

History of Homeopathy in Köthen

Mekka of Homeopathy!

Uninitiated are often astonished by the rich history including the associated personalities of the rather small residences in the former Duchy of Anhalt. Köthen certainly is no exception, which is mainly based on the fact that Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann lived, researched and healed here after a restless life for comparatively long 13 years. Guests from all over the world come to visit his living house, the exhibition in the castle and the European Library for Homeopathy attempting to walk in the footsteps of the man who has made this alternative form of medicine to a now widely reorganized science. During these visits an almost spiritual adoration of Hahnemann can be observed quite often, like kissing the threshold of his house or presenting a portrait of him painted as an icon. At the same time meetings and conventions, but also practice-related events such as the "Homeopathy Summer" or trainings make clear that Hahnemann's teachings even today and more than ever have validity, giving the foundation of healing for physicians around the world. This brochure shall give a brief overview of the history of Homeopathy in Köthen, not only focussed on Hahnemann. Only a few years after his departure to Paris in 1835, more chapters were written, because of Dr. Arthur Lutze. He left his marks in the history of homeopathy as he established a permanent monument with his famous clinic, well known in whole Europe, even though that his approach to the homeopathic method and practicing it was quite different and not undisputed. For the world and therefore in Köthen homeopathy is agile also in the 21st century, history is shown and newborn in manifold events up to now. And since the beginning of the new millennium there is again homeopathic curing on the very spot where it all started - in the Hahnemann-House.

Hahnemann in Köthen - life

Born 1755 in Meißen, Hahnemann was able to look back on a quite productive, however restless life by the time he made the decision for Köthen. Permanent changes of residences and working places had finally brought him to Leipzig in 1811, where he also held the permission to teach at the University in addition to his practice activities. Disputes among local pharmacists about the right to dispense, the privilege for manufacturing medicine directly by the physicians, which Hahnemann claimed for his own, led to the shift to Köthen. The local Duke Friedrich Ferdinand of Anhalt-Köthen granted him exactly this and also hired Hahnemann as personal physician. In 1821 the relocation along with the purchase of the residential house on Wall Street was carried out. Just one year later, the meanwhile thriving practice owner was promoted to a court counsellor. Almost eight years later Hahnemann's wife Henriette, always a big support and relief when it came to the "normal life" aside of science and practice, died and was buried on the old cemetery. By the end of 1834, the now her place occupying daughters received tough competition by a new patient: it was reported that Melanie d'Hervilly arrived in Köthen on horseback and in men's clothing, which certainly was as detrimental to her reputation in conservative Köthen as well as her Parisian origin. And finally for good measure, the 34-year-old fell deeply in love with the now 79-year-old widower. A highly themed love relationship developed - including various cabals not only among the jealous daughters. But despite all scepticism the in January 1835 entered marriage was very happy and kept even after the soon following departure to Paris until the death of Hahnemann in 1843. The daughters of Hahnemann remained living in the house on Wall Street.

Hahnemann in Köthen - works

The protection by the Duke Friedrich Ferdinand granted Hahnemann uninterrupted work and research, which of course was reflected in his work's successes. Besides some new editions of older writings, he also took the opportunity for new academic issues. Most important is here the in 1828 published first edition of the "Chronic Diseases". In 5 volumes it represented and still represent beside the "Organon" and the "Materia Medica Pura" a foundational work for homeopathy, particularly since Hahnemann wrote in this first edition unaffected by the later aroused discussions. In Köthen Hahnemann also fought passionately for the purity of his doctrine that he faced particularly threatened in the early 1830s especially by colleagues from Leipzig. These disputes are still going on until today. High appreciations in all social levels earned Hahnemann's "Writings to ward off the curse of Asiatic cholera" in the year 1831. Obeying these advises helped in the treatment of this dreadful disease, which also raged in Central Germany at that time. Also Hahnemann assumed even then that tiny organisms would have been inspected as cause and suggested preventive measures. Through all this time the practice mode naturally not stopped, patients were found not only in the residence itself, they also came from his former haunts or have been, in part, attracted from distant places by his high reputation. While celebrating his 50th doctor's jubilee in 1829 the decision was made to found an association of homeopathic physicians. The founding ceremony took place in Hahnemann's house, adding even more importance in medicine history. The society exists as "German Central Association of Homeopathic Physicians" ("DZVhÄ") to date, making it the oldest existing German medical network and closely linked to Köthen and the house up to now.

