

Potential for Change: C Triturations

By Brenda O'Brien



This article will explore the trituration process, and the C potencies that are becoming increasingly relevant for 21st-century homeopaths. Brenda O'Brien's journey to discover this hidden aspect of homeopathy began in 2001. Here she shares the story of how this has deepened her respect for potency and trituration and explains why she feels potency is our strength

Potency is a fascinating, perplexing and often nebulous area of homeopathy. It excites both intrigue and ridicule. It is an aspect of homeopathy that causes the most controversy from both within and outside the profession. Unlike our search to match the remedy with the patient, we have no clear reference tools for matching potency.

Practitioners are taught various methods of case-taking and case analysis, and are aided by reference materials such as the materia medica, repertory or a computer search programme. There is information from the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, and an understanding of miasms and nosodes. Yet very little attention appears to be given to the study of potency and trituration even though potency is our strength.

Without potency homeopathy would simply be a method of using the law of similars, with a limited selection of physical substances, herbal tinctures and dilutions of soluble compounds as medicines. The discovery of trituration i.e. reducing substance methodically in a small amount of sac lac, using a mortar and pestle, for one or more hours (as in the footnote to §270)¹, gave homeopathy an enormous advantage over any previous school of medicine. Trituration enabled insoluble substances to be diluted and succussed. With trituration almost any substance can become a potential homeopathic medicine, including *Sepia*, *Lycopodium*, *Petroleum* and *Silica*, which had never been used as medicines before. Trituration now allows us to substantially enlarge our range of potencies. And from the experience of the trituration process comes a whole new understanding of our levels of existence. The recent developments of trituration have produced remedies, in what have come to be known as the "C potencies". These potencies are currently distinguished by including the number of triturations, in addition to the total potency (i)

C potencies

The C potencies have been developed during the past ten years mainly in Germany and Holland. Beginning with physical substance, all these potencies have undergone further degrees of trituration than the three hours specified by Hahnemann^{1a} and it is these further degrees of trituration that are the key to our new understanding of potency.

My introduction to the curative power of the C potencies was through a seminar presented by Alize

Timmerman. Alize used video cases of her patients both before and after C4 potencies. The first case showed a woman who had been prescribed *Argentum metallicum* successfully for many years with different potencies. Initially after *Argentum metallicum* LM2 she remained very well for three years. She was subsequently prescribed *Argentum metallicum* 1M and later the same remedy in 10M potency, after which she again remained well for three years. Thereafter she was prescribed again *Argentum metallicum* in 50M, CM, further LM potencies, and also 30 and 12c, but regardless of the potency, the patient experienced a relapse after a shorter and shorter period of time. Alize was confident that *Argentum metallicum* completely matched the patient's condition, yet was unable to find the potency to effect a longer-lasting cure. On hearing of this patient, one of Alize's colleagues offered to prepare *Argentum metallicum* to the fourth trituration. In 1999 Alize prescribed *Argentum metallicum* C220/4 and the patient phoned the following morning to say, "this is the right remedy", having experienced change on a spiritual level, her daily, debilitating symptoms ceased. The C220/4 was prescribed two years prior to this seminar, and the patient had remained in excellent health since.

For each case presented at the seminar there was a major aspect of life that remained fixed. It was only after being prescribed a remedy from a C4 or C5 trituration that the life issue became resolved.

People who require remedies from a C4 trituration are often aware that their symptoms relate to the difficulties or emotional traumas of a previous generation. With these new potencies we are able to bring resolution to these issues, so the effects of previous traumas need not be passed on to succeeding generations. For example, a mother recently became aware that all her sons had broken their left arm, and her husband his left leg, all at exactly the same age and in similar circumstances. On further talking with members of an older generation it became clear that her children were having these accidents because of a generational trauma, and she was keen to break the cycle. The correct remedy from a C4 trituration would be useful in this circumstance.

