

## THE ESSAY ON HISTORY OF HOMEOPATHY IN LATVIA

Are there in history of the mankind happy countries or nations whose development and flourishing were not disturbed either by their neighbours' ambitions or inner errors? Small in number the Latvian nation whose language originates from Sanskrit and whose ancestors' coming to the Baltic shores is hidden in vague legends does not belong to them unfortunately. As any other socially meaningful phenomenon the history of development of homeopathy in Latvia can't be understood without the common historical background. The excursion to the visible history probably is double desirable because during the last years of our growing contacts with our colleagues - homeopathic doctors abroad it appeared to be that nearly nobody of them knows such a country as Latvia and the place where it is.

By the moment when father of homeopathy Samuel Hahnemann was born in Germany the land on the Baltic sea shore where modern Latvia is located being geographically attractive and having good economical prospects passed into hands of different surrounding states several times.

In the 13th century the north of the Latvian land together with neighbouring Estonia was conquered by the Livonian Order (the organization of German knights-crusaders) and the new state of Livonia was founded. In 1558-1583 during the Livonian war this state collapsed and the rule of Poland was established. In 1600 the Polish-Swedish war broke out for ruling over these lands. It lasted 29 years and Sweden won the victory. Coming 90 years the northern part of Latvia and its capital Riga were ruled by Sweden. In 1700 the Russian czar Peter the First announced the war to Sweden. This war which is known as the Northern war lasted 21 years and ended with Nishtadt treaty according to which the Northern part of Latvia was incorporated into Russia in 1721\*. (\*- It should be mentioned that the same year of 1721 the last trial against the witch took place on the territory of Latvia). The Southern part was within the body of Polish-Lithuanian state till 1795 and then joined the Russian Empire too.

Thus at the time when Hahnemann in Germany discovered the Law of similarity Latvia (under the name of Liffland province) was a part of the Russian Empire. Because of that we can consider their history as one whole at this stage. The difference was that there were more favorable terms for homeopathy spreading here from the point of view of the language. If Russian was a state language then German during coming more than 2 centuries was accepted as the second main regional language according two reasons. First, everything what came from Germany was of great respect in Russia because Russian tzars from mother's line had German origin. And second, it happened historically that the majority of wealthy people who lived in Liffland were of German birth. That time only the certain level of finances and property gave the right to be elected to Riga Town Hall. The local people 95% of whom were landless peasants, farm labourers and wage workers had to take the language of their authorities into the consideration.

And the first homeopathic doctors who appeared in Riga in the beginning of the 19th century were of German origin. We know 5 names of homeopathic doctors who practiced here. They are Drs. Lezeviz, Deringer, Neimanis, Sheffer and Gase.

It was just their idea to open homeopathic pharmacy in Riga and they asked Riga Medical Board the permission to found it. The permission was given on the 25th of October **1833**. And 11 days later Riga Chemical-Pharmaceutic Society (RCPHS) opened the first Riga homeopathic pharmacy. The official medical documents of the Russian Empire note that the pharmacy was founded by all Riga pharmacists. It belonged to RCPHS till 1848.

We can be proud that it was not only the first pharmacy on the Latvian land but on the territory of whole Russia. Only in 1857 the homeopathic pharmacies were opened in Petersburg and Moscow.

The second homeopathic pharmacy in Riga was opened in 1898, and in 1905 another one was opened in other Baltic town, Ruena. In one of brochures of 1914 there was a commercial of 3 homeopathic pharmacies in the centre of Riga which announced that homeopathic remedies could be also bought at the chemist's shop of town Ogre. In 1939 in Latvia there were 5 homeopathic pharmacies, 4 of them in Riga and 1 in the city of Liepaya. After the World War II 2 homeopathic pharmacies worked in Riga, but since 1947 - only one, the oldest.

As it appeared to be after nearly two centuries since the day of its foundation this the very first and eventually being the only Riga pharmacy was the axis round which homeopathic life in Latvia was turning and it did not let this life fall down. The first manager of this pharmacy was pharmacist Linde, and from 1848 to 1888 it was run by German pharmacist Ferdinand Niderlaus (1814-1888).

