Where are we going to?

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Doubtlessly, research on high dilutions (HDs) is an interesting emergent field of science. Studies have become more intense, wide-ranged and multidisciplinary. However, it is important to stop to reflect on where we are going to. What kind of science are we doing? What kind of science do we want, should or must develop? A discussion on this subject is much more important than it seems because it can help us define the directions we should follow in order to reach the desired aims. That is to say, it is not a mere exercise on prediction but an instance of decision-making, i.e. the definition of a program of action to establish attainable goals, to go in the direction we believe to be right.

Certainly, to know where we want to go is the first condition to attain our goals. If we would gather all knowledge obtained from non-clinical studies on HDs performed in the last few years, we would have to rate it as a disconnected collection of data, some more consensual, others more polemic. However, mere collections of data are not a problem when they are later evaluated and classified according to some accepted and known criteria.

Unfortunately, this is not yet the case of HD research because, it must be admitted, there are not criteria to judge on the value of data. HDs as subject of study do not seem fitted to the standards of traditional science because Avogadro's number is no longer a limit in living nature. Although no new scientific models have been proposed to give an account of data collected on HDs, some hypotheses have been advanced, as e.g. the "paradigm of corporeal signifiers", the full ramifications of which have not yet been explored.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that data are not fact. Conversely, we could begin by stating that there is an actual phenomenon, which requires an explanation. To come to good end, new and more rigorous methods are required, aiming to make defined aspects of such phenomenon clearer, but even before that, some basic presuppositions are needed on the nature of our subject of study, which, once again, are not available.

To summarize, on the current state of the science of HDs, two assertions can be made: 1) we are still unable to explain the phenomenon of the biological activity of HDs; 2) but there is a multidisciplinary and high-skilled community of researchers. The first positive inference is a contradiction: how is it possible that a community of professional and highly motivated researchers cannot give an explanation of the phenomenon they study?

The first and most simple answer: HDs relate to a phenomenon outside the scope of traditional science, grounded on matter, its properties and motion. This argument has been adduced in countless occasions, but in fact, it is only an easy way to avoid our responsibility and scientific commitment. A better answer, perhaps, would be to admit that we were too anxious to explain the full phenomenon and its implications through a super encompassing theory before stating and validating its basic concepts, axioms, postulates, hypotheses and methods.

Some fundamental questions must be addressed before attempting to explain the phenomenon itself.

What is the ontological status of our subject of study? A property of matter? A signal system using matter as vehicle? Is traditional logic, grounded on the notion of "substance" the fittest reasoning tool in HD research, or should we seek the help of the new logics arising since the end of the 19th century? Regarding studies grounded on the matter hypothesis, it would still be needed to ask whether the study of the physical-chemical properties

of vehicles is the most fitting research path to discover the nature of HDs. And, are such properties actually changed by the process of dilution-agitation? Are the quantum mechanics and thermodynamic interpretations supported by the current results or just a beautiful but unverifiable theory that seems reasonable for laymen but senseless for experts? Do results obtained with liquid vehicles, e.g. water, also apply to solid vehicles? Regarding the signals system approach: what is the nature of signals? Are they electromagnetic? The list of questions is endless.

The history of science shows that the isolated and genial scientist was superseded by the organized and connected community of researchers in constant interaction. Internet and the “digital revolution” have only increased and facilitated the formation of networks to present data, discuss hypotheses and formulate concepts. Rather than hollow or premature theories, strident announcements of delusory “Newton’s apples”, the science of HDs requires the active commitment of researchers to share ideas and discuss results. So that, in this moment it is not so important to know where we are going to, as to realize that we must go there together. Someone once said that happiness is not a place to reach, but a way of traveling. So is current HD research.

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How to cite this article: Zacharias CR. Where we are going to? [editorial]. *Int J High Dilution Res* [online]. 2009 [cited YYYY Month dd]; 8(28): 80-81. Available from: <http://www.feg.unesp.br/~ojs/index.php/ijhdr/article/view/355/398>.