

Carola Scheuren

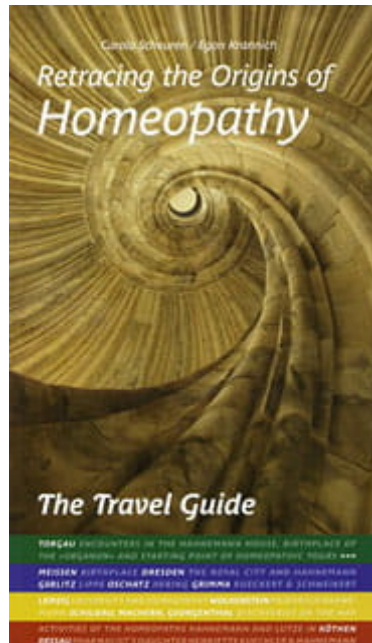
Retracing the Origins of Homeopathy

Sample text

[Retracing the Origins of Homeopathy](#)

from [Carola Scheuren](#)

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 Excerpt from: Carola Scheuren and Egon Krannich: Retracing the Origins of Homeopathy

Preface

The Reunification of East and West Germany revealed the birthplaces of homeopathy, Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt, to the German people and to the world. Ironically, few people in the East German city of Meissen knew, even during the socialist era, that Hahnemann was originally from their hometown. Occasionally, a few foreigners, e.g., from India, made a "*pilgrimage*" to the city of Kothen in search of Hahnemann's house. Such places of remembrance, however, can easily be forgotten. Commemorative plaques fade, are no longer noticed or treated as peculiar relics of local history.

In socialist East Germany, homeopathy was being phased out. Lack of education and training meant no new homeopaths and signaled the possible death of the art. Homeopathy was as insignificant to the "*scientific-technical revolution*" in the socialist East, as it was to the medical optimists in the West, who were fans of more conventional medical practice.

In 1991, when I began working as an archivist at the "*Institut für Geschichte der Medizin*" (Institute for the History of Medicine) at the Robert Bosch Stiftung (Robert Bosch Foundation) in Stuttgart, I curated the collection of unpublished works of the founder of homeopathy, the physician Samuel Hahnemann (1755 - 1843). I immediately comprehended the magnificent opportunity and wealth of information made possible by the reunification of Germany.

I lived in West Berlin long enough to become annoyed by the challenges I faced when entering

East Germany before 1989. Thus, I began contacting sources in Leipzig, Dresden and Kothén in hopes of locating what was left of the Schwabe Company library at the VEB drug company (VEB = Volkseigener Betrieb/nationally-owned enterprise) in Leipzig. In Kothén, Mrs. Streuber had already successfully started the rediscovery of Hahnemann and the lay practitioner Arthur Lutze (1813 -1870) at the local historical museum. In 1996, we had the great opportunity to present an exhibition for the bicentennial celebration of homeopathy at the "*Deutsches i-fygiene-museum*" (German Museum of Hygiene) in Dresden.

While preparing for the exhibition, the Saxon roots of homeopathy became more and more apparent. We discovered homeopathic patients' associations throughout Saxony, the historical archives of the company Schwabe of Leipzig in the state archives, and stories from people in Chemnitz about naturopaths and an elderly homeopathic doctor who was quite adored by her patients.

During the following years, interest in homeopathy grew even more as former activists from East German environmentalist groups started reviving the memory of Hahnemann and homeopathy in Meissen. One laypeople's group tracked Hahnemann and Lutze in Kothén and organized homeopathic seminars. The first travel guide, published by Klaus Thon in 1992, identified Hahnemann's laboratories. Researchers in Torgau also tracked homeopathy's founder in their city and found that Hahnemann's house had a foundation dating from the Late Middle Ages. Regrettably, despite this newfound historical evidence, the discovery made it apparent that Hahnemann's legacy had faded from local memory.

The town of Georgenthal received renewed attention when researchers rediscovered the place of Hahnemann's first treatment for the mentally insane, where he used an empathetic method of communication. Additionally, the great German homeopath Constantine Hering, known as the "*father of American homeopathy*", became the focus of renewed attention in his hometown of Oschatz, where his birthplace still stands today.

In this way, various local participants worked together to return the origin of homeopathy to its proper place in local, regional and international memory. This was often aided by the efforts of West German homeopaths. I particularly remember very committed partners from Karlsruhe, Frankfurt and Berlin who made this rediscovery their personal business.

This travel guide will be of great use to people from all over the world who might ask, for example, in Stuttgart for guided tours of Hahnemann's or Hering's birthplace. Hopefully, they will follow the many suggestions in this book which provide not only nice pictures, but useful information. The book also provides a great opportunity to rediscover Germany from a historically medical perspective. I hope that the book will find many readers and that its contents will raise further questions that shed light on the past. Those who have been involved in putting together this new landscape of homeopathy are aware of how much fun such work can be. Special thanks to these very people for their efforts and achievements, and congratulations on your successful work!

