

# Medical Heresy Struggles for the Right of “Otherness”: Homeopathy in the USSR<sup>1</sup>

Alexander Kotok

## Summary

*Der Streit um eine Alternativmedizin: Homöopathie in der UdSSR*

In der Weltgeschichte der Homöopathie fehlte bislang die Sowjetunion. Bis zu einem gewissen Grad ist dies durch die Schwierigkeiten begründet, mit denen jeder, der zu diesem Thema arbeitet, konfrontiert ist. Der halb-legale Status der Homöopathie in der Sowjetunion, die permanente Bedrohung, verboten oder abgeschafft zu werden, Strafmaßnahmen der Behörden, all dies führte dazu, daß ein Mangel an verlässlichen Quellen und Belegen herrscht. Ziel der vorliegenden Studie ist es, die Geschichte der Homöopathie in der Sowjetunion darzustellen. So wird ein kompliziertes System von wechselseitigen Beziehungen zwischen medizinischen »Häretikern« sichtbar. Die Existenz eines solchen Systems erscheint in einem totalitären Staat unmöglich, da in diesem das Recht, »anders« zu sein, nicht zugestanden wird.

Es handelt sich um eine erste Studie, der weitere folgen sollen.

## The Years before the Breakdown

An outline of the position of Russian pre-revolutionary homeopathy provides a better insight into the history of homeopathy under the seventy-three year long Soviet government. Unlike the certainty of the decline of homeopathy by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe, homeopathy in the Russian Empire of the 1890s enjoyed a revival. Almost every year during the 1890s saw a new homeopathic society established, some promising doctors joined the homeopathic community, and the nobility and the Orthodox Church openly favoured homeopathy. Russian homeopathy reached a peak of success in 1898 when the St. Petersburg Society of the Followers of Homeopathy opened its own homeopathic hospital in that city. It was built from private donations collected in memory of Tsar Alexander II, assassinated in 1881, and was named after him. This belated development of homeopathy in the Russian Empire clearly reflected the late development of the whole Russian Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century compared with that of other European countries and the USA.<sup>2</sup>

---

1 I wish to express my appreciation to all my close friends who kindly assisted me, first of all Galina Lobanova (St. Petersburg, Russia) who, at my request, found and provided me with some valuable sources kept in the archives and libraries of St. Petersburg. A special debt of gratitude goes to Peter Merrell (Stoke-on-Trent, UK) for his careful editing of my article. And, of course I would like to thank my colleagues from the Robert Bosch Foundation for the grant which made the research, writing and publishing of this paper possible.

2 For more detail on the history of pre-World War I Russian homeopathy see Kotok (1999).

Yet, the early 1900s showed that homeopathy in Russia, although enjoying wide support from many high-ranking individuals, was rather fragile and did not have a substantial basis within Russian society, except for two metropolitan centres. The social and political upheavals within the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century significantly undermined homeopathy. Many societies virtually ceased their activities never fully regaining their power and the corresponding influx of charitable donations diminished. Moreover, observing both the recent rapid success of homeopaths and the post-revolutionary weakening of the position of the main supporters of homeopathy, Russian allopaths decided to destroy their hated rival by introducing new pharmaceutical regulations designed to undermine the financial basis of Russian homeopathy, namely homeopathic pharmacies.

The Medical Council at the Ministry of the Interior – the highest medical authority in the Russian Empire – began a crusade against homeopathic pharmacies which lasted until World War I firstly, by planning to close them and, then, by amalgamating them with allopathic pharmacies. Although the threat was permanent and required particularly fast reaction by the supporters of Russian homeopathy, it took almost eight years to call the First All-Russian Meeting of the Followers of Homeopathy, thereby, indicating sluggishness and poor organisation. The meeting, held in St. Petersburg on October 21-23, 1913, was the first and the last attempt at bringing together all Russian homeopaths and their lay supporters. The meeting sent an address to the Duma requesting that it not pass the legislative proposals from the allopaths. This address and some covert actions, gained homeopaths a breathing space, whilst the war removed this issue from the agenda of the Duma.

The bitterest irony in the lost cause of pre-World War I Russian homeopathy was that all appeals to society to recognise the benefits of homeopathy and to introduce it into state medicine on a larger scale proved to have absolutely no influence. The number of Russian homeopaths was so insignificant (no more than 150 doctors openly practicing homeopathy, i.e. less than 1% of all physicians in the Russian Empire) that even the most favourable and attractive proposals received from homeopathic societies were forcefully rejected.<sup>3</sup> It is quite obvious that Russian homeopathy was highly

---

3 So, homeopathic societies of such a metropolitan city as Kiev and large provincial towns like Saratov and Yalta, sought in vain for many years to employ a homeopathic doctor. When the Nizhnedevitsk Zemstvo of the Voronezh district (from being established in 1864, the Zemstvo was the favourite object of appeals from Russian homeopaths to introduce homeopathy “to convincingly demonstrate doubtless benefits of fast, mild and effective homeopathic treatment over cruel allopathic drugging”) decided to employ officially a homeopathic doctor and did not succumb to threats by allopathic doctors to leave their service if a homeopath joined the ranks of the Zemstvo physicians, it received many greetings and wishes of good luck from homeopaths and homeopathic societies from all parts of Russia, but not even one offered to accept

sensitive to any event which would decrease the number of practicing homeopathic doctors which was to happen at the start of World War I.

Russian homeopathy in 1914 had thirty purely homeopathic pharmacies (which represented approximately 0.6% of all pharmacies in the Russian Empire) and twelve pharmacies which kept a homeopathic section, one homeopathic hospital (Alexander II Hospital in St. Petersburg) and some small in-patient clinics (e.g. a clinic in Moscow run by the Moscow Society of the Followers of Homeopathy and a few small charitable facilities in the countryside run by landowners and nobility), some twenty homeopathic societies (often running their own out-patient clinics), two homeopathic journals (both issued in St. Petersburg), 130-150 doctors openly declaring themselves as homeopaths and belonging to homeopathic societies as well as some 200 doctors who used homeopathy in their day-to-day practice without advertising this fact.<sup>4</sup> The main Russian homeopathic city indisputably was St. Petersburg. There were 5 to 6 homeopathic pharmacies enjoying a high turnover and 20 homeopathic doctors belonging to the only homeopathic professional association of the Russian Empire (St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians).

### **The Breakdown: 1914 to 1920**

It is almost impossible, unfortunately, to find in the contemporary Russian homeopathic literature any assertion truly representing the situation of homeopathy in this critical period. All authors repeat that the breakdown of homeopathy occurred after the Bolshevik Revolution and was directly caused by it when, in reality, it happened earlier and was caused by World War I. This was determined by two main factors. Firstly, immediately after entering the war, the Russian government started drafting civilian physicians to treat the front-line forces. The majority of Russian homeopathic doctors were in private practice who could not avoid being drafted on the grounds of their affiliation with civilian hospitals, in-patient clinics, etc., i.e. public institutions recognised and supported by the state. Additionally, many of them were sincere Russian patriots, wanting to offer support to their homeland. Thus, physicians were leaving their practices and public activities, whilst the homeopathic societies lost their support and soon collapsed. Secondly, every shock experienced by the Russian Empire re-emphasised the fragility of the organisational basis of homeopathy. As at

---

the salary proposed. In 1913, the Moscow Society of the Followers of Homeopathy had to decline an excellent offer of a land-owning lady of the Nizhny Novgorod district who was ready to donate a plot of land, build a sanatorium and employ a homeopathic doctor at her expense to provide peasants with free homeopathic treatment, because "there was no doctor who would agree to manage the sanatorium". Examples of this kind are numerous.

4 See the sections "Homeopathic pharmacies in Russia an outline history" and "Homeopathic periodicals", in: Kotok (1999).

the beginning of the century, such a terrible disturbance as participation in World War I drastically diminished and even halted the charitable donations which had nourished the homeopathic periodicals, homeopathic societies and charitable in- and out-patient homeopathic clinics throughout Russia. Such charitable donations were now directed to support the army and homeopathic life, at best, became frozen in the whole of Russia with the partial exception of the metropolitan areas.

The annual reports of all Russian homeopathic societies were discontinued in 1914 although some societies continued to hold meetings as late as 1915. Therefore, the fate of the homeopathic journals, which lost both readers and supporters, was predetermined. *Vrach-gomeopat* (Homeopathic Doctor), issued under various titles and editors since 1891, ceased at the very beginning of 1915, providing its readers with no explanation. *Gomeopaticheskoe obozrenie* (Homeopathic Review), issued privately by Dr. Lev Frenkel (1858-1917), continued publication for a further 7 to 8 months, probably because it had started only two months before the start of the war and the editor still had some stamina to continue. Dr. Frenkel, in the last issue published in the autumn of 1915, informed the readers that “the issuing of the journal is being ceased till the end of the war”<sup>5</sup> but it never re-appeared. Dr. Frenkel died soon after from consumption.

The cessation of annual reports and journals seems most unfortunate as it created a large gap in the literature, making it difficult to trace the events from the beginning of the war to the re-emergence of homeopathy in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. Some fragments of significant information can be found in the archive of Dr. Nicholas Gabrilovich (1865-1941)<sup>6</sup>, who

---

5 *Gomeopaticheskoe obozrenie* 1915, 17, p. 514.

6 Brief information about Dr. Gabrilovich by the archivists of the State Archive of the Russian Federation in Moscow (Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii – GARF) is provided in the foreword to the description of his archive (fond 656), which was donated by Prof. Sergey Maslov, his son-in-law, in 1990. I cite it here with insignificant abridgements and my personal notes in brackets. “Nicholas Gabrilovich was born on February 15<sup>th</sup> 1865 in Ponevezh (since 1917 the city of Panevezhis, Lithuania). His father, Evgeny Osipovich Gabrilovich (a christened Jew; c. 1837-1918), was an obstetrician-gynaecologist (entered the St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians and became its energetic member in the mid-1880s). Completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Petersburg classic gymnasium. Enrolled the St. Petersburg Medical-Surgical Academy in 1884, and graduated from it with honours in 1890. In 1891-92, attended the course in ophthalmology at the Clinical Institute. In 1892-94, worked at the Institute of Experimental Medicine. In 1893, defended his MD thesis ‘On anatomy of the vitreous humour’. During 1894-95, worked as the chief of ophthalmologic groups in the Mogilev and Tobol’sk districts by order of the Trust for Care of the Blind. Full member of the St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians since October 1894. Homeopathic doctor at the out-patient clinic of the society during 1906-1912. From 1912 until 1918 was the physician in chief of that clinic (simultaneously worked in the Alexander II Homeopathic Hospital). From April 1919, to 1922 took positions of ophthalmologist at the factory ‘Bolshevik’, district physician, head of the library of the

played a very important role in the re-establishment of homeopathy in Soviet life and especially in Petrograd (St. Petersburg until 1914, Leningrad from 1924). His personal archive of 567 documents, kept in the State Archive of the Russian Federation, represents a collection of private letters he received from various correspondents and copies of letters he sent, texts of his lectures and reports, protocols of different meetings, reports and papers on the subject of homeopathy published in the Soviet popular and professional periodicals, pictures, etc. Although a very inadequate substitute for the relatively ordered information available from the pre-World War I Russian homeopathic periodicals and societies' reports, it does give a good impression of homeopathic events during the period of the greatest Russian unrest. Homeopathic life in the Russian Empire went into decline from 1914 but this decline was more obvious in the provincial towns than in metropolitan centres, where, although weakened, it persisted.

The Moscow Society of the Followers of Homeopathy succeeded in raising funds and opened a small homeopathic military in-patient clinic with twenty beds, where six doctors (including one woman) were employed. The medical supplies were provided free of charge by all three of the existing Moscow homeopathic pharmacies.<sup>7</sup> Two acting homeopathic societies in St. Petersburg (St. Petersburg Charitable Society of the Followers of Homeopathy and St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians)<sup>8</sup> continued their activities. They pooled resources as well as energy. The civilian Alexander II Homeopathic Hospital, run by the lay society (the Followers of Homeopathy), was turned into a military one with the permission of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, whilst an out-patient clinic at the hospital

---

public health museum [...]. From 1934 a consultant on homeopathy at the All-Union Institute for Experimental Medicine. Vice-President of the International Homeopathic League in 1932 and 1938. Headed the Petrograd (later Leningrad) Society of Homeopathic Physicians until 1926 [...]. Mastered English, French and German, read in Spanish and Italian. Died on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1941". According to Dr. Nicholas Gabrilovich, he became dissatisfied with contemporary medicine during his university studies and chose ophthalmology as his profession to avoid dealing with the useless "Latin kitchen". He turned to homeopathy after successfully treating a patient who suffered from atrophy of the optic nerve, as allopathy had nothing to offer (GARF, fond 656, file 17, p. 2). I believe that his decision to try homeopathy at first, Dr. Nicholas Gabrilovich was influenced largely by his father Dr. Ossip Gabrilovich (1835-1918), who studied homeopathy in Budapest under the famous Prof. T. Bakody (1825-1911) at the only existing Department of Homeopathy in Europe at that time and became a homeopath in the 1880s, after 25 years of allopathic practice in obstetrics and gynaecology.

7 *Gomeopaticheskoe obozrenie* 1915, 5, p. 160.

8 The St. Petersburg Charitable Society of the Followers of Homeopathy was established in 1880 by a group of dissatisfied former members of the St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians. For more detail of the history of the latter and the reasons that led to its split, see the section "The St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians from the establishment to the split", in: Kotok (1999).

concentrated on the treatment of the wounded. The five members of the pre-war staff of the hospital (four men and one woman), thereby, kept their positions, with only one doctor lost by being drafted. He was replaced by a surgeon who was invited to work under the supervision of the homeopaths. The number of beds grew from fifty to eighty, whilst fifty beds were allo-cated for use by the wounded. From September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1914, when the mili-tary hospital opened, until April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1915 there were 147 persons under treatment, 15 of them army officers and 132 soldiers. 105 were cured, and 5 transferred to other medical facilities. The hospital was governed by repre-sentatives of both societies, whilst the Ladies Charitable Committee at the Society of Homeopathic Physicians collected money and gifts for the wounded.<sup>9</sup>

The Alexander II Homeopathic Hospital, since its establishment in 1898, had been the flagship and the nucleus of Russian homeopathy, the subject of its special pride, the testimony and confirmation of its successes, and the real proof of its vitality. Periodically, many high -ranking officials visited the hospital. Dr. Petry Hoyle (1861-1955) visited the hospital in 1913 and voiced his appreciation when participating in the First All-Russian Meeting of the Followers of Homeopathy on behalf of the International Homeo-pathic League. The staff of the hospital enjoyed being part of the Russian officials' hierarchy, whilst the doctors were entitled officially to wear the uniform of the employees of the Ministry of Interior.

The correspondence between Drs. Gabrilovich and Brazol provides a par-tial insight into events at the hospital. In the Spring of 1917, the head of the hospital, Dr. Lev Brazol (1854-1927)<sup>10</sup>, surrendered his post to Dr. Nicholas

---

9 *Gomeopaticheskoe obozrenie* 1915, 10, p. 320. For the types of treatment provided and some observations on the usefulness of homeopathy in war injuries, see the report of the 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the St. Petersburg Charitable Society of the Followers of Home-opathy held on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1915 published in the last issue of *Vrach-gomeopat* 1915, 1, pp. 96-109.

10. Dr. Brazol probably had been the most prominent Russian homeopath from the late 1880s until the Bolshevik Revolution. He was born into a noble family in the Poltava province (Ukraine). In 1877, he graduated from the St. Petersburg Medical-Surgical Academy. When working in the early 1880s in Germany in the laboratory of the distinguished German physiologist Karl Ludwig (1816-1895) as part of the requirements for his MD degree, he became acquainted with homeopathy, but the circumstances still remain unknown. By the middle 1880s, he was already a convinced adherent of homeopathy. He first became known to the Russian medical community not for being a homeopath, but for his writings on smallpox vaccinations – “The imaginary benefit and the real harm of smallpox vaccinations” (Mnimaia pol'za i deistvitel'ny vred ospoprivaniia) and “Jennerism and pasteurism. A critical essay of the scientific and the empirical grounds of smallpox vaccinations” (Dzhennerizm i pasterizm. Kritichesky ocherk nauchnyh i empiricheskikh osnovany ospoprivaniia), issued in 1884 in St. Petersburg and in 1885 in Kharkov. In 1885, he became a member of, and two years later on was elected the President to, the St. Petersburg Society of Homeo-pathic Physicians, a post he held until 1917. He was the first doctor to deliver in Rus-

Gabrilovich, then the head of the men's department, and went to Kiev. His wife suddenly fell severely ill and, despite all his efforts, she died. Dr. Brazol was shocked so deeply by this tragic event that he vowed never to return to St. Petersburg. Dr. Gabrilovich took over as the head of the hospital which operated normally until the beginning of 1918.

In 1918, along with mass murder and plunder, the Bolsheviks started nationalising private property. They knew nothing of homeopathy and it is probable that they considered it and its institutions as a meaningless amusement of idle rich people. Thus, the People Commissar of Education, V. Lunacharsky (1875-1933), decided that the hospital should be transferred to the management of the Petrograd Women's Medical Institute.<sup>11</sup> The joint letter of Dr. Nicholas Gabrilovich and the chairman of the Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, General Georgy Burman naively tried to explain to Lunacharsky that the homeopathic hospital had never been private property but exclusively a charitable facility to satisfy the need for homeopathic treatment. Thus, the hospital should not be transferred to the Communal Commission for Education which, in turn, was about to transfer the hospital to the Women's Medical Institute. Gabrilovich seemingly also sent a letter on behalf of the St. Petersburg Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, which held its urgent meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1918, to an unnamed Professor at the Women's Medical Institute. This was an attempt to convince the management of the institute to reject this generous "gift" which had been created by the efforts and donations of the followers of an

---

sia public lectures on homeopathy (three lectures in 1897 and one lecture in 1890) in the Pedagogical Museum in St. Petersburg. In 1896, he proposed at the International Homeopathic Congress in London to immortalise Hahnemann's name and was elected the President of the International Committee for Erecting Hahnemann's Memorial. The memorial was erected on the grave of Hahnemann at the Père-Lachaise cemetery due to the efforts of the committee and the collection of money initiated by its local representatives in various countries. Russia, for which Dr. Brazol was responsible, donated a third of the total sum of 20,000 francs collected. In 1924, he left Russia for Paris where he died in 1927. See Kotok (1999), notes and references to Ch. 1, n. 132. For more detail on Lev Brazol's biography, see Kotok (2001), pp. 12-17. Lev Brazol had two sons, Evgeny (1882-1973) and Boris (1885-1963). Both of them migrated to the USA after the Bolshevik Revolution. Boris Brazol was a spy for the American government during the Civil War in Russia when the US participated in the foreign intervention of 1918. More importantly, he is known for his active participation in the Beilis trial on the side of the prosecution and as having brought the fraudulent "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" to Henry Ford. He also worked for Henry Ford on the anti-Semitic newspaper *The Dearbon Independent*. He had no family. The private archive of Evgeny Brazol (Evgenii L'vovich Brazol's memoirs), another son of Dr. Brazol, is kept in the Bakhmeteff Archive at Columbia University Library in New-York. An exploration would shed some light on the fate of Brazol's family.

