



World Futures

The Journal of New Paradigm Research

ISSN: 0260-4027 (Print) 1556-1844 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/gwof20>

Introduction

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To cite this article: Maria Sagi (2016) Introduction, World Futures, 72:3-4, 93-96

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02604027.2016.1194074>



Published online: 08 Sep 2016.



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INTRODUCTION

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A new phase is beginning in the evolution of the art of healing and science of medicine. This special issue of *World Futures* outlines the principal benchmarks of the new phase. It is based on a meeting of eminent physicians and medical researchers in Stresa, on the shores of Lago Maggiore on May 1, 2013. The presentations and discussions of the meeting have shown that new developments in medical research have reaffirmed and recovered in a new, empirically based and clinically tested form, some classical insights, that have been largely neglected in modern medicine.

In this regard, it is useful to recall, as Dr. Biava does in his contribution, that Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine, had two daughters: Panacea who had the secret for curing diseases, and Hygeia, who possessed the secret of preserving health. Modern medicine is dedicated to researching and applying the secret of curing diseases, while it largely neglects the quest of maintaining health. In consequence, modern medicine is highly accomplished in eliminating ill-health but is poorly prepared to maintain health by averting the onset of disease. The modern physician is paid to cure the diseases of his/her patients, but is not paid—like physicians were in classical China—to maintain their health. The biochemical approach of modern medicine is curative but not (or not primarily) preventive. The orientation is toward eliminating the manifestation of diseases and not toward preventing their onset.

As the articles published in this issue show, there are definitive characteristics that identify the approach that characterizes the new phase in medicine in distinction to the currently still dominant approach. The concept of the organism as an information-energy-based open dissipative system is one such characteristic. It shows that the organism is a delicately balanced system integrating the information and energies in its environment so as to maintain its own integrity. Its structural and dynamic equilibrium is an equilibrium imposed on the flow of energies between the organism and the environment. This is a highly fluid, constantly self-correcting equilibrium. Dr. Bardaro points out that genes do not decide our fate. The DNA sequence is not alterable, but the environment can modify the regulation and the expression of the sequence. The principal environmental factors in this regard are

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diet and stress. The central dogma of biology does not coincide anymore with reality.

In understanding the nature of the self-regulation of the organism the concept of “information” is key. Dr. Laszlo points out, information in the living system, as in all complex informed-energy configurations, appears in a twofold guise. Information is part of the basic “substance” of the systems, and it is also the logic response for structuring the substance on superordinate levels. Living systems can be defined as self-maintaining superordinate informed-energy configurations arising in the universe in favorable physico-chemical environments.

The distinction between lower- and higher-level configurational information is essential for assessing the efficacy of treatments aimed at correcting a malfunction. Mainstream medicine uses low-level configurational information to effect treatment: information specific to the malfunctioning part of the organism. Treatment is effected by allowing the information present in various molecular compounds—natural or synthetic substances—to interact with the malfunctioning part of the organism. Information medicine, on the other hand, is intrinsically holistic: it interacts with the malfunctioning organism on a level where it embraces the malfunctioning part together with its relevant environment. The latter may be the pertinent organ or organ-system, or even the organism as a whole.

The secret of health is to make use of the information available to a well-balanced, healthy organism to impose a functional equilibrium on the ongoing organism/environment flow. As long as the equilibrium is maintained, the organism is in a state of health. The onset of disease indicates a flaw in the flow and ultimately its partial breakdown. The demise of the organism signifies the permanent and total breakdown of this essential equilibrium.

The art of Hygeia is to discover and apply the information that can maintain the equilibrium of healthy organic functioning, whereas the art of Panacea is to eliminate the faulty information that leads to disease. Evidently, both are needed, but the one-sided emphasis on the latter indicates a shortcoming in the practice of modern medicine. It needs to be re-balanced by equal attention both to the maintenance of equilibrium and to its re-establishment: the prevention as well as the cure of disease.

