

# HEALTH MANAGEMENT. A MEDICAL GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

At the conclusion of the eleventh meeting, held in "Sala delle Adunanze" in Palazzo Manzoni, home of the Department of Humanities – Languages, Literature and Civilization ancient

and modern at the University of Perugia in December 2014, I think it is necessary and useful to give some interesting results to the national and international scientific community.



INTERNATIONAL  
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UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PERUGIA

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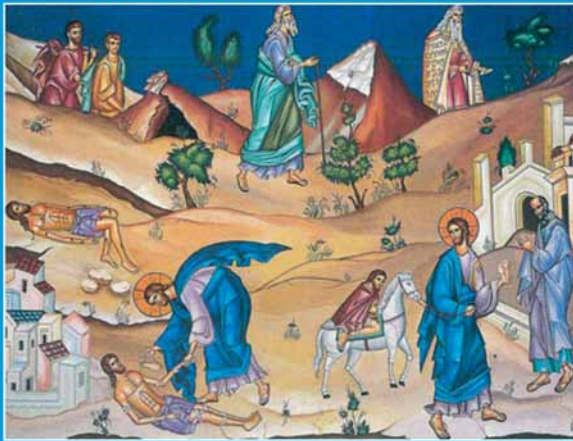


A.G.I.

## XI SEMINARIO INTERNAZIONALE DI GEOGRAFIA MEDICA

# Gestione della Salute

Perugia, 18-20 Dicembre 2014



Assisi, Monastero di San Giovanni il Precursore, affresco della parabola del buon samaritano

**Giovedì 18 Dicembre 2014 - ore 15.30**

Seduta inaugurale  
Sala delle Adunanze di Palazzo Manzoni  
Dipartimento di Lettere  
Lingue Letterature e Civiltà Antiche e Moderne  
Piazza Morlacchi, 11 - Perugia

First of all I would like to make some general reflections on medical geography seminars taking place now for over 30 years and whose acts are regularly published.

I would like to point out, with some pride, that we had come so far from when in Rome, in the wonderful setting of Villa Mirafiori, where Gabriella Arena and Cosimo Palagiano, thanks to their intuition, started, with diligence and determination this path: none knew that we could get for now, until 2014. During this last seminar, I noticed with pleasure the presence of friends, old and new, that I would like to thank: the first to have been close throughout this period, the other for having accepted our invitation with enthusiasm, enriching this workgroup. In the context of clearly defined and equal relationship between man and the environment, which for Medical Geography can be expanded to include relationships that are established between society, territory and the disease, find full realization that it can be compared to the State of human health.<sup>1</sup>

That reality includes many implications that affect, inevitably, on the social level, population, settlement, economic, political, ethical, ... whole populations, with important and inevitable effects on the entire range of human activity. As a result, the relationship between health and medical facilities is strong, at first for their presence and accessibility in the context of territorial reference, and after for the many consequences that can generate not only on the general framework of help to those who need it the most but also for the opportunity to put in place preventive

<sup>1</sup> The problems associated with the disease and its treatment, which at first glance might seem closely related to specific fields of disciplines such as medicine, epidemiology, hygiene, ... also greatly affect the work of the geographer especially because they are increasingly close reports that tend to establishment and intertwining between medicine and geography, as they fall into that sphere which highlights the relationship between man and environment. Geography, understood primarily as a science of synthesis, looking, in fact, to identify the relationships that interact between man and the environment. Therefore man should be seen in the complex of multiple interventions that creates the environment and the specific events that are to affect the socio-economic life of the same individual, but also of entire communities; in this context it cannot be ignored by a particular state of man, what the disease, because of the huge inter-generating against the company and, consequently, fall in the same territory.

measures designed to protect and safeguard the health of entire communities.

In fact, not just the weak and marginalized to need the help and the support of others, and among them, are there those whose health is in danger or has already been lost, most in need of care and assistance? That's why this issue is fully relevant with the peculiarities inherent in the concept of health.<sup>2</sup>

In a very simple ecosystem it is easier to find cause-effect than complex systems with radical transformation of an increasingly artificial plus the changed conditions of life and relationship between human groups. However, it should also be pointed out that in such systems, the company – this is the cohort targeted by the Medical Geography which is not so interested in the “health” of the individual, as that of the entire human group that lives in that territory – has provided to achieve strong changes in environments favorable to the development of infections, not separated from the fundamental development of medicine, with drugs and techniques more and more advanced, it aims to control the disease, even those which lack the triggers, so to note that today, in the more developed countries, people live better and longer lives but more with the disease, unlike the situation that exists in those developing countries where the whole society undergoes strong and mortality rates indigence.

