

PRAXIS: Method of Complexity by Massimo Mangialavori

Volume I: Methodology, and Volume II: Case Studies of the Homeopathic Drug Family
Matrix Press: Modena, Italy. J. Sobraske, Ed.
284, 298 pp., with Indices, \$125.00 the Set

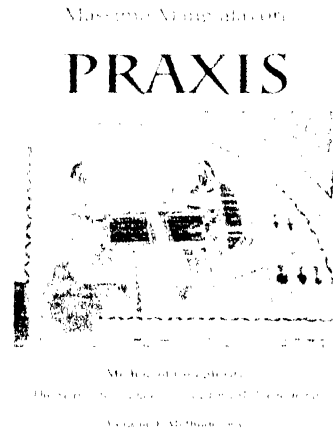
Reviewed by Richard Moskowitz, MD, DHT

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Massimo Mangialavori's latest work is strong and valuable medicine for homeopaths of all persuasions and at all levels of experience. Simply reading it for this occasion has already enriched and sharpened my practice. Beyond that, it is also a pleasure to read. It is written with *intelligence*, which is to say, perceptively, with careful attention to detail, yet never losing sight of the "big picture." Better still, it requires a comparable intelligence on the part of the *reader*, to ponder it, digest it slowly, and take it to heart, rather than taking a fast look and putting it back on the shelf. And perhaps most of all, it engages me as a work of *philosophy*, quite in the spirit of Hahnemann, beginning with the elementary precepts that we all know, and reshaping them according to the needs, problems, and insights of our own time in a way that makes logical and practical sense. To me this is no small achievement, since I've been practicing for so long, and making the same mistakes so consistently, that getting me to change in *any* way is bound to provoke serious resistance.

So I guess the phrase "a pleasure to read" needs further clarification. How pleasant is it to be expected to re-examine every step of what we do and every rationale for how we think? Or to have our noses rubbed in the flaws and limitations of our early training, not to mention even more bad habits than we knew we had? Fortunately, it's the kind of medicine that I know we all *need*, since it mostly teaches what we already profess to be true, but haven't yet figured out how to accomplish, or have simply become too lazy or complacent to make the effort. Even what is most innovative and controversial about it is firmly rooted in the homeopathic philosophy that we all share, devoutly respectful of that history, and fully conversant with the best that hard science and current philosophy can offer. So once you've made up your mind to take it, I can at least assure you that the medicine tastes good and won't upset your stomach.

Massimo is, of course, already well-known and esteemed



by homeopaths everywhere for his ongoing courses in Italy, his seminars on materia medica, and a growing library of books based on them. The present work is his major theoretical statement, beginning with methodology, followed by an overview of the "Drug" family and its principal themes, and concluding with illustrative cases involving six drug remedies, mostly lesser-known ones.

Its subtitle, "The Search for Coherence in Clinical Phenomena," announces its guiding purpose, which is to discover and teach a deeper, more meaningful similitude between our remedies and patients than any list of unrelated symptoms, like those from which our repertories, provings, and case reports are compiled. Fortunately, we know when we've *found* one, because its various symptom-elements fit into and indeed can be *derived from* a coherent whole, a totality of symptoms that exceeds the sum of its parts and makes intuitive sense to doctor and patient alike. In short, what he is after is the mystical, elusive, and often ridiculed "essence" that master homeopaths like Kent and Vithoulkas have long sought, and that Scholten and Sankaran are now seeking. It is Massimo's way of *discovering* that unity, and of describing and understanding it once found, that is uniquely his own.

Because of limited time and space, I will simply highlight a few choice nuggets that caught my fancy along the way, to show that it *hangs together* as a system. Naturally I loved the beginning, a brief essay on the Doctrine of Signatures, in which he agrees with the fundamentalists that trivial rescm-

blances, as between the yellow color of *Chelidonium* and that of the bile, fall short of a real affinity. Often hinted at in the common names of medicinal herbs, the levels of meaning that Massimo is interested in arise from their unique physical, chemical, and mythic properties as *systems* of adaptation to and within their natural habitat, including their time-honored uses in folklore and medicine.

At times these multi-layered resonances can seem almost spooky. I have always wondered, for example, why, how, and by whom our most important snake was named for *Lachesis*, one of the three Greek goddesses who fix the span of life, given the improbable circumstance that Constantine Hering, who first proved the venom in 1828, died on the fifty-second anniversary of that event, almost to the day. Signatures of this sort are *laden* with meaning, because they plumb deeply into the history of our culture, and weave what first seem like unrelated details into a tapestry that becomes cogent and persuasive. Massimo's "Method of Complexity" is so named because it includes such diverse fields of endeavor as anthropology, ethnography, and folk medicine; physiology, biochemistry, and toxicology, on the scientific side; classical homeopathy, with its history and literature; and the art of clinical medicine, which ties them all together by means of the *interview*, combining the insights of psychology with an easy, understanding, and empathic way of being with sick people, arising from real life and acquaintance with human nature more than any book learning.

