

SPAGYRIC TINCTURES - TRADITION, PREPARATION AND USAGE



BY
BEAT KRUMMENACHER

NE PRAETER
ATEAM

Spagyric Tinctures - Tradition, Preparation, and Usage

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Basic Spagyric Tinctures - Tradition, Preparation and Usage*

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1. Preliminary Remarks

The Preparation of Primordial Spagyric Tinctures is rooted in ancient tradition. Even though its procedure is also meaningful from a modern pharmaceutical-chemical viewpoint, a deeper understanding is only possible when we take into account the traditional way of thinking. The following writings therefore have to consider both the basic viewpoints of a chemically oriented science *and* the traditional world view. If we do not consider both we cannot do justice to the Spagyric processes. Scientific preparation of medicine separated itself from the traditional viewpoint about 200 years ago, which brought about a development in a different direction. But this is not sufficient reason to portray the forgotten pathways of Spagyrics as senseless or wrong. Even though much of this tradition may seem strange to a modern pharmacist, pitching the modern against the traditional viewpoints may help him to find a deeper understanding of the Tradition itself.

2. The Concept of Spagyrics

The origins of Spagyrics are lost in historical darkness. Its roots go back millennia. No historical founder of Spagyrics can be identified for certain. In the related (but semantically not identical) spelling "Spagyria" this word was often used as a synonym for Alchemy. Another, better known word for Alchemy is Hermetics. This concept is being traced back to Hermes Trismegistos (Illustration 1) who is said to have lived in Ancient Egypt [1]. "Hermetic" means: tightly sealed, inaccessible to Outsiders. Thus Hermetics can be understood as a secret science. *Hermetics deals with Universal Law, and with the interconnections between microcosm (man) and macrocosm (Nature and the Universe)*. The hermetic teaching can be summarized in seven principles or axioms, which however we shall not bring up in detail here [2].

In the Middle Ages Spagyrics (Alchemy) experienced a period of bloom. Especially with Paracelsus¹ (Illustration 2) the clearly attributable written materials begin to gain clarity. He writes [3]: "That is why you should study Alchemy, which is also called Spagyrics: to learn to separate the the wrong from the just"

This leads to an etymological analysis of the word "Spagyria": Spagyria is the combination of two Greek words: 'span' (to separate, divorce) and 'ageirin' (to bind, unite) Therefore the word itself contains the basic procedures of Spagyria: After a suitable preparation and separation of the raw materials a spagyric (Alchemical) product emerges through their new composition (Union). While Spagyria or Alchemy are more referring to the theoretical underpinnings of the practical work, the closely related word "Spagyrics" refers to the practice itself: *Spagyrics is the method of preparing remedies by applying the theory of Alchemy (Spagyria)*.

* Numbers in angular parentheses refer to the Bibliography,
Superscript numbers refer to the footnotes at the end of the document



Illustration 1: Copper Engraving 1617: *Hermes Trismegistos*



Illustration 2: *Paracelsus 47 years old* after a picture by August Hirschvogel

The connection of the word with the preparation of remedies becomes even clearer with the Alchemical axiom, which we find again and again in Alchemical writings: "Solve et coagula, et habebis magisterium!". (Dissolve and coagulate and you will have the magisterium!) It is again emphasized here that one needs to "separate and join" in order to finally arrive at a magisterium - a certain kind of Alchemical healing agent. Spagyrics thus includes a procedure which makes it possible to free the healing principles of the original substance by methods that unlock these principles and find appropriate new ways of re-arranging them for medical use. In a certain sense modern preparation of remedies follows the same purpose. Partly also the same methods of work are applied. But the different concept of substance leads to the spagyric preparations in the end having hardly anything in common with modern remedies. Basically each original substance can be turned into a remedy by spagyric methods. But the practical, necessary steps for this procedure are more or less different depending on the substance. Therefore the following explanations can be applied as well to minerals and metals, even though the focus will be on plant substances.

3. Spagyric Understanding of Remedies

Nearly all methods used today for preparing phytotherapeutics (plant remedies) have the common goal of isolating or at least reinforcing an effective ingredient of the plant. The trend is to achieve a clear, unambiguous characterization of pharmacologically active and pure preparations. Aside from this approach (of isolating effective ingredients) there is also the successful use of extracts of the whole plant, which often is more effective than the isolated effective compounds. One explanation for this phenomenon is that in the whole plant there are transmitter substances which allow for a better absorption of the effective compounds in the gastro-intestinal tract. But even in cases like that a direct correlation between the chemical substance and effectiveness of the remedy is assumed. All commonly used methods for preparing herbal remedies are very simple. Most of the time the approach is to prepare a watery or alcoholic extract of a plant by maceration, extraction or other simple methods. These methods have the sole aim to concentrate or to isolate the effective compounds which are known or suspected to be there. Thus the contemporary methods can be seen as a direct outcome of the modern theoretical understanding of what constitutes a remedy.

Here we find no difference from Spagyrics. In Spagyrics too the theoretical understanding determines the practical work methods. Thus one should not prematurely dismiss spagyric methods without coming to know spagyric theory. Lack of or insufficient knowledge of the theory (of Alchemy) has led some time ago to the conclusion that Spagyrics is only the precursor of modern chemistry. Spagyrics is considered to be rightfully dismissed, because its theory is outdated. But such judgment is premature and does not do justice to this matter. The fact is that the simple methods for preparing common plant tinctures were also well known to the alchemists. Nevertheless they did not avoid the great effort required in making spagyric remedies. Again and again they emphasized that the laborious path of spagyrics was precisely leading to significantly more effective and more beneficial remedies than the methods of the "chymists". Such a statement from those who knew both paths should make us stop and think. Unfortunately we do not have any modern studies which could give clinical evidence to the assertion that spagyric essences² are more effective. Thus, we will have to first attempt to gain a greater understanding of the theoretical side of spagyric preparations.

Understanding basic spagyric processes also helps us to distinguish truly meaningful spagyric procedures from "pseudospagyric" ones. Even in Alchemical circles we often find ignorance of the actual Alchemical processes, which has led to the introduction of alien elements into today's spagyric procedures. How important it is to earnestly deal with Spagyrics today is reflected in the growing public interest in alternative healing methods - which also include spagyric remedies. That the actual value of spagyric preparations is far higher than what the historical record shows is also apparent when we consult the HABI[4] : Spagyric methods have been recorded there, which indicates their presence on the pharmacological market.

In order to approach an understanding of Spagyric medicine, we have to explore the important Alchemical concepts of the Arcana, of polarity, as well as the three basic Alchemical principles³.

3.1 The Arcana

Arcanum literally means that which is secret. Its meaning is illustrated by the following quote of Paracelsus [5]: "What we see is not the medicine but the carrier of the medicine. Because the arcana of the elements and of man are invisible. That which is visible is the superficial, which is not part of the healing essence." This invisible part of each medical substance is "all virtue of the substance in thousand fold improvement, The Arcanum is that which is non-physical and indestructible - it is the eternally living part of Nature." A remedy, or more precisely that which makes a substance a remedy, is here called the "arcana of the elements". These healing powers are to be understood as purely abstract or spiritual principles, not material ones. At the same time these powers are "the virtue of the substance a thousand fold increased", thus they are qualitatively much more than the material, observable carrier of these healing powers. If we understand the arcana to be immaterial healing principles which we cannot define by their material substance, then that does not necessarily mean that they are ineffective. However, according to the currently dominant paradigm we only assume that to be real which we can perceive with our senses and which is physically measurable. This paradigm does not allow us to get a concrete assessment of the concept of the arcana, because according to tradition, arcana are not gross matter but subtle energetic realities.⁴

Paracelsus often called those remedies transmitting arcana to the patient "arcana" and made unmistakably clear that they had to be prepared alchemically [6]: "Make arcana and point them against the illnesses... This is the way to healing and making healthy - this all is accomplished by alchemy, without which it could not be happening." With this statement, he also brought in the fact that the immaterial arcana can be transmitted. That means that it is possible to prepare transmitters (the spagyric remedies), which serve as material vehicles of the hidden (arcane) powers. This kind of thinking diverges greatly from our contemporary understanding, which makes a causal connection between the effect and the substance. In the present day understanding it is the substance itself which effects healing, due to some physical-chemical interaction with the organism. For Paracelsus and the alchemists the material substance does not produce healing, but is the vehicle for the powers causing the (healing) effect. Substance is only the matrix or form serving to embody the arcana.

3.2 Polarity

The hermeticists have stressed again and again that *all that exists is subject to the law of polarity*. They expressed this in the form of the following axiomatic statement as part of the seven hermetic principles mentioned before [7]: "Everything is twofold - everything has two poles, everything has its pair of opposites; similar and dissimilar is the same; opposites are identical in nature, only different in degree; extremes are connected; all truths are only half truths; all contradictions can be reconciled." Everywhere we meet polarities: day and night, light and dark, warm and cold, attraction and repulsion in static electricity and magnetism, big and little etc.

But these seemingly opposite extremes are only different degrees of expression for one and the same basic force. In that way attraction and repulsion are results of the same magnetism. So attraction and repulsion stay unchanged when we approach a magnet with a piece of iron - the magnetic power is the same. Warm or cold are both aspects of temperature. Likewise day (light) and night (darkness) are only aspects of Light differing in intensity, while big or little are aspects of size.

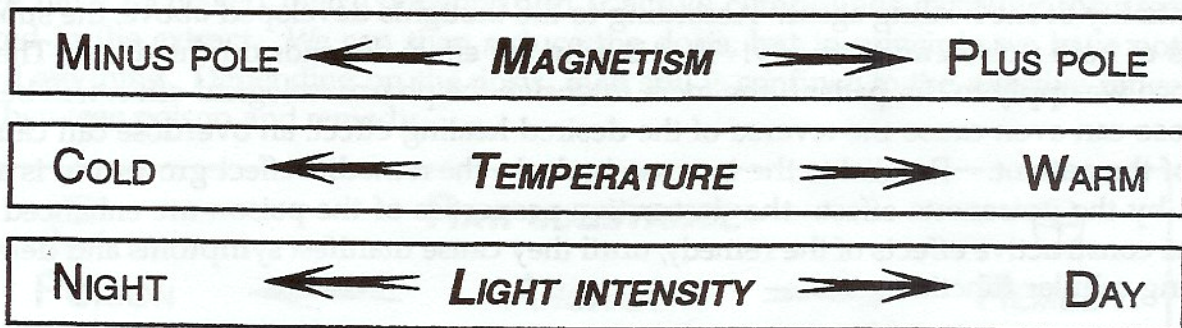


Illustration 3: Each attribute, indeed everything that exists holds in it a polarity. Opposites (polarities) are aspects of one basic property or force.

The seemingly opposing extremes of a polarity thus prove to actually be identical in nature regarding their basic property. They are only 'differing in degree'. *Both extremes become meaningful only through the concrete effect they have on a third principle.* It is also possible to define them by the existence or total lack of one of the principles. For example we distinguish between light and darkness because our eye perceives a lot or a little light. But in absolute darkness there is no longer light present at all: the principle itself (light) no longer appears.

Likewise the medical potency as a sum total of remedial attributes manifests according to the hermetic principle of polarity in form of polar opposites. A reminder: The healing powers causing the remedial effects have been named "arcana" by Paracelsus. Alchemy thus defines a remedy as a preparation that transmits the potency of arcana for healing purposes. The polar opposite of healing is making sick or poisoning. Here too it is true that the "degree" of the arcana is experienced through its interaction with a third principle, i.e. the organism, where it proves to act as a healing or a poisoning agent. The relativity of this determination can be seen in the

fact that some substances are healing or neutral for an animal but toxic for a human being. Paracelsus thus uses the term "arcana" in a twofold sense, which is a crucial factor to consider. He understands "arcana" as the remedial powers in general as well as the effect that one polar extreme has on the body (healing), which he named remedy. To avoid a lack of clarity in the following pages we will refer to arcana only as the immaterial powers underlying healing or poisoning. The effect of these powers on the organism lies anywhere between the extremes of remedy or poison.

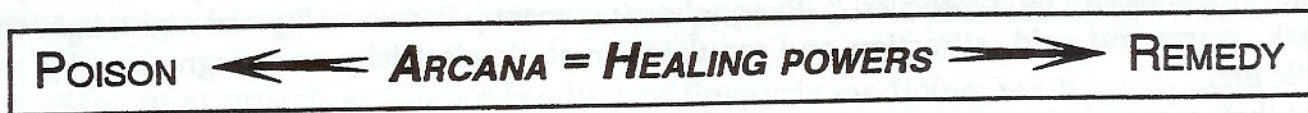


Illustration 4 "poison or remedy" is a pair of opposites of the hidden healing forces or arcana.

The difference between remedy and poison in its effect on the human organism is thus only a matter of degree. *We define the remedial effect on the human being as constructive, enhancing and harmonizing, whereas the effect of poison is destructive, diminishing and disharmonic.*

Modern understanding sees the direct cause for the healing effect of a remedy in the material substantiality of the healing agent. According to the thoughts developed above, the substance consists of both poison and remedy! That is why the effect depends on the dosis. The more substance we apply to the patient, the more intensive the pharmacological effect will be and a high dose can even cause the reverse of the desired healing effect: an overdose can cause the death of the patient. Parallel to the increase in dosis, the remedial effect grows, but is always limited by the poisonous effect: the destructive properties of the poison are enhanced along with the constructive effects of the remedy, until they cause manifest symptoms and defects by impeding cellular functions.

The Alchemist goes deeper: For him the substance is only the vehicle for the arcana. There is no compelling connection between the physical substance and its effect. He does see the remedial effect also in the unprocessed "chymical" substances. However the connection between dosis and effect is interpreted differently in non-chemical, i.e. spagyric preparations, taking an Alchemical form. The therapeutic range is especially greatly broadened. This is achieved by first dissociating and then separating the principles by spagyric procedures: The arcana are changed in their inner structure by dissociation, and then freed from their intimate connection with the physical substance by separation.

