

## Spagyrics

By Juergen C. Bauer

*Basically, we must realize that what we perceive of the world can only be a segment of reality - and that we modify our perception of this segment in ways corresponding to our consciousness.*

If the human organism did not possess a fascinatingly great self-healing capability, all of our therapeutic efforts would be for nothing. Even with diseases which as far as anyone can judge are certain to be fatal, spontaneous healing sometimes occurs. The capability of the organism for regeneration and self-healing must not be underestimated. We must investigate the basic causes of these self-healing processes; for here is where the therapy must exert its effect. Basically, only the human organism can heal itself; as therapists, supporting these self-healing processes is our primary function.

To provide support for self-healing in the holistic sense, it is essential to search for the underlying causes of the disease.

Naturally, there are many reasons why diseases develop. Paracelsus (Theophrast von Hohenheim) stressed - more than half a millennium ago - five factors that cause diseases to develop. He called these disease causes entien. To my knowledge, the paracelsian entien correspond to the following factors:

1. Physical, climatic, geographical influences
2. Toxic influences
3. Constitution and disposition (genetics)
4. Psychosomatic causes
5. Superordinate to these first 4 factors is the quintessence, Paracelsus' ens dei, now also commonly referred to with the concept of karma.

Additionally, there were 4 levels - we would perhaps call them Earth, Water, Fire, Spirit .

- body - physis - element: earth ▽
- life - ether - element: water ▽
- soul - astral - element: fire △
- spirit - element: air △

- that were very important for diagnosis and treatment. The medicine of Paracelsus was spagyricism, a naturopathic method that due to its ideological background, fostered a particularly holistic view of the human being. This view broadens the usual approach to diagnosis and therapy.

Spagyricism can be described as holistic because diagnosis and therapy start from the concept of a unified whole consisting of body, life, soul and spirit - what lies behind these concepts is regarded as reality. Above all in the early pre-pharmacological era in which spagyricism came into being, human beings regarded themselves as such quadrupartite beings. That was possible because mankind lived in an entirely different state of consciousness than is true today.

Basically, we must realize that what we perceive of the world can only be a segment of reality - and that we modify our perception of this segment in ways corresponding to our consciousness.

People who think purely materialistically and mechanistically tend to hold the correspondingly materialistic and mechanistic views and try to understand the world around them in such terms. In the world of today, this point of view permeates the whole of science. To reverse this development, it is necessary form a kind of synthesis from the more intuitive awareness of times past with modern modes of thought. This is urgently needed to avoid having our minds become paralyzed by a type of materialism that practically dominates the whole developmental process. For the materialistic-mechanistic thinking advocates of the modern natural sciences which even shape and mould social and political opinion, our feelings and even what we call happiness are ultimately nothing more than chemical processes in our brains. In this connection, the oft-quoted lines from Faust II spoken by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Mephistopheles come to mind:

This is how I recognize the scholarly gentleman:  
What you don't touch, is miles away.  
What you don't grasp, simply doesn't exist!  
What you don't calculate, you believe, cannot be true.  
What you don't weigh, has for you no weight.  
What you don't coin, you believe has no worth.

Incidentally, it is worth mentioning that in his youth, J. W. von Goethe's life was saved by a spagyric medicine.

Spirit and soul have been declared as non-existent in the modern natural sciences because the ability to perceive them has been lost; materialism is narrowing our field of vision more and more. This has consequences in many fields - in medicine and drug research as well. The logical consequence of the materialistic and mechanistic way of thinking is that medicaments are defined exclusively in material - that is, chemical - terms.

In naturopathic circles, another perspective has been able to survive. Today as well, naturopathic therapists and their patients see - quite apart from all theoretical concerns - the therapeutic efficacy of medicaments confirmed in practice which modern pharmacologists assume must have no or only slight effects.

### ***The starting substances***

Spagyricism is a naturopathic method because in producing its medicaments, only natural substances are used, and it readily integrates other naturopathic applications in its therapy.

For the production of spagyric preparations, only natural substances are used; here, great importance is attached to origin and quality. Substances which do not come from nature have no link to human evolution. In a certain sense, they can be referred to as dead material which is unable to engage in fruitful communication with actual life processes.