Massimo differs from other teachers chiefly in this multi-systems approach, his quest for resonance and corroboration on many levels, and his insistence that no one method or formula of case-taking or remedy study will cover every case, that homeopathy is at bottom an art that cannot simply be *taught*, must be experienced anew with every case, and is never finished or "complete." All of this talks my language. Yet from start to finish *Praxis* is still a textbook on *method*: warning that the method is difficult is not to say that there is no method at all.

This brings me to his first great heresy, contrary to all we were once taught, that provings are *not* the best source for *materia medica* study, because they yield vast amounts of *information*, in long lists of detailed symptoms, whereas what the student needs to know is how *important* they are for prescribing the remedy, a judgment which must include their *context* in the totality of symptoms of the prover, the same level of similitude that a curative prescription must embody.

Reliable remedy information adequate for prescribing on thus requires some system for organizing and prioritizing the data. Perhaps more than any other leading teacher today, Massimo prefers *cured cases* for this purpose, because they alone can provide the richness of context that allows us to see the whole of the remedy in the whole of the patient, to connect up the various threads that led him to prescribe it, and thus to stimulate the kind of thinking by analogy that could be applied to other patients needing the same remedy, and also to patients requiring different but related remedies. These connections he calls "themes," and from *them*, rather

than disembodied symptoms standing alone, he constructs his own *materia medica*, based on his own experience, just as we all do.

During my home birth years, I remember racking my brains over *Cimicifuga*, trying to make sense of the disembodied rubric "Fear of insanity," which rarely seemed to fit my cases. Then one of my patients carried to 42 weeks, still had not gone into labor, and the imminent prospect of hospitalization finally prompted her to tell me that her previous miscarriage and D&C had been the most traumatic experience of her life, and that she felt "unhinged" by the very real possibility that the greater intensity of labor would send her over the edge into a state of disintegration from which she might never return. At my office a few days later, and well along in labor, she indeed appeared wild-eyed and out of control, as she had foreseen; her speech was fragmentary, and her gestures were disconnected and woeful. In that instant I understood not only the rubric, and why she'd been so reluctant to speak of it, but also many physical symptoms of the remedy in relation to it, so that I too was alarmed for her sanity. Although remaining flagrantly psychotic for the rest of her labor, she made rapid progress on two or three doses of *Cimicifuga* 200, gave birth normally, and made a full recovery, not long after which I began prescribing the remedy to a wide variety of patients with notable success.

Massimo's criteria for a "cured" case are so strict that many of the successes we love to report at conferences would fall far short of satisfying them. For chronic cases, he accepts a remedy as *simillimum* only after a follow-up of at least two years, preferably longer, during which the remedy has continued to act in a curative manner; and only if the remedy is also effective in overcoming seemingly unrelated *acute* conditions developing in the interim, even injuries and other common domestic ailments, in lieu of the usual first-aid remedies.

Remedy themes emerging from cured cases also provide the ideal framework for organizing the mass of symptom-data that provings generate, which can then in turn be used to help confirm, refute, or modify the themes that should and must ultimately connect them. *Materia medica* study thus becomes an ongoing process of integration, rather than a rote memory exercise.

Other priorities are evaluating the relative importance of symptoms, identifying the themes to connect them to, and rewriting and re-organizing the Repertory in light of them, three monumental but fortunately interrelated tasks that will nevertheless require the collaborative efforts of a whole generation of dedicated homeopaths, just as the older repertories did, and indeed continue to do. I especially love his case of the patient with a passion for toy trains, cured with the help of *Allium sativum*, whom he uses to illustrate how to *clarify* a symptom, to make it relevant to a theme. To render his success in symptom-language, rubrics like "Passion for model making" or "Plays with toy trains before supper" seemed good candidates, since they disappeared after the remedy, as did his other disabling pathologies, his general

health improved as well, and they were precisely the kind that we stuff our repertories full of. Yet they mislead by giving so much detail as to obscure deeper meanings that could provide useful analogies for similar cases, a consideration that led him to add the remedy to the rubric "Childish," upgrade it to a theme, and identify and cure several other patients with equally consuming hobbies.

I also loved his ascending scale of coherence, beginning with "symptoms," the lowest level, whether verbal or non-verbal, subjective or objective, and obtained from provings or cases, which may or may not be associated with a theme. To illustrate, he uses the remedy *Camphora*, some recognized symptoms of which are connected to characteristic themes of the remedy - "Ailments from loss of fluids" - or to fundamental themes of the Drug family in general - "Sense of isolation" and "Sensitivity to cold" - while others are not, and thus of little value.