This can be appropriately synthesized with the phenomenon that Palagiano simply called “health artificial” and that has its points in the best conditions of life determined not only by an improved relationship of human

<sup>2</sup> Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social, not just a mere absence of disease or infirmity. The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, and political belief, economic or social condition. The health of all peoples is fundamental to the achievement of peace and security and is dependent on the broader cooperation of individuals and States. The commitment of every State in the promotion and protection of health is useful for the world. The unequal development among countries in the promotion of health and control of communicable diseases is a danger to everyone.

groups with the environment – especially in countries with Advanced Development –, the introduction of external factors such as medications, diets, healthier life, sports practices, reduction of smoking cigarettes or drugs, sports and/or in the open air..., which add health and surgical interventions offered by health facilities.

Sure, there would never be the aim of the giving assistance and help those who are fine and have a good quality of life. If, then, of those suffering from disease or malnutrition or other diseases or in serious financial difficulties, often due to serious conditions, the help that is given without receiving something in return is required to be crucial for better quality of life.

Closely connected with what has been said is the theme proposed and developed during the work of the Eleventh International Seminar, about health management, at which interventions have focused mainly on how health is managed in health care systems

in the world, both for the enormous impact that creates the person and, consequently, the whole society, and for the possibility of access to all facilities of care and protection even and especially against those who are in trouble and needs help.

The work was divided into three main sessions:

FIRST SESSION – General aspects (related to health, human, law, economics, social, territory...) linked to health management as a way to promote and improve the quality of life.

The first session intended to focus in a general way about how the health protection depends almost completely on the management of health services and about their accessibility. Particularly it focused on the effects on society in a way to create an improvement of health conditions and wellness of the subjects that are studied, both the ones that are objects of solidarity as the ones that make this behavior leave.





SECOND SESSION – Health management in different health systems.

The session intended to know more about the role and the differences that work in several systems in each country determined on health protection and on the uses of services, not forgetting That in a lot of cases we are facing a real and proper industry that takes advantage of pain of people, with consequent economical management of the funds and political development on a big scale.

THIRD SESSION – The practical applications and the impact on the community determined by the type of service operating at the local level in relation to the combination of public/private.

This session examined, however, the practical effects that different types of health management can have on society both in health, both at the local level, since the presence of shelters often leads to urbanization and territorial transformations.

Common background, which allows tracking of a unit within the various contributions, has been the intent to focus on the relationship between health management and the types of health services in the context of a world in full globalization and in which the differences of health care in place in highly developed countries and those in the developing world are increasingly tending to increase, partly because of the serious economic and financial crisis that for several years affects the entire Earth system.

The review made according to the global, found a full accomplishment in the many references to local situations in rich countries, which is a trend to a progressive differentiation in health management that goes hand in hand with the growth of the gap between the lower classes and the economically better-off.

The comparisons resulted in the vastness of these issues was possible thank to the convinced participation of many colleagues, Italian and foreigners, old and new scholars in





the discipline of Medical Geography: what came out from the reports presented and discussions, has found its rightful place in the volume of Acts<sup>3</sup> that collects, in over 550 pages of text, as many as 41 papers published in the language of presentation and equitably distributed in sections which the jobs were divided.

At a methodological level, characteristics of the Acts are mainly good internationalization of the topics and the constant interdisciplinary<sup>4</sup>: next to the contribution of foreign scholars and Italian colleagues have shown that while the Italian situation and that of other countries, should be recorded, like the presence of not only geographers, but also doctors,

epidemiologists, historians, archaeologists, economists, sociologists, philosophers, psychologists who have permission to enlarge the field of investigation and the possibility of enhanced interaction with the methodologies of other disciplines. Both features are appreciated thanks to the interesting discussions that followed the different reports, whose faithful and accurate transcription opens the volume.

Very satisfying and very important – this is an element that has always characterized the seminars – was also see the significant presence of so many young people, with results extremely flattering, are catching up, some for the first time, the issues of medical geography, finding in it a fertile ground for discussion.

The volume is a worthy conclusion Appendix represented Catalogue decades of reports presented in previous seminars, in 1982 to 2012, which lists the titles of more than 600 papers discussed at meetings and published in the Proceedings. It is an important reference tool that can offer multiple interpretations, helping to put once again to light the remarkable and consistent interdisciplinary approach that has always characterized this discipline.

<sup>3</sup> Giovanni De Santis (a cura di), *Gestione della Salute*, "Atti dell'Undicesimo Seminario Internazionale di Geografia Medica (Perugia, 18–20 dicembre 2014)", Perugia, Edizioni Guerra, 2015, pp. 552, ISBN 978-88-557-0553-0.

<sup>4</sup> It is worth citing, as an example, the contention in key pedagogical and philosophical, Chiara De Santis (pp. 133–146): "The discussion about what actually can be referred to as 'health', it is more open than ever and current, especially since the given the profound change recorded by the epidemiological picture in recent years, with the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases and the need to revise the concept of health, in terms of dynamic balance between the individual and the environment. Critical reflection of this debate is extremely relevant to an assessment of health management in all its complexity. In particular, it is noted as the contribution of the human sciences, and pedagogical reflection in particular, from the account of the act of education as a process of increasing participation of the population and of the individual to protect his health."