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## **DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR GESCHICHTE DER NERVENHEILKUNDE e. V.**

### **Abstracts**

#### **I. On the history of psychiatry in Vienna and Austria**

**Gustav Schäfer**

##### **The Development of Psychiatry and Mental Health Care in Vienna in the Latter Part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

*Summary:* Using the example of two newly established institutions, it is shown how innovations based on knowledge acquisition and exchange contributed to reforms in the care of the mentally ill. The two sanatoriums and nursing homes Mauer-Öhling and Steinhof were deliberately chosen as examples, as they were very closely linked in their planning, construction history and persons involved.

In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the situation of care and support for the mentally ill was suboptimal: the four lower Austrian mental asylums (Ybbs, Klosterneuburg, Kierling-Gugging and Vienna-Am Bründlfeld) only admitted “mentally ill and dangerous to the public” or “mentally ill and curable” patients. The “harmless lunatics” in need of care remained in the care of the communities in the general welfare of the poor. In 1864, legislation laid the groundwork for the “public lunatic system” to be administered by the province of Lower Austria, with the provisions of admitting “dangerous lunatics” to these institutions in the province. On the initiative of the Association for Psychiatry and Forensic Psychology, a law was created in 1893 with which the Lower Austrian state parliament took over the care of the “incurable mentally ill”. This law enabled the construction of public institutions, which were to consist of a sanatorium, a nursing home and a colony. A constantly growing number of mentally ill and the associated overcrowding of the existing institutions made the construction of another institution necessary. Steps implemented through the reform enabled a completely new care of mentally ill patients, which was considered as “state of the art”. An institution was established that was suitable for both curable and incurable patients and, for the first time, also for patients who entered voluntarily.

*Keywords:* 19th century, psychiatry, reforms, innovative solutions, Steinhof, Mauer-Öhling.

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**Anna Böhler**

##### **Reading-Worlds in Psychiatric Wards Around 1900: Material Prerequisites and (Individual) Functions of an Everyday Practice**

*Summary:* The following article summarises the findings of the author’s thesis-project at the Medical University of Vienna. It investigates the multiple aspects and fields of reading in psychiatric asylums in Lower Austria around 1900. Central questions are those regarding the everyday practice of reading performed by patients. What kind of options for engaging with literature did patients have at their disposal and how was the act of reading integrated into their everyday life in the ward and with their illnesses in general?

To investigate this topic, five types of sources were analysed using a multi-perspective approach: contemporary psychiatric textbooks and journals, reports from different asylums, the newspaper of the asylum Mauer-Öhling and *belles lettres*.

Reading turns out to be a technique that penetrates the everyday life of the asylum in multiple ways. From a doctor's perspective, the therapeutic use of reading received little attention around 1900. Reading constituted merely one aspect of occupational therapy among many others. Nevertheless, it became clear that patients implemented multiple approaches of self-empowerment and self-therapy by using various practices of reading.

*Keywords:* Medical history, history of psychiatry, reading, medical humanities.

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## **Uta Kanis-Seyfried**

### **From the Habsburg Monarchy to Upper Swabia: Dr. Malvine Weiss/Rhoden The First “Female Doctor” in the Schussenried Asylum (1911–1912)**

*Summary:* This article traces the biography of the Jewish doctor Malvine Weiss/Rhoden (1885–1977) who was one of the first women in Austria-Hungary to complete a university degree at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After studying medicine in Budapest and Vienna, she began her professional career in the German Empire in the autumn of 1910. Her employment at the Grand Ducal State Sanatorium and Nursing Home in Alzey in Rhine-Hesse was short-lived. From 1911 until the middle of 1912, she worked as an assistant doctor in the women's ward of the asylum in Schussenried in Southern Württemberg. The discovery of her personal file set a research project in motion, in the course of which the doctor's biography was reconstructed with the help of her descendants living in Great Britain and the USA. The life story of Malvine Weiss/Rhoden also contributes to medical, historical and biographical research on Jewish female doctors who were persecuted and expelled from Austria during the National Socialist dictatorship.

*Keywords:* Women, Doctor, Jews, Asylum, Schussenried.