The next higher level of meaning he calls a "coherent symptom group," a collection of such symptoms assembled from different parts or functions of the body, exemplified by a group connected to the same *Camphora* theme. "Ailments from loss of fluids":

Mind: *Anxiety, during stool;
Delirium, with thirst;*

Stomach: *Thirst, burning, vehement;*

Rectum: *Cholera;
Diarrhea, in hot weather;*

Stool: *Profuse;*

Female: *Metrorrhagia, with coldness of body;*

Extremities: *Coldness, with diarrhea;*

Perspiration: *Cold, with vomiting.*

It is obvious that these Repertory extractions are facilitated and inspired by various kinds of computer software, such as *MacRepertory* and *ReferenceWorks*, both of which Massimo makes frequent and extensive use of, and without which such projects would not be technically possible.

A still higher level of coherence is provided by themes that he calls "characteristic," i.e., distinctive of the remedy, and often present, but not always, because they are limited either to certain phases in the evolution of the remedy, such as the *Belladonna* tendency to acute inflammation, which occurs mainly in childhood; or to either side of a polarity if the patient is compensated, or its opposite, if decompensated. Many such themes are to be found in well-known keynotes of polycrests, and *overidentified* with them as a result, like the classic creativity of *Cannabis indica*, which can quickly vanish when the patient is in at his worst.

In contrast, the highest level of coherence are "fundamental" themes of the remedy," that is, "an essential, structural component of the remedy and its adaptive strategy," and "nearly always present in a case," although not necessarily *voiced* in so many words and thus having at times to be inferred by the homeopath. These "permeate" the remedy, "describe [its] deepest level," its "core and structure," and

provide the ultimate basis of its similitude. He chooses the theme of "Isolation" in *Camphora*, which provides a matrix for connecting many symptoms of the remedy, although many of them would not *look* connected until the theme is recognized, and which turns out to be fundamental not only to *Camphora* itself, but also to the entire homeopathic "Drug" family. In contrast, "Sensitivity to cold," the famous keynote of *Camphora*, is a *characteristic* theme of only its most decompensated cases, while a more usual, compensated patient might actually *defy* the cold. This is the kind of nitty-gritty scholarship which I find especially characteristic about the book, and it's everywhere, as well as elegant and sublimely beautiful at times. His elucidation of themes is masterful and easy to grasp, although as the fruit of a long experience, their actual *discovery* probably looks a lot easier than it will prove to be in practice for someone encountering the idea for the first time.

It all culminates in his concept of the Homeopathic Family, precisely the point where his method comes closest to that of Sankaran and Scholten, which is also where he diverges from them, and charts a path most uniquely his own. The attempt to classify homeopathic remedies into "families" has a very old pedigree, and consists of two possible strategies, based on *taxonomy*, the place of the remedy within Nature, like the Periodic Table for the mineral remedies, or on the homeopathic characteristics of the remedies themselves.

Much easier to understand and accept, the taxonomic approach was envisioned by Farrington, and in our own time has been elaborated most convincingly by Sankaran and Scholten. Massimo prefers the second or homeopathic approach, which is purer and more difficult, but in practice he incorporates elements from both strategies. Frequently his first suspicion of a family arises from a treatment failure involving the best-known representative of a natural biological or chemical grouping, and usually a polycrest, like *Lachesis* for the snakes. Next it will include a few others taxonomically related to it, such as *Crotalus*, *Naja*, and *Bothrops*, but insisting on a purely homeopathic definition, based on the fundamental themes they have in common. Eventually, having identified these themes makes it possible to recognize and add other remedies with the same themes that are taxonomically unrelated, often "small" or at least unfamiliar and underrepresented in the literature.

The same idea has fruitful applications for the situation where one remedy has acted curatively for a period of years, but then stops working, and therefore needs to be changed. In my earlier training, based on Kent and his successors, this was a clear signal for retaking the case and prescribing a new remedy, perhaps but not necessarily complementary to it. But if the major themes are still at work in the patient, as one would expect them to be from the length and strength of the curative reaction, Massimo's family concept argues strongly for choosing a different remedy from the same family, a strategy he has evidently employed with great success.

Reading his case reports in Volume II, I marvel at how he gets his patients to confide in him as they do, to spit out their

deep inner truths, in the absence of which we are apt to substitute a review of systems, for no better reason than that's all we can think of to fill up the time. This is the abiding mystery of case-taking, which is really the "sleeper" factor that distinguishes great homeopaths from merely competent ones, and ultimately it can't really be taught in a linear or discursive fashion, because it also involves and engages the subjective experience of the *homeopath* as a human being, not only a doctor, scientist, or healer.

