

CONSTITUTION AND ITS BEAUTY IN HOMOEOPATHY

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ABSTRACT

The factors making up the human constitution keep changing and affect every person differently. Constitutional characteristics are determined at the moment of fertilization. Therefore body chemistry of every person is unique. Homoeopathic cure takes place by giving the simillimum which at the same time acts as a constitutional medicine for that particular individual. A constitutional medicine corrects the constitutional defects, inherent and acquired.

Keywords: Constitution, temperaments, gestalt of the disease

INTRODUCTION

We frequently speak of constitution and of constitutional remedies. Yet, when we ask ourselves what constitution actually is we find we are at a loss for an answer. If every characteristic is looked upon as constitutional, we still lack a yardstick to measure what represents the differentiating elements between constitutional and non-constitutional factors.

Every person is born with a certain part of organization which is determined by the genes and the environmental influences. During intrauterine life, the embryo is liable to receive the effect of various physical and emotional factors on mother. It develops certain attributes during this stage of life. After nine months of intrauterine life it comes out with certain attributes and enters the world which has altogether different environment. The first reception as well as the new environment will have a great impact on his constitution. In the course of its growth, it comes across different environment and accordingly modifies its reaction by learning through experiences. It develops certain likes and dislikes, certain positive and negative attitudes which, in due course, become a part of its behavioral pattern. Throughout his life, a person learns through his personal experiences, but the impact of early environment plays a great role in the making of his constitution. Thus the constitution of a person is the sum total of the result of the influences of early environment on hereditary characteristics.

Definition

According to Stuart Close, "Constitution is that aggregate of hereditary characters, influenced more or less by environment, which determines the individual's reaction, successful or unsuccessful, to the stress of environment."

Dr. Kent says, "Physical constitution is the external disorder following disorder in the man, the vital force."

A definition like Bauer's "the sum total of an individual's characteristics as they are potentially determined at the moment of fertilization".

Whitmont himself offers the following definition — '*...constitution is the inherent tendency to respond automatically along qualitatively predetermined individual, characteristic patterns.* Constitutional differences are the differences of response patterns to identical situations. Constitutions can be characterized by characterizing these fixed response patterns.' Thus we may speak of psoric, allergic constitutions; of Sulphur or Nux vomica constitutions, etc.

Each individual reacts according to an innate, predetermined emotional pattern that makes it impossible for him to respond otherwise. The choleric cannot respond in a phlegmatic fashion nor can the sanguine or phlegmatic person, even if he wanted to, work up a real affect.

Interpretation of the term Constitution

In the German text Hahnemann used the term, *beschaffenheit* (make up), which is usually translated into English as the word "constitution". This, however, does not reflect all the usages of the German term. This term can be used in a variety of ways that have nothing to do with the human constitution. The root word "schaffen" means "to do, to make, to work". *Beschaffen* is a verb that means, "to procure, make something available", and as an adjective it means, "constituted".

The English word, constitution, comes from the Latin root, *constituere*, which means constitutes: to set up, to establish, to form or make up, to appoint to give being to. *Beschaffenheit* is usually translated as constitution in relationship to the Latin root "constitute" in homoeopathic works. *Chambers Dictionary* defines constitution as: the natural condition of the body or mind; disposition.

The *W. Turner's Dictionary*, published in Leipzig in the 1830s, defines the German term, *Beschaffenheit*, as nature, quality, temper, condition, constitution, disposition and circumstance. Therefore, the term *Beschaffenheit* may include any circumstance, condition or quality related to the physical constitution and mental temperament as well as dispositions. This shows how the term was used in Hahnemann's lifetime. Modern German may not clearly convey this meaning. The homeopathic usage is related directly to the practice of medicine not the common usage of a layperson on the street. The term constitution is used at least 16 times in *The Chronic Diseases*. The term "*beschaffenheit*" may have the following meanings in German.

A quality of someone or something that is inherent or a characteristic trait that serves to define or describe its possessor.

The make-up or way something is composed or arranged, its constitution, composition, construction or nature.

A medical term for inherent traits and qualities of the human being [constitution; make-up and qualities of the body and/or soul].

Different concepts of Constitution

- Chinese Concept -Yang & Yin
- Ayurvedic concept – A person's constitution is made up of three different types of doshas; vata, pitta & kapha.

