

Manchurian Plague of 1910–1911 in newspaper cartoons (part 1)

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The aim of the paper is to analyze and interpret satirical pictures in Harbin newspaper *Novaya zhizn'* about an epidemic of pneumonic plague in 1910–1911 in Harbin. We have found 22 drawings relating to plague: independent satirical drawings and combinations of several pictures. In the first months of the epidemic, the newspaper mocked the way of life of the Chinese people, traditional Chinese medicine and the Chinese administration. *Novaya zhizn'*'s satire was directed primarily not to the prevention and control of plague, but was aimed to reveal the culprits in the epidemic. In January 1911, in caricatures about the plague there appeared senior officials of the administration of the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER). *Novaya zhizn'* portrayed a local railway officer, not a doctor sent from the European part of Russia, as the hero who overcame the plague. Later V.M. Bogutskiy, P.B. Havkin and other Russian doctors, who fought with the plague, became heroes of satirical drawings in Harbin newspaper. The targets for criticism were the bureaucratic nature of the fight against the epidemic, the long fruitless meetings, the ineffectiveness of medical measures in the treatment of pulmonary plague and vaccine prevention. The newspaper *Novaya zhizn'* also printed picture on memory of plague victims among the medical staff. Two drawings were devoted to Mukden antiplague Conference (April 1911), one of which shows the “cunning” and “insidious” Chinese. The participants of those events and the later commentators overlooked the unprecedented rise of the national movement in China in this historical period. For this country, it was extremely important to maintain domination over Manchuria and its sovereignty from threats (imaginary or real) from Japan and Russia. The epidemic of pneumonic plague in Manchuria in 1910–1911 occurred at a crucial time for Chinese history – on the eve of the Xinhai Revolution. Any historical epoch has its own refraction in everyday life, and the details of everyday life convey the spirit of the times. The drawings in the Harbin newspaper on plague and the doctors who fought against it show the attitude of a part of society towards the epidemic and medicine.

Keywords: *plague, an epidemic, China, the social history of medicine, D.K. Zabolotny, periodicals, Manchuria*

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Introduction

Writers and artists have often ridiculed doctors. Regardless of the goal – to make them laugh or to deeply injure them – a caricature, especially in Europe, became a common means of expressing personal opinions about representatives of different social strata and their activities [1, p. 115]. With the development of the printing business in the early 20th century, cartoons and caricatures of famous doctors, their patients and important medical events began to appear in Russian newspapers and magazines.

The purpose of this article is the analysis and interpretation of the drawings from the illustrated appendix to the Harbin newspaper *Novaya Zhizn'*,¹ devoted to the epidemic of pneumonic plague in Harbin in 1910–1911. We have studied the filings of *Novaya Zhizn'* from the 1st of September 1910 to the 31st of August 1911² (Funds of the Russian National Library, Saint Petersburg) The tasks of the article did not include the study of the epidemic of the plague of 1910–1911 itself because this is the subject of

¹ Russian for “New Life”.

² In this article, the dates are given in accordance with the Old Style.

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a large number of works in Russian [2–9] and other languages [10–15].

The article presents the characteristics of the sources, analyses the satirical drawings published in the first months of the epidemic (October–December 1910). The attitude towards the plague epidemic and the measures taken to combat it can be grasped by the images published in the Harbin newspaper in January–May 1911. Particular attention is paid to the perception of the Mukden anti-plague conference in Harbin society.³

Sources' characteristics

Cartoons from the Harbin newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*, dedicated to the plague epidemic, are not entirely new to researchers as a historical source. Selected drawings were published in the book by I.L. Martinevsky and H. Mollaret about the plague in Manchuria [2, p. 37, 38, 113, 211], as well as in the book by K.G. Vasiliev about Professor D.K. Zabolotny [16, p. 51]. However, in those publications, the caricatures were not the subject of study. One illustration from the book by I.L. Martinevsky and H. Mollaret (about the victory over the plague) was reproduced in the monograph of the American researcher W. Summers and, in the author's opinion, is the proof of Russia's intentions of military intervention in Manchuria [11, pp. 57–58]. According to the Israeli researcher Mark Gamsa, cartoons from the Harbin Press about the plague epidemic were reprinted in the book of memoirs of Dr. Baron R. A. Budberg [10, p. 170], [17].

