



## Mini Review

# Nature's Code: Unravelling The Scientific Basis Of The Doctrine Of Signature And Its Role In Homoeopathic Remedies

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of Doctrine of Signature is perhaps as old as the history of mankind but is believed to have taken its name from the book of German philosopher, mystic, and theologian Jakob Böhme "The Signature of All Things" published in 1621. According to the Greek physician and author of *Materia Medica*, Pedanius Dioscorides, described medicinal plants according to a divine intention in the 1st Century AD. His belief was that God marked objects with signs, or signatures, of their purpose and this notion of divine design persisted as a central aspect of medical doctrine throughout the middle ages. Well, for hundreds of years healers and medical practitioners relied on the doctrine of signatures to signal the potential healing effects of plants. The doctrine of signatures refers to the age-old belief that plants resemble the very bodily parts they are meant to heal.

## INTRODUCTION

A New Perspective on the Doctrine of Signatures was given by the biologist and popular author Stephen Jay Gould from Harvard University that the most objective assessment of Doctrine of Signatures is nothing but the theory represents the key difference between modern science and an

older view of nature. The Hermetic literature of late antiquity and the medieval eras, which was extensively read in Greek, Syriac, Arabic, and Latin, tended to emphasize that "God has endowed each herb, each stone, each star, and each sign, with a secret which, when it becomes known to man, will be of utility." The writers of this

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literature mostly transcribed first-person tales of healing; they were neither practitioners nor even in the business of discovering therapeutic plants. Coulter claims that "The doctrine of signatures and the microcosm-macrocosm correspondences seem to provide the physician with a priori knowledge of the remedies." The assumption that signatures were used to determine a plant's medicinal characteristics is not supported by any data. In some situations, the signatures of medications were seen after their true function had been found. However, current studies back the medicinal benefits of numerous species that display these signs. For example - the commonly known Autumn Crocus, Meadow Saffron, or Naked Ladies, the roots of this plant resemble the form of a gout-ridden toe. In fact, the bitter flavors and active ingredients (Alkaloids, Colchicine, And Flavonoids) actually do provide effective treatment for gout. It was premature for Mooney to write off purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*, Portulacaceae). Recent research has validated the plant's usage in traditional medicine for digestive disorders by demonstrating its efficacy in reducing intestinal parasite burdens and its gastroprotective activity. A more reasonable explanation would be that the resemblance to worms helped spread information about the plant's use rather than being a tip that led to its discovery. In the Caribbean, Bitter Melon (*Momordica Charantia*, Cucurbitaceae) is also taken as a blood tonic. The seeds of the plant feature an aril that is a vivid red color, and healers relate this color to blood. The plant's extracts normalize triglyceride and LDL levels while lowering them and raising HDL levels. Even the cotyledon signature of the human brain found on Walnuts (*Juglans regia*, Juglandaceae), which is frequently mocked, may be useful in treating cerebral disorders. Melatonin is present in Walnuts, when they are consumed by Rats, blood melatonin concentrations increase. In laboratory animals, melatonin is helpful at

reducing a range of brain-related issues, including inflammation brought on by cerebral ischemia. It is necessary to include non-morphological signatures in the concept of Doctrine of Signatures. Strong odors in plants are correlated with the presence of volatile compounds, most of which are biologically active. The Paracelsian chemical physicians strongly disagreed with those who sought to understand and identify them just through their external shape or look. Davis and Yost's suggested that plants with a strong odor might repel symptoms echoed a similar view. In 1810, Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician, published *Organon of Rational Therapeutics*, which outlined the principles of Homoeopathy. Hahnemann was justifiably dissatisfied with the heroic medical practices (bleeding, purging, vomiting, etc.) and the *Materia Medica* of his times, from the earliest beginnings until now, The *Materia Medica* has only ever included erroneous assumptions and fantasies, which is equivalent to having no *Materia Medica* at all. He promoted the *Similia Similibus Curantur* or Like Cures Like principle in place of Hippocrates' and others' *Contraria Contrariis Curantur* principle. Fishbein, however, claimed that Hahnemann's thesis was a revival of the Paracelsian Doctrine of Signatures, except that Paracelsus focused on causes of disease rather than their symptoms. Dr. Samuel Hahnemann says that "I'll spare the ordinary medical school the embarrassment of reminding it of the foolishness of those ancient physicians who gave the testicle-shaped orchis-root to restore manly vigor, the phallus impudicus to restore weak erections, and considered *Hypericum perforatum*, whose yellow flowers when crushed yield a red juice (St. John's blood), useful in haemorrhage.