Kapha type people tend to have a strong frame. They tend to have a melodious voice, thick hair and lustrous, moist eyes, are generally loving and kind to others. In its imbalance, Kapha people gain weight easily. Because of their attraction to sweets they are more prone to diabetes. Emotionally they can get overly attached.

Pitta type people have medium frame. They are very smart and motivated. Out of balance, they can create competitiveness and lack of concern for others. It can create ulcers, heartburn and liver disorders and balding.

Vata type of people has a small frame. They are very creative and get excited about having multiple projects, are spiritually inclined. Out of balance they tend to get fearful and anxious. They have a tendency to develop disorder of the central nervous system.

- HIPPOCRATIC Concept – SHORT and THICK & LONG and THIN. According to him first type is prone to apoplectic conditions and the second type is prone to tubercular affection. According to humoral theory the body is made by four humors- phlegm, yellow bile, blood and black bile. Hippocrates postulated that health prevailed when the four humors were in equilibrium and when the balance was disturbed, the disease results.

The Essence is the Gestalt of the Disease

All these perceptible signs represent the disease in its entire extent, that is, together they form the only conceivable gestalt of the disease.

Hippocrates was the first to write of the constitutional nature of the human organism.

Hahnemann used his knowledge of the Hippocratic Canon to understand the nature of the constitution, temperament and predispositions and their relationship to the signs, befallments and symptoms.

VIEW OF DIFFERENT STALLWARTS

Hahnemann included the observations of Ludwig Christian Juncker in the main body of text of *The Chronic Diseases*. This quote shows how the four classical temperaments and various diathetic constitutions condition the signs and symptoms produced by the suppression of psora. Vide *The Chronic Diseases*, Volume I, and page ¹⁷.

"A brief survey of the manifold misfortunes resulting thence is given by the experienced and honest LUDWIG CHRISTIAN JUNCKER in his *Dissertatio de Damno ex Scabie Repulsa*, Halle, 1750, p. 15-18. He observed that with young people of a sanguine temperament the suppression of itch is followed by phthisis, and with persons in general who are of a sanguine temperament it is followed by piles, hemorrhoidal colic and renal gravel; with persons of sanguino-choleric temperament by swellings of the inguinal glands, stiffening of the joints and malignant ulcers (called in German *Todenbruche*); with fat persons by a suffocating catarrh and mucous consumption; also by inflammatory fever, acute pleurisy and inflammation of the lungs.

He further states that in autopsies the lungs have been found indurate and full of cysts containing pus; also other indurations, swellings of the bones and ulcers have been seen to follow the suppression of an eruption. Phlegmatic persons in consequence of such suppressions suffered chiefly from dropsy; the menses were delayed, and when the itch was driven away during their flow, they were changed into a monthly haemoptysis. Persons inclined to melancholy were sometimes made insane by such repression; if they were pregnant the fetus was usually killed. Sometimes the suppression of the itch causes sterility, in nursing women the milk is generally lacking, the menses disappear prematurely; in older

women the uterus becomes ulcerated, attended with deep, burning pains, with wasting away (cancer of the womb)."

This term was said by James Kent to indicate a chronic or anti-miasmatic medicine that affects the whole patient. This term was complementary to the "acute remedy", which was more suitable for the transitory local phenomena associated with acute crisis. Kent's constitutional medicine had nothing to do with giving remedies by classical constitutions or temperaments. It was simply the remedy that was most suited to treat chronic diseases and miasms. In truth, Kent spoke out against the use of classical constitutions and temperaments in homoeopathy in his *Lesser Writings*. The symptoms that represent the morbid constitution or disorder of the individual are the ones that the skillful prescriber always seeks.

Foubister also warns against prescribing on constitutional type, stating "The fact that anyone can be fitted into a type, even accurately, does not mean that the remedy for that type is required at any given time."

This view is modified by Roberts, who sees some value in constitutional typing: "The homeopathic prescription is often biased by the temperament to the extent that certain temperaments bring out certain symptom pictures much more readily than do other so-called temperaments. ... Just so far as the temperaments as classified develop symptoms in their conventional lines may we depend upon them as guides in the selection of the remedy?" Roberts bases his classification on the classical temperaments — nervous, bilious, sanguinous, and Phlegmatic. There are many combinations of these types, usually with one basic type predominating. The phlegmatic type is essentially sluggish in reaction; venous stasis is marked tendency of these temperaments – the opposite of the sanguineous. The nervous temperaments, as it implies, would indicate quick action, the high strung type. The bilious types have a tendency to liver disorders. "...the remedy indicated by the conditions of disturbed balance is the one that will most quickly restore the equilibrium, regardless of the temperament."