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## **Thomas Reuster**

### **Otto Gross (1877–1920): His Contribution to the Problem of Modern Assisted Suicide**

*Summary:* Otto Gross, a pioneer of modernism, made a radical theoretical and practical attempt to combine psychoanalysis and anti-bourgeois emancipation. At the alternative living community on Monte Verità in Ascona, he experimented with free love, but also with free death. Politically, he justified his dubious role in the suicide of two young women by invoking the right to self-determined death. However, the specific circumstances of the two assisted suicides contradict this interpretation. A social anthropological analysis of the encounter between the suicidal person and the suicide helper reveals their potential for mutual freedom, which includes a continuous conversation and an open-ended outcome. It is shown that Gross used this possibility only in a one-sided manner, with a lethal outcome. His example clearly highlights the latent indecisiveness of the “last relationship”, which therefore also contains the chance of an alternative outcome to suicide.

*Keywords:* Otto Gross, assisted suicide, self-determination, interaction, last relationship.

## **II. Neurosurgical section**

### **Uwe J. Neubauer**

#### **The Development of the Percutaneous Treatment of Trigeminal Neuralgia Until 1914**

*Summary:* Since the descriptions of tic douloureux by Nicolas Andrè in 1756 and John Fothergill in 1773, it took another 100 years until surgical treatments of trigeminal neuralgia were developed and invented. Since cauterisations, the sectioning of peripheral branches (including the facial nerve) and of the sympathetic trunc and even carotid artery ligation proved to have very limited success, the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a parallel

development of both open surgical and percutaneous methods. Concerning the latter, there was a gradual development, starting with injections in painful areas, into peripheral branches, near the foramina of the skull base and finally in the Gasserian ganglion. Various substances like osmic acid, solutions of morphine and cocaine were used until alcoholic solutions became more popular in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Remarkable were the high success rates, regardless of which substances were administered and whether the diagnosis of tic douloureux was correct. Reports claimed cure rates of around 90 percent, and only minor complications — numbers that are questionable from today's perspective. Especially the low complication rates were used as arguments to prefer the percutaneous injections, which were mostly performed by non-neurosurgeons, as the method of choice. It lasted until 1913, when Härtel introduced his method of intraganglionic injection via the oval foramen based on detailed anatomic studies, that more realistic numbers of both success and complication rates were provided.

*Keywords:* Trigeminal neuralgia, percutaneous treatment, alcohol injection, Friedrich Härtel.

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### **Michael Synowitz, Detlef Ernst Rosenow und Hans Joachim Synowitz**

#### **The “Society for Neurosurgery of the GDR”: A Retrospective on its EANS Membership in 1971 and the Training Course in 1989 in Rostock-Warnemünde**

*Summary:* Due to the existence of two German states, the “Association of Neurosurgeons in the GDR” was established in 1962 after the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Its first chairman was the German Neurosurgeon Georg Merrem (1909–1971) from Leipzig. As a result of the statutory alignment with the overarching body, the “General Secretariat of the Society of Clinical Medicine”, the activities of both the chairman and the board of the society were subject to constant control, significantly limiting their scope. This oversight remained unchanged until the dissolution of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1990. The process of acquiring membership in a newly formed international organization, the “European Association of Neurosurgical Societies” (EANS), is documented through materials from the Federal Archives and the Political Archive of the Federal Foreign Office. It is evident that the neurosurgical society had limited involvement in this process. Decision-making at ministerial levels — namely the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Higher and Specialized Education (MHF), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AA) — meticulously planned, decided upon, and implemented measures for this procedure. The GDR specialist society became a full member of the EANS during the founding congress in Prague in 1971. Membership in international bodies was considered a significant contribution to the state recognition of the GDR. Events organized by foreign associations in the GDR served the same purpose. In February of 1986, an official inquiry from EANS regarding the possibility of organizing an EANS training course by the Society for Neurosurgery of the GDR, received a positive response from the ministries. Documents detailing the preparatory measures, including the selection of the speaker for the opening speech at the 1989 event in Rostock-Warnemünde, suggest that the control of activities was ensured by the constant presence of a representative from the ministry.

*Keywords:* Society Neurosurgery, GDR, EANS, Rostock.

