

Odyssey to Köthen

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Abstract: Dr. Chase provides a detailed accounting of her trip to Köthen during the 2005 Liga meeting in Germany. The trip was sponsored by the German Central Homeopathic Physicians Association. Köthen is renowned as the home of Hahnemann for fourteen years, just preceding his relocation to Paris. The visit included a walking tour of varied sites associated with Hahnemann, including the Lutze Clinic, Hahnemann's home and office, and other sites of historic interest.

Keywords: Köthen, a visit to; Hahnemann, his home and office in Köthen; history of homeopathy

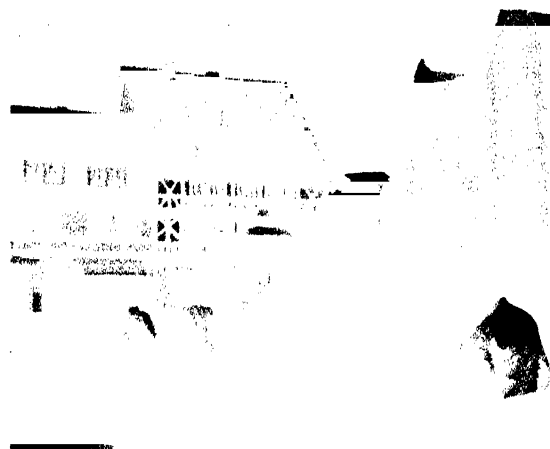
On the occasion of the 60th Congress of the Liga Medicorum Homeopathica Internationalis held in Berlin, Germany, in early May 2005, every participating member of the Executive Committee and of the International Council enjoyed the opportunity to visit Köthen, Germany, a town where homeopathy's founder, Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, lived for fourteen years, 1821-1835. The Deutscher Zentralverein Homöopathischer Ärzte (DZVhÄ), the, generously arranged and provided for this unique experience for which those of us who participated are deeply



Executive Committee

grateful.

The DZVhÄ arranged for chartered busses for our two-hour bus ride to Köthen and the charming Hotel Anhalt and hosted the EC/IC dinner Monday night. The City of Köthen and its mayor rolled out the red carpet for us, as well. We held our Executive



Walking Tour of Köthen

Committee Meeting in the music room of the Lutze Clinic and the International Council Meeting in the very impressive wood paneled council room in the historic Rathaus whose clock tower we also visited.

DZVhÄ President Dr. Karl-Wilhelm Steuernagel and local guide Claudia Luders led the Liga Executive Committee on our walking tour of Köthen with particular regard to the sites associated with Dr. C.F. Samuel Hahnemann. First, a little background on the history of the District of Köthen within the State of Saxony-Anhalt, very much contributory to Hahnemann's having come there in 1821, is in order.

Prince Ludwig (1579-1650), who obtained Köthen at the division of Anhalt in 1603, was influenced by an academy that he had encountered on a trip to Italy and founded the "Fruitful Society" in August 1617. Originally created as a bulwark against the effects of the Thirty Years War on the purity of the



Prince Ludwig

German language, the society's aims became more comprehensive. As a means of promoting equality among the members, without regard to status or religion, the members assumed society names. The names primarily chosen were those of medicinal or useful plants. This erasing of social boundaries extended to a broadmindedness that encompassed other areas such as poetry, primary education, and technical education.

The first teacher's college was established in Köthen in 1783/84 following the reforms of Wolfgang Ratke (1571-1635) in whose methods Ludwig had become interested. Köthen was the site in 1867 of the founding of the first institution for nursery school teachers in Germany by Angelika Hartmann. The practice-oriented method was the basis of education in the Polytechnic College established in 1891. Both institutions are represented to this day; the former in the Wolfgang Ratke Institute for Primary School Teaching of the University of Halle-Wittenberg, and the latter in Anhalt College that still has its headquarters in Köthen.

Another renowned son of Köthen is Johann Friedrich Naumann (1780-1857), a child prodigy, whose *Natural History of the Birds of Germany* became the scientific basis of ornithology for all of central Europe.