11 There is a draft of a letter signed by Dr. Nicholas Gabrilovich and the chairman of the Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, General Georgy Burman, kept in the archive of Dr. Gabrilovich. GARF, fond 656, file 411.

absolutely different stream of medicine. It is not known whether or not the letter was delivered.<sup>12</sup> The fate of the hospital was finally prejudged by the unfortunate purchase of very expensive X-ray equipment, approved by the board of managers in 1916 or 1917, to improve the quality of diagnostics and treatment. The Russian roentgenologists, headed by Prof. Mikhail Nemenov (1880-1950), considered that roentgenology was neglected by the Tsarist government and, thus, enthusiastically greeted the Bolsheviks expecting to gain higher positions in medical society. They took the opportunity of legal plundering and, under the orders of Lunacharsky<sup>13</sup>, became the new owners of the excellent well-equipped medical facility, whilst re-moving the former owners. It seems that homeopaths and lay supporters from the St. Petersburg Charitable Society of the Followers of Homeopathy tried vainly to do something. The head of the society, General Burman, in his letter dated June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918, asked Dr. Gabrilovich to call a meeting of the board to discuss the current events. However, he added that personally he considers it being senseless as “the authorities don’t see the meetings of the Society as the owner any more”.<sup>14</sup> The state Institute for Roentgenology, Radiology and Cancer was founded in place of the homeopathic hospital. The Alexander II memorial at the entrance to the building was destroyed and replaced with a Conrad Roentgen memorial, being the first such Ro-entgen memorial in the world. Even the street where the hospital was lo-cated had its name changed to Roentgen St. The loss of the hospital was not merely a takeover of legal property, it also marked the virtual eradica-tion of almost a century of Russian homeopathy, based on the lay support provided mainly by the Tsar’s family, nobility, clerics and high military staff; a new era had dawned.

The St. Petersburg Charitable Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, having lost the main focus of its existence, i.e. the hospital, was discontinued the very same year. The St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physi-

---

12 There is also a draft of the letter kept in the archive. GARF, fond 656, file 109, p. 74.

13 It seems that later Lunacharsky changed his attitude towards homeopathy. In his lec-ture “Sociological and pathological factors in the history of art” held on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1929 in the Communist Academy, he benevolently mentioned the recently published (and now widely known as an important landmark in the history of homeopathy) pa-per of Prof. August Bier “What should be our attitude toward homeopathy?” He stressed: “Since the recent time the theory of Hahnemann has been gaining ever more power [...]. One of the greatest surgeons of the present, Bier said that all the debate around homeopathy should be revised [...] homeopathy in its essence, in its philoso-phy of disease, is correct [...]. What does homeopathy mean for us? When not being a follower of homeopathy (on the contrary, homeopaths consider me as Herod of a kind for I took away their central house in Leningrad and transferred it to roent-genologists), I believe that there is a deep biological sense, which cannot be ignored [...] and which may be applied to social phenomena [...]” Lunacharsky (1967), vol. 8, p. 74.

14 GARF, fond 656, file 205, pp. 1-2.



cians soon followed. Generally, the losses caused to Russian homeopathy first by World War I, then by the Bolshevik Revolution (1917), the Civil War (1918-1920) and subsequent devastation, were almost irreparable as all homeopathic societies ceased. Many famous Russian homeopaths and pharmacists either died, often from epidemic diseases (distinguished examples being V. Ripke, S. Brandt, V. Zar'ianov, L. Frenkel, O. Gabrilovich, K. Vasil'ev, V. Solov'ev, G. Sidorenko, Adrianov, Rollsen), perished in the war – such as Dr. Ivan Lutsenko of Odessa (1869-1918), the leader of Ukrainian homeopathy, who fell in the battlefield fighting on the side of the Ukrainian Directory – or emigrated (Drs. A. Flemming and L. Brazol, the owner of the Odessa homeopathic pharmacy J. Levy). Many active lay supporters shared the same fate as physicians and pharmacists.<sup>15</sup> St. Petersburg homeopathy, together with the city itself, were permanently diminished.

### **The Revival: 1921 to 1924**

After the Civil War, Russian homeopathy slowly began to revive. Most fortunate for homeopathy was that the Soviet regime left homeopathic pharmacies intact, almost untouched by nationalisation, although all private allopathic pharmacies and drugstores passed into state ownership. The decree signed by V. Lenin on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1918, “The decree of nationalisation of pharmacies”, entirely overlooked the homeopathic ones. Homeopathic pharmacies not only supplied Russian homeopathy with its medicines, but also formed its vital ground and nucleus. They supported and propagated homeopathy and homeopaths within society by operating under either homeopathic societies or privately. Homeopathy in the USSR would certainly have disappeared if they had been closed, as virtually happened in the East European countries after World War II under Soviet rule.

Thus, it was a real miracle that homeopathic pharmacies twice escaped closure, in 1918 and in 1920. It is probable that they were merely forgotten by the legislators or neglected because homeopathic articles, unrecognised as an official science, could not be used immediately unlike allopathic ones under the new administration. In 1920, the pharmacists suddenly realised that their despised homeopathic counterparts were still alive. Yet, amending the nationalisation law, which had not included homeopathic pharmacies, was quite a difficult task for the pharmacists. Any amendment of a state law required a special decision taken at the highest level of the Soviet authori-

---

15 GARF, fond 656, file 296, pp. 7-10. Generally, the mortality of Russian physicians through the period 1914-1922 was enormously high. The average physicians' mortality during the 20 years preceding 1914 had been 249 persons a year, when during 1914-1922, and based on incomplete data (some districts did not provide statistics at all) it was as high as 390. The chief cause of death was typhus (60%) and other infectious diseases (6.7%), violent death (11.1%), etc. Zhbankov (1926), pp. 427-428.

ties, namely the VTsIK<sup>16</sup>, which had far more important issues to consider. Therefore, the pharmacists tried to find an easier solution. If homeopathy were officially labelled as a non-scientific method and as quackery, its facilities could be destroyed more easily.<sup>17</sup> It is possible to imagine that no financial interest or any competitive considerations derived from previous capitalism were behind the evangelical zeal to destroy homeopathy. The most intolerant representatives of “true medical science” simply sought a way of settling a grievance with an old rival, no matter the means. The Pharmaceutical Department of Narkomzdrav<sup>18</sup>, virtually the Soviet pharmacists’ lobby, turned to the Scientific Medical Council (Uchenyi Meditsinsky Sovet – UMS)<sup>19</sup> on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1920 to establish an official inquiry (№ 1614), to provide an explanation of “whether the further existence of homeopathic pharmacies left untouched by the law of nationalisation of pharmacies, is expedient”. As soon as the UMS acknowledged homeopathy as a non-scientific method, the Pharmaceutical Department could trigger the abolition of homeopathy by the Narkomzdrav. Although the correct answer was contained already in the question, the decision of the UMS was a great disappointment for which it is difficult to explain. The UMS did consist, of course, of pure allopaths, many of them belonging to Moscow academic circles hardly sympathetic to homeopathy. Its head was the microbiologist Dr. Lev Tarasevich (1868-1927), after whom the State Institute for Standardisation and Control of Biologic Products (GNIISK) is named.

---

16 An abbreviation of *Vserossiiskii Tsentralnyi Iсполnitelnyi Komitet* – The All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the highest legislative, administrative and supervisory body of the Russian Federation from 1918 to 1938.

17 In N. Gabrilovich’s archive a letter written by Nina Vorbricher (most probably, daughter or wife of the owner of the central Moscow homeopathic pharmacy Vorbricher), dated March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1920 is kept. She informed N. Gabrilovich that a scientific medical commission of the Narkomzdrav (see footnote 18) held a meeting presided over by the pharmacologist Prof. V.V. Nikolaev (1871-1950). The head of the Pharmaceutical Department Rogov reported on homeopathic pharmacies. It was decided that homeopathic pharmacies had to be closed. Moreover, the authorities suddenly inspected the Vorbricher’s pharmacy. According to Nina Vorbricher, the pharmacy workers at first did not allow the inspection but later acceded in order “not to do harm to themselves in the future.” A Moscow homeopath Dr. Vassily Postnikov arrived at the pharmacy and offered explanations to the inspectors. GARF, fond 656, file 205, pp. 13-16.

18 An abbreviation of “Narodnyi Commissariat Zdravoohraneniia” The People’s Commissariat of Health, operated from 1917 to 1946 as the central administrative body on medical affairs. In 1946, like other sectoral Narkomats, it was reorganised into the Ministry.

19 The Scientific Medical Council was established at the Narkomzdrav in August 1918 as the body responsible for taking decisions on scientific problems in medicine. It was abolished in 1988 as its functions were redistributed among other departments of the Ministry of Health of the USSR. This body will accompany us all through this paper.

No protocol of that meeting of the UMS exists<sup>20</sup> nor is there any information on whether some members of the UMS could have been influenced by homeopaths or whether their relationships with pharmacists were tense, daring to exploit high-ranking physicians, i.e. the UMS, as a tool for their dislike of homeopathy, or other relevant factors. Either way, at its meeting held on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1920, the UMS stated:

Homeopathic pharmacies should have no place in the medical-sanitary system of the state. It is why they are not subject to nationalisation and the state institutions thus have no reason to support or finance them in any manner. Although it does not share the doctrine of homeopathy, the Scientific Medical Council has no right to forbid this school of thought, and can therefore not endorse the closing of homeopathic pharmacies.<sup>21</sup>

There is a convincing argument that future generations of the UMS' members had every reason to regret deeply and repeatedly the decision of their predecessors. This proclamation made future prohibitive measures towards homeopathy virtually impossible, at least any from the UMS. At the same time, this decision was worthy of Solomon. Later on, Soviet authorities, having no power to destroy homeopathy because of its advocacy from patrons in the government and the communist party, constantly explained to the puzzled public that homeopathy existed in the USSR not because it was supported by the state or was scientifically valid, but because, if somebody takes an interest in it, it should not be subject to prohibitive measures. Ironically, this bizarre explanation related exclusively to homeopathy and not to any other branches of medicine people would take an interest in or, indeed, to other phenomena of Soviet life.

However, this decision placed the homeopathic pharmacies in a difficult position. Although the instruction did not suggest directly their closure, the final decision was left to the discretion of the local authorities. In Moscow and Leningrad, homeopaths had ties with representatives from the communist party and the government elite who were their patients and could call on help from many supporters of different ranks, thereby preventing the closure of homeopathic pharmacies; in some provincial cities, the UMS instruction was viewed as a license to eliminate homeopathy. Before the Bolshevik Revolution, the large city of Viatka (since 1927, Kirov), for example, had two very successful homeopathic pharmacies because of the popularity of domestic homeopathy. They survived all the disturbances from 1914 to 1920 but, as soon as the instruction was issued, both were nationalised and became state allopathic pharmacies. The customers were outraged, having been used to treating themselves with homeopathic remedies, and demanded that the pharmacies be returned to their owners. After a special debate at the meeting of the Viatka Gubzdrav (a regional health

20 It is likely that it was not saved.

21 GARF, fond 656, file 444, p. 68, and Gipary (1927), p. 98.

authority) on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1920, the protesters were advised to establish a homeopathic society to prove the worth of homeopathy and to seek their goals administratively. If achieved, the pharmacies and all stocks and equipment would be returned. The followers of homeopathy created the Viatka Society of the Followers of Homeopathy (the first homeopathic society in Soviet Russia), whose regulations were approved on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1921. The Gubzdrav sent its representative to negotiate with the society and to establish the conditions for returning the property. It seemed that the negotiations would succeed but they became protracted and five days after the decision of the UMS of June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1924 the society was closed without explanation. All petitions and complaints were rejected and neither pharmacies nor remedies were returned. Moreover, when the followers of homeopathy tried to purchase remedies by paying in cash, the local authorities intervened. Homeopathy in Viatka, having existed in the city for almost eighty years, was suppressed.<sup>22</sup> Another homeopathic pharmacy, the only one in Tiflis (now Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia), was closed without warning or explanation on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1924. After considerable efforts by its owner and the followers of homeopathy, it was re-opened, but over-the-counter distribution of remedies was strictly forbidden – a means of de-destroying the business.<sup>23</sup>

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1920, the Narkomzdrav issued an instruction that all regional branches should stop supplying homeopathic pharmacies with medicaments, alcohol and staff, and stop employing skilled workers. The facilities and equipment of homeopathic pharmacies might have been used previously according to the needs of the regional branches of the health administration.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the staff of homeopathic pharmacies was to be de-prived of even food supplies provided by the state; the supply of firewood was also terminated.<sup>25</sup>

In 1922, the Civil War ended and the establishment of Soviet power over remote areas of the former Russian Empire, such as Central Asia was realised. Further peaceful development of the country, as planned by the Bolsheviks, required taking control of all public organisations and making them an appendage of the Soviet State, thereby, also eradicating every possibility of free thought. All public societies which had existed before 1917 and wished to resume their former activities had to re-write their aims declaring their loyalty to the state. N. Gabrilovich started work on the registration of a Society of Homeopathic Doctors in Petrograd as the previous

---

22 The Central State Archive of St. Petersburg (Tsentralnyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv TsGA), fond 7431, file 16.

23 See letter of Dr. Karl Bojanus Jr. to N. Gabrilovich of May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1924, kept in: GARF, fond 656, file 106, p. 9.

24 Gipary (1927), p. 99.

25 GARF, fond 656, file 46, p. 2.

St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians had not survived. Yet, as soon as it became possible (probably at the beginning of the 1920s) he attracted new doctors to homeopathy. The apprenticeship in homeopathy consisted mainly of those doctors attending Gabrilovich's private consultations. Drs. A. Passek, M. Rotstein, E. Khronovskaya and V. Kudriavtsev came to homeopathy in this way. With the exception of Nicholas Gabrilovich, only Dr. Zinaida Golovach, the former head of the women's department at the Alexander II Homeopathic Hospital, remained of the former generation of St. Petersburg homeopaths. Nevertheless, they comprised the centre of a revived society. When Gabrilovich and the younger Dr. Kudriavtsev tried to register a new homeopathic society, the successor of the St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians established in 1868, it was not an easy task. The Soviet authorities, largely ignorant of the conflict between homeopathy and allopathy, had no immediate objections to the approval of a new society. Yet, the local city medical administration put obstacles in the way. Although it was obliged by law to process the application within one month, it had not provided a required reference on the essence of homeopathy to the higher authorities after two months, and only yielded after an official inquiry had been instituted. Homeopathy, according to N. Gabrilovich, was represented absolutely falsely in the reference. Gabrilovich and Kudriavtsev had to negotiate with officials at various levels, first in Petrograd and then in Moscow, where Gabrilovich was forced to go, to obtain final approval.<sup>26</sup> The Petrograd (since 1924, Leningrad) Society of Homeopathic Physicians (Petrogradskoe, later Leningradskoe Obshchestvo vrachei-gomeopatov – LOVG) was registered in 1923. Its regulations represented typical bureaucratic Soviet regulations, being fully controlled by and subordinated to the state society.<sup>27</sup>

Along with registering the city society, Petrograd homeopaths, headed by N. Gabrilovich, and their Moscow colleagues, tried to establish an All-Russian Homeopathic Society. Ten leading Moscow and Petrograd homeopaths held a joint meeting in July 1923 in the Moscow central homeopathic pharmacy at Petrovka St., 25, to discuss establishing such a society. It was declared that all Moscow and Petrograd homeopaths wished to create and join one society to investigate scientifically and to apply homeopathic therapeutics practically as well as to grant entry to all doctors of the Soviet Union having an interest in homeopathy. It was decided to approach the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs to establish the Russian Hahnemannian Society of Physicians-Homeotherapists.<sup>28</sup> Neverthe-

---

26 GARF, fond 656, file 46, p. 2.

27 "Ustav Petrogradskogo Obshchestva vrachei-gomeopatov" (The Regulations of the Petrograd Society of Homeopathic Physicians), Petrograd 1923.

28 GARF, fond 656, file 310, p. 18. It seems that a new term "homeotherapist" (gomeoterapevt) instead of commonly used "homeopath" (gomeopat), was introduced by N. Gabrilovich, yet it did not become more widely accepted anywhere except in

less, further developments clearly demonstrated that Soviet homeopaths were too optimistic. All efforts by Moscow homeopaths to register a society, similar to that of Petrograd, failed and no approval was given for the setting up of the All-Russian Homeopathic Society. Moreover, the 'old disease' of Russian homeopathy re-surfaced in all its glory: homeopaths, even though only in the mid-twenties in total, could not co-operate.

The core of the conflict lay in the totally different approaches of N. Gabrilovich and his Petrograd (Leningrad) followers and of the increasingly powerful Moscow homeopaths regarding self-identification within the state health system. When Gabrilovich sought fusion of homeopathy and allopathy into one united medical family, Moscow homeopaths consistently stressed the 'otherness' of homeopathy, its unique and isolated place within medicine. They demanded nothing but autonomy for homeopathy in the country. Thus, the 'chorus' of Soviet homeopaths was quite 'out of tune', not to say completely divided, from the very beginning of the performance, whilst this discord sadly related to the most fundamental problem. This point needs to be emphasised as this conflict, rooted in the early 1920s, explains both the differing developments of homeopathy in different cities of the Soviet Union and the peculiarities of its strange fate overall.

The conflict of personalities and alternative approaches was aggravated by another conflict which had a political-geographical rather than a homeopathic basis. When Moscow swiftly became the new capital of the Soviet Empire, a metropolis of business, of money, of careers and of some trivial opportunities allowed under the Bolsheviks, Leningrad became transformed into a memorial to its eminent past. Homeopathy never had an especially strong basis in Moscow before 1917 as it did not have brilliant practitioners nor wide public support and the goodwill of high-ranking city officials. The only existing Moscow homeopathic society rarely provided reports, making it seem that homeopathy in the city was permanently dormant. Moscow homeopaths neither owned property, nor were they involved in the political life of their city. Thus, the great upheavals that Russia passed through from 1914 to 1920, left Moscow homeopathy undisturbed. Afterwards, firstly St. Petersburg homeopathy declined and secondly, the Bolsheviks relocated all administrative and governing bodies to Moscow in 1918. Thus, it seemed natural for Moscow homeopaths to consider themselves to be at the forefront of Soviet homeopathy. Correspondingly, they felt able to manage homeopathic affairs on their own and were irritated by the frequent visits made by Gabrilovich and his pupils to represent Soviet homeopathy at all levels. It is likely that the joint meeting of Petrograd and Moscow homeo-

---

his own works, reports, etc. The intention was to distinguish physicians from laymen and to draw homeopathy closer to the official medicine practiced by regular therapists. As this innovation neither influenced the attitude of allopaths toward self-styled "homeotherapeutists" nor sounded especially euphonic, Soviet homeopaths dropped this term very quickly.

paths of 1923 was the only attempt at unity. The relationships between homeopathic representatives of the two Soviet metropolises soon soured and throughout the history of homeopathy in the USSR, they never worked together, even in the most dangerous periods. Although some generations of homeopaths changed, there were times when even courtesy visits stopped completely.