In detail, the natural substances used are the following:

- Fresh plants and drugs
- Botanical substances (e.g. cream of tartar, resins)
- Naturally occurring minerals and rocks
- Native metals
- Compounds produced from natural substances in spag. laboratories
- Animals and animal substances (e.g. snake venoms)

All materials employed should have as natural an origin as possible: from gathering in the wild or from biological cultivation. Only in well-founded exceptional cases, can the so-called conventional drugs be used. An important and well-known example is myrrh; another is Orthosiphonis, a medicinal plant from the labiate family. The plant from which the drug (Folia [leaves] Orthosiphonis) is produced is native to Southeast Asia. It makes no sense to cultivate it in our latitudes, and in its homeland, no drug can be obtained from spagyric-biological cultivation. Nevertheless, due to its therapeutic properties, this botanical drug is extremely important for the elimination of toxic substances via the kidneys as well as for the treatment of renal disease. In spagyricism, this justifies the use of the drug - which normally is intended for phytotherapeutic application.

Nowadays, it is best to produce the medicinal plants using spagyric-biological cultivation. For some medicinal herbs, gathering in the wild is no longer acceptable because it fosters the eradication of the plants or at least represents a major intervention in the (still existing) balance of nature.

For the spagyric-biological cultivation of medicinal herbs, nature is always taken as the model. If possible, medicinal plants that are used for cultivation should have a wide variety is desired here. Therefore, the plants should not - where possible - be reproduced from root division or using cuttings. Seeds should always be used for reproduction.

It is very good to use medicinal plant seeds of the same type but from different regions for growing young plants.

It can also be important to harvest a certain stand only every 2nd or 3rd year. The plants should - to the extent possible - be allowed to form seeds that germinate to form new plants. Here as well, spagyric cultivation methods are based on the model of nature.

As has already been pointed out, chemical fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides should of course not be used (biological cultivation or gathering from the wild). Instead, spagyric preparations are used for strengthening the specific plant vitality.

It must be particularly taken into account that the medicinal plants should be harvested in the developmental stage that is ideal for efficacy. This assumes special knowledge of the natural rhythms.

By means of spagyric medicinal plant cultivation, areas can be created which represent a popular living area for many endangered animals, particularly many insects and birds. It creates areas which are free from toxic substances and not intensively cultivated.

## **History**

From today's perspective, the historical origins of spagyricism are unclear. What we do know is that a spagyric medicine already existed in China in the 8th century before Christ; it was based on the alchemical views of the day and in later eras, was also closely connected with Taoism. The situation in ancient India, Persia, Tibet, and naturally in Egypt was similar to that in China. European alchemy and spagyricism was strongly influenced by Egyptian alchemy.

In the Indian Ayurveda medicine, we can still find alchemical views and preparation processes today, and particularly in the Southern Indian Siddha-medicine as well. Viewed from the spagyric point of view, particularly the botanical preparation processes of contemporary Ayurveda medicine are unfortunately carried out on a qualitatively very low level.

The intellectual origin of spagyricism lies in alchemy. Alchemy is based on ancient wisdom - concerning the earth, cosmos, and man - which is also referred to as the science of life in the material universe. One should not be deterred by the term, alchemy. With it is not meant the distorted image of a degenerated alchemy that has shaped our ideas from the Middle Ages down to the present century. In reality, alchemy is a magnificent philosophical and (in the truest sense of the word) scientific edifice that many peoples have helped to erect.

The science of life in the material universe was given different names in different cultures and ages. We in Europe refer to it as alchemy (Alchymie), a fitting term that it seems appropriate to continue using.

To the extent that alchemical work dealt practically with prophylaxis, diagnosis, the production of medicaments, and treatment, one talked of spagyricism.

Accordingly, spagyricism is the practical application of alchemy in medical treatment.

The word, spagyricism, that we use today probably first came into existence in the Middle Ages. It is derived from the Greek and means something like separate/divide and unite/bind. This separation and uniting is of significance to spagyricism on all levels. Indeed it is the significance of life processes for example expiration and inspiration.

One of the most famous spagyricists was Theophrast von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus. However, during this period and later, there were many other spagyricists who are no longer familiar today because their work did not come to public attention.