Before we move on directly to the analysis of figures, it is necessary to briefly characterise the *Novaya Zhizn* periodical. The newspaper of that name existed in Harbin between 1908–1914, its editorial board was headed by Z.M. Kliorin, S.R. Chernyavsky and G.O. Leventsigler. In 1914, due to internal changes, the *Novaya Zhizn* partnership, to which the newspaper belonged, fell apart. The newspaper received a new name, *Novosty Zhizni*,⁴ and lasted until June 1929 [18, p. 412].

³ The pictures of Professor D.K. Zabolotny, caricatures reflecting the backstage life of the medical world of Harbin in April–June 1911, will be presented, analysed and discussed in the second part of the article, and general conclusions will be drawn.

⁴ Russian for "News of Life".

According to the Chinese researcher Shaohua Diao, *Novaya Zhizn* had a democratic nature and was popular amongst the intelligentsia. Unlike *Kharbinsky Vestnik*⁵ (the official newspaper of the Chinese Eastern Railway, hereinafter CER), *Novaya Zhizn* with its liberal political position exerted a great influence upon the public opinion of Harbin for many years, until the revolution of 1917 [18, pp. 413–414]. During the period under consideration (from 1910 to 1911), its editorial policy was clearly anti-Chinese. Two of the newspaper's editors, Samuel Romanovich Chernyavsky and Lev Osipovich Leventsigler, were doctors. It is likely that they formed the newspaper's editorial policy in covering events related to medicine.

In total, we have found twenty-two illustrations (satirical drawings and their combinations) concerning the plague epidemic. Judging by the execution, the drawings belonged to different artists. We have no information about their authorship, since most of the archives of Harbin of this period either didn't survive, or are inaccessible to Russian researchers. Of the twenty-two drawings, only four were signed with the pseudonym "Kaverza",⁶ but we haven't yet succeeded in identifying that artist.⁷

The beginning of the epidemic (October–December 1910): unsanitary conditions, the Chinese and the plague

The epidemic of pneumonic plague 1910–1911 began at the CER station of Manchuria, on the border with Transbaikal. The first bacteriologically confirmed data on this disease was obtained on the 13th of October, 1910. Initially, the outbreak of pneumonic plague at the Manchuria station was local in nature, but the emergence of cases of this especially dangerous disease with a 100% mortality rate on the Chinese Eastern Railway line was immediately reflected in the pages of Harbin newspapers. However, the epi-

⁵ Russian for "Harbin Herald".

⁶ Russian for "skulduggery".

⁷ Kaverza. "Our acquaintances" // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. January 1, 1911. P. 8; Kaverza. "I'll bury you!" // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. January 10, 1911. P. 1; Kaverza. "Emergency meeting of the plague commission" // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. January 10, 1911. P. 8; Kaverza. "Near the Plague" // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. March 14, 1911. P. 4.



Fig. 1. To the emergence of plague in Harbin.⁸

demic in the distant Manchuria station aroused fears amongst the people of Harbin only in terms of the possibility of the emergence of plague in their city.

The situation changed immediately after the registration of plague patients in Harbin itself, where the first bacteriologically confirmed case was recorded on the 27th of October, 1910. The tone of newspaper articles changed at once: theoretical discussions about the organisation of anti-epidemic measures were replaced by exhortations to take urgent and decisive measures. Five days after the first case of plague was discovered in Harbin, a caricature “To the emergence of plague in Harbin” appeared in *Novaya Zhizn*. Satire on the dirt in Chinese taverns and lodging houses was complemented by the allegorical image of the plague for the first time (Fig. 1).

⁸ *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. November 1, 1910. P. 4.

Text on the picture:

The Plague (strolling through the Harbin wilds): Such nice places here – to my taste, and not far from the centre!..

– I don’t mind staying here forever –

During November 1910, there were only isolated cases of plague in Harbin and Fujian (China’s satellite city of Harbin), and there even was a time when the epidemic seemed to be subsiding. In these conditions the satire of *Novaya Zhizn* was aimed mainly not at preventing and fighting the plague, but at finding the culprits for the epidemic. For a Russian anti-Chinese newspaper, the Chinese population became the main object of criticism. The newspaper mocked the Chinese way of life, traditional Chinese medicine and the Chinese administration.