The second half of 1923 and the first half of 1924 were full of dissatisfaction and anxiety for homeopaths. Apart from the refusal to register new homeopathic societies, pharmacists also tried to destroy homeopathy once more by closing homeopathic pharmacies and, again, the threat was prepared at the highest possible pharmaceutical lobby level. As the UMS was not a reliable ally in its fight against homeopathy, the Pharmaceutical Department at the Narkomzdrav tried to close homeopathic pharmacies itself on this occasion. Homeopaths had their own sources of information and support within the corridors of the Pharmaceutical Department and managed to defend their interests. A letter from the Moscow homeopath Dr. V. Postnikov to N. Gabrilovich reveals that Moscow homeopaths resorted firstly to the UMS. They appealed directly to the decision already taken by the UMS in 1920 when, indirectly, they had appealed to doctors' dignity which they shared with the majority of the UMS members. They pointed out that the decision to close homeopathic pharmacies could be based exclusively on the assertion that homeopathy was non-scientific, while it was not the legitimate business of pharmacists to make decisions on such matters.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, Moscow homeopaths applied to the heads of the Pharmaceutical Council, and luckily found that they had an unconscious role. One of the heads, pharmacist Israel Levenstein (1882-1972), who had been a theorist rather than an expert all his professional life, had no knowledge of homeopathy and was convinced that no special training in homeopathic pharmacy was required as all homeopathic remedies were easily purchased in allopathic pharmacies, while allopathic remedies were sold also in homeopathic pharmacies. After receiving the explanation from the homeopaths, he probably felt that his colleagues were using his ignorance for selfish ends. He agreed not only to let a representative of homeopaths speak at the meeting planned to discuss the problem of homeopathy but also to allow participation by all homeopaths who wished to take part. I. Levenstein, from that moment, showed an increasing interest in homeopathy and, finally, became a key supporter.<sup>30</sup>

---

29 GARF, fond 656, file 165, pp. 1-2, 5-6.

30 Later, he headed the Scientific Pharmaceutical Commission of the LOVG, took part in many public discussions on homeopathy and published several papers in professional pharmaceutical periodicals advocating homeopathy. Prof. Israel Levenstein left a large archive, which, like the archive of Nicholas Gabrilovich, is kept in the GARF in Moscow.

Most fortunate for homeopaths was that, at the beginning of the same year, their theories of the efficacy of highly diluted and immaterial substances were confirmed by experiments performed in the laboratory of the prominent Russian physiologist and pharmacologist Prof. Nicholas Kravkov (1865-1924).<sup>31</sup> These experiments, whose results were published in a substantial article<sup>32</sup>, are still of interest today and deserve a brief review. The essence was in isolating a living organ (rabbit's ear) and then exposing its blood vessels to biologically active substances such as strychnine, histamine, nicotine, quinine, cocaine, ether, amyl alcohol, hedonal, veronal, etc. Kravkov was interested especially in the effects of such highly diluted substances whose biological effect in commonly accepted concentrations was undoubted. Kravkov fully confirmed Hahnemann's teaching of the bi-phasic action that every remedy can exert; the difference was dependent exclusively on the concentration. He was astonished to reveal that histamine, taken not only in a concentration as low as  $10^{-5}$ , but also at  $10^{-23}$  and even  $10^{-32}$  (the two last concentrations are much less than Avogadro's number  $10^{12}$ ) still constricted the blood vessels of the rabbit's ear. The same effect was noted for adrenaline. Kravkov wrote impartially:

When investigating effects of poisons, often we have observed absolute variance between power and degree of dilution. It is not rare that the effect of the poison was ever increasing as soon as it was more and more diluted [...]. This observation relates not only to vasoconstricting, but also to vasodilating effects.<sup>33</sup>

Kravkov found no explanation for these astounding results:

One should admit that the natural protoplasm is surprisingly sensitive to such minimal doses of substances and to such dilutions that beyond the reach of any physical-chemical analysis [...] there is no certain knowledge of the state of the substance in these colossal dilutions [...].<sup>34</sup>

Homeopaths endeavoured to promote him as the most influential advocate of their doctrine. The correspondence of N. Gabrilovich reveals that homeopaths sought Kravkov, approached him and finally succeeded.<sup>35</sup> At the meeting of the Scientific-Pharmaceutical Commission of the Narkomzdrav held on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1924, attended by sixty professors and doctors, N.

---

31 According to *Sovetskiy Entsiklopedicheskiy Slovar* (The Soviet Encyclopedic Dictionary), Moscow 1980, p. 651, "Kravkov Nikolai Pavlovich [...] the Soviet pharmacologist, one of the founders of pharmacology in the USSR, founder of a school of thought, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences (from 1920). Investigated the dependence of the pharmacologic effect on the dose and concentration of the drug. Improved a method of experiment on isolated organs, proposed intravenous anaesthesia by hedonal. V. I. Lenin prize (1926)."

32 Kravkov (1924), vol. 3-4, pp. 147-172.

33 Kravkov (1924), vol. 3-4, pp. 158-159.

34 Kravkov (1924), vol. 3-4, p. 169.

35 GARF, fond 656, file 165, pp. 5-6, 9.



Gabrilovich delivered a two-hour long lecture in defence of homeopathy. The ensuing debates clearly show a very hostile attitude towards homeopathy within academic circles. Professors and senior lecturers labelled homeopathy as a denial of science, as metaphysics, speculation, etc. Nevertheless, some pharmacists did not share such blind obscurantism. The chemist and patho-physiologist, I. Oberhard (1888-1938)<sup>36</sup>, pointed out that Hahnemann was a brilliant chemist and pharmacist, from which homeopaths derived their strength but, sometimes, the writings could be misleading. The pharmacologist, Prof. M. Gramenitsky (1882-?), who became interested in homeopathy several years before the conference and was recruited swiftly by homeopaths, said that homeopaths and allopaths would do better to try and learn from each other.<sup>37</sup> The central point of the conference was a speech by Prof. Kravkov:

I find no reason why homeopathic pharmacies are to be closed. I consider Hahnemann being doubtless a great man.

I accept his idea of proving homeopathic remedies on healthy people with the only reservation: it should be performed along with experiments on animals.

Hahnemann's statement of efficacy of substances in minimal doses is confirmed by my research.

The principle of *similia similibus curantur* I can view as a possible key to reveal proper remedies under certain conditions, yet it has not been proved experimentally.

As to therapeutic importance of Hahnemann's method, I can say nothing because of the lack of personal experience. Nevertheless, I am aware of many cases when homeopaths achieved therapeutic successes.

I suggest that homeopaths by no way should be prevented from experiments and clinical observations. I oppose closing homeopathic pharmacies.<sup>38</sup>

Eventually, the conference found that, because of the wide spectrum of opinions on the subject, the UMS should be the body responsible for the final decision.

Homeopaths hardly managed to take a breath after this meeting when a new threat appeared. The All-Ukrainian Medical Meeting in Kharkov in May 1924 planned 'to abolish completely' homeopathy. Homeopathy in Ukraine was in particularly dire straits (2 to 3 pharmacies and 2 to 3 doctors in Kiev, Odessa and Kharkov) and, yet, this initiative has no immediate explanation. N. Gabrilovich managed the counter-measures. He invited to Kharkov Dr. Lev Brazol from Kiev, as well as Drs. V. Postnikov, V. Sokolov and V. Dunkel from Moscow. Lev Brazol was asked to prepare a report on the current state of homeopathy in the world. When the homeo-

---

36 Isidor Oberhard later became a professor and the head of a department of the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine. Fell a victim of the Stalin repressions.

37 For a full record of the conference see: GARF, fond 656, file 19.

38 GARF, fond 656, file 324, p. 1.

paths were preparing to go to Kharkov, the pharmacist S. Strubchevsky, owner of a homeopathic pharmacy at Nikolaevskaya Sq., 25 in Kharkov, passed a letter from Dr. Gabrilovich to the board of the meeting demanding the inclusion of the report on homeopathy. The chairman of the meeting, who probably had a similar background in homeopathy to that of I. Levenstein, did not expect to turn the meeting into a battlefield on homeopathic issues and decided not to place homeopathy on the agenda, leaving the decision to the Moscow authorities. The threat again passed.<sup>39</sup>

Yet, this was not the end of the stormy developments of 1924. When leading Soviet homeopaths were active in Moscow and in Kharkov, the People's Commissar of Health, Nicholas Semashko (1874-1949), received a report entitled "What kind of medicine is needed for us" written by an accountant, a former secretary of the Odessa Hahnemannian Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, Emmanuel V. Gipary. That year (1924) and, again, in 1927 Gipary issued this report as a pamphlet with additions and amendments.<sup>40</sup> It was first delivered to a commissioner of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection<sup>41</sup> of the North-Caucasian district approved by him and then forwarded to N. Semashko who passed it to the Commission on Education at the Narkomzdrav. The Commission prepared a report to be delivered at the meeting of the UMS; hence a vicious circle was created.<sup>42</sup> The

39 See correspondence of N. Gabrilovich with L. Brazol and S. Strubchevsky, kept in: GARF, fond 656, file 84, p. 5; file 97, pp. 1-4 and file 181, pp. 1 and 5.

40 See note 20 above. I was able to find very little data on him, mostly that in his pamphlet. He was born c.1865. For several years he held the post of secretary of the Odessa Hahnemannian Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, headed by Dr. I. Lutsenko, and practiced homeopathy as a layman. His name was then Giparis – most probably, of Greek origin. Author of several polemical articles and pamphlets issued by the society. In 1922, relocated to Krasnodar (until 1920 Ekaterinodar). Why and when he joined the Bolsheviks and became a stalwart is not known. After his visit to the pharmacy in Kharkov (probably in 1923 or 1924), its owner, the pharmacist S. Strubchevsky, wrote to N. Gabrilovich: "He is an old man with firm communist ideological principles, makes impression of homeopath-psychopath, who sincerely convinced that he deals with the great cause of liberation." GARF, fond 656, file 181, p. 2. Gipary had been familiar with the leading Soviet homeopaths from pre-revolutionary times. Thus, it looks strange that he presented his report without consulting and coordinating it with them; probably, because he did not consider them Marxists?

41 The body existed in the Soviet Union from 1920 to 1934, and nominally had the function of people's control in all branches of administration and economy, fighting bureaucracy, etc. After 1923, it was affiliated with the central committee of the communist party to execute its policy.

42 The report perhaps was not saved. Based upon the content of the pamphlet, it seemingly represented rather naive ideas, where some separate reasonable proposals were abundantly mixed with absurd, bombastic revolutionary words and pathetic slogans, being characteristic of the early Soviet post-revolutionary epistolary. Thus, homeopathy was equated to Marxism in sociology, whilst Hahnemann was lauded as Hegel's forerunner in dialectics. Homeopathic treatment, according to Gipary, was a true

UMS, probably, was already tired of the problem for which it could find no solution. Perhaps its members suggested sincerely in 1920, when taking their semi-decision, that homeopaths and their pharmacies would wither away within a few years under the unfavourable conditions. Therefore, the problem would be solved peacefully in the most natural way. However, this proved to be false. Now the UMS had to deal both with pharmacists, raising again the question of closing homeopathic pharmacies, and with Gipary's report, to which N. Semashko was required to reply. The UMS invited the well-known Moscow homeopaths, Drs. Vassily Dunkel (1865-?) and Yury Klimov (1886-1966), to present a half-hour long report on the subject. They were warned that no joint debates would take place afterwards, nor would they be allowed to read Gipary's report. They rejected this humiliating proposal and the UMS made its decision without consulting them. The private letters of Dr. V. Postnikov to N. Gabrilovich and the testimony of the archival staff of the LOVG reveal that the homeopaths already had a person in the UMS quietly sympathetic to their aims, its secretary, the epidemiologist Dr. Ivan Popov (1855-1927). Thus, it is likely that they were defended to some degree from the most unfavourable decisions.

The new decision taken on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1924 and published a month later in the central Soviet newspaper *Izvestiia*, followed the path begun in 1920. The council on Gipary's report simply adopted the conclusions of the Commission on Education, stating:

The opposition of homeopathy as a particular teaching to common medicine has no ground under today's conditions [...]. As a science, medicine is the single whole. Principal disagreements, like in any science, may relate to separate problems, yet by no means that can lead to establishing separate schools, as it used to be long ago [...]. When there is no reason to ban physicians against prescribing any remedies, including homeopathic ones to cure the sick, as well as there is no reason to ban against opening special pharmacies to prepare and distribute homeopathic medicines, in any case one should avoid opposing homeopathy as a peculiar school to scientific medicine. One has to eliminate all that might put into people's mind an absolutely wrong idea that homeopathy is a special doctrine, applying methods of treatment unknown to scientific medicine.

Answering the Pharmaceutical Department, the council repeated that homeopathic pharmacies should be neither supported nor nationalised.<sup>43</sup> Thus, the attitude of the authorities towards homeopathy eventually became

---

Marxist method of proletarian reaction to the violence of the deposed classes ("terror against terror"); to fight home-brewing, the state establishes its monopoly on alcoholic drinks, etc. Gipary (1927), pp. 46-48. The rationale beyond those ideas was to recognise homeopathy as a special branch of medicine and provide it, as that should have been in the 'State of Workers and Peasants', with the most benevolent conditions for fast development and further growth. In 1925, Gipary was elected an honorary member of the LOVG. TsGA, fond 7431, file 18, p. 3.

43 *Izvestiia*, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1924, 161 (2196).

relatively clear: homeopathy does exist and does not simultaneously. Although being non-scientific, it is considered a part of medicine. Although being a part of medicine, it and its pharmacies will be neither banned, nor assisted in any way by the state.

### **The Period of Relative Calm: 1925 to the Early 1930s**

After the UMS had approved the report of the Commission on Education and re-confirmed its decision of 1920 on homeopathic pharmacies, Soviet homeopathy entered a quiet period, when it was able to normalise its internal structure and to develop further. Before World War II Soviet homeopathy continued developing and strengthening, almost exclusively in Moscow and Leningrad.

Pre-revolutionary homeopathy in the Russian Empire had been supported by laymen, many of whom were clergymen, high-ranking civilian officials, nobility and military staff. It was they who had run the Societies of the Followers of Homeopathy and homeopathic pharmacies, hired physicians and promulgated homeopathy. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 destroyed completely those support groups. Subsequently, non-metropolitan homeopathy in USSR had no opportunity to develop unless a group of homeopathic doctors appeared in a locality. A few provincial homeopathic physicians, who had survived the disturbances of 1914-1920 and did not emigrate, such as Drs. Evgraf Diukov (1868 -c.1933) and Nataly Shul'gina (1880-?) in Kharkov, and Dr. Karl Bojanus Jr. (1861-1927) in Odessa, were already quite old and exhausted, unwilling to participate in any rebuilding of homeopathy in a country strange to them. All of them died during the 1920s and the early 1930s leaving no pupils and followers. All the efforts of the All-Russian Society to spread homeopathy artificially even in once 'homeopathic' cities failed.

The ways of Moscow and Leningrad homeopathy further diverged from the mid-1920s. Homeopathy in Leningrad, following the aspirations of N. Gabrilovich, gradually became transformed into a docile member of the Soviet doctors' family. Leningrad homeopathic physicians were paid on an approved scale; they had local communist party and trade union committees and seemed satisfied. They neither tried promulgating homeopathy nor did they defend it at any level even if being criticised.<sup>44</sup> The activities of the

---

44 For instance, when Moscow homeopaths were outraged both by the degrading conditions on which they were invited to participate in the meeting of the UMS in June 1924, and the decision taken by it, which led to the closure of the homeopathic society in Viatka and virtual destruction of homeopathy in that city, they proposed that their Leningrad colleagues jointly rise in opposition to the Narkomzdrav. In reply, the LOVG informed the Muscovites about its "desire for peaceful politics and condemnation of any 'military operations'". TsGA, fond 7431, file 11, p. 4.

LOVG<sup>45</sup> represent the day-to-day existence of a typical Soviet office or bureau, the only difference being that homeopathic doctors were employed instead of clerks. Surprisingly, even for him, Gabrilovich's progeny proved to be especially gifted in fusion, carrying out his point to a logical end. Dreaming of the fusion of homeopathy with allopathy, he imagined homeopathic doctors working everywhere in the country with their allopathic colleagues, whilst the latter would adopt homeopathic remedies and approaches. Thus, homeopathy would be spread. However, his pupils achieved another fusion, incomparably more comfortable, namely of themselves with the Soviet authorities and homeopathy. Already suffering severely from stenocardia aggravated by the alarms of 1924, N. Gabrilovich left Leningrad in the same year and for some eighteenth months underwent spa treatments abroad. He found that all was going wrong on his return in 1926. Observing the reluctance of his disciples to fight to expand homeopathy in the USSR – reviving the homeopathic society being only the first step – and feeling betrayed, he relinquished leadership of the society. His participation in the society's affairs diminished and, in December 1936, he left. Although his experience and authority were beyond question, the time and energy of a sincere propagandist of homeopathy already belonged to the past.

The LOVG started consolidating its position as early as 1924. The number of doctors (4 to 5) remained desperately small and scarcely sufficient to be considered a society. The medical council of the society on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1924, approved a programme of training in homeopathy intended to provide basic knowledge for those interested physicians. Yet, this initiative was cut short by local authorities in charge of education stressing that, only after district health authorities confirmed a need for courses in homeopathy, would the society be allowed to carry hold them. It took almost ten years to gain finally the permission of the medical authorities. Nevertheless, even without official courses, the LOVG grew, albeit slowly. The society trained several new doctors in homeopathy, placing at their disposal its large library inherited from the St. Petersburg Society of Homeopathic Physicians and allowing them to attend consultations. There were some preliminary requirements for the candidates: a minimum of three year's clinical experience, a successful interview in which each applicant had to demonstrate theoretical erudition, and the presentation of a scientific report.<sup>46</sup> It seems that such a careful approach was caused by the fear of bringing an 'unworthy' or 'unreliable' individual to homeopathy rather than any real surplus of candidates. In Moscow, even without a society, the number of homeopaths grew much more swiftly.

45 Reflected in the careful records and documents kept in the Central State Archive of St. Petersburg.

46 Pesonina/Kovaleva (2003), pp. 25-26.

Dr. L. Brazol, who had left Kiev for Paris in 1924, was asked later to represent Soviet homeopathy at the Congress of the International Homeopathic League in Paris in September 1926 and, in turn, he requested information on the state of homeopathy in the USSR. The LOVG doctors wrote to him that Leningrad and Moscow had three pharmacies each, Kiev, Odessa, Kharkov had one; there were nine homeopathic doctors in Leningrad, of whom seven were employed at the LOVG's out-patient clinic, some twenty doctors in Moscow, two old and five young (the latter used complex solutions and were non-homeopaths) doctors in Kharkov, in Kiev and Odessa only one.<sup>47</sup>

There was no definite policy of the Soviet authorities towards homeopathic organisations in different parts of the country. A new homeopathic society was registered in Krasnodar in July, 1927, the Kuban Hahnemannian Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, whose elected head, naturally, was E. Gipary. The goal of the society was "assisting the sick with homeopathic remedies, issuing popular homeopathic prescribing books, establishing homeopathic pharmacies as well as out- and in-patient clinics".<sup>48</sup> The Don Society of the Followers of Homeopathy, headed by Dr. Konstantin Rozhdestvensky, was registered around 1927 in Rostov-on-Don<sup>49</sup>, while Ukrainian homeopaths failed to register the All-Ukrainian Homeopathic Society in the 1930s.<sup>50</sup> The common unwillingness of the local authorities and the internal conflicts between homeopaths prevented concerted efforts aimed at establishing societies, clinics, etc. Evidence of this kind may be found constantly throughout the history of homeopathy both in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union.

