

Interview Heidi Brand and Anne Schadde 2017

The Organon and the Spirit Behind Matter

H: As part of our book *The Pioneers of Homeopathy in the 21st Century*, I would like to talk with you about Samuel Hahnemann's **Organon**. To me, it is the greatest legacy he left us. What does this work mean to you?

A: For me, the **Organon** is a **book of secrets**. I have always been fascinated by discovering what lies behind words, concepts, and the phenomena of life. In daily practice we strive not merely to recognize symptoms but to understand the patient on a deeper level.

Alongside its precise practical instructions, the **Organon** contains subtle mystical and alchemical ideas. They are woven into the text with great restraint and only reveal themselves to readers who approach the work attentively and with an open, questioning mind.

Even the title **Organon** is significant. It denotes an instrument of reasoning and systematic thought. It is a foundational work that provides clear guidance for the practice of homeopathy. At first glance, it appears almost like a legal text, composed of numbered aphorisms, long sentences, and a style of German that can be challenging for modern readers. Yet beneath this rigorous structure lies a living spiritual path.

The Historical Spirit of the Organon

To understand Hahnemann, we must first understand the **spirit of his age**. The **Organon** was written during the **Age of Enlightenment**, a period in which reason, observation, and independent thinking gradually replaced authority and unquestioning belief.

Hahnemann deliberately distanced himself from many of the speculative medical theories and often harmful treatments of his time. At the same time, however, homeopathy was deeply rooted in ancient wisdom and long-standing spiritual traditions. This created an inner tension: Hahnemann sought to describe an invisible, dynamic principle of healing while presenting it in a language that was rational, systematic, and acceptable to the scientific spirit of his era.

Our own age increasingly encounters the limits of a purely material understanding of reality. We transmit photographs and information invisibly, store data in the cloud, and interact daily with forces that cannot be perceived directly by our senses. At the same time, people are increasingly fascinated by stories that explore realities beyond the visible world.

For this reason, I believe the **Organon** is especially relevant in the twenty-first century. Hahnemann speaks repeatedly of **movement**, **dynamism**, and the **spirit-like** nature of life. His work therefore has the potential to become fully alive again in our own time.

My hope is to inspire especially young homeopaths to discover the **Organon** with enthusiasm and genuine curiosity. It offers far more than a therapeutic method. It shows us how to accompany those who suffer through the challenges of their lives while keeping alive the light of hope.

From Rational Medicine to the Healing Art

H: Hahnemann originally entitled his work *Organon of Rational Medicine*. Later he changed it to *Organon of the Healing Art*. What does this change signify?

A: For Hahnemann, the word **rational** primarily meant **purposeful** and **appropriate**. His aim was to establish a medicine that truly served the patient and stood in contrast to the speculative practices of his time, such as the widespread use of bloodletting, which often weakened patients even further.

As early as the second edition of 1819, he changed the title to **Organon of the Healing Art**. This evolution reflects the development of his own understanding of medicine.

The **Organon** itself grew organically. Across its successive editions, Hahnemann continually revised, refined, and expanded it. It is therefore not a static book but a living work in constant development. One of its central messages is that **both healing and understanding are processes of continual evolution**.

"Aude Sapere" – Dare to Think for Yourself

The motto at the beginning of the **Organon** is **Aude sapere**—"*Dare to be wise*," or, in the spirit of the Enlightenment, "**Have the courage to use your own understanding**."

This invitation remains just as relevant today as it was in Hahnemann's lifetime.

When Hahnemann urges us to follow his method faithfully, I do not understand this as a call to imitate him mechanically. Rather, I believe he is inviting us to do exactly what he himself did: **observe carefully, question established ideas, investigate, and think independently**.

During Hahnemann's time, knowledge concerning spiritual realities was often preserved within secret societies. This led me to ask whether certain principles associated with **Freemasonry** might also resonate within the **Organon**. My interest is not in membership of any lodge, but in the underlying spiritual ideals: **self-knowledge, freedom, personal development, and individual responsibility for the greater whole**.

The Chain of the Aphorisms

H: How is the inner structure of the aphorisms organized?

A: The first three aphorisms form the foundation of the entire **Organon**.

In **Aphorism 1**, Hahnemann defines the physician's task:

"The physician's highest and only mission is to restore the sick to health—to cure, as it is termed."

In **Aphorism 2**, he explains what genuine healing means, describing **the highest ideal of cure** as one that is **rapid, gentle, and permanent**, achieved by the **shortest, most reliable, and least harmful means**.