These temperaments, as they are developed at the moment of very beginning of the new individual are to a very large extent physiological. Besides the stature of the patient the matter of temperaments implies coloring, functional tendencies of circulation, elimination, respiration and so on, and at the same time mental and emotional tendencies in relation to environment and circumstance. It is closely allied with the basic dyscrasias. The initial tendency cannot be changed or influenced by the action of our remedies, but the similitum if prescribed accurately in babes and children, can modify the physiological tendencies as to prevent their unfavorable ultimate, to a considerable degree.

According to phenomenological view point of Roberts, the patient who suffers from atmospheric pressure and the dampness of sea level flourishes at higher altitudes. As the sycotics are manifested by over-stimulation of growth and development of certain body cells, when they are exposed to increased bombardment by the cosmic rays, this tends to balance the diseased state, and the patient enjoys a more stable equilibrium.

Boger appears to regard the constitution as that which produces the characteristic, as opposed to common, symptoms of the disease.

Jahr says that the choice of the right remedy is the most difficult in chronic diseases. Not only because there are often only few symptoms, but also because the symptoms that should determine the choice of the remedy are often not presented to the eye of the observer. One of the reasons is that "here, because of the origin of the disease in an acquired or inherited diathesis, they are often so intimately amalgamated with the individual constitution of the patient that he doesn't even think of communicating the constitutional anomalies, which he doesn't often even consider as pathologic, to the doctor."

John.H.Clarke, put to his own patients the same questions that Grauvogl did, and this at once sorts them in to sections and narrows the choice of remedy.

Eduard Von Grauvogl (1811 – 1877) described three constitutions, endomorphic, mesomorphic, and ectomorphic, or hydrogenoid, oxygenoid and carbo nitrogenoid constitutions. In his book "The Simile in Medicine," Linn Boyd tells us that Grauvogl introduced constitutions into Homoeopathy. "These constitutions (hydrogenoid, oxygenoid, and carbo-nitrogenous) led to the choice of certain remedies in constitutional diseases.

It is in this conception as explaining Hahnemann's observation of the effect of the various seasons and climatic conditions on patients and drug provers that Grauvogl's arrangement of the constitutions is based. Grauvogl's arranged the morbid constitutions according to excess or deficiency of certain elements in the tissues and blood. For every organ and every tissue breathes, and if the lungs are the gateway and the blood the carrier it to the tissues which are the ultimate recipients of the oxygen that is breathed.

The three constitutions of Grauvogl

- The Carbo- Nitrogenoid constitution: It is characterized by an excess of carbon and nitrogen or insufficient oxygenation and the complaints are caused by retarded nutrition. This makes for increased liability to disease and perverted nutrition. They suffer from functional disorders of body and mind, marked by erratic working of the heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, spleen etc. This constitution corresponds to Hahnemann's Psora. Medicines like Lyco, Phos. Sulph.etc. comes very closer to this morbid constitution.
- The Oxygenoid constitution: It is characterized by excess of oxygen and consequently exaggerates breaking down of hydro-carbons, nitrogenoids and albuminous tissues and bones – destruction of tissues, equals syphilis.

The persons under these constitutions are thin and complain of weight loss inspite of having food, appetite and eating well. They have prominent glands, weak bones, and anemia. Destructive, disorders involving the genitalia and diseases of central nervous system are present. They like fats and have aversion of carbohydrates. They are ill on change of season, worse when dryness is changing to humidity, before storms and before and during tempestuous winds. They are better when it begins to rain and snow. They are also worse in foggy weather. Oxygenoids are commonly called nervous individuals and are characterized by increased physical and mental activities. Body is prone to ulcerations and self— destruction.

Grauvogl puts in the first rank Kali- iod as it absorbs all the ozone.

Remedies – Calc phos, ferr phos, nat phos, phos, phos acid, iod, sit, calc, natr mur, hell, tuberc, syph, merc sol, are the main drugs. Medicines closer to this constitution are Kali.iod, ferrum and the carbon group.

- The Hydrogenoid constitution: It is characterized by excess of hydrogen, and consequently of water in the blood and tissues. They are aggravated by moisture and humidity, prone to dropsy and anasarca, and suffer from tissue growth of benign type, equals Hahnemann's Sycosis.