The basic theoretical difference between the two approaches is reflected in their practice: The Chemist only separates, whereas the Alchemist dissociates and then separates. This important theoretical and practical difference of the two approaches is also found in Paracelsus' work. All quotes cited above referred to Paracelsus, the Alchemist. But at the same time Paracelsus was well aware of the difference between alchemy and chemistry. The following is a much quoted passage from his works, when the issue is to portray Paracelsus as the founder of modern chemistry [8]: "All substances are poisons, and nothing is without poison; only the dosis determines a substance to be non-poisonous." This quote shows us that he knew the typical characteristics of the purely chemical substance. But it is only seemingly a contradiction to the Alchemical approach. Because, as long as the remedy is not prepared

spagyrically, the effect always proves to be bound to the substance. Paracelsus himself distinguished precisely between the properties of the unprocessed raw substance and of the chemically prepared on one hand, and the properties of the Alchemical preparation on the other hand. While according to Paracelsus in the chemical approach the dosis determines the poison, this is no longer true for the Alchemical approach! The reason for this difference lies in the process of dissociation of the arcana, which is the most important element of Spagyrics. If we apply the structure given above we can elucidate this commonly misunderstood difference even further:

Chemical Preparation: The arcana between the extremes of poison and remedy are inseparable from the material substance, unless they are dissociated via the Alchemical process. In using simple extractions, we are also applying a process of separation. Certain substances show up in the extract, others stay in the residue. But the Alchemists assert that a simple extraction does not *dissociate* the "pure from the impure" ('puri ab impuro'); it is only a *separation* process. Only PUTREFACTION⁵ can lead to the dissociation of the arcana. For the time being we will accept this allegation to be true and look at the consequences this has on chemical procedures. The extract also contains the arcana without changing them; in the best case we have increased their concentration if active compounds carrying the arcana are dissolved in the extract. We can then reduce the dosis, but in principle we have not really changed anything. Depending on the dosis, man still is confined to the effective range of the arcana between poison and remedy.

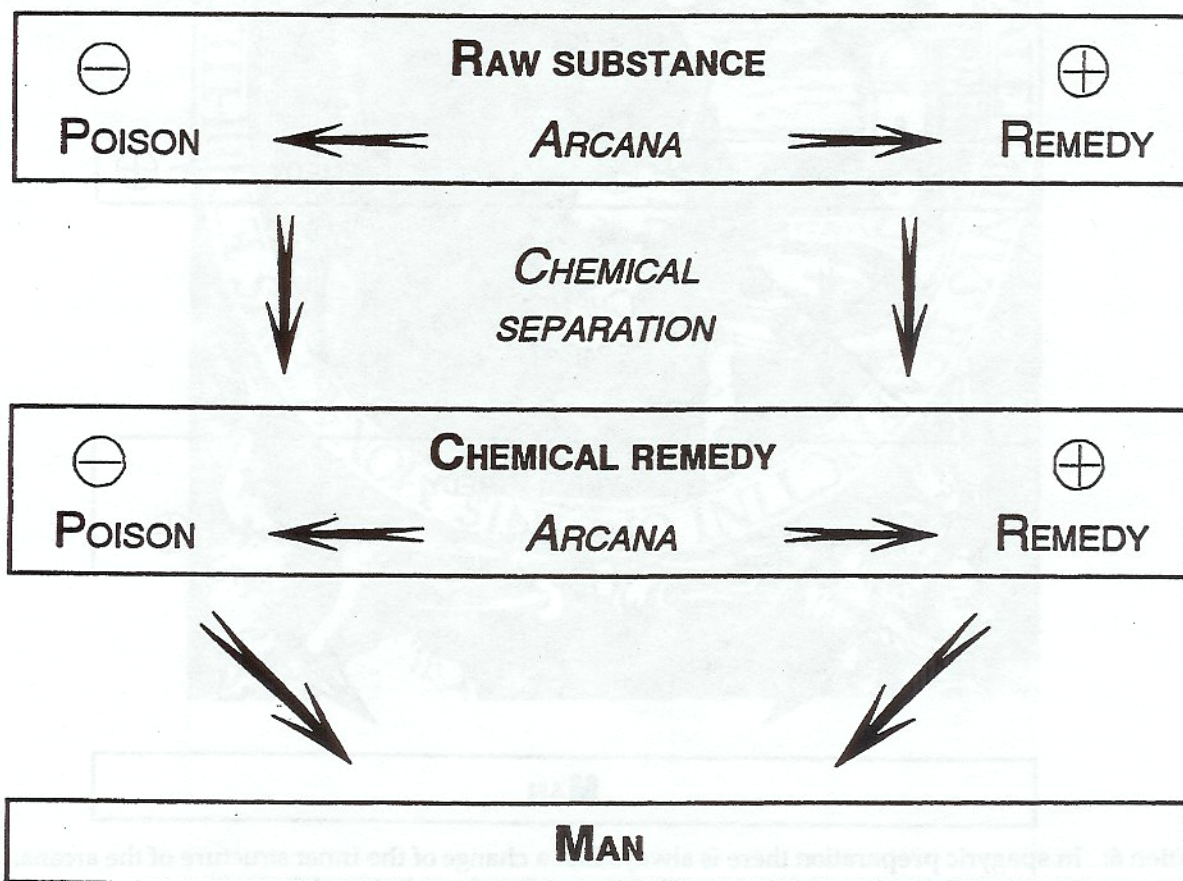


Illustration 5: In chemical preparations the arcana are not structurally changed. They continue to affect man in the polarity 'Poison' and 'Remedy'.

Spagyric Dissociation: In contrast the Putrefaction of the Alchemists leads to a change in the inner structure of the arcana. The Alchemist knows how to exalt (elevate) the Arcana so that there are no more poisonous effects on man. The same arcana are transmitted through an Alchemical remedy, but they are changed insofar as they have a solely harmonizing effect on the human organism. Destructive effects are no longer possible. This fact can be summarized in the following sentence: The remedy is dissociated from the poison. (Dissociation of the 'False' from the 'True'). And yet the polarity is preserved! Because the pole we previously called "remedy" is in itself of dual nature. The remedy shows a noble and a less noble side. But in respect to man both poles have a healing effect, because through the spagyric process all destructive energies (poison) have been eliminated. This is the invisible aspect of Alchemical dissociation (illustration 6). In a parallel process the arcana are also separated from their physical carrier substance: it is possible to isolate by simple separation methods only those chemical substances, which serve as optimal carriers of the arcana in their exalted form. All elements obstructing the remedial effect are eliminated. The spagyric essence thus emerges in an externally purified form as well. This is the visible aspect of Alchemical dissociation.

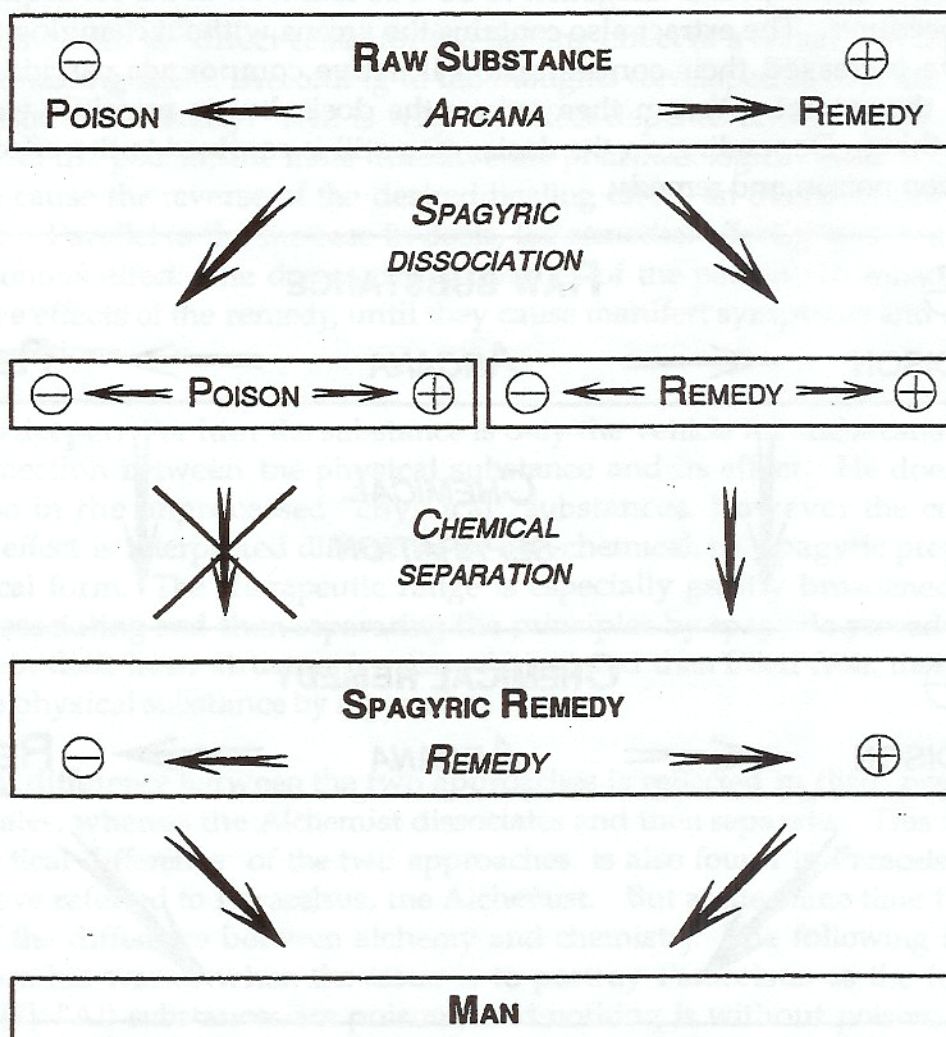


Illustration 6: In spagyric preparation there is always first a change of the inner structure of the arcana. Only the remedial pole of the arcana affects man. But the polarity of the healing power also has a dual nature, which is indicated by the + sign (for the noble aspect) and the - sign (for the less noble aspect).

A quote from the "Triumphant Chariot of Antimony" [9] by Basilius Valentinus ⁶ illustrates these thoughts: (illustration 7). This text deals with the spagyric processing of antimony, which was at that time the name for antimony sulfide ore. Since the theoretical basis of Spagyrics is universal, we can also consult a work on minerals for purposes of illustration. We will see that the above paragraphs correspond exactly to Alchemical thinking in general.



Illustration 7 - Partial view of the title page of the collected works of Basil Valentine, edition Leipzig 1769

Basil Valentine is fully aware that common antimony is poisonous and unusable as a medicine [11]: "In the beginning I assert emphatically - and always did so in all my writings - that Antimony is sheer poison and contains nothing but poison, which is entirely true... That is why nobody uses it - because it is poisonous." But this changes as the spagyrist processes the antimony: "After the correct and true preparation of antimony there is no longer any poison present at all, the antimony has to be changed fully and completely by spagyric art, so that the poison can turn into a remedy. Without such preparation⁷ you will have no use from the antimony, but come to harm and trouble." He describes the process of dissociating the pure and the impure, the poison and the remedy [12]: "You now have to carefully dissociate the powers of the Antimony, the good from the evil, the fixed from the un-fixed and the remedy from the poison, so that its use can result in truth and honor... Nobody shall be surprised that we dissociate the pure from the impure, the poison from the remedy ... because it has been proven to work in daily experience in the Proba⁸. ... Because the poison is taken away by the process of dissociation, and a change from evil to good has taken place... that is why the fire⁹ brings about the dissociation of the poison from the remedy and of the good from the evil."

3.3 The Three Alchemical Principles

We established that the alchemists understood arcana to be the invisible healing powers in a specific material form. The arcana appears as a polarity between poison and remedy in relation to a third principle, the human organism. But the arcana are invisible energies hidden in substance, which is only its carrier or matrix. We also said that the spagyric process is distinct from the chemical method insofar as it brings about a change in the inner structure of the arcana by means of Putrefaction. That is how we described the fundamental spagyric process of dissociation. But this does not yet suffice to explain the mechanism of the change in the arcana and the substance. It is still unclear what allows for the transmutation of a poison into a remedial agent.

In order to address this question, we have to take a closer look at the arcana: The alchemists assert that everything in nature consists of three essential principles, which they have named Sal (salt), Sulfur (sulphur) and Mercurius (mercury) [13]: "These three - mercury, sulphur and salt - are never without the other; where you find one, there are always all three of them united, and in the whole world there is nothing which does not consist of these three - and from these three all is made that is in the world."

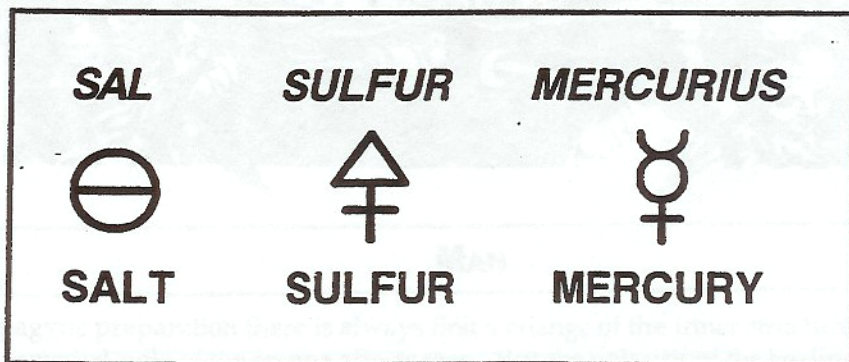


Illustration 8: The three Alchemical principles and their symbols

Of course the three principles are not identical with what we today understand to be chemical mercury, sulphur or salt. Time and again this fact has led and leads to misunderstandings. Nevertheless the words were not chosen randomly - the properties of common salt, mercury and sulphur do phenomenologically correspond to properties of the abstract Alchemical principles. Interestingly the three Alchemical principles find a surprising representation in physics [14]. Contemplating a description of a physical vibration, whose simplest form is the sine or cosine curve, we can distinguish three parameters which completely describe the curve:

- 1) The form of the curve, in our case sines or cosines. This is an expression of the quality, the way in which something vibrates or how it vibrates.
- 2) The amplitude, which is the measure for the quantity or degree of deviation from the middle
- 3) The frequency or the number of vibrations per time unit, which is a measure for the movement or speed of the vibration.