Aphorism 3 then outlines three essential requirements of the physician:

- to recognize **what is to be cured** in the patient,
- to understand **the healing powers of medicines**, and
- to apply those medicinal powers **individually** to each unique case.

At the end of this third aphorism stands the **true practitioner of the Healing Art**. Thus, within these opening aphorisms, Hahnemann describes the journey **from physician to healing artist**.

The aphorisms themselves are linked like the **links of a chain**. Each one grows naturally out of the preceding one, deepening or expanding its central idea. Even the transition to **Aphorism 4** is already anticipated in Aphorism 3, where Hahnemann speaks of recognizing and removing the **obstacles to recovery**. Aphorism 4 then develops this idea by examining the influences that disturb health, produce disease, and maintain illness.

The Healing Art, Play, and a New Perspective

H: What distinguishes the **Healing Art** from medical knowledge alone?

A: In Hahnemann's time, the word *art* primarily referred to **mastery**—the ability to perform something skillfully. Today, we also understand art as a **creative process**. The Healing Art therefore encompasses not only professional knowledge and technical skill, but also **perception, intuition, freedom, and creativity**.

For me, there is another essential element: **play**.

Play creates a space in which something genuinely new can emerge. Children develop through play, whereas many adults gradually lose this capacity. Yet every artist depends upon a playful openness that allows new possibilities to become visible.

In this context, I often speak of a **180-degree turn**—looking at a situation from the opposite perspective. In my practice, helping a patient view life from another angle often creates the distance needed for new insights to arise. The same is true when reading the **Organon**. It reveals its richness only when we approach it from different perspectives rather than interpreting it purely literally.

Observation and Experience

The **Organon** remains relevant because Hahnemann developed his ideas through **careful observation and experience**.

He studied the natural course of disease and compared different illnesses with one another. In doing so, he recognized that diseases displaying similar characteristics could influence each other in meaningful ways.

From these observations he developed the **Law of Similars**.

For me, homeopathy is therefore both an **empirical healing art** and an **empirical science**. Its underlying attitude can be summarized simply:

Do not merely believe. Observe. Experience. Think for yourself.

Hahnemann's greatness did not lie only in his powers of observation. He recognized the **underlying laws** behind what he observed. That required patience, profound knowledge, and undoubtedly a considerable degree of intuition.

The Unprejudiced Observer

In **Aphorism 6**, Hahnemann speaks of the **unprejudiced observer**, not of someone who is completely free of prejudice.

Complete freedom from prejudice is probably impossible. What matters is becoming aware of our assumptions and learning to let them go whenever possible.

True openness therefore requires **self-awareness**, **self-knowledge**, and the willingness to suspend premature judgments.

The homeopath observes symptoms, life circumstances, relationships, and patterns without immediately forcing them into a preconceived explanatory model.

Hahnemann also introduces the idea of the **Gestalt of disease**.

A disease is not merely a diagnosis or a collection of isolated symptoms. It expresses itself through the whole human being—through posture, movement, gestures, speech, relationships, life experiences, and the unique way in which each individual lives and experiences illness.

In **Aphorism 7**, Hahnemann describes the visible symptoms as **the outward reflection of the inner essence of disease**.

For the homeopath, the name of a disease is therefore less important than understanding **how the disease is experienced inwardly by the individual patient**.

The Inner Essence of the Remedy and the Law of Similars

The same principle applies to homeopathic remedies.

Our task is to discover their **inner essence**. This refers not merely to the material substance from which the remedy originates, but to the **characteristic pattern of effects** that the substance is capable of producing in a human being.

This pattern is revealed through the **homeopathic proving**.

Healthy volunteers take a potentized remedy and carefully observe every change that occurs on the **physical, emotional, and mental** levels. Taken together, these observations form the remedy's unique **Materia Medica picture**.

The **Law of Similars** provides the foundation for applying this knowledge therapeutically:

"Let like be cured by like."

A remedy is therefore not selected simply because a patient carries a particular medical diagnosis. The decisive question is whether the characteristic picture produced by the remedy in healthy individuals closely resembles the patient's own individual expression of illness.

This comparison goes far beyond matching isolated symptoms.

The homeopath seeks correspondence in the **entire pattern** and **dynamic quality** of the case:

How does the illness manifest itself?

How is it experienced?

What makes it better or worse?

Which physical, emotional, and mental characteristics define this individual patient?