Substance, information, power

To understand spagyricism, it is appropriate to distinguish between three levels: they are:

1. The material or molecular level
2. The information level
3. The powers level

Please note that these levels cannot actually be viewed as being completely separate from one another. However, to understand their relationship to one another, it is simpler to discuss them one by one.

### **1. The substance level**

Here, we must consider the purely physical effect of chemically defined medicaments. This is the level with which modern pharmacology is concerned. In practical drug research, the conscious concentration on this level alone leads to the active chemicosynthetic agents and also to pure plant substances which, like the other chemical compounds, are employed above all for substitution and suppression. As a rule, they exert a clear pharmacological effect, which says nothing however about whether they also possess a therapeutic efficacy.

### **Example:**

In human beings, certain chemical substances produce an narcotized state similar to sleep by means of blocking the production or transmission of messenger substances: suppression. For this reason, traditional medicine uses such substances with sleep disturbances. Apart from the well-known side effects (e.g. liver damage, disturbance of the REM phase, hangover, dependence, etc.), an acquired tolerance develops relatively quickly, which requires increasing the dose. What is interesting, however, is that after discontinuance of the drug, the sleep disturbances are as a rule considerably more severe than before the therapy. In reality, the medicament employed had no curative influence on the disorder and it was therefore not therapeutically effective; the sleep disturbances were only masked.

## **2. The information level**

Whereas the production of chemically defined medicaments takes only the substance level into account, homeopathy concentrates above all on the information level.

According to homeopathic ideas, a vehicle substance (ethanol/water, lactose, or something similar) is impregnated with the structure of a certain primary substance. This impregnated primary substance information is intended to stimulate a reaction in the organism by which the healing process is initiated.

### **Example:**

If one drinks too much coffee, one can't sleep. But if one can't sleep without having drunk too much coffee and a state very similar to that produced by coffee is present, one can take, for example, *coffea* 24X. *Coffea* no longer contains anything from the coffee and naturally therefore no caffeine. Only the vehicle substance, therefore the ethanol-water mixture, sugar, or milk sugar, is impregnated with an impression of the primary substance at the molecular level. The body reads this message and immediately initiates a counter-reaction; in this case, sedation. Since no caffeine has been taken into the body via the potentized *coffea* administration which must be compensated for by the body's reaction, sedation takes place and one can sleep.

This is possible on the information level or better, on the false information level. The information caffeine is false in that it deludes the organism into reacting as if caffeine were present.

## **3. The powers level**

Now we come to the level of the powers. For spagyricism, the powers level is of paramount importance, and by means of the spagyric production methods, primarily natural substance-specific healing powers are developed from natural substances.

We must assume that something like a primordial power, an elemental force, exists. This primordial and universal life energy is present in the cosmos, in the atmosphere, in water, in every mineral, every plant, every animal, and every human being. However, it is not always present in the same form. Every natural substance and naturally every organism corresponds to a highly specific modification of this originally universal vital energy. Such a vital force was known to many cultures and peoples. An example is the CHI of the Chinese. CHI was influenced with the help of acupuncture. In Japan, this energy was called KI, the Indians referred to PRANA, Baron von Reichenbach called it OD, and Wilhelm Reich, ORGON. In alchemy (Alchymie) we call it CHY. Whether or not all of these terms refer to exactly the same thing has not yet been investigated. However, these concepts at least included the different revelations or effects of this elemental force. The presence of specific vital powers or vital energies is what also differentiates natural substances

from synthetic substances. The specific healing power of a natural substances is of course quite different than that of a petrochemical/ synthetic or similar substance, if one indeed can speak of the healing power of such dead substances.

The energy which represents to a certain extent the basic component of this universal vital force can be termed electricity. This term was used accordingly by spagyrics like Krauß, Mattei, and Glückselig around the turn of the century. This force - or better, these healing powers - are important for therapeutic regeneration. They are also effective when the vital capability to respond to information is lacking.

With the aid of spagyric processes, natural metallic, mineral, and botanical substances are used to develop medicaments with indication-specific healing powers whose site of action lies in the realm of the living/vital processes.

