Homeopathy in Sweden and Brazil, 1880–1930

'Golden ages' with radically different implications

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Introduction

The present study is part of a larger investigation devoted to the development of homeopathy in Sweden and Brazil. It illustrates the relevance of the comparative approach and is a contribution to current scholarship on the global and local dynamics of science, technology and medicine. In an earlier paper,[1] we discussed the arrival of homeopathy in both countries in the early nineteenth century. The results led us to conclude that analysis of contexts, determinants, and interactions of practitioners and institutions seems to provide relevant pictures of different episodes of the global history of medicine.

Moving forward, we found that while the initial establishment and future fate of homeopathy in Sweden and Brazil were dramatically different —they were in fact polar opposites—it clearly flourished in both countries in the beginning of the twentieth century, to the point this period might be characterised as a 'golden age.' In addition, the remarkable development of homeopathy was intertwined with discussions on the roles and rights of academically trained physicians and lay healers, leading to epoch-making legislation that defined the course of the health professions to this day. Indeed, lay practice of homeopathy was one of the triggers for the Brazilian Penal Code of 1890 to outlaw non-academically trained physicians. Contrariwise, in 1915 the Swedish Parliament, *Riksdagen*, passed the "Lag om behörighet att utöva läkarkonsten" (Act on authorisation to practice the art of healing) which enabled lay practice

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with some provisions—an approach which, with some modifications, is still in force.

The aim of the present study is to achieve a deeper understanding of the contextual forces and the particular determinants of the status of homeopathy in both countries at the turn of the twentieth century. The emphasis on institutionalisation, the problem of lay versus academically trained practitioners, and theory versus empirical tests and results. We first describe the two 'golden ages' separately to then highlight convergences and divergences in our final remarks.

The Brazilian Golden Age

According to the periodisation established by José E.R. Galhardo (1876–1942) in his history of Brazilian homeopathy, published in 1928, between 1879 and 1911 homeopathy entered a new peak of development in Brazil, to reach a 'golden age' which was still evolving in his time.[2] This period coincides with that of the First Republic (1889–1930), the outcome of a coup against the imperial regimen orchestrated by the military and the wealthy coffee growers from São Paulo.[3] It was gestated within a scenario of unrest among the elites, characterised by abolitionism, republicanism, anticlericalism and federalism. All this under the strong influence of French currents of thought, to begin with Auguste Comte's Positivism. As an emblem, the Brazilian flag, designed at that time, bears the positivistic motto, 'order and progress.'

A new century, a new republic: a new Brazil. It would finally leave its colonial and imperial past behind and join the civilised nations. Slavery was abolished, production acquired capitalist contours. The health of workers, mainly the newly immigrated Europeans, ought to be protected to ensure productivity. But the sanitary status of cities was disastrous. For the very first time the government assumed the task of combatting disease.[4] Under the influence of Positivism and other forms of scientism, the identification and solution of sanitation problems was to be an exclusive prerogative of science and scientists. Microbiology held the key, institutes of bacteriological research were created as the privileged institutional space for scientific medicine.[5] Only official schools of medicine could grant the degrees required by the law to heal. Furthermore, these schools had enthroned the laboratory as the proper locus of medical education.[6] The role model for all doctor-scientists had a name: Oswaldo Cruz (1872–1917). Trained as a microbiologist at Institut Pasteur in Paris, he was appointed director of the newly created National Department of Public Health (1920). Cruz, and the other gods of the microbiological-sanitary Olympus—Carlos Chagas (1879–1934), Emílio Ribas (1862–1925), Adolfo

Lutz (1855–1940)—saw themselves, and were seen by society, as the harbingers of new times. New times in which science and technology would afford the objective and effective knowledge necessary to ensure the moral and material wellbeing of the Brazilian population.[7]

From the medical and scientific point of view, the First Republic was signalled by an explicit project of medicalisation of social problems. Historically, and to this day, the burden of infectious diseases is intolerably high in Brazil. Experimental science and the newborn microbiology were received with open arms in the country. The conjunction of fresh political institutions and the promises of science seemed the key to the Comtian utopia of progress under the sign of order.

Although it might seem contradictory at first sight, this was the very context that favoured the development of homeopathy during the First Republic. In addition to an explicit appeal to Positivist theory and methods, the homeopaths were members of the new political class. As we shall argue, the success of homeopathy in this period was largely due to the political interactions of prominent homeopathic physicians with the protagonists of the new political order, particularly the armed forces, government officials, senators and congressmen. Many such prominent doctors were themselves members of the new dominant classes and played politically influent roles.

An exemplary case is that of Joaquim Murtinho (1848–1911).[8] A scion of a high-standing family, Murtinho set himself to study engineering at the prestigious Polytechnic School of Rio de Janeiro, a stronghold of Positivism. However, he fell ill and was cured with homeopathy, which changed the path of his life. Not only did he devote himself to study the works by Samuel Hahnemann (1755–1843), the founder of homeopathy, but enrolled in the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro, to graduate with a dissertation with explicit homeopathic overtones. Along his busy and multifaceted career, Murtinho was a professor at the Polytechnic School, a businessman and industrialist, senator for Mato Grosso (until his death), minister of industry, economy, transport and public works. At the same time, he became a highly respected physician, among his patients were noblemen, presidents of the Republic, Benjamin Constant (1836–1891)—one of the main advocates of Positivism in Brazil and one of the engines behind the proclamation of the Republic, high-level army and navy officers and powerful businessmen. In time, Murtinho defended homeopathy on the pages of the widely read newspaper *Jornal do Commercio*, eventually entering in open polemics with none other than the Brazilian emperor, Dom Pedro II.[9]

This, thus, seems to be the overall context for the new developments in the history of Brazilian homeopathy. Or at least, according to the standard

narratives. Because a more faithful picture requires the inclusion of an additional factor in this parallelogram of forces. Also of French origin and a product of the typical faith in experimental science, Allan Kardec's brand of Spiritualism—known as Spiritism—found fertile soil in Brazil, precisely starting in our period of interest. According to some authors, Kardec (1804–1869) embodied the ideal of nineteenth-century rationalism and scientism, by attempting to reconcile experimental science and religion, under the positivistic banner of progress.[10] And in Kardec's own words, homeopathy was the approach to medicine most compatible with the new and more advanced doctrine, a harbinger of the ultimate progress of humankind.