The objective of the Method of Complexity is to identify the patient's basic adaptive strategies *at work*, which are exhibited in physical symptoms no less than mental, just as the characteristic and fundamental themes of the remedies and their family groupings are represented in many if not all sections of the Repertory. In other words, the distinction between "Physical" and "Mental" symptoms is itself artificial and meaningless in many cases. This is the kind of iconoclasm that makes this book so valuable, and that Sankaran and other leading teachers of today have independently discovered and advocated in their own fashion.

As always, the emphasis is on facilitating a free-flowing narrative, and allowing the patient to experience what emerges spontaneously, rather than trying to force the conversation in a certain direction, becoming frustrated if the effort is unsuccessful, and asking questions that require logical explanation. The hardest part is learning to tolerate those long, pregnant silences, and to trust the innate wisdom of the patient to reveal or hide itself, without feeling the need to amass more information in as many areas as possible. This involves focusing on the relevant detail, and finding the whole story there, recognizing the theme or signature pattern in every part as it is offered.

The cases in Volume II are beautifully presented, and a pleasure to read. Each remedy is introduced with a brief but scholarly essay on its natural history, its uses in folk medicine, and its pharmacological, toxicological, and homeopathic characteristics, such that the cases seem to arise and emerge from this background, each with its own unique individuality, yet with clear and vivid analogies to the others. Rather reminiscent of the remedy introductions in Clarke's *Dictionary*, but much richer, more detailed, and beautifully written, these little gems were for me highlights of *materia medica* writing that surpass or at least equal the very best that we possess; and the cases that follow are always sensitively taken, and full of deep confidences from real people that embody and bring to life the method that he has outlined and elaborated for us. Many of the actual case reports are followed by commentaries by Dr. Giovanni Marotta, Massimo's long-time mentor, collaborator, and friend, almost an *alter ego*, whose more reflective style is nevertheless so perfectly attuned to the method which was created and developed by both men in tandem, that it adds a further richness to the work and in no way detracts or distracts from its mission.

Unfortunately the same is not always true for the small army of other people who were involved in the project of rendering the original Italian edition into English, or for

the sometimes unclear division of labor between them. A sizeable portion of Volume I, Chapter 1, for example, was a learned but at times barely intelligible essay written by Professor Alberto Panza, an academic colleague who tried to identify themes in modern European philosophy, science, and culture that were congruent with the teachings of homeopathy, a supremely worthy project that could have taken the work to a whole other level of meaning. Unfortunately, the writing, the translation, and perhaps some of the sources cited revolved around technical terms that will be unfamiliar to most of his readers, difficult to translate, and too abstruse for most people to understand, even those who have met them before. So this splendid idea was for me at least a dismal failure.

Another example was the last chapter of Volume I, the longest in the book, which was a summary of the main teachings of modern psychology with special interest and relevance for homeopaths. This task was given to Dr. Marotta for the Italian edition, but this time it was rewritten for its English-speaking audience by John Sobraske, the General Editor. While not at all bad in itself, coming after Massimo's more engaged, incisive, and goal-oriented style, it seemed dry and boring to an extent I found almost jarring. Sobraske's Introduction to Volume II, on the other hand, a brief summary of Volume I, is quite excellent, thoroughly competent, and readable throughout. On the other hand, I can see no reason for doing it, except as a "pony" or shortcut for those choosing to omit Volume I, which contains some of the finest writing on homeopathy that I have ever read and would be a huge mistake to miss.

In addition, there were a sizeable number of translators and editors, including such dedicated homeopaths as Betty Wood, Krista Heron, Bill Gray, and Maria Kingdon in North America, and several others in the United Kingdom and Europe, and their work certainly deserves hearty commendation. But their task was made almost superfluous by Massimo's own excellent command of English, and almost impossibly difficult by Prof. Panza's much greater need and unfamiliar subject matter. In the end, I was left with the suspicion that there were too many good cooks, and no master chef to keep them in line.

But these are minor quibbles. I have no doubt that this work is among the very best our method has produced in its long history, not only for its considerable literary merit, but above all for the cogency of its ideas, which I predict will change how homeopathy is taught and practiced, now and in future.

About the Reviewer: Richard Moskowitz, M.D. practices classical homeopathy in Watertown, Massachusetts (Boston area). He is on the editorial staff of the JAIH; he previously served as President of the N.C.H. and was on the faculty of the N.C.H. Summer School. He is the author of the books "Homeopathic Medicines for Pregnancy and Childbirth" and "Resonance: The Homeopathic Point of View."

