



An Exploratory Study and a Theoretical Hypothesis on the Possibility of Integrating Art into the Homeopathic Treatment of Anxiety and Depression: An Invitation to a Scientific Comparison between Homeopathy and Art, Music and Poetry Therapy

Giulio Tarro

President of the T.&L. de Beaumont Bonelli for Cancer Research, Naples, Italy

Giovanni De Giorgio

Physician, registered in the register of homeopaths and in the register of acupuncturists at the Provincial Order of Rome of Physicians, Surgeons and Dentists, Rome, Italy and Member of the Scientific Committee of the National Observatory for Minors and Artificial Intelligence, Torre di Ruggiero, Italy

ABSTRACT

Our exploratory study is purely theoretical, and the development of our hypothesis for integrating homeopathy and art in the treatment of anxiety and depressive symptoms is essentially based on conceptual analysis, the interpretation of the *law of similars*, and the reinterpretation of artistic stimuli from a homeopathic perspective. Therefore, our investigation is not supported by experiments or clinical studies. However, to remain grounded in scientific thought, we conducted a literature search to find authoritative articles reporting the efficacy of homeopathic medicines for anxiety and depression. The efficacy of homeopathic medicines in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression has been demonstrated through authoritative scientific research that at least partially confirms the classical homeopathic literature. With this article, taking into account the results obtained through scientific research, we wish to broaden the discussion on the possibility of including homeopathy among the therapies that can be scientifically used to treat symptoms of anxiety and depression. Furthermore, we wish to present a hypothesis developed during our exploratory, theoretical, and conceptual study regarding the possibility of using art homeopathically, consistent with the *law of similars* and the therapeutic action of homeopathic medicines. The reinterpretation of art from a homeopathic perspective has led us to ask the following question: can painting, sculpture, music, and poetry facilitate the therapeutic action of homeopathic medicines? We theoretically believe so, but we also recognize that a comprehensive answer to this question can only be derived from in-depth scientific research. According to our theoretical hypothesis, based on the fundamental principles of homeopathy, art can be revealed to be homeopathically curative when it acts in coherence with the *law of similars* and with the homeopathic method, therefore, we believe that the *stimuli* generated by artistic images, musical pieces and poetic verses can facilitate the action of homeopathic medicines only if they act in coherence with the fundamental principles of homeopathy, if they respect the law according to which *similar cures similar*, if they are able to provoke, evoke, amplify homeopathically Symptoms *similar* to those intended to be treated. Therapeutic

intervention with art, logically, should take into account a highly personalized, comprehensive, and holistic homeopathic diagnosis, which must be matched by a targeted therapy implemented with homeopathic medicines, which today, thanks to scientific research, can be prescribed with greater clinical awareness. We encourage scientific research and hope that our theoretical and conceptual hypothesis will be confirmed in the future by high-quality studies, observations, and experiments. For now, we can theoretically conclude that certain stimuli generated homeopathically through art (painting, sculpture, music, poetry) can facilitate the action of homeopathic medicines and help alleviate or eliminate symptoms of anxiety and depression. However, in practice, we cannot provide any scientifically solid conclusions. Therefore, we hope that future scientific studies will be conducted that can provide results, information, numbers, and data that will allow us to understand the possible interactions between homeopathy and art, between artistic stimuli and pharmacological stimuli, and between artistic creations and homeopathic medicines. Scientific research has conducted interesting studies on homeopathic medicines, and although the studies are limited, in our opinion they are highly significant and provide encouraging results. These could also encourage future exploratory theoretical studies, which could lead to innovative, pioneering, and bold, yet conceptually coherent hypotheses developed with logic and rationality. We hope that our theoretical hypothesis, homeopathically pioneering and innovative yet rooted in the ancient *law of similars*, can provide further scientific inspiration to all researchers, including those who intend to study homeopathy in unexplored or underexplored fields, in order to understand whether the conditions exist to create a solid scientific foundation for new therapies that can be integrated with homeopathic therapy. Based on our exploratory study, the integration of art and therapy is possible, which is why we hope that future scientific research can expand, engage with, and intertwine with research on other serious therapies, such as art therapy, music therapy, and poetry therapy.

