweating, wound healing, bowel habit, thirst with dryness of mucus membrane or no dryness of mucus membranes are broadly the physical generalities. [13]

Similarly, desire for solitude or not, irritability, consolation aggravates or ameliorates, jealousy, memory, doubts, fastidiousness, loquaciousness, depression, impulse to commit suicide, sympathy, empathy are the broad mental generalities of the patient. [13]

The other book by the homoeopathic stalwart Dr. Kent is his 'Repertory' or popularly known as Kent's repertory. There are two prefaces in the Kent's repertory of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica. One is on 'use of the repertory, how to study the repertory & how to use the repertory' by Dr. Kent. The other is 'repertorising' by Dr. Margaret Tyler & Dr. John Weir. These two were followers of Swedenborg's philosophy as well as Kent's philosophy. In fact, the explanation of general & particular symptom is elaborated by Tyler & Weir. These two also explain that when the patient refers to the word 'my' instead of 'I', it is a particular symptom. [13]

The philosophy becomes individualistic when the symptoms are seen through the modalities which are basically qualitative & differs from person to person. The individualized symptom is highly qualitative as it cannot be generalized. This is the 'individuality' perspective of homoeopathy.[13] The personalized medicine approach is the current toast of modern medicine & it is nothing

but the 'individuality' approach which is the pivot of homoeopathic therapeutics.

Materia Medica & Philosophy

In the earlier section, the article discussed the influence of philosophy in homoeopathy in the last decade of 19th century & the first quarter of 20th century. On looking back, the birth of the therapeutic system had its roots in philosophy. Dr. Hahnemann in 1790 discovered the homoeopathic principle using the logic of Aristotle & Francis Bacon. The inductive logic of philosophy helped with the birth of Materia Medica whereas deductive logic helped with the increased bulk of the subject. [10]

Under the inductive logic, the major premise was that the drug 'Cinchona' or 'China' cures malaria as it produces malaria symptoms on healthy body. The minor premise of the inductive logic was that other drugs were also added in the Materia Medica using the same principle. Hence, the inductive logic started with 'China' & arrived at a universal truth preceding from observed particular truth that 'Like Cures Like'. [10]

Under the deductive logic, we arrive at a particular truth deducing it from a universal truth. Here, the major premise is that substances when potentized & proved can be employed for cure on patients having signs & symptoms. The minor premise was that new drugs can be incorporated into the Materia Medica. [10]

Besides, Aristotle & Bacon, the 'Association' concept of the philosopher J.S. Mill (1806-1873) is related to Dr. Hahnemann's theory of matching the symptoms of the drugs elicited during Human Clinical Trials or 'Drug Proving' with the symptoms of the patient. It is to be noted that Dr. Hahnemann used the concept of 'Association' in 1790 even before J.S. Mill was born. [8] Mills 'Naturalism' theory had the component of 'Associationism'. [10,14]

As the importance of philosophy gained traction, the syllabus for the bachelor's degree in homoeopathy in India in the year 2025 has included the basics on the subject of philosophy to augment the current subject of Organon & Homoeopathic Philosophy in the bachelor's degree since the current academic year in India. Further, the subject of 'Research Methodology' has also been included in the bachelor's degree since the current academic year 2025 in India. [15]

In the first year of the bachelor course in homoeopathy, there is a subject on fundamentals of 'Psychology' in relation to homoeopathy. In the fourth year, there is a subject on 'Research Methodology & Biostatistics'. The subject 'organon of medicine with homoeopathic philosophy' is across the entire bachelor syllabus. Hence, the study of philosophy is a cross-cutting area across the entire homoeopathic education in India. [15]

The philosophy section in chapter six of a book on homoeopathy encompasses the issues of symptom, susceptibility & hierarchy. In the chapter, five models of health are given. These are relational, holographic, holistic, biological & pathogenic. The choice of potency for these models is from higher to lower as given in the order mentioned above. These five models of health are also compared to the models of health where the relational model is related to ether, holographic to fire, holistic to air, biological to water & pathogenic to earth. [16]

Further, these are related to Dr. P. Sankaran's (A Mumbai based homoeopath 1922-1979) levels also where ether is related to 'energy' level, fire to 'sensational' level, holistic to 'delusion/emotional' level, biological to 'fact' level & pathogenic to 'name' level. The chapter also gives clues to understand ways of expressing depth in relation to the five models of health. The 'relational' model of health is related to 'intensity of relationship'. The 'holographic' model is related to a 'layer of theme'. The 'holistic' model is related to 'breadth of causation/totality'. The 'biological' model is ascribed to 'level of symptom'. Finally, the 'pathogenic' model is tuned with 'penetration of cause'. [16]

To explain the sorts of perception in each model, an example is illustrated in the book. 'Penetrating cause' perception is through the example 'I am tired as I did not sleep well'. The 'level of symptom' perception is through the example 'I am weak & lethargic'. The 'breadth of constitution & totality' perception is through the example 'I always want to be busy'. The 'layer of theme' perception is through the example 'my digestion & bowels are rushed'. The 'intensity of relationship' is through the example 'I make others buzz'. [16]

There is also a metaphor through the sailing of a boat. This metaphor shows the interplay between an individual's susceptibility, their environment & the symptoms generated by their vitality. The book mentions the entire homoeopathic therapeutic system through five themes. These are philosophy, Materia medica, the case, case analysis & case management. Under one section titled 'causation & the presenting symptoms', the sixth chapter of the book is on philosophy where the sections like 'symptom', 'susceptibility' & 'hierarchy' is described under the philosophical context. [16]

Summarization

Philosophy gave birth to so many subjects & homoeopathy adds to the list of these subjects that were born out of philosophy. The basic of philosophy is to ask questions & similarly in homoeopathic therapeutics, the basic is to ask the right questions & interpret the answers rightly, prioritize the symptoms in the right manner, grade the symptoms, use the logics like inductive, deductive & associative & prescribe the appropriate remedy for the case in hand.

The basic in homoeopathy is individualization of each patient & the concept of individualization is intricate to philosophy. Currently, the modern medicine is focusing back on the art of medicine as well because too much technicalities in science have subsumed the technique of the art of practicing medicine. A relook into the philosophy & its artistic application in therapeutics like homoeopathy will only benefit the masses & the nation at large as the system is cost effective, clinically effective and has no side effects.

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