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## **III. History of mental health and psychiatry in the early 19th century**

### **Irmtraut Sahmland**

#### **A Hospital Qualified for Treating Mentally Ill Patients**

*Summary:* This article intends to reconstruct the ambitions to establish institutions for treating mentally ill persons in Hesse, concentrated in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In attempting to cure these patients using contemporary psychological therapy concepts, specific stationary conditions and spatial requirements were necessary. Analysis of the archival material reveals the web of intentions and interconnections in the prolonged deliberations of the stakeholders. Several concepts had been worked out: a combination of hospital and asylum, dedicated wards for

mentally ill patients within the provincial hospitals or a mental hospital linked to the faculty of medicine of the university in Marburg. Despite these efforts, all these projects failed in the end. For mentally ill persons, the provincial hospitals were the only places where they might benefit from new psychological treatments, but to a very limited extent and under absolutely inadequate conditions that affected all patients, both the mentally ill and those suffering from somatic diseases, if their treatment might be reduced.

*Keywords:* Mental Hospitals, Electorate Hessen, Project planning, curative treatment, Patients' history.

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## **Werner Felber**

### **Carl Gustav Carus and Ida von Lüttichau: A Creative Partnership in Understanding the Soul**

*Summary:* The communicative encounter between Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869) and Ida von Lüttichau (1798–1856) enhanced discoveries on the human soul. The universal scholar Carus considered “Psyche: On the Development of the Soul” (1846) as one of his main works among the approximate 70 books he wrote. The highly educated Ida von Lüttichau, a central female figure of romanticism in the Saxon region of the Dresden district, is identified as extremely sensitive. Therefore, she was predestined to contribute to Carus' work by adding valuable, even decisive information to the latter's work and on the development of the unconscious. She had more critical reservations about incorporating the substance into Carus's philosophy of life. However, with the “structure of the soul” and the presentation of a genetic development, Carus makes a significant contribution to understanding the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious.

*Keywords:* Carl Gustav Carus, Ida von Lüttichau, high sensibility, unconscious.

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## **IV. Psychopharmacology**

### **Joachim Heinrich Demling**

#### **The Benzodiazepine Story**

*Summary:* More than almost any other group of drugs in psychiatry, benzodiazepines (BZD) are linked with the name of their discoverer, the pharmacist and chemist Leo Henryk Sternbach (1908–2005). Born in what is now Croatia (then Habsburg / Austria-Hungary), he worked in Poland and then at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. In 1940 he started to work at Hoffmann-La Roche, initially in Basle, Switzerland, and from 1941 at the research centre in Nutley / New Jersey, USA. He and his research group discovered benzodiazepines based on heptodiazine derivatives in the 1950s while trying to improve tranquilizers; Sternbach had already worked on these in Poland, at that time with the intention of developing azo dyes (without success). The first benzodiazepine preparations introduced to the market were chlordiazepoxide (Librium®, 1960) and diazepam (Valium®, 1963). Despite the unknown risk of low-dose dependence at the time, they fulfilled expectations quickly and became drug “blockbusters”, almost completely displacing previous tranquilizers and hypnotics (meprobamate, barbiturates, etc.).

Other manufacturers also developed many modifications of the molecular structure that successfully entered the market. In search for the mechanism of action, the novel GABA-benzodiazepine receptor complex (principle of “allosteric modulation”) and corresponding ligands with different, sometimes opposing active properties, were discovered at Hoffmann-La Roche and other research institutions. Further developments led to the “Z-substances”, which have largely replaced the original benzodiazepine sleeping pills as modern hypnotics. The BZD and their derivatives have revolutionized the treatment of anxiety, agitation as well as insomnia, while at the same time providing a lasting advance in our understanding of the psychobiological basis of these disorders.

*Keywords:* benzodiazepines, history, GABA-benzodiazepine receptor, Z-substances.

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**Henrik Döbold****Ernst Vix's Drug Tax: Medical Treatment and Pharmacotherapy in the Hofheim Asylum Around 1850**

