

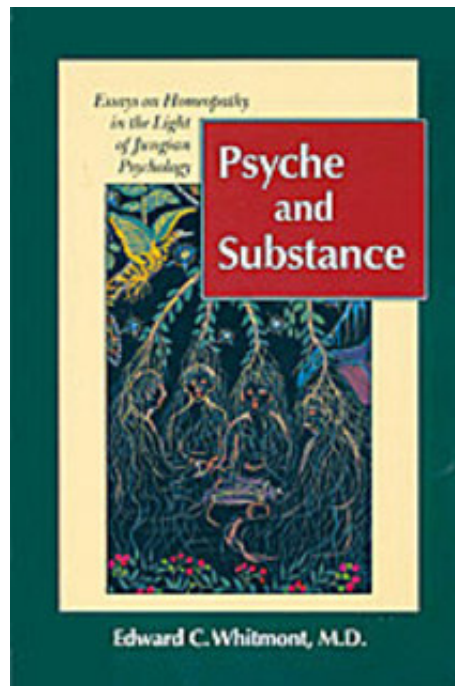
Edward C. Whitmont Psyche and Substance

Reading excerpt

[Psyche and Substance](#)

of [Edward C. Whitmont](#)

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²¹*Ibid.*

²²Cf. F.L. Kunz, "Feeling in Plants," in *Main Currents in Modern Thought*, 25, 5, 1969 (May-June), p. 143.

²³M. Gauquelin, *The Cosmic Clocks*, New York, 1967.

²⁴G. Piccardi, *The Chemical Basis of Medical Climatology*, Springfield, 1962.

²⁵L. Kolisko, *Spirit in Matter*, Kolisko Archive, Rudge Cottage, Edge Stroud, 1948.

²⁶M. Rubin, "Lunar Sex Cycle," *American Astrology*, July, 1968, p. 365.

ILLNESS AND HEALING

When one refers to psychosomatics as a special field one misunderstands the nature of human organismic functioning. Psychosomatics as a clinical entity *sui generis* presupposes that there could also be somatic or psychic functions that are separate and noninclusive expressions of a disembodied soul or of a soulless body. In this respect psychologists no less than doctors of medicine have been dealing with mental abstractions rather than real persons.

While popular instinctive understanding still knows of "broken hearts," of "bellyaching" complaining, or of "having gall" or "venting spleen," post-Cartesian enlightenment saw mind and matter as totally separate, indeed incommensurable entities. Eventually positivism, cellular pathognomy and behaviorism came to regard the human organism as an electrochemical machine that "produces" a mind, in a fashion analogous to how the liver produces bile. These notions have saddled us with the dilemma of how to reconnect and then understand functionally what never was separate in the first place.

The "modern" mechanistic machine concept views illness as a malfunctioning or misplacement of spare parts. Healing, in this view, is to be brought about by removal, straightening out or substituting the bad parts. This particularistic approach is still basic to biology and medicine, "holistic" protestations notwithstanding.

Looked upon from this angle, Homeopathy can obviously be seen only as an absurd piece of nonsensical hocus-pocus. For how could something that does not "exist" because of having lost its

materiality, such as a potency above the 30x, have an effect on material processes? And even acknowledging that a lower potency might have a chemical effect, how could something that induces a disturbance similar to the one that already exists be helpful rather than harmful? If your machine happens to be damaged you do not help it by adding more of the same damaging agents.

However, since therapy based upon the law of similars and the ultramolecular dose *does* work, obviously, the above mechanistic assumptions must be incomplete or wrong. To abandon a firmly established viewpoint is not easily done. While facts cannot be argued with, one can still refuse to look at them when one does not like the conclusions they imply. In this respect we have not advanced very much beyond the Middle Ages when Galileo's contemporaries refused to look through the telescope at the moons of Jupiter which were not supposed to exist.

Instead of the current mechanistic model I propose that we consider one that views life as a meaningful aspect of an artistically creative, dramatic, cosmic play of which we are a partial manifestation, comparable to cells of a superordinated organism. Of the overall functioning, meaning or intents of that organism we may be able to understand as little as a cell of our intestinal lining or our skin epithelium can understand about why we want to go to the theatre.

This working hypothesis seems to me to be suggested, indeed necessitated, by the two most "scandalous absurdities" of Homeopathy, namely the non-material dose and the law of similars. And, conversely, that working hypothesis may help us understand why Homeopathy works the way it does.

