

# *Bambusa arundinacea* (Bamboo)

## **Bamboo, Homœopathic Proving, Repertory, Cases**

Bernd Schuster

Publisher of the book with the original German provings text:  
Kent-Gesellschaft, Kastanienstrasse 4;  
61476 Kronberg, Germany. 1996  
Fax: +49-6173-933470. E-mail:  
kent@zizia.com  
ISBN 3-932116-00-3. 350 pages, hard cover. Unverb. Preisempf. DM 49,-

Publisher of the book with the English translation of the provings text, available end of June 1997:  
Homöopathie Forum e.V. Verlag, Grubmühlerfeldstrasse 14a, 82119 Gauting, Germany. Fax: +49-89-89341466.

There are not that many serious provings that have been published in the recent years, so this book about Bamboo makes a pleasant change.

This is actually two books in one, because Bernd Schuster dedicates a consid-

erable amount of pages to a reflection on the action of drugs in general (the placebo issue), and also adds some hypothetical ideas to the actual proving results. These are interesting, but no real surprise to the skilled homœopath.

This contemplation should not be a part of a serious proving.

There should be no doubt about the precision with which this proving has been conducted, every word has been literally recorded, summarised and statistically evaluated; and every effort has been made to find an 'essence'. More than fifty percent of the provers stopped the proving. This high rate shows that the author has 'impregnated' the supervisors of the proving thoroughly. Many of the listed 'as if' symptoms should not really be marked like this, but one may nevertheless choose to turn a blind eye, because of the quality of the remaining statements.

The transcription into rubrics is welcome for clinical use and those rubrics did already find their way into computer programmes. In the book you will find a col-

lection of cases and a detailed botanical description, together with an index of literature. This book is a 'must' for every homœopath. The appealing appearance and the colourful pictures are equally pleasing, so is the favourable price.

The English translation of this proving has been shortened, and has a few cases and ideas added. It will be available end of June 1997.

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M.D., Sooß (Lower Austria); General Practitioner. Walter has been practising and teaching classical homœopathy since many years; he was in charge of the coordination of remedy provings in Austria for some years; provings of *Vincetoxicum* and *Mantis religiosa*.

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## Bamboo

### An important remedy for 'ailments after parturition'

**Bernd Schuster, Germany**

A methodical and large-scale homœopathic proving of the remedy Bamboo was conducted in Germany in 1994; 20 provers (12 women and 8 men) participated. The test was conducted with C6 and C30 globuli and Q3 dilution. The potencies were made from fresh Bamboo shoots of the *Bambusa arundinacea*. (Bamb-a.)

The proving symptoms were observed for a period of two months. Bamboo produced so many symptoms that more than 2,000 additions to Kent's repertory could be suggested. These additions, together with the additions of Ozone, are already included in version 4.0 of the *Complete Repertory* by Roger van Zandvoort. All Bamboo rubrics can be extracted with Mac Repertory.

Since the proving, about 100 patients in my practice have benefited from this remedy.

I used mainly Q-potencies.

Up to now three main effects have become apparent:

1. Pain, stiffness and pathological changes of the spinal column, problems with the inter-articular discs, Bamboo-spine (Morbus Bechterew) and Primary Chronic Polyarthritis. Pain in the shoulder joints, often with stiffness, and in the joints of knees, hands and feet. The pains are mainly short, sharp and stitching. Sciatic pain. Distinct tendency to support the head.

2. Female hormonal problems. Especially a regulatory effect on the hypothysis and on the estrogen-progesterin ratio. Pre-menstrual syndrome, particularly painful swelling of the mammae, premature menopause, painful menses, weakness after parturition with premature restarting of the menstruation, irritability towards the child, refusal to nurse the child, depression and headache.

3. Strong effect on the mind, a feeling of being stressed, particularly by their own child, with a search for support. Laziness and sleepiness alternating with silliness and exaggerated laughter. (There is a saying in China: 'The Bamboo bends with laughter'.)