Green Medicine: Challenging the Assumptions of Conventional Health Care

By Larry Malerba, DO

North Atlantic Books: Berkeley, CA. 2010
415 pages, paperback, \$18.95.
ISBN-10: 155439024

Reviewed by Ronald Whitmont, MD

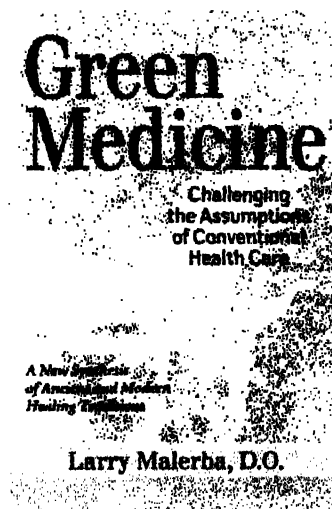
Larry Malerba's first book, *Green Medicine*, is made for burning. In its seventeen chapters Malerba challenges the foundations of conventional medical care and offers a blueprint for advanced thinking and re-visioning of medical practice for the twenty-first century. This book will exceed the expectations of conventional, integrative and holistic practitioners alike, but it will certainly be a favorite for burning by members of the pharmaceutical and insurance industries since the book takes direct aim at the profit seeking businesses working against green health care.

I was personally moved by Malerba's descriptions and found encouragement in his pages. Anyone who takes the time to read this tome will find many of their own assumptions challenged in a thought provoking and important way. One of the remarkable qualities of Malerba's writing is that no matter what your orientation in medicine, he will challenge you to open your mind a bit further, change your thinking and push you toward a farther, broader horizon.

The book begins with a long overdue expose of the failures of conventional mechanistic medical science and a call to overhaul the closed-minded medical paradigm that dominates this system. He challenges orthodox medicine to: "redefine professionalism to mean the practice of one's science and art to the best of one's ability with honesty, unselfishness, and integrity," to incorporate other modes and disciplines and "to seek, and remain open to, better ways of serving humanity."

Malerba goes on to describe his vision of green medicine through various chapters dealing with different alternative modalities. But what surprises and refreshes the reader is the breadth of Malerba's vision: even the most non-conventional and alternative practitioners will find their own paradigms challenged to incorporate a deeper vision of a truly holistic "Green" medicine.

According to Malerba, Green medicine is a paradigm of Integrative Holistic Medicine that incorporates knowledge and awareness of "the inextricable interconnections between body, mind, soul, family, community, culture and environment." He encourages practitioners to utilize the conventional medical sciences of anatomy, physiology, biochemistry and physics alongside intuitive and spiritual practices of healing. He makes a solid case for balancing the overly



mechanistic conventional framework and putting an end to the divisiveness built into the current medical-pharmaceutical-industrial model of healthcare and replacing it with a patient-centered, depth psychological paradigm of healing that links body, mind and soul.

The book is divided into seventeen chapters with a brilliant introduction outlining the crisis in medicine today. The chapters clearly present and develop Malerba's thesis calling for a new paradigm of integrated green medicine. His writing style is clear and thoughtful, while offering helpful citations and excerpts from relevant texts sewn carefully alongside selected case histories, as well as personal anecdotes from his own and his family's life experiences.

His writing is compassionate and compelling. He doesn't fail to incorporate information from cross-cultural studies, philosophy, history and the arts in a manner that is insightful and engaging. Readers will be pleased and challenged by the breadth and the scope of this material.

The book covers a diverse range of approaches to health and healing while introducing homeopathy and the concepts of the vital force with elegance and wit. He goes on to discuss elements of shamanism, oracles (such as the *I Ching*), dream work, astrology, alchemy, numerology, mythology, synchronicity and the need for balance between right and left brain thinking, intuiting and feeling. Malerba accomplishes this tour-de-force by connecting each of these areas to the healing process with case studies and personal experiences.

The only chapter that I found unnecessary was the third, since it dealt largely with historical conjecture and built less upon science compared with the rest of the text.

At the same time that Malerba offers valid criticism of conventional science he also challenges practitioners of Complementary and Alternative Medicine to avoid the pitfalls of scientific pressure, to reach beyond the narrow confines of natural medicine and to "resist allowing their arts to

be made over into sciences out of the overwhelming desire to seek respectability.”

Malerba's text is nothing short of visionary. He acknowledges that his ideals are lofty, but at the same time offers a glimpse of the true potential for healing in a broader sense. Malerba grounds his work in a foundation of homeopathic vitalist experience interspersed with elements of shamanism and analytic psychology. His green medicine is the acme of a truly holistic integrative medical approach that eschews suppressive therapies, when possible, and pursues the vision of illness as an opportunity for body, mind and soul to overcome adversity on a journey towards further development.

The book is worth the time it takes to read its four hundred pages. It is printed on high quality paper, well-bound with a durable, smooth plasticized cover. After a thorough reading, being dragged into the mountains, the seashore and

back, the binding shows little sign of wear. The book will be of interest to all students of health, and particularly those practicing integrative specialties. Readers do risk becoming better advocates for their patient's deep inner struggles as their healing journeys unfold. If readers take the time and have the courage to enter this advanced vision of green holism, they stand to grow personally as well as professionally.