Keywords: Anxiety, depression, homeopathy, law of similars, art.

INTRODUCTION

In homeopathy, anxiety symptoms and depressive symptoms must be treated according to the fundamental *law of similars* or *law of similarity*. On the The therapeutic principle, *similia similibus curentur*, is the basis of all homeopathic medicine, and this principle can nowadays be scientifically explained through the systematic study of the rebound effect of modern drugs [1]. *Like cures like*. This principle is the *cornerstone* of homeopathy. Even anxious and depressive symptoms, therefore, must be treated by relying on the *homeopathic cornerstone* and on the basis of the similarity existing between the symptoms complained of by the patient and those produced by a specific medicine during homeopathic trials. In the classic repertoire of homeopathic materia medica by Dr. Kent, under the entries *anxiety* and *sadness, mental depression*, various homeopathic medicines are listed [2]. We wanted to verify whether, nowadays, these medicines are studied scientifically, whether homeopathic therapy is effective, whether homeopathy can be included in the therapies for anxiety and depression. Furthermore, we initiated and conducted an exploratory, theoretical, and conceptual study to evaluate the possibility of using art therapeutically, consistent with the *law of similars* and the therapeutic action of homeopathic medicines. The question we asked ourselves was very clear: can painting, sculpture, music, and poetry facilitate homeopathic therapy? We We believe that an

equally clear and scientifically reliable answer to our question can only be provided in the future by systematic, serious, and rigorous research. However, for now, by reinterpreting art from a homeopathic perspective, we hypothesize that some *artistic stimuli* can be used homeopathically to facilitate the therapeutic stimuli generated by homeopathic medicines. Indeed, images, sounds, and words often act in accordance with the *law of similars*, and this leads us to suppose that painting, sculpture, music, and poetry, at least in theory, can be used homeopathically. Our hypothesis, therefore, rests on a theoretical, not a practical, basis, and we must await the scientific studies that confirm both theory and practice. For now, through bibliographic research, we acknowledge the existence of scientific studies confirming the efficacy of homeopathic medicines in treating anxiety and depression. The studies are still few, but significant, and provide extremely interesting and encouraging food for thought. Our exploratory study, although it only produces a theoretical hypothesis, aims to contribute to the encouragement of scientific research by providing a pioneering and innovative vision, yet consistent with the classical homeopathic view and the ancient *law of similars*. This study invites a scientific comparison between homeopathy, art therapy, music therapy, and poetry therapy.

METHODS

Our exploratory study is purely theoretical, and our hypothesis of integrating homeopathy and art in the treatment of anxiety and depressive symptoms is essentially based on conceptual analysis, the interpretation of the *law of similars*, and the reinterpretation of artistic stimuli from a homeopathic perspective. In short, our investigation is not supported by experiments or clinical studies. However, to remain grounded in a scientific approach, we conducted a literature search for authoritative articles reporting the efficacy of homeopathic medicines for anxiety and depression. We therefore consulted the electronic biomedical database PubMed/Medline and the web search engine Google Scholar. During the literature search, we consistently took into account the authoritativeness of the articles' authors and their affiliations.