# CASE STUDIES

## Case 1

### Cervical syndrome after Caesarean section.

In September 1995, a 29 year old woman, who could not take care of her child, consulted me because of bad headaches. She had previously been treated by a homœopathic colleague who had prescribed *Belladonna* C200, C1000, and 10M, unfortunately without relief or healing. Twelve weeks ago she gave birth to a boy after a Caesarean. After two hours of labour the child got stuck in the birth canal and an emergency Caesarean section had to be carried out.

She said that shortly after the operation she felt a pain in the occiput, at first only when shaking her head or brushing her teeth. The pain in her neck began early in August 1995 and at first she thought that it was caused by a draught. She had never been bothered by headaches before. These pains got so severe within the last three weeks that she had to lie down. The doctor took an X-ray and diagnosed a cervico-cerebral syndrome. The pain comes from the neck and spreads over her head, manifesting itself in the forehead and the eyes. Sometimes she feels a piercing and throbbing pain in the back of her head. The pain comes and goes unexpectedly, it begins suddenly and abates slowly. Movement aggravates the pain. Turning the head to the right or to the left is painful because her neck is stiff. An aggravation of the headache is always accompanied by intensified stiffness of the neck. She can hardly bend her head to the chest.

The pain aggravates when she gets up after lying down and ameliorates when she lies quietly. She cannot bear hearing her child cry.

It does her good to lean against something or to prop up her head, and she feels better when sitting and resting her chin on her hands. The feeling of heaviness and enlargement makes the propping of the head necessary. She says that her head feels as though it is the size of a pumpkin.

Sometimes she has the sensation as if she would fall down on the floor with pain.

At lunch time the pain is worse. Although her baby was delivered only three months ago she is now menstruating for the second time. The first menstruation appeared whilst she was still breast feeding, only four weeks after parturition. It

lasted one week, disappeared and started again after some days.

On the recommendation of the doctor she stopped breast feeding two weeks ago, after having an injection of an anti-inflammatory analgesic, because she could no longer bear the pain. The menstruation is normally preceded by cramps in the hypogastrium. Sometimes the menstrual cycle is prolonged to 42 days. Before menstruation she is irritable, ill humoured, tearful and depressed. In the past she had big problems with nausea, diarrhoea, profuse perspiration and pain at the commencement of menstruation. She also tends to suffer from haemorrhoids and diarrhoea during the time of menstruation and this continued after the birth of the child. Several years ago the haemorrhoids were suppressed by injections because they were so painful.

Carrying the child caused pain in the dorsal region of the spinal column. At present 'everything gets on her nerves', she is irritable and 'stressed' sometimes 'she would gladly abandon her child' (laughs inappropriately). But she was irritable during pregnancy, too. The young woman feels 'the whole situation is too demanding for her', she has the feeling that 'it is all too much for her'. The child cries too much. She thinks a lot about all sorts of things ('worries about everything'). The burden is too much for her. 'Perhaps I worry too much. Having a child is not as nice as I had imagined. When he cries I don't know why. I also thought that he may not have been satisfied with my milk. And now I'm worried again because I haven't been able to do anything for the last three weeks due to my headache. I've got a bad conscience because I neglect my child' (weeps).

She also tends to be weepy when watching romantic films (laughs). She is also easily roused and puts her foot down (laughs and cries at the same time). She will moan and also use abusive words. 'I can get rather angry if someone gets on my nerves, if someone doesn't listen to me or if they don't agree with me immediately' (laughs). She doesn't like being contradicted. She cannot watch cruelty to animals on television, she must turn it off. She is sensitive to cold and tends to have cold feet. She does not like the cold at all. At night she is well covered up. Even in summertime she needs a warm cover.

Her father died of prostate cancer when he was 59. Quite a few members of her

-father's family died of cancer, including her father's brothers.

### Repertorisation

Mind; Anxiety; conscience, of Female; Metrorrhagia; nursing the child

Rectum; Diarrhoea; menses; during Mind; Irritability; menses; before Back; Pain; general; Cervical region; extending; eye, to

Head; Prop, inclination to (!)