When a patient responds well to a particular remedy and you have reached CM or MM, it seems there is nowhere else to go, until you understand that it is possible to increase the number of triturations. Another example is of a colleague, who after hearing about the C

potencies requested *Thuja* in a higher trituration. Below is a summary of her response to *Thuja* C220/5:

“For years I suffered from period pain, specifically located in the right ovary region. Several years of homeopathic treatment helped but never really cured the problem. One dose of *Thuja* 200 and the period pain didn’t return for two years. Over the course of the next 10 years, *Thuja* was almost the only remedy I ever needed. My period pain symptoms had returned and I had to repeat *Thuja* CM every few months to keep them at bay. I felt that my pathology wasn’t really “my stuff”.

“I was given *Thuja* C220/5, and I first placed the remedy on my arm, (ii) but it caused bruising so I decided to pop it in my mouth. Soon after this I had a dream in which I was a young girl who had been prostituted by her parents and had bled to death after intercourse with a particularly vicious customer. I woke from the dream feeling as though I had actually been there. I was not distressed though. I just thought, “ This is past-life stuff, it is OK to be me. I’m not in those kind of situations anymore I’m safe.” My next period was pain-free, as have all periods since been.

“Since then I have been finding myself. The experience has been a little like someone has shoved me from the top of a steep slope, and sometimes I’ve tripped in an effort to keep up with myself, but nothing has happened to me that I’m not able to cope with. It has all been good.”

It is now over two years since *Thuja* C220/5 and this colleague has made creative life-changing decisions, as well as keeping in excellent health.

Understanding the different stages of the trituration process

Previous generations of homeopaths used a wide variety of triturations and succussion as can be seen in original materia medicas.^{2&3} Margaret Tyler writes in the description of *Natrum muriaticum*: “In regard to this veritable transmutation of *Sodium chloride* from a common aliment into a powerful remedial agent by potentisation, one remembers that the late Dr Molson used to tell how he got the coastguard at Brighton “because they had nothing to do” to go on triturating *Natrum Mur* to produce higher and higher potencies. Instead of the usual three triturations which reduce a substance to one in million, and by which the most intractable substances, becoming soluble in water and alcohol, are easily run up into the higher potencies, he found that by such repeated trituration his *Natrum Mur* became so intensely – almost explosively – active, that at last he was positively afraid to administer it.”⁴

It seems that the power of trituration could not be contained for previous generations which might explain Hahnemann’s footnote to a footnote: “These are the three degrees of the dry powder trituration, which, if carried out correctly, will effect a good beginning for the dynamisation of the medicinal substance.”^{1b} I now understand this to indicate Hahnemann was aware of the nature of different triturations, and specified the three degrees to set a standard for the trituration process, allowing the profession to explore further triturations when there was sufficient understanding, and respect, for the power and potential that is subsequently released.

For the past ten years, groups of homeopaths, and other provers (mainly in Germany and Holland) have been exploring the further degrees of trituration beyond the three degrees. In contrast to the fear experienced by Dr Molson in Margaret Tyler’s quote, these triturations [and C potencies] are bringing new understanding to our

different levels of experience, and gradually being more widely prescribed. From their many triturations further levels of experience are now more clearly understood.⁵

The term C0 is used to describe the level of raw material of food, nutrition, of physical substance. This level has not been potentised or triturated. Some substances have very little or no action on the C0 level, e.g. silica. Others such as aconite and arsenic can be fatal on the C0 physical level. Generally plants have more pharmaceutical action on this level.

It can be observed that Hahnemann practised mainly using the level of physical sensation (C1 level), whereas during the time of Kent, homeopaths were using higher potencies and prescribing more on emotional symptoms, this is the level of C2. In the past 20 or so years the C3 level of homeopathy has come to the fore, with the level of themes, kingdoms, the periodic table etc.

C1 represents substances after one hour of trituration: this is the level of physical sensation.
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C2 the second trituration (i.e. after the second hour of trituration): the emotional level is brought out e.g. the fears and anxieties
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C3 the third trituration the substance reaches the mental level – the level of thinking, delusion. This is the level of present-day homeopathy where mental symptoms predominate, the level of thinking, of delusion
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C4, the fourth trituration, is the level of individual purpose: the spiritual level of existence. This level brings resolution on an individual level.
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C5 is the level of Collective Unconscious, the miasmatic level, and connection to the wounds of past generations.

