



Libro formato chiuso cm 17 x 24, vol. 1 pagine 210
Stampa in bianco nero in fronte retro su carta patinata gr. 100
Copertina a colori su carta patinata opaca plastificata gr. 300
Rilegatura a filo rete con brossura colla a caldo
Riccamente illustrato.
Prima Edizione February 2011.

HISTORY

Raimondo Villano - Elements on art and history of pharmacy.

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Presentations

The new book by our colleague Raymond Villano richly illustrated with a gorgeous collection of data and facts about the past of our profession from the earliest times until today. The work offers a presentation of ideas through the history of pharmacy and pharmaceutical literature but also of Italian and European laws, preparation of medicines, and materials used for their preparation by pharmacists. This vast fresco of the author is accompanied by a multitude of practical information on historical pharmacies, museums and structures in the history of pharmacy in the world and in Italy of interest to many enthusiasts of the history of pharmacy. But at the same time, Dr. Villano also effectively addresses the wide audience of pharmacists revealing to people a broad way that leads to cultural and historical knowledge of the pharmacy.

Prof. Dr. François Ledermann
President of the International Society
for the History of Pharmacy

It's not often the case in person, exercising a profession, I also feel the need to possess, in addition to the contents of which it consists and the logic that governs it, including the historical dimension. When this happens, it means that the expertise of the professional field have risen to intellectual needs broader and more articulated, in a word: culture have become such.

Such is the case of Raymond Villa, which gives us further evidence of his inexhaustible curiosity and his professional commitment with this work, the fruit together, of painstaking research and intellectual passion. Was well known for its reliability through careful research and diligent other proofs of his industry insight and time to examine with the broad realities of our time (I think especially towards the Global Information Society, 1996) and now that very seriously, rekindles passion and involvement in human search for ways that his profession has changed over the centuries by trial and experiments that have marked and characterized the performance of the same cultural history of mankind.

The history of pharmacy, in fact, heard and presented as the struggle that mankind has struggled against physical illness, committed, under the dramatic urgency of suffering, their faith is in divine and the resources of his genius, so that the adventurous tale of attempts successful or denied the experience is identical with man's journey into the dimension of time to the laborious conquest of civilization as slow but inexorable liberation from subjection to the hostile forces of nature and as a gradual but also unstoppable domination of nature. Hence the fascination of a search that will win over not only the interests of employees at work but also, perhaps above all, how many for the first time, as happened to me, facing a horizon stranger who turns out to pleasant surprise harmoniously complements that of the historical and literary studies. If we consider the rich documentation of the professional institutions, civil and political as well as the variety of objects produced by the advance pharmaceutical science historian, you will be more extensive and satisfactory use of fatigue Villano made by offering the vision of many evidence (books, drawings, museums, etc.)'s long journey man by the heroic solitude of the origins of modern comfort care valetudinarian.

So we are grateful to the Author of giving us the fruit of his labor can enrich our poor knowledge of the long and difficult man advanced on the path of civil progress with the discovery of an aspect of his achievements so far remained on the margins of common knowledge.

Prof. Antonio Carosella
Literary critic

Preface

Faced with the disintegration of complex societies, as expressed by Salvatore Settis, can be questioned with more acute our present knowledge allows us to open up its sense of the classic elements of story, which never cease to say what they have to say that persists as background noise even when the current rule as incompatible (Calvin) and, having overcome its own ruin and could show his greatness mutilated more attractive to their full integrity, they are both time and memory capacity project. The inferred fragmenta it pereant (John, ch. IV), reconstruction of fragments of the past, long and difficult, which sometimes are not enough tracks, one hand can enhance the awareness of having inherited a well-deserved privilege by our fathers and 'On the other hand, gathering the threads of this same noble heritage, can project into the future today, due to a rapid development of the profession rather than a succession of this is, in fact, almost a present. According Cantoni¹, mainly because Italians often historians tell the story almost entirely of political life, the common awareness of the past, the memory of it comes out deformed, and therefore attention to this. But when this is characterized by a weak policy, the question arises of a reconstruction of this historical time that is not limited solely to a sequence of political action, moreover, at least with recent evidence, not ideologically motivated.

