Manfred Müller-Küppers (Heidelberg): 125 Jahre Psychiatrische Universitätsklinik Heidelberg
The past history of the psychiatric university hospital of Heidelberg extends into the first half of the 19th century and has connections to C.W. Roller and his hospital „Ilmenau“. The psychiatric tradition in Heidelberg stems from Emil Kraepelin. The psychopathological orientation was founded by Karl Jaspers and continued by Kurt Schneider, Walter von Baeyer and W. Janzarik. The history of the psychiatric university hospital of Heidelberg would be incomplete without mentioning Carl Schneider’s biological research project that was closely connected to the centrally organised euthanasia of psychiatric patients during the Nazi period.
Keywords: Kraepelin, Jaspers, C. Schneider, K. Schneider

Hans-Michael Meinck (Heidelberg): Geschichte der Heidelberger Neurologie
Keywords: Neurology – Heidelberg – history – tabes dorsalis – neuromuscular disorders – psychosomatic medicine – neurovascular disorders – critical care neurology

Maike Rotzoll, Gerrit Hohendorf (Heidelberg): Die Heidelberger Psychiatrische Universitätsklinik im Nationalsozialismus
The Heidelberg University Psychiatric Hospital was one the most famous centres in the history of German psychiatry: Kraepelin taught therein Heidelberg, Jaspers wrote his “General Psychopathology” and Wilmanns together with Prinzhorn founded the nowadays well-known “Prinzhorn Collection”. Nonetheless, during the time of National Socialism the Heidelberg University Hospital under the leadership of Prof. Carl Schneider spearheaded the adaptation of psychiatry to National Socialist health and social politics. Even in spring of 1933 his predecessor Karl Wilmanns had been dismissed because of political reasons and three lecturees had to leave due to their Jewish descent. Besides his engagement for compulsory sterilization and eugenic research the main issue of Carl Schneider’s activities was the implementation of work therapy in order to overcome the so-called therapeutic nihilism. In 1939 Carl Schneider became involved in the planning and execution of the National Socialist “euthanasia” program. As chief expert he was responsible for the lethal selection of the institutionalized patients. At least 211 former patients of the Heidelberg Psychiatric Hospital were put to death during the different phases of Nazi “Euthanasia”. In 1942 Carl Schneider received a research grant from the “euthanasia head office” to research the different causes of feeblemindedness. During Schneider’s research programme 21 children were killed in the Eichberg asylum in order correlate clinical and pathoanatomical findings. After a long period of silence a memorial in front of the Heidelberg Hospital now commemorates the death of these children.
Keywords: Nazi euthanasia, academic psychiatry in national socialism, euthanasia and research activities

W.J. Bock (Düsseldorf): Karl Jaspers und Heidelberg
Karl Theodor Jaspers - born in 1883 in Oldenburg and deceased in 1969 in Basel/Switzerland - was one of the most famous psychiatrists and philosophers of the 20th century in Europe. He was one of the advocates of existentialism. His habilitation (postdoctoral lecture qualification) was not as psychiatrist at the Faculty of Medicine, but in psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Heidelberg. Later he was awarded a professorship in philosophy. He was married to Gertrud Mayer of Jewish origin. During National Socialism he was prohibited to give lectures at the University. In 1945 the renewal of the University of Heidelberg was started together with the surgeon and rector K.H. Bauer. Even after a series of achievements and honours at the University of Heidelberg during the postwar period, Jaspers accepted a professorship of philosophy at University Basel, where he died in 1969.
Axel Karenberg (Köln): Demenz in der antiken Heilkunde: Historische Realität oder modernes Trugbild?

Dementia in medical texts of antiquity: Illusion or reality? This paper disproves recently published studies claiming that the ancient Greek and Roman physicians developed a medical notion of dementia. We analyzed classical medical and philosophical treatises including key authors such as Plato, Aristotle, „Hippocrates“ and Galen. We also examined almost a millennium (400 BC to 400 AD) of various relevant literary texts. Ancient medical texts did not contain any description or classification remotely comparable to the modern meaning of dementia. A few literary sources mention dementia-like states with regret or in the context of fighting the mental decline associated with old age. Greco-Roman physicians ignored dementia because elderly people were rare (less than 3% of the population was older than sixty-five), progressive cognitive impairment was not part of medical theory and the physician's primary role was to treat conditions with positive therapeutics. Before the relatively recent medicalization of old age, intellectual decline was considered normal. Although the word ‘dementia’ is ancient, its contemporary meaning and conceptualization originated as late as 1700. Further studies, including a computerized key-word search of ancient literature, are necessary to evaluate the personal fates and social roles of individuals suffering from diminished cognitive abilities more precisely.

