Call for Papers
International und Interdisciplinary Conference

The Concept of “Future” in Ancient Medicine

Symposium
on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the international and interdisciplinary Working Group
„Ancient Medicine“

Date: Friday and Saturday, 19-20 June 2020
Place: Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
Deadline: 31 January 2020
Organizer: Norbert W. Paul, Tanja Pommerening

Perspective of the future plays an essential role from early healing practice to the modern. It is precisely through the practice of prognosis that the future enters medicine as an epistemologically and practically uncertain dimension. Divinatory texts in the Near East, oracle texts in Greco-Roman Antiquity, prognoses in Egyptian medicine, Hippocratic treatises on prognosis, or the writings of Galen, offer a multitude of ways for explaining illness, healing and death that are oriented towards the future. Movements of demarcation, that separated medical prognosis from divination, are found for example in the Corpus Hippocraticum and in the writings of Galen. In all cases, it becomes clear that a supposedly safe practice of medicine and healing is initially based primarily on the past, on experience, empiricism, and evidence and places these in relation to the present within the context of the diagnosis. The exact recognition of what is the case and medical problem solving, acting and justifying are always dependent on the reinsurance of the past.

Deeply rooted in the healing and medicine of the present, is the practice in the past. Equally, it is directed towards the future; in the narrower sense towards future health and participation, up to and including global health. While empirical knowledge and diagnostics justify medical decisions and actions, prognosis and prevention dictate the goals for the future in the sense of preventing the worst.

It is in this historically, historic-epistemologically and medical-theoretically rich context that the 40th conference of the Ancient Medicine Interdisciplinary Working Group, which is jointly supported by the DFG Research Training Groups "Early Concepts of Humans and Nature: Universal, Specific, Interchanged" and "Life Sciences - Life Writing: Experiences at the Boundaries of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience", will take place. Which individual levels of action of practitioners and patients are oriented towards the future? What overarching ideas about the shaped future can be discerned from historical sources? What allusions can be found in texts from the Near East, Egypt, in Plato’s Politeia, in the Greek-Roman and Arabic works of medicine, or the relevant works of the Renaissance, such as Morus, Bacon, Campanella – or even concepts of the more recent and most recent history of medicine that refer to long lines of tradition? With such and other perspectives, temporality in medicine and healing arts is to be made the subject of interdisciplinary exchange.

Due to the anniversary, there will be a keynote lecture by Prof. Dr. Florian Steger (Ulm) on Friday evening. After a small reception there will be the opportunity for a joint dinner.
We expect proposals of papers in German and English limited to 20 minutes, as well as panels with a series of papers, lasting 90 minutes.

**Beside the specified theme, it is also possible to include other papers (limited to 20 minutes) from the domain of the pre-modern medicine.**

Please submit your proposals of papers or panels to Nadine Gräßler (graessle@uni-mainz.de) before **31 January 2020** including an abstract (c. 300 words), which clearly describes the questions and outcomes of your study.

You can find more information on our website: [https://ancient-medicine.uni-mainz.de/](https://ancient-medicine.uni-mainz.de/).