

Institute of the History of Medicine and Medical Ethics

Chair of the History of Medicine

Address

Glueckstrasse 10
91054 Erlangen
Phone: +49 9131 8522308
Fax: +49 9131 8522852
www.igem.med.uni-erlangen.de

Head of Department

Prof. Dr. med. Karl-Heinz Leven

Contact

Prof. Dr. med. Karl-Heinz Leven
Phone: +49 9131 8522094
Fax: +49 9131 8522852
karl-heinz.leven@gesch.med.uni-erlangen.de

Research Focus

- Galen – Compendium and Catalogue of Galenic Writings
- The Nuremberg Sondersiechenalmosen 1394–1664
- Later Ancient and Early Byzantine Psychopathology
- Leprosy and Vagrancy in Southern German Free Imperial Cities
- Early 18th Century Medical Practice: Physician Johann Christoph Götz (1688–1733) from Nuremberg
- Medical Crime and the Social Practice of Terror – SS-Physicians in Concentration Camps, 1934–1945
- History of the Bavarian Society for Gynecology and Obstetrics in the 20th Century in cooperation with Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics

Structure of the Department

Together, the Chair for History of Medicine and the Professorship for Medical Ethics (see separate article in this report) constitute the Institute for History of Medicine and Medical Ethics. It includes the Forum Medizin und Menschenrechte (“Forum on Medicine and Human Rights”), founded in 2006, and the Coordinating Office of the Clinical Ethics Committee. Furthermore, the institute harbors the Erlangen Medical Collection. In total, the staff of the institute consist of 16 members, 14 are academic personnel with seven part-time positions. Chair and Professorship cooperate in joint research projects on history and contemporary history of medical ethics (e.g. medicine in NS-Germany, history of the Medical Faculty Erlangen, medical ethics in Germany after 1945).

Research

Galen – Compendium and Catalogue of Galenic Writings

Project manager: K.-H. Leven
The Greek physician Galenus of Pergamum (129–ca. 210 AD) figures as the most influential medical author of the Roman imperial period. A very prolific writer, the extent of his oeuvre surpasses what remains of any other ancient author; his work decidedly influenced not only his successors in late antiquity but was of fundamental importance for all premodern medicine. “Galenism” profoundly shaped medieval science across cultural and religious boundaries (Byzantium, Islamic medicine, the Latin West), it was constitutional to Renaissance medicine in the 16th century and remained influential well into modern times. This research project aims at a comprehensive depiction of Galenism both in its time of emergence and its impact on medicine in the historical contexts named. On the one hand the project is devoted to a compendium of Galenic Medicine in and out of antiquity for which renowned international experts have been gathered. It aims at both consolidating existing knowledge and venturing into new ground. On the other hand an annotated catalogue of all remaining Galenic writings (ca. 400) is devised to provide a much needed reference work for scholars in the field.

The Nuremberg Sondersiechenalmosen 1394–1664

Project manager: F. Dross
The Nuremberg Sondersiechenalmosen, a charity founded in 1394 by three wealthy patrician women, provided food, clothing and temporary shelter for foreign lepers not endowed with the privileges of Nuremberg residents. Restricted to three days of Holy Week, this charity was in existence for more than 250 years. In the 15th century Nuremberg saw hundreds of lepers gathering for this occasion at the appointed days; by the 16th century there are up to several thousand recipients reported by reliable sources. The domestic lepers, in contrast, were provided for in four municipal Siechköbel outside the city walls throughout the year. This extensive institutional care for lepers in late mediaeval and early modern times places Nuremberg as outstanding in this regard. Despite this prominent position, concise and comprehensive treatment of the subject is still a desideratum of present international scholarship.

Later Ancient and Early Byzantine Psychopathology

Project manager: N. Metzger
In their descriptions of mental illnesses, the later ancient and early byzantine medical authors show much more diverse sources and originality than their much attested foundation on Galenism would lead to suspect. The medical compendia by physicians like Orbasius, Aetius, Paulus Aegineta, Paulus Nicaeus and Alexander of Tralles (4th–9th century AD) surpass Galenic psychopathology by including diseases unlisted by Galen, drawing their knowledge from preceding authors otherwise lost. Although these authors mostly aim to preserve the medical knowledge of their predecessors, it can be observed – by comparing with sources from outside the medical sphere – how changing cultural and social realities leave their mark. Excerpting in their own way, these medical encyclopedists convey new meanings to old words, nudge medical concepts according to their needs and in the meantime shape them with lasting effects for the subsequent medical tradition.

