

# Where is Apitherapy going ?

A personal view

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# A Rapid Survey

## the points considered

- The spirits of traditional Apitherapy and of Western Medicine
- Brief revue of their histories
- Importance of the relation of us humans to Nature and to Life
- What we learned; what Apitherapy can teach.

# Brief History of Apitherapy

## traditional

- 2000 BC from ancient Egypt, Greece & China. Propolis, honey, royal jelly, pollen & bee bread were used then, used mostly for nutritional benefit: “let food be thy medicine & medicine be thy food”
- Hippocrates, some 400 BC, mentioned bee venom as miracle medicine
- 800 AD Charlemagne was treated for gout with bee venom
- 1928 first preparation of an injectable derivative of venom.

# Brief History of Western Medicine

- 2000 BC – Here. eat this root
- 1000 AD – That root is heathen, Here, say this prayer
- 1850 – That prayer is superstition. Here, drink this potion: medication was born!
- 1860 – Pasteur's and Koch's proposal that germs caused illnesses. These discoveries started the war on germs, actualized by antibiotics
- 2006 – NIH: engages in ending the war metaphor and unraveling the host microbe relationship.

# The Western world

## Simplification

- We do not know what Life is !
- Western Medicine made two very wise decisions:
  - Using systems that are closed (or nearly so, with meta analysis)
  - Defining the human being as a physiological specimen
- This simplification has allowed immense progress in understanding physiology and illnesses. Attention is centered on illnesses and their treatment.

# Closed Systems

What they can, ~~cannot~~ do

- Control (know, measure, change, minimize, eliminate) their variables
- Allow, therefore, prove a proposition by reducing the value of any unwanted variable down to irrelevance
- A variable has been identified under the name “placebo”, which refers to the relationship between Doctors and Patients. The Patient’s responsibility in his treatment and in his health is not recognized
- Consider the patients as active and responsible participants .

# Open Systems

What they can, ~~can~~ not do

- Accept variables that cannot be known, measured, changed or minimized
- Consider the patients as active and responsible participants
- Show series of observations where a certain effect has been obtained
- Prove any proposition.

# A difference between the two worlds

## Origin of the products

- Traditional Medicine: all bee products have been created by live organisms
- Honey, pollen, propolis, royal jelly, venom and wax, have been created in tiny individual amounts, often of very slightly different composition and are most often used in high numbers grouped together
- They are, therefore, un“knowable. The indetermination principle applies
- Western Medicine uses, as products, either derivatives, such as extracts, homogenization, or synthesized compounds
- They are, therefore, knowable, and can be reliably reproduced



# A difference between the two worlds

## Consequences of this difference

- Traditional Medicine: all bee products are constantly changing, often in subtle forms, in a way that cannot be predicted nor completely known
- This very variability explains why, when used in the handling of infections, products from the hive, in their un modified forms, do not create resistance
- Synthetized compounds, having no relation to life, do lead to resistance. Requiring ever more powerful antibiotics they have created monsters.

# “Distance from Nature”

## Our relation to Life

- Developed countries are waging a multi-fronted war on bacteria and have a diet notably detrimental to their own wellbeing
- This tendency appears to be related to the sharp increase in allergies, food intolerances, autoimmune diseases
- The study of microbiota reveals that we have at all times a resident population of microbes of 10 times the number of cells in our body
- Their presence on all surfaces of our body is protective. One of their tasks is to prevent the invasion by pathogenic bacteria.

# Who are these bacteria?

- These populations contribute more genes for our survival than our own genes. Their bacterial-coding genes are estimated to be 360 more abundant than human genes
- They can only survive in symbiosis on other live organisms. In this respect they are like us, who can only live in symbiosis
- Only 1 % of them can be cultivated – “The great plate anomaly”
- This concerns all forms of life: all animals (and all plants?)

# What do they do?

- One of their major function is colonization resistance, which is the ability to resist invasions by exogenous and pathogenic organisms
- The more diverse these populations are, the better they resist invasions!
- Our western way of life attacks them.

# Our relationship to “them”

- All human beings can only live if in symbioses with these germ populations, just as these populations can only survive in symbiotic relation to a body
- This means that we are at all times surrounded by live populations of microbes of all kinds
- These are more abundant and genetically more powerful than we are
- We have to learn to respect them as they are part of us.

# Western evaluation of Apitherapy

- In 2005, a group at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, concluded that their study on nine MS patients treated with bee stings suggests safety, but little evidence to support the use for their condition. Four patients withdrew for reasons unrelated to the treatment
- This conclusion is surprising as, of the five patients left, three reported subjective improvement and the other two showed objective progress
- The same year a Dutch team treated 26 MS patients for 24 weeks using bees. The treatment was well tolerated but no clinical improvement was noted
- The Commission contacted this group during their experiment, and noted that they did not follow a recognized protocol for such a treatment. They showed no interest in our consulting with them.

# Western reaction to Apitherapy

- In writing the chapter “Apitherapy” for a book on Biotherapy, I reported on a clinical observation of a one time treatment that showed remarkable results obtained with Bee Venom that were compared to those seen, when the same patient was treated with Apitoxin. The previous therapist, very experienced with Apitoxin, told me that he had never seen such a favorable response with his product
- This observation of the contrast between the result of bee venom and Apitoxin was removed from the book
- I assign this happening to the influence that Western Medical Culture has even on scientific minds.

# What can Apitherapy teach?

- Western Medicine had defined its limits and has supported the current approach to health of our Society. We recently learned how deficient this approach is to human health
- The vignettes I showed you about the views that the established order has of Apitherapy is an indication of the trouble we are causing them
- We have recently learned that we can only exist if we are in symbiotic relation with another organism equally needing symbiosis in order to exist.



# Where Apitherapy can go

## Our teaching

- The fact that ALL the product of the hive are produced directly by live bees shows the relevance of the presence of life in our therapeutic products
- It could be our task to study further, and promote, the therapeutic power carried by products that have a close relation to life, represented by Apitherapy.

Thank you !