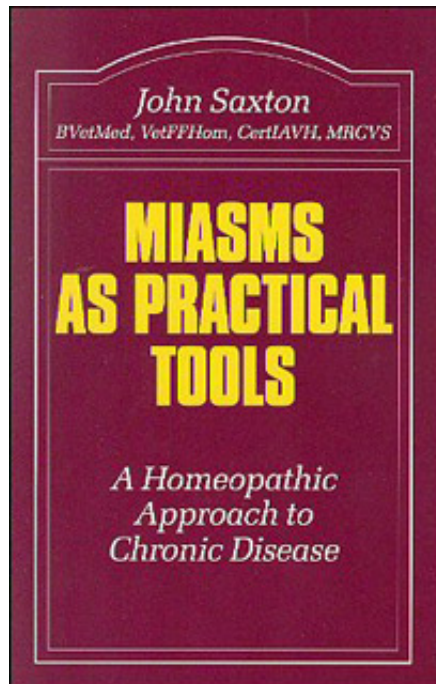




John Saxton

Miasms as Practical Tools

Reading excerpt
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Reviewed by David Lilley in 'Homeopathy'

BOOK REVIEW

Miasms As Practical Tools; A Homeopathic Approach to Chronic Disease

John Saxton

Beaconsfield Publishers Ltd, Beaconsfield, Bucks, UK, 2005

Price: £15, ISBN: 0-906584-58-2

This is a slim book with a hefty content. When I read a book from which I can profit, I have pencil in hand and I underline the section;) that are of particular importance to me. In the case of this new book on the chronic miasms, I could have underlined almost the entire text; such is the richness of its material. Every paragraph is pregnant with observation and information; to lapse in concentration for a moment is to miss some important point or nuance. Nonetheless, it is written with clarity and read with ease.

This book is a welcome, modern presentation of miasmatic theory and practice, lifting both from the sphere of contention and controversy to the central position they deserve in case and remedy analysis, strategy of therapy, case management, and interpretation of response. The concept of miasms is presented as a practical therapeutic tool with which to enhance prescribing skills. The veterinary background of the author in no way reduces the book's relevance for the entire homeopathic profession. The theoretical model postulated is based on principles fundamental to life and all species, and the illustrative, animal case histories, unencumbered by human considerations and complexities, prove ideal vehicles for showing how miasmatic understanding of a case can be applied in practice.

The author gives an overview of how the concept of miasms arose and how it has developed from Hahnemann's original thinking to the more philosophical interpretations of today. Excellent pictures of the three primary, chrome miasmatic states—psora, sycosis, and syphilis—are provided, with discussion and case histories, and, to refresh our memories, concise clinical pictures of the five miasmatic nosodes, with the addition of Scirrhinum, and useful information regarding the miasmatic relationships of the bowel nosodes. Always, in keeping with the main title of the book, the practical aspects of this knowledge are emphasised. The reader is encouraged to take hold of the theories and facts presented, and to use and develop them further in a clinical context.

The central theme and theory of the book is based upon the profound influence the three primary miasms, considered as deep-seated predispositions to disease and disease patterns, exert upon the three basic physiological functions: creation or production (sycosis),

destruction or removal (syphilis), and maintenance or regulation (psora). This echoes an ancient wisdom that portrays the three aspects of the manifest God as creator, preserver, and destroyer: three fundamental forces, which are present in all facets of the creation. All organs and tissues function within the constraints of these forces. In health there exists a fluctuating and dynamic balance between the three physiological processes, always interacting and adapting to the needs of the moment, and presided over by the vital force of Hahnemann. This balance extends beyond the physical; it encompasses the emotional and mental aspects of being. The mental equivalents of the three functions are given, respectively, as creativity, selectivity and perseverance. The miasms create chronic disease through disturbing this equilibrium, each according to its inner essence. The disturbance of sycosis will change production to excess—overproduction and overreaction; under the influence of syphilis removal of obsolete material becomes destruction and perversion; and disruption of the self-regulatory mechanisms of homeostasis by psora, leads to deficiency.

On the basis of this premise, the author proposes a model, which illustrates, by means of an equilateral triangle, the balance of the three forces in an ideal state of wellbeing and health. Each side of the triangle represents one of the basic physiological functions. Since the normal balanced state of mental, emotional, and physical health is constantly fluctuating, the triangle is seldom equilateral. However, when the constitution is under acute or chronic challenge, the proportions of the triangle will be markedly changed due to considerable alteration in the ratio between the three functions. In this way the functioning of the body in disease can be visualised. Within the concept of the model it is essential to life that the integrity of the triangle is preserved. Since the three forces are mirrored in all aspects of nature, the same model can be applied to measure and illustrate the predominant action of remedies. Each remedy will present 9 unique and constant picture, which reflects its antimiasmatic influence. In this representation the functions depicted in the triangle are replaced by their respective miasms. This picture can be logically compared to the similar image of miasmatic activity in the patient, and the one can be compared and matched to the other. Fundamental to this approach is the knowledge that all three functional connections are always there, and likewise, in both patient and remedy, all three primary miasmatic influences are always present in varying degree. Challenges possess inherent miasmatic influence and will therefore provoke a matching miasmatic response in the subject. Repeated or continuous exposure to the same challenge will imprint a miasmatic pattern of disease in the individual and in the community, which may then be transmitted through inheritance.