The **inner essence of the disease** should correspond as closely as possible to the **inner essence of the remedy**.

The more characteristic this similarity, the more precisely the remedy can, according to homeopathic understanding, stimulate the **vital force**.

Dynamis and the Vital Force

One of the central concepts of the **Organon** is the **Dynamis**, or **vital force**.

The Greek word *dynamis* refers to the capacity to bring about change. It therefore describes movement rather than a fixed condition.

In **Aphorism 9**, Hahnemann deliberately speaks of **the healthy state**, not of permanent health.

Health is not something static. It is a moment of dynamic balance in which the **spirit-like vital force** maintains the organism in harmonious functioning.

I often illustrate this by imagining three overlapping circles:

the **body**,

the **mind**, and

the **vital force**.

The **Dynamis** influences both body and mind. When it falls out of balance, physical and psychological symptoms may arise.

The role of the homeopathic remedy is therefore to provide a **dynamic stimulus**. Rather than suppressing individual symptoms, it seeks to encourage the organism's own capacity for self-regulation and healing.

Homeopathic Provings and "Know Thyself"

Hahnemann asked healthy individuals to take potentized remedies and carefully record every change in their bodies, sensations, thoughts, and emotions.

Through this process, the **homeopathic proving** was born.

The prover does more than observe the remedy.

He or she also learns to observe oneself.

In a footnote to **Aphorism 141**, Hahnemann refers to the ancient Delphic maxim:

"Know thyself."

Self-knowledge does not begin with self-criticism or self-improvement.

It begins with learning to perceive what truly is.

Through this process, one gradually becomes a genuine observer.

For that reason, the practitioner of the Healing Art must also undergo a process of **individualization**.

Only someone who has cultivated inner freedom can truly rely upon **sound senses, open-mindedness**, and independent judgment.

Healing Rather than Suppression

Disease, in Hahnemann's understanding, first arises as a disturbance on the **dynamic** or **spirit-like** level before it manifests in the body and mind. Consequently, genuine healing cannot consist merely in eliminating outward symptoms.

When a symptom disappears through suppression, this does not necessarily mean that the underlying disturbance has been resolved. True and lasting healing occurs when the **vital force** returns to a healthier state, making the symptom unnecessary.

The example of **Belladonna** illustrates the **Law of Similars**. In its crude form, the deadly nightshade can produce symptoms such as a flushed face, intense heat, dryness, and inflammation of the throat. If a child develops a sudden high fever with a bright red face, burning heat, and a sore throat—displaying a picture that closely resembles the Belladonna proving—a potentized preparation of **Belladonna** may be indicated.

According to homeopathic understanding, the remedy does not combat the disease materially, nor does it merely suppress symptoms. Rather, the similarity between the remedy picture and the patient's condition provides a **dynamic stimulus** that encourages the organism to activate its own healing response.

Underlying this concept is Hahnemann's profound confidence that the organism is fundamentally oriented toward **healing, growth, and development**.

At the same time, he recognized that healing is not always straightforward. In **Aphorism 4**, he describes the existence of **obstacles to cure**. Persistent grief, emotional distress, unhealthy living conditions, and other burdens may maintain illness and make recovery considerably more difficult.

Miasms and Chronic Disease

In his work on chronic diseases, Hahnemann developed the concept of **miasms**.

He distinguished three fundamental miasms:

- **Psora**
- **Sycosis**
- **Syphilis**

From the perspective presented here, these terms do not merely refer to physical diseases or infectious agents. Rather, they describe deeper **dynamic disturbances** or predispositions that affect the **vital force**.

These influences may be inherited or acquired during life and shape an individual's susceptibility to chronic illness.

Yet even inherited tendencies should not be regarded as unchangeable.

The **Dynamis** remains the central regulating principle and therefore always retains the potential for development and transformation.

Individualization – Aphorisms 83 and 153

For my own clinical work, **Aphorisms 83 and 153** are of particular importance.

In **Aphorism 83**, Hahnemann describes the process of **individualized case-taking**.

He explains that the practitioner of the Healing Art requires only:

- **freedom from prejudice,**
- **sound senses,**
- **careful observation,** and
- **faithfulness in recording the picture of the disease.**

Even the word **examiner** is meaningful.

The physician must look beneath the surface, seeking what is essential rather than collecting every detail of a patient's life indiscriminately.

Aphorism 153 then explains how the appropriate remedy is selected.