Every vibration - however complicated - can be demonstrated as a unique interference pattern of harmonic vibrations (Fourier analysis). The form or quality of a more complicated vibration is expressed in the frequency spectrum, the amount of amplitudes - the total amplitude being composed of the sum of the individual amplitudes - and also the frequency itself is defining the vibration. We can compare these ways of defining a curve with the description of the three Alchemical principles, as we meet them in the Alchemical texts:

Sal is the principle of condensation and affinity, which enables materialization. Sal can also be called the fixing or firming principle. It is the material or static (fixed) component in all things, the corporeality of substance and materialization. After subjecting a substance to fire, Sal remains as the indestructable part of the substance - without form. Thus we can characterize Sal also as relating to quantity. In respect to man Sal signifies the physical body as a whole.

Sulfur is the characteristic property of a substance. It defines the essence, the soul. Sulfur shows us what we are dealing with - it denotes form, color, shape and other characteristic properties. Sulfur also indicates how well a substance burns. Thus Sulfur relates to the quality of a substance. In man, sulphur signifies the soul.

The principle of movement is contained in **Mercury**. Mercury also is the life-giving principle, the spirit. Mercury is life energy, the moving force, awakening to life the specific qualities (sulphur) within the body (Sal). Movement is change, and change is bound to time. Mercury thus relates to the concept of frequency. In man, mercury is the life essence or spirit.

Sal, Sulfur and Mercury (body, soul and spirit) thus are analogous to the physical properties exhaustively describing a vibration. But according to modern physics everything material is nothing but energy - vibrating energy. In this context the assertion of the alchemists that everything consists of three basic principles is amazingly pertinent and meaningful.

SAL	SULFUR	MERCURIUS
Salt	Sulfur	Mercury
Amplitude	Form of Curve	Frequency
Quantity	Quality	Movement
Physical Being	Gestalt, Essence	Life Energy, Mutability
BODY	SOUL	SPIRIT

Illustration 9: Some analogies of the three Alchemical principles

Now we can better understand the abstract meaning of the three principles. But we have to keep in mind that Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius can also manifest physically. Every principle materializes in physical form according to its properties. We also have to consider a polarity of the visible and the invisible. The *three material manifestations together form the "Corpus". which we perceive with our senses ; their inner potencies of power however, the threefold arcana, stay invisible.*¹⁰ It is only through the spagyric process that the Corpus can be destroyed and Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius both in their physical and in their invisible form can be accessed for therapeutic use.

Paracelsus describes the material aspect of the three principles as follows [15]: " There are three substances which give each thing its Corpus - three things are making up each physical thing. The names of these three things are *Sulfur, Mercurius and Sal.* - when these three are joined into one, then that is called a corpus... So in the one form of any corpus there are *invisibly*¹¹ contained all three substances... for example if you take into your hand a piece of firewood, then you see just o n e thing (body/ corpus)... now burn it ... what burns is the sulphur - nothing burns but the sulphur; the smoke indicates mercurius - nothing sublimates but Mercurius, and what you find as ashes is Sal - nothing is in the ashes but Sal."

The following passage explains the *abstract meaning of the three principles* [16]: "Thus we know

that in the three principles, everything broken is resurrected; a tree void of its liquid (mercury) will dry up¹²; if the sulphur were taken from the tree, there would be no form and if the salt were taken away, there would be no *congelatio*, but it would fall asunder as a barrel without an iron ring..." The visible and invisible manifestation of the three principles becomes even more apparent when we are tracking them in a plant [17]: "each plant according to its nature is composed of three things, that is sal, sulphur and mercurius: these three are joined and then make a corpus, a unified being... But we know what form these three principles take: *one is a liquid and that is mercurius, another one is an oil and that is sulphur and one is an alkaloid (ash) and that is Sal.*"

Chemically specified:

Sal: The soluble mineral salts leached from the calcined¹³ plant substance are called the alkali or Salt. This at the same time is the principle of physicality - indestructible by fire - the quantity.

Sulfur: The volatile, oily mostly fragrant parts of the plant are the sulphur. Most prominently we meet this principle in the ethereal oils. These substances characterizing every plant are also a fitting illustration of the Alchemical model: Sulfur can be understood as the soul or essence of a plant.

Mercurius: Mercury has been defined as life energy, as the moving principle. It is the as yet invisible spirit which only manifests after putrefaction (fermentation). If we ferment a plant we obtain its spirit as ethyl alcohol and other highly volatile products of fermentation. Even today the word "spirits"¹⁴ is used for alcoholic beverages in reference to this connection. (Illustration 10)! The life-giving principle of mercury is not bound to any plant species. All plants share in the life principle. The Alchemical viewpoint thus easily explains that after fermenting different plant species the same spirit appears in the physical form (chemical matrix) of ethyl alcohol.

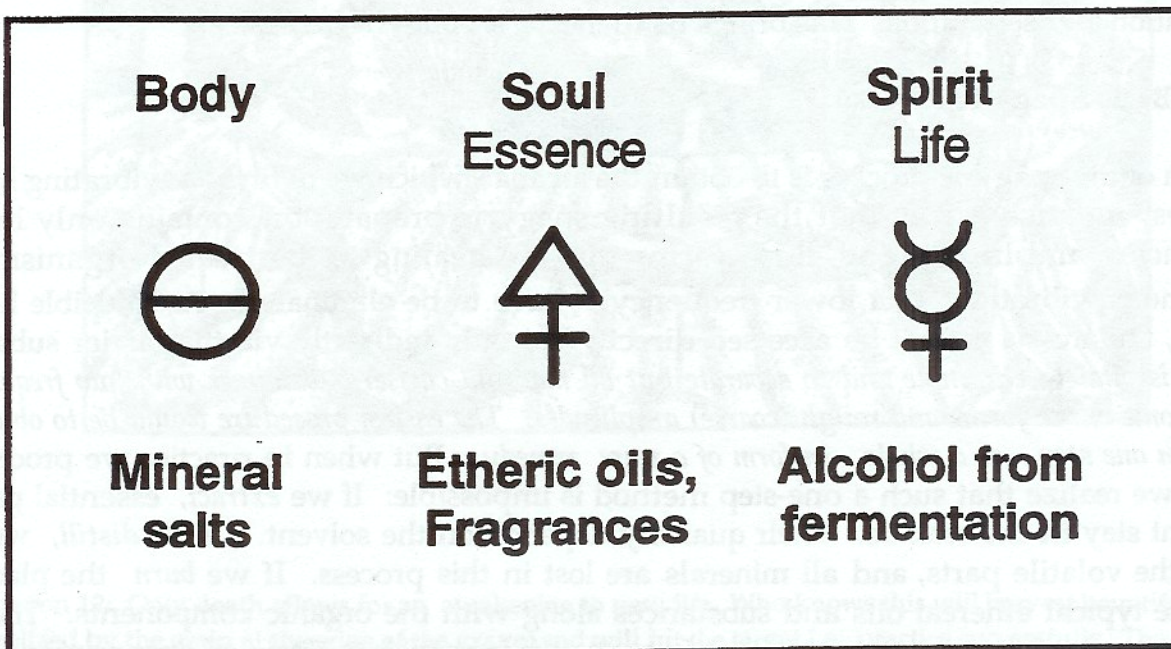


Illustration 10: Material form of the three principles within plants

3.4 The Inner Structure of the Arcana

Now we can more precisely understand the inner structure of the arcana: The arcana are on one hand the remedial potency or hidden healing powers of the plant; on the other hand they are bound to the material manifestation of the plant. The arcana are energies, showing themselves in threefold form. The substance as a carrier of the arcana mirrors their inner structure in a threefold way as well. *These three principles, invisible and visible, are called Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius.* The arcana are subject to polarity as well. We defined the two poles of that polarity to be poison and remedy. We can now understand the polarity of poison and remedy as an effect of the threefold substructure of the arcana. Thus we can portray it.

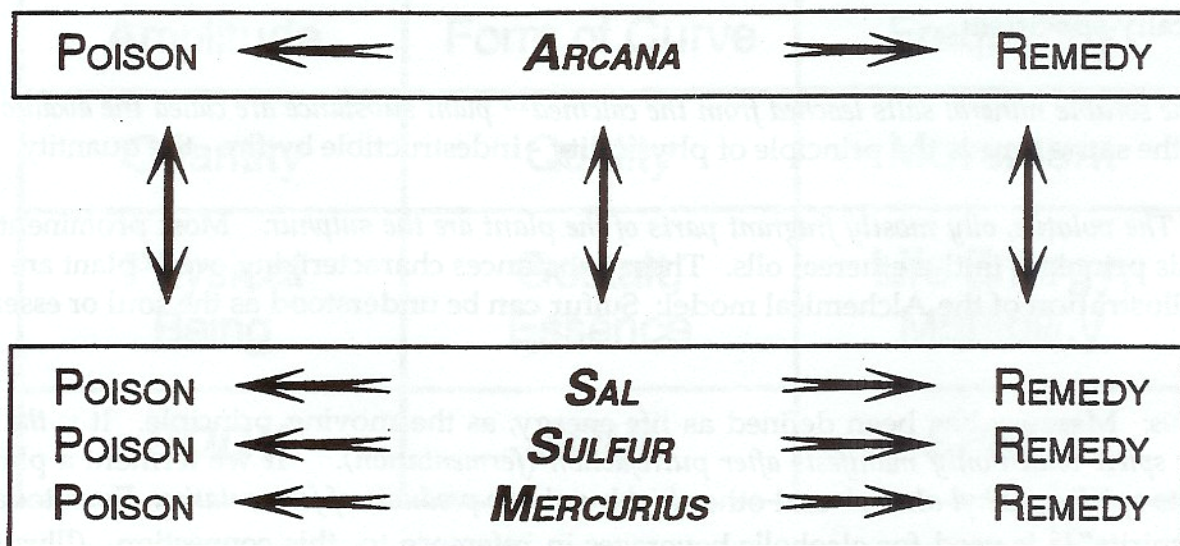


Illustration 11: In their inner structure the arcana show a threefold polarization

If we want to free up only the remedial side of the arcana, we have to correctly consider their inner structure. Only then can we choose the right procedure for achieving a complete dissociation and separation. This brings us to the basic spagyric process

4. The Basic Spagyric Process

The aim of the spagyric process is to obtain the arcana - which we defined as vibrating healing energies - in such a way that the resulting spagyric preparation contains only healing frequencies, amplitudes and curve forms that are healing to the treated organism. All disharmonic vibrations of a lower frequency ¹⁵ have to be eliminated. As invisible healing powers, the arcana cannot be accessed directly but only indirectly via the carrier substance. *Thus it is vital to eliminate and to separate out all material carrier substances with low frequencies, disharmonic curve forms and rough (coarse) amplitudes. The easiest procedure would be to obtain the arcana in one step - as a whole - in form of a pure remedy.* But when in practice we process the plants, we realize that such a one-step method is impossible: If we *extract*, essential parts of the plant stay in the residue. Their quantity depends on the solvent. If we *distill*, we only obtain the volatile parts, and all minerals are lost in this process. If we *burn* the plant, we burn the typical ethereal oils and substances along with the organic components. The only residues are the inorganic components: *In short, it is impossible to obtain all three principles at the*

same time. The "chymical" separation of one principle leads to the destruction or loss of the others. Thus we only have one choice left: we first have to let the plant die, i.e. we need to process it in a way that the three principles which are firmly united in the live plant are dissociated without destruction or loss of any one principle. *This first step of all spagyric processes the alchemists called putrefaction (putrefactio), Digestion, Fermentation etc.* There are different words for this process, because different methods are applied depending on the substances that are the basis for the dissociation. *Only the putrefaction can dissociate the Alchemical principles and part their innate polarity of poison and remedy .* Only the death of the substance enables the birth of the pure essence. An anonymous author described this process in 1782 as follows: [19]: "Death is the putrefaction, the separation of good and evil, of the pure from the impure; through this the new body and the tincture can be born again. Because just like a blade of grass grows from a seed, so also the old body gives birth to the new body via putrefaction." Kirchweger says [20]: "We therefore start at the main gate of nature - at the key and origination point of all birth, destruction and rebirth - without this key we can not probe the bottom of the mysteries of Nature, and this key is the focal point of the art of dissociation: it is called putrefaction... Therefore we cannot hope for true dissociation without maceration, digestion or fermentation..."



Illustration 12: Only death allows for an awakening to new life. Who knows this will harvest bountiful fruit (symbolized by the grain at the edge of the grave) and will hit the target, i.e. practice successfully. The correct putrefaction is the key for the entire art (look at the key above the target).

