

Peter Fraser

Snakes, Drawing power from the Underworld

Reading excerpt

[Snakes, Drawing power from the Underworld](#)

of [Peter Fraser](#)

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INTRODUCTION

There are two types of symptom in any case. Most symptoms make up what can be seen as the background of the case. These are stable and distinctive and they will lead the prescriber to a group of remedies. Examples of the background are the Miasms, the Botanical and Zoological Families, the Periodic Table, the Realms and the Kingdoms.

It is sometimes possible to find the indicated remedy by cross referencing the various background features of the case. This approach has great appeal as it appears to be ordered and systematic and does not require a detailed knowledge of the remedies. In fact a completely unknown remedy can be prescribed purely on its relationship to other known remedies. However, this approach is not as easy to work with as it seems since the slightest misunderstanding in classifying the case will lead to the wrong remedy.

The background in the case will usually lead to a group of remedies and it is differentiating within the group and finding the specific group member indicated in the case that is the most difficult part. Although other backgrounds do differentiate somewhat there is usually a correspondence between different backgrounds. Many remedies that are of the Sea Realm are also Phlegmatic in nature and so knowing that a case is both of the Sea and Phlegmatic is not very specific.

The foreground is the place in a case where there is dynamic energy and movement. It is the place where the patient becomes animated and where the symptoms are changing and contradictory. This is the place that restricts, that prevents the patient from moving on and growing but it is also the place through which they will move and grow. This is perhaps the most distinctive feature of the foreground of the case - it is as positive as it is negative and it is as healing as it is destructive. It is also unusual, individualistic and characteristic. No one else expresses it in quite the same way and for no one else would it quite make sense in the way it does for the patient. It is also something that appears in different aspects of the case but with the same distinct character. The foreground is what Hahnemann refers to as the totality of the characteristic symptoms.

Finding the foreground in a case gives you a deep insight into the patient and without understanding this aspect of their life it is very difficult to understand the case and to discover what it is that is to be cured.

Finding the foreground features in a case requires attention to the patient's way of expressing him or herself and of describing his or her symptoms. The key indicators are animation and contradiction - wherever either of these appear in a case they need to be pursued because here will be found the information that allows an accurate differentiation between the group of background remedies. Animation is important because it indicates that the things under discussion are dynamic and alive for the patient. Contradiction is important because the path to illness and the path to healing are the same - just as the symptoms of the disease and of its cure are the same.

The same process that is involved in finding the foreground features of a case is involved in finding the foreground features

TRANSFORMATION BETWEEN THE REALMS

of a remedy. Again animation and contradiction are the key indicators of foreground symptoms. This is why it is important to study remedies from the provings as all too often these are lost in secondary materia medica.

In some classes of remedy there is at least one point of dynamism and change that is the same for all the group but which the individual remedies each handle in slightly different ways. Each remedy has different issues that dominate the same dynamic process. One of the clearest points of this dynamism is when there is movement from one Realm to another. The Birds, Trees and Insects all involve movement from the Earth to the Sky. The Snakes and Drugs move between the Earth and the Underworld. Since this movement is so important and so dynamic it will be where the dynamic foreground of the remedy is expressed.

Through understanding the way in which each individual remedy handles this point of transformation it is relatively straight forward to differentiate between the members of the group.

SNAKES
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