Ferdinand Peter Moog (Köln): Wenn Hähne Helden zittern lassen - Ätiologische Überlegungen zum Phänomen der Phobie im Altertum und ihr literarisches Fortleben in der Neuzeit

In the last decades, phobias are diagnosed with increasing frequency in the industrialized countries. In literature, and especially in different genres of film phobias serve as a means of characterizing protagonists. Nevertheless, phobias have already been observed in antiquity. As spectacular disorders they moved people’s minds. Etiologic models, however, used to be presented not by ancient physicians but by philosophers, especially by those who were naturalists at the same time or possessed a highly speculative lore like Pythagoreans or atomists. As Plutarch says, Pythagoreans interpreted phobias as reminiscences from the former lives and therefore recognized them as a proof of metempsychosis. Germanicus, the Roman hero who showed phobic reactions whenever confronted with a cock, is one of the most famous examples ever mentioned. This particular property of his was elaborated by Robert von Ranke Graves in his autobiography of the emperor Claudius, who was a brother of Germanicus. The motif of the general frightened by cocks occurs also in the works of Friedrich von Schiller. He made the alleged phobia of Wallenstein a constitutive component of his dramatic plot.

Keywords: anxiety, phobia, Plutarch, Lucretius, Pythagoreans, metempsychosis, Germanicus, Claudius, Robert von Ranke Graves, Friedrich von Schiller, Wallenstein.

Christian Donalies (Wittstock): Bemerkungen zu Berichten von Wunderstätten in der Prignitz (Mark Brandenburg), die zwischen dem 13. und dem 18. Jahrhundert gewirkt haben sollen

Because of places where miracles were said to work the Prignitz area (situated in the northwest of the federal state of Brandenburg) attracted many visitors in the Middle Ages. In particular three reddish consecrated wafers were visited by many pilgrims. It was believed Christ’s drops of blood would become apparent here and those could cure sick people. Only in the 19th century it was clarified by means of microbiology that the red colour was the product of a mould (Prodigiosin). Other places enjoyed the reputation to help ill people as well. In the 16th century it was said of the Anna Maria Altar in the village of Altkrüßow that here people who suffered from „pins and needles“ (probably ergotism) would be healed. It was said that rheumatism could be healed as well. Similar miracles were claimed to be worked by a particular oak tree. In 1734 a three year old boy from Kehrberg was often visited because it was believed that he could heal wounds by touching them. In addition people believed that they could be cured by drinking his bath water. His parents made money out of it until Prussian soldiers stopped them. One has to assume that suggestion was often the healing principle.

Keywords: Prignitz, miracle, wafer

Philipp Gutmann (Halle): Heinrich Kaan: „Psychopathia sexualis“

In the beginning of the 19th century, the first German medical publications systematically are dealt with the relationship between psychiatric disorders and certain sexual conditions. In 1844, HEINRICH KAAN, a physician from Vienna, published his "Psychopathia sexualis" which is much less known than the treatise with the same title written by RICHARD VON KRAFFT-EBING more than 40 years later. Much more than his predecessors, KAAN tries to describe systematically sexual aberrations paving the way for sexual entities described in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. On the other hand, KAAN continues the discussion on the serious consequences arising from onania. Additionally he presents an elaborate description of the
Thomas Müller (Berlin): „[...] Und das vermag allein die Familienpflege, die deswegen überall eingeführt werden muss [...]“. Die Anstalt Uchtspringe unter dem Direktorat von Konrad Alt

During the second half of the nineteenth century hardly any other issue has been discussed as controversially as the question of the asylum. This debate inflamed several times and in German lands has been closely connected to the professionalization of psychiatry itself. This process showed considerable regional differences. Even as late as 1900, this medical discipline had not yet been installed at every German medical faculty. In these debates the placement of patients into ordinary families was a central topic. In Germany as well as in other countries, e.g. France, a little Flemish town served as the model of the so-called family care. Gheel existed because of a pilgrimage dating back to the medieval ages. Among the German psychiatrists adapting the Flemish model to their own needs, Konrad Alt (1861-1922) at “Landes Heil- und Pflege-Anstalt Uchtspringe” in the Altmark, Province of Saxony, belongs to the most prominent.