Having thus unlocked the substance, we next have to separate the principles from each other. *Only after such dissociation do the "chymical" separation procedures make any sense, because the dissociated principles can now be isolated.* Now we can obtain Salt, Sulfur and Mercury without destroying or losing any of the other principles. For this purpose the processes of distillation, calcination etc. are used. *But it is not enough to separate Salt, Sulfur and Mercury from each other. We also have to purify each principle according to its inherent polarity.* The purification is achieved through use of an external fire. Because:[21]:" Each substance can be purified without destroying its essence in the fire." However the right temperature has to be applied, depending on the specific properties of the substance. Example: the actively charged compounds of salt are the only components which are able to crystallize. Amorphous salts are dead and alchemically useless - thus they were fittingly called 'caput mortuum' (death's head). If we use (relatively speaking) very high temperatures in calcining a plant, we obtain the inorganic components in the ashes. It is only at this point that we can dissolve the alchemically valuable salts out of the 'caput mortuum'. However, if we wanted to perform a distillation for obtaining sulphur and mercury at the same high temperatures, this would lead to a burning of the residues in the flask, rendering the entire distillate unusable. If we finally have separated and purified the principles, they have to be brought to a new unity. *This is because only the conjunction of the three principles constitutes the arcana, which now appear in a new, complete form (Gestalt) as the active healing potency without the poison polarity. Thus the basic spagyric process proceeds in four steps.*¹⁶:

1. The *Putrefaction* (Putrefaction) or fermentation
2. The *Separation* (Separation) of the principles
3. The *Purification* (Purification) of the principles
4. The *Cohobation* (Cohobation or conjunction) of the principles
or the chymical marriage, yielding the spagyric essence

In this quaternary process lies the secret of obtaining spagyric preparations. Now we can see that from a spagyric viewpoint common tinctures, extraction's, decoctions etc. can only in part make use of the healing powers of the plants. In these preparations the three principles are neither complete nor purified nor conjoined in their remedial properties. Also the process of putrefaction - so essential to the dissociation of the three principles - is missing in the chemical procedures. *Therefore the 'chymists' can never set a principle free without destroying others at the same time. In contrast the spagyric preparation completely 'unlocks' the plant, so that the way is cleared for obtaining the spagyric essence containing only the purified principles .*

5. Literature on Spagyrics

The main sources for the treasures of Spagyric wisdom today are still the writings of Paracelsus. Works of other, later authors are often easier to understand, since they mostly deal with segments of Alchemy, not with the total field. Johann Rudolf Glauber (1603 - 1668) wrote a treatise deserving special notice in 1654, titled "Pharmacopoeia spagyrica.." [22]. In this work he describes in great detail and exactitude the spagyric processing of remedial substances. Other books dealing with plant materials were written by Johann Isaac Hollandus [23] and Baron Urbigerus. [24] or are reproduced in collected works [25]. A very good overview is offered in the "Bibliotheca Chemica: A Catalog of the alchemical, chemical, and pharmaceutical books in the collection of the late James Young of Kelly and Durris. This bibliography was published in 1906 by John Ferguson [26], and it contains detailed, critically reviewed bibliographic entries of hundreds of Alchemical writings from the last centuries. Even though Alchemical writings were very popular and widely read until about 1800, the rise of modern sciences had the result of these writings sinking into obscurity. In the previous century, then, we owe it mainly to the efforts of the homeopathic doctor Carl Friedrich Zimpel, MD, Ph.D., that the spagyric preparations were not completely forgotten, but that a sizable circle of interested people were informed about them. Based on many years of costly studies and experiments, Zimpel built his "Spagyric Healing System" [28,29]. Derived from Zimpel, we find today 2 processes published in the homeopathic book of remedies (HAB 1) [30]. Other plant spagyricists living around the turn of the century were Count Cesare Mattei (1809 - 1896) who greatly influenced Zimpel and another student of Mattei's, Theodor Krauss (- 1924). Krauss issued further procedural recipes which we find in the HAB 1 [31]. Lastly, another official procedure is based on the approach of the naturopath Ulrich Juergen Heinz, who practices in the suabian Rottweil [32]..

There are also a number of non- official spagyric processes and products which retain a certain practical significance. These preparations are the results of the efforts of the following persons: Alexander Von Bernus (1880 - 1965), who produced spagyric tinctures in his Laboratorium Soluna, which was founded on July 1, 1921. Von Bernus moved his laboratory in 1926 to Stuttgart, and finally in 1939 to Donaumuenster close to Donauwoerth. Today you can still buy spagyric products prepared from Von Bernus's recipes. Conrad Glueckselig (1864 - 1934) a former member of Von Bernus's team, founded the Phoenix Laboratorium in Bondorf. The Phoenix preparations also can still be obtained today, and are made not only from plants but also from certain minerals. Similar preparations have been made by the alchemist Karl Richert, who lives in the south baden town of Elzach. He markets his 16 "spagyric-iatrochemical remedies for constitution and organs" under the trade name of Solaris. An interesting personality was Albert Riedel, who published several books on Alchemy under the pseudonym Frater Albertus [33] and offered courses in theoretical and practical alchemy in several countries. He presided over the "Paracelsus research Society" in Salt Lake City until his death in 1986. This Society aimed at making the Alchemical treasures once again accessible to the modern world. In Switzerland a book was published in 1982 by Manfred M. Junius [34], a former student of Albert Riedels. His book on Plant Alchemy deserves special mention for its practical chapters.

The author of this article has chosen as his goal to make spagyric remedies based on traditional preparations once again available to therapists and patients. He chooses the following method: high quality spagyric essences will be prepared according to the basic

spagyric process. Preparation and production however have to also measure up to today's standards (standardization, Observance of GMP and GLP). The spagyric procedure thus will first have to be subjected to a historical-methodological control process - both in theory and practice, and then secondly be adapted to modern standards of production. The complete spagyric process of the author of this article, which is explained in chapter 7, allows for the fulfillment of all these conditions. It guarantees the production of spagyric preparations of consistently high quality. The author can be approached about information on where to obtain such complete spagyric essences.

6. Production of Spagyric Plant Essences.

In preparing basic spagyric plant essences, different producers currently apply different methods. The following pages will deal with those that are mentioned in the official Homeopathic Remedy Book (HAB 1). It is important that any process claiming to be "spagyric" fulfill the criteria of Spagyrics as it has been outlined in the previous chapters. Substantial deviations from this process may be permissible if there are convincing reasons for such deviation. However, we will find that this is not always the case, so that it is necessary to critically evaluate the spagyric processes listed in the HAB 1.

6.1 Basic spagyric tinctures according to Zimpel/Glauber.

At the end of the last century the Goeppingen based Pharmacist Dr. Friedrich Mauch produced spagyric preparations following the instructions of Zimpel. He marketed these products under the name "Dr. Zimpel's Healing System". Mauch founded the Homeopathic Central Pharmacy in Goppingen, which was later followed by the firm Staufen-Pharma, which still today produces Spagyric remedies according to Zimpel. But Zimpel's procedures have by today been altered somewhat, and that is probably how the method of Glauber entered the HAB 1 [35]. Thus the correct entry in the HAB 1 should read: No. 25 and No. 26 essences "spag. Glauber" or "spag. Zimpel/Glauber and not "spag. Zimpel".

The Zimpel/Glauber instructions are:

"Instruction 25: Basic spagyric tinctures according to Zimpel and their liquid dilution's:
Basic Spagyric tinctures according to Instruction # 25 are prepared from fresh plants or parts of fresh plants after the following manner:

The plants or parts of plants are finely minced. In a suitable vessel 1 part of the plant substance is mixed with 1 part of water and 0.005 parts of yeast. The mixture is daily stirred at a temperature of 20 - 25 degrees Celsius and left to ferment. As soon as the fermentation process has come to a halt, the mixture is subjected to vapor-distillation. In the receptacle vessel, equivalent in volume to 1 part of plant substance, is added 0.4 parts of 86% Ethanol. The distillation is done as soon as, proportionate to 1 part of plant substance, 2 parts of the mixture containing distillate and Ethanol is obtained. The distillation residue is compressed, dried and calcined at 400 degree Celsius. The calcination residue is added to the distillate. It is filtered off after 48 hours.

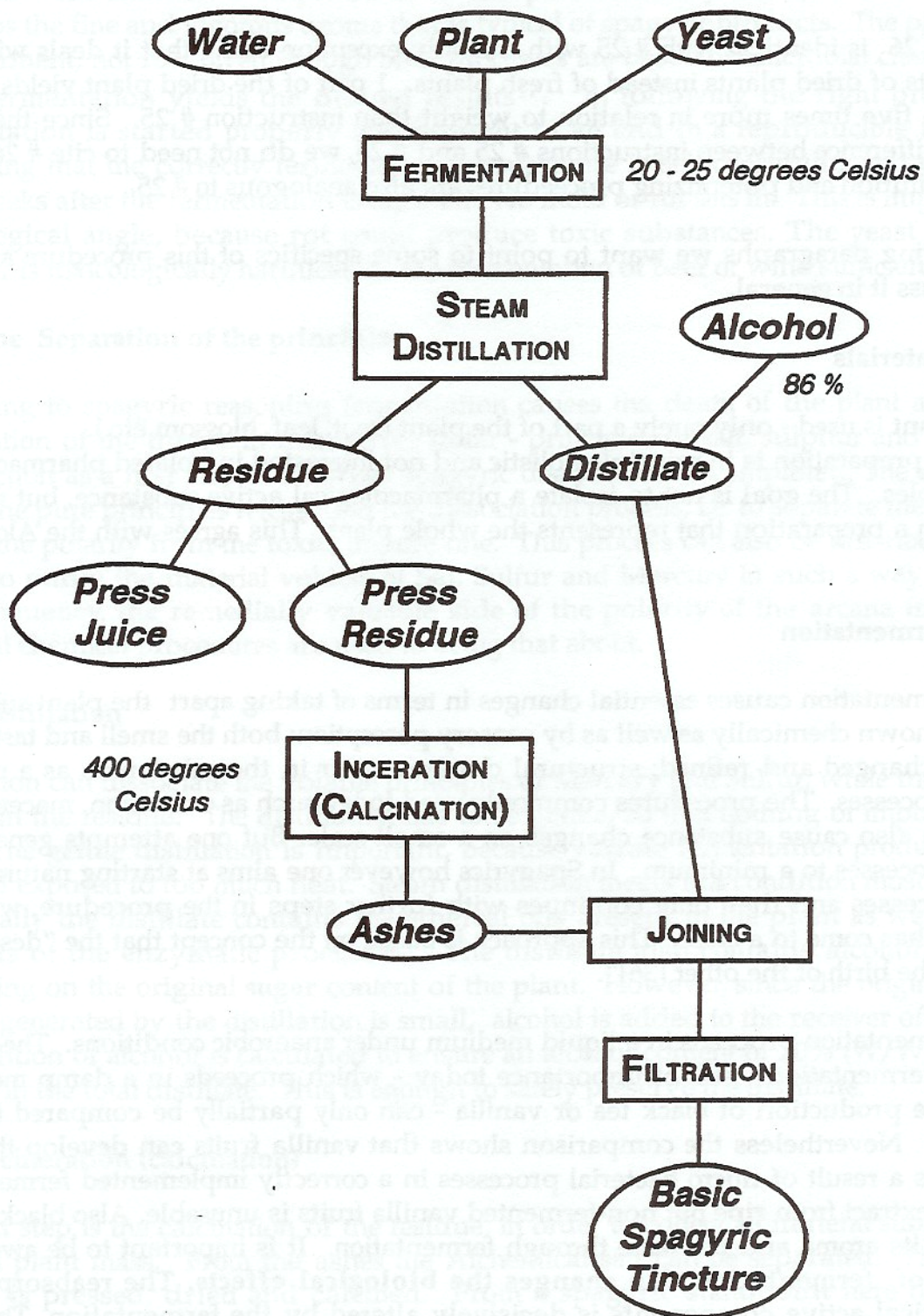


Illustration 13 - the process according to Zimpel/Glauber

Instructions for homeopathically potentizing the basic spagyric tinctures follow. The HAB 1 treats the basic spagyric tinctures as analogous to basic homeopathic tinctures. Also, there is an entry that the basic tinctures prepared according to instruction # 25 have to read in addition "spag. Zimpel".

Instruction # 26 is identical with # 25 with the only exception being that it deals with dried plants or parts of dried plants instead of fresh plants. 1 part of the dried plant yields 10 parts of product - five times more in relation to weight than instruction # 25. Since there is no methodical difference between instructions # 25 and # 26, we do not need to cite # 26 here in detail. The dilution and potentizing procedures are also analogous to # 25.

In the following paragraphs we want to point to some specifics of this procedure and also want to discuss it in general.

6.1.1 Raw materials

The entire plant is used - only rarely a part of the plant (root, leaf, blossom etc.). The spagyric preparation is in principle holistic and not interested in isolated pharmacological active principles. The goal is not to isolate a pharmacological active substance, but rather to come up with a preparation that represents the whole plant. This agrees with the Alchemical concept.

6.1.2 Yeast Fermentation

The yeast fermentation causes essential changes in terms of taking apart the plant substance. This can be shown chemically as well as by sensory perception: both the smell and taste of the mixture are changed and refined; structural changes occur in the substances as a result of enzymatic processes. The procedures commonly used today such as extraction, maceration or digestion can also cause substance changes on a small scale. But one attempts generally to hold these processes to a minimum. In Spagyrics however one aims at starting natural micro bacterial processes and then only continues with further steps in the procedure, when the fermentation has come to a close. This approach is based on the concept that the "destruction of the one is the birth of the other [36]".

The yeast fermentation proceeds in a liquid medium under anaerobic conditions. The process of oxidative fermentation - still of importance today - which proceeds in a damp medium - such as in the production of black tea or vanilla - can only partially be compared to yeast fermentation. Nevertheless the comparison shows that vanilla fruits can develop their full aroma only as a result of micro bacterial processes in a correctly implemented fermentation. An alcoholic extract from ripe but non-fermented vanilla fruits is unusable. Also black tea can only develop its aroma and full taste through fermentation. It is important to be aware that this process of fermentation **also changes the biological effects**. The reabsorption of pharmacological active components is decisively altered by the fermentation. There are enough indicators to assure the validity of the Alchemical concept that only through a fermentation can the true remedial effects of the plants be set free. Putrefaction may very well cause new chemical reactions, giving rise to a remedial effect that the plant could not unfold

under the commonly used procedures. Maybe some day at least parts of the complex reasoning of the Alchemists will be explained by physics or chemistry along these lines.

The Yeast fermentation is emphasized in this process. Only the fermentation with yeast develops the fine and vigorous aroma that is typical of spagyric products. The plant substance must ferment, not rot. Even though both processes are based on microbial changes, only the yeast fermentation yields the desired results¹⁷. In following the right procedures, the fermentation is started properly and brought to an end in a reproducible fashion. It is interesting that the correctly fermented plant substance is self-conserving and does not spoil even weeks after the fermentation is finished. No mold or rot sets in. This is important from a toxicological angle, because rot could produce toxic substances. The yeast fermentation however is toxicologically harmless, as the fermentation of beer or wine sufficiently shows.

