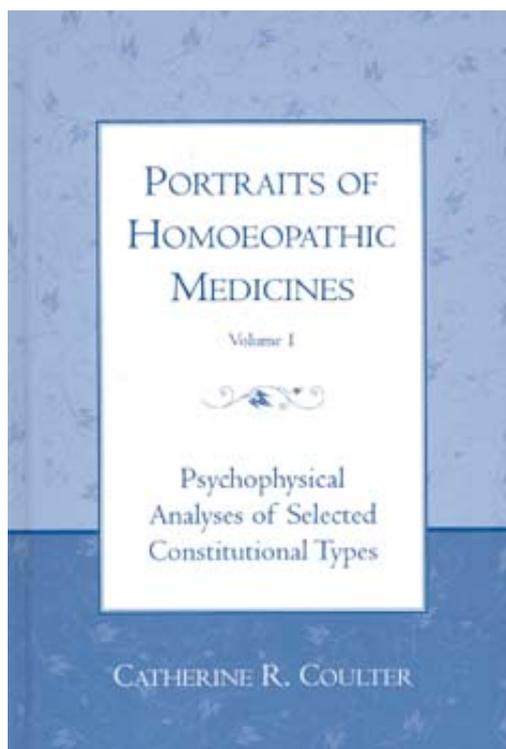


Catherine R. Coulter
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Preface

Two hundred years after its discovery, homoeopathy is still under cover, and that for good reason. Even if we ignore the controversy about the efficacy of the ultramolecular dosage of a potentized substance, the epistemological implications of homoeopathy are too staggering for ready acceptance. They challenge some of our most cherished post-Cartesian beliefs about the nature of biologic and psychologic functioning and their interrelationships.

The paradigm of a healthy body espoused by biology and medicine is still largely that of a physiochemical machine responding and successfully adapting to external threats to its functioning. When this machine partly or wholly succumbs to such external interference or runs down from age, illness is assumed to ensue.

Yet, the experimental and clinical evidence of homoeopathy makes it quite evident that what we call health and illness are mutually inclusive of one another. They are changing faces of one and the same entity, two sides of the same coin: the individual constitutional state, or archetypal form pattern. The same dynamic fields inherent in the various substances call forth illness as well as health.

These fields are, moreover, intrinsic to the very organismic process, our own as well as the planet's. The dynamic of every existing substance, whether it be mineral, plant or animal, hence every constituent of our bodies as well as of the universe in which we live, is able to call forth illness patterns in its own likeness (as in a "proving") and of healing through that likeness when used in therapeutic dosage. The tendency to illness is "built in" to physical existence. Illness is an aspect of being alive, an aspect of the constitutional inherency of a particular person. But so is also healing. They both are elements of the "principium individuationis," the urge to individuation; and this in quite specific psychosomatic terms.

By and large psychology and psychoanalysis have been viewing the psychological makeup of a person primarily, if not exclusively, in terms of environmental conditioning and developmental influences, foremost among them of inadequate or outright destructive parenting. Yet the fact is that specific constitutional states (which are also potential illness patterns)—inclusive of psychological features—are inherent and, hence, a priori "given" (when, for instance a constitutional prescription is called for and proves effective in a newborn baby). This makes it evident that also psychological patterns are at least to some extent inherent as parts of an overall constitution—notwithstanding the fact that they may also, to varying degrees, be subject to environmental modification.

A child's personality is then not only structured by parental and environmental influences, but also, selectively, in its own individual ways, evokes and responds to "like" or corresponding parental and environmental influences. In its own way it will also constellate and call forth environmental factors that a child of a different makeup will not. A *Natrum muriaticum* or *Lycopodium* child may stoically withdraw, even sever communications, where a *Sulphur* child may respond with overactivity or a *Hepar Arsenic* type with fury or anxiety respectively. It is, of course, also to be considered that environments that encourage anxiety or withdrawal may also help produce corresponding *Arsenic* or *Hepar* constitutional states. In either case, the somatic indications for a particular remedy can alert the experienced prescriber to the potential presence of specific psychological predispositions as yet dormant and unrecognized.

