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#### Abstract

The history of epidemics and health has been completely revised in France as a result of studies done by the *Annales* School and on the basis of the results of historical demographic research of the nineteen fifties and nineteen sixties. The discovery of peaks in mortality in long-term death rates and the construction of a model for the «mortality crisis of the *Ancien régime*» have led to the study of past epidemics and their relation with malnutrition. Effects related with the development of historical anthropology and the publications of Michel Foucault have also had an influence. This article notes the important place of the history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in efforts to understand the marked decrease in mortality in developed countries, the disappearance of large epidemics, and the increase in endemics. Methods developed by population historians have made it possible to refine the analyses of this decrease despite variations in nosology. In addition, this article suggests especially promising avenues for future research.

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### Abstract

Even though for most of medical anthropologists history of medicine is far from their professional interest, that is not the case in South European and in Latin American medical anthropology. There, history of medicine is a seminal point of academic discussion in the last two decades particularly among those anthropologists who work on the processes of health/disease/care linked to medicalization. Among others interesting consequences, common areas of interest develop. This article aims to explore a main obstacle to the full conquest of interdisciplinarity, namely the persistence of subaltern discourses and practices related to medical history and to social sciences among the medical professions, which at the same time becomes also an artifact that led social scientists to misunderstand the image of medical history in medical practice.

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### Abstract

Since the end of last century, due to the diffusion of certain —mostly contagious— diseases, the problem of communicating health issues to the public has emerged as crucial within the context of health care and prevention. The development of mass communication technologies, together with the transformation occurred in the sphere of health attitudes and behaviours, have made this problem even more urgent. The plurality of messages and communication agents present in the different media and more or less directly related to health has become so high as to discourage the adoption of simplified communication models —linear, unidirectional models— traditionally employed to understand such phenomenon.

## Diseases of the Pericardium in Avenzoar's *Kitāb al-Taysīr* (c. 1095-1162) (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

Avenzoar has been credited as the author of the first description of inflammation of the pericardium in medical historical literature. Our study shows that although Avenzoar authored a study of diseases of the pericardium with emphasis on pathologies, his epistemological framework was similar to that used by Galen and Avicenna, authors who constituted the source of knowledge for Islamic medicine. We show that the approach used by Avenzoar appears to derive from the absence of anatomical and physiological information, and from a detailed description of the indications and treatments, which distinguish his work from earlier writings.

The Golden Panacea. Alchemy and Distillation in the Court of Philip II (1527-1598) (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

This study analyzes the relationships between Philip II and the two main goals of Alchemy: obtaining or forging alchemical gold, and preparing chemical drugs, liquors and perfumes. The first part of the study shows that throughout his reign Philip II maintained contacts with alchemists of several nationalities (Flemish, German, Italian, English and Spanish) in the Low Countries and Spain who were determined to obtain gold and silver. Their activities were overseen by high-level bureaucrats. Despite the disapproval of the Church and intense repression by the Holy Office, the alchemists had no difficulties during his reign, although their situation changed markedly after his death. In relation with distillation, Philip II ordered stills to be installed in all his gardens in Madrid, Aranjuez and the Escorial. He hired a corps of Flemish distillers who worked at all three sites in the preparation of chemical drugs, liquors and perfumes for the royal household. Their activities, and records conserved at the library of the Escorial, bear witness to a new route for the introduction of Paracelsism in Spain. Philip II organized the distillers' activities and brought them under the oversight of his apothecaries and protophysicians. The distillers' activities were later regulated by the by-laws of the Royal Apothecary, inaugurated in 1594.