In considering the important newer miasms, the Tubercular and the Cancer miasm, the author proposes that these are symptom pictures arising from the way in which the body responds to various challenge situations through the interplay of the three basic forces. These symptom pictures are far more fixed and predictable than the three primary miasms, which create disease by directly disturbing the balance of the basic physiological functions. Due to their more stable patterns, he classifies the Tubercular and the Cancer miasm as mixed miasms in contradistinction to being a mixture of miasms. In his experience it is the mixed miasms that create the most serious and obstinate conditions met in practice. In the most severe cases of mixed miasm, in which advanced pathology has developed, he advocates the regular use of the appropriate miasmatic nosode in conjunction with other indicated remedies

Apart from the presentation of the theoretical model, the subject matter of this absorbing book is far ranging and, I am certain, represents the fruit of long and deep contemplation of every aspect of miasmatic theory and practice. The author considers the approach of Sankaran to the miasms, and concludes that the extra five miasms that he has proposed represent transitional stages along a continuum of disease rather than classic miasms in themselves, and that the term 'pace' in relation to this system is more appropriate. He also discusses the miasmatic tendencies existing within the three natural kingdoms: plants tending more towards psora, with some sycotic influences; animals overall showing a tendency towards sycosis and syphilis; the mineral kingdom being more related to psora and syphilis.

The vital role of suppression in the origin and compounding of miasmatic disease is thoroughly dealt with and emphasised throughout the work. In this regard the author tackles the contentious subjects of vaccination and the suppression of reproductive function in an admirably uncompromising way. We are left in no doubt of the danger to health both pose. With great insight he proposes that in addition to Bering's Law there 'is another law, a law of disease, which states that the suppression of the normal

function of a vital system will often drive that function inwards to become pathological within the same system'.

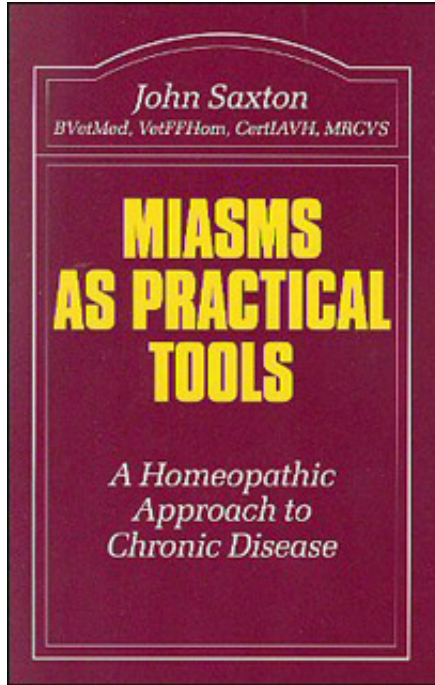
Excellent case histories are presented, each including a clearly motivated therapeutic strategy; these are extremely valuable and instructive. I was pleased to see the use of remedies in logical sequence, like moves on a chess board, each move being based on the indications thrown up by the previous potency and remedy. The judicious use of miasmatic, and when appropriate, bowel nosodes to elicit a response, particularly when a miasmatic block is uncounted, is well illustrated.

This is an important book. It is refreshing to revisit the theory of the miasms under the guidance of a seasoned homeopath with modern insight and interpretation. I am sure that it will stimulate much thought, debate and opinion. For instance, regarding the relationship between the three germinal layers and the predominant action of the three miasms—is the endoderm the prime target of sycosis, or is it rather the mesoderm, which is the most actively proliferative tissue in the body; is the effect of syphilis especially upon the mesoderm, or rather the ectoderm, which is the focus of neurosyphilis; and likewise, is autoimmune disease primarily a result of syphilis, or is it possibly initiated by sycosis, of which the very essence is self-rejection; is AIDS a new miasm, and if not, is it essentially syphilitic, or rather sycotic, a result of escapism, excess and promiscuity?

I highly recommend this book to the homeopathic profession as essential reading. Both the inexperienced and the veteran homeopath will derive benefit from its study and be better able to employ the concept of miasms as a practical therapeutic mode. It is another fine feather in the Beaconsfield publishing cap.

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A Homeopathic Approach to Chronic Disease

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