6.1.3 The Separation of the principles

According to spagyric reasoning fermentation causes the death of the plant and leads to a dissociation of the three - in themselves polar - principles of salt, sulphur and mercury. The putrefaction as a first step to a correct spagyric dissociation is completed. The next step is to obtain the pure principles released in the dissociation process, i.e. to separate the healing, pure part of the polarity from the toxic, impure one. This process can also be described in spagyric terms: to purify the material vehicle of Sal, Sulfur and Mercury in such a way that only the high frequency, the remedially valuable side of the polarity of the arcana is transmitted. Classical chemical procedures are used to bring that about.

6.1.4 Distillation

Distillation can dissociate the volatile principles of Mercury and Sulfur, while the salt remains behind in the residue. The distillation has to be gentle, so that nothing of importance can be burnt. The gentle distillation is important, because volatile fermentation products would be ruined if exposed to too much heat. Steam distillation meets this condition most satisfactorily. Chemically the distillate contains the ethereal oils present in the plant as well as volatile products of the enzymatic processes. The distillate also contains alcohol, its quantity depending on the original sugar content of the plant. However, since the original amount of alcohol generated by the distillation is small, alcohol is added to the receiver of the distillate. The addition of alcohol is calculated to ensure an alcohol content of 20% (W/W or weight by weight) in the total distillate. This is enough to safely preserve the distillate.

6.1.5 Incineration (calcination)

The next step is the calcination of the residue, in order to collect all mineral substances in the residual plant mass. From the ashes the Alchemical salt can be separated. The distillation residue is pressed, dried and calcined. From a spagyric standpoint here the procedure according to Zimpel/ Glauber is not complete. The press juice is not used, which leads to the loss of important parts of the salt. Probably this simplification - which has severe Alchemical problems - was introduced for commercial reasons, because it takes more time and expense to include the press juice. The result of a correct calcination is a white to beige-gray ash without

smell and a loose powdery structure. The calcination has to proceed in a complete manner which is not included in the instruction # 25. An Ash which still contains organic compounds as a result of incomplete calcination is unusable. This again is important from a toxicological viewpoint: An incomplete calcination gives rise to oil-like, complex organic compounds that can cause cancer or can be toxic. For example, the dry distillation of charcoal results in a bad smelling oil containing highly aromatic and highly toxic substances. However, if there is complete calcination with the aid of oxygen, only inorganic compounds remain. Those are mainly carbonates, oxides and - to a lesser degree - sulfates and phosphates of the alkali- and soil-alkali metals. Often, one can also find varying amounts of silicon dioxide in the ashes. The production of the salts is a unique feature unique to Spagyrics within the field of phytotherapy. Conventional press juices, extracts etc. do contain mineral substances. But those are only the directly soluble components of the plant cell juices. The greater part of the mineral substances is embedded in the solid plant components (cell membranes, complex-bound actions of insoluble proteins etc.) These mineral substances cannot be extracted by conventional means, and are generally thrown out with the press residues. In the calcination process - by contrast - these minerals can be accessed and become part of the spagyric essence

6.1.6 Processing of the Ashes

However, the calcined ashes do not as yet represent the valuable, fully dissociated spagyric salt. The actual salt is still made impure by the caput mortuum, which has to be separated away in order to obtain the water soluble parts of the salts. The direct maceration of distillate and ashes allows for this separation. Only the desirable salts will go into the solution. The caput mortuum is filtered off. Toxicologically the separation of the caput mortuum is particularly meaningful: any traces of heavy metals are removed by this procedure. The spagyric essence has no heavy metal content whatsoever.¹⁸

6.1.7 Union (Joining) of distillate and Ashes

The dissolution of the salts in the distillate represents the union of the three principles of salt, Sulfur and Mercury. This is the spagyric essence.

6.1.8 Evaluation of the method according to Zimpel/Glauber

We already mentioned that the discarding of the pressed plant juice constitutes a deviation from the basic spagyric process which is not permissible. Also, adding the ashes to the distillate presents a problem. The alchemists generally took pains to dissolve the soluble salts out of the ashes by adding distilled water, rain water etc. By repeating this process several times the ashes are exhaustively extracted. The combined extracts are boiled down until dry and dissolved again in water. By this repeated dissolution further insoluble salt particles are separated out, which are discarded as so-called "feces"¹⁹. Only the completely water soluble, purified and snow white salt which is obtained after repeated evaporation and dissolution, was finally dissolved in the distillate. "Why is it snow white? because it has been cleansed from all impurities..." Hollandus fittingly remarks, concerning a special salt called "Saturnus", after it has been purified. [37]. The advantage of this procedure is obvious:

The salt is purified in a better way and nothing is lost from the distillate. If however the ashes are added to the distillate, significant amounts of aroma substances are bound to the caput mortuum and discarded with the filtrate. *Therefore the direct addition of ashes to the distillate leads to diminished quality of the essence.* The two procedures # 25 and #26 only make a distinction between fresh plants and dry plants. More or less of the essence is obtained depending on that. Choosing a factor of 5 corresponds to an assumed water content of 80% in all fresh plants. But since the water content of a plant is entirely dependent on plant species, and the time of harvest, essences obtained from fresh or dried plants are only rarely or not at all comparable. Yes, even different harvests from the same plants can only be compared in a limited way. *Therefore spagyric essences according to Zimpel/Glauber are not standardized.*

6.2 Basic spagyric tinctures according to Krauss;

Instruction # 27: Basic Spagyric Tinctures according to Krauss and its liquid dilutions.

According to instruction 27, basic spagyric tinctures are produced from fresh plants or parts of fresh plants which contain more than 70% moisture (amount of drying loss). The plant materials are minced and stored in a cool place. A sample is taken and the loss of moisture from drying is determined. In a suitable vessel the plant mass is mixed with saccharose (sucrose), water and yeast. The amount of water needed is calculated using the formula

$$W = M \times T / 100 [\text{kg}]$$

the amount of sucrose is calculated using the formula

$$S = 2 \times M \times T [\text{g}]$$

and the amount of yeast is calculated using the formula

$$H = 0.1 M \times T [\text{g}]$$

M = weight of the plant mass in kilograms

T = the loss of plant moisture from drying - in percent - determined in the sample

The vessel is closed with a fermentation lock, and allowed to ferment at a temperature of approximately 35 degrees Celsius. As soon as the fermentation has come to an end, the plant juice is pressed off and stored at a temperature of not more than 20 degrees Celsius in a dark room where it is protected from light. The air dried press residue is now percolated with 86% ethanol in a procedure described in the monograph "EXTRACTS of the Book of Remedies"; the amount of ethanol necessary for percolation is calculated using the formula

$$A = M \times T / 100 [\text{kg}]$$

A = Ethanol 86%

The mixture of 2 parts of press juice, 1 part of the percolate and 7 parts of ethanol 30% is the basic tincture. The basic tincture sits for at least 5 days in a room of not more than 20 degrees Celsius, and is then filtered off.

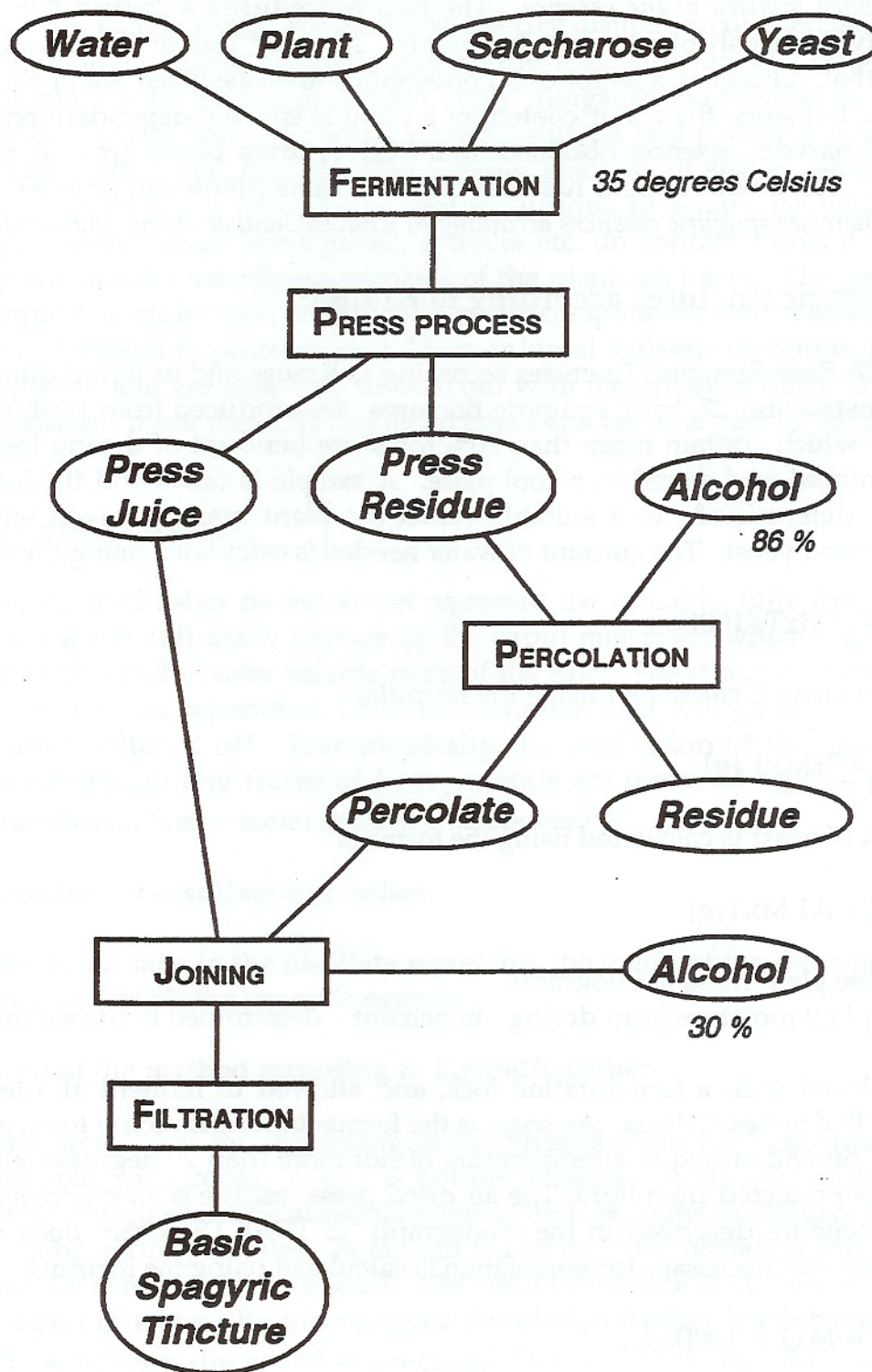


Illustration 14 - The process according to Kraus

Instructions # 28 to # 30 basically follow the same steps as # 27. The relative proportions between amounts of water, saccharose and the other ingredients vary depending on the water content of the plant material used. Instruction # 28 applies to plants with a loss of moisture between 40% and 70%, and instruction # 29 applies to plant materials with a loss of moisture less than 40%. Instruction # 30 applies to fully dried plants. Also the instructions for homeopathically potentizing the spagyric basic tinctures are given. Preparations following instructions # 28 - # 30 have to carry the description "spag. Krauss".

As before, the following paragraphs will be commentary on the specific features of this procedure.

6.2.1 Fermentation

The procedure begins with the fermentation of the plants after adding calculated amounts of water, saccharose and yeast. Fermentation proceeds at 35 degrees Celsius, a high temperature for yeast fermentation. The sugar addition causes a strong fermentation, even for plants that normally would barely ferment because of their low sugar content. By the way, in 1654 Glauber was already recommending that sugar be added if dealing with "foreign, dry, aromatic plant matter"[38]. After soaking the dried plants in water... "sugar shall be added, of the same weight as the dry plant, let it dissolve in water, add a spoonful of young beer yeast and let it ferment in a dim room..." (this is Glauber's old instruction)

Up to now Krauss's procedure is acceptable from a spagyric viewpoint. But the next processing steps no longer correspond to spagyric procedures at all.

6.2.2 Press Juice

The juice is pressed from the fermented plant mass, which of course contains parts of the unpurified principles of Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius. These alchemically impure plant parts appear unaltered in the product, because this press juice - non purified or altered in any way - is part of the basic tincture.

6.2.3 Percolation

The percolate of the press is also not processed according to correct spagyric procedures comparable to paragraph 6.2.2. Moreover, various important ingredients are lost because the percolation residue is not used any further.

6.2.4 Coniunctio

The coniunctio leading to the spagyric essence is achieved by joining 2 parts of press juice, 1 part of the percolate and 7 parts of ethanol 30%. As far as I know there is no reason for such a procedure in all of the spagyric literature.

6.2.5 Evaluation of the process according to Krauss

The essential procedures for preparing spagyric essences are putrefaction, separation, purification and cohobation of the three principles Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius. Using these criteria it becomes immediately apparent that Krauss does *not produce spagyric tinctures*. The putrefied substance is not distilled, which would be necessary to purify the volatile principles of sulphur and mercury. Also the mineral substances are obtained only in incomplete and non-purified form, because on one hand *there is no calcination and significant mineral substances are left in the percolation residues. The dissociation as the beginning step of a spagyric process does in itself not suffice to obtain a spagyric essence!* Krauss is more differentiated though in respect to the varying water content of different plants. He establishes the arbitrary parameters of between 40 and 70% water content, as a determining factor in the use of different calculatory formulas. There is however no direct connection between the amount of the original substance and the amount of essence it yields, so that again we cannot achieve a proper standardization.

6.3 Basic Spagyric Tinctures according to Heinz: Explanations to the process according to Heinz.

Instruction # 31: This last official²⁰ procedure is titled: Basic Spagyric Tinctures and their liquid dilution's.

