Robert Koch: A life for research

In the 19th century, diseases like tuberculosis, diphtheria, wound infections and cholera were the most common cause of death worldwide. In Germany, alone, hundreds of thousands of people died every year. This was the time when, as a young doctor in 1876, Robert Koch was determined to find out what ailed people so much and to develop effective ways to fight them directly.

Robert Koch and his colleagues in Berlin managed to identify numerous pathogens and infection pathways and thus pave the way for therapies and preventive measures. Together with Louis Pasteur, Robert Koch is now thought of as the pioneer of microbiology.

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Today, the building housing amongst other things, the Institute of Sexology and Sexual Medicine that is part of Berlin's Charité, is known since 1932 as Robert Koch's workplace, the Robert-Koch-Platz.

In 1882, he identified the tuberculosis pathogen for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1905. All this was thanks to new scientific methods, such as systematic animal experiments, the cultivation of bacteria on solid culture media, microphotography and staining techniques, which made it possible not only to trace the pathogens but also to visualize them. Scientists from all over the world travelled to Berlin to learn about "Koch's method." In 1882, Koch was made a professor not only at the Royal Prussian Institute for Infectious Diseases in Berlin, but also at Göttingen University.

In April 1885, Koch laid the foundation stone of the new Hygiene Institute in Berlin at Chausseestraße 118, which was named after him.

From 1901 to 1904, Robert and Hedwig Koch resided at Kurfürstendamm 52, which is known since 1932 as Robert-Koch-Platz. On 27 May 1916, a monument was unveiled to Robert Koch at Robert-Koch-Platz, which is still the headquarters of the Robert Koch Institute.

In the early 1990s, Robert Koch investigated the foot and mouth disease virus and co-founded the Institute of Virology. Isolated the foot and mouth disease virus in 1910 and named after him.

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In 1900, the Royal Prussian Institute for Infectious Diseases renamed itself the Robert Koch Institute that belongs to the Berlin universities.

In 1901, Robert and Hedwig Koch moved to a flat roof of the house, playing the zither or (…) lying in the sun between grass and flowers on the flat roof of the house, playing the zither or (…)

In 1906, Robert Koch’s workplace, the Robert-Koch-Platz, was named after him.

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