And this, the length of time between the twentieth century, the "short century" according to Eric J. Hobsbawm, begun in 1914 and already completed in 1989², and the early years of Century XXI, which was not chronologically started when he was already under way, is characterized by a common weakness for totalitarian hypertrophy after decompression or compression by other areas of life.

That grows in humus, therefore, interest in the life "politics" as politically-conditioning that is the ebb, whether voluntary or promoted, is accompanied by the application of different quality within that unfolds between curiositas and studiositas on everything is not politics and history, or on its characters and permanent changes in its course.

If this question remains unanswered and is disappointed by the official authorities, which are most universities, there is legitimate room for corporate initiatives, ie initiatives of those who are curious and scholars of the past of his own business, while satisfying the public interest .

While acceptable reflection of the importance of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe completion of their professional knowledge by the knowledge of its intrinsic history, when considered certainty gained proficuamente can undoubtedly lead to herald in a remote future, the enormous potential for training on their academic disciplines and professional historian can deploy in implementation projects of even broader than, though valuable, of modern times.

In the development of the History of Pharmacy as a scientific discipline are central to the definition of its object of study, its implications on many issues, the demarcation of borders and relations with neighboring or related disciplines. To correctly identify the object of this discipline, therefore, must take into account that the term "Pharmacy" is used to identify both a technical and scientific profession that area: it meets a definition in the various preparatory activities, storage and dispensing of medicines and technical-scientific as the result of an intersection of various disciplines such as Biology, Chemistry, Medicine, having as the relationship between drugs and living organisms.

In this view, whatever point of view, the core of its meaning is the medicine.

It would be a stretch, therefore, conclude that the subject of History of Pharmacy is the profession and the pharmaceutical medicine. It is not, therefore, to study a medicine as such, nor to study a drug in the abstract but to study a number of different relationships between people and civilizations. Paraphrasing M. Bloch, therefore, the History of Pharmacy is the discipline that studies the relationship between man and medicine. It is this relationship that defines its subject, while its rich domain that shows in all its breadth the importance of this discipline in training future professionals in medicine. In this conceptual framework, the pharmaceutical profession continues to be important as in the past.

The areas of the discipline of History of Pharmacy as defined above, namely the transformation of theories and concepts in relation to medicines and the transformation that occurred in relation profession-drug-companies, are indeed traditionally the two dominant forms of supervision of History Pharmacy: a History of Science and the other linked to the Economic-Social History.

Currently, the main address of pharmaceutical history is the synthesis between these two perspectives that consider the technical specifications of work but are integrated to enable a comprehensive understanding of medicine in human history. The next component integration in the history of science rather than the part next to the Economic-Social History, in each case using methods and techniques identiche³ is a problem of relatively recent approach and is largely be the result of the impact of the change it can be seen growing interest and appreciation for Clinical Pharmacy.

The attempt here is to be doing, in conclusion, is to stimulate curiosity about the depth of the issues mentioned and Food is responsible for keeping alive the past from which we come at the same time as our father and our son, we can not Moreover, escape from history, or accept that history is made of silence to no end, then, we silence⁴ below. Engage, even in the relentless race to the future, research applied to the recovery of historical knowledge of the essence and reason of their profession, carefully assessing achievements and mistakes, is - to paraphrase Kaplan consciousness is absolutely necessary because we realize the recognition, of finding oneself, of being.

History, in fact, as a "category" of thought, is an inexhaustible source of reflection and critical education exercise, attention and power that is pushing forward is a sense of life, life as one of the pharmacist, but perhaps often misunderstood rich with meaning, full of varied and multiple large part of the great cultural history, civil, economic, political and social of all time.

Raimondo Villano