RESULTS

The results of our bibliographic research are interesting. For transparency, some short but significant passages from the original articles published by the authoritative authors in equally authoritative scientific journals are reported in quotation marks. Bagherian *et al.*, following an authoritative randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study, report the following conclusions: "These findings suggest that homeopathic therapy can be used as an effective method to treat anxiety and depression disorders" [3]. The following are the results of an authoritative study by Zepeda-Quiroz *et al.* on the efficacy of individualized homeopathy in treatment-resistant depression: "This case study reconfirms the usefulness of homeopathy in treatment of depression. It also suggests that individualized homeopathic treatment may be useful in cases of treatment-resistant depression" [4]. This article, which presents a case of treatment-resistant depression, seems significant to us because, in the discussion, the authoritative authors state: "Interestingly, the patient responded surprisingly well to treatment with Staphisagria, N. vomica, A. album, and L. trigonocephalus in parallel with allopathic treatment and had a good evolution" [4]. In an authoritative study by Anser *et al.* a comparison is made on the antidepressant activity of three homeopathic medicines and their effect on rodent behavior. The article explains: "The current study is designed to assess neurobehavioral and antidepressant like effects of homeopathic remedies Staphysagria, Argentum nitricum and

Ignatia amara in comparison with standard drug (escitalopram)” [5]. The authoritative authors' conclusions are the following: “It is concluded from the results that all three homeopathic remedies produce comparable effects like standard drug while among all three remedies Staphysagria possess a potent antidepressant activity” [5]. In a study by Anser *et al.* the anxiolytic effect of the homeopathic remedy Argentum nitricum on rodents, at the 30 ch potency, is evaluated and these are the interesting conclusions of the authoritative authors: “In conclusion, we found that Argentum nitricum possess anxiolytic profile, but the use of low doses and high dilutions is advocated to avoid any toxicity” [6]. In a work on mice carried out by Bellavite *et al.*, Gelsemium sempervirens is studied. The authoritative authors specify: “Gelsemium sempervirens is used in homeopathy for treating patients with anxiety-related symptoms, however there have been few experimental studies evaluating its pharmacological activity”. The conclusions of the study are the following: “In conclusion, homeopathic doses of G. sempervirens influence the emotional responses of mice to novel environments, suggesting an improvement in exploratory behavior and a decrease in thigmotaxis or neophobia” [7]. These, however, are the conclusions of an authoritative study by Magnani *et al.* : “The overall pattern of results provides evidence that G. sempervirens acts on the emotional reactivity of mice, and that its anxiolytic-like effects are apparent, with a non-linear relationship, even at high dilutions” [8]. Regarding Gelsemium sempervirens, we believe it is interesting to report the conclusions drawn from the abstract of an authoritative article by Mateva *et al.* : “Aside from psychological consultations or conventional anxiolytic therapy, other avenues of treatment are rapidly demonstrating their merits for the management of professional stress-related disorders in management staff. Complementary medicine, at least as it pertains to homeopathic treatment with G. sempervirens, shows promise without the significant downsides of conventional therapy” [9]. In an authoritative randomized and controlled study by Narayanan *et al.*, “Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)” is studied and the following conclusions are drawn: “In conclusion, the homeopathic medicines selected from Kent's repertory in LM potency were adequate for the treatment of GAD” [10]. The conclusions of an authoritative study by Lakshmi Prabhakar *et al.* on the anxiolytic effect of the homeopathic preparation of Pulsatilla nigricans in Swiss albino mice are as follows: “The study showed an anxiolytic effect of homeopathic preparation of Pulsatilla nigricans comparable to that found with a standard drug” [11]. In an authoritative article by Hwang *et al.*, it is reported that “Homeopathic Pulsatilla 30C was evaluated in 4 clinical cases of ophthalmic complications with concomitant separation anxiety in dogs”, furthermore it is clearly stated that “these dogs were completely cured of physical and behavioral problem within 10 days” [12]. An authoritative study by Agrawal *et al.* carries out a comparative evaluation of the anxiolytic effect of oral midazolam and a homeopathic remedy in children during dental treatment. The article reports that “Group B: Received Aconite napellus (homeopathic remedy)”, furthermore, it reports the following conclusions: “In children with behavioral difficulties, homeopathic remedy was marginally more successful than oral midazolam in lowering anxiety during dental treatment” [13]. In an authoritative article by Alibeu & Jobert, the results obtained with the homeopathic medicine Aconitum are reported: “Aconit proved to be effective for children's postoperative agitation with 95% good results” [14]. In an authoritative study by Haine *et al.* an evaluation of the homeopathic medicine Aconitum napellus was carried out in the treatment of anxiety in an animal model and the effects on the central nervous system, CNS, are clearly reported in the article: “Conclusion: Dilutions 12cH and 30cH of Acon exhibited anxiolytic effects on the CNS in an animal experimental model” [15]. In a study by Hechavarria *et al.* on the effectiveness of homeopathic treatment in patients with depressive syndrome “the most used remedies turned