Since 1888 the work of the pharmacy advanced when pharmacist Artur Junger (1851-1927) headed the pharmacy. He invested a great deal in the development of it and the popularization of homeopathy. Some time he rented the pharmacy but in 1895 he bought it from RCPHS. The pharmacy was his and his descendents property till 1940.

In 1927 after Mr. A. Junger death some complications connecting with the managing of the pharmacy arose. For following 13 years 8 managers changed each other. On the 19th of February 1940 Mr. Egon Dilbek bought the pharmacy for 8 thousands lats from Junger's descendents.

Not to break the common chronology of the story for a moment we shall interrupt the history of the homeopathic pharmacy to observe the synchronous history of homeopathic bookprinting in Latvia.

Our contemporaries till 2000 supposed that any homeopathic literature in Latvian was not published. And one can imagine my surprise when I was presented the book «Homeopathic advisor» written in old Latvian with gothic letters and published in 1900 with the permission of the tsarist censorship. The book was found in a second-hand bookshop. It was a translation made by Mr. J. Berzinsh from the works of German homeopathic doctors of that time, namely Dr. Herring, Dr. Jahr, Dr. Luce and others.

This finding inspired for further search in the archives. And the results have exceeded all expectations. It was found out that at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century 15 brochures and books on homeopathy in Latvian were published mainly for the

population. Almost all of them were translated from German. The very first brochure was issued in 1872 and it was titled "Advices for rural people how to help in the right way themselves and their relatives being sick" with an explanation in brackets, "Putting the background of homeopathy according to laws of common sense". The next brochure is written by the Latvian author, Lapmezhs, as collected advices of many doctors how to treat oneself by homeopathic remedies.

Then there is a number of brochures and books translated into Latvian from German by one and the same man, Mr.M.Shimminsh, which were published with the financial support of Mr.A.Junger, the manager of Riga homeopathic pharmacy. The total number of books in Latvian issued by these two men from 1898 till 1923 was eight.

Mr.M.Shimminsh in his brochure "What the homeopathy is" refers to the information collected from different periodical foreign publications of that time about comparative efficiency of homeopathy towards to allopathic therapy, about opening homeopathic clinics in some European countries, such as Austria, Hungary, Spain and France. He gives remarkable references to the official sources, e.g. «The Journal of Ministry for Home Affairs of Russia» of 1830 and 1831 where particularly is pointed out that during the epidemic of cholera in some Russians provinces 63% of those treated allopathically died, but among those who were treated by homeopathic remedies only 11,5% died.

As it came out of the same books Mr.M.Shimminsh was the Chairman of the Society of Assistance to homeopathic treatment. He was not medical doctor but doctor's assistant. Nevertheless he knew homeopathy very well. It is witnessed with his answer in the written brochure «The answer of the people's crowd to Dr.P.Kalnins to his article «About homeopathy» in which the latter attacked the method.

Active dispute took place between other homeopathic and allopathic doctors too. Two preserved books of 1914 by Dr.P.Gauzens «Venereal diseases and their treatment with homeopathic remedies» and «The fight of luminaries of allopathy against homeopathy» are a noble answer to the criticism of his first book. Till nowadays his words, «It is difficult to escape old deep-rooted prejudices even in case if they speak about the wellbeing or life of their relatives» are true and acute.

Since 1914 there is a break in publications as World War I in the course of which the whole territory of Latvia was occupied by German troops. In 1917 the October Revolution took place in Russia which perverted the development of Russia for many decades alike syphilitic miasm. But a new period ensued for Latvia. On 9th November 1918 the revolution happened in Germany. Then the Germans including those who lived here since long ago started leaving the Latvian land. On 18th November 1918 the National Council was held which proclaimed the foundation of the Latvian Republic. For the first time in its history Latvia became independent, and for the first time the Latvian language was accepted as a state language by law.

