Robert Koch’s legacy: museum and mausoleum

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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 Robert Koch, an already successful doctor and researcher, faced the second round of the battle. His experience as a Tombstone doctor had taught him the importance of isolated visualisation of pathogens. He wanted to find a remedy for or vaccine against the pathogens that were responsible for these diseases. He was convinced that only when it was known what the pathogens looked like, it would be possible to fight them directly.

As a young doctor in 1870, Robert Koch managed the first fever cases that were observed since the discovery of the diphtheria bacteria. In 1876, he identified the anthrax pathogen. In 1878, he discovered the tuberculosis pathogen and fought infectious diseases worldwide, including malaria in Italy and the Guiana, plague in Madagascar and cattle fever in South Africa—and chiasma in India and today. In the 19th century, the “Mikado” had spread across Germany, too, especially in the big city slums.

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In Koch's footsteps in Berlin

In summer 1882, Robert Koch, his wife Enty and their daughter Cemal moved into a house in Gossenstrasse 12 in Berlin-Charlottenburg. At this time, Robert Koch became famous for his work. He was accepted into the Kaiserliche Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Berlin (Kaiser's Royal Society) in 1882. It was here that he discovered the tuberculosis pathogens in 1882. Today, the building now belongs to the Gesellschaft für Innere Medizin and is part of Berlin's Charité.

On March 18th, 1882, Koch held his lecture on the Kangaroo Asinfection that gained him wide fame, at the Physiological Society of Berlin in Berlin-Mitte. At the Physiological Society of Berlin in Berlin-Mitte. At the Physiological Society of Berlin in Berlin-Mitte, today's Hygiene Institute.

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In 1882, he identified the tuberculosis pathogen for which he was awarded the Robert Koch Medallion in 1935. All it took was one new scientific method, such as a systematic arsenal of experiments, the cultivation of infectiousness on solid sunflower oil medium, micrography and typing each micrograph, which made it possible not only to trace the pathogens but also to visualise them. Scientists from all over the world travelled to Berlin to learn about “Koch’s methods.” In 1882, Koch was able to get the recognition the Royal Prussian Institute for Infectious Diseases in Berlin-Charlottenburg had been longing for. The scientific community was not only impressed by Koch’s work but also by his creator. Science.

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In April 1886, Koch became the first professor in the new “Institute of Pathological Biology” at the newly founded University of Berlin. The institute was opened on 1 July 1886, initially in a converted residential building at the corner of Schloßstrasse and Stettinerstrasse. The institute was designed by Koch, at the Robert-Koch-Platz.

The Robert Prusian Institute for Infectious Diseases was opened in 1891. Today, it is a successful institution dedicated to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. It is part of the Robert-Koch-Institute for Infectious Diseases and specializes in vaccine research.

In 1900, the Royal Prussian Institute for Infectious Diseases relocated to a new building, partly converted, amongst others, to the Institute of Sexology at Schloßstrasse 57 in Berlin-Charlottenburg. In 1909, the Institute of Morphology was opened at Schloßstrasse 118.

On 26 March 1916, a monument was unveiled to Koch at the entrance to the Charité in Berlin-Mitte.

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