This particular conjunction of Spiritism and scientism led to two parallel lines of development of homeopathy during the First Republic. One involved academically trained physicians, many of whom, as was said, played influential political roles, while in conflicting relationship with conventional physicians, with whom, however, they had open channels of dialogue. The second line involved spiritists, whose prescriptions were dictated by spirits, even when the prescribing medium (*medium receitista*) was an academically trained physician.[11] The latter group too, included influential actors on the political stage, including Adolfo Bezerra de Menezes Cavalcanti (1830–1900), an army surgeon, physician and politician, in addition to countless physicians, lawyers, journalists and the military, among many others.[12]

Positivism and homeopathy: "What would Auguste Comte say?"

Positivism, with its elevation of science to the status of ultimate stage of development of human mind, naturally could not be absent from medicine, to the point of becoming an adequate subject for doctoral dissertations in Brazil.[13] Homeopathic physicians went further and sought to reframe homeopathy on the grounds of Comte's ideas.[14] Some outstanding examples, like that of Nilo Cairo, were thoroughly studied by other scholars.[15] Here we chose to illustrate, briefly, how homeopathic physicians constructed the positivistic basis of homeopathy, and even presented it to the stars of the Brazilian positivistic heaven.

To begin with the latter, in July 1908 the homeopathic physician of São Paulo, Alberto Seabra (1872–1934) published a series of short articles in the newspaper *O Correio Paulistano* in the format of "open letters" to Luís Pereira Barreto. Pereira Barreto (1840–1923) was one of the earliest advocates of Positivism in Brazil, starting in the 1860s, after having entered in contact with this movement in Brussels where he learned medicine.[16] And he was against homeopathy. This was the trigger for Seabra, also a positivist, who called Pereira Barreto "my teacher," to engage in public polemics.

In his letters, the focus of Seabra was on the objective evidence he could gather for the two main controversial aspects of homeopathy: the law of similitude and infinitesimal doses. In this regard, his full argument was based on the experimental method and the notion of *fact*, since "against facts there are no arguments."[17] And facts, to him, were first and foremost clinical outcomes. This led him to a result-oriented approach: "There is perfect concordance between theory and practice, because practice is theory in action. Therefore, if homeopathy has good results, this means that also its theory is good."[18] From here he elevated the homeopathic principles to the status of a "natural law," which although previously asserted by Hahnemann, was meant to acquire a new meaning when understood in the light of Comte's conceptions: "Any spirit shaped by scientific discipline hearkens to the majesty of the natural law."

Given the contemporary spread of microbiology and bacteriology, in which fields Pereira Barreto had developed intensive activity and which were seen as the "the positive orientation of medicine,"[19] they could not be left out of the polemics. Seabra argued that microorganisms could not be the sufficient cause of disease—since not all the exposed fall ill—to thus warn his teacher: "A cause which needs consent to produce an effect does not deserve this name. What would Auguste Comte say?"[20] This he adduced was no more than reasoning based on logics, rather than "mysticism," a true anathema for positivists. In the same vein, he criticised conventional medicine for precisely closing itself to experience, the clinical experience of homeopathy in this case.[21] Which was the trigger to question again: "What would our teacher, Auguste Comte, think of a science which goes after convenient facts only, and rejects the ones which cannot gravitate within its preconceived system?"[22]

The second example is a paper presented at the First Brazilian Congress of Homeopathy, in 1928, entitled "Positive nature of Hahnemannian pathology and etiologic foundations of its nosology," by Sylvio Braga e Costa (1900–1962), a prominent homeopathic physician from Rio de Janeiro. Differently from Seabra, Braga saw the theoretical grounds of homeopathy as extremely weak, since at first sight they appeared as "a mix of metaphysical ideas and poorly understood experimental data,"[23] i.e. there was nothing more abhorrent to a Comtian epigone. He thus subjected Hahnemann's works to review according to the principles of the positivistic method for the ultimate purpose of giving positive grounds to pathology.

However, outdated eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century notions cited by Hahnemann needed to be reformulated according to the latest developments in science. The two outstanding cases were the ones of the 'vital force' and the 'miasmas.' The latter was easy to deal with: it sufficed

to replace Hahnemann's 'invisible contagion' by the newly found microbes. Given the central place microbiology had at that time in medicine in general and among Brazilian physicians in particular, explicit identification of Hahnemann's 'miasmas' with the ever-increasing number of microorganisms appeared only natural and represented a point of intersection with mainstream science.

Updating the 'vital force,' however, was harder. The Brazilian homeopaths had ubiquitous resource to the notion of 'dynamism'—a focus on energy in opposition to matter, now divested of the anthropomorphised nature of the older concept of 'force.' Such a view, according to Comte, was typical of the second, or metaphysical, stage of human development. While the idea that living beings are incommensurably different from lifeless matter is a fundamental principle of homeopathy since its inception, the rejection of the metaphysical notion of force left homeopathy with a theoretical void.[24] Attempting an explanation, Braga concluded "*positive vitalism*, to thus call the orientation of positive physiology based on the integration of the body, should definitively replace the false idea of the [mutual] independence of the organs or of cell autonomy, which has plagued science."[25]

However, this view did not only put homeopaths in conflict with mainstream medicine, but also with another contemporary group that played a crucial role in the spread of homeopathy in Brazil from the end of the nineteenth century to this day. This is the topic of the next section.

Spiritism and homeopathy: Spiritualised medicine

Allan Kardec is the pseudonym of Hyppolite Léon Denizard Rivail, a French pedagogue. Kardec's spiritualism arrived in Brazil in the second half of the nineteenth century together with Positivism and many other fashionable French ideas. In record time it became a religious alternative for the liberal, republican and anticlerical vanguard,[26] attracting highly influential members of society. Under Bezerra de Menezes's presidency of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation (Federação Espírita Brasileira, FEB, founded in 1884) the ideal of charity and care of the poor became official doctrine, embodied in prescriptions of homeopathic medicines by mediums.[27] Although a physician by training, Bezerra de Menezes never learned homeopathy, but at the end of his life he began to prescribe homeopathic treatments according to the instructions he received from spirits. The result of his overall endeavours was the vertiginous expansion of Spiritism and spread of outpatient facilities. Soon homeopathy was prescribed all across the country and in addition, a school for prescribing mediums was created at FEB.[28]