For example, following the appearance in the local press of the announcement that “the Chinese doctor Sun Shin Shen cures some diseases ‘irretrievably’, as well as cholera and plague”, the newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* reacted with a satirical drawing on the ignorance of representatives of traditional Chinese medicine.⁹

⁹ Caricature “To the attention of the inhabitants of Harbin (on the occasion of the emergence of the plague)” // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. November 15, 1910. P. 5.



Fig. 2. To the attention of the sanitary commission (on the occasion of the plague epidemic). Pristansky Market.¹¹

After the Fujian's refusal to cooperate with the Russian side in the fight against the epidemic, *Novaya Zhizn* accused the Chinese nationalist newspaper *Dong-chui gun-bao* of anti-Russian propaganda, forestalling the organisation of anti-epidemic measures and, consequently, furthering the spread of the epidemic.¹⁰

The traditional criticism of the unsanitary conditions of the Chinese quarters of Harbin is seen in the picture "To the attention of the sanitary commission (on the occasion of the plague epidemic)" (Fig. 2). And, although the picture shows Pristansky Market located in the Russian-controlled area, it clearly shows a Chinese in traditional clothes, with a plait (the symbol of China's subordination to the Manchus), smoking opium. Shown near the "Chinese Trade" are piles of garbage, a half-decomposed corpse of a dog

and a cow's head. This example shows how the "image of the enemy" was created, embodied by the Chinese population.

Such a nationalist position regarding the causes of the spread of the epidemic wasn't the only or even the dominant one in Russian Harbin. Representatives of the liberal intelligentsia focused attention on poverty as the main reason for the rapid development of the epidemic amongst the Chinese, and not on the nationality of the sick [6, p. 55], [19, p. 50].

In December 1910, the incidence of plague in Harbin began to increase rapidly (up to several tens of newly recorded cases per day). Harbin Public Administration (hereinafter HPA) and the CER were sharply criticized because of the ineffectiveness of the measures taken. The board of the CER in Saint Petersburg sent to Harbin a group of experienced epidemiologists headed by Professor D. K. Zabolotny. In December 1910 – January 1911, volunteer doctors, two detachments of medical students and seconded military doctors from nearby military

¹⁰ Caricature "The Plague: under the protection of this helmet you can stroll unpunished around Harbin" // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. November 22, 1910. P.4.

¹¹ *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. November 15, 1910. P. 5.

districts also came to Manchuria. After a series of meetings with the participation of the director of the CER, General D.L. Khorvat, and Professor D.K. Zabolotny, by the end of December 1910 the leadership to combat the epidemic in Harbin was transferred from the HPA to the Antiplague Bureau, controlled by the CER. The Bureau comprised high-ranking railway and city officials, and the only doctor was not a local, but a visiting doctor from Russia.

The epidemic in Harbin in January 1911: officials and the plague

As a result of the reorganisation of the anti-plague service in Harbin, the honour of the employees of the CER and the city residents was wounded: their ability to cope with the epidemic was questioned.

The decision to remove their own specialists from management and attract “Varangians” preconditioned the conflict, which developed later. In the festive annex to the 1st of January, 1911, *Novaya Zhizn* newspaper was published a colour drawing. It depicted the head of the land department of the CER, M.K. Koksharov, appointed chairman of the Anti-Plague Bureau on the 22nd of December, 1910 (Fig. 3). The illustration presented a scene of successful bird hunting. The captions “The fight against the plague at the Manchuria station was led by M.K. Koksharov” and the caption “Bam!” in the picture were meant to remind the readers of the Harbin newspaper about the successful liquidation of the epidemic in November 1910 at the Manchuria station. In the first months of the epidemic the medical and sanitary part of the CER was conducting anti-epidemic measures on its own. The most severe form of an administrative model of combating epidemics was chosen, which, on the one hand, proved to be effective, but on the other hand, caused an extremely negative reaction from the Chinese population and the Chinese authorities. It is important to note that *Novaya Zhizn* portrayed a local railway official, and not the doctor sent from the European part of Russia, as a triumphant hero of the plague.