Practical experience of Trituration

In §265 Hahnemann urges us as homeopaths to undertake the making of remedies: “It should be a matter of conscience with him to be thoroughly convinced in every case that the patient takes the right medicine... and therefore he must give the patient the correctly chosen medicine prepared, moreover, by himself.”¹

In the UK Jeremy Sherr brought provings back on to centre stage as of fundamental importance to the profession, both from a professional desire to increase our materia medica, but it has also given us courage to learn from experience. We now need to undertake similar investigation with trituration to better understand the different levels of the both the individual and the substance, whether soluble or insoluble.

Trituration begins with the raw substance in contrast to a conventional proving where the prover takes either a potentised substance or placebo. Each stage of the trituration brings the substance to a new level of dynamisation. The susceptibility of the individual person triturating, along with their resonance with the substance, will affect which symptoms, and changes, they experience. Unlike conventional provings, the triturations have a specified time limit, and most importantly trituration brings resolution to the individual. For each individual, the level where resolution is reached depends on a combination of the level of the individual and their resonance with the substance, this is generally after the C3, C4 or C5 trituration.

Over the past two years I have initiated two triturations of substances fundamental to life. Several of the people involved experienced strong reactions on different levels. Yet with both triturations once the fourth trituration was complete the symptoms brought

on by the substance disappeared and newer understanding was reached for each individual. Below are some excerpts from journals written during and after the completion of the whole trituration process.

Some changes experienced during *Lac humanum* trituration

"I have been depressed, irritable, no fuse, short-tempered with everybody, whole world, only wanted to be near water or on water. Away from people, I didn't want to go to work, I didn't see any point in anything... I've been fussy. Always thinking I couldn't leave people to do things in their own way... I lost interest in food. Feel like I've had PMT for two months – irritable moods, snappy, dissatisfied. I never before felt I had PMT, now I understand. I've been out of character... I went to the doctor. I was at my wits' end, tearful, so angry with doctor – he did not look after me and that's what I wanted. I lost interest in everything... I bought a camel with empty humps... My breasts were really achey, were bigger, fuller. I didn't want (husband) to touch them... very rarely have sensitive boobs. Always the same size bra for 20 or more years. Before I would never go without a bra because breasts so small, now can go without bra and feels great... I lost weight. Physically I feel more balanced (I lost weight around abdomen, breasts feel bigger)."

Soon after the C4 trituration: "My husband said: "Its all gone." I was smiling and laughing and not being miserable. I stopped doing; before I was always doing, doing. I'd lost my sense of humour, lost my spark. Now it's all fun again, everything is funny.

"I feel I've learnt a huge amount about me in the past few weeks, feel it has been so intense – more than I've learnt in therapy. I've been looking at myself, more noticing, dreams have become really vivid, not my usual dreams. This has got to the soul of me, something deep, something core."

Another person's experience during the *Lac humanum* trituration:

Night before trituration started: "Awful dream: a friend's grandmother (I think) died, and had to be laid out in our dining room."

C1: "I felt as though I had behaved childishly... Period started yesterday and I didn't believe it. It's too early. It normally arrives at full moon. I feel really peculiar. Irritable. Large, sore breasts. It's like PMT and periods at the same time. It feels wrong. Drank a whole bottle of cream soda. Have far away sensation in ears. The odd deafness that feels like I'm underwater or very far away lasted most of the day. Supermarket was very difficult; it was like being in a big echoey box. It felt as though it took me ages to do my shopping but when I came out it had taken less time than usual. Then time did go very fast. I was feeling really odd so I had a bath – very loud in the bathroom – uncomfortable. Ears felt better underwater. Time is stretching and contracting. It reminds me of how I was before my son was born. I haven't been remembering to eat properly for the past few days."

C2 & C3: "I'm feeling schizophrenic – like I've had a separate personality grafted onto my own. I'm talking too much to everyone but I feel distant. I'm dwelling on the small things people say. Life feels pointless. My life feels a mess but I can't say why. I'm avoiding talking to friends but feeling isolated. I felt I needed a job to make my life valuable. I took a waitressing job (it seems relevant now that I wanted to feed people!) Trying to detox – sick of sugar cravings. Sugar stops me thinking and although I don't want to think, I can't carry on like this. Very tired and sleepy. Slight headache. Sore tip of tongue.

