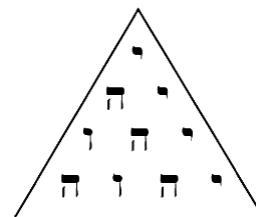


ARIADNE'S THREAD

In this issue, the abstract holistic science inquiry joins with research into the quality of health. At a workshop at Aboca, Italy in August 2011, Graham Jones presented a talk of the whole cognisance of the immune system. This led Graham to an article of Irun Cohen, also included in this issue.



The suggestion of Graham and Irun is that the whole quality of the organism pervades the working of the immune system, in the same way that 'mind' is the whole manifestation of the neurological system. In this way the proteins are actively involved in monitoring and responding to a sense of the whole identity of the organism.

The immune system is presented as a very special player with a whole overview of the body, comparable to the neurological system and the 'mind'. It is possible to read the status of the body's health from the self-reporting of certain key (stress) proteins that are monitoring the whole state of the organs and the body. The immune system is an inner mirroring of health at a high level of cognisance of the whole state of the body.

Potentially the paradigm by which we understand health is turned on its head. For although the article presupposes a holistic perspective of the whole cognisance of the immune system, the simple test of the 300 proteins into the health of a patient, gives a way for research to test the truth or otherwise of this tenet.

The issue looks further to where the signature of life is missing, as can be the case in science, and to the loss of cellular integrity in cancer. Simple signatures are explored in principal component analysis of the protein distribution of each herb; and how a herb can be seen to have a character that matches the personality of the person who benefits from its use.

The goal of health, as many authors argue, is where the dynamic of living parts escapes for a moment the isolation of separate existence, and animates an emergent essence of unified being. The freedom of potential distils nature to a common related web of being, in which we have found our place along with herbs. The issue goes beyond the high funded projects of genetics and neuroscience to respect again the sacred integrity of the cell in its context.

The issue brings together several threads from previous issues of HSJ – molecular language, hermeneutics, biosemiotics, diversity within unity and succeeds in transforming the abstract discussion into a living test of health.

These signatures of health all point to the need for further research, but from a different perspective.

Philip Franses