out to be: Natrum muriaticum, Aurum metallicum and Pulsatilla. The favorable clinical course of the affected patients showed the usefulness of this therapy to decrease depression" [16]. The conclusions of an authoritative study by Davidson et al. are the following: "Homeopathy may be useful in the treatment of affective and anxiety disorders in patients with mildly to severely symptomatic conditions" [17]. The conclusions of an authoritative study by Marzotto *et al.* on the effects of the remedy Ignatia amara on the behavior of mice are the following: "Homeopathic Ignatia dilutions/dynamizations (peak at 9C) modify some emotion-related symptoms in laboratory mice without affecting locomotion" [18]. A pilot study conducted by Pinto *et al.* on an animal model for the study of Chamomilla in stress and depression provides interesting data: "These data suggest that treatment with Chamomilla 6cH is related to the recovery of basal behavioral conditions in mice subjected to stressful conditions" [19]. Very interesting is what is stated in an authoritative scientific article by Adler *et al.*: "This study illustrates the feasibility of randomized controlled double-blind trials of homeopathy in depression and indicates the non-inferiority of individualized homeopathic Q-potencies as compared to fluoxetine in acute treatment of outpatients with moderate to severe depression" [20]. We believe that the results found by the authoritative researchers and their studies that have been cited in this article represent a fairly solid basis of data, information, very significant contents that, in our opinion, encourage scientific research on homeopathy and on the homeopathic treatment of anxiety and depression.

DISCUSSION

Homeopathy is based on the so-called *law of similarity*, according to which *like cures like*. Therefore, mental and physical sufferings are treated with the same substances that cause them. To treat suffering homeopathically, the healing substances must be administered in *small or infinitesimal doses*. An example: the administration of ponderal doses of Aconitum napellus causes the typical mental symptoms characterized by anxiety and agitation, on the contrary, the administration of *small* and infinitesimal homeopathic doses of Aconite can cure it. The symptoms caused during homeopathic experimentation can be cured with the same drug that causes them, furthermore, mental symptoms caused by existential causes can be cured with the homeopathic medicine that experimentally causes similar symptoms. *Similia similibus curentur*. Fundamental principle of homeopathy [1]. The *law of similars* can also be found during some circumstances that are not necessarily clinical, for example, during the observation of a painting or a sculpture, while listening to a piece of music or reading a poem, while watching a play or a film. Based on the correct application of the *law of similars*, art could also facilitate homeopathic diagnosis and therapy. A popular article, but conceptually useful to support this scientific discussion, is cited in this context, in particular, a short passage is reported which highlights "the 'homeopathic' sense of similes, metaphors, allegories transmitted not only by painting and sculpture, but also by music, poetry, the culture of beauty and significance" [21]. In theory, therefore, some anxious and depressive symptoms could be attenuated, and in some cases eliminated, through the application of the *law of similars*, that is, through the administration of *microdoses*. *Homeopathic remedies* of images, words, and music. According to our theoretical hypothesis, *artistic stimuli* can act in accordance with the *law of similars* and the therapeutic action of homeopathic medicines. Therefore, stimuli generated by paintings, musical pieces, and poetic passages can facilitate homeopathic therapy if they can provoke, evoke, or amplify symptoms similar to those intended to be treated and, logically, similar to the experimental symptoms of the curative homeopathic medicine. Some stimuli can be generated with the support of AI and through customized prompts. For example, if Aconite is the curative medicine,

