

Pharmacobotanical Literature – Transmission of Phytotherapeutic Knowledge from Past to Present

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For centuries plants were the most important remedies to treat any kind of sickness. Since the late 18th century and especially after the discovery of morphine by Friedrich Wilhelm Sertürner single plant constituents together with the derivatives that could be prepared from them and finally synthetic substances determined the medical therapy. Even though the interest in plants as remedies or sources of active agents declined since then, they have never fallen into oblivion and recently patients as well as scientists have drawn their attention to phytotherapeutics again. The historical pharmacobotanical literature of the past – from the celebrated *Materia medica* by Dioscorides, the famous pharmacobotanical works of the Chinese, Indians, Arabs, the medieval Europeans to the herbals of the early modern time, the works on exotica and about foreign medicinal plants of many different geographical regions and finally to the works of pharmacognosy, pharmaceutical biology and ethnopharmacy – contains the immense knowledge about the medicinal virtues of generations of people from many cultures of different regions around the globe and offers the chance to explore traditional medicinal plants by research in the history of pharmacy for present therapies.

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