Köthen at the times of Hahnemann

Approximately 30000 people populated the heavily indebted Duchy of Anhalt-Köthen in Hahnemann's time, 6000 of them in Köthen itself. Benefiting from the fertile soils, many townspeople still earned their money with agriculture. Only a few years after Hahnemann's departure, the emergence of the first German railway junction in Köthen created a true boom in terms of industrial development, even though until today the town is heavily connected with agriculture culminating in the famous nickname "Cow-Köthen". Since 1818 Duke Friedrich Ferdinand ruled, also a highly decorated retired Major General of the Prussian army famed from fighting Napoleon and wounded several times. He was married to Julie, a daughter of Friedrich Wilhelm II., King of Prussia with his morganatic wife Sophie von Dönhoff. The conversion of the Duke and Duchess in 1825 to the catholic faith evokes in Prussia sheer horror and also caused unease and suspicion among the subjects in the reign of Köthen. For centuries the people there were Calvinists or, like Hahnemann, Lutherans. However, all these religious problems and the mentioned financial hardships could not prevent a building prosperity. Especially the Hofbauconducteur C.G.H. Bandhauer worked on site and created unique buildings. Unfortunately the authorized fame of the architect got diminished by the collapse of the chain bridge at Nienburg with several victims and the misfortune at St. Mary's Church, when the collapsing framework for the high church tower killed six people. The certainly most beautiful work Bandhauer made, the magnificent Hall of Mirrors in the castle, is currently being restored back to full splendour. And not to forget, since 1835 the Naumann's bird collection in the castle remained unchanged, truly worth climbing up the numerous stairs to the museum.

Hahnemann's house

There is no exact date of purchase, only the civil rights, given to Hahnemann in June of 1821, point out that he must already have been the owner of the early 18th century built house by this time according to the law. Marked with a distinctive plate by the homeopathic successors of Hahnemann, this building is now a pilgrimage destination for guests from all over the world. Passing the original entrance door they start their walk through the house directly in the former practice room with some deeply admired furniture from Hahnemann's Paris apartment. In this case, it is his desk and chair. The thus belonging deathbed can by the way be seen within the exhibition in Köthen castle, an essential destination for any visitor. Also in this first room is next to a collection of historical books with the works of Hahnemann his original travel pharmacy on display, presented to him in 1829 right here in this house on occasion of his 50th doctor's jubilee. Today this item is for many homeopaths a really impressive climax. Passing by the living room the way leads to the kitchen with the resultant smokestack. It is reported that the stove definitely was also used for research, but probably mainly for preparing the Hahnemann's appreciated home-style cuisine, cooked certainly with ingredients grown in the garden. Over there the legendary harbour is rebuilt again, for Hahnemann both retreat and inspiration. Even today a way from here leads into the adjacent hospital building, with its operators Hahnemann shared a fountain. Until 1994 privately-owned, the listed residential house of Hahnemann has been completely refurbished. In addition to the aforementioned exhibition the house is again used by a homeopathic doctor for practising and not last since 2013 as seat of the German Central Associations of Homeopathic Physicians (DZVhÄ).

European Library for Homeopathy

Hahnemann's direct neighbours were not only monks. As members of the Monastery of the Brothers of Charity they found their passion and duty in serving as well-practised healers, trained in several practises including even surgery. In the hospital, built by Bandhauer in 1828, they nursed their patients free of charge and stayed in intensive exchange with the Homeopath. Since some parts of the almost complete evangelical citizens still felt provoked by them, the monks departed from Köthen in 1832 after fulfilling their vow. The Brothers left behind not only the impressive record of 800 patients served in a very advanced manner, but also their hospital building. Later it was used i.a. as carpentry or seminar building and had been ruined by the course of time. As part of the International Building Exhibition 2010, it was re-opened to the public in October 2009 after extensive renovation, hosting seminar rooms and especially the European Library for Homeopathy. Both experienced homeopaths as well as interested laymen are invited to search, read and do research in the growing collection of books, guided by competent staff. One is particularly proud of the historic fund with outstanding rarities from 1796 to 1950. This bibliophile treasure was delivered by ship from Hamburg and perfectly complements the current book inventory. But not only the books are definitely worth a visit: There is also a collection of artefacts of the homeopathic history presented to the public, including the drug archive of Karl von Petzinger. Furthermore some highly interesting objects can be seen visualizing the homeopathic principles in an entertaining way, for example a Chaotic Pendulum. Nestled in regular exhibitions, they provide not only homeopathic experienced visitors fascination again and again.