The association between Spiritism and homeopathy was originally asserted by Kardec, who approached this subject in several occasions.[29] So we learn that past homeopaths, to begin with Hahnemann, had made substantial contributions to the doctrine of Spiritism, including the confirmation of the existence of 'fluids,' the identity between Hahnemann's vital force and Kardec's perispirit, the role of the perispirit in disease and its susceptibility to homeopathic medicines ('spiritualised matter').[30] The homeopaths of the past were also important to Kardec's mission in life as such, besides him having had personal contact with Hahnemann's spirit on at least three occasions.[31] Therefore, it is no reason for surprise that, in addition to Bezerra de Menezes, several other influential physicians turned to both Spiritism and homeopathy.[32] Nevertheless, the prescribing mediums were the main responsible for homeopathic care (prescription and delivery of medicines) in most Brazilian towns—indeed, the population preferred them over the homeopathic physicians. The spread of Spiritism, particularly in its association with homeopathy, was a cause of much concern to the mainstream medical institutions and the government. As a result, the Penal Code, passed in 1890, formally banned any form of healing practice, explicitly including homeopathy, to individuals without a university diploma.[33]

The non-spiritist homeopathic physicians lost no time in disassociating themselves from Spiritism and focused their efforts in demonstrating that homeopathy was a positive science in Comte's terms, as was discussed above. It is therefore not by chance that Galhardo failed to mention the remarkable contribution of Spiritism to the spread of homeopathy in Brazil in his book on the history of homeopathy in the country—the main source of data for historians to this date. Not only that, but he made a point of explaining why the population was wrong in believing homeopaths were spiritists: the common people were childish and naive; homeopathy, a 'positive science,' had been degraded by, eventually criminal, "mystifiers" and the 'spiritualist' phenomena were actually natural and accounted for by the aforementioned 'dynamism' invoked by the positivistic homeopaths to reframe the outdated vital force in modern scientific terms.[34] Nevertheless, far from receding, medium prescribing intensified: as early as 1910, the number of prescriptions at FEB Service of Care for the Needy had reached 395,437 (1,083 prescriptions per day, on average),[35] an impressive number by any standard, even contemporary ones.

The politics of success

Homeopathy underwent a second peak of development along the period of the First Republic, the onset of which was signalled by the re-foundation,

in 1880, of the Hahnemannian Institute of Brazil (Instituto Hahnemanniano do Brazil, IHB) which survives to this day. This period was characterised by strong institutionalisation and culminated in the creation of an official school of medicine, a hospital and a professional journal. Together with the establishment of the Republic, with its federal orientation, these developments occurred variably in the different states. For reasons of space, here we only discuss the case of Rio de Janeiro, the then capital of Brazil.

The strategy adopted by the new IHB aimed at several institutional targets simultaneously: establishment of healthcare facilities, public debate, public divulgation, and university access. Some attempts were remarkably successful: a first homeopathic service opened at Holy House of Mercy, the main hospital of Rio de Janeiro, in 1883. This was followed by homeopathic wards in the Army Hospital (1902) and the Navy Hospital (1908) among many others, by virtue of the political connections of influential homeopaths.[36] The latter also made frequent appearances in mass media.[37]

Indeed, the homeopaths proactively sought the support of the new political figures—the military, congressmen, senators, government officials.[38] Their overall goal was to obtain official status for homeopathic physicians: by creating homeopathic chairs in medical schools, or by having IHB be recognised as a superior scientific institution entitled to grant degrees in medicine. Yet, they hoped for much more: a university course of homeopathic medicine. The opportunity came with the new law of reorganisation of education in 1911.

Starting from the very proclamation of the Republic, one of the main concerns was with education, which was held to be too tightly tied to the colonial and imperial ethos.[39] In 1911, the government passed the Organic Law of higher and fundamental education of the Republic, known as the Rivadavia Corrêa Reform, after the name of the minister—a positivist—who sponsored it.[40] The main aim of this law was to enable rapid updating of the content of curricula to allow for immediate incorporation of the latest innovation in science and the arts. For this purpose, the best path was full deregulation and professional freedom. The law did not only abolish mandatory curricula, but replaced formal institutions by "autonomous corporations" entirely free to choose what they would teach and how. While this piece was too radical and was thus short lived (it was abolished just four years later) it provided the perfect opening for homeopaths to enter academia. And they did not let the occasion be lost.

The Hahnemannian School (Faculdade Hahnemanniana, FH) was established in 1912.[41] The curriculum included both conventional and homeopathic medicine. Soon after, in 1916, the homeopaths succeeded in

having the government allocate a plot of land for a homeopathic hospital, which by 1926 had 200 beds. From its opening to 1926, it provided care to more than 600,000 outpatients and admitted more than 7,000 inpatients, mainly the needy.[42] As is to be expected, this development did not go uncontested by the conventional physicians and institutions. However, the homeopaths won the battle, and in 1921 the Superior Council of Education (SCE) declared that the degrees granted by FH were equivalent to the ones delivered by the conventional medical schools.[43]

The later fate of the FH was very similar to the one of the homeopathic schools in the United States.[44] Although it remained formally tied to IHB until 1948, in 1932 SCE established that only the teaching of conventional medicine was mandatory, while that of homeopathy was optional.[45] This school survives to this day. After many changes and reorganisations, it is presently named Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, UNIRIO). Acknowledging its origin, it includes homeopathy chairs. In 2004 it started the first medical residency program in homeopathy in the world, and in 2007 a non-degree graduate study. The original buildings of the homeopathic school and hospital were demolished in 1971; clinical teaching is presently delivered at the Gaffrée and Guinle University Hospital.[46]

The Swedish Golden Age

Growing support for homeopathy after 1900

The highest representatives of the medical profession had successful blocked all support in the Riksdag to a homeopathic hospital or clinic in the 1850s and 1860s, and homeopathy did not achieve any status within mainstream medicine.[47] All along the 1800s only a few authorised doctors practiced homeopathy in Sweden, seven of whom are known by name, including the pioneer, Pehr Jacob Liedbeck (1802–1876).[48] By the turn of the century, however, homeopathy had spread among lay practitioners through personal contacts, lectures and publications. Some of them were clergymen and preachers, as e.g. Nils Liljequist (1849–1936), widely known as the 'second father' of iridology.[49] In the early 1900s, many of the sympathisers belonged to the church, often non-conformists from the Free Church movement. The non-invasive character of homeopathy suited the notion of the body as a temple of God to be treated with utmost care. Many of the lay homeopaths were also engaged in other social movements of the time, such as opposition to compulsory smallpox vaccination and vivisection, and in favour of peace, temperance, vegetarianism and freedom of choice in medical matters.[50]