I need not elaborate upon the implications of such somatopsychic constitutional understanding for education and psychotherapy. It may alert us to propensities and limitations otherwise yet unrecognizable. In concert with educational or psychotherapeutic measures it can also help us to avoid pathogenetic extremes through homoeopathic medication free of side effects, in contradistinction to psychotropic drugs.

Lastly, if particular somatopsychic features and their exacerbation

tions are individually predetermined as part of constitutional structuring, one can be healed only within and "into" the limits of one's individual pattern. There can be no average standard or definition of health that would fit everyone. One person's normality may be another's pathology and vice versa. Health and illness are not more than relative standards of comfortable adaptation or survival.

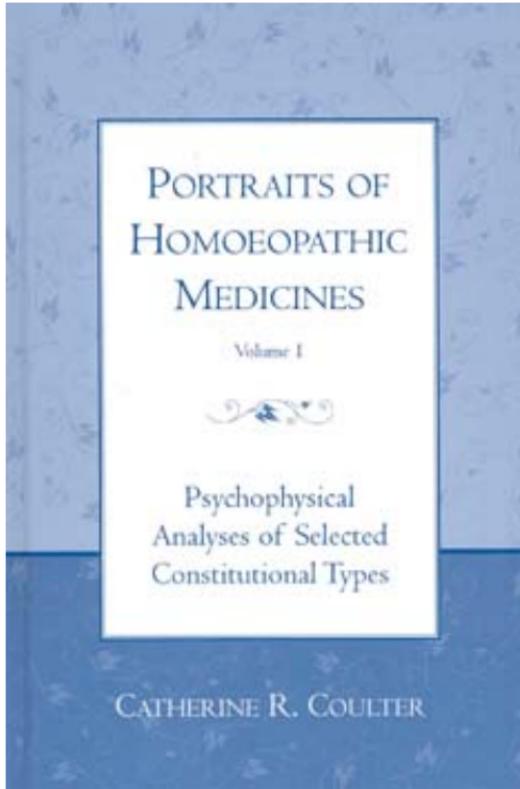
In listing mental (or emotional) symptoms as important criteria for the selection of an indicated remedy, homoeopathy has, in the past, implied the above considerations. Any systematic exploration in depth is still in its infancy. In William Gutman's essays on *Calcarea carbonica* and *Silica* and in my own *Psyche and Substance* the somatopsychic interrelations, as such, of some substances have been explored. Catherine Coulter's book is the first psychological description that widens the personality picture of the substance patterns beyond the hitherto standard enumerations (frequently overlapping) of relatively single criteria such as jealousy, fear, desire to be alone, etc. Her book deserves to be studied by every homoeopathic prescriber as well as by the practicing or research psychotherapist. To the former it offers widening of perspective for remedy selection, while the latter can gain new insights into constitutional data and the possibilities of a new typology that bridges the gap between psyche and soma. Here is a view of therapeutic possibilities beyond the limits of a purely psychological approach to personality problems.

It is to be hoped that this book will also stimulate new research into the relation of constitutional and environmental factors as well as verifications of the clinical data offered here.

Homoeopathy bridges the Cartesian body-mind split. The body-oriented physician in the past has tended to gloss over psychological determinants and their fine points in the genesis of illness. The psychologist on the other hand has lacked adequate specific data for linking biological factors "with psychic dynamics. This book is primarily (though not exclusively) descriptive of psychological features. Therein lies its virtue as well as a deliberate limitation; familiarity with the basics of the homoeopathic *materia medica* is taken

for granted. For this reason I cannot conclude without a general caveat to the homoeopathic beginner and the less experienced prescriber. An adequate selection of a remedy cannot safely rely upon a psychological picture alone. There are still too many inadequately defined lines of demarcation, possibilities of temporary shifts in moods and overlappings. No matter whether one tries to help somatically or psychologically, the leading somatic guiding symptoms and modalities must also be considered.

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