Let us return to the sleep disturbances, which have different causes. The therapist ascertains the cause and designs his treatment accordingly. It is the underlying problem which therefore must always be treated! However, it is often the case -even with exogenously induced sleep disturbances - that they are fostered by certain constitutional factors and factors related to the initial vegetative condition. Often, a weakness of the nervous system is involved. This weakness concept, which is not used readily in modern medicine, is of special importance in naturopathic and holistic medicine. In addition to the disease which can be referred to by using the name of the clinical diagnosis, holistic medicine takes account of among other things constitutional factors on which differing dispositions and diatheses are based.

A constitution is not a disease. It is the idiosyncratic genetic character modified by the sum total of the spiritual, mental, and physical impregnations. In terms of prophylaxis, the treatment with spagyric preparations for strengthening the constitution is of great importance. Disposition refers to the individual tolerance against illness-producing stimuli. The weakest organ is the first to react pathologically to strong stimuli. By the application of spagyric preparations, the individual tolerance can be increased.

The term, diathesis, refers to the inability to compensate for even weak stimuli. Certain organs or organ systems represent the weakest link in the chain and break when placed even under only mild stress. By means of the appropriate ways of living and therapy, diatheses can be lastingly compensated for.

The so-called weaknesses are connected with these factors. Weaknesses always represent a lack of vital energy. This can be a general deficit or a deficit located only in the region of an organ or organ system.

For example, with certain types of neuropathic constitutions, states of exhaustion develop very quickly. These patients for whom formerly a diagnosis of irritable asthenia was readily made tolerate psychic stresses that are of minor importance for other constitutional types only very poorly. Usually, they sleep very lightly, wake up in response to the slightest sounds, and don't feel rested and refreshed in the morning.

In young people and with a reasonable life-style, no disease develops. However, after decades or in crisis situations, a true disease can develop. In these patients, there is a tendency to migraines, neuroses, gastric and cardiac diseases, etc. Prophylactically and therapeutically, it is important here to treat the causes, which lie in the sensitive weakness of the nervous system.

By means of spagyric preparations which are aimed at effecting the CNS, an organ-specifically

modified healing power can be supplied to the CNS. This healing and strengthening effect proves indeed to be therapeutically efficacious in practice, for sleep disturbances as well, within the context of holistic therapy (i.e. taking account of differing causes). In spagyric therapy, first priority is given to strengthening the weak points by supplying specific healing powers for so long that they are again in a position to carry out their functions on their own.

If a disease of an organism is diagnosed, the corresponding therapy can be easily derived from the diagnosis. However, this treatment must be broadened with a holistic and constitutional therapy. The precondition for proceeding in this way is a holistic and constitutional diagnosis which should be made as a matter of course by the naturopathic practitioner.

Particularly with conditions which are difficult to treat like, for example, allergies or neurodermatitis, it is always reasonable to search for and treat the weak points because for treating the disease only in strict accordance with the clinical diagnosis, usually only masking and symptom-oriented measures are available.

In practice, spagyric preparations are most appropriate for holistic therapy; for they exert effects on all three levels because due to the specific steps in the preparation process, the material substance level, information level, and powers level are preserved and in part strengthened. Since the effect of these remedies is also on the level of (healing) powers, they can also be used to therapeutically induce organisms which have a lack of the vital ability to react to (healing) information.

Genuine spagyric medicaments are energy accumulators which contain an indication-specifically modified healing power. They are related to the chemically defined medicaments by their material basis, and to the homeopathic remedies by the intensive impregnation with information concerning the primary substance. But they only become genuine spagyric remedies by means of the development of specific healing powers.

In comparison to the treatment with chemically defined medicaments, a physiological process, for example, is not simulated, but rather regenerated with spagyric medicine.

In contrast to classic homeopathic treatment, no vital energy for responding to the healing stimulus is required from the organism. For this reason, spagyric preparations are also suitable for the treatment of patients who lack vitality and elderly patients. Initial aggravation almost never occurs unless one considers particular detoxication reactions to be initial aggravations. With such processes, it would be more reasonable however to talk in terms of reactions.

The three philosophical principles

Sulphur, mercury, and sal are old alchemical terms. Sulphur doesn't mean here the element, sulphur. Mercury not the element, mercury. And salt not the substance, salt. These substances are used as symbols.

