

## TI: THE PHARMACY AS A CULTURAL PHENOMENON

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With our lecture, we wanted to present a new option purveying the history of pharmacy, especially regarding the past of pharmacists and problems relating to this topic.

Up to this point, the history of pharmaceuticals was based on factual data, emphasizing on its description.

In one of the most important categories, we want to introduce the term “imaginarium”.

By doing this, we can understand the general visions of the environment and the people, as well as the collection of values and regulations which control the activities of individuals and pharmacist groups.

Herewith we can describe a culture as a collection of “imaginaria” - a typical characteristic, of a social group, f. e. the pharmacists at, a certain place and time.

The effects of, such a cultural term, are textual results developing and forming the language.

The institutions, f. e. the pharmacists, would then allow the textual terms of this culture come into being.

We suggest looking at pharmaceuticals in different places, at different times.

The descriptions above, have to be understood as cultural events, in other words, as complex as imaginaria.

In our concept, the pharmacists would contain a certain type of textual view, which could be deduced from a certain predominant culture in a certain place, at a certain time.

History of Pharmacy is put aside and does not participate in this alteration.

It remains as a tradition in the history of Pharmacy.

The collected data of registration and systematization shows us past incidences.

2.9. We can present the traditional model in such a way.

The knowledge of pharmacy has come about through discovering biological, physical and chemical phenomena.

The possibility that the synthesis of new medication and the presenting of technologies, that serve these mentioned, result from objective scientific discoveries.

This mentioned data was discovered on an imperial path.

The pharmacy develops especially in merit of the scientists, that are pharmacists or doctors.

Under the term ‘development of pharmacy’ we can understand the progression. One must not take into consideration, superstition.

From another aspect the methods and techniques from mythology, are perfected.

The biographical data, which is applied in pharmacy, describes the achievements in the organization of pharmacies.

It is exceptionally important that registration is systematic and in numerical order.

In these investigations, the elements of who, where and when, must be stated.

The history of pharmacy is usually described as a catalogue of mistakes and errors.

In opposite perspective, the successes are described as a development of pharmacy in the present day phase.

This typical example of this way of thinking, was taken from the academic textbook ‘Historia pharmacy’ by Robert Rembielinski – Warsaw 1963, pg Nr. 9.

Definition: the author characterizes pharmacy as follows: under the term of pharmacy we understand this science as a drug.

Belonging to the history of pharmacy, is the event of occurrences, referring to past processes, that directly or indirectly, are connected to the discovery, preparation and investigation.

The hand over to utilization is also significant.

The object of the history of pharmacy is the way in which drugs and application of drugs, are presented.

The history of pharmacy has a variety of conditions, which must be obeyed with.

These concern the political system and the jurisdiction.

We should not give these processes more credit than deserved.

The investigations carried out, support pharmacy.

It is our opinion, that the fundamentals regarding the perspectives of the history of pharmacy are, as mentioned above, referring to cultural competence.

We must remember that the basis of the understanding of this culture, is a collection of a dominant 'Imaginarium', which exist in a certain place, at a certain time.

This controls the social practice of the people.

Single and groups of individuals recognized that certain cultural values, with these supporting rules, derive from 'Imaginarium'.

In order to determine this culture, we must accept the incurring consequences in all life activities in all human situations, which means that the science is determined.

Beyond this, the scientists function within this framework, of a certain cultural 'imaginarium'.

The descriptions are by no means neutral.

Neither are they realistic, convincing or universal.

This historical story is not based on pretences and must therefore not be seen as significant.

Holding a grudge against these claims is nonsense.

Why? Because the pharmacy historians function in a defined community.

They identify themselves within this community.

They share their visions with this body of trade members.

This visions of reality are the same visions defined within this culture.

The created works of the historians are based on the cultural viewpoints of this cultural group.

The views defined in the writings are equal to the views defined in the writings of the cultural group.

The first vital question, which the pharmacy historian should ask him- / herself is: what are the reasons for which I want to prepare these historical stories, within this pharmaceutical disciplin.

One must not fall into dellusion.

All that we publish is a portrayal of past happenings – showing how things were at that time.

In this narration, created by us, we have indicated the cultural rules which must be obided with.

The pharmacy historians are subject to these strict conditions.

Another posibility of this coherence is to purvey the past in the collective role, with ist traditions and joint experiences.

After all, one must think, that the story of the trade members is portrayed.

Otherwise expressed, in the form of a story.

The sollution we propose, is that these stories, with their crucial categories must be applied.

These being: culture, imaginarium, cultural values and community visions.

As a source, the text material and community experiences are applied.

Herewith, we try to outline the appearances of the pharmacy stories, with which a different cultural perspective is used.

The conservative pharmacy historian refers to the pharmacy story as being unique and that there is only one truth.

If these conditions are altered, the narrations and depictions of the lives and functionings of the pharmacy historians will also change.

These narrations must not be said to be better that, but equal to other existing methods.