---

47 GARF, fond 656, file 61, p. 3.

48 *Krasnoe znamia* (The Red Banner), Krasnodar, 14.07.1927, 159 (2154). It does not seem that the society was long-lived. Throughout 1927, the LOVG maintained correspondence with E. Gipary and even delivered a large amount of homeopathic books (the duplicates of those kept in the LOVG's library) to his society. E. Gipary complained that all his attempts to attract even one homeopathic doctor to settle in Krasnodar proved fruitless, while without a doctor, the homeopathic society loses its purpose. Most probably this was the case. See this correspondence between the LOVG and E. Gipary, kept in: TsGA, fond 7431, file 18. It is known that all the books belonging to the society were transferred to the Central Medical Library in Krasnodar in 1938.

49 Unfortunately, neither the society provided any evidence of its activities, nor was I able to find any additional information. See correspondence of N. Gabrilovich with K. Rozhdestvensky, kept in: GARF, fond 656, files 84 and 169. The fate of Dr. Rozhdestvensky is unknown. Some post-World War II homeopathic sources mention that he was shot when Rostov-on-Don was occupied by the Nazis.

50 See correspondence of N. Gabrilovich with Dr. Naum Ioyrish of Kiev, in: GARF, fond 656, file 135.

Although several failed attempts were made to register a city society in Moscow (the local authorities refused approval because of the decision of the UMS that homeopathy should not have been supported by the state), Moscow homeopaths did succeed in registering the All-Russian Society of Homeopathic Doctors (*Vserossiiskoe Obshchestvo vrachei-gomeopatov* – VOVG) in August 1928, when August Bier's paper and wide public debate on homeopathy had changed the atmosphere. Establishment of this society gradually led to further clashes and the almost total breakdown of relations between Moscow and Leningrad homeopaths. Whilst Leningrad homeopaths had their own in-patient clinic supported by the local authorities, Moscow homeopaths, who heavily outnumbered them, were individual private practitioners who wished to ensure their incomes. The VOVG tried preserving the structure of the pre-revolutionary homeopathic societies, actively attracting high-ranking lay individuals as its patrons and advocates, while the LOVG remained an almost pure medical society, where lay people played a minor role as supernumeraries. When the VOVG sought to obtain autonomy for homeopathy within the Soviet medical system, the LOVG recommended that its members take the state remunerated positions. Eventually, the relationship between the two societies broke down completely when, at the beginning of the 1930s, they discussed a proposal to amalgamate all of the Soviet homeopathic societies into one unified society. However, every society insisted that the administration of the future society should be housed in its city. Thus, the fierce disagreements in the negotiations resulted in the previous friendly relationships being broken, never to be rebuilt.

Along with ever-growing tensions among homeopaths, the second half of the 1920s demonstrated an interest by some allopaths for fresh teaching. Their interest was provoked primarily by the paper "What shall be our attitude toward homeopathy?" by the prominent German, Prof. August Bier (1861-1949), one of the fore-most surgeons of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and 'the father' of spinal and intravenous anaesthesia. He defended homeopathy both on theoretical and practical grounds.<sup>51</sup> There were many reactions to Bier's long paper, which was translated immediately into English and French, and issued as a separate brochure. In 1927 or 1928<sup>52</sup> the Berlin publishing house *Vrach* (Physician) issued a Russian translation of Bier's paper which sold out immediately in the USSR. Bier's work acted as a catalyst in the Soviet medical world where, although discussion of homeopathy was not unmentionable, it was systematically ignored by the state authorities, thereby preventing any wide-ranging discussion of homeopathy by both supporters and opponents. Dr. Nicholas Rudnitsky of Samara, who took an active part in the discussion by publishing his very detailed pamphlet ad-

51 Bier (1925).

52 Unfortunately, a year of issue is not noted on the cover.

vocating homeopathy, started with an assertion that he used various materials on homeopathy in his work which:

have been gathered for a long time, yet the author has been prevented from publishing them for a quite obvious reason: what is acceptable conduct for Bier, is not acceptable for a little-known Russian doctor. Thus, the latter had to wait for a moment when he would possess an authority sufficient to allow his report not to be met by mockery or even accusations of quackery. It is not known whether this moment has yet arrived, but after Dr. Bier such works ceased being an extravagancy [...].<sup>53</sup>

It was an accurate observation. The problem of homeopathy had waited a long time for widespread discussion in the USSR; Bier's paper opened the door.

The Soviet pharmacologist Prof. M. Gramenitsky published, in 1927, his paper "Our attitude to homeopathy. A scientific-critical essay"<sup>54</sup> while, in the same year, physiologist, Prof. Grigory Gurevich (1870-1947), issued "The fundamental principles of homeopathy as viewed by the modern science".<sup>55</sup> Both, like Bier, first published their works in medical periodicals and were issued later as brochures. Prof. Gramenitsky published his paper in *The Leningrad medical journal*, while Prof. Gurevich in *The physicians' newspaper*. These works were the most serious and carefully scientific post-Bier observations on homeopathy. Less significant papers were those by the pharmacologist, Prof. V. Skvortsov, published even earlier than the papers of Gramenitsky and Gurevich in *Therapeutic Archive* (1926, № 1) and by the pharmacist Prof. Shcherbachev (*Pharmaceutical Bulletin*, March 1928). Even the prominent Soviet clinician Prof. V. Shervinsky (1860-1951), the founder of Soviet endocrinology, entered the discussion with a paper questioning the efficacy of small doses published in 1926.<sup>56</sup> He also participated in open public discussions.

Almost all of the publications on homeopathy were written by academics in non-clinical specialties, although Soviet medical periodicals, in general, willingly published papers by both clinicians and ordinary doctors. This reflects less the awareness of homeopathy by practicing Soviet doctors than their unwillingness to participate in debates. Yet, representatives of academic circles in metropolitan towns, having access to proper periodicals and literature, could have been more broad-minded, being informed about homeopathy. Although it is beyond the scope of this research to analyse these papers as well as the discussions held at meetings in many of the Soviet medical societies it is clear that there were different views. The first wave, some five to six years after Bier's publication, was quite benevolent

---

53 Rudnitsky (1928), p. 3.

54 Gramenitsky (1927), p. 24.

55 Gurevich (1927), p. 48.

56 See Shervinsky (1926).



towards homeopathy and the assertions typical of the pre-revolutionary polemics, when homeopathy in the leading medical periodicals of the Russian Empire was labelled as nonsense and pure quackery, and homeopaths as betrayers of science and deniers of medicine do not appear to have been present.<sup>57</sup> The majority of the papers and discussions show a genuine interest in various aspects of homeopathy, including pharmacists and pharmacologists interested in the rich homeopathic pharmacy and its sources, and some clinicians interested in the adaptability of the law "*similia similibus curentur*" for the treatment of different conditions. However, this interest should not be over-estimated as no-one, apart from such blind enthusiasts as Gipary, proposed that homeopathy should be included in the curriculum of medical schools or to take a leading position.

Soviet homeopaths were disconnected and few, most of them only wanted to ensure conditions which allowed them to practice, to earn a living and not to have to suffer the danger of prohibition, persecution, etc. The re-mainder of the pre-revolutionary generation of provincial homeopaths were discontinuing their practice, whilst newcomers were either absent or afraid to start their practice in a hostile allopathic environment without the support of their neighbouring homeopathic brethren.<sup>58</sup> Concessions from the authorities were insignificant. The UMS and its parent, Narkomzdrav, persistently rejected all efforts of the Soviet homeopaths to establish connections with their foreign colleagues, obtain currency to subscribe to homeopathic periodicals issued abroad<sup>59</sup> or publish their own. So, when the

57 See numerous examples in the section "From the 1890s to the First Russian Revolution (1905)" in: Kotok (1999).

58 The archive of N. Gabrilovich reveals many examples of this kind. The dentist, Nataly Kodenko, wrote to him on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1927 that she had been a friend of the late Dr. Brazol, who used to tell her a lot about Gabrilovich. She asked to invite some homeopaths to settle in Kiev to start practicing, for "there is no a homeopathic doctor in the city. A feldsher is practicing, but he is of poor competence. Patients, who re-member Dr. Brazol still, are being dissatisfied and leave consultations [...]. One can imagine how large practice may be, when this feldsher receives patients at two pharmacies and at his house and also visits patients [...]. Otherwise homeopathy would end soon in Kiev [...]." GARF, fond 656, file 139, p. 1. Yet, when a new homeopathic doctor arrived in a large city, he often found it impossible to find work. A young doctor P. Garin, a graduate of the Moscow University of 1930, wrote to N. Gabrilovich (probably in the spring or summer of 1933) that he arrived in Odessa at the invitation of the VOVG, but the local authorities refused to find him employment as a homeopath, while a private practice for an absolutely new person in the city seemed impossible to live on. He asked N. Gabrilovich to find him some job in Leningrad. GARF, fond 656, file 123, p. 5.

59 Because Soviet banknotes were not accepted anywhere abroad to buy something, any organisation in the USSR had to approach the special branch commission which approved or not currency for a certain purpose. For medical men such an instance was the Narkomzdrav. Of course, neither homeopathic books nor homeopathic periodicals were considered worth spending currency on. Until 1933, N. Gabrilovich received books and journals from "Boericke and Tafel" due to the generosity of his

VOVG turned to the UMS at the beginning of 1931, asking for approval of a homeopathic journal, it was forwarded to the UMS' members. Almost all of them, being allopathic professors, replied that when even 'real scientific' (i.e. allopathic) journals were restricted because of the lack of paper, ho-meopaths should not be allowed to print their nonsense, especially as they possessed neither clinics nor laboratories to provide research materials worth reading.<sup>60</sup>

The final refusal took place at the meeting of the UMS on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1931 although claiming they:

found it necessary to put at the disposal of homeopaths a special section in one of the medical journals to publish their views and give them a possibility of applying their methods of treatment in the state hospitals and laboratories under the supervision of those institutions,<sup>61</sup>

Yet, this idea had no more importance than the derisory and century-old decision of the State Council in 1833, permitting homeopathic treatment in the state hospitals if the administration would agree. No such section in a medical journal was granted to homeopaths, and no state hospital or laboratory hastened to try homeopathic treatment.

Nevertheless, quietly and incrementally, homeopathy took root in the Soviet Union, chiefly in the large cities. The 1930s brought Soviet homeopathy a new spirit, new expectations and, unfortunately, new disappointments.

### **Great Expectations that Failed: Early 1930s until World War II**

The extensive discussions following the publication of Bier's paper and the adoption of homeopathy 'by default' in society allowed Soviet homeopaths to raise again the question of postgraduate training in homeopathy. When

---

cousin, the famous pianist and conductor Ossip Gabrilovich (1878-1936), who emigrated from Russia in 1894, settled down in Detroit in 1909, where he directed the De-troit Symphony Orchestra and was married to Clare Clemens, a daughter of Mark Twain. GARF, fond 656, file 100, pp. 1, 7; file 121, p. 3. The lack of currency and the ban on qualified citizens leaving the country meant that Soviet homeopaths were pre-vented from attending international conferences etc. and establishing good relations with foreign homeopaths.

60 See materials kept in: GARF, fond -482, file 660. The remark of one of the respondents, Prof. Garinevsky, deserves to be quoted. He replied that he would not object to issuing a homeopathic periodical if there would not have been a terrible paucity of paper, under conditions that it would be read by physicians only. Yet, because it might be read by laypeople as well, "lacking the grounds in medicine and, especially, in pharmacology" who would misinterpret "miraculous cures" reported, such journal should still not be allowed. He added diplomatically that the flat refusal is unsuitable for "it would give the impression that the free expression of scientific opinions is sub-jected to repressions". GARF, fond A-482, file 660, p. 10.

61 GARF, fond -482, file 660, p. 13.

answering the opponents, insisting that homeopathy was taught nowhere in the USSR, homeopaths stressed that, indeed, many problems were rooted in the lack of education and training in homeopathy. Moreover, the demand for homeopathy largely exceeded the supply. The 18 homeopathic physicians and 2 consultants (many of whom were aged), for example, employed at the out-patient clinic of the LOVG (the only homeopathic clinic of the USSR) in 1931 received some 400 patients daily, while turning away 500.<sup>62</sup> The smouldering discontent of those doctors, who were interested in homeopathy and wished to study it, was stirred further by the complete lack of any courses. However, the authorities did allow modest courses in homeopathy in Leningrad and Moscow. Unfortunately, both restrictions and circumstances diminished the number of graduates from the courses in Leningrad. The LOVG was allowed to enrol homeopaths but only in numbers not exceeding the needs of the society, i.e. obtaining employment after finishing the course. The programme approved by the city health department (Gorzdrav) consisted of 150 hours, of which 78 were devoted to lectures and 72 to practice. Thus, from the very beginning, the course was part benefit and part financial burden because the 28 registrants, the maximum permitted, could not justify financially employing lecturers and facilities. Even this number decreased, when the main lecturers, the consultants of the LOVG, Drs. N. Gabrilovich and Mikhail Rotstein (1866-1937), Gabrilovich's pupil of 1923, were drawn away for the trial on the outcomes of homeopathy in the VIEM. Thus, the course failed and was discontinued after only three months. Only five new homeopathic doctors were created who continued visiting the LOVG out-patient clinic and, in this home-made manner, filled the gaps in their knowledge and were certified by the administration of the LOVG.<sup>63</sup> Fourteen physicians and nine pharmacists, in comparison, passed the oral examinations of the presidium of the LOVG scientific council in 1933. The aim of the examination was to confirm that the candidate possessed a thorough knowledge of homeopathy.<sup>64</sup> It is surprising that, of the 150 hours required for the study of homeopathy, the course curriculum included such irrelevant topics as "Chemistry of col-loids" and "Immunology and immunotherapy". The LOVG maintained its home-bred training in homeopathy by allowing those interested doctors to attend consultations and to speak to homeopaths. The output of 1935 and 1936 was 9 and 5 doctors respectively.<sup>65</sup>

Moscow homeopaths seemingly were more successful. A homeopathic out-patient clinic at Trubnaia Sq. was opened on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1935. The cen-

---

62 See report of Dr. Mamikon'ian "Information on the activity of the out-patient clinic" of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1932, in: TsGA, fond 7431, file 118, pp. 22-24.

63 GARF, fond 656, file 30, pp. 13-14.

64 According to Pesonina/Kovaleva (2003), p. 26.

65 Pesonina/Kovaleva (2003), p. 26.

tral homeopathic out-patient clinic provided a course in 1935-36, “approved by the Narkomzdrav and attended by more than 50 doctors, who wish to study this *bona fide* method to reinforce the ranks of homeopathic physicians”.<sup>66</sup> It is clear that, under the influence of the VOVG or the Mos-cow homeopaths, on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1935 the Narkomzdrav of the USSR circulated all its administrative sub-units that homeopathy may be freely applied by all homeopathic doctors wherever they work.

The most interesting of the developments of the mid-1930s was the first trial of homeopathy on Russian soil during the Soviet period and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The tireless N. Gabrilovich, 66 years old in 1933, successfully cured the wife of the prominent Soviet anatomist Prof. Nicholas Bushmakin (1875-1936), the head of the department of morphology and the deputy director of scientific affairs of the Leningrad branch of the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine (Vsesoiuznyi Institut Eksperimental’noi Meditsiny – VIEM). Prof. Bushmakin became interested in homeopathy and proposed that N. Gabrilovich prove its advantages in the VIEM. Gabrilovich submitted a research plan in April 1933 which, with some significant changes, was approved by the Director of the VIEM, the physiologist Prof. Lev Fedorov (1891-1952) and by N. Bushmakin.<sup>67</sup> The proposals of Gabrilovich, however, were quite naïve and removed from reality. Dreaming, as usual, to fuse homeopathy with regular medicine, he thought that he should be appointed by the VIEM as the consultant on homeotherapy who would treat patients together with the allopaths employed by the VIEM. The methods of treatment would depend on the state of health of the patient. Only allopathic or only homeopathic treatment would suit some, in other cases a mixed homeopathic- allopathic treatment would be most beneficial. Thus, by such co-operation, homeopathy could be learned and adopted by regular doctors without any of the out-dated fanaticism and passion which Gabrilovich thought seemed unavoidable when homeopathy was taught by unsuitable persons. Gabrilovich rejected any comparison between homeopathy and allopathy. He stressed that, firstly, homeotherapy should not oppose other methods of treatment and, secondly,

---

66 GARF, fond 8009, file 258, p. 34.

67 It should be added here that not only homeopathy but also Tibetan medicine was undergoing investigation under the VIEM. Yet, in contrast to homeopathy this investigation was seemingly foisted upon the VIEM by high-ranking advocates of oriental medicine, first of whom was the well-known Soviet party figure Nicholas Bukharin (1888-1938). The department for oriental medicine in the V. Lenin Hospital existed for some two months and was closed by the administration of the VIEM, which falsely accused the head of the department of misappropriation. Later on the head of the department N. Badmaev, a nephew of the great Tibetan healer, who had been close to the tsar’s family, Dr. Zhamsaran Badmaev (1841-1920), and the lamas (Buddhist-Lamaist priests) who assisted him, were arrested on political grounds. The re-search into Tibetan medicine was renewed in the USSR in the special centre in Ulan-Ude as late as the 1980s.

that comparison was impossible in principle as each person's suffering was unique. It is easy to understand the absolute unreality of Gabrilovich's proposals. The Leningrad branch of the VIEM was more a scientific than a clinical body. Its hospital was represented by clinics affiliated to the teaching medicine facilities where many patients were admitted. The doctors at the VIEM were heavily over-worked and did not need any outside consultants to co-ordinate treatment. They had no interest in homeopathy and the introduction of homeopathy into a number of departments of the VIEM was viewed by them as a strange and annoying extravagance, interfering with their regular day-to-day practice.<sup>68</sup> Thus, from the beginning, Gabrilovich's expectations could not be fulfilled.

