

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

43 months have gone by since Synthesis 7: it is fascinating to stand still and to look back for a while! So many things have happened and so many more people got involved that it becomes a tough job to acknowledge them all.

First of all I need to thank those who have challenged the value and even the existence of Synthesis for different reasons. It has given us the creativity to question the fundamentals of our project and to rise from our ashes in a most innovative way.

Thank you also to those many thousands of Synthesis users. Their feedback and help to improve the Repertory has become so substantial that we have one person in our team, since August 1998, who is fully dedicated to check and integrate their remarks into Synthesis. Your input adds to guarantee the increasing quality of information.

I have always been a team player and I am very happy to see that more than 150 people have collaborated in the creation of this Synthesis. Their names are all mentioned in the appendix, but I would like to thank some of them for really substantial jobs: Edith Meinders (NL) and Erik Van Woensel (NL) for integrating Morrison's DeskTop Guide; Edith Meinders (NL) and René Otter (NL) for integrating Nancy Herrick's work; Erik Van Woensel (NL) again for completing all information about Jeremy Sherr's remedies; Gerard Megens (NL) for sharing his monstrous logfile with us; Marc Brunson (B) and his team for their help to integrate the classical authors; P. Sivaraman (IND) for his invaluable help with bg2; Peter Fraser (UK) for integrating Misha Norland's provings; Peter Friedrich (D) and Wilhelm Schmidt (D) for integrating their provings; Peter Vint (D) and Jürgen Wachsmuth (D) for integrating olib-sac.; Pierre Salaün (F) for sharing his personal source tracking work of Kent's Repertory; Dean Crothers, Nick Nossaman and Robert Schore (all USA, members of the rhus-t-study group) for helping us to integrate their own tedious source work; Steve Olsen (USA) for helping to integrate his proving work.

A special word of thanks to the translation coordinators: their inestimable effort makes the information so much more accessible to all: Claudio Araujo (Portuguese); Andreu Forteza, Isidre Lara, Joaquim Peleteiro, José-Marie Queralt, and Salvador Cabré (all from Spain) and Fernando Ochoa (MEX) (for Spanish); Jacqueline Ozanon (French); Mariella Di Stefano (Italian); Peter Vint (German) and René Otter (Dutch).

To create Synthesis is one thing, to have it out there and appreciated by all is a different one. For this tremendous task, many thanks to Archibel's General Coordinator, Dale Emerson and his administrative and production team (Deborah Stevenson, Liz Nys, Valérie Lenaerts and Valérie Dubois and to all our representatives worldwide (today more than 30 countries), especially to Kim Elia (USA) and Reinhard Rosé (D) who make all the difference over there.

The role of computer science has again become more important as you have noticed and I am proud to have a most ingenious collaboration with Philippe Santantonio and his team (Pascal Debuissou, Eric De Ceuster, Paul Dessaert, Annick Franck and Jean-Claude Spelte). Then, for this printed edition, Philippe Eeman as a publishing coordinator, Emmanuel Warnier as our trusted house supplier for a flawless design, the proofreading team (Echo, Helena, Gani, Kristel, Lia and Mieke), Dale Emerson and Joan Bielunas for rewriting my texts and Frédéric Tourrain and the people at Aubin press in France.

At last, but not least, my own "Synthesis team", the people working directly with me on a daily basis: An Aerts, Connie Claerhout, Paul Debruyne, Gerd Van Brandt, Katelijne Vanhoutte and also Manuel, my freewheeling son, for creating the webpages.

One more word to you who read this: thanks for choosing Synthesis and for supporting us: this will allow us to continue our task for the well-being of all! And don't forget: *your* ideas and *your* criticism are always welcome.

INTRODUCTION

This concept is a proposal

History of Repertories

Repertories have helped conscientious homeopaths in their struggle for the right remedy as long as homeopathy has existed.

Hahnemann himself made some first steps in structuring his information into some kind of repertory. However, it was his immediate disciple and collaborator of the first hour Clemens von Boenninghausen who can be credited with creating the first usable Repertory in 1832.

Different authors expanded on previous versions of this repertory, e.g. Allen, Jahr, von Lippe etc. Some created completely new structures, as did Gentry and Knerr.

It was Kent, however, who published different parts of a Repertory from 1897 to 1899 with a structure and a hierarchical logic that would stand the test of time. Kent released different versions of his repertory himself (the second edition in 1908, and a third manuscript edition at his death in 1916, only printed in 1924). Later editions¹ never reached the quality of Kent's manuscript of the third edition and can be considered as only slightly changed and updated versions edited by his followers and his wife Clara-Louise.

Nevertheless, for a few decades no other Repertory succeeded taking up the challenge of progress.

In 1973 Barthel and Klunker started the publication of a first version of their "Synthetic Repertory", adding information from 14, later from 16 authors to the 5 main chapters of the Repertory (mind, generals, sleep and dreams, male and female sexuality). Although Barthel and Klunker did not expand their work to more authors or to more chapters, many considered their Repertory a new reference.

Other articles report in detail on the evolution of Repertories, now let's turn our attention to Synthesis, the newcomer.

History of Synthesis

Synthesis is the Repertory linked to the Radar-project.

It is based on the Sixth American Edition of Kent's Repertory, and contains all its rubrics and remedies.

Since 1987, Synthesis has been used as a database for the Radar program in the daily practice of leading homeopaths. It has been commented upon and thereby improved over and over again, which gives it an outstanding label of quality. Indeed, not only additions of an

¹ Fourth edition: printed in 1935; fifth edition printed in 1945 and sixth edition printed in 1957. After this several Indian editions have been printed which contain an unacceptable amount of mistakes.

increasing number of authors have been added to all chapters, but also corrections of the existing data, including of Kent's work, have been integrated.