Fig. 3. Our acquaintances.¹²

The controversy with the HPA over differentiating responsibility in the fight against the epidemic continued for two months against the backdrop of hesitant actions regarding the organisation of anti-epidemic measures, and it was only after the arrival of Professor D.K. Zabolotny that the CER administration (possibly with the sanction of the Board of the CER in St Petersburg) began to spend large sums of money to fight the plague. This change in the financial policy of the CER was reflected in the satirical drawing in *Novaya Zhizn* of the director of the CER, General D. L. Khorvat (Fig. 4). Since D.L. Khorvat was the highest official in the Chinese Eastern Railway lineside (Chinese lands rented by Russia for the construction of the CER, subject to Russian jurisdiction), the publication of this caricature of him wasn't allowed for reasons of censorship. In the already printed edition of the newspaper, it was blacked out with black ink. On the blacked out picture that we restored, we can see the figure of the director of the CER, pouring coins from a bag on to the allegorical image of the Plague with a scythe, and the caption “I'll bury you!”.

¹² *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. January 1, 1911. P. 8.
Text on the picture: The fight against the plague at the Manchuria station was led by M.K. Koksharov.

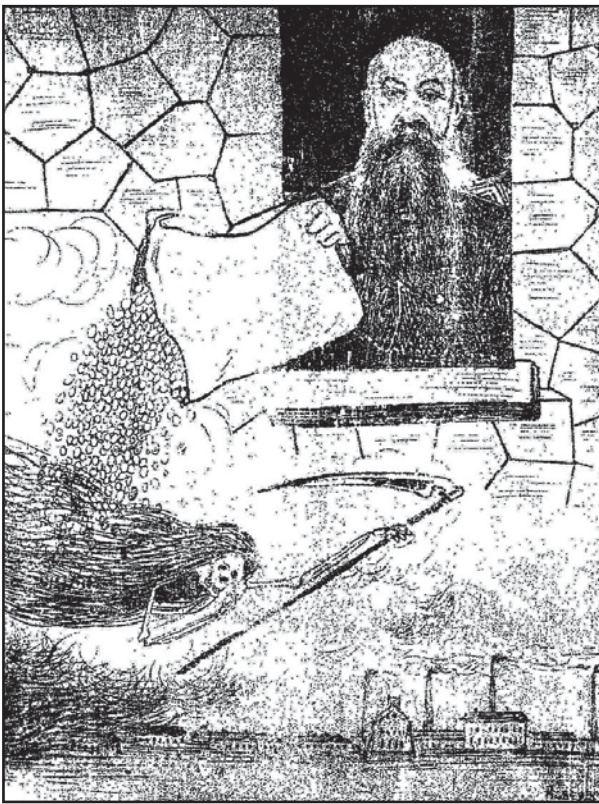


Fig. 4. I'll bury you!¹³

Doctors on the pages of the Harbin newspaper

In January 1911, the epidemic of pneumonic plague in Harbin reached its peak, claiming hundreds of lives a week. What happened in the winter of 1910–1911 in Manchuria can be called a “humanitarian crisis”. According to various estimates, a total of 60,000 to 100,000 people died during this time. After the initial shock, the city adapted to life under new circumstances: the work of institutions didn't stop even for a day; the trains ran on schedule and new daily issues of local newspapers were being published. Leading articles and news sections of newspapers were devoted mainly to the plague, and the doctors became the principal heroes of those news stories.

The medical world of Harbin at that time was relatively small. In 1910, there were forty-seven Russian and eleven foreign doctors in the city, including seventeen railroad doctors,

¹³ Novaya Zhizn. Illustrated annex. January 11, 1911. P. 1.

fourteen doctors from the Separate Corps of the Border Guard, two city doctors, eleven freelance practitioners and five Japanese doctors [9, p. 255].

Dr. V.M. Bogutsky,¹⁴ who arrived in Manchuria in December 1910, has been given great administrative authority to fight the plague in Harbin. There, he showed outstanding organisational skills and dedication [22]. This wasn't the first time V.M. Bogutsky visited China: in the summer of 1899, during the construction of the road, the CER administration had already sent him to Yingkou (a city in southern Manchuria) to fight a plague outbreak [23, p. 7]. This fact from V.M. Bogutsky's life was illustrated in a satirical drawing in the Harbin newspaper (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Near the Plague.¹⁵

¹⁴ Bogutsky Vikenty Mechislavovich (1876–1929). Sanitary physician and public figure, until 1917 worked in Saratov, Odessa, Arkhangelsk, after the February Revolution was the comrade of the Minister of Internal Affairs, mayor of Odessa in the period from 1917 to 1918. In 1910, he went to Poland, where he held the posts of Minister of Health and Vice-Mayor of Warsaw [20, 21]. His extensive work on the plague epidemic in Harbin is still a valuable material in this field [7, 8].

