

Abstract:

Medical Networks. Ludwig Kleinwächter's (1839-1906) participation in the transnational scholarly network of gynaecology and obstetrics

Based on the case study of the contentious gynaecologist and obstetrician Ludwig Kleinwächter – whose career led him from Prague to Innsbruck and finally to the town of Chernovtsy in the eastern most part of the Habsburg monarchy – this research project analyses medical- and science historical questions as to the production, transmission and reception of medical knowledge in the field of gynaecology and obstetrics throughout the second half of the 19th century. For the interpretation of these processes, Ludwik Fleck's theory of *thought-styles* and *thought-collectives* serves as a productive background. The planned study wishes to analyse the multifaceted history of a scholarly life on three different levels and from different perspectives.

First of all, aiming at a reconstruction regarding the quantity and topical focus of Kleinwächter's oeuvre, the focus will, on the one hand, lie on the subject-specific orientation of his evidence-based and theoretical works. On the other hand, the chosen form of publication will be scrutinized, gaining insight on knowledge dissemination strategies. Then, moving to a more theoretical level, systematic citation analyses will provide the basis for the identification of the underlying thought styles and thought collectives within the discipline. On a praxeological level a reconstruction of the physician's approaches to medical research, through the qualitative analysis of the presented case studies, is targeted. The focus in the last section of this project will lie on the journals and publishing houses that accepted and issued Kleinwächter's works. Analyses as to the reception of his works within the scientific community complete the aim of scrutinising the concept of scholarly reputation in order to critically evaluate Kleinwächter's integration in the relevant medical societies.

Against this backdrop, Kleinwächter's scholarly products have to be seen as the essence of scholarly thinking and therefore form the starting point and the central body of sources. A structured bequest including the medical practice records, personal documents, correspondence or unpublished manuscripts does not exist. However, an extensive body of sources – autographic or related to Kleinwächter – has survived in the consulted archives on national and international level. In order to answer the previously posed research questions on the epistemological prerequisites and empirical approaches in the production, transmission and reception of gynaecological and obstetric knowledge, quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. Fleck's fundamental concept of epistemic thought-styles and thought-collectives will be grasped through a network approach as well as a more qualitatively oriented, discursive approach. Thus providing a "thick description" of the medical and science historical topic.