The period from the 1910s through the 1930s might be described as the

'golden age' of Swedish homeopathy, despite the failure to achieve academic or clinical institutionalisation. There were advances not only in the *Riksdag* regarding the laws on licensing and medications, but the number of associations, journals, publications, and other public activities reached their peak about this time. Lay movements became strong, and a few doctors openly practiced homeopathy and strived to integrate it into mainstream medicine. While the criticism of the medical establishment against homeopathy was still harsh, there was support among the general population. Homeopaths—as well as popular healers, naturopaths, bone setters, and so forth—were more readily available than the few academically trained physicians, mostly concentrated in the larger towns. They also represented an alternative to mainstream medicine, which status was a cause of concern to the physicians themselves, who agreed that many difficult and chronic diseases still lacked treatment.[51] Some such doctors actively promoted natural medicine, including hydrotherapy, physical therapy and diet, as counterweights to the invasive standard therapeutic methods. Bonds between homeopathy and Spiritism did not develop in Sweden, as were developed in Brazil, nor any association with Swedenborgianism as in Britain and North America. While there is a more apparent link between theosophy and gymnastics, embodied in Gustaf Zander's (1835–1920) work, one single homeopathic physician was a member of the Swedish Theosophical Society, Petrie Grouleff (1862–1931), a resident of Gothenburg, and editor of a homeopathic journal.[52]

Dr Adolf Grundal (1841–1920) is considered the link between nineteenth- and twentieth-century Swedish homeopathy,[53] soon to be followed by several other physicians, including Grouleff, Hjalmar Helleday (1844–1922), Hjalmar Selldén (1849–1922) and Inez Laurell (1877–1936), the first female homeopathic physicians in Sweden, and also one of the first female school doctors in the country. In 1912 a national association of homeopathic physicians, *Svenska homeopatiska läkarföreningen*, was founded, with Grundal as first chairman. Members were licensed physicians, as well as others with degrees granted by homeopathic medical schools in North America. Starting 1915, the association's journal, *Homeopatisk tidskrift*, published four issues per year. While at the time the association was established there were only a few licensed homeopathic physicians in the country out of a total of about 1,500, the interest was considerably wider: more than 60 doctors and medical students used to visit the lay homeopath Klara Fransén (1862–1943) for treatment of their own illnesses, diseases in the family, or to discuss aspects of homeopathy.[54] In turn, the members of *Svenska föreningen för vetenskaplig homeopati*, founded in 1915, were mostly lay practitioners and patients.[55]

Abolition of medical monopoly

As per the Medical Act of 1688, licensed physicians should be the primary providers of internal medical care in Sweden; furthermore, they had the right to supervise other categories of healers. The growing lay practice of homeopathy and other therapies in the early 1900s caused much concern among the regular doctors, who were organised in the Swedish Medical Association since 1903. The academically trained doctors demanded a stronger status for their profession, and more restrictive legislation against what they called 'widespread quackery,' not least the practice of lay homeopaths.

The issue on quackery was divided in two parts: authorisation—who should be allowed to treat sick people and under which conditions—and how medications ought to be defined and regulated. The organised medical profession and the National Medical Board demanded prohibition of all professional quackery, and legislation that granted only the academically trained the right to call themselves physicians (*läkare*) or doctors.[56]

When these matters were discussed in the Riksdag in the 1910s, the lay practitioners and the public engaged in it to a greater extent than previously. Extra-parliamentary activities of homeopaths and their supporters targeted parliamentarians and influenced the course of the discussions and decisions. Public meetings and popular petitions demanded impartial investigation of the possible value and use of homeopathy for society. As Klara Fransén wrote to the Riksdag members: was a law supposed to drive all sick people to regular doctors to be treated "scientifically" irrespective of what they wanted? Was that not a violation of their personal rights?[57]

Fransén's views were shared by some Riksdag members. For instance, Stockholm's chief magistrate, Carl Lindhagen (1860–1945), referred to the successful homeopathic treatment of his son and did not like the idea of any particular medical approach having the monopoly: in his view, the ongoing state of medical science represented just one step forward.[58] Others expressed their awareness of the fact that the few doctors in the country could not possibly meet all the demands for health care all over the country, while eventual good results could be attributed to belief or to the healing power of nature.

The act the Riksdag finally passed did not ban lay practice nor did it grant special privileges to physicians. With the new Authorisation Act from 1915 (enacted from 1916), the medical profession lost its previous (at least theoretical) monopoly.[59] Lay health care became legal, with a few restrictions. Unauthorised treatment of tuberculosis, venereal and contagious diseases, and cancer was made punishable, as was treatment through hypnosis or under general anaesthesia. Fines could be imposed when

unauthorised treatments endangered the patient's health or life. Any "mainly beneficial lay practice," in turn, could continue undisturbed.[60] The Act further listed the conditions for authorisation and—what was new—the revocation of a doctor's license in case of malpractice.

In turn, medications were regulated by a new Pharmacy Act passed in 1913 (enacted from 1914), according to which homeopathic medicines were defined as products manufactured on license by pharmacists and which were to be sold exclusively at pharmacies.[61] In 1916 the National Medical Board began requiring prescriptions for homeopathic drugs prepared from poisonous substances—such as aconite and belladonna. However, after intensive lobbying by the homeopaths, in 1919 the Riksdag decided that homeopathic medicines in dilution 6x and higher could be sold without a prescription. This decision was celebrated as the "Magna Carta of Swedish homeopathy."[62]

Optimism within Swedish homeopathy

By the mid-1920s, homeopathic medications were sold at pharmacies in Stockholm and several smaller cities, mostly provided by Dr Willmar Schwabe's company, from Leipzig.[63] When the large German pharmaceutical firm Dr Madeus & Co, from Dresden, made a survey among all the Swedish physicians inquiring whether they would be interested in visits by representatives, 400 responded affirmatively. In addition, in 1926 the lay homeopaths founded the Swedish National Homeopathic Association (Svenska Homeopaters Riksförbund).

Optimism further increased when a highly respected physician began to express interest in homeopathy. Carl Sundberg (1859–1931) was a professor of anatomical pathology at Karolinska Institutet from 1900 to 1924, and among other activities, he served as member of the Nobel Committee, was the inspector of serum production (1902–1909), chairman of the Swedish Pathology Association, and editor of the Swedish Medical Society's journal *Hygiea* (1904–1916).[64] In 1920 he published the book *Läkarevetenskapen och dess samhällsbetydelse under det nittonde århundradet* (Relevance of medical science in the nineteenth century), soon translated into other languages, in which he praised Hahnemann for having warned against excessive use of strong medicines, and recommending a well-ordered diet and a natural and simple lifestyle.[65] Otherwise he rejected homeopathy as "a combination of artificial teachings about symptoms, vitalism and natural philosophy, mysticism and teleology."