Studying the history of family care serves to understanding a subject in the history of psychiatry, which in a “modernised” mode has become an issue for psychiatric care again today: Since the early 1990, following de-institutionalisation trends in medical care and more cost-effective decision-making in health administration, this type of family-based care has been re-introduced in many places. Germany, however shows an extremely fast growth in the family care sector at the moment. This is worth being mentioned, as the attempt of implementing family care about a century ago was hardly oppressed so harshly elsewhere.

Keywords: Psychiatric family care - German psychiatry - Konrad Alt - Uchtspringe - family care today

Rainer Tölle (Münster): Ludwig Wille – Reformpsychiater im späten 19. Jahrhundert

Ludwig Wille was one of the few asylum psychiatrists of the last third of the 19th century working on a renewal of psychiatry. From a scientific point of view, he can also be regarded as a clinical psychiatrist – comparable to Kahlbaum and, later, Kraepelin – basing his research work on clinical observations rather than from neuropathology. He was one of the first in Germany to initiate treatment free of restraint (similar to conolly). At the same time he supported new forms of therapy such as extramural treatment within families or agricultural colonies.

Keywords: Ludwig Wille, clinical psychiatry, non restraint, steady progress

Kai Sammet (Hamburg): Sozialistenfurcht, Psychiatriekritik, Arbeit am Kranken und das Feld der Anstaltspsychiatrie: L. Scholz´ (1868-1918) „Leitfaden für Irrenpfleger“ (1900)

In the 19th century, attendants posed great problems in German psychiatry. Well-trained staff could hardly be found. As the first “antipsychiatric” movement heavily debated asylundom around 1890, the Wärterfrage came under dispute again. Therefore in 1897 the Verein der deutschen Irrenärzte announced a contest for the best handbook of psychiatric nursing. In 1900 L. Scholz´ (1868-1918) booklet was awarded the prize, a monograph which until 1950 was edited 26 times. This paper sketches the historical background, the biography of the author and the content of the book.

Keywords: Germany 19th century - psychiatric nursing, handbook – L. Scholz (1868-1918)

Horst Isermann (Rotenburg/Wümme): Zur Lage der Versorgung geistig behinderter Menschen im ehemaligen Königreich Hannover aus ärztlicher Sicht

About 150 years ago multiple institutions were founded in Germany in order to provide care and treat idiots, as people with mental retardation were called at that time. This occurred during a time of socio-political reorientation and a new pedagogic awareness. The poor and partially dehumiliating conditions of the idiots, living in the Kingdom of Hanover at that time (1814 to 1866) and the necessary improvements through the activities of theologians, educators and physicians are described in a commission report of the physician Dr. Gustav Brandes of Hanover in the year 1862.

Keywords: idiocy, mental retardation, mental home, mental home direction

Keywords: 19th century; sexuality, onania, vitalism, psychopathia sexualis.
Frank Stahnisch (Erlangen): Von Guillaume Benjamin Duchenne de Boulogne zu Robert Remak und Hugo Wilhelm von Ziemssen: Die Neurologie auf dem Weg zur physikalischen Diagnostik

Guillaume Benjamin Duchenne de Boulogne’s (1806-1875) experiments with the method of electropuncture, formerly introduced into neurology and physiology by Jean-Baptiste Sarlandière (1787-1838) and François Magendie (1783-1855), are widely known in medical historiography. The psychological orientation of DUCHENNE's experiments in relation to his general typology of emotion, however, is quite often overlooked. It was the declared aim of the French neurologist to develop a „kind of living anatomy“ in the wider context of his systematic myological doctrine of function. Especially in the German-speaking countries, DUCHENNE’s approach has not gone unopposed: Berlin neurohistologist Robert Remak (1815-1865) and Erlangen physician Hugo Wilhelm von Ziemssen (1829-1902) objected to some methodological assumptions of the French scientist. With a view on technological developments that regard diverse instrumental attempts as well as clinical and experimental practices, this article traces some paths of the branched course of neurology to physical diagnostics.

Bernd Holdorff (Berlin): Alfred Goldscheider (1858-1935), Grundlagenforscher und neurologischer Internist

In his doctoral thesis (1881) Alfred Goldscheider demonstrated specific thermosensory cutaneous spots and by this the „law of specific nerve energies“ in the skin, as did independently and simultaneously the Swedish physiologist Magnus Blix. Goldscheider continued to study the skin- and „muscle“- sense during the next decades. Like his senior teacher Ernst von Leyden he saw neurology in close relationship to internal medicine; he headed clinical departments of internal medicine in Berlin and eventually the II resp. III. University clinic of internal medicine at the Charité of Berlin until 1933. His nearly 200 papers including 18 Books and handbook-contributions contained topics of sensory physiology and neurology; they mirror his great scientific labour and influence on contemporary neuroscience. In spite of his continuous dissent with Max von Frey concerning specific cutaneous receptors, the discovery of the specific cutaneous sense energy goes back to him – as well to Magnus Blix (Sweden), Henry Donaldson (USA) and Max von Frey – and represents an enduring milestone of neurophysiology.