Hahnemann emphasizes the importance of the patient's

"striking, singular, uncommon, and characteristic signs and symptoms."

These are often the features that cannot easily be explained by ordinary medical reasoning.

They express the patient's individuality.

Throughout more than three decades of practice, I have continually asked myself:

Where is this person's true individuality revealed?

When a patient genuinely feels seen and understood in his or her uniqueness, the process of healing and personal development often begins at that very moment.

Hahnemann guides the reader step by step, yet never restricts independent thinking.

This, to me, is one of the greatest secrets of the **Organon**.

Every sentence invites renewed reflection.

Every stage of life reveals new meanings.

Self-Knowledge and the Higher Purpose of Life

Within the symbolism of **Freemasonry**, the human being is often described as an **unhewn stone**.

Through **self-knowledge**, one gradually shapes and refines this stone so that it may contribute to the construction of the great temple of humanity.

In a similar way, I understand the deeper purpose of homeopathic treatment.

Healing is not merely the disappearance of symptoms.

It is also a process of inner development.

In **Aphorism 9**, Hahnemann writes that when the organism exists in a healthy state, the indwelling rational spirit may freely employ it **for the higher purpose of our existence**.

He does **not** speak of a *higher state of well-being*.

He speaks of a **higher purpose**.

For me, this distinction is fundamental.

Human beings are called not only to become healthier for their own sake, but also to contribute, through their own development, to the well-being of humanity as a whole.

From this conviction comes one of my guiding principles:

"Whatever is founded upon spiritual principles can never be destroyed."

External institutions may disappear.

Books may be forgotten.

Ideas may be attacked.

Yet genuine spiritual principles continue to exist.

For this reason, I do not believe that homeopathy can ultimately be destroyed.

Like every living discipline, it will continue to evolve.

Science evolves.

Our understanding of life evolves.

Human consciousness evolves.

Transformation is the driving force of further development.

Continuing Hahnemann's Work in Our Own Time

Hahnemann always investigated the central questions of his own era.

He studied **Cinchona**, **Mercurius**, and **Lycopodium** because they played important roles in the medicine of his time.

He never accepted established opinions without examining them himself.

He remained curious.

He continued asking questions.

Following this example, I asked myself:

What are the defining themes of our own age?

This question eventually led me to conduct **seven homeopathic provings**.

The first concerned **Ozone**, which became highly significant during the 1990s because of ozone depletion and environmental pollution.

My interest extended beyond its physical effects.

I wanted to understand its energetic significance.

Later came **Lithium**, widely used in the treatment of bipolar disorders but still largely unexplored within homeopathy.

While studying Hahnemann's preparation of **Causticum**, I became fascinated by its unmistakable alchemical background.

This inspired the proving of **Agarwood (Oud)**, chosen because its fragrance is released precisely at the moment when the material substance begins to transform.

Later provings included the **Cowrie Shell (Cypraea)**—inspired by questions surrounding money and the introduction of the Euro—and finally **Tourmaline**, the gemstone of the rainbow, whose symbolism of hidden light and transformation resonated deeply with Goethe's vision of humanity's future.

In all these provings I have tried to remain faithful to Hahnemann's method while responding creatively to the questions of our own time.

Joy, Evolution, and Light

For me, **joy** is an essential prerequisite for working with those who suffer and for contributing to the continued development of homeopathy.

Every generation stands upon the shoulders of those who came before. Our students and children should not merely repeat what we have learned; they should build upon it and see further than we could. This idea of **evolution**—of one generation expanding the work of the previous one—fills me with great joy.

In this sense, Hahnemann himself was not the endpoint of homeopathy, but its beginning. He established principles that invite continual observation, reflection, and discovery.

H: You often refer to Schiller's *Ode to Joy*. What does this poem mean to you?

A: It is far more than the anthem of Europe.

Schiller presents **joy** as a profoundly **spiritual force**.

He calls it the "**divine spark**", the daughter of Elysium—a gift that originates beyond the material world.

Later he writes,

"...we enter, drunk with fire..."

Throughout history, **fire** has symbolized the awakening of the human spirit.

In Schiller's vision, joy enables us to enter a realm in which genuine human community becomes possible.

On the material level people remain divided by nationality, culture, opinions, and personal interests. Yet joy possesses the remarkable capacity to unite what has become separated.

This makes the poem much more than a celebration of happiness.

It expresses the ideals of the **Age of Enlightenment**:

Freedom. Equality. Brotherhood.