(!) New rubric)

Prescription: *Bamboo* Q6, dil. 1\*

### Follow-up

The patient called me the next day. She told me that there was less pain already. Besides, she had much more initiative and was having fun with her child. The neck cramps were much better. Her mind was clearly brighter.

A daily dose of one tea-spoon of the dil. 1 was prescribed.

Seventeen days later she complained of intensified cramps in the neck, especially when bending forward. As she is still in a good frame of mind, this seems to indicate an over dosage. She stops taking the remedy for three days after which one teaspoon dil. 2 is taken daily.

On the 25th day after the initial dose she said in an extremely happy manner that she feels very well, 'super', she is in a good mood and could work for hours without discomfort.

Almost 6 weeks after the first prescription the pain in the neck has completely disappeared and the painful twinge in the head and the stitching and the throbbing haven't come back.

The menstruation came without complaints and the former irritability has also gone. Sometimes she still feels overstrained because the child is always crying and is very restless. The boy wants to be carried all day. The dil. 2 *Bamboo* treatment was continued. She did not make any further appointments, but brought her child in for treatment instead. The *Bamboo* treatment was ended in the middle of December 1995. Up to April 1997 the headache did not reappear. The young woman is well again so that the treatment of the cervical syndrome can be regarded as being successful after a period of eighteen months without pain.

## Case 2

### Metrorrhagia while nursing.

In January 1995 a 31 year old woman consulted me because she had become nervous and irritable after the birth of her third child one month earlier.

She tends to get extremely angry, she shouts at her children and cannot stand any contradiction. She easily feels attacked and hurt. Not long ago she had repeated quarrels and differences of opinion with her husband, which still worries her. The husband used bad language and she could not retaliate.

She felt very hurt and did not talk to him for days.

Her whole life situation is very strained (weeps) because her husband has set up his own business and has to work very hard for his living. She always has a bad conscience regarding the children because of the quarrels. She realises that the children are afraid that their parents might divorce.

She is very sensitive and cannot watch creepy or frightening films, especially films with 'aliens'.

There is no space for the nicer side of life, no space for relaxation. She often feels a retching sensation in the stomach, and has a craving for sharp spices.

She has a sharp nose and can smell what the children have been eating by the smell of their clothes. Repeated stitching backaches in the lumbar region and the sensation as if her back is breaking.

The pregnancy, which was not planned, the childbirth and the care for the baby created an additional burden. Standing up after sitting causes dizziness from hypotension. She would never drink so much alcohol that she would lose control.

Cannot vomit when she feels sick. Complaints from haemorrhoids since the last pregnancy. The mother of the patient suffers from severe psoriasis, she also has a renal insufficiency and needs dialysis.

As a baby she suffered from eczema. One of her daughters has this disease too. The patient has a troublesome relationship with her mother, there is also an incompatibility of milk. She moved away from home when she was 18.

### Prescription:

*Nux vomica* LM6 for a period of four weeks (once a day dil. 1) with good results. She became steady and well-balanced again and was more able to cope

with the tense situation at home.

When she was breast feeding her little daughter she developed mastitis. The milk was thick and viscid. In March 1995 I prescribed *Phytolacca* C200 which cured her immediately.

In August 1995 the patient consulted me again. She reported that six months after parturition, when she was still breast feeding the little girl at night, she had her first menstruation. It did not stop, however, but continued spotting over a period of more than two months. Before menstruation she noted the growth of some nodes in the mammae. Because of the breast feeding the gynaecologist did not want to treat her allopathically and was of the opinion that the bleeding would stop on its own, which unfortunately did not happen.

Apart from this problem the irritability, the feeling of being overstrained and forsaken, and the feeling that 'it is all too much for her' is still very prevalent. During the consultation the patient constantly massaged her neck which was extremely tense.

Stitching pains in hands and feet. A hallux valgus is inflamed and aching. Sensation as if the vertebral column were made of glass and could break. Hungry at night. She cannot stand clothes around her neck.