Information medicine is correctly considered the approach that distinguishes the new phase in medicine from the previous, still dominant phase. It seeks the information that is present in the organism, as well as in the environment of the organism, that creates the dynamic equilibrium we know as health. This information also serves the art of Panacea in that it can reestablish a weakened or lost equilibrium. But this does not primarily rely on synthetic substances and artificial interventions, but on discovering and applying the information that can maintain, and in case of disease, reestablish, the equilibrium that characterizes the health of the organism.

The studies in this issue expound specific features and applications of the new information paradigm. The organism is extraordinarily coherent, all its parts are quasi-instantly and multidimensionally interconnected so that what happens to one part also happens to the others. This coherence applies also to the relations of the organism to its surroundings: what happens to the organism is reflected in

its relations to its environment, just as whatever changes occur in the environment have quasi-immediate, even if not necessarily immediately evident, implications for the organism.

Dr. Biava points out that the quasi-instant interconnection within the organism and between the organism and the world around it signifies the communication of messages that have both semiotic and symbolic meanings. Distinctions of this kind are beyond the scope of the mainstream of modern medicine; here information is analyzed only in terms of the transmission of chemical, biochemical, and biophysical effects. In the new conception, disease is considered a pathology of information to be classified according to the type of process that disrupts the functional expression of information.

In the new-paradigm approach, as Dr. Pizzoccaro points out, the symptom is an important indication as to the nature of the informational malfunction, and is not an “enemy”—it is not to be eliminated in the belief that thereby we eliminate the disease, but to be consulted in the attempt to find the information the organism needs to establish its vital equilibrium. The symptom is the way the organism expresses its damaged equilibrium and thus it is a positive sign provided by the organism.

The approach of new-paradigm medicine includes physiological, ecological, as well as social and sociocultural elements, integrated in novel syntheses such as that suggested by Dr. Friligi. This is the complex environment to which the organism needs to continually “tune” itself, unless malfunctions appear and lead to disease. The emphasis is not on the particular cause of a malfunction but on the information that can correct the malfunction. In this sense it is the nature of the solution that indicates the nature of the problem. In the new paradigm the kind of information that corrects the imbalance provides the clue regarding the nature of the imbalance. Therapy is holistic and refers not just to biochemical information, as conveyed *inter alia* by artificially synthesized substances, but complex-information based, with biochemical, social, as well as psychological elements.

The “territory,” Dr. Burigana tells us, is always more complex than any particular “map” that we can construct to represent it. This is shown also by the currently discovered role of the epigenetic system: as noted above, the sequence of genes given in an organism is not what ultimately determines the workings of the organism—the determinant factor is the system that activates and de-activates the genetic system. The epigenetic system, as both Drs. Burigana and Bardaro point out, is an informational system, which “conducts” the functioning of the genetic system much as the conductor of an orchestra conducts the performance of the musicians in the orchestra: not by intervening in the way the musicians play, but by providing the holistic conception that guides the play of the musicians. This is another key difference between the biomolecular mainstream and the new informational approach to medicine, highlighting the logic and the efficacy of the latter.

My own work testifies to the extreme sensitivity of the organism to the information that reaches it. I discovered, and I can make systematic use of, the sensitivity of the organism to information associated with certain geometrical forms, lines, as well as solids. These were known in traditional healing arts but are regarded as

mere superstition in mainstream medicine. Yet the effects can be shown in clinical tests, among others in the alteration of the electroencephalogram (EEG) waves produced by the brain and nervous systems of the patients and, in the longer term, by the alleviation of the symptoms of a disease or malfunction.

In the Annex, the reader will find specific and in part more technical articles demonstrating the application of new paradigm medicine to specific health problems, in particular to the treatment of cancer-diseases through “soft” remedies, which include proteins provided in quasi-homeopathic form, and applications that rely primarily on electromagnetic and even on quantum-level information.