"World Capital of Homeopathy"

No marketing or advertising strategy has made up this slogan, in fact, it was the enthusiastic press. The district seat Köthen naturally perceived it as a great honour as the "Liga Medicorum Homeopathica Internationalis", short LMHI, set its statutory seat in Hahnemann House in March 2013. This World Association represents thousands of homeopathic physicians from more than 70 countries, concluding that the term "World Capital" is certainly not too far-fetched. But thereby the care of homeopathic heritage and the resulting tradition is not exhausted. The Hahnemann-Lutze-Club for example has long been active in Köthen, in order not only for perpetuation but also to bring the general public closer to homeopathy in an easy way, for instance with the "Homeopathy summer". At this event, the visitors can get in touch with homeopathy in a very good mixture of both entertainment and information. The most important connection from the past to the here and now is certainly done by the numerous meetings and conventions from worldwide significance. The "German Association of Homeopathic Physicians" (DZVhÄ) with its foundation and the "Scientific Society for Homeopathy" (WissHom) not only have their seats here at the Hahnemann-house and the nearby Library, they are also causing a global impact with their events, setting the focus on Köthen; as with the "International Coethen Exchange of Experiences" (ICE) or the multiple alignment of the "German Homeopathic Congress". Besides the economy, Köthen benefits even from the creativity and inspiration of its guests, which in return enjoy the atmosphere in the historic town center and the feeling of dwelling in the one city, which Samuel Hahnemann has ennobled the Mecca of homeopathy.

Arthur Lutze

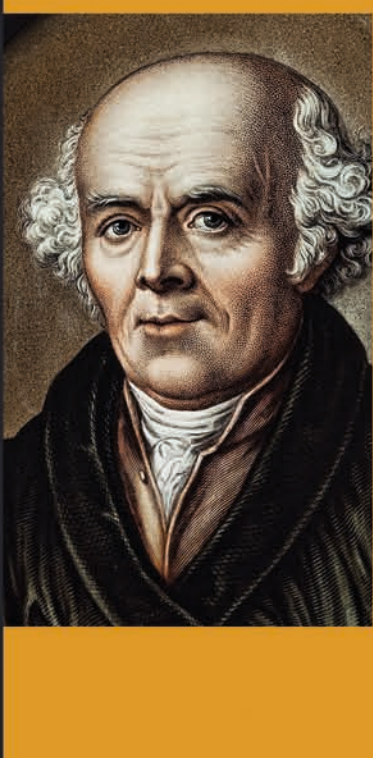
An essential part of the Köthen homeopathy history is Dr. Arthur Lutze, born in 1813 and a native from the Prussian capital Berlin. Actually an employee of the postal service, he became an ardent admirer of Hahnemann and worked as an alternative healer in Prussia until this was prohibited to him due to the lack of medical licensure. From 1846 on he set up a prosperous doctor's office first situated in a guesthouse on the edge of Köthen, called the "Bunter Fasan" (colourful pheasant). Caused by the great stampede of patients he was later - meanwhile a studied doctor of medicine - forced to expand an acquired house at the corner of Springstraße / Lange Straße and finally to construct a pretentious hospital in Gothic Revival / Italian style. The building was finished in record time and inaugurated in 1855 as a very modern and set to the highest luxury standards clinic, including an elevator, hot water heater and a wide entertainment program. The busy Arthur Lutze turned it into a thriving clinic with fantastic numbers of patients, with Lutze emphasizing the appraisal of treating the vast majority of free of charge. According to his statement he and his 20 employees took care of 173277 patients only in 1862, for many researchers hard to believe. Lutze was not undisputed among others for his dissent to Hahnemann's healing methods and his occurrence. The success, however, conceded him. From today's point of view his modern-looking products such as health coffee or diet are impressing, just as he recommended a strictly vegetarian lifestyle. The Lutze clinic existed up to 1945 as a clinic, in times of the former GDR it sheltered the seat of the city council. Renovated in 1997 it was i.a. used as an artist colony. Since 2010 belonging to the "Kanzler von Pfäusche Stiftung" it now serves as an age-based living, called the "Lutze-Stift".

Discover Köthen!

There are plenty of possibilities to follow the marks of homeopathy through Köthen. The KKM (Köthen culture and marketing) is your right contact point to get in touch in any case. We organise your stay here and arrange individually tailored guided tours for both groups and single travellers. Also, the means of access to our sights such as the Hahnemann House can be organised from a single source. Provider of conferences and congresses may not only find ideal conditions in particular at the Veranstaltungszentrum Schloss Köthen (Event Center) for their events, but also employees, received just on the needs of the homeopathic sector with expertise and years of experience. We look forward to your inquiries and requests!

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Köthen Kultur und Marketing GmbH



International Coethen Exchange (ICE) of Experiences in Köthen at the event centre in the castle



Partial view of the Hahnemann-Lutze-Monument at the Lutzeklinik



Hahnemann's writing set



contemporary view of Köthen



Hahnemann's house



The former Hospital of the Monastery of the Brothers of Charity, nowadays seat of the European Library of Homeopathy



Homeopaths from India visiting Köthen



Historic view on the Lutze clinic



Detail view on the Reiseapotheke travel pharmacy that was given to Hahnemann in Köthen