*Summary:* The large number and heterogeneity of substances and compounds available in the medicine cabinet of the Hofheim asylum around 1850 indicates a daily routine dominated by the treatment of a wide variety of physical illnesses. Given that many of the patients spent several years in this remote institution, the residing doctors handled most aspects of their medical care, including surgical procedures. This required that the doctors had a broad medical and scientific expertise. The administration of the different drugs seems to have followed certain empirical and scientific principles. However, there are indications that traditional, mostly medicinal plant-based drugs were also in use, probably aimed at the treatment of less severe symptoms. Some of the drugs seem to have already been obsolete by contemporary standards. Few, mostly sedative substances aimed at treating primarily psychiatric symptoms. Other substances, in addition to their primary use for treating physical diseases, were noted for their potential effects on psychiatric symptoms according to contemporary scientific literature, exemplified by Friedrich Oesterlen's "*Handbuch der Heilmittellehre*" (fourth edition of 1851). The specific indications for their use in Hofheim cannot be deduced from the sources used in this research. There is however evidence of a gradual evolution in the traditional drug repertoire, which was changed and complemented by newer substances of more specific effects. This process would continue into the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially through the spread of subcutaneously injectable sedatives and the introduction of further sedating substances.

*Keywords:* history of psychiatry, lunatic asylum, pharmacotherapy, Hofheim, 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**V. Psychiatric-historical Varia****Bernd Reichelt****Psychiatric Ambulatory Care in Wuerttemberg, 1945–1960**

*Summary:* This chapter deals with the modalities of the resumption of ambulatory care in post-war psychiatry in Wuerttemberg. The matter has not yet been studied. The chapter's focus is on the three state psychiatric hospitals in Southern Württemberg: Zwiefalten, Schussenried and Weissenau near Ravensburg. The tasks and objectives of ambulatory care are being analysed by comparing them with the past. Continuities with pre-1945 practice and new approaches to psychiatric practice will be presented. The decree on external care issued by the Baden-Wuerttemberg Ministry of the Interior in 1956 was in continuity with the decree from 1930. However, the appointment of welfare nurses (Fürsorgerinnen) in all clinics and the intensive cooperation with the public health departments at municipal level took psychiatric out-of-hospital care to a new qualitative level. By adding welfare nurses to the clinic staff, a new professional group was established in the newly organized clinical psychiatry. Called social workers (Sozialarbeiterinnen) from the 1960s onwards, this caring activity in the clinic later developed into social services.

*Keywords:* Ambulatory care, open care, institutional psychiatry, out-patient psychiatry, state psychiatry.

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**Hannes Stubbe****A Walk Through the Viennese Psychiatry in Robert Musil's Novel *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* ("The Man Without Qualities")**

*Summary:* After a short introduction, in which the biography and work of Robert Musil (1880–1942) is showcased, the paper focuses on a walk through Viennese psychiatry in the novel "The Man Without Qualities" (*Der Mann*

*ohne Eigenschaften*) and attempts to discuss some interpretive hypotheses such as Musil's essayism, his assessment of the psychology of his time, his knowledge of psychiatry, his criticism of psychiatry, art in psychiatry, as well as Clarisse's role.

*Keywords:* Robert Musil, „*Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften*“, psychiatry, interpretation.

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## **Katharina Röse**

### **From Training Course to Vocational College Studies: The Qualification of Occupational Therapists in the GDR with a Focus on Occupational Therapy in Psychiatry**

*Summary:* A comprehensive study of the development of vocational training for occupational therapists in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and specific qualifications for occupational therapy in psychiatry is still outstanding. Ursula Katzenstein, Wolfgang Presber and Liese-Lotte Eichler were pivotal in the introduction of occupational therapy as a profession in the GDR. In 1959, the first course in occupational therapy was held as an additional qualification for trained physiotherapists and nurses. As early as 1962, a three-year basic education was considered important, which was realized as a direct study program in 1980. The article starts with a historical review of occupational therapy in the GDR, followed by an examination of the development of vocational training for occupational therapists in the GDR concerning the development of occupational therapy in health care with a special focus on the field of psychiatry.

*Keywords:* occupational therapy, vocational training, psychiatry, GDR.

## **VI. History of neurology and epileptology**

### **Oleksandr Shevchenko**

#### **Hans Berger and 100 Years of the First EEG Study on Humans: From the Past to the Present and the Future**

*Summary:* Electroencephalography (EEG) is one of the most important neurophysiological and neurological examination methods and an ideal method to directly display the function of the central nervous system. July 6, 2024 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first EEG study on humans, which is associated with the name of the outstanding doctor and scientist Hans Berger (1873–1941). The article is dedicated to the history of the origins and implementation of this research method as well as various areas of application of EEG examinations.

