

Internal Psora

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Abstract: The author describes the latent and secondary stages of Psora as identified by Samuel Hahnemann in his book, *Chronic Diseases*. This is the second in the (interrupted) series of articles on Psora by George Dimitriadis and is a reprinting (by permission of the author) of various chapters from his book entitled *The Theory of Chronic Disease According to Hahnemann*.

Keywords: miasm, psora; psora, latent stage; psora, secondary stage

1. Schematic Overview

Before we further describe the various stages of this *psora* disease, beginning with the latent stage, the following schematic diagram has been added to serve as a visual summary of the events in the initial acquisition and further development of this *internal psora* disease:

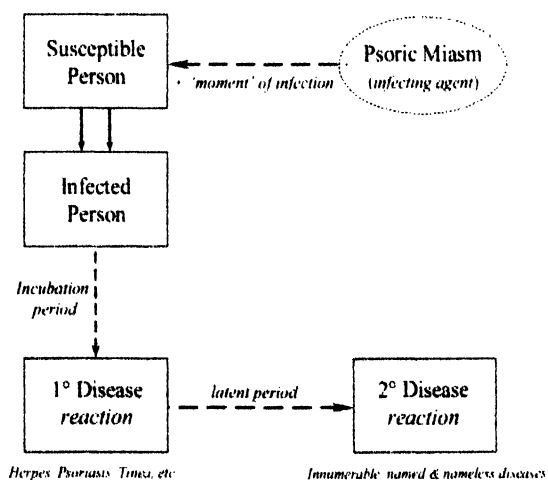


Figure 2

Exposure of a susceptible host to the *psora* miasm results in infection. After a variable period of incubation the primary (1°) disease symptoms are evident. Suppression, or spontaneous remission of these symptoms will precipitate the development of secondary (2°) disease after a variable period of latency.

The reader will readily recall that this is the same model as the current medical model for infectious diseases, all we need to do is replace the specific *psora*

miasm with any other infecting agent. Of course the acute or self-limiting diseases do not develop beyond the primary disease response.

It is to be noted that nowhere in this model is there a consideration of the basic or 'original' *susceptibility* of the host which allows the reaction to external disease-producing stimuli.

2. Latent Stage

On pages 45-47, Hahnemann paints a picture of the signs of *latent psora*, saying that during this period, the affected person displays an increasing susceptibility to being adversely affected by external stimuli (winter, grief, injury, etc.) and to subsequent development of secondary symptoms of the now "*awakened psora*".

It is important here to realise that at every stage of his *psora* model, Hahnemann strictly adheres to the logic outlined in his *Organon* where he says that disease is always known by signs and symptoms¹⁰⁰ and that if there are absolutely no signs or symptoms, then it cannot be logically asserted that there is any disease.

For this latent stage, Hahnemann lists 60 signs, amongst which we find predispositions to: epistaxis; ascarides; perspiration; catching cold; strains and sprains; cramps; twitches; rough or unhealthy skin, with unbearably itching vesicular or scaly eruptions.¹⁰¹

Thus, even during this latent stage, according to Hahnemann's model, *psora* was recognisable through abnormal signs and symptoms.¹⁰² He has not asked us to base our diagnosis of *latent psora* (or any other disease) on transcendental speculation unconfirmed by experience,¹⁰³ but on *signs and symptoms*. This again is a main point of departure from the purely speculative, opinionated medical hypotheses which were so

¹⁰¹ An examination of these symptoms of latent psora reveals, among others, the following polychrest remedies (given here in alphabetical order) as being indicated from their lists of pure MM symptoms: Bar-c., Calc-c., Chin., Graph., Kali-c., Lyc., Merc., Sep., Sil., Spig., Sulph.

¹⁰² CD, vol.1, pp. 44, 45-47

¹⁰³ *Organon* §6

often held by the old school (allopathy)¹⁰⁴ during Hahnemann's time. He says:¹⁰⁵

Allopathy has also assumed *hidden (latent)* conditions of disease in patient... These so called *qualitates occultæ Fernellii* are, however, wholly supposititious and imaginary, as (according to the statement of this same physician) they are not supposed to be recognizable by any manifestations and symptoms. But whatever does not make known its hidden, imaginary existence by any sign does not exist for us men, who are limited by our Creator in our cognizance of things to observations—it is consequently a phantom of a roving fancy. It is quite different with the various forces *slumbering (latent)* in nature; despite their ordinary occultness, they nevertheless, show themselves when the requisite circumstances and conditions appear... just as the *Psora* manifests itself...