The trial started in 1934 and Gabrilovich was appointed a consultant in homeotherapy at the VIEM. Dr. Sheffer, the head of LOVG, refused employment under the VIEM, supported by the LOVG, considered that LOVG might be represented by another physician, Dr. M. Rotstein. Gabrilovich objected on the grounds of old personal enmity and suggested that his homeopathic practice was not fully accurate. Gabrilovich was affiliated to the ENT and eye departments, Dr. Rotstein to the skin, surgical and two therapeutic (tuberculosis and common internal diseases) departments.<sup>69</sup> The results of almost two year's work by homeopaths in the Leningrad branch of the VIEM were announced at the meeting, presided over by Prof. Mikhail Chernorutsky (1884-1957), on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1936. Homeopaths were involved in the treatment of almost 1,500 cases. The best results were seen in the treatment of acute conditions such as furunculosis (an acute skin disease), ulcers of the cornea and acute otitis (inflammation of the ear). There was general improvement in those suffering from internal diseases, yet they could have been ascribed to a natural clinical course. There were disappointing results in the skin diseases department where only in pyoderma some success was achieved. Homeopathic remedies were not effective in chronic purulent otitis and only insignificant in bone tuberculosis, etc. Such remedies seemingly shortened the period of carrying bacterial flora (in the carriers of diphtheritic pathogen), yet no control group was tested. The Director of the VIEM, Prof. L. Fedorov, said that in no department had homeopathy proved itself convincingly. Where there were prom-

---

68 When reporting on the results of the trial at the meeting of the Therapeutic Bureau of the VIEM held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1936, N. Gabrilovich pointed out that "the arrangement of affairs in the institute is absolute irrational for the personnel is heavily overloaded with manifold works. There is no need in many workers, dealing with another business, only one is needed [...] but such a person, who would be interested in homeopathy and would deal with it exclusively [...]." GARF, fond 656, file 35, pp. 11-12. Moreover, according to him, "because of the lack of facilities not everywhere homeopaths were welcomed guests". GARF, fond 656, file 33, p. 9.

69 Numerous interesting trials of homeopathy in the USSR are so little known to researchers in the field that even in the most detailed book on the subject by M. E. Dean (2004) they are not referred to. Those trials may be worthy of special investigation.

ising results, the control was absent and where there was control, the good results were lacking.<sup>70</sup>

These results, to a large extent, were predictable allowing for the type of homeopathy being practiced by Soviet homeopaths. In analysing the typology of pre-World War I Russian homeopathy it should be stressed that the demand for homeopathy in the Russian Empire was so great that any kind, even the most primitive, such as the “pathologic prescriptions” of Richard Hughes (1836 -1902) and his school, was welcomed, while the most widely published and widespread literature was represented by domestic self-treatment books and brochures. Thus, the return to truly Hahnemanian homeopathy and the development of homeopathic philosophy by James T. Kent (1849-1916) and his American and British pupils, for example, was largely ignored by Russian homeopaths.<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, the great demand for homeopathy together with a small number of practitioners, led to the situation where homeopaths had no time for a full examination of patients required by the laws of homeopathy set out by Hahnemann and his most gifted and competent followers. Neglecting careful individualisation, collecting and evaluating symptoms of different ranks and modalities in every case, i.e. all that makes true homeopathy, Soviet homeopaths remained bound to an essentially allopathic approach, where remedies are prescribed to a nosological label, i.e. diagnosis, rather than to the holistic appraisal of the totality of symptoms unique to each individual case.

The dream of N. Gabrilovich was to make homeopathy ‘standardised’ as related to various diseases so that physicians could apply homeopathy in the same way as allopathy. He suggested, for example, a standard to be used in vasomotor rhinitis – *Mercurius solubilis* 6C and *Lachesis* 6C, in external otitis and ozena – *Lachesis* 6C and *Kali bichromicum* 3C, etc. and applied such non-homeopathic schemas in the VIEM trial.<sup>72</sup> The history of homeopathy has many examples where, in some cases, such an approach may bring success but true homeopathy does not operate this way. The VIEM trial proved this axiom once again. Moreover, Soviet homeopaths exclusively applied only the low potencies. When sometimes it may be absolutely justified, homeopathic posology<sup>73</sup> is not limited to dilutions up to 12C or 30C which was the highest potency commonly used by Soviet homeopaths. Thus, it was natural that the best results were obtained in acute cases requiring, for the most part, no thorough individualisation, when a simple application of a model or standard is often sufficient. Yet, chronic cases should have been approached differently and this is the reason why

---

70 GARF, fond 656, file 557, p. 15.

71 See the section “The Typology of Russian Homeopathy”, in: Kotok (1999).

72 GARF, fond 656, file 31, pp. 22-23.

73 The pharmacological determination of appropriate doses of drugs and medicines.

all the successes of homeopathic treatment in chronic pathology in the VIEM trial seemed dubious and unconvincing. The same approach was repeated in the later trials of homeopathy. The VIEM trial had no serious consequences for Soviet homeopathy. Although both homeopaths and the administration of the Leningrad branch of the VIEM were willing to pre-prepare a new programme of joint trials and research, the conditions were unfavourable. Dr. M. Rotstein died suddenly of heart failure in November 1937 and, in December, the heart disease of Dr. N. Gabrilovich (which would kill him in May 1941) became seriously aggravated and he temporarily gave up further participation in the project. When he wanted to re-new his involvement, homeopathy had entered a new period of persecution, while the VIEM was shaken by internal conflicts and by arrests of its leading specialists on political grounds. As for the results of the trial, both allopaths and homeopaths later interpreted it as they wished. Allopaths stressed the inefficacy of homeopathy in most cases, whilst homeopaths objected that it was not the aim of the trial to demonstrate the effectiveness of homeopathy in all conditions. It showed that it was really effective in some cases, thus, proving that it worked.

Despite all the achievements of homeopaths since the beginning of the 1930s, the clouds were gathering over them. While homeopathy was a business of some dozens of practitioners, it found itself out of step with the wider medical profession. Therefore, as soon as it started to become institutionalised and to attract newcomers, the concern of allopathic doctors increased. The presidium of the Society of Physicians Marxists-Leninists published in the leading Soviet medical journal in 1932, its resolution, strikingly close in spirit to the declarations of Gipary. The difference was that, by using the same terminology and from the same point of view of class struggle, now homeopathy was accused of all the deadly sins. Thus, it was stressed that a medical method:

treating of symptoms and not the sick man, the same approach to the same symptom irrelevant of the essence of the process beyond it represents political expression of the hostility of homeopathy to the class understanding of the nature of disease and the objectives of public health. It translates into a protest against the class character of medicine.

It is not by chance that the formerly ruling classes sympathised with homeopathy [...] and it is not by chance that homeopathy has been most influential outside of proletarian centres. Homeopathy is developing from an anti-scientific stream into an anti-proletarian, politically hostile one for us [...].

The resolution concluded with an appeal to label homeopathy as sorcery and to abolish it. It was proposed “to develop an emphatic struggle against homeopathy in all manifestations of the latter”.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Meditsinsky rabotnik* (The Medical Worker), 1932, 15.

The political realities of the USSR of the 1930s made such accusations and appeals serious and dangerous, although the most terrible events of Soviet life came in the second half of the 1930s. Nevertheless, the passionate appeals of the Marxist-Leninist orientated physicians remained without consequences for homeopathy in the Soviet Union. Moreover, being accused of some crimes, Drs. V. Postnikov (then the director of the out-patient clinic at Trubnaia Sq.), D. Kegeles, Ya. Zdravomyslov, V. Sokolov, A. Galunov, and the pharmacist F. Wagner (all of Moscow), fell victims to the repressions of the 1930s. Some of them were killed, others exiled.<sup>75</sup> If these accusations had been related directly to their professional life as homeopaths, all Soviet homeopaths would have been subjected sooner or later to similar repressions. Examples of this kind in the Stalin period are numerous. Yet, organisationally, homeopathy was not destroyed in the USSR. Thus, the Soviet authorities had no clear, unified policy towards homeopathy and demonstrated no desire to deal with it.

New troubles appeared at the beginning of 1936 and, probably, were connected with personal conflicts among the Moscow members of the VOVG. The pre-history of the development is not completely clear.<sup>76</sup> Moscow homeopaths, since the 1920s, had pursued a course of attracting high-ranking lay patrons to act as advocates and to secure the society. The model regulations of scientific societies, adopted by the VOVG, did not prohibit the participation of laymen in their activities. However, gradually they played an ever-increasing role within the society not only being active in making day-to-day decisions but also practicing homeopathy and publicising it as competent practitioners. It is probably a common criticism that the popularisation of homeopathy by such unqualified practitioners provoked justified criticism of the society and of homeopathy. Consequently, a group of medical doctors who, perhaps, had not been able to find a solution to the problem within the framework of the society, complained to the Narkozmdrav which decided to inspect the VOVG by appointing a special commission. The involvement of administrators was not going to benefit homeopathy and the commission found that the society was scientific only in its title. There had been no scientific meetings between 1928 and 1933 and only a few from 1933 to 1936. The majority of the members were unlicensed lay individuals, without any medical education, who practiced homeopathy privately.

The Narkomzdrav removed the board and the auditing powers of the society by an order of February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1936). As a result, of 213 members regis-

---

75 See letters of Dr. N. Vavolova to N. Gabrilovich of April 13<sup>th</sup>, (1938?) and of November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1938, kept in: GARF, fond 656, file 111, pp. 6 and 9 as well as a paper by Kosmodem'ainy/Mishchenko (1997), p. 2.

76 The prehistory of the development is not completely clear.



tered in the society in 1936, only 44 remained.<sup>77</sup> When the commission finished its work in June, 1936, new regulations for the society were awaiting approval. Yet, instead of mere approval, as had been planned, the Narkozmdrav passed the issue to the UMS. At several joint meetings with homeopaths<sup>78</sup> held in the second half of 1936, the UMS discussed the future of homeopathic therapy in the USSR. The longest and most detailed discussion held at the meeting of October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1936, was presided over by Prof. A. Rakhmanov. Both speakers, who represented homeopathy officially, T. Lipnitsky of the VOVG and N. Gabrilovich of the LOVG, agreed that homeopathy did not have any pretensions of being an extraordinary method of treatment, while homeopaths were completely aware of their limitations and wish to be regarded as other physicians. N. Gabrilovich said that many of the statements of Hahnemann were outdated and could not be viewed as either scientific or reliable.<sup>79</sup> The Pharmacological Committee of the UMS, headed again by Dr. I. Zelikin, demonstrated its firm and irreconcilably hostile attitude towards homeopathy. He said that while homeopaths claimed to have renounced their old principles, they could not state their new ones; the cases of successful treatment proved nothing; there have been no scientific data confirming the validity of homeopathy; no special clinics should have been created for homeopaths, homeopathy had to be tested in the existing ones; the clinicians had not to ignore homeopathy, but, on the contrary, reveal the essence of this phenomenon: "if honest-minded Soviet citizens wish to work in homeopathy, one should make a great fire to burn those homeopathic books [by Charette, Gipary, Rudnit-

---

77 *Pravda*, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1938.

78 It was planned seemingly that only N. Gabrilovich would represent homeopathy at those meetings, yet Moscow homeopaths energetically objected. On March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1936, the organisational bureau of the VOVG consisting of Drs. Hodzhamirov (the head of the commission appointed by the Narkomzdrav), Lipnitsky and Mukhin, submitted a protest, demanding that representatives of the VOVG would be called to the meeting as well, because "personal views of Dr. Gabrilovich by no means reflect views of the collective of physicians and taking into consideration that the centre of scientific and organisational life of the VOVG is located in Moscow." GARF, fond A-482, file 1019, p. 39. The request was accepted and Drs. T. Lipnitsky, V. Dunkel and Zhake were invited.

79 Moscow homeopaths were obliged to resign and confess to save the affair. T. Lipnitsky said "Soviet homeopaths neither worship Hahnemann blindly, nor do they share fanaticism, which have been an essential part of the views of the former and of some contemporary homeopaths." GARF, fond A-482, file 1068. Along with that, he did not fail to make a contemptuous remark about Gabrilovich. T. Lipnitsky denounced the trial of homeopathy in the VIEM as conducted without any plan and without the collaboration of a collective of homeopaths; homeopathic treatment was passed to the hands of non-homeopaths, while consultants rarely prevented it "homeopathy as a science was transferred to the therapeutic control of non-homeopaths, while homeopaths themselves were carrying out no scientific or practical work." GARF, fond A-482, file 1068, p. 16.

sky, Lipnitsky, etc. – A.K.]”<sup>80</sup> However, many of the speakers did not share this extremist position. Thus, as a clinician, Prof. Sakharov stressed that homeopaths should be provided with clinics and not prevented from practicing. Finally, it was decided to form a commission of six academics of the UMS and two representatives of the VOVG.<sup>81</sup> At its last meeting, held on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1937, the UMS confirmed all those rights that had been granted previously to homeopaths. The only and important exception related to homeopathic societies. They should have been abolished, according to the UMS, and homeopaths should join the Moscow and Leningrad therapeutic societies to establish their own homeopathic sections.

Nothing happened for the whole of 1937 and the homeopaths knocked at every door without success. Meanwhile, the Narkomzdrav of the USSR had another more serious problem than homeopathy and its status. The head of the Narkomzdrav, Grigory Kaminsky (1895-1938), was arrested and later executed. His successor, M. Boldyrev (1894-1939), had no intention of delving into the problems of homeopaths, refusing to discuss the issue. The society, in addition, had been ‘all-Russian’ and not ‘all-union’, thereby, referring homeopaths to the Narkomzdrav of the Russian Federation. The head of the Russian Narkomzdrav, Chesnokov, in turn, transferred homeopathic applicants to his deputy, Weber, who met the homeopaths on September 16<sup>th</sup> and assured them of the immutability of the policy toward homeopathy. Four months later, at the end of 1937 no progress had been made.

Meanwhile, in 1937, a well-balanced paper entitled “On homeopathy and homeopaths” by the assistant professor (privat-dozent), N. Blumental, was published in the professional journal *Soviet Medicine*.<sup>82</sup> He recognised, at the very beginning, that homeopathic success in treating certain diseases was beyond any doubt. However, he emphasised that, in other diseases where there have been no alternatives to surgery, homeopathic treatment brought nothing but harm. He cited instances of his own practice, when diseases, which could have been cured relatively easily and efficiently with surgery, became complicated and sometimes even incurable after long and unsuccessful homeopathic treatment (e.g. ovarian cyst, osteomyelitis, appendicitis, cancer of the breast, etc.). There had been a growing number of patients coming to consultations in a state of deterioration and desolation after long homeopathic treatment. Appealing to homeopaths to recognise their impotence in the treatment of malignant diseases<sup>83</sup>, he was correct in emphasising the absolute unacceptability of the situation where homeopaths received 100 to 150 patients a day, giving each patient only some two to three min-

---

80 GARF, fond A-482, file 1068, pp. 31-35.

81 The commission seemingly did not leave evidence of its work.

82 Blumental (1937), pp. 44-46.

83 A topic I wish to leave without comment as controversial and irrelevant to the main issue.

utes. Homeopaths neither examined patients, nor checked the results of tests or investigations the patients brought with them, nor managed even to cast a glance at their patients. Unfortunately, it was an incisive and justified observation. Even the Soviet allopaths most sympathetic to homeopathy often expressed their perplexity at how the principle of strict individualisation could be compressed into just a few minutes of consultation. It seems that the restrictions imposed on homeopathic treatment, to a large extent, were the basis of numerous examples of homeopaths overlooking either malignant or serious infectious diseases.

The scientific-organisation council of the Narkomzdrav, headed by Prof. Konchalovsky, set about again investigating homeopathy only on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1938. It declared that homeopathy would have the right of having its own clinic; the courses for homeopathy would start in the Central Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education (Tsentralnyi Institut us-overshenstvovaniia vrachei – TSIU); all homeopaths could apply their method freely without any limitations.<sup>84</sup> This final decision should have been approved by the UMS. However, instead of giving its approval to all the proposals, the UMS, headed by the hygienist Prof. A. Sysin (1879-1956), approved only the dissolution of homeopathic societies. Their members would have to join other medical societies. The UMS, on the other points, merely deferred the responsibility to other branches of the Narkomzdrav. The decision on courses in homeopathy in the TSIU was left to the Department of Medical Education, while the decision on homeopathic treatment in in-patients clinics was passed to the Department of the Treatment and Prophylaxis of the Narkomzdrav, etc.<sup>85</sup> The UMS, and various sub-units of the Narkomzdrav, shifted and exchanged resolutions and decisions; nobody was going to deal with homeopathy, and the default policy of 'neither forbid, nor support' was allowed to persist. Moreover, even when decisions were accepted, nobody hurried to implement them, realising that no-one would pursue the non-fulfilment.

After many complaints by homeopaths, the Narkomzdrav finally issued on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1938 an order № 656, "On conditions of applying homeopathic

---

84 The ambiguous policy of the highest Soviet medical authorities towards homeopathy usually led to situations, when heads of medical facilities, just to avoid further trouble, prohibited homeopathy regardless of the benefits it would bring to patients and clinics. Thus, Dr. Nataly Vavilova, the head of the fever department of the Grauerman maternity hospital in Moscow, who had been practicing homeopathy since 1934, carried out some research in 1936 on anaesthetisation of deliveries with homeopathic remedies and reported the results at a meeting of the Obstetric-Gynaecological Society. Immediately afterwards she was summoned to the head of the regional health department branch, who demanded the removal of homeopathy from the clinic. In response, Dr. Vavilova left the service.

85 GARF, fond 8009, file 177.

methods of treatment”.<sup>86</sup> Examination of the activities of the Moscow self-supporting homeopathic out-patient clinics revealed a lack of control by the local health authorities, intolerable insanitation, lack of proper medical documentation, use of homeopathy to treat incurable diseases (inoperable tumours, etc.) or diseases which could be treated successfully by proven science-based methods (syphilis, trachoma, etc.), lack of use of established medical science methods in clinical-diagnostic examining and even a denial of their expediency, and prevalence of undisguised greed. Among the measures aimed at normalising the situation, the head of the Narkomzdrav directed the restriction of homeopathic practice to physicians and only in cities. He permitted the opening of self-supporting homeopathic out-patient clinics in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov and Sverdlovsk (until 1924 and since 1992 Ekaterinburg) only. The production and distribution of homeopathic remedies were to be left as the sole right of homeopathic pharmacies, while such activities by physicians were to be strictly forbidden.

The Department of Treatment and Prophylaxis of the Narkomzdrav was charged to work with homeopaths to produce a list of diseases which homeopaths should not treat. Homeopaths, pending a final decision, were forbidden to treat both at home and in medical facilities: tuberculosis, trachoma, syphilis, any infectious diseases and surgical and gynaecological diseases requiring urgent intervention. One Moscow homeopathic clinic was closed for being unsanitary, while the first and the largest Soviet homeopathic out-patient clinic in Moscow, at Trubnaia Sq., would be transferred to another location.<sup>87</sup> Meanwhile, a promise was made to conduct trials of homeopathy at two clinics throughout 1938. It is unlikely that this order changed very much. Homeopathy in the USSR remained in a strange and unique situation. Whilst being recognised as a permissible method of treatment it was persistently subjected to limitations, restrictions, prohibitions and other persecutions. No other examples of this kind may be found in the history of Soviet medicine. Any prohibitory measures with regard to homeopathy came into force with immediate effect, while any (rare) permissive measures invariably were not implemented. The heads of the Moscow and Leningrad clinics at medical institutes<sup>88</sup> never agreed to give ho-

---

86 To be found in the “Official collection of orders of the Narkomzdrav of the USSR”, of 1938. *Ofitsialnyi sbornik Nkzdrava SSSR* 11-12 (1938), pp. 24-26.