Leopold (1694-1728) marked the



Duke Ferdinand

Excerpt from diary of Besuch Griesselichs bei Hahnemann in Köthen, 1832

Visit of Dr. Griesselich in the house of Hahnemann, Köthen, 1832

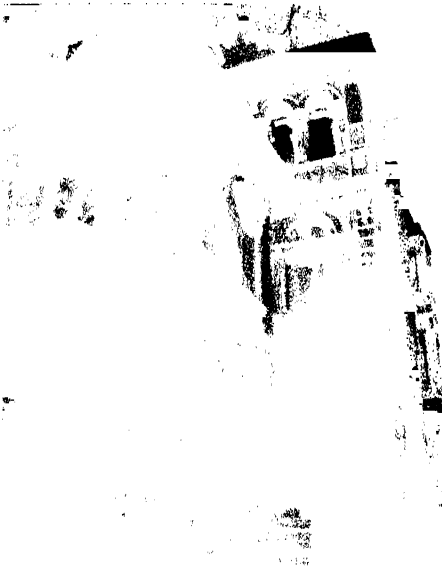
"Some 173 years ago, a homeopathic colleague traveling through Germany came to this house that we are visiting today. He was lucky because Hahnemann opened the door for him. Although we will not find today Hahnemann personally in his old house, we might find his spirit among us. Maybe it will be a bit easier for us to feel Hahnemann if I read to you some of the impressions Griesselich wrote down in his diary about his visit in 1832.

"Griesselich described Hahnemann with the fiery behavior of a young man. It was hard to believe that he was 77 years old. He was small, quick in his movements. Every movement expressed life and was full of energy. His eyes revealed the scientist within though his features were sharp. His speech was fiery and fluent and often directed against his adversaries. He showed an excellent memory and returned easily after many excursions to different topics, to the original theme. When he talked about friends and enemies or about science and philosophy, he talked without breaks, got warm, started sweating, had to take off his little hat and had to wipe off the sweat. He often had to have his big pipe relit. For that purpose the whole day a candle was burning on the table. And don't forget the beer—over the whole day a big, covered glass of beer was found on the table. He didn't drink wine. His way of living was quite simple, not at all fancy, patriarchal.

"Hahnemann's discussion often contained something polemic and critical. They were not all directed exclusively against allopathic colleagues but also against his homeopathic colleagues. He even criticized work and attitudes of friends. Often he demanded more agreement among the homeopaths for the approach of common goals. He considered the agreement concerning the fundamentals of homeopathy as very important to defeat the attacks of the allopathic colleagues. He criticized here and there the tendency of publishing more and more books on homeopathy, but insisted on giving everybody free space to gain experience with the purpose of correcting eventually what has already been discovered (including his own experiences). But he rejected everything published on pure presumptions.

"Hahnemann talked with me also about patients he was unable to cure; especially, he named ascites, pathologies related to gonorrhoea and certain types of intermittent fevers, which showed a big variety of symptoms.

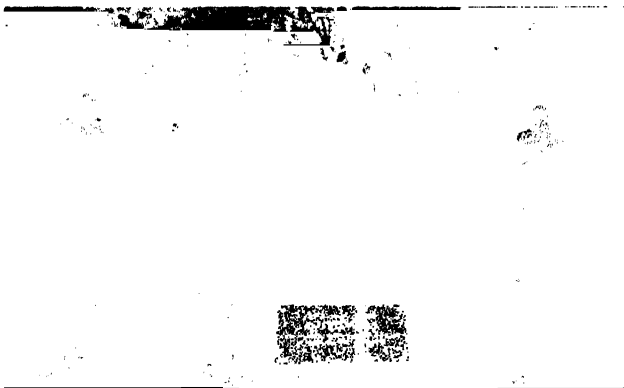
"I also had the chance to admire Hahnemann's case taking. He explored every detail and documented it im-



Villa Witting

start of his young reign with a decree for religious tolerance. He paid homage to music by the expansion of the court's orchestra and, in 1717, with the appointment of Köthen's other famous resident, the then thirtytwo year old Johann Sebastian Bach, as the official musical director for the Prince of Anhalt-Köthen.