Such signs which Hahnemann attributes to a *latent psora* were usually too subtle or not definitive enough to be classed as a specific disease entity with a pathological name, and so people at this clinical stage of *psora* usually did not seek medical help; or if they did, they were not able to be treated by allopathic means – until a clinically significant disease (for allopathic treatment purposes) broke forth. Many of the signs of *latent psora* were seen as increased susceptibilities and/or abnormal reactions to otherwise fairly innocuous stimuli. But how could Hahnemann ascertain which signs or symptoms, especially in this subtle, latent stage, were normal or abnormal. This he did by comparing the state of all such patients, with his own state of health which he says was free of *psora*,¹⁰⁶ and was therefore a normal (control) state.

Even today, we see people fitting a similar picture of abnormal susceptibility, of frequent and severe reactions to cold, etc., which could easily fall into this *latent psora* disease category.

3. Secondary Stage

On pages 52-77, Hahnemann lists the secondary symptoms which he has himself observed after the awakening of the *latent psora*. We read:

51 The awakening of the internal *psora* which has ~~hitherto slumbered and been latent, and, as it were, kept bound by a good bodily constitution and favourable circumstances, as well as its breaking out into more serious ailments and maladies, is announced by the increase of the symptoms given above as indicating the~~

slumbering *psora*, and also by a numberless multitude of various complaints. These varied according to the difference in the bodily constitution of a man, his hereditary disposition, the various errors in his education and habits, his manner of living and diet, his employments, his turn of mind, his morality, etc.

Then when the itch-malady develops into a manifest secondary disease there appear the following symptoms, which I have derived and observed altogether from accounts of disease which I myself have treated successfully and which confessedly originated from the contagion of itch, and were mixed neither with syphilis nor sycosis.

Hahnemann has here told us how he collected these secondary symptoms. Basically, all chronic disease which Hahnemann himself had successfully treated (with his so called "anti-psoric" remedies); or which the patient or his relatives remembered were preceded by an itch eruption, even in their early childhood; and which were not traceable to a history of syphilis (venereal chancre disease) or sycosis (fig-wart disease), nor attributable to errors of diet, habits, allopathic medications, etc.,¹⁰⁷ all these other (natural) chronic diseases were attributed to the secondary manifestations of developed *internal psora*.

Hahnemann now offers a list of 427 symptoms¹⁰⁸ as representing the characteristics of secondary *psora*, and believes many more could be added according to the experience of others.¹⁰⁹ He then clarifies how it is that such a variety of identifiable 'diseases' could spread from a single source expressing only a limited number of these secondary symptoms:

77 These are some of the leading symptoms observed by me, which, if they are often repeated, or become constant, show that the internal *Psora* is coming forth from its latent state. They are at the same time the elements, from which (under unfavourable external conditions) the itch malady, as it manifests itself, composes the illimitable number of chronic diseases, and with one man assumes the one form, with another, according to bodily constitution, defects in the education, habits, employment and external circumstances, as also modified by the various psychical and physical impressions. It thus unfolds into manifold forms of disease, with so many varieties, that they are by no means exhausted by the disease-symptoms enumerated in the pathology of the old school, and erroneously designated there as well-defined, constant and peculiar diseases.

¹⁰⁴ Hahnemann coined the term "allopathy" (Gr. ἄλλος [allos] = *other than*) to refer to all (medicinal) practices which rely on a therapeutic approach *other than* the homeopathic (similar) one.

¹⁰⁵ CD, vol.1, p.44 second footnote

¹⁰⁶ CD, vol.1, p.44; first footnote

¹⁰⁷ CD, vol.1, p.10

¹⁰⁸ These symptoms represent a very broad range of action, from vertigo and headache, through almost all regions and functions of the body, to all kinds of disturbances of mind and disposition.

¹⁰⁹ CD, vol.1, p.52. By this Hahnemann means (as he states on p.51) observations of disease developing following the 'suppression' of itch eruption, were unmixed with syphilis or sycosis, and which were treated successfully using the anti-psoric remedies.

In other words, it is the combination of such listed 'elements' of secondary stage psora which provide for the illimitable number of chronic diseases. This explanation provides a reasonable model for the development of a sufficient variety of disease expressions from a finite number of elements.

"Medicine is a science which hath been (as we have said) more professed than laboured, and yet more laboured than advanced; the labour having been, in my judgement, rather in circle than in progression. For I find much iteration, but small addition."

Francis Bacon

Advancement of Learning, second book, X, §3

About the Author: George Dimitriadis practices homeopathy in Sydney, Australis. He actively teaches there as well, at two homeopathic colleges and the Hahnemann Institute. He edited the Australian Journal of Homeopathic Medicine, and he has authored four homeopathic books and numerous journal articles. Most recently he edited "The Bönninghausen Repertory – Therapeutic Pocketbook Method" a republication of Bönninghausen's Therapeutic Pocketbook. ATH