Leprosy and Vagrancy in Southern German Free Imperial Cities

Project managers: F. Dross, A. Kinzelbach
Extensive Research has been done on medieval leprosaria; nevertheless, their contextualization with (municipal) health care is still deficient. This project focuses on a social group which is especially hard to pinpoint – vagrant lepers whose traces in archive material tied to a certain place are particularly elusive. Extensive archival research concentrates on Free Imperial Cities (Reichsstädte) in Swabia and Franconia with the intention of establishing basic facts so far entirely wanting. Neither amount nor behaviour nor strategies of these individuals are known yet. Furthermore, by posing these questions this research is able to shed light on the very beginnings of health care policies in medieval urban communities.

Early 18th Century Medical Practice: Physician Johann Christoph Götz (1688–1733) from Nuremberg

Project manager: M.M. Ruisinger
This project is part of the DFG funded Research Cluster on 17th to 19th century medical practices (“Ärztliche Praxis im 17.–19. Jahrhundert”, spokesperson Prof. Dr. Dr. Michael Stolberg, Würzburg). It is dedicated to quantitative and qualitative analysis of the early 18th century medical records by the hand of Johann Chris-

troph Götz which have fortunately been preserved in the Trew Collection of the local University Library Erlangen. Consisting of seven volumes, originating from the years 1716 to 1726 and predominantly in Latin, these records enable a close look into every-day practice as noted down by Götz. His patients, their ailments and social status, furthermore his arrangements and contemporaneous medical knowledge can be brought to surface. Besides database driven analysis the project focuses on Götz's patients. Although their perspectives are unmistakably hard to obtain, selected case stories especially rich in detail are closely scrutinized. Götz's journal sparks additional interest because its author was closely connected to the influential physician and publicist Christoph Jacob Trew from Nuremberg and promises new insights into early public health measures.

Medical Crime and the Social Practice of Terror – SS-Physicians in Concentration Camps, 1934–1945

Project managers: K.-H. Leven, Ph. Rauh
This project surveys the biographical development of SS-physicians active in German concentration camps between 1934 and 1945, focusing on their group-specific characteristics. Consisting of two parts, the study aims to outline socialization, mentality and actions, including their role in concentration camps on the one hand and their subsequent careers in both German states after 1945 on the other hand. These physicians, constituting the core unit of nazi persecution and genocide policies, originated from the heart of the German academic upper middle class, a social group regarded with particular esteem by their contemporaries. After 1945, the question remains open to what extent these persons lost their status in face of the severe charges laid against them or whether they continued their careers undisturbed by public and political repercussions. In this second part of the project, a well defined group is employed to methodically analyze – for the first time – how both German states dealt with these people and their criminal past.

History of the Bavarian Society for Gynecology and Obstetrics in the 20th Century in cooperation with Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics

Project managers: F. Dross, W. Frobenius
The Bavarian Society for Gynecology and Obstetrics ("Bayerische Gesellschaft für Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde" [BGGF]) has been established in 1912 by an united meeting of

both the former Franconian and Munich societies. On the occasion of its centenary a historical research project is analyzing the Society with special respect on how it worked out professional policy on the background of the social history of 20th century Western Germany. The role of the society and its members within Nazi Germany will be highlighted as well as its way to deal with this matter afterwards.

Teaching

The Institute of the History of Medicine and Medical Ethics is responsible for teaching the following courses according to medical curriculum: Medical Terminology (first semester students in human medicine/dentistry); Querschnittsbereich Q 2 "History, Theory and Ethics of Medicine" (seventh semester medicine) and "History of Science and Ethics" (degree program in molecular medicine). Furthermore, it contributes to Querschnittsbereich Q 7 "Medicine and Aging" in the section concerned with old age in past and present.

