



## THE BLACK BOX TREASURES (#18)

There is an interesting term called the “black box theory”. It speaks about an object which can be analyzed in terms of its input and output, but there is no knowledge of its internal workings. Many of us probably don’t know that in our Archives here in Rome we have more than 200 black boxes. Some of those treasures have seen the light of day in many publications, but there are still others waiting to be seen...

### (*The first patient #18*)

There is an interesting medical term called the “index case” (or index person or sometimes “patient zero”). It refers to the first identified patient who suffered from certain disease and who was the first documented case in an epidemiological investigation...

In the previous newsletters I showed you the medical records of some patients of Fr. Peter Semenenko and his homeopathic kit from the “Homeopathic Central Pharmacy” in Saint Petersburg, which he probably received from Eustace, the brother of Fr. Alexander Jelowicki, C.R. It is clear that Fr. Peter had a strong passion for homeopathy. The question which emerges from the readings of his letters is why he was so interested in this alternative medicine. And who was his first patient or case which probably caused his fascination about it?

In order to answer that question let us move to the year 1847. For Fr. Peter it was a difficult year. He suffered from not being understood by the community regarding certain issues and from a “severe case of tuberculosis and a complete mental breakdown [so] he was forced to take refuge in Africa” (Iwicki J., *Resurrectionist Charism*, 140). He remained there until May of 1848 when, on the advise of his doctor, Fr. Bourgade, he moved to France. In a letter from this time, he wrote to one of his confrere: “I would like to finally consult in Paris about my health and ask for advise some homeopaths, because I consulted all other doctors, maybe God help them in restoring my health” (Peter Semenenko, C.R., Letter to Jozef Hube, C.R., dated May 30, 1848, ACRR 1370, *\*this letter is attached below*). Probably few months later he finally went to see a homeopathic doctor. Who was the doctor? What did happen during this visit? Was the treatment successful? We do not know, but certainly something did happen after that visit because a year later he wrote a letter to one of his friend speaking about the past and making a very strong statement: “It is a pity that when Stas was here in Paris last summer, I did not go to see a homeopath at that time, although it was my intention; I would be able to effectively convince him, or at least I would be able to urge him. In my opinion, it is the only real remedy, it is the medicine and I’m seriously persuading you, my dear John, to do what you need to do in order to convince yourself” (Peter Semenenko, C.R., Letter to Jan Kozmian, dated January 29, 1849, ACRR 1462).

+ 1271

Marsylia 30 Maja 1840

Kochany Ojciec Józefie,

Jestem w Marsylii. Gorąco króć życzę panować w A-

fryce serodnie życzę memu zdrowiu. Przedstawtem więc

niez całą <sup>Ojciec</sup> D<sup>ca</sup> Bourgade, który w tym razie zastępował

Ciebie mój drogi Józefie i za jego radą ruszytem do Francji.

Dwie były drogi przedemną, jedna do Rzymu druga do Pary-

ża. Pierwszą rozporozynałem ni bez twojego wyraż

nego pozwolenia, druga udawała mi się zyskiwać twoje

przyjście, zwłaszcza w oddaleniu iż w Rzymu braci Hieronim

i Karola dawato mi znać iż tam jeszcze nowicyatu

nie rozporozynałem. Przyjrzęto mi i to do tego że chciałem

ostatecznie poradzić iż w Paryżu względem moego zdrowia,

a poradzić iż Homeopatów, przeciw im i innych wyraża

mi radę, moie też Pan Bóg i chępczony wryj w przy-

wrocceniu mi zdrowia. W Marsylii trudno by mi

było czekać twojej odpowiedzi przy braku funduszu

1577

1221

mam wysłać około 100 fr. ile mi potrzeba wcale  
na podróż do Sancy. D. Bourgade dał mi na adre-  
sownem 140 fr. - przjazd mi atem darmo na statku.  
Kochany mój Gine Jozefie ciekaw twojego postanow-  
wienia. - Przytwarzam ci D<sup>a</sup> Bourgade.

Sewruk wyjeżdża do Krymu; chce wyprosić  
o was pomieszkanie; - dawny to nasz brat,  
i walczył oddawna ze swoim powołaniem.

Siłkowi; ciałej się najcierliwej  
i wysłanych braci

Piotr

*(Peter Semenenko, C.R., Letter to Jozef Hube, C.R., dated May 30, 1848, ACRR 1370)*

Dear Father Joseph,

I'm in Marseille. The hot weather that began to prevail in Africa was bad for my health. So I presented the whole thing to Fr. Bourgade, who in this case was replacing you, my dear Father Joseph, and with his advice I went to France. Two directions were on my path: one to Rome and the other to Paris. The first I did not dare to begin without your direct permission, the other seemed to have your approval [...] I would like to finally consult in Paris about my health and ask for advise some homeopaths, because I consulted all other doctors, maybe God help them in restoring my health.

While being in Marseilles, it would be difficult for me to wait for your answer because of the absence of funds, I have only about 100 francs, what I exactly need for a trip to Paris. Fr. Bourgade gave me 140 francs. The ride was free on the ship. Dear Father Joseph, I am waiting for your decision. I attach the letter of Fr. Bourgade [...]. I embrace and kiss my all brother's hands most sincerely.

Peter