The non-material dosage

Let us stop for a moment and consider what we are doing when we administer a ten-thousandth or hundred-thousandth potency. We actually give a few sugar granules or drops of alcohol that carry—what? In material terms, nothing! Above the 23rd decimal the presence of any molecules of the original substance is at best chancy, probably unlikely. However, the effect of this "nothingness" is substance-specific and its medicinal power can be transferred to further solvents and even to the walls of the container. Furthermore, specific autonomous nerve reflexes and kinesiology

responses can be elicited.

Clearly, some sort of *information* is being conveyed, is imprinted upon the solvent, retained like a memory and transferred to the patient's organism. We are reminded of the "imprinting" of thought forms upon protein molecules in the brain, the physical basis or corollary of conscious memory.

But we are told that only the living brain is capable of such memory. When recently biologist Rupert Sheldrake postulated memory as an aspect of morphogenesis inherent in all form-patterns of substance manifestation,¹ his book was declared "worthy of being burned" by the very same editor of *Nature* magazine who called upon the help of a magician in order to "disprove" the experimental evidence of microdoses.

Apparently, in terms of morphogenesis there is no difference between so-called living and non-living substance. In order to understand and incorporate this seeming paradox we have to revise our outdated notions about the nature of material substance and of its separateness from mind. We have to dispose of the notion that matter as we purport to know it is real and that, in respect to memory, there is a basic difference between living and "dead" forms of matter. Perhaps memory is a universal property of existence.

In keeping with its 19th-century idea of matter as a solid "thing" separate from mind, medicine continues to base itself upon a physics that no longer exists!

The nuclear physicist Erwin Schrodinger declares that the idea that the individuality of particles is based upon the identity of material units "seems to be a gratuitous and almost mystical (sic.) addition that is in sharp contrast to what we have found....The new idea is that what is permanent in these ultimate particles ... is their shape and organisation. They are, as it were, pure shape, nothing but shape, not an individual speck of material."²

Einstein treats matter and field as mutually exchangeable. He defined matter as "being constituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense....There is no place in this new kind of physics both for the field and matter, for the field is the only reality."³

And David Bohm adds:"... each relatively autonomous and stable structure (e.g. an atomic particle) is to be understood not

as something independent and permanently existing but rather as a product that has been formed in the whole flowing movement and that will ultimately dissolve back into this movement. How it forms and maintains itself, then, depends on its place and function in the whole"⁴ and is no more than a "state of information"⁵ which "... unless created by our physical operation ... to realize, to manifest ... will not be localized; it will in fact have no properties at all apart from what we do to it."⁶

But, what is information? Are we not already speaking of something akin to mind?

Like form, information (namely that which "in-forms") makes for form, is not of something that has form. Information is a "certain thing . . . neither knowledge nor meaning. Its basic units [are] not ideas or concepts or even necessarily words or numbers,"⁷ nor, we may add, are they molecules or chemistry. Like form, information is *a priori*; it is not material but may utilize materiality and have material effects. Information or formal intents are quasi-transcendental principles or "fields."

On the other hand, information must of necessity be a function of an "awareness" that is "informed" and can inform, can convey its "content" to other awarenesses; if it is not "mind," it is at least a substratum from which evolve mind, memory and the ability to process meaning as well as the phenomenon we call matter. Thus it would appear that the mind-matter dichotomy is an illusory notion of a separation brought about by our ways of experiencing. Functionally, they are not separate.

Field, shape, form, pattern, even systems are now understood as ultimate basic units of existence. Even the concept of energy is no longer primary. Field has become formative Gestalt or plain information. The field, shape or form-patterns that we can perceive with our senses or instruments are but expressions of an (as such) unrepresentable organizing essence - what Jung' called the "archetype as such ... that is transcendental ... but has effects which make visualisation of it possible."⁸

Matter is but encoded information, a vector toward form or pattern. Bohm calls it the "explicate" expression of an invisible and unrepresentable "implicate" order.⁹

Sheldrake has applied these insights to biology. He calls those implicate information fields morphic fields:

"The nature of things depends upon fields, called morphic fields. Each kind of natural system has its own kind of field: there is an insulin field, a beach field, a swallow field and so on. Such fields shape all the different kind of atoms, molecules, crystals, living organisms, social customs and habits of mind.