#### **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The Doctrine of Signatures is a profound ancient health system, which states that every plant, fruit and vegetable has a certain pattern that resembles a body organ, or system. This pattern acts as a



signal or sign as to the health benefits of a particular fruit or vegetable, etc.

### 1. PULSATILLA NIGRICANS



- *Pulsatilla Nigricans* always found themselves growing in groups. *Pulsatilla* patients always seek company and get aggravated when alone.
- It is small and delicate, with a flexible stem which bends one way or another according to the direction of the prevailing wind. The constitutional type, found predominantly in women and children, is generally delicate and pretty, most commonly of fair complexion, with blond or light brown hair, and a physique that can fluctuate easily in weight loss and gain, with the fat tending to a shapely plumpness.
- Like the flower swaying in the wind, *Pulsatilla* symptoms are characteristically changeful: pains wander from one part of the body to another, shift rapidly from joint to joint, appear on one side of the body or the other, with "no two chills, no two stools, no two attacks alike" (H .C. Allen)
- Like gusts of wind, the pains come on suddenly, then either let up abruptly on first motion or subside gradually; often the patient finds relief in gentle motion-walking or rocking back and forth. patient's habit of relieving the pain by rocking his undrawn knees from side to side.

- Delicate flower that she is, *Pulsatilla* cannot tolerate the heat of a warm room or the stuffiness of a close atmosphere and requires fresh air to preserve her strength and well-being.
- As the flower grows primarily in dry sandy soil, so the *Pulsatilla* nature has little need to water; she is thirstless and, even when the mouth is dry, can go for long periods without drinking.
- She is not intrinsically weak, but she requires support just as Ivy cannot grow without clinging to a wall or a tree.
- Like the meadow anemone which is swayed by every passing breeze, the individual blows one way and another, revealing a habitual inability to make up her mind on matters both large and small.
- In choosing which flavor of ice cream, which matchbox car, or which doll to buy, the child undergoes agonies of indecision, at length crying out in anguish.

### 2. SILICEA



- *Silica* is like a grain of quartz sand, hard and gritty it is, by long and slow process it comes into present inflexible form. The *Silica* patient embodies these qualities of hardness, granularity, rigidity, and chronicity on the physical and mental planes.
- At the physical level, hardness is encountered in the type's tendency to form hard lumps or growths, fibrous nodules ("it has cured recurrent fibroids": Kent),

carbuncles, cysts, tumors in the breast and elsewhere,

- *Silica* can also exhibit brittleness, as seen by the bones that readily become carious and break; the hairs that split at the ends. The *inflexibility* of Flint is manifested on the mental plane in *Silica's* obstinacy
- Take the glossy, stiff, outer covering of a stalk of grain and examine it, and you will realize with what firmness it supports the head of grain until it ripens; there is a gradual deposit of *Silica* in it to give it stamina. So it is with the mind; when the mind needs *Silica*, it is in a Slate or weakness, embarrassment, dread, a state of yielding. Even in physique, *Silica* may resemble a stalk of wheat He can be weedy; with celery-stalk limbs and an endive-tinted complexion— in short, a thin delicate reed
- In yet another analogy to the inert and inflexible flint that yields a spark only when struck or abraded, the *Silica* individual may have to be stimulated by the homoeopathic remedy to ignite the spark that provokes accomplishment, enhances performance, or brings a long-dormant project to fruition.

### 3. CUTTLEFISH

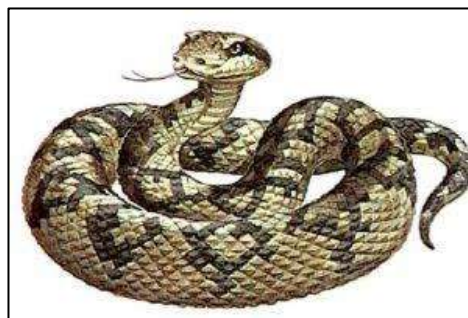


- *Cuttlefish* is an independent creature, predominantly Sepia female loves to stay as an independent lady as she sets her apart from the other women and wants to be alone.
- *Cuttlefish* is a solitary animal. It swims alone rather than in a group and the same

thing is seen in Sepia women that she can be unsociable and averse to company. Amelioration in complaint when alone.