*How did the political changes influence the development of homeopathy?* It seems that for a few years everything came back to the previous level. Pharmacies went on working. In 1923 Mr.Shimminsh translated the report by L.E.Brazol «Modern homeopathy» from Russian into Latvian. The report was delivered at the First All-Russian congress of

homeopathy followers in October 1913. The report had comments titled "It is recommended all higher schools professors and senior lecturers, medical students, members of the Parliament (Saeim) and everyones who takes care of his health and his nation health. In 1937 Mr.?.Shimminsh has also translated from German "Homeopathic therapeutic catechism" by Dr.Dewey.

The names of homeopathic doctors who worked during that period should be restored. The one thing is certain that they had private practice as we could not find references concerning homeopathic clinics in the archives. But there is one man who left the bright trace in the history of the Latvian homeopathy as a doctor and exceptionally spiritual, whole-hearted personality. His name is Feliks Lukin (1875-1934).

Mr.F.Lukin graduated from the medical faculty of the University in Tartu (Estonian town) in 1899. Then he replenished his knowlege in Kenigsberg, Berlin and Vienna. Later he headed the mobile brigade on eye diseases treatment in Russian villages of Kaluga province, and since 1901 he worked as an oculist in Riga. During World War I Lukin and his family left for Vitebsk (Belorussia) where he worked in 1916-1918. There he was taken ill with tuberculosis heavily and after his return home the whole 1919 he spent having treatment in Switzerland. Together with private practice he started curing TB-patients. In 1923 he founded Society for struggle against TB in Latvia and headed it. Soon he opened the first TB clinic in the outskirts of Riga. Being interested in TB curing he went to Danmark, to Copenhagen, where he got to know about TB treatment by medicine of manganese, beryllium and cadmium salts in small doses. Here he came in touch with homeopathy for the first time and further he was involved into investigations connected with it. He studied botany, practice of Oriental medicine, particularly Ayurvedic material, «electrohomeopathy» from Dr.Rosendorf in Tallinn (Estonia). Following Hahnemann's wish in §265 of "Organon of Medicine" he prepared herbal remedies and collected raw material for them himself. He worked preferably with low potencies remedies, but also worked out combinations of homeopathic remedies. Up to now Riga homeopathic pharmacy uses sets composed by Dr.F.Lukin. In his work he paid a great attention to the investigation of patients concsiousness and psyche considering organism as one unit. Good results and complete devotion to work gave him vast practice. He was especially close to poor people who were often treated by him free of charge.

Dr.F.Lukin was a real scientist in his approach to medicine. He checked up everything himself while making experiments. And it was not occasionally that he established contact with the Institute of Himalaian Investigations of Urusvaty in India\*\* (Here keeping in mind the fact that the Latvian language is traced back to Sanskrit you can suppose that probably some esoterically meaningful circle connecting epoches has closed.) which was founded by the outstanding Russian philosopher, artist, botanist, archeologist, fighter for peace N.K.Rerich, some of whose ancestors were Latvians. In 1923 Dr.F.Lukin got acquainted with the secretary of N.K.Rerich. After carring on lively correspondence and personal meeting with N.K.Rerich in Paris in 1930 Dr.F.Lukin founded the Society of friends of Rerich in Latvia and was appointed its chairman. The versatile cooperation started. Repetedly the Urusvaty Institute sent herbs, roots, seeds of officinal plants to Riga which were collected by the Rerichs during the expeditions to the highlands of Tibet, Mongolia, India. Dr.F.Lukin carried out investigations, prepared remedies of them for his own practice and shared them with Riga homeopathic pharmacy.

The results of the scientific investigations of Dr.F.Lukin and his collection of 71 samples of prepared remedies were passed on to the Urusvaty Institute by his son, doctor Harald Lukin, after his father's death. During last weeks of his life the father handed down his son his curative methods and doctor's practice. In 1938 the book of Felix Lukin's friends, colleagues, son recollections about him "The light of heart" was issued in Riga.