Basic spagyric tinctures are prepared according to instruction #31 by using fresh plants or parts of fresh plants in the following way. The plants or plant parts are finely minced. In an appropriate vessel a mixture is made from 100 parts plant mass, 200 parts water and 0.05 parts yeast. This mixture is left to ferment at a temperature of 18 degrees Celsius and is stirred daily. As soon as the fermentation is completed, the fermented mass is adjusted to an ethanol content of 10% to 15%. The ethanol resulting from the fermentation has to be taken into account and 86% Ethanol is added to achieve the correct percentage where necessary. In an appropriate vacuum apparatus the mass is pressure distilled at 3.2 bar²¹. The distillate residue is dried and calcinated at a temperature of over 700 degrees Celsius. The ashes are cooled down to 150 degrees Celsius and then mixed with the distillate. This mixture is distilled at normal temperature. The distillate residue is dried and calcined again at 850 degrees Celsius. The cold ashes are mixed in with the distillate. 24 hours after combining ashes and distillate, the mixture is thoroughly stirred and after another 60 hours it is filtered. The filtrate is the basic tincture (Illustration 15).

Then instructions for potentizing are given. Preparations according to instruction # 31 have to carry the words "spag. bides". Basic spagyric tinctures according to Heinz are solely made from fresh plant materials. There is no instruction on how to process dried plants. Also this instruction does not at all take into account the varying water contents of fresh plants. Further, there is no determination of the relationship between the weight of the plant and amount of essence yielded with this procedure. Just like the other spagyric procedures discussed so far, there is no standardization at all. The following paragraphs shall again discuss the specifics of this procedure.

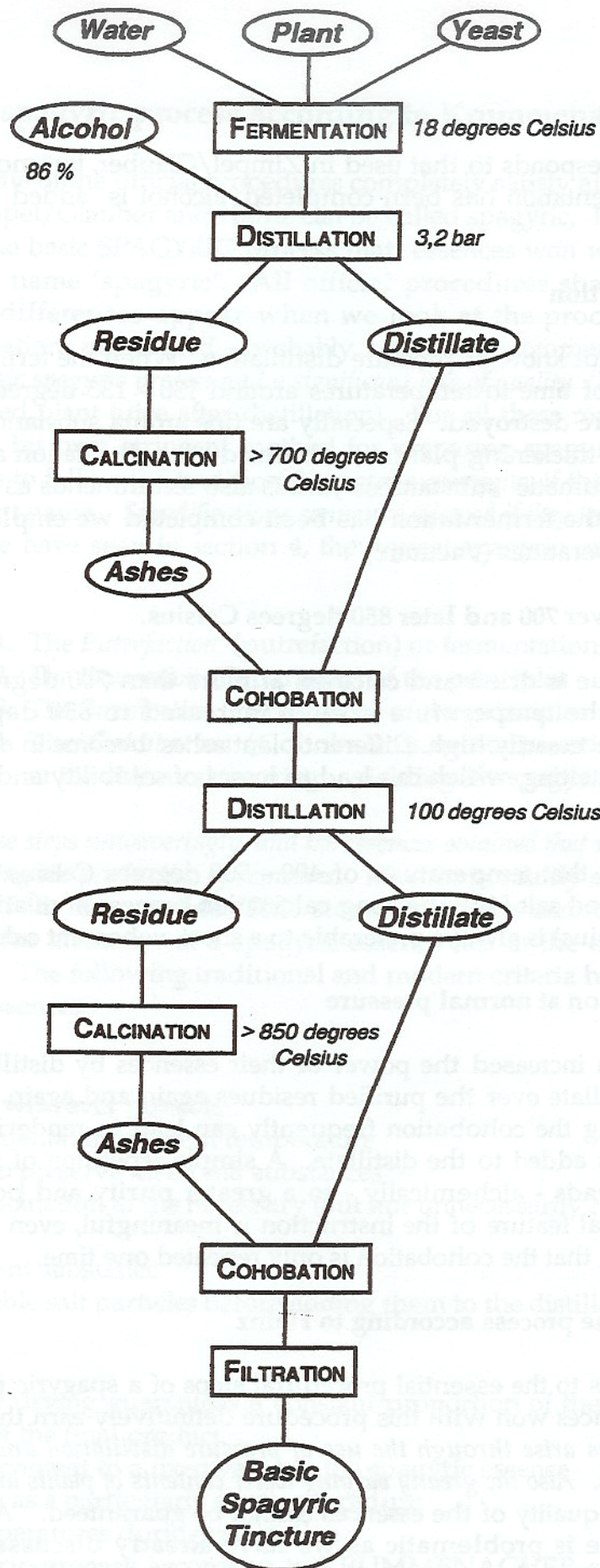


Illustration 15 - The process according to Heinz

6.3.1 Fermentation

The fermentation corresponds to that used in Zimpel/Glauber, but more water and less yeast is added. After fermentation has been completed, alcohol is added prior to the distillation process.

6.3.2 Pressure distillation

The Alchemists did not know of pressure distillation. When the fermented mass is exposed for a lengthy period of time to temperatures around 130 - 135 degrees Celsius, temperature sensitive substances are destroyed. Especially are fine aroma substances destroyed. There is also a danger that the thickening plant mass burns during distillation and that the distillate is altered by the empyreumatic substances. Junius also recommends as gentle temperatures as possible [39]: "After the fermentation has been completed we employ gentle distillation - preferable at low temperatures (vacuum!)".

6.3.3 Calcination at over 700 and later 850 degrees Celsius.

The distillation residue is dried and calcined at more than 700 degrees Celsius. After the second distillation the temperature is even increased to 850 degrees Celsius. These temperatures are unnecessarily high. Different plant ashes become in danger of coalescing, of forming a glass, or melting, which can lead to losses of solubility and in that way lessen the quality of the product.

In practice we found that temperatures of 400 - 500 degrees Celsius are quite sufficient for obtaining a light colored salt [40]: "A long calcination process at relatively low temperatures (440 - 500 degrees Celsius) is always preferable to a short, vehement calcination process."

6.3.4 Second calcination at normal pressure

The Spagyricists often increased the power of their essences by distilling several times, and then pouring the distillate over the purified residues again and again. This process is called cohobation. Repeating the cohobation frequently can lead to rendering part of the residue volatile, which then is added to the distillate. A simple repetition of the distillation and the calcination process leads - alchemically - to a greater purity and potency of the spagyric essence - so this special feature of the instruction is meaningful, even though its effect is not very great considering that the cohobation is only repeated one time.

6.3.5 Evaluation of the process according to Heinz

This procedure attends to the essential procedural steps of a spagyric process, but in parts is incomplete. The essences won with this procedure definitively earn the name 'spagyric'. As we mentioned, problems arise through the use of pressure distillation and through the very high calcination temperatures. Also the greatly varying water contents of plants are not taken into account, so that a standardized quality of the essences cannot be guaranteed. Also the addition of the ashes to the distillate is problematic as we have already discussed²². But no mineral substances are lost, because the entire distillation residue is retained for further use.

7. The complete spagyric process according to Krummenacher

As we have seen, none of the official procedures completely satisfy all spagyric criteria. While the processes of Zimpel/Glauber and Heinz can be called spagyric, Krauss's method deviates so markedly from the basic SPAGYRIC process that essences won with this method actually do not deserve the name 'spagyric'. All official procedures share in the initial step of putrefaction. The differences appear when we look at the processing of the putrefied substance. Simplifications introduced - probably because of commercial advantages - lead to *deviations from the basic spagyric process and a significant loss of quality*. (Example: loss of salts by discarding the pressed plant juice after distillation). For all these reasons the author wanted for years to develop his own stringent method for preparing spagyric plant essences. High quality spagyrics has to follow the traditional spagyric concepts, if the essences obtained shall rightfully deserve that name. *Simplifications cannot be allowed if they lead to a loss of quality in the final product*. As we have seen in section 4, the typical spagyric process follows four basic steps:

1. The *Putrefaction* (putrefaction) or fermentation
2. The *Separation* (Separation) of the principles
3. The *Purification* (Purification) of the principles
4. The *Cohobation* (Cohobation or conjunction) of the principles or the chymical marriage, yielding the spagyric essence

We need to follow these steps unwaveringly, and the essences obtained that way need also to satisfy the modern criteria regarding the production of remedies. Most importantly spagyric essences should be standardized as fully as possible. This standardization cannot be applied to single substances, because the character of a spagyric essence lies in the combination of different substance properties. The following traditional and modern criteria have to be satisfied when preparing spagyric essences:

Traditional

- a) Use of fresh plants wherever possible
- b) complete yeast fermentation at room temperature
- c) gentle distillation to preserve all aroma substances
- d) Incineration and calcination at the necessary (but not unnecessarily high) temperatures
- e) use of the entire plant substance
- f) isolation of the soluble salt particles before adding them to the distillate

Modern

- a) Standardization by drying guarantees a constant proportion of the amount of the original plant substance and of the final product.
- b) Setting the alcohol content to a fixed value in the spagyric essence
- c) Vacuum distillation as a particularly gentle procedure
- d) Using defined temperatures during calcination

The complete spagyric process according to KRUMMENACHER stringently satisfies the modern as well as the traditional criteria.

7.1 Directions: Complete Basic Spagyric Tinctures and their Dilutions²³

Complete basic spagyric tinctures are -when ever possible - prepared from fresh plants or parts of fresh plants according to the following prescription - dried plants can be used as an exception. The plant or the parts of the plant are finely minced (cut into very small pieces). A sample is taken and the loss from drying (T) is determined by percentage. The total plant weight M (measured in kilograms) gives us the targeted amount of the basic tincture according to the formula:

$$U = 0.1 \times M \times (100 - T) \text{ [kg].}$$

The amounts of water, saccharose and yeast necessary for the fermentation process are determined according to the formulas:

$$\text{Amount of water } W = U \text{ [kg]}$$

$$\text{Saccharose } S = 30 \times U \text{ [g]}$$

$$\text{Yeast } H = 2 \times U \text{ [g]}$$

The entire amount of water is poured into a container appropriate for fermentation and the saccharose is dissolved therein. The yeast is stirred into the solution and the minced plant mass is added. If the plant mass is not covered at least a little with the water, more water should be added until it is covered. The container is left to ferment at a temperature of 15 to 25 degrees Celsius and is to be stirred thoroughly every day, during which process plant parts that rose to the top should be pushed back down. As soon as the fermentation has stopped, the entire mass is distilled while under vacuum. At a pressure of 135 millibar two portions are collected:

$$\text{Portion 1} = F1 = 0.7 \times U \text{ [kg]}$$

$$\text{Portion 2} = F2 = 0.15 \times U \text{ [kg]}$$

The ethanol content A (as a percentage of the weight) of portion 1 (distillate =D) is determined. Then the required amount of AE - 94% Ethanol - (W/W) is added:

$$AE = (1/94) \times (22 \times U - A \times D) \text{ [kg]}$$

The distillation residue is dried, burnt and completely incinerated at a temperature of 480 - 520 degrees Celsius. With boiling water the soluble salts are completely extracted from the ashes. The salt extracts are filtered and evaporated to dryness. Enough of portion 1 (distillate containing alcohol) is now applied to dissolve the salts. New impurities can appear which are to be filtered off. The clear solution is mixed into the remaining amount of the alcoholic portion 1. Finally enough of portion 2 is added to the mixture to make the total amount match the targeted amount. The resulting liquid is the basic tincture. (Illustration 16). If the tincture is eventually to be raised to a higher power (potentized), calculations are to be based on the determination that the basic tincture corresponds to the first decimal dilution. (($\emptyset = D1$) (this refers to the homeopathic process.))

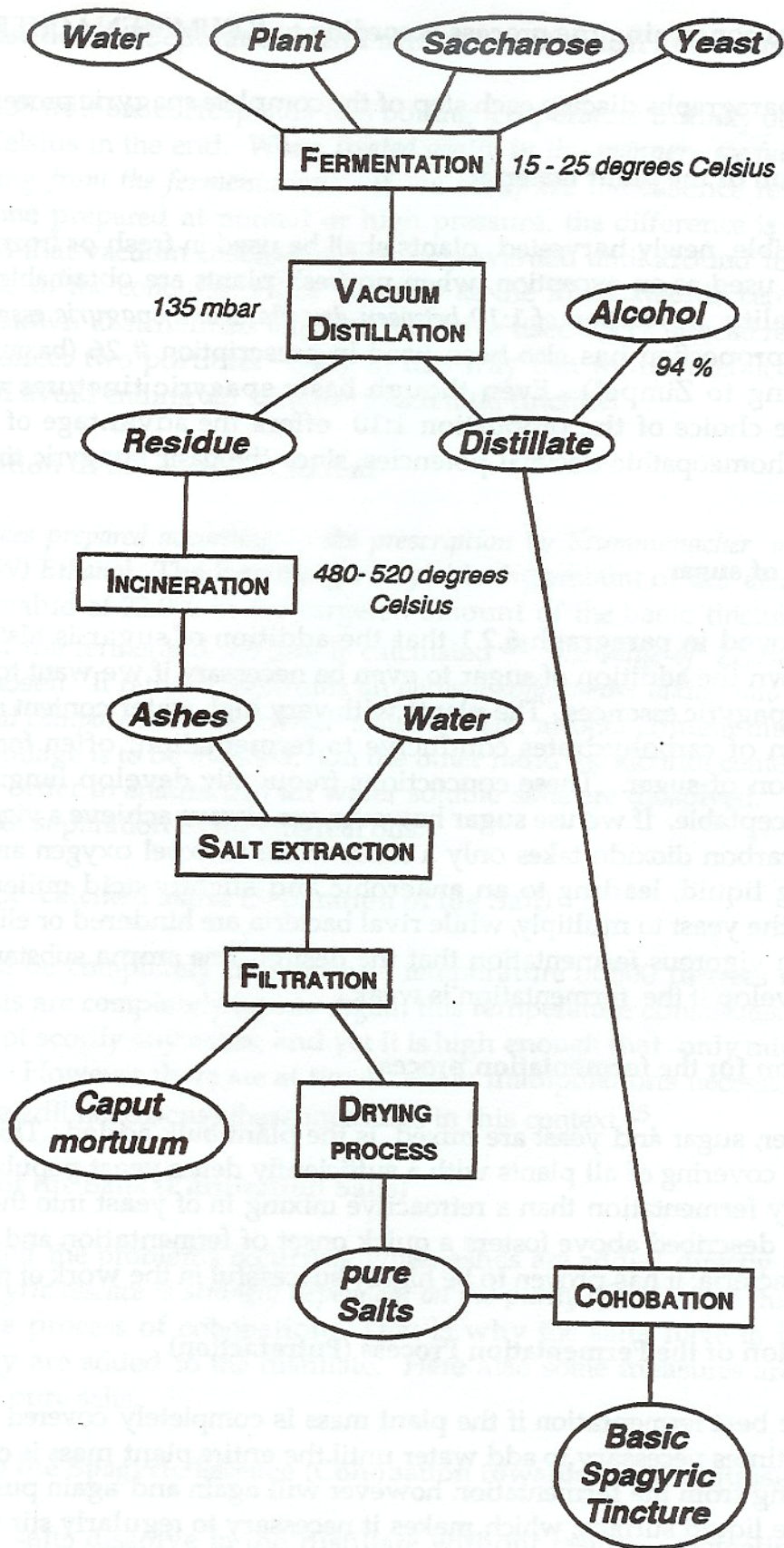


Illustration 16: The process according to Krummenacher

7.2 Explanations concerning the process according to KRUMMENACHER

The following paragraphs discuss each step of the complete spagyric process in detail:

7.2.1 Preparation of the plant material

Whenever possible, newly harvested plants shall be used in fresh or frozen state. Dry plants should only be used as an exception, when no fresh plants are obtainable, and have to be of impeccable quality. *A relation of 1:10 between dry plant and spagyric essence has been proven optimal.* This proportion has also been used in prescription # 26 (basic tinctures from dry plants according to Zimpel). Even though basic spagyric tinctures are generally used undiluted, the choice of the proportion 1:10 offers the advantage of allowing a simple preparation of homeopathic decimal potencies, since the basic spagyric tincture is equivalent to D1.

7.2.2 Addition of sugar

We already proved in paragraph 6.2.1 that the addition of sugar is historically legitimate. Tests have shown the addition of sugar to even be necessary if we want to guarantee an even quality of the spagyric essences. The plants with very high water content and/or those with a low proportion of carbohydrates conducive to fermentation, often ferment only weakly without addition of sugar. These concoctions frequently develop fungi or become putrid, which is not acceptable. If we use sugar however, we always achieve a vigorous fermentation. The resulting carbon dioxide takes only a short while to expel oxygen and other gases from the fermenting liquid, leading to an anaerobic and slightly acid milieu. These are good conditions for the yeast to multiply, while rival bacteria are hindered or eliminated. Further it is only through vigorous fermentation that the desired fine aroma substances are developed: they do not develop if the fermentation is weak.

7.2.3 Preparation for the fermentation process

Only after water, sugar and yeast are mixed, is the plant bulk added. This way we achieve a more complete covering of all plants with a sufficiently dense yeast population which leads to a higher quality fermentation than a retroactive mixing in of yeast into the liquid plant mass. The procedure described above fosters a quick onset of fermentation and hinders the growth of unwanted bacteria; it has proven to be highly successful in the work of the author.

7.2.4 Completion of the Fermentation Process (Putrefaction)

We achieve the best fermentation if the plant mass is completely covered with water. That is why it is sometimes necessary to add water until the entire plant mass is covered. The carbon dioxide resulting from the fermentation however will again and again push parts of the plant mass above the liquid surface, which makes it necessary to regularly stir and push the plants back down. *The substance has to ferment completely.* The fermentation process is complete if no more carbon dioxide is produced and the plant parts sink to the bottom of the container.

7.2.5 Vacuum Distillation (Separation and Purification of Sulfur and Mercury)

The pressure of 135 millibar corresponds to a boiling temperature initially of 50 degrees rising to 52.5 degrees Celsius in the end. When *treated gently in this manner, we fully retain the aroma substances resulting from the fermentation.* If we compare the essence resulting from this procedure with one prepared at normal or high pressure, the difference is amazing. Today, most sources hold that vacuum distillation was not invented until around 1800. But studying the old texts leads to the conclusion that as early as the mid sixteenth century, this method must have been known to alchemists who seem to have used it as a special refinement. [41] It is necessary to collect two portions. Only in this way can we fix the alcohol content to a specific value, and avoid ending up with too much total tincture.

7.2.6 Standardization of the Alcohol Content

The spagyric essences prepared according to the prescription by Krummenacher are standardized to exactly 22.0% (W/W) Ethanol. The formula given yields the amount of the alcohol necessary to achieve an exact value of 22.0% in the targeted amount of the basic tincture. The intrinsic alcohol content of the fermented mixture is calculated ²⁴. *The value of 22,0% ethanol has not been randomly chosen. It rather constitutes an optimal compromise taking into consideration the solubility of essential components and bacterial stability.* The alcohol content must be at least 18-20% if bacterial spoilage is to be avoided. On the other hand the alcohol content should not be too high either, in order to ensure that all water soluble salts are dissolved. Too little alcohol also would lead to a separation of the ethereal oils.

7.2.7 Obtaining the calcined ashes (Separation of the Salt)

Each plant ash can be completely calcined at a temperature of 500 degrees Celsius, i.e. all organic components are completely burnt. Again this temperature constitutes an optimum: It is low enough to not scorify any ashes, and yet it is high enough that **only** mineral substances are left afterwards. However there are at times certain manipulations necessary to obtain the desired results - we will not discuss these measures in this context ²⁵.

7.2.8 Purification of the Salts (Purification Salis)

In 6.1.8 we discussed the problems occurring when ashes are added directly to the distillate. *The quality of a spagyric essence is strongly dependent on the purity of the salts,* which are added to the distillate in the process of cohobation. That is why the salts have to be isolated and purified before they are added to the distillate. Here also some measures are known which lead to particularly pure salts.

7.2.9 Addition into the Spagyric Essence (Cohobation towards the Quintessence)

Often the purified salts dissolve in the distillate without residue. Sometimes however a slightly cloudy fallout occurs (feces), which needs to be removed. In the process of cohobation we obtain a product - the complete spagyric essence - which is often colored and has an intense aromatic fragrance.

7.3 Evaluation of the Process according to KRUMMENACHER

This procedure takes into account all of the initial criteria. The three essential Alchemical principles Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius are obtained in purified form without any losses. Thus the procedure merits the name "complete spagyric process". The amount of the product being in fixed proportion to the dry mass of the plant, the process is independent of the water content of the original plant species. In that way essences from fresh plants can be compared with essences from dry plants, which none of the other methods achieve. The fixed alcohol content of the complete spagyric essence constitutes another advantage, also in respect to the legal obligation to indicate the level of alcohol contents.

8. Effectiveness of spagyric essences

As we mentioned in the beginning of chapter 3, up to now we have no clinical studies that satisfy modern criteria of pharmacological research. Therefore the effectiveness of spagyric essences has not been scientifically proven for the time being. When new medicinal substances are introduced, controlled clinical studies are required in order to research them toxicologically, and to prove their effectiveness and suitability for use in the human organism. This is appropriate and necessary, if we wish to achieve a high degree of pharmacological safety.

But it would seem to be going too far to apply this rule to spagyric essences (which are not new substances). We have more than a hundred years of documented experience - especially in Germany - in the use of spagyric products, without any toxic effects ever being reported. The non-toxicity of the spagyric essences can also be argued analytically: there are no toxic components in the spagyric end product, even if there are toxic substances in the original plant, because of the specific procedures followed in obtaining the spagyric essences. Therefore it can be shown that even if we obtain spagyric essences from poisonous plants, the tinctures will always show a concentration below the toxicity level when taken²⁶ This also is affirmed by the unanimous statements of the alchemists of all centuries; that by spagyric procedures we obtain only "lovely, non-toxic and agreeable essences".

Many passages in the Alchemical literature point to the high effectiveness of spagyric essences. For Example Johann R. Glauber writes[43]: "As to the powers of such essences - each has the same effect as the herb or plant itself, but in a much lower dose it proves to be more effective by a thousand fold." The tenor of the testimonies to a high effectiveness of spagyric products is unanimous in Alchemical literature. They all point to a manifold increase in effectiveness. (compared with non-spagyric preparations from the same plant, so that it paid off the great effort and costs in preparing them. These statements may today rightly be viewed with skepticism. But also the non-Alchemical literature contains descriptions of near-miraculous effects of spagyric products. It seems probable that there must be some truth to these testimonies. In earlier times Paracelsus built his fame with cures using spagyric remedies. Even today we can observe amazing results when we use these essences. The experiences of recent decades - even though not statistically consolidated - also are an important indicator for future research, that will probably show positive results. We should give spagyrics a chance to prove itself today. In order to achieve this however, we first have to provide high quality spagyrica to the health profession.

9. Guidelines for the therapy with spagyric essences

Glauber writes about the use of spagyric essences [44]: "... such (effect) can be understood first by observing the signature of the plant, and second by consulting a good herbarium. This passage shows, that the effect is fully in line with classical phytotherapeutics. We just have to add that the range of effects is wider than in non-spagyric phytopharmaca, because the spagyric products represent the entire being (essence) of the plant, and not only a part thereof. Spagyric essences contain many substances that we can also find in traditional preparations, and these substances are often thought to give rise to the effectiveness of the spagyric products. This applies especially to essences from plants containing ethereal oils. Modern pharmacologists are not surprised that the spagyric and non-spagyric (traditional) remedies apply to the same range of symptoms and illnesses in this case. In other cases it is more difficult to find a reason for the effectiveness of the spagyric remedies. Especially when we deal with plants that contain tannic acid or alkaloids. These substances are "destroyed" in the spagyric process, and a purely chemical-analytic analysis no longer suffices to explain why and how the spagyric essence from such plants is effective. But yet - the situation does not change: Their effects still go along with that of traditional remedies prepared from such plants. The results of long-standing use of spagyric essences has led to a "spagyric remedy system" [45], which describes about 300 spagyric remedies and their range of effects. This system shows that there is an obvious congruence with the effects of the plants as described by modern phytotherapy. But the congruence is not complete! Often the range of indications - as experience shows - is much wider for the spagyric remedies, and sometimes their effect resembles that of homeopathic preparations from that plant.

There is an amazing and peculiar relation between the effects of spagyric remedies and that of homeopathic ones. First that may seem like a contradiction. How could a preparation be both allopathic and at the same time homeopathic in effect? We can give an Alchemical explanation for this phenomenon: **The theoretical basis of the homeopathic system of Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann (1755 - 1843)** can be outlined as follows: Rhythmical shaking (or grinding in the case of pulverized remedies) in increasing dilutions transmits the remedial "information" of the original substance (here: the plant) into the carrier (diluting or solvent) substance, (most often alcohol or lactose). This process is called "homeopathic potentizing". With increasing dilution the actual physical substance is in effect reduced to nothing, while its "information" or effective principle has been separated from its material vehicle. This effective principle now appears in subtle form in the homeopathic remedy. The effect range of the plant then is reversed: a homeopathic remedy is effective to counteract the symptomatic (toxicological) picture that the undiluted substance would evoke in the patient if taken in high doses. (This is called the "Simile" principle - "similia similibus curantur" [like cures like]). Generally Hahnemann is viewed as the discoverer of the Simile principle. But most people do not know that earlier on Paracelsus was very familiar with this principle [46]: "because the good cures the bad that is connected with it. An example: that which causes the jaundice, cures the jaundice. This shows that in every thing resides both good and bad - from the bad comes the jaundice, from the good which resides alongside the bad and needs to be dissociated from the bad, we find the arcanum which is effective against the jaundice. .. because the remedy that shall heal the illness has to emerge from the same thing that causes it." In the first part of this quote the homeopathic law is explicitly stated, in the second part

however Paracelsus emphasizes the condition under which the Simile principle is valid: **The necessity of first separating remedy and poison.** According to Paracelsus the spagyric dissociation is the first condition for obtaining the pure remedial power - as we outlined: the healing polarity of the arcana. However, the Homeopaths are not dissociating the polarities strictly speaking (their process lacks the step of putrefaction). But the Simile principle remains the same according to this quote of Paracelsus in the case of spagyrics, and it yields excellent results in practice. But since the spagyric process is able to separate the healing principle in a much more complete way than homeopathy, the effects are even more intense. The spagyric remedies are able to bridge the paradox combining allopathic and homeopathic effects.

We can find further reasons for this twofold effect by giving a simple description of the Alchemical understanding of illness and health: from a Hermetic perspective health is nothing but the complete harmony of the powers functioning in the body. Harmony means a "balanced, even and lawful relationship of the parts to each other." [47]. We know that "parts" here means the principles of Sal, Sulphur and Mercurius, each containing the polarities of remedy and poison. We can find health only if body, soul and spirit are in a balanced relation to each other. If we find a disharmonic interplay of these principles, there will be discomfort at first, later, if the disharmony continues illnesses will manifest. Illness thus is an essential imbalance in the crucible of all gross and subtle forces in man - in body, soul and spirit. We can regain health only by eliminating the imbalance and thus withdrawing the causes for illness. Illness as a disharmony of forces can be defined within the vibrational model (see beginning chapter) and can be seen as an interference in frequency, quality and quantity of these forces. For example, a certain illness can be caused by an excess or lack of energy - an imbalance of quantity. Another cause for illness could be higher or lower frequency range than normal or an imbalance in quality. Alchemically speaking this means that illness is an imbalance and non-alignment of sal, sulphur and mercury and can have physical, soul-level or spiritual roots. There are few illnesses rooted in the imbalance of only one principle. Most of the time two or all three principles are affected. If we want to heal the illness, we have to use measures that solve the basic imbalance. We also have to find the appropriate remedy for compensating the disharmony. The main consideration in choosing such a measure is - staying within the physics analogy - that a vibrating physical system can only be influenced by vibrations that resonate with the target system. Both - the patient and the remedy - have to be "related" to each other. Healing plants that show in the range of their effects similarities to the symptoms of the patient answer to this consideration. Their effects "resonate" with the illness. All remedies ultimately fall under this law. Allopathic as well as homeopathic remedies show an energetic resonance to the illnesses they cure. The range of symptoms however covers the pair of polarities, and we need to keep in mind that the healing and the toxic effects are only extremes on the same vibrational continuum.

