Comments on Dr. Candegabe’s letter
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Sir,

In his letter [1], Candegabe explains what HUMA method consists in, therefore every reader can easily make his or her mind up on this matter. There it is also confirmed that my earlier assertions and comments [2] are accurate; for this reason I don’t find necessary further explanations.

However, I’d like to add a few words to state that my intention never was to offend the author, as he suggests, but to subject his ideas to criticism. As he himself expressed, “Nothing in science is written on stone, but everything is open to criticism and improvement”. My questioning about the “guru-like claims of new fads whose music is appealing to many practitioners” certainly was not directed to the author as neither was the sentence urging to “distinguish quality work from quackery and imposture”. These are general rather than personalized opinions on what I believe to be overt abuses of homeopathy.

I think it is also obvious that by making a critic comment about the “Pythagorean metaphysical conception on the essence of being” I am not “reject[ing] a mathematical theorem which states that in a right triangle the square of the hypotenuse equals the sum of the squares of the two legs or the existence of irrational numbers simply because their finished formulations were made by Pythagoras and his disciples” as Candegabe suggests. I am aware of the debate between mathematicians who think that mathematics is a human invention and those who believe it is discovered [3,4]. But the one at issue is not a mathematical, but an ontological debate. And by definition, absolutely everything in the real world shares the common attribute of motion and change. Mathematical and geometrical objects are immutable, therefore they are not real. In other words, they only exist “In Here” and not “Out There” [5].

On the one hand, my colleague demands from me not to “simplistically reduce it [the method] to a few statements without internalizing its fundamentals” and states that “The new model of similarity proposed by HUMA method claims to be judged by its effects.” On the other hand, as the only insight in this “novel paradigm” he affirms “Respecting individuality and completeness conditions, similarity is achieved now according to a key contained in the phonetic code number that relates the numeric phonetic properties of the Latin name of the substance and the key contained in the phonetic code numerical data related to the patient's individuality and goals” and explains that this code is “actually, a numerical series arising from phonetic-numeric codes from the Latin name of various remedies consistent with the numerical series of data from the patient taken to the Latin language and its subsequent phonetic-numeric code” and offers as vague methodological tools “The intertwining of the information contained in the variables studied-symmetrical distribution curve and Gaussian curves skewed distributions, Gumbel, Pearson, for example, shows the fact that not all remedies have the same number of symptoms keeping constant the values of the patient's data.” On the one hand he states “The new similarity model proposed by HUMA method claims to be judged by its effects rather than speculation or intellectual misconceptions” and on the other, he tells us that “The formula that contains the method and its HUMA algorithm will not be known for the entire duration of the investigation.” And most important, he fails to render a single reference to his work outside his website.

Scientific knowledge begins from hypothesis and is achieved by the application of methodologies which in their turn demonstrate or deny the initial hypothesis. In medicine, as in natural sciences, demonstration is
empirical or experimental and methodologies have particular rules. It is of special interest for homeopaths that this conception is perfectly clear in Hahnemann’s work from the very beginning [6]. As a cornerstone of homeopathy, Hahnemann criticizes the pretention of discovering the curative properties of substances from their physical appearance or their chemical or taxonomical classification, making an emphatic defense of experimentation as the only way to achieve therapeutic knowledge. Regarding HUMA method, we can only know its fundamental hypothesis. Methodologies and experimental demonstration are not available because they are not published. And we are asked to accept blindly that the “new similarity” clue resides in relating the “name of the medicines” with the “patient’s names and surnames, date of birth, nickname, country of origin of the father’s last name, position in the family between siblings and name and place of birth of the parents” and that it was “proved in more than 900 (unpublished) cases.” [7]

Candegabe should explain clearly and convincingly the following:

- Why and how can a substance’s name relate to its pharmacological activity?

- Why and how can the “patient’s names and surnames, date of birth, nickname, country of origin of the father’s last name, position in the family between siblings and name and place of birth from the parents” relate to the patient’s health problems, clinical diagnosis or even more, to the homeopathic medicine which can help him or her?

- How can the two previous items be reduced into a mathematical formula and related one to the other?

Science, though imperfect, is much more than a “temporary social construction” as Candegabe suggests. It intends to reflect reality in an accurate way. Our ignorance about “what homeopathic remedies contain” or “what the mechanism of action of homeopathy is” does not apply here as an argument in defense of the lack of a rationale or scientific evidence of HUMA method. Simply because, although we don’t know what is inside homeopathic dilutions and how they act, tremendous efforts have been made to demonstrate their activity in clinical trials [8,9], basic research [10,11] and physical research [12], just to mention a few good examples.

Finally, I would never make a criticism about the human right to get retribution for work performed. Money itself is not at all the point here. The ethical issue arises when someone claims to have found “a novel paradigm” which in turn will change the history of human suffering, gives no convincing explanations and proofs to his claims and while concealing the whole procedure, starts to sell it to the medical community.

I fully agree with Candegabe that criticism must be moved by the “genuine will to achieve together a better Homeopathy” and that “I’m afraid of the future”. But I’m not afraid of my future, but of the future of homeopathy.

References