A few years later, however, Sundberg changed his mind. In an article published in 1926 in the newly founded *Social-medicinsk tidskrift*—previously refused by the Swedish Medical Journal, *Svenska läkartidningen*—he stated that homeopathy should not be rejected out of hand, but should

rather be studied more carefully. The value of homeopathy ought to be put to test without any preconceived notions, even if it would be effective for a limited number of diseases only.[66]

Sundberg thus suggested performing clinical trials with real patients, a proposal which elicited strong reactions. While some of Karolinska Institutet's main physicians adopted a rather tolerant stance, others, such as Josua Tillgren (1881–1969), professor, chief physician, and secretary of the Swedish Association of Internal Medicine, saw homeopathy as comparable to astrology: it was a "religious belief" and a "dusty spider's nest on medical science's healthy tree," contrary to medical progress.[67] Carl G. Santesson (1862–1939), professor of pharmacodynamics and medicinal chemistry at Karolinska Institutet, rated the differences between the so-called scientific medicine and homeopathy unsurmountable,[68] and also expressed methodological and ethical doubts. According to him, any doctor would hesitate before allowing a patient to be subjected to tests with alleged ineffective treatments in cases in which "therapy has real significance." Then, "when regular doctors establish a diagnosis and thereafter treat a patient in accordance to homeopathic principles and *vice versa*, no one will be satisfied."[69] He had objections of principle against the design of comparative trials, as it would be difficult to conceal from patients whether they were receiving homeopathic or conventional treatment, and subjective beliefs, and even suggestion, could interfere with the results. In addition, he was persuaded that the homeopaths would only accept results favourable to homeopathy, to finally criticise the very core of homeopathic treatment: high dilutions were unreasonable, and the low ones could hardly be rated "homeopathic." According to Sundberg, the decision of the journal's editor to publish his piece resulted in the resignation of physicians, about a dozen among the Swedish elite, from the editorial board of *Social-medicinsk tidskrift*.[70]

Amid the debate, the physician Waldemar Gårdlund (1879–1959) published in 1926 the translation of a French article entitled "What is homeopathy? What every doctor should know on the subject."[71] In France, homeopathy was practiced by licensed doctors, as required by the law. According to Gårdlund, the fact that in Sweden homeopathy was mainly provided by lay practitioners was one of the reasons it was considered quackery. He also stated that with homeopathic medicines he had "accomplished equally good results, yes, sometimes better than with those I had earlier learned to use."[72]

In several articles in homeopathic journals, Sundberg explained why he had changed his opinion on homeopathy.[73] He himself had been successfully treated with homeopathic medicines, and had reviewed the homeopathic literature, including a number of cases that had been successfully

healed in few weeks following therapeutic failure in the hands of the most skilled conventional physicians. He further engaged in a collaboration with Klara Fransén—the only homeopathic practitioner to suggest scientific cooperation in studies conducted with cases and controls. Sundberg extended the invitation to conventional doctors, focusing on medical conditions mainstream medicine was unable to treat. He was persuaded that such joint studies would provide evidence that suggestion, personal belief and fanaticism had no larger place in homeopathy than in conventional medicine; the only reason for patients to trust homeopathy was their successful personal experience.[74] In 1927, during a lecture at the Swedish Association for Scientific Homeopathy, Sundberg observed that the lack of a homeopathic hospital contributed to delay the development of homeopathy in the country.[75]

During the years Sundberg engaged in homeopathy he delivered lectures and published articles in homeopathic journals. He was vice president of the homeopathic doctors association *Svenska homeopatiska läkarföreningen*, member of the editorial board of *Homeopatisk tidskrift*, and contributed to the journal *Homeopatins seger* (Victory of homeopathy) even when he did not approve of the journal's title—homeopathy in Sweden was anything but a "victory."[76] He also opened his own homeopathic practice in Stockholm, which he advertised in homeopathic journals.

Professor emeritus Carl Sundberg died suddenly in 1931. Other homeopaths, both lay and academically trained, had hoped that the professor's contributions would finally enable the inclusion of homeopathy into the regular medical curriculum. Instead, the mainstream medical profession closed the door on Sundberg even posthumously. He did not receive an obituary in the medical journals, which was an honour granted not only to professors, but also to less well-known representatives of the Swedish medical establishment.[77]

Decline of homeopathy in Sweden

Several other leading homeopathic doctors died in the beginning of the 1930s, and thus academically trained homeopathic physicians all but disappeared. So, for instance, the medical society's journal, *Homeopatisk tidskrift*, was discontinued after the death of its editor, Erik Ekelöf (1875–1936), since there was no licensed doctor who could take over.[78] Just as in the 1800s, references to the strong position of homeopathy in Germany, Britain and North America did not make any impression on mainstream medicine. That homeopathy was stronger in other countries, according to the critics, only showed that the scientific level of the Swedish doctors was significantly higher. If by 1936 the lay organisation *Svenska föreningen för vetenskaplig homeopati* had counted over 14,000 members, and the

subscribers to its journal were more than 12,200, the golden days were over.[79]

Throughout the 1920s, the Swedish physicians had shared in the ardent debates, especially in Germany, on the 'crisis of medicine,' resulting from the combination of lack of effective therapeutics and growing distance between patients and doctors, as the emphasis fell on research and the public health and social security systems. The fact that, during a part of the 1930s, the German National-Socialist leadership made much of natural healing and homeopathy was criticised in the Swedish press. The Nazi leaders and physicians advocated a synthesis of conventional and natural medicine, complemented with homeopathy and racial biology, within the framework of what was called *Neue Deutsche Heilkunde*.[80] Some Swedish doctors supported racial biology, but opposed the establishment of a university chair of homeopathy.[81] In turn, homeopaths in Sweden were initially favourable to the strong support for homeopathy within the framework of the *Neue Deutsche Heilkunde*, while others did not like the new political turn at all.[82] Nevertheless, the different standpoints in relation to the Nazi politics notwithstanding, the position of homeopathy became even more unfavourable in Sweden.