Vaccinosis, or the constitutional sufferings from cow-pox infection, should certainly be included under this heading. The antidotal relation to it of *Thuja*, which is one of Grauvogl's principal remedies for Hydrogenoids is a clear indication that this is so.

If the patient states, that he feels worse in cold, or damp weather, and in the rain, then choose remedies which are similar to disease, such only as contain a greater percentage of a combination of O with C and H, consequently produce more heat and diminish the influence of the water. Hence the symptoms of a disease in this constitution of the body are aggravated by everything which in any way increases the atoms of water in the organism, for example by baths- mineral baths or simple water baths; eating of animals which have lived in the water, as fishes; by cold and cooling food and drinks- sour milk, hard eggs, cucumbers and mushrooms, but chiefly by living near water, and especially standing water. The complaints which are

aggravated by electric disturbance find a special place under this constitution.

Medicines which have similar features and are curative for such a constitution are Nat.sulph, Thuja, Ant. tart, ipecac etc.

Importance of constitution in homoeopathy

- The first instruction on homoeopathic case taking is for the homoeopath to record all the significant points of the complete case history, the potential causations including miasms, as well as the 7 attendant circumstances. The ascertainable physical constitution is one of the very important factor among the accessory circumstances. This information forms the basis of understanding the patient (nature-inheritance) as well as the environmental conditioning factors that affect the development of symptoms (nurture-situation) as per *Organon* §5
- In the Chronic Diseases again Hahnemann speaks about how Psora can produce so many different signs and symptoms in different individuals. He points out that the individualizing factor is the bodily constitution, psychology, and hereditary dispositions as well as the mode of living, environment, etc. Hahnemann includes both inheritance (nature) and environment (nurture) in his pathological theory. He said "These are 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.
- In selection of potency: The susceptibility of the patient is one of the very important factors of selection of potency. As the susceptibility is modified by constitution and temperaments, the potency selection is to some extent depends on it. The higher potencies are best adapted to sensitive persons of the nervous, sanguine or choleric temperament; to intelligent, intellectual persons, quick to act and react; to zealous and impulsive persons.
- Lower potencies and larger and more frequent doses correspond better to torpid and phlegmatic individuals, dull odd comprehension and slow to act; to coarse fibered, sluggish individuals of gross habits; to those who possess great muscular power but who require a powerful stimulus to excite them. Such persons can take with seeming, impunity large amounts of stimulants like whiskey, and show little effect from it.
- The morbid influences that are attracted to temperamental tendencies are amenable to treatment and can be removed by the homoeopathic remedy; this in itself is greatly preventive of the dangers arising from temperamental weakness.
- Constitutional diagnosis:

It is necessary to assess the peculiarities of an individual during his or her healthy state. The peculiarities of each individual are put together and assessed in three ways. These are as follows – actual constitutional diagnosis, developmental constitutional diagnosis and environmental constitutional diagnosis.

- The actual constitutional diagnosis is done by observing the peculiarities of the individual during his healthy state, to be compared with the pathologic state. Only then, "the physician clearly perceives what is to be cured in disease, that is to say, in every individual case of disease." As per §3
- The developmental constitutional diagnosis is done by examining and finding out the various etiological factors; it is done by the guideline of Hahnemann in §5 of *organon* of medicine.
- The environmental constitutional diagnosis is nothing but the assessment of the modalities, or the individual's characteristic conditions. That is... how does this person react to his environment, as to time, place and circumstances?
- Selection of appropriate constitutional medicine is necessary as it corrects the constitutional defects, inherent and acquired. A constitutional medicine acts best only after other miasmatic effects are removed or brought to latent state.

- Assessment of the way of cure: the qualities possessed by the patient before he or she grew ill should be come back when they are in the right path of cure.
- As per §210 those who were patient when well often become obstinate, violent, hasty or even intolerant and capricious, or impatient or desponding when ill; those formerly chaste and modest often become lascivious and shameless etc.

CONCLUSION

The only real evidence of disease condition is the deviation from the normal. These deviations are manifested in mind, body and spirit – the sum total of which provides a sound basis for prescription.

“No knowledge is perfect unless it includes an understanding of the origin – that is, the beginning ; and as all man’s diseases originate in his constitution, it is necessary that his constitution should be known if we wish to know his diseases.” - Paracelsus.

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