the administration of images, words, and music must provoke, evoke, and amplify the anxiety and agitation typical of Aconite, not of another remedy. The amplification of symptoms must occur weakly, homeopathically, and gently. Therefore, the phobic patient, *such as Aconite*, must be invited to desire to see and listen to selected and *personalized microdoses* of images, words and music which weakly, homeopathically and paradoxically evoke and amplify the phobic symptoms he suffers from. This technique, in many ways, recalls the technique of paradoxical intention applied in logotherapy [22]. It is important to clarify a concept: "*Like cures like*". This therapeutic law is also found in Franklian logotherapy, in particular, in the technique of paradoxical intention according to which the phobic patient is invited to desire that exactly what he fears happens" [23]. It is important to point out that, in homeopathy, administering *microdoses* of images, words and music means, for example, showing paintings or listening to pieces of music or poetic pieces for a few seconds or a few minutes (we would dare to say in *small doses or microdoses*) so that images, words and music can minimally or homeopathically amplify the mental symptoms experienced by the patient in a curative way. A poetic passage could work homeopathically for a simple reason: "The profound meaning of the law of similarity resonates both in poetry (with poetic similarities) and in homeopathy (with symptomatic similarities)" [24]. An aphorism could also work homeopathically because "*the small energetic dose present in the aphorism, similar to the small dose present in the homeopathic medicine, does not act by virtue of abundance, but of scarcity and essentiality*" [25]. *In order for the law of similars to be applied homeopathically and correctly, listening to an aphorism must provoke, evoke and amplify a symptomatology similar to that which must be cured.* An important clarification: since in homeopathy the human being is viewed globally, the stimuli generated by images, music and words must take into account not only the psychic aspects, but also the somatic ones. The interaction between psyche and soma is evaluated homeopathically for both diagnostic and therapeutic purposes. And if it is true that "important relationships are in fact intertwined between psychology and homeopathy" [26], it is also true that "in every homeopathic type the psycho-somato-motor aspects are studied" [27]. This is why artistic stimuli, used homeopathically to treat anxiety and depression, must take into account the psycho-somato-motor aspects, and not only the psychic ones. It is evident that our theoretical hypothesis presented in this article, derived from the elaboration of some concepts already exposed and synthetically divulged by De Giorgio [21], although consistent with the law of similarity and with the homeopathic mentality, needs practical feedback and scientific confirmations deriving from clinical studies and rigorous experiments. For the moment we can conclude, at least in theory, that the stimuli generated by art (painting, sculpture, music, poetry) could contribute to attenuating or eliminating symptoms of anxiety and depression, but for further conclusions regarding clinical practice we must hope for future, authoritative and pioneering scientific studies. In the meantime we note that some important scientific research demonstrates the efficacy of homeopathic medicines in the treatment of anxiety and depression. The studies are not many, there should be more, but they exist. The existence of these studies constitutes a good reason to encourage and not discourage scientific research on homeopathy, on homeopathic medicines and also on the pioneering hypotheses that are elaborated with logic and rationality.

CONCLUSIONS

Our exploratory study is exclusively theoretical, and the development of our hypothesis for integrating homeopathy and art in the treatment of anxiety and depressive symptoms is essentially based on conceptual analysis, an interpretation of the *law of similars*, and a

reinterpretation of artistic stimuli from a homeopathic perspective. We hope that our theoretical hypothesis, pioneering and innovative homeopathically yet rooted in the ancient *law of similars*, can provide further scientific inspiration for all researchers, including those who intend to scientifically study homeopathy in unexplored or little-explored fields. This will help us understand whether the prerequisites exist for creating a solid scientific foundation for innovative therapies such as homeopathic art therapy, homeopathic music therapy, and homeopathic poetry therapy. Based on our theoretical study, we believe that these prerequisites are partially present and that future scientific research on homeopathic medicines should expand and engage with research on other serious therapies such as art therapy, music therapy, and poetry therapy.

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