Within the intensified socio-political project in Sweden of building a welfare state, a part of the role of public education was to teach the population to see physicians rather than quacks, and doctors demanded support for their profession.[83] From the point of view of the health authorities, there was no longer need for unauthorised quacks in the country, as now there were enough certified physicians.[84] The new director of the National Medical Board after 1935, J. Axel Höjer (1890–1974) intensified the attacks against homeopathy in lectures and proposals for restrictive bills.[85] Doctors and the police tried to prevent meetings held by homeopathic organisations.[86] The press was highly critical of homeopathy. Newspapers censured advertisements by homeopaths, chiropractors and other healers, to contribute to stop something they considered to be harmful to the general population.[87] In the Riksdag, however, where both homeopathy and chiropractic were discussed at that time, there was not enough support for severe legal measures. As late as 1956, an official report stated that it was pointless to pass laws which did not have popular support.[88]

The self-confidence of mainstream medicine was still unsteady, but its hope for the future was growing. The physicians trusted the developments in the natural sciences, medical research and the pharmaceutical industry. Both political and economic support were needed to modernise health care, which would make quacks superfluous once and for all. Homeopaths felt this headwind but could only surmise the dangers which in the early 1950s would bring the (expected) final blow, when a couple of manufacturers of

homeopathic medicines in Stockholm were found to be selling just pure sugar pills.[89]

Final remarks

In both Sweden and Brazil homeopathy enjoyed a 'golden age' in the early decades of the twentieth century, however, for different reasons and with radically different implications. In Brazil, a young country with just an incipient tradition of learned medicine and a heavy burden of infectious diseases, the microbiological era inaugurated in the 1880s seemed to bring the solution to serious health, social and economic problems. This development happened within a utopian context signalled by a new, and more advanced political regime characterised by progress under the sign of order and informed by the latest French currents of thought. Homeopathy had undergone strong institutionalisation since its very arrival in the country in the mid-1800s. By the time of the First Republic, homeopathic physicians were a part of the new regimen, and proactively sought the support of the elites to—successfully— achieve the ultimate institutionalisation of homeopathic medicine. Rather than opposing, they promoted the recent advances in medical science, and sought to reframe homeopathic theory in the light of the new scientific ethos—and the emphasis on germs—on strict positivistic grounds. While republicanism was supposed to promote liberalism, in the case of public health the program implemented was highly coercive, resulting in violent conflict, such as the so-called "Vaccine Revolt," against the Mandatory Vaccination Law which Oswaldo Cruz had convinced the Congress to pass in 1904.[90] Given the medicalisation of social problems, there should be no reason for surprise that strict legislation was imposed on healing practices, leading to the full ban of all non-academically trained healers, to begin with the adherents of Spiritism. Indeed, one reason to give homeopathy the benefit of the doubt was the fact it was practiced by respected physicians.[91]

By the turn of the twentieth century, the medical profession became more strongly regulated in Sweden. Licensed physicians were few in number and in the name of science, this rather small and homogeneous group almost unanimously rejected homeopathy and succeeded in blocking all attempts at institutionalisation. The Swedish physicians seemed to be historically more interested on sound theory than in practical results, which contrariwise was the main concern of the government and the population, which thus left the door open to other practices available in the medical marketplace.

Also different from the situation in young Brazil, in the early 1900s Europe was undergoing a crisis of confidence in medicine,[92] in which also

Swedish society, including the academically trained physicians, shared. The population took a proactive stance to ensure their right to free choice. For instance, as in Brazil, smallpox compulsory vaccination was an arena of conflict. In 1910s, the Riksdag supported an amendment that led to the inclusion of a conscience clause in the law passed in 1916.[93] Allied to the claims of the population to respect the right to free choice, in 1915 the Riksdag also passed a bill that made lay healing practice legal. Yet, as Waldemar Gårdlund had observed, this contributed to further marginalise homeopathy, definitively rated unscientific and assimilated to lay healing and quackery to this day.

Given the current state of scholarship, it is not possible to assert that the success of institutionalisation in the early twentieth century accounts for the current favourable situation for homeopathy in Brazil. More studies are needed relative to the intermediate decades to achieve a clearer picture. However, our study strongly points to the fundamental role played by Spiritism in the spread of homeopathy across the country, a phenomenon not reported in any other national history of homeopathy. The most similar case is the adoption of Swedenborgianism by influential North American and British homeopaths. However, as stated above, neither Swedenborgianism nor other major modalities of Spiritualism in Sweden, such as theosophy, seemed to have had any noticeable influence on homeopaths either academically trained or lay.

Several factors are commonly cited in the literature as reasons for the acceptance or refusal of homeopathy in different countries. Most such factors are purely epistemological: scientific (or not) status of homeopathy, plausibility of the action of high dilutions, the similia principle, and so forth. Our two studies taken together indicate that the label 'scientific' varies as a function of the overall social context, and that many other variables, including institutionalisation of medicine, medicalisation, political interests, public health concerns, health care provision systems, and the population's rights, among others, have equal, if not greater, weight on the attitude vis-à-vis non-mainstream medical approaches.

Notes

1. Silvia Waisse & Motzi Eklöf, "Spread of homeopathy in the early nineteenth century: the comparative approach—the cases of Sweden and Brazil" in *História, Ciências, Saúde—Manguinhos* [forthcoming 2019].

2. José E.R. Galhardo, "História da homoeopathia no Brasil" in *Livro do 1º Congresso Brasileiro de Homeopatia* (Rio de Janeiro, 1928). An update to Galhardo's periodisation was attempted by Madel T. Luz, which however has not yet been validated through the due case studies; see *A arte de curar versus a ciência das doenças,* 2nd ed. (Porto Alegre, 2014).

3. On the significance of coffee production in Brazil, and São Paulo in particular, see the study by Cristiana C.L. Mendonça & Ana M. Alfonso-Goldfarb in this volume.

4. On the history of public health in the First Republic and the new medical *Zeitgeist*, see e.g. Cláudio Bertolli Filho, *História da saúde pública no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1996); Gilberto Hochman, *A era do saneamento: as bases da política de saúde pública no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1998); Luiz O.M. de Andrade, *SUS passo a passo: história, regulamentação, financiamento, políticas nacionais* (São Paulo, 2007); Luiz A.C. de Castro Santos, "O pensamento sanitarista na Primeira República: uma ideologia de construção da nacionalidade" in *Dados* 28:2 (1985), 193–210; Luiz A.C. de Castro Santos, "Poder, ideologias e saúde no Brasil da Primeira República" in Gilberto Hochman & Diego Armus (ed.), *Cuidar, controlar, curar: ensaios históricos sobre saúde e doença na América Latina e Caribe* (Rio de Janeiro, 2004), 249–293; Simone P. Knopf, *Doença de Chagas, doença do Brasil: ciência, saúde e nação (1909–1962)*, PhD dissertation, Fluminense Federal University (Niterói, 2006).