- *Cuttlefish* limbs or tentacles are always in motion, dancing in water so Sepia women always feel better from any violent motion, activity, jogging, tennis, swimming in cold water. Sepia is often attracted to dance yoga, Tai Chi and other activities which involve the experience of physical harmony.
- Through these activities she maintains contact with her life force, whereas when she ceases to be physically active, she begins to feel deadened inside.
- *Cuttlefish* is more comfortable from moving about and worse from any fixed or locked position such as kneeling at the church, standing for any length of time, bending over or even sitting so a sepia woman feels better from dancing and worse from being fixed or locked.

### 4. SURUKUKU



- *Surukuku* prefers to live in pits because they feel cold inside and they want relief from heat as Lachesis is a hot patient.
- Snakes have a tendency to bite on slight provocation because they don't have trust in anyone, they have fear of being hurt so we found it marked suspicion and jealousy, attractive, attracts the opposite sex.
- Snakes are the symbol of sexuality in Hindu mythology similarly these patients are highly sexed and very passionate type in

nature, when they make love it is not for enjoyment for them but it will relieve their tension.

- Loquacity means talking a lot. They are very hurried in thought, speech and action. A similar feature quick in action is found in snakes. Tongue in and out constantly to sense temperature and smell.
- Left sided complaints seen in these patients because snakes always move towards the left side. More tendencies to bite when hungry so fasting aggravates and amelioration by eating.
- Toxicity of venom minimises by sucking and bloodletting hence bleeding and discharges ameliorate most of the complaints of the patient.
- Stool of the snake is offensive similarly to patients having offensive discharges. Snakes are also sensitive to touch and sound as patient complaints are aggravated by touch and sound. Snakes do not take milk but they are carnivores hence constricting pain in the throat ameliorated by solid and aggravated by liquids is marked modality.
- Snakes come out at night from their pits so the patient is having aggravation at night.

#### 5. CALCAREA CARBONICA



- Mollusca shells have hard shells to protect the soft body in the same way a patient of *Calcarea Carbonica* is soft and needs protection.
- *Calcarea Carbonica* tries to build a protective wall of defence around himself

which will ensure that he is safe, secure and covered like a developing embryo within an egg. He seeks the protection he needs by expressing a lot of fears. He surrounds himself with a lot of people who protect him.

- The *Calcarea carbonica* persons are people who don't go out much, don't want any adventure in life. Rather they choose for themselves friends and partners who are protective and on whom they can depend. This protection may be in the form of money, and the dependence causes the fear of poverty.
- There is a desire to be magnetized that is to allow one's will to be taken over by another person: "Doctor, tell me what to do, I will do exactly as you say."
- *Calcarea Carbonica* is that of a woman completely protected first by her parents during childhood and now by her husband. The need to cope up does not arise. In the protective environment of their parents' homes, they hesitate and fear getting married, unable to trust that they will find the same security elsewhere.
- They remain unmarried as long as possible, till they suddenly realize that their parents are getting old too, and will not always be there to protect them. The same can be seen in young men much dependent on their parents, who remain bachelors till late and then try to find a mother substitute for a wife.
- In the coped-up state, *Calcarea Carbonica* is a home-builder. Home represents the protective shell he needs around him. He has to cope when he has to face responsibilities and there is no protection.

#### 6. NATRIUM MURATICUM



- Na belongs to group IA and Cl (Halogen group). Na has only one electron in the outermost shell, hence to complete the octet state it has to give away the electron or share 7 electrons, which it does with Cl to form a NaCl bond.
- NaCl is Independent and dependable with attachment and relationship. In the same way *Natrium Muraticum* is specific towards a person and having fear of being alone.
- It has a One to one attachment and desire for company, complaint aggravate when being alone
- Physiologically - It maintains osmotic pressure, volume and composition of extracellular fluid compartments. Electrolyte and fluid balance causes dryness of mucous membrane, cardiac rhythmicity and peripheral resistance of blood vessels- Palpitation, with faintness, muscle relaxation and contraction.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Doctrine of Signatures is a profound ancient health system, which states that every plant, fruit and vegetable has a certain pattern that resembles a body organ, or system. This pattern acts as a signal or sign to the health benefits and helps our system to find out with their exterior properties. Determining the medicinal powers of crude drugs

from their signatures that may be their colour, shape, form, taste, smell, touch, action reaction etc. this will help to serve and suggest the potential therapeutic benefits and also refer the relationship between a drug source and its symptoms. In this article we have taken few examples from different kingdoms and tried to explain their correlation between Doctrine of Signature and Homoeopathic medicine.

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