On the level of the arcana, the contradiction between allopathy and homeopathy is only illusory, however on the level of the illness, the two approaches are polar opposites. The difference in effect comes about as a consequence of different methods of preparation and levels of indication.

- Allopathic remedies primarily impact the physical body - materially and substance wise, by

setting up a physiological interplay in the cell between remedy and receptors. The effect is strong and penetrating, because of the direct impact of the healing agents.

That is why allopathic remedies are particularly successful if used in acute imbalances, that need a strong corrective stimulus. Since however the toxic polarity has not been dissociated from the harmonizing side of the arcana, the greatest problem that we have is in finding the right dosage. The healing forces are strong, but they carry with them unwanted side effects (c.f. 3.2).

- Homeopathic remedies, in contrast, impact the physical level only in their lowest potencies - more in the sense of a slight stimulant. In the higher potencies, where we can no longer find any material trace of the original substance, we are dealing with the purely "informational" aspect of the arcana, and the influence lies on the purely spiritual levels transferred to the solvent. While allopathic and spagyric remedies are capable of directly acting as mediators of the healing forces, homeopathic remedies can not do this because they lack the specific chemical substances which convey the healing forces. Thus Homeopathic remedies are only stimulating - via resonance - the self healing powers of the patient, and thus indirectly stimulates the relief of the symptoms.

Homeopathic remedies are of little value as first steps in acute cases. If the energy system of the patient is very weakened and imbalanced, it does not suffice to only stimulate the self healing forces. However, chronic cases respond well to homeopathic remedies. The advantage of the homeopathic remedies is that there are no side effects, since there is not sufficient amount of the original substance in these remedies, to cause the unwanted toxic side to occur. But alchemically the homeopathic remedies are severely lacking. According to the above quote by Paracelsus the spagyric dissociation is the condition for obtaining the pure healing effect of a remedy. It is not enough to only potentize (dilute) the unchanged original substance. The toxic and healing aspects of the arcanum remain intertwined. The transmitted information still carries both polarities. But there is no observable effect, because the amount of original substance is at most minimally low. Because in the potentizing procedure there is no real dissociation of the polarities, the homeopathic remedies tend to show only slight effects. This may be the reason why it is so hard to prove their effectiveness.

- Spagyric remedies however combine the effects of the allopathic and that of the homeopathic remedies and contribute additional beneficial effects. They are able to transmit the healing agents allopathically - thanks to the material components from the original plant. As a result of the spagyric dissociation and separation of the toxic polarity from the healing aspect of the arcana there are no harmful side effects - just as with the homeopathic remedies. However, the reason is not the lack of material substance. Not only the "information" is transmitted, but the refined and purified energies of the original substance. Therefore we can use spagyric remedies both in acute and chronic conditions. Furthermore, they contain the physical, soul and spirit forces of the original substances, and thus they are able to cure the imbalances of all three levels. Neither allopathic nor homeopathic remedies can achieve this.

In summary, we can say that the therapeutic guidelines for the use of spagyric essences are related to both allopathy and homeopathy. Spagyric remedies can be defined as a group of remedies that show both homeopathic and allopathic effects. In other words: Spagyric

remedies are a balancing agent for any kind of deviation from the harmonious interplay of forces in the organism. They are able to balance out the disharmonies, which some seek to cure allopathically and others homeopathically.

10. Special features of basic spagyric tinctures.

Compared with current phytotherapeutica the spagyric remedies show some advantage stemming from their special procedure of preparation, which we will discuss in the following paragraphs.

10.1 Use of Plants and Waste Problems

Since generally the entire plant is used, there is hardly any waste produced in the preparation of spagyric remedies. The production process ends with a - volume wise rather insignificant - *caput mortuum*, which can be discarded without problems. The calcination produces gases that can be considered harmless. Thus the use of the plant materials is more complete and the spagyric process yields less waste than other production processes in use today.

10.2 Alcohol contents and conservation

The alcohol content of spagyric remedies is 22%. Basic spagyric tinctures are therefore plant preparations with low alcohol content, if we do not consider pressed juice from fresh plants. But fresh juices have to be preserved and have only limited shelf life. Basic spagyric tinctures however can be stored easily and do not spoil. On the contrary: storage leads to an objective refinement of the essence, similar as in good wine.

10.3 Side effects

Basic Spagyric Tinctures are toxicologically harmless, even if they are won from poisonous plants. The lack of side effects makes them nearly ideal plant remedies, especially in the field of self medication.

10.4 Incompatibilities

There is a problem in mixing different conventional plant tinctures, many of them being incompatible with each other. Many plant substances - when mixed - lead to precipitation which permits only limited mixture of remedies. Even the mixture of two basic plant tinctures can lead to a precipitation of pharmacologically active components. The pharmacological effects attributed to each remedy can not just be assumed for the mixture. The sum of the indications of the two essences is different than that of each component. Therefore the recommendation of mixed preparations as often commercially offered is questionable.

Spagyric tinctures do not show any incompatibility. The spagyric preparation eliminates most substances that are chemically responsible for any precipitation (tannic acids etc.) We can mix basic spagyric tinctures without problem. Thus the indications can be combined and a systematic treatment becomes possible.

10.5 Analysis

Basic spagyric tinctures can be relatively easily identified by simple chemical procedures. Especially chromatographic methods (DC, TLC, GC, HPLC) allow us to separate out clearly defined tinctures. This is of great significance for quality control. The possibility of an unambiguous chemical determination of spagyric essences is a great advantage over homeopathic ones. A chemical- analytical identification of homeopathic remedies is only possible in the lowest potencies, but cannot be shown at all for the higher potencies.

10.6 Advantages of Usage

The wide range of indications for any spagyric essence brings many practical advantages. Relatively few essences and mixtures enable the treatment of a large number of different illnesses. Also the therapist is already familiar with the range of effects of classical phytotherapy, therefore there is no great additional effort needed to learn new ranges of application. Because of their broad spectrum of effectiveness, spagyric essences are also well suited for self medication.

10.7 Popularity

Because of their agreeable smell and taste, patients like to take spagyric essences. This improves compliance.

10.8 Increase demand of natural products

The demand for naturally produced remedies is constantly increasing. Here Spagyrics can be a valuable contributor, since spagyric products are natural remedies par excellence. Furthermore spagyric remedies are part of the western tradition. We do not need to seek for natural, traditional remedies in the East, but can rely on the experience of our own western tradition.

11. Classification of basic spagyric tinctures as a group of remedies

As we can deduce from the above paragraphs, spagyric remedies show characteristics of both allopathic and homeopathic products. Spagyric remedies are chemically to be seen as a special class of allopathic remedies, since they contain substances of the original plant that can directly be determined by modern chemical analysis. What is new compared with the established procedures is the fermentation process and the addition of mineral ingredients. Therefore it is recommended that a new category for spagyric remedies be established. The therapy guidelines show a certain similarity with those of homeopathy, but since there is no diluting or potentizing process whatsoever, we cannot just assign spagyrica to the homeopathic category. This again makes the definition of a whole new category necessary. This necessity is not mitigated either by the fact that spagyric and homeopathic remedies show similarities in non-toxicity and in lack of side effects. Therefore we suggest that all preparations following the spagyric procedure should be assigned to a new category: the Spagyric remedies (Spagyrica). Dilutions of spagyric remedies according to methods of

homeopathy could be grouped into the homeopathic remedies²⁷. However, the current pharmacological guidelines do not show this category. Based on the law of August 24th, 1976 the spagyric remedies are legally equated with homeopathic remedies²⁸. This legal equating with homeopathy makes it look as if the spagyric remedies are just a subclass of the homeopathic ones. This is absolutely not the case, which clearly can be seen from the reasoning above. Therefore the current pharmacological guidelines (HAB) are unsatisfactory and urgently need to be corrected.

12. Final Remarks

I want to close with a quote by Karl Christoph Schmieder, which was written more than 150 years ago but nevertheless is still of burning factuality. Schmieder was a philosophy professor in Kassel, and started with the opinion that Alchemy was a fairy tale without any relation to reality. After 40 years of intensive studies he had to conclude, however, that the exact opposite was true. This is what led him to open his "History of Alchemy" with the following words [48]: "We rightfully would regard anyone with disdain who questions a fact long established. For many my endeavor may seem to be just that. True, Alchemy lost its case in the first instance, however if new evidence is found one can re-open a case and bring it to revision. Even if centuries have passed, this right cannot be taken away. Because Truth is eternal and cannot be decreed out of existence..." The last 14 years of studies and experience that the writer of this document can look back on have shown clearly that this new evidence has indeed been furnished. Spagyric essences deserve to be used again - and increasingly so - in therapeutic practice.

Footnotes

- (1) 1493 - 1541. Actually his name was Aureolus Philippus Theophrastus Bombastus Von Hohenheim, known as "Paracelsus". He was born in Einsiedeln, Switzerland.
- (2) Essence - derived from Latin: essential. Term for extraction won by spagyric procedures, containing the 'essence' of the original substance. For spagyric remedies this is a more appropriate term than "basic tincture".
- (3) To be added are the so-called four elements, Fire, Water, Air and Earth, which however shall not be discussed in the following. It would become too complex an article if these were included. Fortunately we can skip the discussion of the elemental forces without altering the facts given in this article.
- (4) Possibly our current methods of measurement are simply not sensitive enough to be able to detect the subtle energies of the arcana.
- (5) This term will be thoroughly explained under 4. The basic spagyric process.
- (6) It has remained unclear to this day who used this name to author several very significant Alchemical writings. They certainly date back to the time around 1600 [10].
- (7) What is meant here is no processing at all or a non-spagyric process - a common 'chymical procedure' as it was called in those days.
- (8) Valentinus clearly indicates here that his hypotheses can be tested experimentally. The result of the spagyric process is a non-toxic, oily substance, the "oil of antimony". This Oil has been prepared by the writer of this article himself, and he can attest to the correctness of Valentinus' process. Also David Schein [10] reported the same result in his PHD thesis.
- (9) The basic dissociation process originated in putrefaction, which described in detail below, is caused by the "inner fire of nature" and can be catalyzed by using the outer, ordinary fire.
- (10) Please note the double meaning of the term Corpus: On one hand this term is often used to describe the Alchemical principle of Salt, on the other hand it is the physically visible whole that is composed of Sal, Sulfur and Mercurius.
- (11) = still hidden. Invisible here does not refer to the arcana, but their material correspondence as a trinity that is still hidden.
- (12) = Life leaves him.
- (13) Calcination, or Latin "Calcinatio", is a procedure that has been well known to peoples of old. It originally meant the manufacturing of burnt calcium and now is used to describe the burning of substances at high temperatures. In Greek it is more fittingly called "titanosis" (calcination). [18].
- (14) derived from Latin = spiritus.

- (15) The higher the frequency the more energy, life and motion defines the vibration. From this viewpoint illnesses are a motion contrary to orgasmic life, i.e. processes that reduce frequency. In the extreme, this reduction results in death, the cessation of motion. That is why high frequency healing methods can often be successfully employed to heal illnesses; these high frequencies have a vivifying effect that raises the vibrations.
- (16) A detailed analysis of the process shows further steps, which are also described in Alchemical literature. The main steps however are the four ones mentioned.
- (17) There are, though, spagyric processes that do not employ yeast fermentation but true putrefaction. Those procedures however only rarely serve the goals of yielding ingestible spagyric essences; other goals are pursued which we will not describe here.
- (18) The mineral substances occur mainly in form of carbonates and oxides. Therefore the ashes are usually more or less alkaline. Most heavy metal carbonates or oxides are not soluble at $\text{pH} > 7$ in the presence of the anions mentioned
- (19) derived from Latin + *faex, faeces* - fallout, residue, also discard.
- (20) The instructions # 33 to 37 are somewhat related to spagyric processes, but deviate too much from the spagyric production methods described in the A #25 to 31. Therefore they are not dealt with in the following argumentation.
- (21) This pressure corresponds to a boiling temperature of pure alcohol at around 109 degrees or app. 134 degrees Celsius boiling temperature for pure water. The bubbling temperature point therefore is about 130 - 131.5 degrees Celsius at the beginning of the distillation process - depending on alcohol contents, and then is increased to 134 degrees.
- (22) compare the explanations under 6.1.8
- (23) This procedure is in the process of being patented internationally.
- (24) Alcohol from the fermentation is found only in the distillate F1. Boiling at a lower temperature, alcohol is distilled off at the beginning, so that the distillate F2 is free of alcohol.
- (25) Various plants cannot be completely calcined by simple heating at temperatures of even 700 - 800 degrees Celsius. This only may yield a dark gray ash, that still contains large amounts of carbon. (*Equisetum arvense*, *Cynara scolymus* and others).
- (26) The undiluted spagyric essence usually corresponds to the 4th decimal potency of the homeopathic remedies. Even though these are strongly effective substances the concentration is always below the level of toxicity. [42]".
- (27) Spagyrica in fact are very rarely potentized homeopathically, since the concentrated essence is already completely non-toxic. There is no potentizing necessary since the spagyric procedure in itself brings about an optimal unfoldment of the remedial powers.
- (28) In a similar situation are the anthroposophical remedies, the biochemical functional remedies (according to Schuessler) as well as the isopathic remedies (nosodes).

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