5. Knopf, *Doença de Chagas*, 51.

6. Júlio C. Adiala, *Drogas, medicina e civilização na Primeira República*, PhD dissertation, Casa de Oswaldo Cruz-Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (FIOCRUZ) (Rio de Janeiro, 2011).

7. Knopf, *Doença de Chagas*, 47–50.

8. Biographical information was obtained from CPDOC, *Dicionário Histórico-Biográfico Brasileiro*, s.v. "Murtinho, Joaquim," cited 18 July 2018, https://cpdoc.fgv.br/sites/default/files/verbetes/primeira-republica/MURTINHO,%20Joaquim.pdf.

9. Galhardo, "Historia da homoeopathia," 758–760.

10. Bernardo Lewgoy, "A transnacionalização do espiritismo kardecista brasileiro: uma discussão inicial" in *Religião e Sociedade* 28:1 (2008), 84–104; and "Representações de ciência e religião no espiritismo kardecista: antigas e novas configurações" in *Civitas* 6:2 (2006), 56–57.

11. Not seldom homeopathy was taken to the various Brazilian states by a "prescribing medium," much before the first arrival of a homeopathic physician, see e.g. the cases of Santos, in São Paulo, and of Paraná, in Célia M.P. Justo & Mara H.A. Gomes, "A cidade de Santos no roteiro de expansão da homeopatia nos serviços públicos de saúde no Brasil" in *História, Ciências, Saúde–Manguinhos* 14:4 (2007), 1159–1171; and Silvia Waisse & Conrado Tarcitano Filho, "Mapeando os itinerários da medicina: Brasil–Portugal na transição do Oitocentos, o caso da homeopatia" in Carlos Fiolhais, Carlota Simões & Décio Martins (ed.), *Congresso Luso-Brasileiro de História das Ciências: livro de actas* (Coimbra, 2011), 645–657.

12. Lewgoy, "Transnacionalização," 88. Spiritism did not spread only among the higher and middle classes, but also among the lower ones configuring what is known as "low spiritism," which included syncretism with Afro-Brazilian religions; see e.g. Emerson Giumbelli, "O 'baixo espiritismo' e a história dos cultos mediúnicos" in *Horizontes Antropológicos* 9:19 (2003), 247–281.

13. Renata P. Sigolo, *Em busca da 'scientia medica': a medicina homeopática no início do século XX*, PhD dissertation, Federal University of Parana (Curitiba, 1999), 77.

14. For a discussion of Comte's ideas on medicine and their appropriation in Brazil, see Beatriz T. Weber, *As artes de curar* (Santa Maria & Bauru, 1999).

15. Sigolo, *Scientia medica*.

16. On the relevance of Pereira Barreto's construction of and role in the spread of Positivism in Brazil, see Ivan Lins, *História do positivismo no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1964), and the more recent study by Angela Alonso, "O positivismo de Luis Pereira Barreto

e o pensamento brasileiro no final do século XIX" in *Coleção Documentos, Série Teoria Política*, *Instituto de Estudos Avançados da Universidade de São Paulo* 9 (1995).

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18. Alberto Seabra, "Homoeopathia e a estatística" in *Correio Paulistano* (4 July 1908), 1.

19. On different currents within the sanitary movement in the early twentieth century, including Pereira Barreto's view, see Edivaldo Góis Júnior, "Higienismo e positivismo no Brasil: unidos e separados nas campanhas sanitárias (1900–1930)" in *Dialogia* 2 (2003), 21–31.

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21. Alberto Seabra, "Doses infinitesimais" in *Correio Paulistano* (10 July 1908), 1.

22. Alberto Seabra, "Acção dynamica" in *Correio Paulistano* (15 July 1908), 1.

23. Sylvio Costa e Braga, "Character positivo da pathologia hahnemanniana e fundamentos aitiológicos da sua nosotaxia" in *Livro do 1º Congresso Brasileiro de Homeopatia* (Rio de Janeiro, 1928), 40–41.

24. Leoni V. Bonamin & Silvia Waisse (ed.), *Signals and images: transdisciplinarity and translationality in high dilution research* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2019).

25. Braga e Costa, "Character positive," 119.

26. Lewgoy, "Transnacionalização," 88.

27. Ibid., 88.

28. Donald Warren, "A medicina espiritualizada: a homeopatia no Brasil do século XIX" in *Religião e Sociedade* 13:1 (1986, 88–107).

29. Listed, e.g., in Warren, "Medicina espiritualizada"; Hermínio C. Miranda, "Hahnemann, o apóstolo da Medicina espiritual" in *O Reformador* (March 1977), 7–31.

30. See items published by Kardec in *Revue Spirite*, e.g. 1 (1858), 305 et seq.; 6 (1863), 234, esp. 258 et seq.; 8 (1865), 268; 10 (1867), 65 et seq., among many others. See also Cláudio Bertolli Filho, "Homeopatia e espiritismo: em torno do imaginário social" in *Revista de Homeopatia* 55:3 (1990), 72–78.

31. See Miranda, "Hahnemann apóstol"; Nadia Míkola, *Uma "medicina espiritual?": aproximações entre espiritismo e homeopatia, 1860–1910*, MA dissertation, Federal University of Santa Catarina (Florianópolis, 2012). Remarkably, these encounters were some of the very first Kardec ever had with spirits, which points to the relevance of Hahnemann and homeopathy in the early formulation of Spiritism doctrine.

32. Bertolli Filho, "Homeopatia e espiritismo," 10 et seq.

33. The Penal Code also outlawed Spiritism in any form; Decree No. 847, 11 October 1890 (Penal Code), cited 17 July 2018, available at: http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-847-11-outubro-1890-503086-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html.

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35. Míkola, *Medicina spiritual?*, 177.

36. Galhardo, "Historia da homoeopathia," 734, 769, 78-6, 802–811.

37. Ibid., 740, 749 et seq, 774–778, 787–788, 810.

38. Ibid., 784, 788.

39. For a recent review of the history of higher education in Brazil, see Ana M. Alfonso-Goldfarb, Marcia H.M. Ferraz & Silvia Waisse, "Training researchers in Ibero-America: early Brazilian chemists as case study" in Kevin Chang & Alan Rocke

(ed.): *Training research scholars: institutions, disciplines, and national cultures, 1830–1945* [Chicago IL, forthcoming].