She has a problem with possessive closeness or too much intimacy in a relationship, which was discussed in earlier consultations.

### Repertorisation

Mind; Forsaken feeling

Mind; Overstrained, overburdened, feeling as if (!)

Female; Metrorrhagia; nursing the child

Mind; Quarrelsomeness, scolding; trifles about (!)

Mind; Laughing; never

Back; Pain; General; Cervical region.

I gave her *Bamboo* C6, which comes up in all rubrics, with the instruction to dissolve three globuli in some water every day and to drink it in three little sips.

### Follow-up

*Bamboo* stopped the bleeding within one day. The patient felt very well! The irritability and fear of being unable to manage things disappeared. More stable feeling in the vertebral column. The C6 was stopped after three days.

Ten weeks later the patient came to me

again. She had a minor metrorrhagia during the days around ovulation. She had to wear a sanitary towel and was very unhappy about the menstrual disorder. The irritability, dissatisfaction and overstrain became obvious again in the course of our conversation.

Basically the above rubrics were still applicable.

I prescribed *Bamboo* C200 dissolved in water, five times one tea-spoonful.

After a short time there was an amelioration of the mental symptoms and during the following months she had regular menstruation and no spotting during ovulation.

Eleven months after the first dose of *Bamboo* the symptoms returned, more or less the same as before. There were also two new symptoms, a stiffness of the right hand in the morning and an eruption on the eyelids. She is feeling dissatisfied again and is scolding about trifles.

Prescription: *Bamboo* Q6 dil. 1.

After that, she felt fine again.

Especially interesting in this case history is the rubric 'Female genitalia; metrorrhagia while nursing' which only shows *Silica* in the original Kent. (Additions: calc., phos., rhus-t.) This is a further indication of the similarity between *Bamboo* and *Silica*.

## Case 3

### Depression after parturition.

Mrs. B., born in 1965, consulted me for the first time in 1991 for a sensation as of a lump in her throat, fear of suffocation, recurrent inflammations of the throat and great sensitivity to any pressure of clothes.

She was given *Lachesis* C1000 and her troubles disappeared.

I saw her again in 1995, 22 weeks pregnant with her first child. She complained of loud palpitations, cramps and stitching pains around the heart, with pain in her left arm. She was very jealous towards her husband. She could not lie on her left side.

Once again I prescribed *Lachesis* C200.

She came back in August 1995, two weeks after the birth of the child. The difficult birth, accompanied by diarrhoea and vomiting, a large perineum incision with bad bruising and the stress with the baby had completely changed her.

'Never again will I go through all that!', she said.

She had lost five kilograms in weight and was very nervous and weak 'as if I had not a drop of blood left in me'. She feels that breast feeding increases the weakness and she had started to take medication to stop the flow of milk the day before.

'While nursing I have a terrible feeling. My mood is the same as when my mother died. I must always weep while nursing. I cannot and I will not breast-feed any longer. I feel empty, miserable, depressed, drained of all energy. I am not the sort of person who can breastfeed her baby for a long time.'

She feels completely stressed and almost persecuted by her crying baby.

She lies in bed all day long and cannot take care of the household. Her husband had to stay home from work, then the mother-in-law had to move in to support her (repeatedly props her head). 'I cannot manage it, I cannot stay alone, I keep ringing up my twin sister to come. I'm afraid to be solely responsible for the child. I imagined the relationship with a child to be more close. I need someone to help me. I feel drawn to my old family, I am homesick (weeps). The child is all I think about.'

#### Repertorisation

Mind; Helplessness, feeling of, support, needs(!)

Mind; Indolence, aversion to work; housework, aversion to her usual

Mind; Bed; desires to remain in

Head; Prop, inclination to(!)

Mind; Overstrained, overburdened, feeling as if (!)

Generalities; Parturition, after.

Prescription: Bamboo Q6 dil. 1.

#### Follow-up

She returns four weeks after taking Bamboo. This time she comes with the baby and she laughs at her baby whenever there is a pause in the conversation. The whole situation is much improved. She is much more at ease with the child. The feeling of emptiness and depression has gone. She gets on well without help, has put on three kilograms in weight.