Physicians and Surgeons in Saragossa During the Modern Age. Number, Social and Family Structure (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

Documentation at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saragossa, scattered throughout many archives, made it possible to trace the evolution of the

number of physicians and surgeons in the city of Saragossa in the Modern Age with regard to the number of inhabitants of this city. Also studied are the possible causes of increases or decreases in their numbers, and the proportions of physicians and surgeons to inhabitants are compared with figures from other Spanish regions. By studying a 1723 census, the social and family structures of the different health professions in Saragossa are analyzed. Comparisons of these figures to the structures of other professions made it possible to determine the different social level of each structure. The social level of physicians was the same as that of apothecaries, whereas it was higher than that of surgeons and veterinarians and lower than that of legal professionals, notaries and jurists.

The Problem of Knowledge among Enlightened Landowners and Merchants in the Province of Caracas, Venezuela (1793-1810) (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

Part of the native elite of the province of Caracas, consisting of landowners and merchants, were slow to become aware of the importance of knowledge and technique for the development of the colony. Awareness came from the moment when they began to participate in the government of the recently unified *Tierra Firme* provinces (currently Venezuela), through the operation of the *Real Consulado de Caracas* (1789). Although the consulate had mercantile court functions, it was also responsible for stimulating the development of agriculture and trade in the provinces. The Consuls were concerned with the lack of scientific knowledge and technical personnel needed to improve and increase agricultural productivity, and also with the colony's trade infrastructure. This was a powerful reason for the Consulate to sponsor the project of a Mathematics Academy in Caracas. However, this led to a conflict with another sector of the native elite: academicians at the university. Although influenced by Enlightenment ideas, they did not understand the need to instruct young persons in mathematics as applied to the practical crafts.

Nature and Deliberate Health. Coping with Health in German Autobiographies from the 18th and 19th Centuries (*English*)

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Coping with illness is a topic well established in social psychology, and in other social sciences. In this essay I focus upon coping with health. I restrict myself to health as an individual activity. Starting with a differentiation between «natural» and «deliberate» health, which was made in the times of the Enlightenment, I look into alternative health accounts represented in German autobiographies.

Matter and Spirit: The Unconscious in Carl Gustav Carus's Psychology (1779-1868) (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

Carl Gustav Carus, one of the originators of a doctrine centered on the unconscious, is an interesting figure from current viewpoints. The doctrine he espoused was «psychological», but in addition, the author sought foundations for his thinking in the biological knowledge of his time. The «unconscious» that Carus postulated was simultaneously biological, material and psychological in nature. Thus the history of psychism —the «history of the soul»— was related with the individual's and the species's biological history. From this perspective the unconscious was recognized as an indispensable element of rational thought. This theory, which recalls in many aspects that of C.G. Jung, made possible the «medical» study of psychic life and the reevaluation of unconscious factors of psychism which were usually denigrated by modern anthropologists and moralists.

Scientific Agriculture in the Nineteenth Century Murcian Press as Seen by Local Authors (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

This article studies the writings on agriculture published by local authors in the cultural and scientific press in the Region of Murcia during the second half of the nineteenth century. All magazines of the period were reviewed, and the most important information from ten of them, published between 1865 and 1898, was extracted. The articles in these magazines defended three main ideas: the use of chemical fertilizers, the recourse to other sciences (such as meteorology and electricity) within agriculture, and the need to renovate and improve traditional agricultural industries (silk and esparto). But the measures proposed by local scientists did not have the desired impact on the landowning class.

The Neurological and Embryological Studies of Santiago Ramón y Cajal (*Spanish*)

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Abstract

The neurological and embryological work of Santiago Ramón y Cajal appeared in three stages: a) Between 1888 and 1893 observations on the development of neuron prolongations led to the observation of the growth cone and formulation of the neurotropic hypothesis. b) Between 1905 and 1908 the study of regenerative phenomena in nerves and nervous centers presented a large body of evidence consistent with the neurotropic hypothesis. c) Between 1910 and 1914 an experimental program was undertaken to test the neurotropic hypothesis; this program led to conclusions on the origin and chemical nature of the growth stimulating factor. These contributions initiated an important line of research that none of Ramón y Cajal's disciples could continue. In the nineteen fifties a group of researchers from three disciplines (biochemistry, embryology and neurohistology) discovered the existence of nerve growth factor (NGF), thus initiating a fertile new field of knowledge in cell biology.