87 In the “Amendments 1156 of the Order 566” of October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1938 the paragraph limiting homeopathic self-supporting out-patient clinics to several Russian and Ukrainian cities was repealed, while the transmission of the clinic at Trubnaia Sq. was substituted with “overhauling” it.

88 In contrast to other countries, higher medical education in the USSR and the current post-Soviet countries has been provided both at the medical faculties of universities (an insignificant part) and in medical institutes, which were either separate from the pre-revolutionary Russian universities or independently established later.

meopaths the possibility of conducting trials and, seemingly, none of their superiors tried to implement the order. Moreover, a group of dissatisfied Moscow homeopaths sent letters to various Soviet authorities and high-ranking individuals, including Stalin, complaining about the bureaucracy of the UMS and the Narkomzdrav as well as of the constant persecution of homeopathy. All letters seemingly were forwarded to the Narkomzdrav which merely replied formally. Nevertheless, one such letter was learnt of by the head of Narkomzdrav, Dr. Nicholas Grashchenkov (1901-1965). He gave an instruction to his subordinates, Alexandrovsky and Sarkisov, to call the authors of the letter to discuss trials of homeopathy in clinics of Moscow and Leningrad.<sup>89</sup> No meeting took place.

The list of diseases that homeopaths should not treat was compiled by the head of the UMS, the distinguished neurosurgeon Prof. Nicholas Burdenko (1876-1946), with the homeopath who was the head of the out-patient clinic at Trubnaia Sq., Dr. Nataly Vavilova (1892-1973).<sup>90</sup> The first impressions of N. Vavilova were quite enthusiastic, writing to Nicholas Gabrilovich on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1938: “[A]ll remarks of him are valuable, considered. Had we had at least one such doctor like Burdenko, homeopathy should not have been concerned about.”<sup>91</sup> Yet, by November 27<sup>th</sup>, she stated bitterly: “Burdenko simply cheated us. It is possible that he as an active assistant of the Narkomzdrav and the head of the UMS was advised to settle homeopathic affairs at the earliest possible date, and so he did.”<sup>92</sup> Homeopaths were not invited to publish their papers in medical periodicals, nor issue their books, no trials of homeopathy were conducted and no professional medical societies showed any readiness to establish homeopathic sections for medical outsiders. As soon as homeopathic societies were abolished, Leningrad homeopaths united into the LOVG, and stopped documenting their internal affairs, making it very difficult to establish the activities of the out-patient clinics of the LOVG. It appears that there was friction amongst homeopathic compromisers. The personal clashes with their homeopathic superiors in the clinic of the respected and experienced Drs. Yuri Klimov and Nicholas Slizhikov forced them to leave. After the homeopathic societies were abolished, the out-patient clinic was transferred to the administration of the central out-patient clinic of Leningrad, headed by Dr. Lisicheva. Nevertheless, both Klimov and Slizhikov were refused employment once again. “There has been a stench in the atmosphere of the clinic through the

---

89 GARF, fond 8009, file 301, p. 1.

90 For detailed biography of Dr. Vavilova see “Doktor Vavilova Natal’ia Mikhailovna” (1892-1973) published in *Gomeopatiia i akupunktura* 1 (1991), pp. 35-39.

91 Letter to Nicholas Gabrilovich on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1928. GARF, fond 656, file 111, p. 2.

92 GARF, fond 656, file 111, p. 9.

last 5 years, all people have suffocated, but the coming of new administration has not changed anything.”<sup>93</sup>

Some important points of the history of pre-World War II Soviet homeopathy which explain the post-war developments need to be stressed. World War I, followed by the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War destroyed completely the organisational basis of Russian homeopathy. It lost many outstanding representatives, much lay support, all homeopathic societies, all periodicals, the only homeopathic hospital, and a number of homeopathic pharmacies. Nevertheless, for some obscure reason, homeopathic pharmacies were never nationalised and homeopathy was not banned after the Bolshevik Revolution. Homeopaths were allowed to consolidate and to rebuild partially their organisational basis. Some pre-revolutionary ties in academic medical circles and constant lobbying at various levels enabled Soviet homeopaths to keep working and even to increase their presence in Moscow and Leningrad. However, homeopathy virtually disappeared outside these cities as a phenomenon of medical and social life, being represented by only two or three doctors in the largest Russian and Ukrainian cities. The future of homeopathy in the Soviet Union was viewed by Moscow and Leningrad homeopaths absolutely differently. When Moscow homeopaths demanded complete autonomy and aimed at private practice, their Leningrad colleagues dreamt of fusion with the state and remunerated positions. Personal enmities deepened the split, so that by the 1930s Soviet homeopathy was divided into two hostile camps: the LOVG and the followers of the VOVG. Moreover, the internal conflicts within the VOVG led to intervention into homeopathic affairs by the highest Soviet medical administration and subsequent new restrictions. The Narkomzdrav had no clear policy towards homeopathy; its policy being determined by the position of the UMS. Its policy, in turn, was determined by its members, their views and personal ties with the leading homeopaths. This explains the ever ambiguous policy of the UMS towards homeopathy: neither support, nor encouragement, nor any attempts to ban it. The only trial of homeopathy, held in the VIEM from 1934 to 1936, was methodologically fallacious and generated no truly reliable data. It is important also to stress the complete isolation of Soviet homeopaths from the world homeopathic community and the ever deteriorating professional quality of those practicing homeopathy in the USSR. As practice was not burdensome and, yet, sometimes in pursuit of higher incomes, homeopaths completely avoided individualisation. The mandatory approach for prescribing remedies did not require an analysis of symptoms and often attempted to treat serious diseases which could not have been cured by them as they lacked proper homeopathic education and understanding of the teaching they supposedly followed.

93 GARF, fond 656, file 570, pp. 26-27.

### From World War II to the 1960s: A New Upsurge

Almost no records of homeopathic activity in the USSR during World War II exist apart from limited information on Leningrad homeopaths. It is known that the majority of homeopaths, who had worked in the facilities of the former LOVG, were called up to the front. Yet, in the terrible conditions of the blockade, cold and starvation, the out-patient clinic did not cease its activities even for a day. A direct bomb hit completely destroyed an additional facility and the library of the former society at Nevsky Av., 92. At a meeting of homeopathic doctors held on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1946 Dr. Zinovy Levin reported that he had been allowed to use homeopathy in treating the sick and wounded in the evacuation hospital of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ukrainian front from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944 to August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1945. A homeopathic pharmacist, Bogoumil Brabek, then aged 71, and his wife were employed at the hospital to prepare and distribute homeopathic remedies. According to Dr. Levin, homeopathy showed success in 39 cases of severe causalgia (a burning pain in a limb), 31 cases of injured peripheral nervous system, 3 cases of severe erysipelas inflammation, many patients with therapeutic complications after surgery and 500 cases treated on an out-patient basis.<sup>94</sup>

There is also poor documentation on Soviet homeopathy for the post-World War II period. N. Gabrilovich died a month before the war began, whilst the LOVG, like other Soviet homeopathic societies, was disbanded in 1937. Thus, this account is based mainly on publications in the periodicals and, to a much lesser extent, on personal communication with witnesses. It seems that after World War II Soviet homeopathy returned swiftly to its pre-war position and continued to grow. Along with Moscow and Leningrad, homeopathic self-supporting out-patient clinics were opened in Kiev and Tbilisi. Nevertheless, all attempts by homeopaths to enter the in-patient clinics and to gain access to the printing-press remained ineffective. The doors to anything that was state-controlled remained closed to them. Thus, the homeopaths seemingly decided to turn to the newspapers to win some support.

A weekly *The Literary newspaper*, in March 1951, published a paper entitled "What is homeopathy?" by the journalist Mark Popovsky (1922-2004).<sup>95</sup> He wrote that homeopaths are subject to the very same administrative rules as other physicians of the USSR: homeopaths work in out-patient clinics, they treat hundreds of thousands of patients, they prescribe remedies to be purchased in special pharmacies. Nevertheless, homeopaths are still viewed by medical authorities as pariahs, whose works are not published (he gave examples), and whose methods are not tested in controlled trials. Several

---

94 GARF, fond 656, file 561.

95 Popovsky (1951). Mark Popovsky was trained as a feldsher (medical attendant), yet he turned to literature. He was the author of several books. Some of them were issued in the USA, where he lived from 1978 until his death.

times, Popovsky cited the order № 656 of 1938 issued by the Narkomzdrav, stressing that it had not been executed with regard to conducting trials of homeopathy. He criticised both the Ministry of Health (the successor of the Narkomzdrav) and the Academy of Science, which persistently ignored homeopathy and homeopaths. He said that homeopathy should be proved and decided on once and for all: either homeopathy is an archaic medical sect – to be eradicated from Soviet medicine – or it is a valuable method to be supported and further developed. As the freedom of the press was guaranteed to the Soviet citizen by the constitution it is certain that the article by M. Popovsky had been given free passage by the highest officials of the party as there would be a response.<sup>96</sup> The newspaper published reactions from the readers on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1951. While some academics protested against homeopathy, others showed interest and supported it. Sympathetic responses came from some homeopaths. They complained about the unwillingness of their medical superiors to put homeopathy on trial and to answer the needs of homeopaths. The most important was a concluding remark that the UMS should discuss the responses and appoint a homeopathic to be charged with careful consideration of the measures required to inquire into homeopathy, explain the observed effects of homeopathic remedies and submit conclusions to the Ministry of Health. A paper of a former front-line soldier, journalist Yulia Kapusto (1919-2002) entitled “Homeopathy and facts”, based on a meeting of the UMS held on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1951, appeared in the monthly *Our contemporary*.<sup>97</sup> Yulia Kapusto re-ferred *verbatim* to the meeting in which two Moscow homeopaths, Drs. N. Vavilova and N. Zenin, were invited to participate. Y. Kapusto described the meeting, in a very sarcastic and ironical tone (as well as in excellent Russian), as a typical case of witch-hunting. The academics, professors of the leading Moscow clinics affiliated with medical institutes, criticised homeopathy, its core principles and the homeopaths. All the reported successes were related to psychotherapy exclusively, despite reports of successful treatment of infant diarrhoea in 1938-39. Although the meeting took

---

96 The very concept of free expression of wills and the desires of the citizen was absolutely alien to Soviet life, as it has been in any totalitarian state. In reality, and it was constantly repeated, all the Soviet press was a tool of propaganda of the communist party. No publication could ever appear without being previously approved by the local branch of the communist party; if publication had a polemic and critical character, it had to be submitted for approval to a higher echelon of the party. On the other hand, taking into consideration that any criticisms issued by a newspaper or journal is also the criticism issued by the communist party, and those who were criticized were obliged to reply; critics could not be simply ignored.

97 Unfortunately, I am not aware precisely of how Kapusto came to the issue of homeopathy. In the archive of N. Gabrilovich, which to some extent was enlarged after his death by his widow Larissa Gabrilovich-Maslova (1894-1985), I found a private letter of Yulia Kapusto to her, of no importance, though. It is quite obvious that Kapusto had been in contact with Soviet homeopaths, who most probably ordered this paper to be published.



place in 1951 and not in 1921, the protocol of the meeting stated that “principles of homeopathy [...] are idealistic and reactionary”, they are “the remains of capitalism”.<sup>98</sup> It was the language of an academic meeting yet it is likely that the audience could hardly answer the expectations of the homeopaths. Nevertheless, those who allowed the publication of Popovsky’s paper were those who probably ordered the academics of the UMS to put homeopathy to the test. Although, probably, there was a sincere and uni-fied desire to ban homeopathy once and for all, they had to resign them-selves to a decision taken by the communist party or the government.

It took a year for the Minister of Health, E. Smirnov, to issue an order № 466 “On testing homeopathic remedies” (June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1952). It is likely that the decision was taken after he received insistent requests from homeopathic physicians, especially Dr. N. Vavilova.<sup>99</sup> The order stated that a clinical trial should be conducted and its results discussed by the end of the year. Nevertheless, almost six months passed before even the trial began at the surgical and internal diseases department of the Botkin hospital in Moscow. Homeopaths at the central Moscow homeopathic out-patient clinic were called. Drs. Nataly Vavilova and Vera Rudbach worked in the surgical department, whilst in the therapeutical department homeopathic treatment was practiced by Dr. Viktor Varshavsky (1909-1985). The trial lasted from October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1952 to April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1953. Reports of the success of homeopathy<sup>100</sup> were mirrored also in the rather satisfactory results of homeopathic treatment in the therapeutic department, especially stomach ulcer. Homeopathic treatment in the surgical department was supervised by the Assistant Professor B. Ospovat (1894-?) who summarised every patient file with a concluding remark. Some of the remarks left by Dr. Ospovat were cited in the paper by Kapusto. Similar to the VIEM trial, homeopathy demon-strated good effects in the treatment of acute cases (furuncles, carbuncles, mastitis, lymphadenitis, etc.). Homeopathic treatment of burns was also quite successful. The head of the department, Prof. Solov’ev, provided an especially favourable final report. It seemed that homeopathy proved itself completely and there were no reasons not to include it in the public health system on a larger scale. Nevertheless, the meeting of the UMS held on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1953 did not discuss the results of the trial. Three weeks previously, a special commission had been created. Opening the meeting, the chief medical officer of the Ministry of Health, Prof. P. Lukomsky (1899-1976), declared that the commission questioned the admissibility of the further existence of homeopathic treatment alongside scientifically based methods in Soviet medicine. The meeting rejected as unfounded all results

---

98 Kapusto (1959), p. 215.

99 See *Gomeopatiia I akupunktura* 1 (1991), p. 37, and GARF, fond 8009, file 448, p. 130.

100 I found the information in the above mentioned paper of Y. Kapusto. Profs. M. Vovsy (1897-1960) and B. Votchal (1895-1971).

obtained in the trials. The success of homeopathic treatment of stomach ulcer was ascribed to diet and the regime of the hospital. Homeopaths had foreseen this conclusion for, when they had been negotiating on the design of the trials, they had proposed that out-patients also be treated, yet the UMS rejected this idea. Both Profs. Votchal and Solov'ev, attending the meeting, stated that all the successes of the homeopaths were nothing more than an 'impression', which had no scientific value. Correctly reflecting the atmosphere of the meeting, the head of the UMS, Prof. Ivan Kochergin (1903-1980), said openly: "I wish that homeopathy would not exist, too [...]. I share your internal conviction that homeopathic facilities should be closed", yet he confessed: "[...] in such a case, homeopaths would present to the minister a position paper, including thousands of observations in their out-patient clinics, when we would have nothing to object to [...]."<sup>101</sup> Thus, the meeting ended with a nebulous recommendation "to work out a plan of further trials of homeopathy".

The Minister of Health, in his order № 434 of September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1954, established that the order of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1952, remained unfulfilled. The new order charged the president of the Academy of Medical Sciences, Prof. A. Baku-lev (1890-1967), with introducing research on homeopathic remedies into the work plan of the institutes for pharmacology and physiology. The academy, understanding perfectly that nothing serious would follow, merely declined to obey the order. The Botkin hospital, however, was cho-sen again to put homeopathy on trial. The trial was conducted between January 1<sup>st</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1955, and was supervised by Dr. Georgievskaya and Prof. Shebanov in the surgical department. Once again, the trial dem-onstrated that homeopathy worked in some cases, while in some acute con-ditions (burns, acute thrombo -phlebitis) it was of undoubted success. The treatment of stomach ulcers in the therapeutic department produced similar results to those obtained in the trial of 1952 to 1953. The results were dis-cussed at the meeting of the UMS held on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1955. Again, it was said that it was not known what helped the patients suffering from stomach ulcers –homeopathy, or diet and regime. The treatment in the surgical de-partment was not discussed. Nevertheless, this time the meeting was pre-sided over by the former head of the Narkomzdrav, Prof. N. Grashchenkov. He proposed a resolution suggesting that homeopaths be provided with a modern fully equipped clinic of 200 beds. However, irre-spective of the decisions of the UMS, the last word always belonged to the Ministry of Health. Thus, the UMS members took neither risk nor respon-sibility; the resolution was accepted. On December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1955, the col-legium of the Ministry of Health considered the results of the 1955 trials and the decision of the UMS. As a result, homeopaths were allowed to issue two books, though, only one, a very primitive and incompetent book by

101 GARF, fond 8009, file 448, p. 220.

Dr. Tatyana Grannikova of Leningrad, was issued in 1956<sup>102</sup>, when Moscow homeopaths had only six ready-to-print manuscripts. "In this way any tiny brook is being lost in the dead sands of the desert," wrote Kapusto.

Eight years after Popovsky's paper of 1951 the *Literary newspaper* published a lengthy editorial on homeopathy entitled "However what is homeopa-ty?"<sup>103</sup> The editorial appeared as a reply to the joint letter of the heads of two of the Moscow homeopathic out-patient clinics (the largest in the USSR) in which they complained that all decisions taken by the Ministry of Health remained on paper: homeopaths were deprived of access to the hos-pitals, their papers were rejected persistently by the professional periodicals, they had no society to be united into, etc. The editorial raised a common cause with homeopaths, stressing that, in the eight years since Popovsky raised the question, nothing had been done. It referred also to a book "A homeopathic therapeutic guide", which had been set up for printing in the state medical publishing house (Medgiz) by order of the collegium of the Ministry of Health. It was not published despite thousands of preliminary orders.

It would be wrong to suggest that homeopaths did not enjoy widespread public support, only relying upon the press and high-ranking officials. Whenever a homeopathic out-patient clinic appeared, it would be overloaded quickly with patients. All journalists writing on homeopathy re-ported that the editorial offices of newspapers and various authorities re-ceived "a lot of letters of the working masses" complaining about the im-possibility of consulting homeopaths either because of the lack of them or their excessive workloads. Thus, the central Moscow homeopathic clinic had patients from the whole of the USSR. All consultations by the dozens of doctors employed in the clinic were scheduled a month in advance. An appointment could only be made by queuing from evening to morning to get a coupon where personal data and the doctor's office were noted. Many patients, in their letters, reported recovery or significant health improve-ment compared with often-unsuccessful allopathic treatment; they ques-tioned why homeopathy, being so effective, was not more widely available and widespread in the USSR. It would be an error also to suggest that ho-meopathy was unable to find a proper place in the Soviet medical system only because of the resistance of the high-ranking allopathic medical offi-cials though it was the main contributory factor. Nevertheless, the very na-ture of the planned economy rejected any novelty in any area as well as the absolute inefficiency of socialist economics and excessive bureaucracy. A place for homeopathy within the system and even transferring one large

---

102 Grannikova (1956). One should not forget that the printing-press as well as all copy-ing machines were in the USSR totally controlled by the state in order not to admit spreading of not previously censored information.

103 "Chto zhe takoe gomeopatiia?" *Literaturnaia gazeta*, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1959, 127.

hospital to homeopaths involved cumbersome procedures of co-ordination and approval across dozens of sub-units of the Ministry of Health, let alone other related problems (salary, supply of remedies, etc.). Equally, homeopaths themselves were hardly willing and able to leave their peaceful and highly profitable out-patient practices for the hassle of in-patient practices. When homeopaths received a well-equipped hospital in 1987 (the first in Russian and Soviet history) they lost it incredibly swiftly.