During the C4 trituration: "I felt my head go really muzzy. Felt really grateful for my life... since it is all over I do feel myself again. I've given up the waitressing job. The children have been making me 'Mummy I love you' cards ever since.

Changes experienced during *Silica* trituration: After the C5 trituration "I really felt it was finished and complete. I felt as if I had completed the journey, and at the time I couldn't describe the feelings of sheer joy, and feeling of everything going to be ok... I could support myself... It is interesting that the feelings of my close friend who died came up – the remedy she had almost to exclusion of others was *Silica*.

"Since the trituration I have discovered a new confidence in some areas of life – but especially with patients when I need to "get to the point". I also have such a new respect for this remedy and for

homeopathy... I had not appreciated before how irritable and weak and tired *Silica* can be, and how it really does give form, and structure, but mainly SUPPORT and teaches us how to support ourselves – a crucial part of growing up – physically and emotionally. *Silica* helps us get the structure of who we are ... the real question is "who are you?" It helps us find out who we are – gives us strength, or form or support or whatever to do this. This trituration has been very powerful and in itself an exhausting and overwhelming experience. I do feel it has entered into me and that this will stay with me. It's as if it really is in my bones."

Conclusion

Since Hahnemann's time our materia medica has grown enormously, yet it is now clear how we have limited our use of potency. With the new understanding that has come through recent triturations, and in seeing the results of C potencies in practice, homeopathy is more able to effect positive change for a wider range of conditions. Through our own experience of trituration we can more fully understand substances on many levels of existence, and can now offer an even greater range of healing potential both for ourselves, and subsequently our patients.

Remedies from fourth and fifth triturations are able to reach beyond the previous limit of the C3 level, and with this new understanding past traumas can be recognised and where applicable the prescribing of C potencies may help to bring resolution.

As homeopathy moves forward in the 21st century, I feel we are ready to experience and utilise the fourth and fifth levels of trituration which, when combined with our ever-increasing materia medica, becomes a truly holistic, and wondrous system of medicine and gives renewed meaning to §9

"In the healthy condition of man, the spiritual vital force (autocracy), the dynamis that animates the material body (organism), rules with unbounded sway, and retains all the parts of the organism in admirable, harmonious, vital operation, as regards both sensations and functions, so that our indwelling, reason-gifted mind can freely employ this living, healthy instrument for the higher purposes of our existence."¹

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*⁶

Footnotes

(i) potency meaning the combination of total number of triturations, and dilutions and succussion. Homeopathic pharmacies do not routinely include the number of triturations on the label – as the standard procedure adopted by these pharmacies is to triturate only insoluble substances for three hours before dilution and succussion – therefore *Silica* 200, when prepared according to homeopathic pharmacopoeias, has undergone three degrees of trituration and 197 degrees of dilution and succussion. The new labelling therefore becomes *Silica* C200/3 i.e. a total potency of 200, beginning with three triturations.

(ii) C4 potencies are often administered initially by attaching to the arm, so can be removed when required to regulate the dose.

References

- ¹Samuel Hahnemann - *Organon of Medicine* pub. 1961 Roy Publishing House Calcutta
 - ^{1a}referring to the footnote to §270 describing the preparation of three degrees of trituration
 - ^{1b}footnote to the footnote [1a]
 - ²Samuel Hahnemann - *Materia Medica Pura*
 - ³T.F. Allen *Encyclopaedia of Pure Materia Medica*
 - ^{2&3}both researched using Encyclopedia Homeopathica computer search programme
 - ⁴Margaret Tyler – *Homeopathic Drug Pictures* pub. 1978 Health Science Press p.568
 - ⁵Witold Ehrler & Jurgen Becker information from written papers.
 - ⁶T.S. Eliot - Little Giddings – from *Four Quartets* pub 1989 Faber & Faber p.48
- Alize Timmerman seminars: www.hahnemanninstituut.nl