40. Decree no. 8,659, 5 April 1911, http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1910-1919/decreto-8659-5-abril-1911-517247-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html, cited 6 August 2018.

41. Galhardo, "Historia da homoeopathia," 825 et seq.

42. Ibid., 859.

43. Ibid., 913.

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48. Carl Sundberg, "Homeopatiens ställning i Sverige", *Homeopatins seger* 6 (1927), 87–88.

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50. Bosse Sundin, "Universalsmörjelsen: kvacksalveri, patentmedicin och drömmen om ett naturenligt levnadssätt i slutet av 1800-talet" in *Lychnos* (1987); Motzi Eklöf, "Rent, friskt, sunt och hälsosamt: ett grepp om svenska hälsotidskrifter 1927–1967" in *Presshistorisk årsbok* (2011), 125–143.

51. Israel Hedenius, *Terapeutiskt Vademecum*, 5th ed. (Stockholm, 1932); Motzi Eklöf (ed.), *Naturen, kuren & samhället: vård på sanatorier och kurorter 1890–2010* (Stockholm, 2011).

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53. Harald Helleday, "Homeopatien i Sverige—en återblick" in *Homeopatiens seger* (1936), 48.

54. Carl Sundberg, "Homeopatins ställning i Sverige" in *Homeopatiens seger* 6 (1927), 96.

55. Ernst Malmberg, "Om vår förenings 20-åriga verksamhet" in *Homeopatiens* 3/4 (1936), 59.

56. C.O. Elfström, "Åtgärder mot kvacksalveriet: föredrag å läkarmötet i Linköping 18 juni 1910" in *Allmänna svenska läkartidningen* 7:4 (1907), appendix; "Professor Th. Engströmers alternativa förslag till lagbestämmelser mot kvacksalveriet" in *Allmänna svenska läkartidningen* 10 (1913), 226–228.

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58. "Riksdagsdebatten om kvacksalverilagen" in *Allmänna svenska läkartidningen* 12 (1915), 879.

59. Lag (1915:362) om behörighet att utöva läkarkonsten, *Svensk författningssamling*.

60. Proposition no. 85, 1915, 15–19.

61. Kungl. Maj:ts nådiga apoteksvarustadga nr 308 1913, *Svensk författningssamling*.

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68. Carl. G. Santesson, "Huru skola vi ställa oss till homeopatien?" in *Social-medicinsk tidskrift* 3:8 (1926).

69. Santesson, "Huru skola," 142.

70. Carl Sundberg, "Anförande vid föreningens årsfest" in *Homeopatiens seger* 5 (1928), 69.

71. Gilbert Charette, *Vad är homeopati? Vad varje medicinare bör veta i ämnet?* (Stockholm, 1926).

72. Gårdlund, preface to Charette, *Vad är homeopati?*

73. Carl Sundberg, "Huru jag kommit att ändra mening om homeopatin" in *Homeopatiens seger* 2 (1926).

74. Carl Sundberg, "Homopatin en viktig kulturfråga runtom" in *Homeopatiens seger* 4 (1927).

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77. Eklöf, *Homeopati i Sverige*, 130–131.

78. "Homeopatisk tidskrift nedlagd" in *Homeopatiens seger* 18:1 (1936), 32–33.

79. Ernst Malmberg, "Om vår förenings 20-åriga verksamhet" in *Homeopatiens seger* 3/4 (1936), 59.

80. Detlef Bothe, *Neue Deutsche Heilkunde 1933–1945: dargestellt anhand der Zeitschrift 'Hippokrates' und der Entwicklung der Volksheilkundlichen Laienbewegung* (Husum, 1991); Anne Harrington, *Reenchanted science: holism in German culture from Wilhelm II to Hitler* (Princeton NJ, 1996); Motzi Eklöf, "Holism som svar på 'medicinens kris'" in Motzi Eklöf (ed.), *Läkare och läkekonster* (Stockholm, 2010).

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88. Statens Offentliga Utredningar 1956:29, *Lag om rätt att utöva läkekonsten: förslag avgivet av kvacksalveriutredningen*. Inrikesdepartementet (Stockholm, 1956).

89. Motzi Eklöf, "Outdated fraudulent healing? Homeopathy on trial: the homeopathic 'pill scandal' in the 1950s and modernization of health care in Sweden" in *Hygiea Internationalis* 2:6 (2007); Eklöf, *Homeopati i Sverige*, chapter 7.

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92. For a thorough analysis of the case of France, see Luciana C.L. Thomaz, *As medicinas heréticas e o holismo francês na primeira metade do século XX*, doctoral dissertation, Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (São Paulo, 2016).

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Abstract

Homeopathy in Sweden and Brazil, 1880–1930: 'golden ages' with radically different implications. Silvia Waisse, PhD in History of Science, Centre Simão Mathias of Studies in History of Science (CESIMA), Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, dr.silvia.waisse@gmail.com; Motzi Eklöf, PhD in Health and Society, Independent researcher, Stockholm, me@exempla.se

In this paper on the comparative history of homeopathy in Sweden and Brazil, we approach the early decades of the twentieth century, which might be characterised as a 'golden age' for homeopathy in both countries. However, contexts and determinants were dramatically different, resulting in radically different implications. In Brazil, homeopathy was granted official governmental recognition, being consequently restricted to academically trained physicians, while all forms of lay healing were legally banned. In Sweden, homeopathy never achieved any formal institutional status, but eventually came to be permitted to lay healers, who earned the right to practice through a *Riksdagen* bill. Besides the commonplace discussions on the scientific (or not) basis

of homeopathy, many other factors—the grounds underlying national health systems, in particular—have equal, if not greater, weight on the attitude vis-à-vis non-mainstream medical approaches.

Keywords: Homeopathy, national histories, twentieth century, comparative method, Sweden, Brazil

Fig. 1. Main coffee production areas in Brazil. Source: Flávio S. dos Anjos, Walter Belik & Nádia V. Caldas: "La caficultura en Brasil: evolución, situación actual y nuevos retos de cara al futuro" in *Mundo Agrario* 12:23 (2011). Available at: https://www.mundoagrario.unlp.edu.ar/article/view/v12n23a05.