It seems that homeopathy in the USSR in the 1950s was progressing as Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, joined the well-established homeopathic communities of Moscow and Leningrad. Dr. Dem'ian Popov (1899-1990) created the first school of classical homeopathy in the history of Russian homeopathy. It was not classical homeopathy in its purest Hahnemann-Kentian version, but the emphasis was on high potencies, which had not been practiced before.<sup>104</sup> The Kharkov Society of Homeopathic Physicians was created also in 1957 under Dr. Anna Prusenko (1883-1959).<sup>105</sup> Homeopathy enjoyed ever-increasing popularity in Tbilisi, where Dr. Schwarz practiced.<sup>106</sup> Individual homeopathic physicians appeared in other cities of the USSR. The publications in periodicals, trials of homeopathy being discussed in the UMS and in the Ministry of Health and especially the publication of a book by T. Grannikova by the central state medical publishing house in the 1950s changed the atmosphere. The local health authorities could not blindly oppose homeopathy anymore, they had to yield and allow the opening of homeopathic pharmacies and homeopathic practice.

Although professional medical periodicals condemned homeopathy in most cases, sometimes enthusiasts were able to place papers supporting it. The official organ of Soviet pharmacists, *The Pharmacing* (*Aptechnoe delo*), published a series of papers from 1955 to 1957 purporting to provide a "basis for discussion" but aiming to support homeopathy. The initiators were friends of Prof. Viktor Kalashnikov (1893 -1959)<sup>107</sup> who wrote the introduction to Grannikova's book, and of Israel Levenstein who, 33 years earlier,

---

104 For more biographical details see Popova (1999).

105 I wish to thank Dr. Anna Penkovaya (Kharkov) who kindly put at my disposal information on the history of homeopathy in her native city. Unfortunately, limitations on the length of this paper do not allow me to shed light on many important facts.

106 Of whom, I still have no data.

107 The discussion, in which homeopathic pharmacists also took part, started with Kalashnikov's paper "The pharmaceutical problems of homeopathic pharmacology" (*Aptechnoe delo* 2 (1955)) and closed by Levenstein's paper "Finishing discussion of the work of homeopathic pharmacies" (*Aptechnoe delo* 2 (1957)). The large archive of Prof. Kalashnikov is kept in the Russian State Archive of Economics (RGAE), fond 249.

had been ready to order the closure of homeopathic pharmacies, but later was to become a great follower of homeopathy.<sup>108</sup>

Soviet allopaths, observing that homeopaths were gradually winning the battle, prepared a retaliatory blow. Twenty-five members of the Academy of Medical Sciences published their letter “The false wisdom of homeopathy” in the central Soviet newspaper *Izvestiia* on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1960. They listed the latest progress in allopathy and then criticised severely the theory and practice of homeopathy. Any efficiency of minimal doses was doubted as everyone took daily large quantities of those substances prescribed by homeopaths. They claimed also that the dynamisation was “nonsense” because “no atom may be altered either by succession or by dilution”. The homeopaths stuck to Hahnemann’s absurd dogmas. Homeopathic proofs were characterised as the ravings of a madman. The authors alleged that homeopaths proved nothing in the trials. It had proposed that they should join the state out-patient clinics but had rejected that, “avoiding a honest competition”. Seemingly, there was no qualified adviser to explain to the academics that homeopathy and isopathy<sup>109</sup> were quite different, as homeopaths were accused that no-one would treat hypercholesterolemia<sup>110</sup> with dynamised cholesterol. The authors doubted whether young university graduates, who had studied at public expense, should be permitted to work in homeopathic clinics where they would have to dismiss all they had been taught about “drug pathogenesis”. The letter, as was quite common for Soviet periodicals, concluded with an appeal to the Ministry of Health “to take a certain position. If it trusts in scientific medicine, it cannot take its neutral stand toward homeopathy. One is unable to recognise both astronomy and astrology.”<sup>111</sup> The reaction of the public was typical. Previous experience suggested that publication of such ‘discussion’ letters was merely a prelude to further closure, abolition, banning, etc. Therefore, the day after publication, a gigantic queue appeared outside the central homeopathic out-patient clinic in Moscow. Those who queued were hoping to get a consultation before homeopathy was banned. The head of the clinic was forced to call the police to keep order.

---

108 The personal archive of Prof. Levenstein reveals that he tried again to publish a paper on homeopathy in 1960. Before passing it to the editor he showed it both to the separate pharmacists and collectives of pharmacies and was honoured with excellent references. Several respondents wrote to him that it was the first time that they had some concept of homeopathy and finally understood the nature of the story. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1960, the paper was approved for publication. GARF, I. Levenstein’s archive, file 6. Yet, neither in 1960 nor later was his paper published.

109 1. Treatment by the application or use of diseased matter. 2. Contagious disease contains in its own causative agent the means for its cure.

110 The presence of an abnormal amount of cholesterol in the cells and plasma of the blood.

111 Lozhnaia mudrost’ gomeopatii, in: *Izvestiia*, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1960.

Nevertheless, on this occasion, the people were wrong in their assumptions. If the highest authorities had stood behind the letter, homeopathy would have been banned in the USSR within a few days. Yet, not only was homeopathy not banned but *Izvestiia* published a reply by the homeopaths on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1960.<sup>112</sup> The letter was signed by four leading doctors of the central homeopathic out-patient clinic in Moscow. Acknowledging some shortcomings of the theory of homeopathy, they rejected the other charges made by the academics. They pointed out that the authors misled their readers by asserting that homeopaths were invited to work at the state facilities and that homeopathic trials were useless. The homeopaths demonstrated that the academics did not take the trouble to understand the nature of homeopathy and merely engaged in polemics about the small doses. The letter concluded by an appeal to combine various methods of treatment and not to put them in opposition to each other. *Izvestiia* published one further paper entitled "On the false way" by the academic N. Blokhin, the President of Academy of Medical Sciences, one of those who had signed the initial letter.<sup>113</sup> Although he repeated the charges made in the previous paper, the ending was incomparably more restrained. He called for the introduction of homeopaths into the state out-patient clinics to permit an honest comparison of the two methods. There was no reply from the homeopaths or, at least, none was published. This type of discussion was quite rare in the pages of Soviet periodicals, where the palette consisted of black and white only, i.e. those who are right (the critics) and those who are wrong (the criticised). Generally, there was no middle path and the criticised had to confess their guilt and promise to improve. However, the polemics reflected the lack of an unambiguous attitude towards homeopathy by the authorities. Thus, the newspaper enjoyed the rare possibility of being an impartial observer.

The head of the health department of the Moscow region signed the permit in January 1961 and, after a ban of 34 years, Moscow homeopaths were allowed to create their own society – the Moscow Regional Society of Homeopathic Physicians (Moskovskoe oblastnoe obshchestvo vrachei-gomeopatov).

### **The 1960s – A New Breakdown**

The very beginning of the 1960s seemed promising as the recently established society developed an active strategy. It conducted courses, licensing students as graduates in homeopathy, and conducted several meetings of homeopaths from all parts of the USSR. It became the very centre of homeopathic life in the Soviet Union. Although homeopaths still had no ac-

112 Nasha tochka zreniia na gomeopatiiu. Po povodu pis'ma uchenyh (Our view of homeopathy. Regarding the letter of the scientists), in: *Izvestiia*, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1960.

113 Blokhin (1960).

cess to the printing-press on a large scale, the problem was partially solved, at least, by printing brochures previously approved by the regional medical authorities in small printing houses.<sup>114</sup>

However, the attempt to unite homeopaths around the Moscow society and its many activities in the USSR in general were serious errors. Homeopathy was neither officially recognised nor did it have strong support in the upper echelons of the Ministry of Health, let alone the Academy of Medical Sciences whose attitude was distinctly hostile. The only achievement of the Soviet homeopaths was a respite caused by a brief press campaign. No-one was going to grant them equal rights with allopaths or promote homeopathy. The presidium of the Council of Scientific Medical Societies (Presidium soveta nauchnyh meditsinskih obshchestv), in January 1964, declined an enquiry from the head of the Moscow Regional Society of Homeopathic Physicians, Dr. Vassily Rybak, concerning the possibility of the All-Union Society of Homeopathic Physicians joining the International Homeopathic League.<sup>115</sup> Yet, homeopaths probably believed that the worst was already behind them. They over-estimated their power and under-estimated their enemies. The danger came from the least expected side, the Minister of Health. Traditionally Soviet Ministers of Health used to take the position of non-intervention in the dispute between homeopaths and allopaths, considering themselves to be above the battle. This changed when a new Minister, the academician Boris Petrovsky (1908-2004), came to power. Boris Petrovsky belonged to those originating from the lower classes (mostly the peasantry and other under-privileged) who rose very rapidly under Soviet power being the 'native'. Such individuals only received formal education and obtained rapid promotion to high positions in Soviet society. Yet, at

---

114 I would speculate that the ties between Moscow homeopaths and local regional health authorities were rather far from being absolutely irreproachable. Since the 1960s, for some reason, only regional health authorities and not the authorities of the city or of the Russian Federation invariably protected Moscow homeopaths in all instances. So-viet homeopaths traditionally were considered as rich people, whilst Soviet officials were never much different from the officials in other countries.

115 In the reference written in reply to an inquiry by the deputy head of the UMS N. Mukharliamov pointed out: "The resolutions of the boards of all-union societies of surgeons, neurologists and psychiatrists, ophthalmologists as well as specialists in skin and venereal diseases were read out at the meeting of the presidium. The latter decided: 1. to mention that homeopathy, as a practical stream of medicine, has not had scientific ground still, as methods of treatment applied in homeopathy are based only on empirical data, 2. homeopathy has no independent base, as its material medica is combined with remedies and methods of allopathy and pharmacology, generally practicing homeopathic practitioners are allowed to join those existing particular medical societies on common ground. This decision was taken by the majority with one voice "against" of Prof. I. V. Davydovsky [...]." GARF, fond 8009, file 488, p. 18. Prof. I. Davydovsky (1887-1968) – the distinguished Soviet pathologist, founder of a scientific school, academician, laureate of many prestigious awards, author of pro-found medico-philosophical works, which keep their relevance even today.

the same time, they remained quite uneducated with those features characteristic of the communist party and the Soviet administration figures – primitive thinking and poor broken language. Such professors and academics, including Petrovsky, could not compensate for their lack of true general education and culture, fostered within intellectual families and a proper environment. Boris Petrovsky, a surgeon by occupation, took the post of Minister of Health and held it for much longer than anybody before or since, namely 15 years. His appointment coincided with several developments which worsened the position of homeopaths and, to some extent, probably increased the opposition to homeopathy.

The first development was the publication in 1964 of an anti-homeopathic book “Homeopathy and modern medicine” by Prof. David Kogan.<sup>116</sup> Homeopaths, not being aware of the motives behind the book, regarded it as a signal for a renewed sustained attack on homeopathy. This was a false impression. The manuscript was submitted to the main medical publishing house of the USSR (Medgiz) in 1960, reviewed by Prof. B. Votchal and included in the plan for 1962. However, when the plan was discussed with the Ministry of Health, the manuscript was excluded “to avoid propaganda of homeopathy”. The author complained to the presidium of the Academy of Medical Sciences and to the co-ordinating council for scientific work of the Ministry of Health. Medgiz was ordered to restore the manuscript to the plan and to issue the book once the manuscript had been rewritten “to improve the scientific-theoretical positions of the author against homeopathy”. Prof. B. Votchal, an ardent opponent of homeopathy, who had approved the manuscript in 1960, doubted by 1963 whether the manuscript deserved to be published, as the style “rather fits newspaper satire”, and was too “casual”. The second reviewer, Dr. Yu. Shilinis, was also critical, suggesting that the tone was “inadmissible for a sound book”.<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, after four years of rejection, complaints and serious criticisms from the reviewers, the book (written in a rough and boorish style) was published. The critics of homeopathy throughout the history of the USSR had never seen examples of this kind. All theoretical and practical bases of homeopathy were declared fraudulent, charlatanry and absurd, being the fruits of the sick mind of Hahnemann. All results from the clinical trials were rejected as invalid and even Kravkov’s experiments were considered as unfounded for “there was possibly some other influence we are not aware of”.<sup>118</sup> He ascribed the permanent proposals of homeopaths to put homeopathy on trial to their desire to get it discussed as a subject of experiments in clinics and

---

116 Fortunately, the archives of the Ministry of Health of USSR reveal what happened. However, despite all my efforts, I have found neither data, nor any publications by him in all available sources.

117 GARF, fond 8009, file 488, pp. 19-26.

118 Kogan (1964), p. 117-118.



scientific institutions “to muddle the heads of credulous sick persons”<sup>119</sup>. If Soviet homeopaths had ignored this book, there would have been no repercussions. Yet, they viewed it as a signal to attack homeopathy and, in their unjustified indignation, they took preventive measures. They started with complaints to the Council of Ministers, the central committee of the communist party, the leading Soviet newspaper, etc., thereby exasperating the new Minister of Health, B. Petrovsky, to whom all these complaints were forwarded. The homeopath Dr. K. Grachev, was correct when writing:

The book of D. Kogan, “Homeopathy and modern medicine” is not a serious book, therefore it can satisfy neither opponents, nor proponents of homeopathy. It is unable to cause any damage to homeopathy, for all charges made in it are unfounded. The positive side of the book is that it has stirred homeopathic doctors into activity, who are now forced into reacting to unjust charges and insults. It is useful both for them-selves and for homeopathy.<sup>120</sup>

Yet just this very usefulness was absolutely inappropriate for the Minister.

The second development was a publication “Homeopathy in the USSR” by the German historian of medicine, Prof. Müller-Dietz of the West Berlin University.<sup>121</sup> Although absolutely innocent of the criteria of a free press, it was taken seriously by the Soviet Ministry of Health. Prof. Müller-Dietz reported, with some small inaccuracies, successes of Soviet homeopaths: the ever-growing number of homeopathic pharmacies, thousands of patients receiving homeopathic treatment, activities of the Moscow homeopathic society, the impartial position of the press (the example of the open letter and the reply published in *Izvestiia*), etc. The translation of the paper was received by B. Petrovsky at the beginning of April 1965. The most ascribable facts were emphasised by Dr. A. Serenko. Soviet homeopaths, wrote Müller-Dietz, desire to establish close relationships with homeopaths of West Germany. Eighty physicians worked in Dr. Rybak’s clinic (the central homeopathic out-patient clinic of Moscow).<sup>122</sup> Russian homeopaths wish to obtain a new edition of Willmar Schwabe’s pharmacopoeia. Homeopathy was flourishing in the USSR, and homeopaths were earning a good income. Petrovsky, who had occupied his post of the minister for six months, remarked: “I have read it. I still intend no measures”.<sup>123</sup> Prof. Müller-Dietz was truthful in saying that homeopaths earned a good income as the average homeopath had an income well beyond that of even the highest earning allopathic specialist. Although all Soviet homeopaths were registered at some out-patient clinics, almost all also practiced privately, and even when

---

119 Kogan (1964), p. 164.

120 GARF, fond 8009, file 488, p. 66.

121 Müller-Dietz (1965), pp. 548-550.

122 It is likely that Serenko tried to show Petrovsky that the clinic was being viewed as Rybak’s private property.

123 GARF, fond 8009, file 488, pp. 1-13.

working at the clinic they received money, expensive presents, etc. from their patients. As all homeopathic clinics were self-supporting, their administration received large incomes and, through various loopholes, were able to secure high incomes for their doctors. Generally, the incomes of homeopaths constantly embittered allopaths.

It is hard to say what induced the Minister to start persecuting homeopathy though he claimed that it was caused by the numerous complaints about homeopaths.<sup>124</sup> However, this explanation does not seem plausible. A letter of February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1966 from A. Safonov to the head of the UMS Prof. D. Zhdanov, the chief of the General Department of Treatment and Prophylaxis (Glavnoe upravlenie lechebno-profilakticheskoi pomoshchi), clearly stated that “over many years the central committee of the communist party and the Ministry of Health have received letters from homeopathic physicians and citizens that in spite of its high efficiency homeopathy is “aloof” to common Soviet medicine [...]”.<sup>125</sup> It seems more likely that some personal motives were involved. B. Petrovsky began his campaign against homeopathy in the USSR as early as 1966. The Moscow Department of Pharmacies ordered the cessation of the distribution of homeopathic remedies not included in the state pharmacopoeia of the USSR. Many homeopathic remedies (based on animal products) had never been investigated by allopaths or used by them on any large scale. Therefore, the ban was more than sensitive and the complaints of homeopaths were ignored.<sup>126</sup> B. Petrovsky issued the order № 598 on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1966, in which the work of the most experienced Moscow homeopaths, Drs. A. Alexandrov and N. Vavilova, was severely criticised. Dr. Alexandrov had misdiagnosed a patient suffering from breast cancer and continued treating her with homeopathic remedies. Similar charges were made against Dr. Vavilova who, allegedly, continued treating a patient with obvious symptoms of cancer of uterus. The question must be asked why, with the two cases of true or false physicians’ negligence, should the Minister of Health intervene, as if there were not numerous similar cases in allopathic practice? Both doctors were censured. The harassment of Drs. Alexandrov and Vavilova continued with the publication of “The duty and the fee” and “The profit on the misfortune” in the central Soviet newspaper *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (The Soviet Russia) on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1967 and June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1968 respectively. This time, Dr. Alexandrov was charged directly with treating a cancerous patient with homeopathy, being fully aware that she suffered from oncological disease. There could not be the slightest doubt that the publication of the paper after the Ministry had intervened in the affair had been inspired by somebody. The head of the out-patient clinic, Dr. Rybak, informed the newspaper that Dr.

---

124 Personal communication with him in Moscow in 2000.

125 GARF, fond 8009, file 488, p. 124.

126 GARF, fond 8009, file 488, pp. 201-202.

Alexandrov had been dismissed from the clinic. Yet, the Ministry of Health when initiating a reform of the clinic, found that he was still employed the-re.