Medical Terminology introduces students to the specific technical language employed in anatomy and clinical medicine; this includes basic understanding of Latin grammar and vocabulary necessary for anatomical terms, furthermore Greek for clinical usage. At the same time it aims to place medicine in its social and historical context.

History, Theory and Ethics of Medicine includes lectures dedicated to the basic principles of medical humanities while the specific skills imparted in seminars. In these seminars, small groups of students are made familiar with current questions, methods and approaches in the field. They aim at sharpening the student's eye for social, ethical and institutional problems. Teaching methods include text interpretation, discussion of case histories, role play, multimedia presentations and excursions.

In addition, courses in ethics and interpersonal skills are provided as part of the Introduction to Clinical Medicine. Courses range from "Skills in Ethical Communication" over "Breaking Bad News" and "Speaking about Death and Dying" to "Intercultural Communication", some of those featuring simulated patients to practice difficult communicative situations.

Moreover, several recurring seminars offer further insight into historical and ethical subjects to students with special interest in the medical humanities (Wahlpflichtfach). In collaboration with the Chair of Anatomy I a seminar on

Jenseits des Tellerrands

Mittwoch, 12.15 – 13.00 Uhr
Kollegienhaus, Universitätsstr. 15,
Raum 1.011/Senatssaal



3. Nov. 2010 **Kollaps und Triumph**
Pocken, schwarze Legenden und der
Untergang der Indianer
Karl Heinz Leven

10. Nov. 2010 **Krieg und Psychiatrie (1914-1945)**
Begutachtung -
Behandlung - Vernichtung
Philipp Blau

17. Nov. 2010 **Klinische Ethikberatung**
Grundlagen, Abläufe und Ziele
Florian Grunz

24. Nov. 2010 **Eine Stadt wird wahnsinnig**
Syrische Augenzeugen, ein
byzantinischer Arzt und der
Hundewahn von Amida
Nadine Metzger

1. Dez. 2010 **Kranker oder Kunde?**
Helfer oder Händler?
Konsequenzen für die
Patient-Arzt-Beziehung
Bernd Friedrich

Friedrich-Alexander-Universität
Erlangen-Nürnberg



Institut für Geschichte und Ethik der Medizin
Geschw.-H.
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Lecture series for a wider audience on current research of the Institute for History of Medicine and Medical Ethics

"Death and Dying in Cultural Perspective" is held by the Chair of History of Medicine. Each semester, a group of interested students is introduced to methods and objectives of medical historiography. Seminars on selected topics close to current research interests are offered each semester, in certain cases in conjunction with the Master Program "Mittelalter- und Renaissance-Studien" and/or colleagues in the Philosophical Faculty.

The lecture series "Über den Tellerrand" caters current research topics to a wider audience. During lunch hour, members of staff present selected tidbits about historical and ethical matters. Invited medical historians from outside give insight into their work in the monthly "Medizinhistorische Vortragsreihe".

Selected Publications

Dross, F. / Salimi K. (Hrsg.): Jacob Henle. Bürgerliches Leben und „rationelle Medicin“. Eine Ausstellung im Klinikum Fürth 10.7.2009 bis 10.9.2009, Fürth 2009 [Katalog].

Dross, F.: Patterns of Hospitality: Aspects of Institutionalisation in 15th & 16th Centuries Nuremberg Healthcare. In: *Hygiea Internationalis* 9 (2010), Nr. 1, S. 13-34

Leven, K.-H.: „Das Wesen des Meeres ist aus dem Tropfen nicht ersichtlich“. Bernadette Soubirous (1844-1879) und die Wunderheilungen in Lourdes. In: *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift* 135 (2010), S. 2588-2592.

Rauh, P./Quinkert, B./Winkler, U. (Hrsg.): *Krieg und Psychiatrie, 1914-1950*. (Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus, Bd. 26). Göttingen 2010.

Meetings and International Training Courses

10.07.–10.09.2009: Ausstellung: Jacob Henle. Bürgerliches Leben und „rationelle Medicin“, Klinikum Fürth, Deutschland