I strongly recommend that this book be read and re-read. It will undoubtedly burn well in conventional bonfires!

About the reviewer: Ronald Whitmont, M.D. maintains a private practice in classical homeopathy in Amenia, New York. He is board-certified in internal medicine. Dr. Whitmont serves as Vice President of the Homeopathic Medical Society of the State of New York.

The Vital Approach

By Anne Vervarcke

Publisher: The White Room. 2010.
5"x 8." 136 pages. 20 Euros
ISBN: 9789081001700-1

Reviewed by Jay Yasgur, RPh

“But now you have a ‘manual’ to my approach in your hands.” - p. 9

In *The Vital Approach*, European homeopath Anne Vervarcke (1952 -) attempts to describe her homeopathic methodology. Ms. Vervarcke was trained originally in the arts and graduated in Oriental Philology and Anthropology and later took courses in classical homeopathy in Belgium. Later she attended the School for Homeopathy in Bloemendaal and Amersfoort in The Netherlands. She established ‘The Centre for Classical Homeopathy’ (CKH) in Leuven, Belgium, which organizes a five-year training course, a post-graduate course, a yearly seminar and an International Training course. She has been in private practice since 1989.

This is her fourth book in the English language, the others being: *Behind the Glass Screen: A Homeopathic Survey of Ozone* (2009), *The Charm of Homeopathy* (2006, 2nd-2008) and *The Postgraduate Annual 2006* (2007). These books I have not seen. Her 2007 tome discusses the fundamentals of her method as depicted in adult and child cases while her ‘charm’ book describes how she developed her approach out of Sankaran's thoughts on kingdoms and miasms in combination with Hahnemannian thought, linguistics, and phenomenology.

This 136 page quality paperback is well produced and

consists of five chapters: The Five Levels of Experience, Kingdoms, Miasms, Subkingdoms and Anamnesis.

The Vital Approach is the author's method of combining ‘new wave’ homeopathy with the classical approach. These newer approaches are still in the developmental stages (so is homeopathy by the way), yet many are rushing to present their ‘special methods.’ This is all fine and good and people should be lauded for those innovations, but, please, can we have methodologies explained methodically and clearly? Despite her opening statement (p. 9), we have yet to see a comprehensive and simple explanation in book form.

“The last decades Sankaran, Scholten and others worked those out and many homeopaths all over the world applied this new information. Many new provings were done and many cured cases added clinical information and a better understanding of the until-then unknown remedies. By now the validity of those so-called new remedies is so well established that I feel it is not good policy to give a remedy the homeopath knows better or is a traditional one instead of the remedy the patient really needs. If there is an emotional resistance to something new or ‘experimental’ in some homeopaths, one should refrain from it once this phase is over...” - p. 73,4.

Perhaps it is me, but I have difficulty in understanding this paragraph. Aside from this unclear writing, another fault of the book is that there are virtually no cases. One clearly outlined case showing how the 'vital sensation' is present within all the levels would have gone a long way to satisfying and whetting one's appetite. And in addition, as long as the patient is a mineral remedy, why not include an analysis of where the patient is on the periodic table. After all, if one is presenting a methodology, let's see it in action. Anne says, 'The manual is in your hands,' but is it?

If we write to benefit the reader, then many of us aren't doing as well as we could. This review could also serve as a call for people to do better. So allow me to make a suggestion: get a good, fair, honest and industrious editor (you ask, 'can such a person be found?'). If everyone did this,

our work would probably be clearer and, no doubt, shorter. Often we write page after page when what we are saying can be said in a paragraph or two. My criticism has nothing to do with the writer's personal style. That is what makes for interesting writing, a person's flair. But do remember that verbosity is not profundity.

The chapter 'Subkingdom' (forty pages) discusses the periodic table and the animal and plant kingdoms. It is a bit rough in places but reasonably well explained.

Once again, I have nothing against innovation and please don't read more into my words. We have a healing method -homeopathy - which is clear. If we innovate, let's make it as clear and beautiful as what Hahnemann gave us.