¹⁵ Text on the picture: The Plague: “Farewell! Like that time in Yingkou, I'm leaving in March. Maybe we'll see each other in the autumn”.

As mentioned above, the general management of anti-plague activities in Harbin was carried out by the Anti-Plague Bureau, of which Dr. V.M. Bogutsky was a member. The bureaucratic nature of the fight against the epidemic of the pneumonic plague had more than once become a target for criticism in *Novaya Zhizn*. So, in a caricature from the 17th of January 1911 issue of the newspaper V.M. Bogutsky is depicted in the midst of a crowd of townfolk with petitions and demands (Fig. 6). A picture in one of the March issues depicts “barricades” of stacks of papers from the Anti-Plague Bureau (Fig. 7). As an independent expert invited for the period of the epidemic, V.M. Bogutsky was involved in a



Fig. 6. Dr. V.M. Bogutsky is an anti-plague bureau doctor.¹⁶

¹⁶ *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. January 17, 1911. P. 1.
Text on the picture:
And it's like this all day long and every day...



Fig. 7. The Plague: You wouldn't get through: they've built such barricades!¹⁷

conflict between the CER and the local government of Harbin which shifted the burden of routine sanitation on to each other. In the summer of 1911, after the end of the epidemic, he unsuccessfully tried to force the HPA to pay more attention to the sanitary condition of the city. The Harbin newspaper ridiculed those efforts on its pages (Fig. 8).

In February 1911, another doctor, P.B. Khavkin¹⁸ who came to fight the epidemic, became the main target of the satirical drawings in *Novaya Zhizn*. In Harbin, he took one of the most dangerous posts – a doctor of the plague caserne. Despite the efforts made, neither the Russian, nor the Chinese, nor the Japanese, nor

¹⁷ *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. March 7, 1911. P. 2.
Text on the picture: Anti-Plague Bureau.

¹⁸ Pavel Borisovich Khavkin (1881 – ?), the nephew of the famous bacteriologist V.A. Khavkin (1860–1930). After the end of the epidemic in the summer of 1911, he asked the administration of the CER to employ him, but was refused (“Chronicle”. *Novaya Zhizn*. No. 175. July 7, 1911. P. 3; “Chronicle”. *Novaya Zhizn*. No. 202. August 4, 1911. P. 3.). In 1917, he headed the medical and sanitary department for emergency medical assistance under the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Later he was appointed the first head physician of the Leningrad Ambulance Station [24].



Fig. 8. Dr. Bogutsky's exercise.¹⁹

any other doctors during the whole time of the plague epidemic could actually cure even a single patient. Therefore, the man in the street began questioning the effectiveness of medicine. In the picture from the Harbin newspaper P. B. Khavkin is depicted with a syringe in his hands amongst the patients dying of plague (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. The Doctor of the Plague Hospital P.B. Khavkin.²⁰

¹⁹ Novaya Zhizn. Illustrated annex. June 13, 1911. P. 1.

²⁰ Novaya Zhizn. Illustrated annex. February 14, 1911. P. 5.

Text on the picture:

— “If only I could cure but one!” ...

For a portrait likeness, in the illustration P.B. Khavkin is shown in a plague unit without a mask on his face (pneumonic plague is airborne). Perhaps it's a coincidence, but the Chinese doctor Wu Lien-teh in his autobiography described the episode when, at the beginning of January 1911, P.B. Khavkin was showing him round the plague hospital: he was wearing a white coat, a hat on his head, but he didn't have a mask on his face. The Chinese physician writes that he was also forced to do without a mask; during the examination of the ward he paid no attention to the patients and only thought of one thing: will he catch the plague? According to Dr. Wu Lien-teh, P.B. Khavkin only laughed at the concerns of his Chinese counterpart: he was absolutely sure of the effectiveness of his uncle's anti-plague vaccine [25, p. 16], [26, p. VI]. Subsequent events showed that this confidence was misplaced.

