

HANS SCHADEWALDT AND THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

*M. Thiery**

Hans Schadewaldt is born in Kottbus in Germany in 1923. He went to the gymnasium in Misdroy/Ostsee, studied simultaneously medicine and history at the Universities of Tübingen, Würzburg and Königsberg. During the war, Drs. Schadewaldt served as medical assistant in the German Navy. After his return from war imprisonment he ended his medical studies in Tübingen and specialized in pediatrics.

Schadewaldt's interest in the history of gynecology and obstetrics - which appeals to me personally - dates back to 1949, as illustrated by the subject of his doctor's dissertation: "Gynäkologie und Geburtshilfe in Morgagni's *De sedibus et causis morborum*". In the 1950's he was editor of the prestigious *Ciba Journal*, the complete collection of which - now rare and expensive - is a standard work and which was read with enthusiasm by physicians of my generation.

In 1961 he acquired the Ph.D. degree in the History of Medicine at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau with a thesis in the field of pediatrics and the history of medicine: "Die Lehre von der Allergie und den allergischen Krankheiten in ihrer historischen Entwicklung". Two years later he received a call from the Medical Academy - now Medical Faculty - of the University of Düsseldorf for the Chair of the History of Medicine and the Directorship of the new Institute for the History of Medicine, which was to become his headquarter, although he also taught at other universities. That he was held in high esteem in Düsseldorf is shown by the fact that he was

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dean of the Medical Faculty from 1976 to 1979.

Among the many awards he was honored with, I might mention that he is a fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, Academic and member of nearly all medical-historical societies, inclusive the Societas Belgica Historiae Medicinae. As President of the Société Internationale de l'Histoire de la Médecine he organized last year in Düsseldorf the 30th Congress of that Society.

Prof. Schadewaldt writes fluently and abundantly : apart from several books, he signed 518 scientific publications, the majority of which is devoted to the history of pediatrics, allergology, naval medicine and tropical medicine.

One of his hobbies is the relation between medicine and art, which explains his interest for the Death Dance, a subject on which he is one of the world top experts. Death has always moved mankind. In old and early Christian times, however, it was approached differently than in late Christian culture, in particular the plastic representation of Death missed the intense drama it was loaded with by the great plague epidemics. The hecatomb provoked by the "Black Death", the mystery of the massive mortality and the helplessness of the physicians were a dramatic experience, the representation of which culminated in the Death Dance. This Danse Macabre is a medical-historical symbol which did not disappear with plague itself, as will be shown by Prof. Schadewaldt's unique collection of documents, which span several centuries, from Albrecht Dürer to Salvador Dali.

Lieber Herr Schadewaldt ! Der Ausschuss der Stiftung Sarton, die Medizinische Fakultät und die Gentner Universität sind stolz, Sie hier heute begrüßen zu können.

Als geriebener medizinischer Historiker ist der Hintergrund dieser Feierlichkeit Ihnen hinlänglich bekannt. Die Stiftung George Sarton, nach und zu Ehren des illustren Gentner und ehemaligen Schüler unserer Alma Mater genannt, hat Sie auf Antrag der Medizinischen Fakultät als Kandidaten behalten für die Sarton-Medaille 1986-1987. Diese Medaille und das

dazu gehörendes Diplom werden Ihnen am Ende dieser akademischen Sitzung von Prof. L. De Meyer, Rektor der Universität, überreicht.

Die Wahl unserer Fakultät ist keine Zufällige. Sie war der Meinung, auf diese Weise Zeugnis ablegen zu können ihrer grossen Verehrung für den Kollegen Mediziner und Historiker, der durch seine unermüdliche Arbeit dem Institut für die Geschichte der Medizin der Universität Düsseldorf Weltruf gegeben hat.

Gleichzeitig hat Sie Ihren bedeutenden wissenschaftlichen Beitrag zur Geschichte der Medizin ehren wollen. Sie will mit dieser Medaille Ihre kulturelle Vermittlung beleuchten, nicht im geringsten wie Sie auf einmalige Weise den historischen Zusammenhang bewiesen haben zwischen Kunst und Medizin.