Six Seconds Per Eyelid: The Medical Inspection of Immigrants at Ellis Island, 1892-1914 (*English*)

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Abstract

Beginning in 1892, immigrants to the United States were subject to a medical inspection, created to restrict the entry of persons with a «loathsome or dangerous contagious» disease or mental deficiency. Ellis Island, which received over 10 million newcomers between 1900 and 1914, served as the largest ever medical screening facility. Far from reflecting a unified policy, the medical inspection offered a complicated compromise amidst a swirl of competing interests. Many industrialists blamed the waves of Southern and Eastern European immigrants for urban joblessness, filth, unrest, overcrowding, and disease. In an era of depression, labor groups opposed immigrant competitors for scarce jobs. Nativists believed immigrants could not overcome their defects because these were genetically transmitted. Germ theory proponents recognized communication of microorganisms as the problem, with controlling the spread of infections as the solution. Many Progressive reformers held that the scientific screening of immigrants offered a systematic solution for the disorder. Dozens of immigrant aid societies struggled to attenuate the effects of the inspection, and as depression subsided after 1900, employers, too, favored the influx of immigrants. This paper examines the social and political basis for the inspection, its realization at Ellis Island, and the reasons for its inability to debar large numbers of immigrants.

Internationalism and Science. Social and Scientific Bases of the European Information Science Movement

GUILLERMO OLAGÜE DE ROS, ALFREDO MENÉNDEZ NAVARRO, ROSA M. MEDINA DOMENECH, MIKEL ASTRAIN GALLART .....

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Abstract

As part of a continuing line of research on scientific documentation we propose in this article a novel approach to the study of the European information science movement at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. We suggest that this movement took place within the context of increasing internationalism of scientific endeavours, a process which was paralleled by the standardization of units, weights and measures for the different sciences. We investigate problems arising from scientific communication in connection with other aspects apparently unrelated to Information Science. Specifically, we refer to conflicts between nationalism and colonialism; concordance and discord between science policy and the corporate interests of nonscientific associations; higher educational policy; the professionalization of sciences; and the economic interests at stake as a consequence of the use of different information models.

Venereal Disease, Public Health and Social Control. The Scottish Experience in an International Perspective (*English*)

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Abstract

During the first half of the twentieth century, VD became in many countries a metaphor for the forces of phisical and moral pollution that appeared to threaten social order and racial progress. By reference to some central aspects of the Scottish experience in a comparative perspective, this article seeks to identify the common denominator of anxieties and assumptions which fuelled public health initiatives towards VD and which defined the boundaries within which VD policy options were discussed.

In particular, it will explore various dimensions of social control associated with the treatment and regulation of VD; the degree to which VD controls and procedures have targetted and stigmatised «sexually active» women, their use to regulate the sexual behaviour of the young, and the way in which discourses shaping medical practice and policy towards VD have enshrined both class and racial stereotyping. The article also examines the powerful moral agenda which shaped the categories and content of treatment and the focus of epidemiology and public health debate. Finally, the institutional and cultural factors shaping the distinctively compulsionist stance of Scottish public health administration towards VD will be explored as a means of identifying some of the possible comparators needed for broader comparative analysis of VD policy in the twentieth century.

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### Abstract

This study is an attempt to investigate health care in the Virreinato de Nueva Granada (1739-1820). Although written reports and testimonies of persons who wielded power within the medical profession during this period, and of persons at the highest levels of political power, have already been studied, information is still lacking on the opinions and views of persons who did not occupy high posts, and of persons who were denigrated by the other members of the medical profession. Through an analysis of the four documents transcribed here, we show that a single problem gave rise to different lines of discourse that were influenced by their authors' interests and sympathy (or antagonism) toward the rest of the profession.

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