Prof. Dr. Martin Dinges, Stuttgart



Hahnemann and The Case Klockenbring

On February 6th 1792, Hahnemann's friend, publisher Rudolf Zacharias Becker, printed an article on the planned foundation of a convalescent home for mentally ill patients with the means to pay, to be managed by a philanthropic physician. This physician was Samuel Hahnemann, who in 1792 founded the first homeopathic institution for mentally ill patients, the "*Hilfsanstalt für verwirrte Standespersonen*", at the hunting lodge and summer residence of the dukes of Saxony-Gotha in Georgenthal. The first and only patient was the paralegal Klockenbring from Hannover, who was treated by Hahnemann around the clock for many months. Hahnemann received a payment of 1000 thaler, a considerable amount at that time. The treatment started in the summer of 1792. In the beginning, Hahnemann remained mostly observant, and a term used in music came to his mind: untunement. This term played a major role in his later thinking. Hahnemann witnessed quite a spectacle. First Klockenbring described capital punishments for criminals in a threatening

Money, music, medicine – the three key factors of Klockenbring's treatment for insanity



Klockenbring as "glutton" at the Georgenthal Museum

Actor Andreas Jung in the double role as "crazy physician" and "madman" in the play "Hahnemann and Klockenbring," which he composed, during performances in Meissen and Torgau in 2007/2008



tone, then cited texts in Hebrew, whistled popular melodies, later wallowed in the grass, or dropped on the ground at his guards' feet, crying and sobbing. In the beginning, he used to walk around yelling most of the nights. Though Klockenbring did not have a calendar with him, when asked, he could tell the exact date and sometimes even the exact hour. Occasionally, he asked for pen and paper and handed whatever he had written to Hahnemann. Klockenbring liked to rhyme. His preferred topics were the morals and prejudices of the plebs. He composed songs about this and sang variations of them accompanied on the piano, which he played exceptionally well.

Step by step, through the power of the remedies, Klockenbring came to his senses again and at last fully recovered. The remedies Hahnemann gave to Klockenbring were already chosen according to homeopathic principles, though homeopathy itself had not yet been invented.

After being treated for nine months, Klockenbring was healed and taken home by his wife. The case of the peculiar healing traveled, but no other patients arrived, and the duke decided to take back his castle. Henriette Hahnemann gave birth to twins on July 29th 1792, and the growing family moved 25 kilometers away to the town of Molschleben.



Hahnemann regarding his patient, Klockenbring:

What remains of Hahnemann and his Patient Klockenbring in Georgenthal?

The former hunting lodge and summer residence, Georgenthal Castle still exists. A commemorative plaque is the only evidence of Hahnemann, his family and the famous patient Klockenbring in Georgenthal. The modest building today serves as a nursing home. The descendants of the former owners have yet to show interest.

Some years ago, a group of friends of homeopathy founded an association, the "Georgenthaler Hahnemann-Verein e. V". Thanks to this group, the "Lohmühlenmuseum" now shows an interesting permanent exhibition about homeopathy and its founder who worked in Georgenthal from 1792 to 1793. Created in the shape of a labyrinth, the exhibition symbolizes the difficult and winding path towards a new therapy, which developed against the tide of the conventional medicine of its time during these years in Georgenthal. In 2003 and 2005, the association organized a homeopathic symposia, which received much attention.

"... Almost superhuman work at his profession as a law enforcement officer, prolonged sitting, as well as permanent pondering, and an overindulgence in food had caused a dissonance in his body, five years before the actual acute onset of the mental confusion. It eventually led to an offending quaintness and intolerable tempers. To what extent the strong wine contributed to that, I'd rather disregard... In winter of 1791/1792, it came to the outbreak of terrible insanity, which by all means mocked the almost 6-month-long careful treatment of his personal physician Wichmann in Hannover, one of the greatest physicians of our time.

When Klockenbring came to see me at the end of June, he was depressed and in bad shape, and walked supported by three strong men. His spongy body, during good times somewhat awkward, now showed an admirable agility, smoothness and flexibility in all his moves. His face was covered with big, reddish-blue bumps, filthy and expressed extreme confusion. Smiling and grinding his teeth, indiscretion and impertinence, diffidence and defiance, childish folly and immense pride, lusts without any need – such a mixture of traits accompanied it."

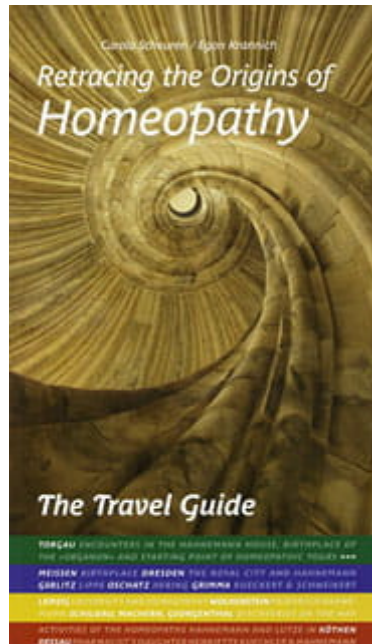
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