Liver and Gallbladder: Acquired Authority by Rosina Sonnenschmidt

Narayana Publishers. 2009
6" x 9", hardback, 116 pages
ISBN: 978-3-941706-13-2

Reviewed by Jay Yasgur, RPh

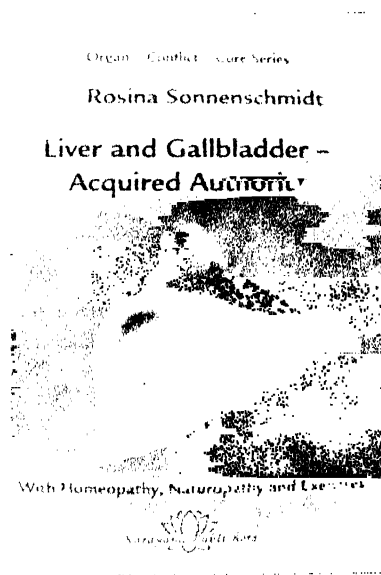
Rosina Sonnenschmidt is a noted German seminar leader, author and healer. Judging from the bibliography, she has written at least ten books. Rosina's work clearly shows Indian (she spent time in India) and Chinese influences in her methodology: this eastern influence is evident throughout as figures of the Buddha and relevant quotations appear almost on every page. She does liberally quote western healers as well:

"In homeopathy, weakness of the liver is recognised by patterns of symptoms...Even if there is no apparent liver disease, we can conclude that the liver is weakened from the existence of certain symptoms."- p. 3, (from *Desktop Companion to Physical Pathology* by Roger Morrison, p. 381).

This book, her first in English and part of the 'Organ-Conflict-Cure Series,' deals with liver and gallbladder issues. Several volumes are planned in this series, each covering the subject by addressing the following themes: the organ system from a spiritual and physiological viewpoint; diseases associated with the organ; the mental and emotional issues of the organ system; organ-related conflicts and their resolution; miasmatic, therapeutic and constitutional homeopathy; nutritional advice and naturopathic therapies.

This work consists of six chapters: Liver Energy, Liver and Gallbladder Issues, Structure of the Liver, A Holistic View of Liver Function, Diseases of the Liver and Gallbladder, and Holistic Liver and Gallbladder Therapies.

Since the material is 'deep' one needs to approach it in a quiet and reflective manner. This will allow the reader to



gain special insights. For example:

"And so we come to the final link in the network of relationships between liver - gallbladder - Jupiter - Mars - tongue - teeth - tin. The metal tin, (Lat: *Stannum*) reveals further aspects of the sphere of action of the liver and gallbladder. Anthroposophy, which has transformed the ancient knowledge of alchemy for our modern times, gives us valuable insights:

" 'In that it is soft and malleable on the outside and inside is moderately hard and keeps its shape, tin represents the counter process in Nature which the body can call upon for healing ... tin can be used comprehensively to heal the regulation between opposing areas of strength in the body, which express themselves on the one hand as building, growth and swelling up and on the other as hardening and drying up.' "- p. 25 (from *Sieben Metalle* by Wm. Pelikan , p. 86)

So, it appears that Sonnenschmidt has studied anthroposophy too. The Steinerian approach, while quite dense and 'uninviting,' holds many pearls.

How does Rosina integrate homeopathy?

"I could have put homeopathy at the beginning of the liver therapies because it acts on all levels. But because many homeopaths tend to neglect the concrete physical needs of the liver and gallbladder because it is easier to just prescribe little sugar pills, I have kept the best until last."— p. 91.

Sonnenschmidt then goes into detail although in cookbook fashion, and mostly so in tabular form: Table 2: Liver Conditions and Remedies; Table 3: Selected Liver Remedies; Table 4: Remedies for Liver stones and Gallstones; Table 5: Ascites/Anasarca with Liver Involvement, and Table 6: Schuessler Tissue Salts for the Liver. There is little narrative weaving its way through the tables and little homeopathy discussed. Nonetheless there is useful material in this eighteen page section.

If you've had little exposure to esoteric approaches to homeopathy, this well produced and beautiful book will nourish that budding side. All can gain some crucial insights from this work.

About the Reviewer: Jay Yasgur is a pharmacist, author and member of the HPCUS (Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia Convention of the United States). He is the author of "A Dictionary of Homeopathic Medical Terminology," 3rd Ed. He republished and edited two homeopathic classics: "Some Clinical Experiences of E. E. Case, M.D.," and "Homoeopathic Materia Medica for Nurses," 2nd Ed. Along with Mr. C. Ellithorp, they produced 'The Dunham Lectures of J.T. Kent'. Mr. Yasgur recently finished a three year project, "Cumulative Index to the Homoeopathic Physician."

Jay has worked for Weleda Inc. and Humphreys Pharmaceutical. Aside from writing, Mr. Yasgur works part time in retail pharmacy where he blends homeopathy into his pharmacy practice. He lives in Tempe, AZ.

