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## Why and How to Study Organon of Medicine?

*Abstract: The core book of Homoeopathy is the Organon by our Master. Do we read it? Have we mastered it? The answer to both questions has to be "Yes" if we aim to be successful Master Homoeopaths. I hope this article stimulates all - Editor*

**Dr KRUTIK SHAH MD(HOM)**

"Holistic Homeo Care" B-1 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Pioneer Shopping Center Nr C P College Crossing, Bhalej Road Anand - 388001.  
Gujarat Phone: (02692) 255500 Mobile - 09825891948

The question is: Why and How should we Study the Organon of Medicine by Dr SAMUEL HAHNEMANN?

HAHNEMANN himself used to be very annoyed on those who were too lazy to carefully read his

directions in *Organon*. But the facts are that unfortunately most Homoeopaths are poorly acquainted with Hahnemann's *Organon*. Yet, there is no doubt that this is the *single most important work* on the subject, providing the very



base on which the study of its single foundation principle (*Similia*) and its application begins. The *Organon* remains largely unread and even ignored subject reveals the real *agony* of our institutions and the teachers on whom lies the onus of training future Homoeopaths. This article wishes to encourage those Homoeopaths to revisit our basic source, to be serious and study it continually and realize its full relevance and unmatched genius.

**HAHNEMANN WRITES:**

"Many persons of my acquaintance but half converted to Homoeopathy have repeatedly begged me to publish still more exact directions as to how this doctrine may be actually applied in practice and how we are to proceed. I am astonished that after the very particular directions contained in the *Organon of Medicine* more special instructions can be wished for."

"I am also asked, 'How are we to examine the disease in each particular case?' As if special enough directions were not to be found in the book just mentioned."

**CMF VON BONNINGHAUSEN**, HAHNEMANN'S most respected and trusted student and colleague stated the following with regards to the general neglect of *Organon*:

"It seems at present to be a rarity for any Homoeopath to re-consult the "*Organon of Healing*," and I know several individuals who do not even possess this book! Yet it is indisputably the basis of the Homoeopathic healing art! So many valuable grains of gold are enclosed within it, that every reading of this remarkable book, especially when read by the older practicing and experienced Homoeopathic physicians, ever new and important instruction and intelligence may be gained, so that its neglect cannot be too sharply reproved."

**Dr J T KENT** himself gives the following comments on the *Organon*:

To learn the *Materia Medica*, one must master HAHNEMANN'S *Organon*, after which the symptomatology and a full repertory must be the constant reference books, if careful

Homoeopathic prescribing is to be attained and maintained.

**ADOLPH LIPPE** made it a rule to read *Organon* once a year and said that every time he discovered something, that he had not observed before! Those sections which describe the examination of patients should be more especially studied, for your *Repertories* and *Materia Medicas* will avail you little if you do not examine your patients as HAHNEMANN teaches." A thorough understanding of the *Organon of medicine* is indeed essential to its most effective application in each and every case of illness.

**Dr J N KANJILAL**, who taught himself Homoeopathy (after his basic allopathic medical training), said it provides interesting guidelines, for those of us in a similar position where (at the present time at least) a proper, comprehensive, high-level institutional training in Homoeopathy is mostly unavailable.

**Dr. KANJILAL** has very well stated the method which he utilized in his self-education in Homoeopathy. He has advised three steps relating to the study of *Organon*:

1. "In the first reading: every word of every aphorism together with its footnotes must be read very carefully with meticulous attention to the commas, semicolons as well as the parentheses. Never be satisfied until the whole meaning of the aphorism, with its logic and connotation becomes quite clear. In this reading, of course, the whole book, beginning from its name to the last line of the Appendix must be read thoroughly."

2. "In the second reading each aphorism should be read in the context of the whole *Organon* including the Appendix as given in the 5th Edition, translated by DUDGEON. Before starting the second reading a thorough perusal of the "Contents" of the same book, as given just after the preface to the Fifth Edition should be given. This will help greatly in forming an idea of the arrangements of the different topics taught in the book.

3. After that, while reading any aphorism, other



aphorisms dealing with the same point should be reproduced.. For example: The phrase *accessory circumstances* occur in aphorisms 5, 7 and 94; *an accessory symptom of the remedy occurs* in 163, 167, 180 and 181; *an accessory symptom of the disease occurs* in 5, 7 and 95; and so on. All these groups of aphorisms should be read together, so that the whole sense of the theme becomes quite clear."

"After these two thorough personal readings, this book should most advantageously be read in a study circle of friends and colleagues who has already done minimum two readings of the book. Each member of the study circle should try to explain his grasp on each of the aphorisms according to his understanding and sense of logic. In this way, by mutual debate, all the points will become more clearer and deeply comprehended."

**Dr B K SARKAR** says HAHNEMANN'S *Organon* is not just a small book on Homoeopathic philosophy, but a treatise on the application of scientific reasoning to the practice of medicine.

"HAHNEMANN'S *Organon* is a critique of medical philosophy underlying the art of medicine. Analytical studies of *Organon* as well as that of the history of Homoeopathy and the life-story of its founder show clearly that Homoeopathy is a product of inductive logic applied to the subject of Medicine. It is in fact the first as well as one of the most brilliant examples of the application of the inductive method of reasoning to the solution of one of the great problems of humanity viz, the treatment and cure of disease."

From the very beginning of my own acquaintance with Homoeopathy in 1998, I made *Organon* the subject of my focus, since HAHNEMANN'S views could most accurately be ascertained from HAHNEMANN himself, even allowing for difficulties of translation. Through my teachings with *Organon*, I have heard students lament the difficulties of its language; but I of course assure them that its study becomes easier the more often it is consulted and read.

Let it not be assumed that *Organon* is merely a theoretical treatise - indeed it is the distillation

of HAHNEMANN'S constant thoughts and significant experiences in the practice of medicine, into a highly condensed expression of a methodical and practical application of his discovery of a single and general therapeutic principle (*similars*) to the clinical situation for the specific purpose of healing the sick, in the simplest, most gentle and reliable manner.

BOENNINGHAUSEN clearly understood this, and through its constant study, gained such mastery of the art, and HAHNEMANN'S confidence to such a degree, that HAHNEMANN made the following declaration: "...BARON VON BONNINGHAUSEN of Munster has studied and grasped my Homoeopathic system of treatment so thoroughly that as a Homoeopath he deserves to be fully trusted, and if I should fall ill and be unable to help myself, I would not entrust myself to any other physician."

Lastly, I would recommend this work to the study of all Homoeopaths, both student and teacher, and suggest it is never too late to return to it's pages, to study and examine each aphorism carefully, and in context with what HAHNEMANN had written earlier (HLW); remember, BÖNNINGHAUSEN was 43 years of age when he undertook its study, and look how much he accomplished!

A patient comes to you with any disease eg Eczema or Migraine or Depression; we should put in HAHNEMANN'S Classification of the disease and I always go through relevant aphorism as per the case presentation. This will help us to decide our line of treatment, posology, do's and don'ts to prescribing for a particular case etc. It will erase many doubts from our mind. Totality of the symptoms is the best way to prescribe but handling and maintaining the simillimum can only be judged if we understand the reaction of the vital force following the administration of 1<sup>st</sup> prescription.

What we need to do is not to mug up the aphorism but check its applicability in each case, case per case and I am sure you will come to know its trustworthiness. ●