We called for , the history of pharmacy narrations, to be written, in order to maintain the identification of the pharmacy groups.

The cohesion of these specific groups has therefore been maintained in the following ways: In his opinion, the putting forward of events and how the presentation of his profession took place.

In order to achieve this aim, sources of materials were applied, which resultet in the establishing of facts and processes within the history of pharmacy.

We suggest that the narrations of these stories are written in such a way, whereby, specifically, the culture, imaginarium, values of the community visions and texts and community experiences.

We try to outline the different perpectives and the way in which the narations appear.

The conservative historians claim that the pharmacy history should only be one, and only of one truth.

It was his task to present all the happenings in his profession.

In order to achieve his aim, he searched through source materials.

He was hereby able to extract valuable information, and with these facts, it was possible to determine the pharmacy processes.

All these pharmacy facts were seen as being unchangeable- like a rule of nature.

The pharmacy data, extracted from the past, was just waiting to be discovered and engraved in peoples memories.

It is our opinion, which we respect, that the pharmacy historian, has to do with cultural phenomena.

We assume that human activity, including the activities of pharmacists and chemists, are directed through values and cultural rules.

These values have been ascertained from certain dominant cultural imaginaries.

In our opinion, the pharmacy history does not discover the pure and symmetrical facts, because it occupies itself with factual occurrences and processes, which have been moulded, in the past – in the framework of a certain cultural context.

We can assume, that this culture has certain attributes; for this reason we use this cultural category, to enable us to accentuate the fact, that all characteristics do not exist, objectively or neutrally.

We assume that reality is non-existent, but not intrinsically.

We are certain that this reality is not present, when it has to do with the human world.

This reality is shaped through the culture, specifically the imaginary.

It is structured and put into hierarchical form.

Likewise, this is present, in that which we call pharmacy today .

It is our judgement that these cultural occurrences do not exist neutrally, but are generated as a reality, which we postulate in the framework of certain cultural imaginaries.

This culture created diverse fields, which were equipped with certain properties. Leading to this, the phenomenon of pharmacy is defined.

It is our portrayal, that the pharmacy knowledge is present only in the already existing reality, and can therefore not be discovered.

In this world the pharmacy is deflected, after which the history of pharmacy can be formed.

The pharmacy history is, leads from this.

An independent problematic issue is what should be classed as an object of pharmacy history.

Should it be culture and its elements, should it be correctness, tendencies in the framework of the pharmacy world, or should it be the observations of places and people, connected to pharmacy.

Besides this, depicted, are all activities of the pharmacists and chemists which go beyond the normal call of duty - the delivering of medication.

In these conservative writings, these activities are described as: activities regarding politics, society and the public, municipal or self government, religious and sporting etc. In this conservative framework, predominant is the factual documentation, based on what is mentioned above.

Therefore, the lives and activities of states and conditions of all representatives are correctly traced and monitored , whereby great attention is paid to accuracy and detail.

Meanwhile, in the epistemological perspective, the registration of facts regarding activities of the different pharmacists are written.

For us, this is the point of origin of our pharmaceutical writings.

We are convinced that all depends on theoretical perspectives.

These perspectives are based on historical reflections, which are valid for the pharmacy.

Nearly all those that occupy themselves with pharmacy, class the individual activities as vitally important.

The people described, had connections with pharmacy.

The exceptional personalities are described as eminent explorers in industrial pharmacy.

All these activities describe, all those that are directly or indirectly connected the human activities in the spherical world.

Exceptionally interesting for us, is the answer to the question: What shapes the characteristics of the pharmacist and chemist activity.

In order to answer the question, the analyses of the factographical description is put aside and we turn to the culture, because we assume that the culture identifies / describes pharmacy / chemistry. In addition to this description, a non-verbal system of values and behavioural rules is applied.

This is the so called ,Schweigen des Wissens / Silent knowledge (to be seen as a term).

This term was purveyed in Kuhns sense.

The 'silent knowledge' steers all chemist / pharmacist activity that is acquired on the road to knowledge – through the practical chemist apprenticeship.

This is why chemistry should be understood as a figment of culture, at a certain time and in a certain place.

A different issue, can be the evaluating of the question: in what way do pharmacists, through their daily activities, create their surrounding reality?

In what way should this surrounding reality be analysed? Perhaps as an element of a cultural belief of the pharmacist / chemist.

This is substantial, because in the framework of these practices, one gains categorical experience.

Through this, their surrounding reality is created. We know this surrounding reality as 'Pharmacy'.

Due to this, this experience of categories, seems to be vital as the attribute of cultural experiences.

These cultural experiences are of extreme importance because, they can have the potential to reach the cultural realities of the chemist / pharmacist.

Instead of questioning, which categories tend toward the truth, we can ask ourselves the following:

- Where do these categories stem from?
- Why do they have these characteristics and why do they take this course?
- Who and what did they serve?

What can be helpful for us in ascertaining the answer, is, in our view, the question of the cultural perspective.