Dr.Harald Lukin (1906-1991) completely continued his father's course practicing homeopathy, cooperating with the Latvian Rerich's Society and keeping close contacts with Rerich's family. He received herbs and roots of the Himalaian officinal plants from N.K.Rerich's son Svyatoslav regularly. Dr.H.Lukin used remedies in low and medium potencies (from 2X and higher) in his homeopathic practice. All the remedies he made himself like his father starting with picking up the raw material. He received the missing stuff from purveyors from different parts of world and after the 60s - from the whole territory of the USSR, and tropical ones - from India. He himself went to the mountains too, to Tibet, brought herbs which were missing in pharmacopoeia, provided Riga homeopathic pharmacy with them. He was a well-known connoisseur of Tibetan medicine as well as homeopath.

Dr.H.Lukin was extremely industrious. He took cases from early morning till late night up to 50 - 80 patients a day. His intuition was developed without any limit. As soon as the patient entered the doctor's room Dr.H.Lukin could already feel his psychological problems and physical disorders e.g. up to the size of pneumonia nidus as it is recollected by one of his students. He believed that the roots of diseases are in the sphere of psyche and that the application area of curative efforts should be mental energy of a human being which he considered to be both physical and spiritual reality. He studied the ways of its displaying in pathological and healthy state. And homeopathy was accepted by him as a means of influence upon mental energy which started acting in the organism by itself and curing the whole economy after taking the homeopathic remedy. This approach gave very good results. He had even succesful case of leucosis and cancer treatment. The well-known people of science and arts from Moscow were among his patients.

He welcomed the development of science and sophisticated experiments in the field of homeopathy. But because of political reasons he could not open the scientific laboratory by himself. But he passed his enthusiasm, his energy and knowlege to his not numerous pupils who put into practice his ideas.

Dr.Harald Lukin passed the signatures and materials of his doctor's practice to the Institute of Himalaian Investigations in India. All his books and manuscripts during his life were kept by his close friend, publisher Mr.Gwido Trepshe who is preparing them for publishing in the USA. In such a way it was not Latvia which was a scientific heir of two its outstanding homeopathic doctors. And the reason of that is in the attitude to homeopathy which was formed here during their life on the background of taking place polical cataclysms. To understand that let us come back again to the 30s of the 20th century.

The political events which took place in the countries neighbouring Latvia were troubled. Stalin's regime raged in the USSR. The third President of independent Latvia perpetrated the coup d'etat in 1934 establishing hid dictatorship. On the 23rd of August, 1939 the

Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was concluded between Germany and USSR. According to the secret enclosures of this pact three Baltic republics as well as Poland and Finland became the subject of division by Germany and USSR. On the 1st of September, 1939 after arranging provocation in Poland Germany broke out World War II. According to the Treaty of 1939 between Latvia and the USSR on 17th of July 1940 USSR the Soviet troops entered the territory Latvia to protect these lands from German aggression. In June 1941 during one week after attacking the USSR by Hitler's army Latvia was occupied by German troops.

We should remember that on this menacing background on February 1940 pharmacist Egon Dilbeck bought the oldest Riga homeopathic pharmacy. He had time to install the equipment for tablets production (by the way which is in use till nowadays because in Latvia still there are no industrially produced homeopathic remedies.) As well he increased the pharmacy staff what allowed to extend its activity. But the pharmacy was in his private ownership not long because it was nationalized soon after Soviet power was established in Latvia. But Mr.Dilbek continued to run the pharmacy until he retired in 1950. Thus he proved himself to be not only a good manager but also a clever diplomat staying at his post during the years of German and Soviet occupation.

Since the 1st of January, 1950 Mrs.Mirdza Ozolina was appointed the manager of the oldest Riga pharmacy being deputy manager since the 20th of December, 1947. In post-war Latvia there was no political peace. The Soviet regime following Stalin's traditions continued repressions against those who were suspected being on the side of «hostile ideology». Homeopathic doctor Harald Lukin was among those repressed. In 1949 as a member of Rerich's Society he was sentenced to death. Later the verdict was substituted with 25 years of labour camps without the right to come back. In 1954 Dr.H.Lukin was discharged and fully exonerated. On his return Riga he restored his homeopathy practice and contacts with the pharmacy.