Keywords: somatosensory, modality, cool, warm, touch, pain, specific nerve energy of the skin

G. Huppman, P. di Cristofano (Mainz): Ergobiographisches zu Fritz Mohr (1874 – 1957)

Among the pioneers of psychosomatics in the German-speaking world, one representative is usually not mentioned even though he had developed a comprehensive conception of treating psychophysical disturbances. He did this already in the first two decades of the 20th century. This ergobiography – in outline – is expected to this author and his works. It not only conveys the contents of Mohr’s more important works but also discusses his role during and attitude towards the Nazi-era. His importance for the psychosomatic medicine in this country is undoubted.

A concluding judgement on Mohr’s identification with the Nazi-ideology, respectively the new German “Seelenheilkunde” can’t be given at the present state of knowledge.

H. O. Dumke (Bad Schussenried): Der „Psychologue“ August Bier

August Bier (1861-1949) is well known as the head of the surgery at the Berlin Charité and as the inventor of spinal anesthesia more than hundred years ago. Little is known about his studies and publications about ecological and psychological issues. The focus of this essay will be his psychological studies, published in his book „Die Seele“.


Paul Julius Möbius (1853-1907). A recollection of his life and work on the occasion of his 150th birthday. His 150th birthday provides a good reason to remember the important Leipzig neurologist and psychiatrist Paul Julius Möbius. Although he has almost been forgotten both among his colleagues in the neurosciences as well as the general public, at his time he was a crucial figure in this area and also had a lasting influence on the history of ideas of this subject. Nevertheless, if at all he is most infamous for his polemically exaggerated, patriarchal pamphlet on 'The Physiological Mental Weakness of Women' which will deliberately be left out here. After all it is due to that Möbius had and has still to suffer from the devastating reputation of being a hack writer that hates women from the bottom of his heart. In contrast, this study highlights his works on hysteria in order to exemplify Möbius's fundamental contributions to the development of his subject. In these papers Möbius worked out the psychogenic aetiology of this illness, a theory that had been totally
neglected by dominating brain-anatomically oriented psychiatrists and neurologists. Nevertheless Möbius succeeded in initializing a gradual change of ideas as regards this matter. By pushing these views Möbius also helped to re-introduce a psychological component into psychiatric and neurological thinking. Not less important however are his thoughts on hysteria, which also reveal a totally different view Möbius had on women.

At the same time this study aims to fill the remarkable gap in biographic research done on this prominent figure. It is a well-known fact that Möbius terminated his academic career at the Department of Medicine at Leipzig University by giving back his venia legendi, i.e. the authorization to give lectures there. Now for the first time ever the full story is told based on primary sources found in archives. At the time, Möbius was working as an assistant at the university's 'Medical-Clinical Institute' ('Medicinisch-Poliklinisches Institut'; the neurological outpatient's department). And it is revealed in the files that it went against Möbius's principles and hurt his self-esteem to work under a head who was not only younger in age, but also had less experience, especially since he had himself been made provisional head of this department some time before. On top of that, Möbius felt disregarded at the medical faculty where even after ten years after his qualification as a university lecturer he was not awarded the title of associate professor. From a plain legal-administrative point of view however, it was Möbius himself who had made this promotion impossible by ceasing to hold lectures at the university, which was an indispensable prerequisite for becoming a professor. In observance of this regulation the faculty turned down Möbius's enquiry whether he would be made professor. As already stated, this is perfectly consistent with the university's rules and regulations, yet the faculty's reaction in this matter seems rather questionable, bearing in mind both Möbius's remarkable oeuvre and the undisputable importance and lasting influence he has had on the development of the neurosciences.