The open-mindedness of this society, ruled, at the time, by Duke Ferdinand, brought Dr. Christian Frederick Samuel Hahnemann to Köthen. He came with his wife and children in 1821 in response to an advertisement for a physician when the Duke granted him that which had been denied him in Leipzig, the right to make and to dispense his own remedies. During his fourteen years of residence in Köthen, Hahnemann produced his *Chronic Diseases* and his writings on cholera, was named Hofrath or Privy Councilor (May, 1822), celebrated his fifty year jubilee (10 August 1829), lost his beloved wife of forty-eight years (31 March 1830), and married his second wife (18 January 1835).



Monument to Hahnemann and Lutze

mediately in his book, which was a protocol for continuing documented cases.

"When I was visiting Hahnemann here in this house—he was working and experimenting on the *Chronic Diseases*. And the most important information I got from Hahnemann was a change in the strategy concerning the repetition of remedies in chronic diseases. Differing from earlier statements, Hahnemann now considered the frequent repetition of remedies in chronic diseases as a major progress. He told me "the sick nature can't resist the frequent impulses of the remedy, it has to progress . . ." This means Hahnemann did not wait any more

until the effect of the remedy; e.g., *Calcarea carbonica*, stopped acting. He repeated the remedy every 7, 8 or 14 days, administering only a few globuli each time.

"We talked a lot about *Psora*. (You might remember that Hahnemann wrote the *Chronic Diseases* here in Köthen, in this house). Hahnemann expressed his opinion that the origin of the chronic, non-veneric diseases are caused by an earlier scabies infection. He also insisted that the transfer from diseases similar to *Psora* from parents to children is possible (in other words, he accepted a "psoric" genetic disposition).

"We talked about different acute events like an unhealthy mode of living, taking cold, physical and mental overexertion or an acute grief, which can be able to awake latent *Psora* and develop chronic diseases related to *Psora*. Hahnemann at that time was involved in an intense discussion with Hartmann (one of his students), because Hartmann published an article, which mentioned that there exist other types of non-veneric chronic diseases, which are not related to *Psora*. Hahnemann was especially upset that Hartmann didn't prove his hypothesis by showing new facts and developments in practice. Discussing these topics Hahnemann expressed his displeasure with angry and impatient gestures and facial expressions.

"I also talked with Hahnemann about drug provings. He explained that lately he used the 30th potency for all his drug provings. To all those colleagues with major doubts with his method he recommended taking a few days *Natrum muriaticum* 30C (10-12 globuli each dose) and 'then he should tell me that he doesn't feel sick . . .,' Hahnemann said.

"We also talked about diet. I heard from Hahnemann that he follows basically the recommendations he gives us in his books of the *Chronic Diseases*. His recommendations were not as rigorous as I thought. Hahnemann explained that the diet has to be adapted individually to the needs of the patient as we do it with his remedy. The diet has to be adapted to the personality as well as the disease of the patient. Hahnemann had the opinion that we should allow the patient everything that: 1. Has not a specific relationship to the patient's diseases (eg.



Schloss of Duke Ferdinand

As we commenced our walking tour from our Hotel Anhalt, we first encountered Villa Wittig, the once resplendent home of Louis Wittig, the purveyor of a homeopathic coffee substitute, who had made his fortune producing a form of that beverage recommended by Arthur Lutze in 1844, who had shared Hahnemann's opposition to coffee. The ingredients included roasted rye, barley, and sugar beet. The DZVhÄ that possesses the formula is considering producing it again in the future, according to Dr. Steuernagel.

Not many blocks away, we encountered a monument erected in 1897 by Commercial Privy Councilor Louis Wittig to the memory of Hahnemann and Lutze, whose busts, by H. Pohlmann, flank a statue of the Greek goddess of health, *Hygea*. From there, we walked on and entered the gates of the Schloss or castle of Duke Ferdinand. Within the buildings of the castle are housed the collection of birds (1835) amassed and augmented by J.F. Naumann, presented in a natural display years ahead of its time; residence rooms, the reconstructed castle chapel, and the Hall of Mirrors, formerly the Throne Room, all associated with Bach; and a small museum in the Apothecary Vault devoted to homeopathy and



Johanna Henriette Hahnemann

no spicy herbs for urinal diseases), 2. Does not have an antidotal relationship to the given remedy (no wine with *Nux vomica*) and, 3. Is not able to alter the nervous system in a way that our remedy ceases to act (coffee!). Whenever it was possible, Hahnemann was very rigorous about prohibiting coffee. He recommended green tea. But he admitted that he has seen cases where *Nux vomica* did a good job in patients with regular coffee consumption.