### ***Sal - Mercury - Sulphur***

- Sulphur stands for soul – astral ♁
- Mercury for life – ether ♀
- Sal for body – matter ⊖

In a spagyric medicament, sulphur, mercury, and salt must be united. Clear parallels to the three levels of substance (sal), information or plan (sulphur) and power (mercury) can be recognized here.

It is indeed the case that in addition to the material basis, which is what makes it possible to handle

the remedy in the first place, specific (healing) power must be present to an unlimited extent in spagyric medicaments. Here is the original universal elemental force which has however been modified in accordance with the primary substance. All three (substance-sal, power-mercury, modification-sulphur) form a unit. The alchemical term salt denotes among other things the material basis of a spagyric preparation. Mercury in this context stands for the healing power and sulphur for its indication-specific orientation.

- Sulphur = indication specific design of healing power, plan ♁
- Mercury = healing power, vigor ♀
- Sal = material base, body ⊖

### **Natural healing power**

Spagyricism is, when healing powers are developed from nature which are therapeutically effective when used as medicinal remedies. For alchemy, the metals are cosmic forces transformed into matter, every plant is an accumulator for a particular cosmic-biological force, and spagyricism attempts - based on the alchemical views and knowledge - to find these very specific (healing) powers in nature and develop them from the natural substances.

For the development of healing powers, various natural substances are subjected to different spagyric preparation methods.

As an example, I would like to describe a spagyric production method that is perhaps not generally well-known. It is a laboratory process, a special spagyric distillation also called cohobation. This method can be very important at certain stages of medicament production. With the help of cohobation, botanical, mineral, and metallic preparations can be brought onto a higher level of the healing power.

With cohobation, the solution of a salt, for example, is distilled in a suitable glass apparatus. The distillate obtained in this way is added again to the residue - therefore to the salt which is left behind in the distilling retort. Then distilling is again carried out and the distillate reunited with the residue. A process which from the chemical point of view remains baffling and incomprehensible. This process can be repeated a variable number of times. It leads to a modification of the salt and to a modification of the solvent and distillate. For spagyricism, the most important thing is that this process leads to the development of a highly substance-specific healing power. The solvent is repeatedly separated by distillation from the salt and then united with it again. Here, we again encounter the separation and uniting that give rise to the word, spagyricism. This is a process that one can compare with exhalation and inhalation as described above. What really takes place during cohobation is hard to describe in words. One should witness the preparation process once or have carried it out oneself. By contemplating such a spagyric process, one can come closer to intuitively grasping its true nature than is possible based on anything that can be described in words.

So-called rotations and circulations are applied for very similar purposes as cohobation. These are very special spagyric reflux distillations which can also be carried out in accordance with certain rhythms like, for example, the day/night rhythm. These rotations or circulations are carried out over a long period of time (e.g. for 28 days). They too lead to a strong energization and to the development and intensification of the substance-specific healing power.

Additionally, there are the so-called calcinations and reverberations - here energy is always supplied in the form of intense or very intense heat - and many other procedures.

The description of a process includes both the method and the substance or substances which are

prepared using the method. The therapeutic efficacy of spagyric preparations provides proof of the correctness of the processes.

Spagyric preparations can be very well combined with high-quality waters or with medicinal herb teas. These represent ideal vehicles for the taking of spagyric medicaments. One can, for example, add the patient's entire daily dose of the required spagyric preparation to one litre of water and shake it thoroughly so that the components that are only slightly soluble in water are distributed as homogeneously as possible. The ethereal oils of the medicinal plants are still contained in spagyric preparations. But the concentration of ethereal oils is so small that they become distributed very homogeneously in the water by shaking. The patient is instructed to take these preparations at times distributed throughout the day. The solutions should be freshly prepared every day. One can also use teas which are produced with a drug mixture suitable for the indication. As a rule, medicinal herb teas are allowed to cool before the spagyric remedy is added. It is easy for working patients to take such preparations with them in a bottle to take at their place of work.

Spagyricism is an ancient healing art. But it is still important today. And in future, when mankind develops beyond the one-sidedness of the materialistic-mechanistic mode of thought, this importance will become considerably greater.

If we wish to be pioneers of this future, we must concern ourselves again with this ancient science spanning cosmos, earth, and man - the science of life in the material universe.

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