*Keywords:* Hans Berger, EEG.

## **VII. On the methodology of the history of neurology**

### **Stefanie Coché**

#### **Psychiatric Patient Files as Sound-Historical Resources**

*Summary:* In my paper I argue that psychiatric medical records can serve as a sound-historical source: “madness” is linked to aural associations like hardly any other historical phenomenon. Despite a significant increase in interest in cultural and media history within the history of medicine, the sound of madness has not yet been the subject of historical research. The assessment of hearing, speech and sound behavior is important for the attribution of psychiatric illnesses. At the same time, hearing – and thus, also the classification of other people's speech behavior and sound production – is a learned cultural technique. Psychiatric medical records describe and assess speech and sound behavior, which, in their context, are meaningful for a time-specific construction of “illness”.

*Keywords:* patient files, sound history.

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## **VIII. The history of training in neurology**

**Henriette Löffler-Stastka**

### **The human being – more than skin, bones, biochemical reactions... – History of Medicine and Medical Humanities in Teaching – Challenges and Implementations**

*Summary:* Medical treatment means applying scientific knowledge to people who are conscious subjects with experiences. Thus, in a research-guided teaching, curriculum development and training, the discourse on research paradigms from the natural sciences, the humanities and the social sciences becomes necessary. In treatment, the relevance of history, culture, the social environment, the structure of relationships as well as the mental level and its embodiment is often underestimated, especially at the moment of physical vulnerability. Nevertheless, the implementation of contents of medical history on an individual and collective level as well as the field of medical humanities in teaching and in the medical curriculum is a challenge. A qualitative interview study presented here was conducted in a cyclical research design with ten experts, who had already implemented medical humanities in their universities. Material was analysed according to the thematic coding paradigm. As a result, transculturality, cultural history, interdisciplinarity, multiplication and collaboration were seen as facilitators for implementing medical humanities. Patient-, stakeholder- and students' involvement was mentioned as strategy to build up structures. A consequent scientific epistemological discourse on the research paradigm and methods is required and the clinical relevance and the ethics of care, including the responsibility for the patient and the society were mentioned as important factors. The implemented projects and ongoing developments are reported. Conclusively, consistent implementation requires creativity in inclusion, interdisciplinary interactions and openness.

*Keywords:* strategy, implementation, structure, curriculum, care.

## **IX. Museum Initiatives, Institutions and Objects in the History of Neurosciences**

**Thomas R. Müller**

### **Change of Perspective: The Saxonian Psychiatric Museum in Leipzig Tells the History of Psychiatry From the Patient's Perspective**

*Summary:* The Saxonian Psychiatric Museum, a project founded by *Durchblick* e.V. in 2001, is true to the slogan "The history of psychiatry from the patient's perspective". This unique approach is reflected in the museum's exhibitions, in the other service offers and in the close collaboration with the *Durchblick* e.V., an organization characterized by self-help initiatives and alternative projects of social psychiatry.

*Keywords:* history of psychiatry, social psychiatry, biographies, self-help, destigmatization.

## **X. Obituary**

**Bernd Holdorff**

Addendum to the obituary on Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Firnhaber (14/12/1930-12/09/2022).

## **XI. Book Reviews**

### **Reviewed by Thomas Müller**

Markus Rachbauer, Florian Schwanninger: Krieg und Psychiatrie. Lebensbedingungen und Sterblichkeit in österreichischen Heil- und Pflegeanstalten im Ersten und Zweiten Weltkrieg (engl.: War and psychiatry. Living conditions and mortality in Austrian sanatoriums and nursing homes during the First and Second World War) (=Historische Texte des Lern- und Gedenkorts Schloss Hartheim, Bd. 5). Innsbruck und Wien 2022.

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### **Reviewed by Christian Prüter-Schwarte**

Viktor von Weizsäcker: Am Anfang schuf Gott Himmel und Erde. Grundfragen der Naturphilosophie (engl.: In the Beginning God created heaven and earth. Basic quests of natural philosophy.). Herausgegeben von Rainer-M.E. Jacobi unter Mitwirkung von Wolfgang Riedel. Heidelberg 2022.

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### **Reviewed by Katharina Witner**

Burkhard Brückner: Kurze Geschichte der Psychiatrie (engl.: Brief history of psychiatry). Köln 2023.