The effectiveness of vaccination on the plague was one of the main questions that the experience of the Manchurian epidemic was supposed to answer. Researchers emphasise that preventative vaccinations were carried out at the peak of the epidemic [2, p. 106]. The initiators of vaccination in Harbin were Professor D.K. Zabolotny and Dr. V.M. Bogutsky. In the period of the greatest appeal for vaccinations, there were cases of plague infection amongst the medical personnel who were vaccinated only once. A consequence of that was a hostile mood against vaccination both amongst some doctors and the population.

Vaccine prophylaxis was the subject of discussion at Harbin physicians' meetings. In the Novaya Zhizn newspaper, there were many notes about the benefits and harms of vaccination. As a result, in the 7th of March, 1911 issue of the newspaper a caricature appeared captioned “The 606th meeting of doctors. On the issue of preventative vaccinations” (Fig. 10). Seeing as the minutes of those meetings were published in the book by V.M. Bogutsky, we can imagine the course of the discussions fairly well. Most likely, the meeting on the 28th of February, 1911, was the “prototype” of the caricature [8, pp. 243–246].

The picture is pronouncedly satirical in nature, it ridicules lengthy fruitless discussions which put half of those present to sleep. The artist endowed the characters of his drawing with



Fig. 10. The 606th meeting of physicians. On the issue of preventative vaccinations.²¹

a portrait resemblance to the real participants of the meeting (top row, from left to right: Dr. P.B. Khavkin, head physician of the CER F.A. Yasensky, assistant to the head physician of the CER E.P. Khmara-Borshchevsky, professor D. K. Zabolotny, authorised by the HPA physician I.F. Akkerman, the CER doctors R.A. Budberg and V.V. Petrov).

The selfless work of Russian doctors during this epidemic was noted by both contemporaries and later researchers. Amongst the physicians who fulfilled their professional duty in Harbin at the cost of their own lives, there were two Russian and one French doctors, two students and several dozen nurses and junior medical personnel. One of the pictures²² in *Novaya Zhizn* (dated the 31st of January, 1911) was published in memory of the plague victims amongst the medical personnel [2, p. 113].

²¹ *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. March 7, 1911. P. 2. In the caption to the picture, there's a hint to Salvarsan, a drug used to treat syphilis "606", created by Paul Ehrlich. A small amount of Salvarsan was purchased by the City Sanitary and Executive Commission of Harbin in early November 1910 "for conducting experiments on plague sufferers" [8, p. 162]. This drug was only used as a treatment for plague once: having caught the plague in January 1911, Dr. V.M. Mikhel asked for an injection of Salvarsan as an experiment. Dr. V.M. Mikhel died on the 22nd of January, 1911 [9, p. 376].

²² "In memory of humanitarians" // *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. January 31, 1911. P. 1.

The end of the epidemic and the Mukden conference

A turning point in the incidence of plague occurred in February 1911, when the number of cases began to decline rapidly. After the 1st of March there were no new cases in the city, so on the 7th of March, 1911, the Harbin newspaper published a picture captioned "We won!" (Fig. 11) [2, p. 211]. In this picture a disinfectant solution is being poured upon the allegorical image of the plague causing it to become enveloped by flames. The use of formaldehyde and mercuric chloride for disinfection of premises and utensils, as well as the cremation of corpses have become symbols of the elimination of the aftermath of the epidemic.



Fig. 11. We won!²³

²³ *Novaya Zhizn*. Illustrated annex. March 7, 1911. P. 4.

For several months after the last registration of new cases of plague in Harbin stopped, the epidemic was still the focus of public life in the city. After the snow had melted in the vicinity of the city, people began to find the dead bodies of the plague victims which needed to be cremated. It was also necessary to process the extensive statistical material received during the epidemic. In April 1911, an international sanitary conference was planned to be held at Mukden (now Shenyang). On the 22nd of February, 1911, Professor D.K. Zabolotny's scientific expedition arrived in Harbin for scientific research and participation in the Mukden conference.

The Chinese government put the following issues before the conference participants (representatives of eleven countries):

Where did the plague come from and how did it spread?

Why was it specifically an epidemic of the pneumonic plague, and the bacteria causing it had such a high virulence?