"Hahnemann talked finally about the need of a homeopathic hospital under direction of an experienced homeopathic colleague. It is absolutely not sufficient, he said, to have a homeopathic department inside of an allopathic clinic because too many obstacles from the allopathic colleagues impede successful homeopathic work. A very critical exchange of letters between Hahnemann and Hufeland were of the opinion that Hufeland had not undertaken every effort to succeed in this aspect.

"I am so thankful for the many topics I had the chance to discuss with the founder of Homeopathy. I learned a lot in the 2 days and 11 hours I spent with him in this house. These hours are among the most memorable of my life."

Read by Dr. Ulrich Fischer, Freiburg, LMHI Prime Vice President.

to C.F.S. Hahnemann and A. Lutze.

Contained within the exhibit on homeopathy in the castle are homeopathic books, such as Hahnemann's *die chronischen Krankheiten* (*Chronic Diseases*), and homeopathic medicines and other items associated with Hahnemann. Displayed on the wall are photocopies of the church records. One notes the date of the death of Johanna Henriette, aged 67, Hahnemann's first wife of nearly forty-eight years, on



Samuel and Melanie Hahnemann



Hahnemann's Deathbed

31 March 1830 of liver and lung complaints. The other records the date of the marriage of Hahnemann, at age 80, to his second wife, Melanie D'Hervilly-Gohier, 18 January 1835. Of especial interest in the exhibit is the bed in which Hahnemann died 02 July 1843 at 5:00 am in Paris. Above it hangs a picture of Hahnemann at his death in that bed. There is also an impressive painted glass window by Oidtman, depicting Hahnemann and Lutze, commissioned for the centenary of the promulgation of the Law of Similars, saved from the Lutze Clinic.

We walked through the garden of the Lutze Clinic, founded by Arthur Lutze (1813-1870), a Secretary of Postal Services, on 10 April 1855, Hahnemann's 100th Anniversary. Having received a dispensation from the then Duke Heinrich to practice medicine



Samuel Hahnemann House in Köthen

and to prepare remedies, Mr. Lutze had many homeopathic doctors working for him, reputedly seeing 26,000 patients annually. Troubles arose from the homeopathic community later when he published a 6th edition of the *Organon* including, among other alterations, a paragraph advocating double remedies that was roundly and soundly

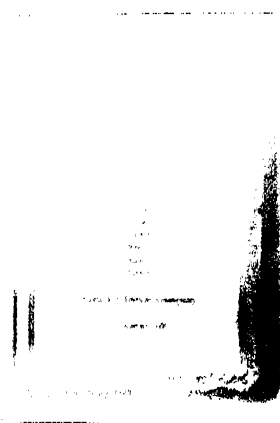
rejected. Today, the garden contains plants that are homeopathic remedy sources.

A house sits "on an obtuse corner of Wall Street" in Köthen. It is the home that Hahnemann purchased for himself and his large family and in which he lived and practiced for fourteen years. He moved there from Leipzig "...with eleven wagon loads of goods and chattels..." The German Central Homeopathic Physicians' Association (DZVhÄ) some years ago purchased the house and, then, with the added support of the international homeopathic community, undertook an extensive and expensive renovation of the historic house, recently completed.

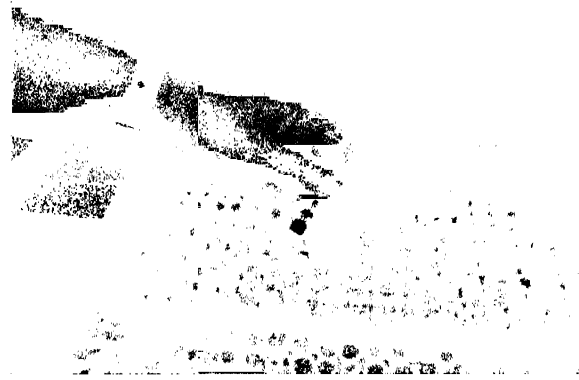
As one enters what is now called Hahnemann House, one stands in a wide hall where Hahnemann's patients awaited their consultations with him. Hang-