Version 2 was released in April 1988 and occupied 10.5 MB² of a hard disk space.

Synthesis 3 followed in September 1990 with 11.5 MB: it contained mostly corrections on the previous version and offered 136.000 additions from about 130 authors compared to Kent's original Repertory.

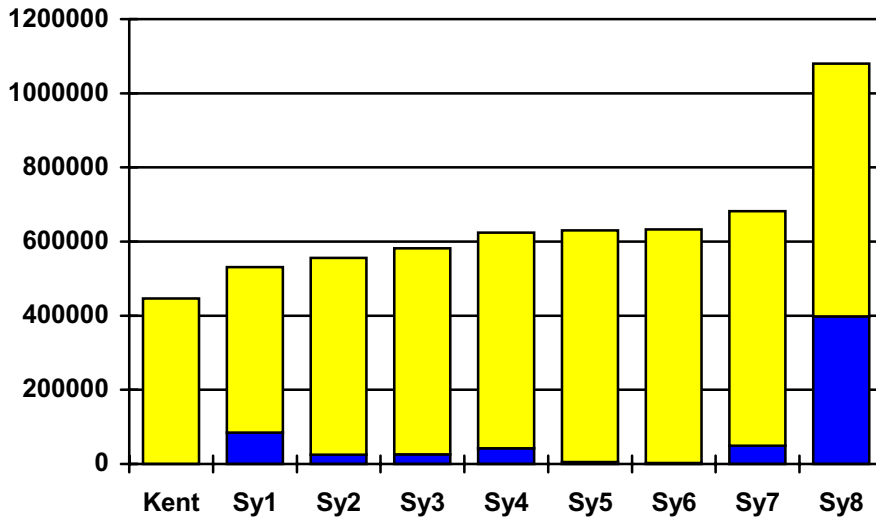


Chart 1: Stepwise additions: This chart shows the addition of information in successive versions of Synthesis. The lower (dark) part of each column indicates the number of new additions compared to the previous version.

In December 1992 the fourth software version of Synthesis was released. It contained 178.000 additions from about 200 authors.

At each step the quality has been improved, but especially in the creation of version 5. Compared to version 4, only a few thousand additions have been added, because we focused on increasing the quality. The reason is that we decided that Synthesis 5 was going to be the first printed version.

Although errors had been corrected in each subsequent version of Synthesis, the decision to print Synthesis caused some extra reflections. If this Repertory was to be printed, it should be done only if we could offer a dramatic increase in the quality of the Repertory, its structure, its language and the consistency of its information. In July 1992 the homeopathic

² One Megabyte (MB) corresponds to one million characters.

part of the job for Synthesis 4 was finished³ and we focused exclusively on increasing the quality for version 5.

The publication of Synthesis 5 was a milestone.

The homeopathic work was finished on June 21,1993 and it was published in German in August 1993 and in English in February 1994. The success was such that in both languages a reprint was needed within a few months. Synthesis started to position itself as the new reference repertory in an increasing number of schools.

On the basis of this much better streamlined version 5, we continued again the work of more additions until January 1995. Considering the loose leaflet edition 5 in German, the original idea was to release an update to edition 5, e.g. some pages with corrections or an updated chapter. So version 6 of Synthesis contains additions and corrections most especially in the mind section. The other innovation of version 6 was the introduction of concepts, a most useful way to find symptoms.

In English, Synthesis 6 was only released as software in July 1995 and occupied 28,3 MB.

In German it was reprinted in August 1995 as an update to the loose-leaf edition, but also as a one-volume book.

Synthesis 6 contains 633.000 author references.

The German users favored the one volume book, so the loose-leaf edition was discontinued and we completed the information in all chapters now to be ready homeopathically with a fully updated version 7 on July 4, 1997.

Synthesis 7 came with 682.000 author references and occupied 32,7 MB.

All this time we believed that the best policy was to increase the number of additions stepwise. Every edition of Synthesis was used in hundreds of thousands of cases worldwide and integrating the feedback of those users was part of our quality policy.

Nevertheless the discrepancy between those wanting highly confirmed information only and those wanting quantity available grew during these years and we changed that policy dramatically when creating version 8.

As a result Synthesis 8 has 1.071.000 author references and occupies 43,1 MB: a major increase in quantity. This increase only happened when we had the tool to let everybody decide about the quantity and quality they wanted: confidence levels.

Synthesis has a tradition of caring for the quality of information in the first place.

This priority defined the work during the first seven editions without any compromise.

³ The corresponding computer version was only released in December 1992, as programming time was needed to integrate it into the next Radar version.

Synthesis 8 without any doubt introduced the quantity aspect, but with care. In fact one could say that we kept on caring for quality but that the individual user had the possibility to choose the quantity of information.

A worldwide project

All aspects of Synthesis will be discussed under the different headings following this introduction. One aspect, however, still needs special attention: our wish that this Repertory stands for worldwide collaboration between homeopaths. Since the beginning, non-Radar users have been collaborating with us. The printed versions have increased this input. Our computer technology was only the means to create this unique totality of information. With the printing of the book, it is available to even more colleagues.

The other feature that is making Synthesis a unique meeting point is the existence of editions in national languages. Homeopathy, despite its German origins, has become very dependent upon the English language. For the level of communication and understanding needed in our profession, it appears that still very many homeopaths have major difficulties with this world language.

At this moment there are translations into Czech, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, either as software, as a book or both. Translations in several other languages are ongoing.

The number of homeopaths who is able to use Synthesis is consequently multiplied several times. We trust that the feedback will increase accordingly. We are ready to process all remarks made in different languages centrally and all editions will be updated with the sum of all new corrections and additions.