Fig. 12. Mukden plague conference (the caption in the picture: An abundant harvest of insoluble matters).²⁴

²⁴ Novaya Zhizn. Illustrated annex. March 18, 1911. P. 1.

Why didn't this epidemic affect rats?

How long can the plague bacteria exist in the environment, and is there no danger of another epidemic?

Are universal vaccine prophylaxis and anti-plague serum required? [2, p. 204; 27, pp. 7–8]. The Harbin newspaper Novaya Zhizn illustrated this abundance of questions in one of its satirical drawings, timed to coincide with the conference (Fig. 12).

The conference played an important role in the development of the science of the plague and made a number of valuable practical suggestions. At its meetings were cited many convincing and interesting facts. The announcing of the resolution of the conference was forbidden, since the Chinese didn't want the measures recommended by the conference to be known in Europe, if these measures were not accepted by the government [2, pp. 206–208].²⁵ The Russian delegation wasn't satisfied with the results of the congress because, on one hand, the Chinese authorities tried to avoid discussing uncomfortable political issues, and on the other, the Chinese actively promoted participation of



Fig. 13. The International Plague Conference at Mukden and its results.²⁵

²⁵ Novaya Zhizn. Illustrated annex. May 9, 1911. Pp. 2–3.

American scientists in the conference in order to prevent the domination of Russian and Japanese physicians.²⁶ Novaya Zhizn timed the caricature, in which the “cunning” and “guileful” Chinese at first chuckle at the discussion by foreigners of the results of the epidemic, then adopt the resolution with faux gratitude, and then, with the departing train with the visiting scientists in the background, burn the ‘mandatory resolutions of the anti-plague conference’ laughing, to coincide with the end of the Mukden conference (Fig. 13).

The participants of those events, as well as the later commentators, overlooked the

unprecedented rise of the national movement, which China was experiencing in exactly that historical period [13, p. 315]. For that country it was extremely important to maintain dominion over Manchuria and its sovereignty from threats (imaginary or real) from Japan and Russia. The epidemic of the pneumonic plague in Manchuria in 1910–1911 occurred at a crucial time in Chinese history – on the verge of the Xinhai Revolution.

In the second part of the article will be presented the main moments of the conflict between Professor D.K. Zabolotny and Harbin physicians in 1911 and the main conclusions will be made.

²⁶ Chronicle // Novaya Zhizn. 1911. 110: 3.

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Vasily Dmitrievich Shervinskiy (1850–1941) and Russian medicine in the first third of the 20th century

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The article is based on an analysis of numerous literature sources and materials from V.D. Shervinskiy’s personal archive and the Central Historical Archives of Moscow. The work reconstructs the multifaceted personality of the outstanding Russian physician V.D. Shervinskiy – a pathologist, therapist and endocrinologist. It demonstrates his exceptionally high level of activity in the scientific and public life of the country’s therapists, in conducting medical congresses, and his role in creating the largest scientific clinical school at Imperial Moscow University: the Shervinskiy-Golubinin school at the Faculty of therapeutic clinical practice. Four major fields are distinguished in the creative legacy of V.D. Shervinskiy as a doctor, researcher and public figure. The authors come to the conclusion that under V.D. Shervinskiy and L.E. Golubinin, the Faculty of therapeutic clinical practice (1899–1912) experienced a heyday (its third peak after A.I. Over in the mid-1800s and G.A. Zakharyin in the 1860s and 1870s), and that in the first decades of the 20th century V.D. Shervinskiy, along with V.N. Sirotinin (Saint Petersburg) and V.P. Obratsov (Kiev) as well as S.S. Botkin and M.V. Yanovsky (Saint Petersburg), F.G. Yanovsky (Kiev) and L.E. Golubinin (Moscow), led domestic clinical practice on internal diseases, following the path set out by S.P. Botkin.

Keywords: *V.D. Shervinskiy, Moscow University, medical congresses, scientific school, therapeutic elite*

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For Russian clinical studies of internal medicine, the 19th century ended with a scandalous confrontation, which captured

both the professional and the general press, between two leading therapeutic schools – that of S.P. Botkin at the Military Medical Academy (MMA; Saint Petersburg) and that of G.A. Zakharyin at Imperial Moscow University (IMU) [1–3]. The question was put bluntly: should medicine in the 20th century go Botkin

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