

Editorial



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“Let a man be born at his own due time”

R. Klimek

In the January issue of *The Journal of The Royal Society of Medicine*, Timothy Chambers and Catherine Chambers (Departments of Paediatrics and Medicine, Southmead Hospital, Bristol BS 10 5NB, UK) reviewed the Book by C. Knight Aldrich: *The Medical Interview: Gateway to The Doctor-Patient Relationship* (second edition), Carnforth, Lancs: Parthenon Publishing, 1999 [1]. The review was excellently written and without doubt the book should belong in every doctor’s library.

In this editorial I would like to put emphasis to the five C-imperatives, underlined in the review: Communication, Competence, Continuity, Compassion and Circumspection, as a foundation for a professional relationship and dialogue between doctor and patient and for a successful clinical practice.

Those 5 C’s have been emphasized in one or another way in almost all issues of the Vol. 20 and 21 of the *Neuroendocrinology Letters*. The vital importance of the primary dialogue between the pregnant mother and her child (and vice versa) as the first human communication was stressed several times both in my editorials, as well as in some of the papers. And, also the imperative impact of the Continuity in human life (as well as of different cultures in the history of mankind) on the mental, physical and social life of the individual as well of the society at large has been underlined.

Competence should be acknowledged already for the capacities of the unborn child, which is intimately connected, to Compassion.

One of the early competences of the unborn child is its capacity to “co-create” (on different hormonal, neuroendocrinological, immunological and even already “psychological” pathways) the course and the destiny of her/his own pregnancy in her/his communication/dialogue with the mother. This also applies to the length of the pregnancy and the date of the delivery. Duration of pregnancy is discussed in this issue by Prof. Rudolf Klimek (from Rudi Klimek’s Desk). Variation in the length of human pregnancy is an old wisdom, mostly neglected or forgotten. In another publication [2] Klimek quotes Aristotle “All creatures have their determined time for giving birth and carrying fetus, only a man is born all year long, not in determined time, one in the seventh month, the other in the eighth, and so

on till the beginning of the eleventh month”.

The above thoughts are intimately connected to the phenomena in a broader human and philosophical context, with impact on politics at large, and health and educational policies in particular. These include broad issues of humanity, tolerance, loyalties, culture and civilization of every day's life, education, preparation for parenting, criminality, violence and in their consequences as the ultimate instance: the indivisible and innegotiable respect for life and for every living being, which should be implicated from the earliest stages of life.

If we assume, that the life of an individual starts at the very latest in the home of her/his grandparents, who convey (or do not) the basic values of the ethical and moral codexes to their children, the potential parents of the next generation, as their legacy, the pregnancy and even before, the preconceptional circumstances and influences will attain a much broader philosophical and human meaning and significance.

The quality of postnatal life, the conditions of the mental, physical and social life of the individual and even society will be essentially influenced by the prenatal conditions and by the individual history.

Winston Churchill said “the more we can look into the past, the more we can see in the future”. Knowing the history of an individual, a society, a culture, in their continuity will give us the capacity to predict possible future developments both in health and in disease.

The faculties, such as intuition, autonomy, integrity, decency, ethics and morality, compassion, competence, circumspection and abilities to communicate (all *conditio sine qua non* for a good physician, scientist and researcher) are or are not given to an individual in her/his historical context.

The message from the above thoughts are not a subject for pedagogy or jurisdiction. It must be a part of the common sense developed from the earliest stages of every individual's life.

Adam Morton [3] in his book review of Alain Finkielkraut's book “*In The Name of Humanity*”, *Reflections on the Twentieth Century*, concludes with a single message: “What Alain Finkielkraut says is not ‘believe this’ but ‘pay attention to these’. The things he wants us to pay attention to concern getting the balance right between individual and humanity.”

Peter G. Fedor-Freybergh
Editor-in-Chief

REFERENCES

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- 2 Rudolf Klimek, editor. Prenatal and Perinatal Psycho-Medicine. Cracow: DWN DReAM; 1992.
- 3 Adam Morton. Book review: Alain Finkielkraut. In the name of humanity. Reflections on the twentieth century. Columbia University Press; distributed in the UK by Wiley. In: The Times Literary Supplement (TLS). London: January 19, 2001. p.30.