The blackest years in the history of homeopathy in the USSR were 1968 and 1969. Four orders of the Minister of Health were issued in quick succession. He dismissed Drs. Alexandrov and Vavilova and ordered their files to be passed to the court in his order № 213 of March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1968.<sup>127</sup> The following order, № 610, of August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1968, “On strengthening control over the work and regulation of further activity of homeopathic physicians as well as on applying homeopathic remedies in practice” shifted the charges from individuals to Soviet homeopaths as a whole. The Minister wrote that the revision of the central Moscow homeopathic out-patient clinic revealed numerous violations. Thus, not only the physicians had three to six sources of income but also received money from their patients; they neither examined patients, nor sent them for proper investigation. The Moscow Regional Society of Homeopathic Physicians was accused of trying to spread its influence throughout the USSR despite being a local medical society. The society was charged, additionally, with violating the standard regulations of medical societies, uniting physicians of all occupations around the method they follow, and not the field of their specialism. Homeopathic pharmacists were also criticised. They were found guilty of producing and distributing remedies which were not included in the state pharmacopoeia (“over 200 substances of various origin are not allowed to be applied in medical practice at all [...]”), of the lack of proper technical documentation for and control over their remedies, of violating prices for the medicines they sell. The most important conclusions of the order were: the Minister ordered banning the further training of physicians in homeopathy and issuing homeopathic literature, banning all homeopathic societies, and abolishing all documents regulating homeopathic practice and application of homeopathic remedies in the USSR.<sup>128</sup> The third order № 240 of April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1969 completed the task: twenty six widely applied homeopathic remedies were banned for further use.<sup>129</sup> A later order, № 625, withdrew eight

127 GARF, fond 8009, file 488, pp. 117-121. The detail of Dr. Alexandrov’s further story is unknown to me. In respect of Dr. Vavilova the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Frunze district of Moscow refused to institute proceedings against her for the lack of evidence. Dr. Vavilova brought a legal suit to restore her position at her workplace, and the suit was successful. Moreover, Dr. Vavilova sued the editor of *The Soviet Russia* for the paper “The profit on the misfortune”. The court ordered the editor to publish a refutation of the paper. It goes without saying that had the affair of Drs. Alexandrov and Vavilova been initiated by the highest state officials, all attempts of rehabilitation of Dr. Vavilova would have failed.

128 “Ob usilenii kontroliia za rabotoi i reglamentatsiei dalneishei deiatelnosti vrachei-gomeopatov i primeneniiem v lechebnoi praktike gomeopaticeskikh sredstv”. GARF, fond 8009, file 21, pp. 25-27, 99-110.

129 GARF, fond 8009, file 750, p. 371.

more remedies. It is known that, as he was unable to ban homeopathy completely, the Minister, Petrovsky, turned to the Supreme Soviet but his request was rejected.

Soviet homeopaths must have mobilised all their power and contacts to avoid the final destruction of homeopathy and, eventually, they succeeded. Dr. Yaakov Eizenstat, an outstanding Soviet lawyer before emigrating to Israel in 1982, was visited by a group of well-known Moscow homeopaths, who were convinced that homeopathy would be abolished altogether. They asked him to undertake all possible steps to prevent this and gave him a large sum of money.<sup>130</sup> He had read shortly before an article in the French newspaper *Le Figaro* that a Soviet diplomat who had been taken ill suddenly was treated successfully by a homeopathic physician in France or England. He wrote a letter to the Supreme Soviet, referring to this article, defending Soviet homeopaths on the basis of existing legislation. It seems that he was not the only person approached by homeopaths. Soviet homeopaths complained about the orders of the Minister Petrovsky to the General Public Persecutor of the USSR, R. Rudenko (1907-1981). An active lay supporter, the retired colonel, N. Tereshchenko (1904-2001) persuaded such prominent Soviet figures as the composer A. Khachaturian (1903-1978), the ballerina G. Ulanova (born 1909/10), the writer L. Sobolev (1898-1971), the Rear-Admiral V. Bogolepov (1896-1974) and others to write letters in defence of homeopathy.<sup>131</sup>

How could all of this happen? Did Soviet homeopaths not enjoy support in the most influential circles to avoid these hostile acts? There were such distinguished Soviet military leaders as Marshals R. Malinovsky (1898-1967), who had also been the Minister of Defence of the USSR in 1957-1967 and V. Sokolovsky (1897-1968), General V. Chuikov (1900-1983), "the saviour of Stalingrad" during World War II; political figures like the member of the central committee of the Communist Party B. Ponomarev (1905-1995) and his family, the chief substitute of the KGB leader Yuri Andropov, F. Babkov, and others among the patients of the outstanding Moscow homeopath Viktor Varshavsky.<sup>132</sup> Another prominent Moscow homeopath, Dr. Sergey Mukhin (1905-1981), treated the patriarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church, Pimen (born 1910) and Alexiy I (1897-1970), and Marshal G. Zhukov (1896-1974).<sup>133</sup> Although these links had some importance in solving some of the problems persistently faced by homeo-

---

130 In 1998, I met him in Jerusalem and this account is based on that meeting.

131 Mishchenko (2003), p. 11.

132 Personal communication with Prof. Yuri Varshavsky (Moscow), a son of Dr. Viktor Varshavsky.

133 Personal communication with Dr. Mukhin's widow, Dr. Valentina Mukhina. For more detail on the biography of Dr. S. Mukhin see a set of articles in memory of him published in *Gomeopaticheskiy ezhegodnik*, Moscow 2005.

paths, they could not influence and prevent the wilfulness and evil intent of the Minister B. Petrovsky<sup>134</sup> who dominated his domain and was supported actively by the Academy of Medical Sciences and the UMS. Nevertheless, he proved unable to gain approval for the banning of homeopathy from the Supreme Soviet. Therefore, homeopathy survived.

### **The 1970s – the Perestroika: Years of Stagnation**

B. Petrovsky, now convinced that homeopathy was not to be destroyed, abandoned his attack.<sup>135</sup> Homeopaths, equally, were satisfied that they had not been banned and dared not to remonstrate openly. Suddenly, in the mid-1970s, homeopathy was put on trial, though it is not absolutely clear why homeopathy attracted again the hostile attention of the Ministry of Health. It seems quite possible that some high-ranking individual was displeased by the lack of homeopathic remedies, wanted a list of those withdrawn from pharmacies and complained, in 1974, to L. Brezhnev (1906-1982), the secretary general of the communist party. “[...] he [Brezhnev] banged his fist on the table and a special commission was established at the Ministry of Health at once”.<sup>136</sup> The Ministry had to react and a special joint meeting with homeopaths was called. The meeting ended with no conclusion but the Minister B. Petrovsky issued an order № 462 of May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1974 “On the revising of organisation and quality of medical assistance provided by homeopaths to the population”. Once again, homeopathy should have been tested in the clinics.

Drs. Anatoly Trubitsyn and Iosif Khaikin (1923-1995) worked at the Central Institute for Research in Dermatovenerology (Tsentral’nyi nauchno-

---

134 It would be wrong to suppose that B. Petrovsky was an orthodox fighter for pure science. He actively supported acupuncture, which has never had a more solid scientific basis than homeopathy, and even opened a large institution for the practice of and research on acupuncture.

135 Many years later in his memoirs B. Petrovsky wrote: “Many people lack proper understanding of homeopathy, being impressed largely by articles published in newspapers and journals [...]. Of course, Hahnemann’s methods were progressive to some extent for his time, they saved many sick people from sufferings caused by then common dangerous methods of treatment. Hahnemann’s methods attracted numerous followers and became fashionable in Europe. Yet when being empiric by its character and not founded experimentally, homeopathy made way for scientific medicine [...]. A careful examination of homeopathy performed by the leading scientists of our country with participation of homeopaths themselves, did not allow recognising their methods effective, although one cannot reject that they have a significant potential of psychological influence [...]. There are many countries where homeopathic methods of treatment are not applied at all. Along with that one should not exclude advisability of the repeated examination of the efficacy of homeopathic remedies, not considering them panacea.” Petrovsky (1995), pp. 337-338. His personal attitude and policy towards homeopathy when being the minister were not mentioned in the book.

136 Trubitsyn (2000), p. 14.

issledovatel'skiy kozhno-venerologicheskiy institut) in the first half of 1975.<sup>137</sup> Twenty-one patients suffering from eczema, neurodermatitis and psoriasis were treated homeopathically. An effect was noticeable in 20: 7 patients recovered, 1 almost recovered, 9 significantly improved, and 3 improved. There was not much difference between a "homeopathic" and a control group.<sup>138</sup> The indisputable advantage of homeopathy lay in the lack of any adverse effects of the remedies. Dr. Trubitsyn remarked that "other homeopaths worked in other clinics [...]. The results, obtained by them, of course, were various, yet there was nowhere doubtless failure."<sup>139</sup> Dr. Elena Zhuk, the head of the department for stomach ulcer at the Central Institute for Research in Gastrointestinal Diseases, when homeopaths came to participate in the trial, found that the results were similar to those usually obtained under allopathic treatment.<sup>140</sup> Those diseases, whose clinical course was favourable for allopathy usually were favourable also for homeopathy, while those, whose clinical course was not so encouraging, were equally difficult. She developed an interest in homeopathy and later studied under Dr. Varshavsky. She analysed the reports of all clinics where homeopaths worked and found that almost everywhere the results were very similar to those of her department. The reports had been forgotten and homeopaths were not further disturbed.

As soon as B. Petrovsky left his post in 1980<sup>141</sup>, the anti-homeopathic fever within the Ministry of Health for almost fifteen years, passed away. Moscow homeopaths succeeded in conducting a wide public campaign in 1983 and the first secretary of the Moscow city committee of the communist party, V. Grishin (1914-1992), received the mandate of his electors to provide homeopaths with a new appropriate facility. He fulfilled that mandate. Moscow homeopaths got an excellent well-equipped 5-story building in 1987, where not only out-patient but also in-patient departments were opened. However, homeopaths leased the clinic to allopaths after eighteen months as they found no need for it. As committed private practitioners accustomed to the out-patient style of life and high incomes, they were not prepared to work as if they were average doctors. This end was to be expected. Russian homeopaths, under the Tsarist regime, had appealed eloquent-

---

137 The only clinic for which data is available.

138 Trubitsyn (2000), p. 18.

139 Trubitsyn (2000), p. 19.

140 Dr. Elena Zhuk, living at present in Tel-Aviv-Jaffo, was the head of the department for stomach ulcer at the Central Institute for Research in Gastrointestinal Diseases, when homeopaths came to participate in the trial. The following account is based on my interview with her.

141 It is known that B. Petrovsky was removed by L. Brezhnev for constantly raising the problem of alcoholism within the Soviet society and criticising the highest authorities for inadequate financing and neglecting the needs of public health.

ly to Russian society, demanding the inclusion of homeopathy into the Zemstvo system, yet they proved unable to provide the Zemstvo with even one practitioner. Their Soviet successors demanded admittance to in-patient clinics to convincingly demonstrate the advantages of homeopathy, but, again, it was nothing but a good intention.<sup>142</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The Gorbachev's reforms of the 1980s led to the natural demise of many derisory Soviet laws. Homeopathy was no exception. B. Petrovsky's orders were never abolished officially, simply they lost their power and were ignored as contradicting common sense and the desires of both doctors and patients. Many homeopathic books were issued in the second half of the 1980s and courses conducted. Homeopathy has been recognised officially since 1991 in the Russian Federation and the Ukraine as an accepted part of state medicine. Only physicians, certified in their specialism and qualified through state approved courses in homeopathy can practice. Almost all of the post-Soviet countries adopted this policy towards homeopathy.

Thus, having been almost completely destroyed by the tragic developments of 1914 to 1920, homeopathy grew again in Russia. The Soviet authorities, being generally negative towards homeopathy as a 'non-scientific trend', severely limited, yet permitted, its existence. Homeopaths could not issue books and journals nor be published in professional periodicals. The number of students on the rarely-approved courses, despite great demand, was constantly reduced. The different approaches, personal clashes and internal conflicts among Soviet homeopaths prevented also a more vigorous growth of homeopathy in the USSR. Throughout the Soviet period, homeopathy enjoyed wide popularity. There were many high-ranking state and communist party officials, representatives of culture, etc. among homeopathic patients, who could provide some support when it was required. The general press usually supported homeopathy because of the ambiguous politics of the state towards it. Homeopathy, as an organised institution, was restricted in the USSR to a few metropolitan towns, such as Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev, where some hundreds of physicians practiced it. It lacked any strong support, being highly popular amongst the population, within the medical profession, especially from the highest ranks. The anti-homeopathic orders of the Minister of Health, B. Petrovsky exposed the rather vulnerable position of homeopathy within the state system. Yet, homeopaths could prevent the complete abolition of homeopathy in the USSR and continued working under conditions of isolation. Homeopathy survived in the USSR. Today,

142 Dr. Elena Zhuk stressed that homeopaths, working in her department, were most irritated by and openly pointed out that they had to waste their time for the hospital, thus losing their out-patient incomes.

the number of those doctors, licensed after finishing courses in homeopathy in the post-Soviet countries, exceeds 17,000.

### List of Abbreviations

LOVG: Leningradskoe Obshchestvo vrachei-gomeopatov (Leningrad Society of Homeopathic Physicians)

Narkomzdrav: Narodnyi Comissariat Zdravoohraneniia (People's Commissariat of Health)

TsIU: Tsentralnyi Institut usovershenstvovaniia vrachei (Central Institute for Postgraduate Education)

UMS: Uchenyi Meditsinsky Sovet (Scientific Medical Council)

VIEM: Vsesoiuznyi Institut Eksperimental'noi Meditsiny (All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine)

VOVG: Vserossiiskoe Obshchestvo vrachei-gomeopatov (All-Russian Society of Homeopathic Doctors)

VTsIK: Vserossiiskii Tsentralnyi Iсполnitelnyi Komitet (All-Russian Central Executive Committee)

### Bibliography

#### Archives

State Archive of the Russian Federation in Moscow (Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii – GARF)

Fond 656

Fond A-482

Fond 8009

Levenstein's Archive

Central State Archive of St. Petersburg (Tsentralnyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv – TsGA)

Fond 7431

Russian State Archive of Economics (RGAE)

Fond 249

#### Sources

Bier, August: Wie sollen wir uns zu der Homöopathie stellen? In: Münchner Medizinische Wochenschrift 72 (1925), 713-717, 773-776.

Blokhin, N.: Na lozhnom puti. In: Izvestiia, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1960.

Blumental, N.: O gomeopatii i gomeopatah. In: Sovetskaya meditsina 1 (1937), 44-46. Chto zhe takoe gomeopatiia? In: Literaturnaia gazeta, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1959, № 127.

Gipary, E.: Gomeopatiia i ee znachenie (Homeopathy and its significance). Krasnodar 1927.



- Gomeopaticheskoe obozrenie 5, 10 (1915).
- Gramenitsky, M. I.: *Nashe otnoshenie k gomeopatii. Nauchno-kritichesky ocherk.* Leningrad 1927.
- Grannikova, T.: *Kratkoe rukovodstvo po gomeoterapii (Brief manual of homeotherapeutics).* Leningrad 1956.
- Gurevich, G. Ia.: *Osnovnye printsipy gomeopatii v sovremennom nauchnom osveshchenii.* Leningrad 1927.
- Izvestiia, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1924, № 161.
- Kalashnikov, Viktor: *The pharmaceutical problems of homeopathic pharmacology.* In: *Aptechnoe delo 2* (1955).
- Kapusto, Y.: *Gomeopatiia i fakty.* In: *Nash sovremennik 4* (1959), 213-225.. Kogan, D.: *Gomeopatiia i sovremennaia meditsina.* Moscow 1964.
- Krasnoe znamia (The Red Banner), Krasnodar, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1927, № 159.
- Kravkov, N.: *O predelah chuvstvitel'nosti zhivoi protoplazmy (On the limits of sensitivity of natural protoplasm).* In: *Uspehi experimentalnoi biologii (Progress in Experimental Biology) 3-4* (1924), 147-172.
- Levenstein, I.: *Finishing discussion of the work of homeopathic pharmacies.* In: *Aptechnoe delo 2* (1957).
- Lozhnaia mudrost' gomeopatii. In: *Izvestiia*, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1960.
- Meditsinsky rabotnik (The Medical Worker), 1932, № 15.
- Müller-Dietz, H.: *Zur Situation der Homöopathie in der Sowjetunion.* In: *Deutsche Apotheker-Zeitung 17* (1965), 548-550.
- Nasha tochka zreniia na gomeopatiuu. Po povodu pis'ma uchenyh (Our view of homeopathy. Regarding the letter of the scientists). In: *Izvestiia*, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1960.
- Ofitsialnyi sbornik Nkzdrava SSSR 11-12 (1938), 24-26.
- Popovsky, M.: *Chto takoe gomeopatiia?* In: *Literaturnaia gazeta*, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1951. *Pravda*, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1938.
- Rudnitsky, N.: *Gomeopatiia i ee nauchnoe obosnovanie (Homeopathy and its Scientific Basis).* Samara 1928.
- Shervinsky, V.: *Malye dozy v gomeopatii (Small doses in homeopathy).* *Terapevtichesky arkhiv* 1926.
- Sovetskiy Entsiklopedicheskiy Slovar (The Soviet Encyclopedic Dictionary). Moscow 1980.
- Ustav Petrogradskogo Obshchestva vrachei-gomeopatov (The Regulations of the Petrograd Society of Homeopathic Physicians). Petrograd 1923.
- Vrach-gomeopat 1 (1915).
- Zhbankov, D.: *Itogi smernosti vrachei za 1914-1925 g. (Statistics of physicians' mortality during 1914-1925).* In: *Vrachebnoe delo (Physicians' journal) 5* (1926), 427-428.

## Literature

Dean, Michael-Emmans: *The Trials of Homeopathy: A Critical-Historical Account of the Origins, Structure and Development of Hahnemann's Scientific Therapeutics, and Two Systematic Reviews of Homeopathic Clinical Trials, 1821-1953 and 1940-1998.* Ph.D. York University 2001.

Kosmodem'ainy, L.; Mishchenko, V.: Razvitie gomeopatii v Moskve (The development of homeopathy in Moscow). In: Gomeopaticheskaia meditsina i akupunktura (Homeopathic medicine and acupuncture) 2 (1997).

Kotok, Alexander: The history of homeopathy in the Russian Empire until World War I, as compared with other European countries and the USA: similarities and discrepancies, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1999. (The enlarged on-line version of the thesis is available at <http://www.homeoint.org/books4/kotok/index.htm>)

Kotok, Alexander: Dr. Lev Brazol. In: The Homeopath (London) 80 (2001), 12-

17. Lunacharsky, V.: Collected works (Izbrannye sochineniia). Vol. 8. Moscow 1967.

Mishchenko, V. et al.: O sud'be odnogo arkhiva po gomeopatii i ego sobiratele (On the fate of one archive on homeopathy and its collector). In: Gomeopaticheskiy ezhegodnik (The Homeopathic Annual). Moscow 2003.

N. N.: Doktor Vavilova Natal'ia Mikhailovna (1892-1973). In: Gomeopatiia i akupunk-tura 1 (1991), 35-39.

Pesonina, S.; Kovaleva, O.: Istoricheskie etapy razvitiia sistemy podgotovki vrachei-gomeopatov v Sankt-Peterburge v XIX-XX vv. (The historical stages of development of postgraduate training of homeopathic doctors in St. Petersburg in XIX-XX centuries). In: Gomeopaticheskiy ezhegodnik (The Homeopathic Annual). Moscow 2003.

Petrovsky, B.: Chelovek. Meditsina. Zhisn' (Man. Medicine. Life). Moscow 1995.

Popova, T. (ed.): Dem'ian Popov. Osnovatel' Kievskoi gomeopaticheskoi shkoly v vospo-minaniiah sovremennikov (Dem'ian Popov. The founder of the Kiev homeopathic school in the memoirs of his contemporaries). Kiev 1999.

Trubitsyn, A.: Zapiski starogo gomeopata (Notes of an Old Homeopath). In: Gomeopaticheskiy ezhegodnik (The Homeopathic Annual). Moscow 2000.