**Translation from *"Etnobotanik. Planter i skik og brug, i historien og folkmedicinen. Vagn J Brøndegaards biografi, bibliografi og artikler i udvalg på dansk (2015)"* meaning *«"Ethnobotany. Plants in customs, history and folk medicine. Vagn J Brøndegaard's biography, bibliography and selected articles in Danish'* (editor: Håkan Tunon)**

**Original article: *Ur Vor Viden 1954, s. 753-759***

Also in the Soviet Union, they had long known of this practice *(of utilizing the wild flora to development of useful crop plants)*. During research travels looking for novel useful plants, Russian botanist Rodin in 1931 found the rubber dandelion (*Taraxacum kok-saghyz*) in the Kazakhstan mountains in Southwest Asia. Rodin was led on the trail of this plant in a note, in old writings, that the Cossacks in this region used a certain plant root as chewing gum or chewing tobacco. The need for rubber was big in the Soviet Union – not only for the millions of pairs of galoshes which are almost the Russian national footwear, but also for rearmament. After a study by the Agricultural Economic Institute in Moscow had demonstrated that this new plant root contained up to 30% rubber, cultivation on a larger-scale was instigated to liberate the country from the importation of foreign (especially English) rubber.

Although this rubber dandelion cultivation gradually assumed formidable dimensions (in 1940 already 50,000 ha), this was unknown in Western Europe. As German troops in summer and autumn 1941 moved into the Ukraine, they found therefore, to their great surprise, tens of thousands of hectares planted with the rubber dandelion and abandoned ruined factories showed that the Russians had had a significant rubber industry.

The Russians reckoned on an average yield of about 150-200kg of raw rubber per hectare. That's not much compared to tropical rubber plants, and when the Soviet Union nevertheless embarked on such an extensive cultivation, it was certainly due in part to the emergency situation , but also due to the large areas of uncultivated steppe land and the readily available labour force.

That also our domestic dandelions contain rubber can be easily shown by letting the white juice from the roots dry into a sticky mass on your fingers. The rubber percentage is however so poor that it can't be used for industrial purposes. Towards the end of and after the last world war in Western Europe, including also Denmark, cultivation experiments were performed with the Russian rubber dandelion. From Sweden it was announced recently that the first cycle and car tyres had been made from this raw product. Swedish experts forecasted a yield of approximately 30 car tyres/hectare. It is still too early to say anything about this dandelion's future as an industrial plant, but through patient breeding work, the rubber content could be significantly increased.