AJH

Calendar of Homeopathic Events

Provided courtesy of Dr. Betty Wood

Scheduled Events

FEBRUARY 5-6, 2011

Will Taylor, MD, DHT, Orlando, FL
www.floridahomeopathicsociety.org
Kpurcell15@cfl.rr.com

FEBRUARY 25-28, 2011

Divya Chhabra, Westford, MA
Topic: TBA
Sponsored by New England Homeopathic Academy (NEHA)
Contact: Betty Wood 978-635-0605
mailto:bw@bettywoodmd.com

MARCH 4-6 2011

Jonathan Shore MD, Los Angeles
Keeping It Simple: Case Taking and learning the techniques of differentiation of one kingdom from another.
Los Angeles School of Homeopathy – Los Angeles CA
Avghi Constantinides – Director
www.lahomeopathicschool.com <<http://www.lahomeopathicschool.com>>
info@lahomeopathicschool.com
310 772-8235

MARCH 5-6, 2011

Massimo Mangialavori, Toronto
Method of Complexity and its Application in Homeopathy
Ontario College of Homeopathic Medicine
Contact: www.ochm.ca
info@ochm.ca
(416-535-5995)

MARCH 19, 2011

146th Annual Meeting of the Homeopathic Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania in conjunction with Southern Homeopathic

**Medical Association • Case Conference • Harrisburg, PA • Harrisburg Holiday Inn East
www.harmanyequine.com • M-Th 703-273-5250**

APRIL 8-11, 2011

**6th Annual Joint American Homeopathic Conference, Alexandria, VA
mail: office@nationalcenterforhomeopathy.org
web: <http://www.nationalcenterforhomeopathy.org>
Phone: (703) 548-7790**

APRIL 11 - 17, 2011

Massimo Mangialavori, Rolling Ridge Retreat Center, Andover, MA
Some Mushrooms: A Real Homeopathic Family? Bovista, Psilocybe caerulescens, Agaricus muscarius, Boletus edulis, Boletus Satanas, Phallus impudicus, Boletus laricis, Secale cornutum, Ustilago maydis
Sponsored by New England Homeopathic Academy (NEHA)
Contact: Betty Wood 978-635-0605
mailto:bw@bettywoodmd.com

MAY 5-8, 2011

The Joshis, Hudson NY
Exotic bird remedies, Minerals coming to source, Childrens' cases, Deep pathologies, and advanced techniques for case-taking.
Contact: Marina Braun: 914 378 5320 aquamarina@speakeasy.com
Sonam Kushner: 646 486 1937 sosimilar@aol.com
About the Joshis: www.joshisclinic.com

MAY 14-15, 2011

Frans Vermeulen & Linda Johnston, Redondo Beach, CA
Precision Prescribing through the Botanical Family

Perspective
 California Homeopathic Medical Society, CHMS Annual
 Conference
 Contact: rhiltner@sbcglobal.net
<http://www.homeopathywest.org>

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2011

Dr. Russell Malcolm, Washington, DC
Resonances- Word, Voice and Mind in Medicine
Pathways for a New Understanding of Patients
with Chronic Illness
Sponsored by: New York Medical College, Amer-
ican Institute of Homeopathy, Homeopathic
Medical Society of the State of New York
AMA Category 1 CME Credits Available
www.homeopathyusa.org
888-445-9988

OCTOBER 10-16, 2011

Massimo Mangialavori, Rolling Ridge Retreat Center,
 Andover, MA
 Difficult Skin Disease: Neurodermitis, Eczema, Psoria-
 sis in Homeopathic Medicine
 Differential diagnosis between some classical rem-
 edies like: Arsencum salts, Graphites, Calcareo
 sulphurica, Dulcamara, Psorinum, Sulphur iodatum
 and some less known like Candida, Clematic, Croton,
 Lappa, Manganum, Mezereum, Viola tricolor ...
 Sponsored by New England Homeopathic Academy
 (NEHA)
 Contact: Betty Wood 978-635-0605

<mailto:bw@bettywoodmd.com>
 OCTOBER 14-15, 2011
 Frederik Schroyens, M.D, Orlando, FL
www.floridahomeopathicsociety.org
Kpurcell15@cfl.rr.com

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INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS

MARCH 18-20, 2011

3rd Children's Homeopathy Congress, Badenweiler,
 Germany
 Dr. Didier Grandgeorge, Dr. Frans Kusse, Dr. Farokh
 Master, Dr. Dinesh Chauhan, Dr. Martin Hirte and Dr.
 Heiner Frei
 Contact: Narayana publishers
 E-Mail: info@narayana-publishers.com
 Web: www.narayana-publishers.com

MAY 16-20, 2011

Massimo Manialavori, Kloster Kappel, Switzerland
 Some Mushrooms: A Real Homeopathic Family?
 Bovista, Psilocybe caerulescens, Agaicus mus-
 carius, Boletus edulis, Boletus Satanas, Phallus
 impudicus, Boletus laricis, Secale cornutum,
 Ustilago maydis
 Contact: Indrani Meier
 E-Mail: indrani@indrani-meier.ch
 Web: www.indrani-meier.ch