Usually signatures were forthcoming to the pharmacy from the privately practicing doctors. In post-war period they were Dr.Martene, Dr.Leja, Dr.Kruminsh, Dr.Vulfins, Dr.Paukshene, Dr.Burshteins, Dr.Asinas, Dr.Ivochkins and some other. The number of signatures forthcoming to the pharmacy decreased abruptly in 1959 because the private practice including homeopathic one was forbidden. More than that homeopathy was excluded from the list of doctor's specialities.

There were no homeopathic departments in poly-clinics at that time. And manager of Riga pharmacy Mrs.M.Ozolina could not persuade City Hall of Riga of the need for such a department. A solution was found eventually due to her good personal relations with the Association of Homeopathic doctors in Moscow. Support from the metropolis was influential and in September 1965 Moscow subsidiary homeopathic clinic was opened in Riga. Six physicians worked in this establishment which existed only a couple of months. It was at the end of November 1965 when the subsidiary was closed by head of Healthcare Department having received instructions from the Communist party committee. The homeopathic doctors were regarded as quacks. Mrs. M.Ozolina memorized the said phrase, «Let it be only a pharmacy, but we don't need physicians».

But patients wrote many complains to the Ministry of Health Care and Riga City Hall.

Due to their unprecedented activity on the 1st of January, 1966 the Homeopathic department requiring payment was opened within the premises of Riga poly-clinic N5. By 1970 already 18 physicians worked there.

Later one more attempt to close this department was made by Minister of Health Care Mr.Petrov from Moscow. But being acquainted with the results of the homeopathic treatment he was to acknowledge them being positive and the homeopathic department was left in peace.

During post-war years there was no serious literature on homeopathy in the USSR including Latvia as one of its republics. Those books and brochures which were published here by the beginning of the century disappeared. Nobody even remembered them. Several books in German were kept in the homeopathic pharmacy. «The manual on preparation of homeopathic remedies" by Wilmar Schwabe was one of them, being published in 1934, it served as a basis for preparation of medicine. In 1957 this book was republished in Moscow in Russian. Up to now almost all remedies are prepared in the pharmacy. Yearly the pharmacy buys up to 5 tons herbal raw material and proceeds it by the hands of the pharmacy workers. The personnel for the pharmacy is trained on spot too. Now and then the homeopathic pharmacists from Lithuania, Belorussia, Tadzhikistan and Russia were instructed here. Till 1991 the pharmacy provided all three Baltic republics and Belorussia with medicine. Then Mrs. Ozolina helped to found pharmacies in Kaunas (Lithuania) and Minsk (Belorussia) in the 80s supplying them the raw material and tinctures.

The more complicated matter was the homeopathic education of doctors. Some of them studied the preserved books in German e.g., Dr. Rajas, Dr.R.Kalnina, Dr.G.Kundzina, practicing since 1966, Dr.B.Limba, practicing homeopathy since 1983. Dr.R.Kalnina is the author of a small home reference book on homeopathy. Dr.G.Kundzina translated the book on homeopathy by Dr.H.Storch into Latvian but the book was not published. During the following decades homeopathic self-education prevailed in Latvia as the existing political system in the USSR limited the contacts with foreign homeopathic school.

But the system died. Together with period of Perestrojka in the USSR and with the avalanche of information being secret during stalinism epoch the sudden great advance in the conscience of the people has happened. The first reaction in all Soviet Union republics was reaction of tearing away, disowning of horror which was filled by acts of the dictator who usurped the power in the USSR for almost half a century. The movement of People's Front was formed in Latvia. On 4th of May, 1990 the Declaration of Independence was published. The actual announcement of independence of Latvia was proclaimed in a few days after the putch started on 19th of August, 1991 in Moscow.

Due to these changes homeopathy was also as if freed of the cage of the communist ideology which blocked its development both in Latvia and in other former Soviet republics.

In the very 1991 the Latvian Homeopathic Association (LHA) was founded. It started arranging yearly courses on primary education of homeopathic doctors. It was registered officially on the 22nd of February, 1995. Dr.B.Limba did her best for its foundation. In

1990 she was a member of Moscow Homeopathic Association. And she is the President of LHA already for 9 years protecting interests of its members.