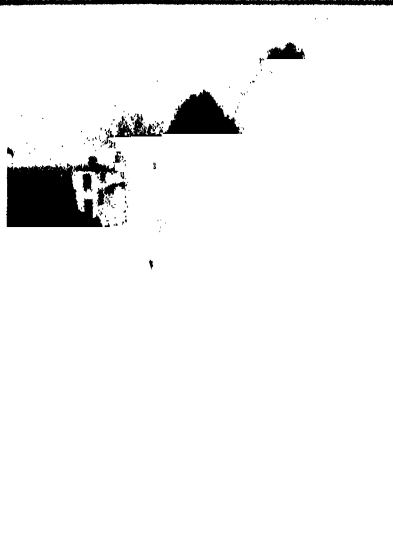
Hahnemann and Lutze



Plaque in memory of Maisie Panos, MD



Dr. Chase examines Hahnemann's vials



Courtyard opening on to garden

ing in that hall is a list of donors that contributed to the renovation expenses of the Hahnemann House, including the American Institute of Homeopathy and the Woodward Foundation for Homeopathy, the latter of which also has a donated plaque displayed connoting its contribution in memory of Maesimund B. Panos, MD, DHT. To the left is the room that Hahnemann used as his consulting room. Filling that room is the desk that he used, on loan from the British Homeopathic Trust, resting on its surface, a stethoscope of the time and an ornate homeopathic medicine case. The homeopathic community, on 10 August 1829, the fifty-year jubilee of his receiving his doctorate from Erlangen, bestowed the case upon him while he lived in Köthen. Many of us availed ourselves of the opportunity carefully to handle the small vials that Hahnemann himself had touched. While we were gathered in the room, Liga Prime Vice President Dr. Ulrich Fischer read an excerpt from the diary of Dr. Griesselich, Hahnemann's contemporary, who visited Hahnemann in his consulting room here in Köthen (see sidebar).

Behind the consulting room is a second room within which there is an alcove where Hahnemann made his medicines. Further renovation is to occur in this area of the house. To the right of the entry hall is a third room that is being used by the newly acquired contemporary homeopathic physician, Dr. Shütte, as her consulting room.

At the rear of the house is a courtyard opening onto a narrow ground, bound by a high wall, that Hahnemann called his garden. He would walk up and down here; it is said, even at night carrying a lantern. His rejoinder to a visitor who remarked on the smallness of his garden, "You are right. My garden is small. But, see how high it is!" At the back of the garden had been a bower where he would

relax after his long day of consultations or welcome visiting professional colleagues.

The second story of the house, reached by stairs to the right at the rear, served as the living quarters for Hahnemann and his family. There is a balcony at the rear of that floor that over looks his garden.

The DZVhÄ successfully sought for a homeopathic doctor, acquiring retired East German homeopathic physician, Dr. Schütte, to practice out of the Hahnemann House, bringing homeopathy back to Köthen after all of these years.

The German Central Homeopathic Physicians Association has collaborated with urban planners to approach revitalization of Köthen from the perspective of a homeopathically based urban anamnesis, substituting individual healing measures for the global prescriptions heretofore used in urban reclamation processes. In their participation in the renewal of Köthen, they have purchased a nearby former monastery that they plan to convert into an educational facility, and they are committed to educating the public in health issues.

All of us of the governing councils of the Liga Medicorum Homeopathica Internationalis express our gratitude to the Deutscher Zentralverein Homöopathischer Ärzte for preserving this historical jewel of homeopathy and for providing for our opportunity to visit it.

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**The author gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Richard Hiltner, MD, DHT, for these two photographs.*

About the Author: Sandra M. Chase, MD, DHT, is Secretary of the American Board of Homeotherapeutics and of the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia Convention of the United States, she also serves on the Executive Committee of the Liga Medicorum Homeopathica Internationalis and the Board of the American Institute of Homeopathy. She was the recipient of the prestigious Liga President of Honor, only bestowed six times in the 80-year history of the Liga.