Keywords: Paul Julius Möbius – Hysteria – Psychogenics – 'The Physiological Mental Weakness of Woman' – Nosology

Katrin Bewermeyer, H. Bewermeyer (Köln), H. D. Mennel (Marburg): Hermann Oppenheim: Beitrag zur Lebens- und Wirkgeschichte anhand eines aufgefundenen Lebenslaufes

Hermann Oppenheim has been widely recognised for his role in establishing neurology as a medical specialty in Germany and indeed the world. His Jewish origin, however, prevented him from becoming Senior Professor at the Prussian University of Berlin in 1889. Various disputes with his contemporaries regarding the entity of “traumatic neuroses” eventually lead to Oppenheim’s resignation from all professional duties towards the end of his life. The history of the Jewish Oppenheim family, originally from Warburg in Westphalia, has been extensively elucidated by Emil Herz, one of Hermann Oppenheim’s nephews. Herz published his findings in his book “Denk ich an Deutschland in der Nacht”, the title of which is based on a famous quotation by the renowned German poet, Heinrich Heine. Herz made use of his uncle’s hand-written autobiography and subsequently published a paper which was retrieved at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York. The following article sheds new light on Oppenheim’s traditional Jewish upbringing and further creates an understanding for the development of resentment in Oppenheim’s later years.

Keywords: Hermann Oppenheim, origin and family, Oppenheim’s biography in the manuscript of Emil Herz, Oppenheim as a paradigm of Jewish destiny in Wilhelminian time.


Paul Ebers, the son of the famous egyptologist Georg Ebers of Leipzig University who came from a well-known Jewish family in Berlin, studied medicine and finished his doctoral thesis under the tutelage of the internationally known Adolf von Strümpell, professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Erlangen. Perhaps due to the close connections between v. Strümpell and the famous Jean Martin Charcot, Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at the Salpetrière Hospital in Paris, Paul Ebers came to know the book on epilepsy and epileptics, written by Charles Féré, who at that time was “Chef de Laboratoire” (Senior Research Staff Member) of Charcot. Both are depicted in the well-known picture of Charcot giving a lecture on hysteria to a group of physicians. In the year 1896, having become junior staff member at the County Hospital of Marburg, Paul Ebers published a German translation of Féré’s book. Later, he abandoned pure clinical work and became owner of a “sanatorium” (health resort) in Baden-Baden, located in the south of Germany in the healthy region of the Black Forest. Hence, he switched from biological psychiatry – as we would call it nowadays – to the treatment of the somewhat questionable illness of the century, namely “neurasthenia”, a condition perfectly mirroring the atmosphere in general culture, fine arts and literature of the “fin de siècle”.

Keywords: Charles Féré’s monograph on epilepsy, german translation by Paul Ebers, sanatorium about 1900, nerve weakness (concept of neurasthenia).
Adrian Danek (München): Bernhard von Gudden und seine Münchner Schule der Neuroanatomie und Psychiatrie

This unresolved, violent death together with Ludwig II, the “dream king” of Bavaria still overshadows the achievements of Bernhard von Gudden in the history of science and, in particular, of neuroanatomy. Gudden and his pupils, foremost among them Forel, Kraepelin and Nissl, established tract-tracing, staining and sectioning techniques in experimental animals (usually rabbits) in order to gain a better understanding structure and function of the brain and – eventually – of psychiatric disease. This also generated an anti-vivisectionist opposition, among them his previous assistant Oscar Panizza. The local neuroscience tradition in Munich, especially that of the Max-Planck-Institute for Psychiatry, has very strong roots in the school of Bernhard von Gudden (1824-1886).

Keywords: Experimental neuroanatomy – antivivisectionists – Ludwig II of Bavaria – no-restraint


During the First World War German neurologists and psychiatrists met for a „Kriegstagung“ in Munich from 21st-23rd of September in 1916. The main topic was “war neurosis” with regard of its aetiology, epidemiology, and its social costs. There was an overwhelming consensus on its neurotic origin, especially among the more psychiatrically oriented doctors, while H. Oppenheim was the lone representative of his organic concept of “traumatic neurosis”. The discourse will be cited with regard to ist opposing views in order to illustrate the historical circumstances and the development of social history of war neurosis.

Keywords: “Kriegstagung” WW I, war neurosis, traumatic neurosis of Hermann Oppenheim

Heinz A. F. Schulze (Berlin): Persönliche Erinnerungen an Oskar und Cécile Vogt

Impressions and experiences of two years as a fellow-labourer at the „Institut für Hirnforschung“ (Institute for Brain Research) in Neustadt in the Black Forest and half a year beyond the death of OSKAR VOGT cover memories of the scientific tasks at the time, the everyday schedule, numerous conversations of CECILE and OSKAR VOGT, the highlights at the institute, illness and the death of OSKAR VOGT as well as the termination of his research activity there. They augment our knowledge about the life and work of the celebrated scientist couple.

Keywords: Biographical dates. Brain research institute at Neustadt/ Black Forest, impressions of daily life and work at the institute, terminal illness and death of OSKAR VOGT and the pain and depression of his wife CECILE.