Sometimes she has a feeling in the hypogastrium as if her menstruation is about to start. Slight pain in the stomach over the last few days. Stiff neck at times.

Prescription: Bamboo Q6 every two days, one dose dil. 1.

I have not seen her since that time, but I know from other women she sent to me for treatment that she is in good health.

I have observed in various cases that the time after parturition often gives rise to a Bamboo disease. This was also confirmed by some of my colleagues who had Bamboo cases which centred around the same topic.

The time after parturition is always a time of high demands on the mother and the whole family. The whole family situation is turned upside down, accompanied by a lack of sleep, always being on call, nursing, worrying about child illnesses.

It is a time in which the mother is often overstrained or has a feeling as if she is overstrained.

This feeling of stress and tension is often accompanied by the feeling of 'not being able to cope', and the resulting search for help and support is the central idea of Bamboo on the mental level.

The Bamboo plant itself is often used as a foundation, providing structure and stability. Bamboo is hard, tough, indestructible, deeply rooted, giving protection and safety against typhoons and earthquakes. These are also the characteristics on which the homœopathic remedy is based and it can therefore help to support and stabilise the mother. The Bamboo shoot itself is a plant embryo and is in the process of being born. Consequently there is a great affinity to the stage of life 'after childbirth' or 'after parturition'.

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#### Publisher of the book with the original German provings text:

Kent-Gesellschaft, Kastanienstrasse 4,  
61476 Kronberg, Germany.

Fax: +49-6173-933470. E-mail:

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ISBN 3-932116-00-3

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\*Dil. 1 means: One drop of the Q6 diluted in 100 cc water. Dil. 2 means: One tea-spoon of the dil. 1 in 100 cc water. First dose in this case: Five teaspoons of the dil. 1 at regular intervals of 10 minutes.

# Bamboo Case - Jeremy Sherr

**W**oman, aged 18 years. Has had *Silica* x 2, *Pulsatilla*, *Arsenicum album*, *Cannabis sativa*.

Has a lump on the head since childhood and new ones are growing. The lump is very painful, possibly a lipoma. Lump < if touched. Since the second *Silica*, another lump has grown.

Generally very restless, must keep moving.

Periods are late, 32 days and very painful. Heavy and clotted.

Gets frequent colds, with sore throats and lachrymation. Tonsils removed in childhood. Colds are < for change of weather.

Food: -- SPICY, FOREIGN, ++ PLAIN food (sweet/salt)

THIRSTY for cold drinks. Hates: tea, coffee, milk, hot drinks

Dreams of people dying, relatives dying. Feelings of guilt after the dreams, in case they really do die. She is quiet and straightforward – introverted. She says: 'People dump their problems on me. I can listen to people easily. I just listen and give as little advice as possible'.

'I'm a hard worker and always do as I'm told. I have no rebellious streak. People say I'm too quiet and don't give out much. I prefer to stand back and listen to others'.

Fear of not doing well in life, not getting a good job and being able to support herself. She worries about letting her parents down. Mentions that her boyfriend is very ambitious, confident and outgoing.

Prescription: *Bamb-a* [*Nat-m*, *Mag-m*]

The following rubrics were used in the primary repertorisation:

Menses, painful, dysmenorrhœa  
Menses, clotted, coagulated  
Menses, too late  
Lachrymation  
Timidity  
Yielding

Other confirmatory and interesting rubrics with regard to this case included:

Head, lump as of  
Dreams of death  
Dreams of death of a friend  
Indisposed to talk, taciturn  
Dreams, animals, of horses  
Dreams of riding horses  
Delusion, insecure, everything is.

### Follow-up two months later

Generally much better. Menstrual pain is totally gone. Lumps on head have vanished. Much fewer colds. The patient's confidence has improved and she is more outgoing. She broke up with her boyfriend and is enjoying her studies more. She spends less time horse-riding and has taken up swimming.

**Follow-up ten months later**  
Improvement continues.