"Morphic fields, like the known fields of physics, are nonmaterial regions of influence, extending in space and continuing in time. They are localized within and around the systems which they organize. When any particular organized system ceases to exist, as when an atom splits, a snowflake melts, an animal dies, its organizing field disappears from that place. But in another sense, morphic fields do not disappear: they are potential organizing patterns of influence, and can appear physically in other times and places wherever and whenever the physical conditions are appropriate. When they do so they contain within themselves a memory of their prior physical existence.

"The process by which the past becomes present within morphic fields is called morphic resonance. Morphic resonance involves the transmission of formative causal influences through both space and time. The memory within the morphic field is cumulative, and that is why all sort of things become increasingly habitual through repetition. When such repetition has occurred on an astronomical scale over billions of years, as it has in the case of atoms, molecules and crystals, the nature of these things has become so deeply habitual that it is effectively changeless, or eternal."¹⁰

Morphic resonance explains the strange phenomenon that when new substances are being synthesized and crystallized it becomes easier to do so with each repetition, even in laboratories or factories far removed from the original place. It is as though a working habit is being established on some invisible level. If morphic resonance exists, a living language in actual use ought to be more easily memorized by someone unfamiliar with it than an artificially invented one that is not in actual use. In one such experiment, subjects unfamiliar with Japanese were asked to memorize a text in Japanese and another text in an artificial pseudo-Japanese. It did turn out, indeed, that the genuine Japanese text was memorized more easily.

Morphic resonance conveys field information. The ultimate entities of existence are not unchangeable particles of materiality

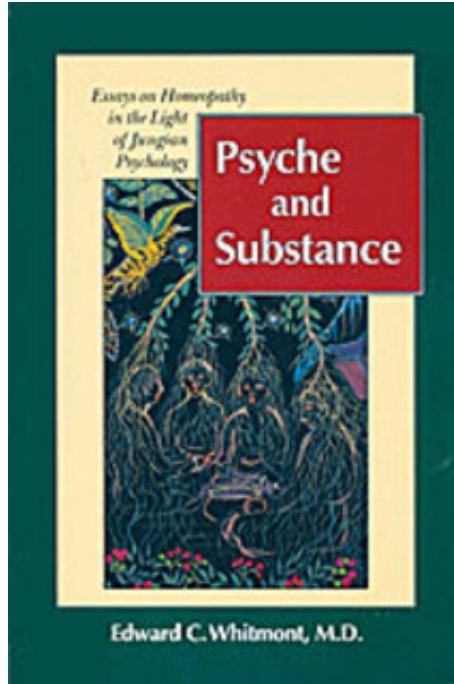
but information, field, shape, pattern out of which flows what our sensory experience classifies as "real" substance, which is considered the basis of reality, or as mind, the "reality" of which is still a matter of doubt.

The most explicit, in fact, most easily verifiable, phenomenology that points to the effective "reality" of mind as well as to the nonseparation of mind, memory, awareness and matter is offered by the *I Ching*. The *I Ching* is an approximately 4000-year-old book of collected situational images and resulting judgments respecting the varieties of the human condition in their relation to self and cosmos. The *I Ching* can be used as an oracle and be asked questions by the random casting of coins or the counting of randomly gathered stems or sticks. The numerical patterns thus elicited correspond to images and judgments in the book, which can thus supply the answers to the question.

For the last fifty years, I have used the *I Ching* innumerable times to elicit insight and get information about likely future developments and risks in situations not readily accessible to rational understanding. I have even asked for advice in clinically ambiguous or difficult situations. Amazingly, in all instances in which it was possible to verify its verdict, the *I Ching* has proven itself uncannily accurate, both to myself as well as to the many colleagues and friends who have communicated their experiences to me.

One of them, a professor at one of our universities who was particularly interested in statistical verification, told me an amusing story about his experience. He wanted to test the *I Ching* by putting the same question to it every month and comparing the answers to see whether or not they were at least consistent. "But you know what happened?" he said to me, "You would not believe it; I got exactly the same answer each time I cast the oracle!"

I shall recall a similarly amusing episode with a sceptical acquaintance who also wanted to put the *I Ching* to a test. We were in a summer house on top of a hill with a rather long and steep driveway. He had come to visit and, expecting to depart in short order, had left his car at the foot of the hill. His stay was prolonged, however, by a heavy storm. At midnight, while the downpour continued, he decided to stay overnight and now was undecided whether to bring up the car or to leave it where it was. Then one of us suggested, "Why don't you ask the *I Ching*?" Here was a chance



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Essays on Homeopathy in the Light of Jungian Psychology

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