The status of homeopathy in Latvia during these years is strengthened. It is accepted as supplementary medical doctor's speciality and during a short period till 1998 it was even in the number of the basic specialities. Homeopathic doctors start private practice and medical centers. They have possibilities of training abroad. From 1996 to 2000 seven Latvian doctors (Dr.S.Lapuzjko, Dr.I.Trubachev, Dr.N.Judina, Dr.M.Afanasieva, Dr.I.Benderska, Dr.L.Scherbakova, Dr.T.Pokatova) acquired a complete course of training in the International Academy of Classical Homeopathy of George Vithoulkas in Greece. Since the beginning of the 90s the seminars of Kiev homeopathic school (Ukraine) take place in Riga. The founder of Kiev school Dr.Demyan Popov had a lot in common spiritually and professionally with the Latvian homeopathic doctors Felix and Harald Lukins. The faithful followers of Popov's school are Dr.J.Demidova, I.Vecvagare and others.

Since 1998 the LHA joined the Liga Medicorum Homoeopatica Internationalis, and since 1999 LHA is a member of the European Committee for Homeopathy. Reaching the international level enhanced the prestige of LHA among medical professionals of Latvia. Colleagues from Belgium, Austria, France offer their help in training to the Latvian doctors. The attitude towards homeopathy is getting more loyal because of its indisputable efficiency. The number of patients wishing to get homeopathic treatment is growing rapidly. In 2000 the Baltic Center of Classical Homeopathy was founded. Opening it we intended to spread the ideas of Hahnemann and his brilliant follower in their classical purity. The homeopathic center «Ars» which sprang up instead of the homeopathic department of the poly-clinic opened in 1966 continues its work.

Riga homeopathic pharmacy goes on its work as well. But because of boundary obstacles it provides with homeopathic remedies only population of Latvia now which are delivered to ordinary town and rural pharmacies of Latvia according to orders of homeopathic doctors living there. In spring 2000 the subsidiary of the pharmacy is opened in Riga. Mrs.M.Ozolina continues her work too but in a new quality of a consultant free of charge as since the 1st of February, 2000 she is retired. The pharmacy management was passed to energetic Mrs.I.Berkmane.

*Nevertheless the history of classical homeopathy in Latvia is only at its start.*

Are we entitled to judge the past? The confident young growth of seeds of homeopathy put into the Latvian soil at the beginning of the 19th century were tried to be trampled down or plucked. But the roots taken by them went deep into this soil. Only gratefully recollecting those who did not allow to weed them and accepting the cruel facts of history as a lesson, having understood and forgiven it, one can feel oneself sure moving towards future. Probably the destiny of the Riga Homeopathic pharmacy which was not involved in politics and survived during revolutions and wars and having continued doing its humane matter providing people with harmless and being in wise hands magic remedies will serve as an evidence of heavenly protection, divine patronage method which is to give back health to the mankind for the higher purposes of its existence.

**Marina Afanasieva, MD.** Vice-President of the LMHI for Latvia

I am apologizing for possible inexactitudes particularly in spelling of names. The certain part of the text is written according to oral recollections of the contemporaries and is to futher investigations.

I am very grateful to Mrs.Mirdza Ozolina, the manager of Riga homeopathic pharmacy; Ms.Gunta Rudzite, the Chairman of the Latvian Rerich's Society; Dr. Sergey Leonov, the pupil of Dr.H.Lukin, senior lecturer of the Chair of acupuncture and traditional methods of treatment at the advanced training faculty of Altai State Medical University and the head of International School of Classical Homeopathy in Altai region; Mrs.Brigita Lukina, the wife of one of Lukin's descendants who has found the above mentioned book on homeopathy of 1900; Mr.Vilnis Zobens, expert on Latvian history; Dr.Dace Gaile for the help collecting information; Ms.Lily Avdienok for the help in work with old Latvian texts; as well as the Council of the Liga Medicorum Homoeopathica Internationalis initiated the beginning of investigation in the field of history of homeopathy in our country., 241-242 p.