

Summary of a doctor thesis titled in English:

The significance of *Artemisia vulgaris* L. (common mugwort) in the history of pharmacy and in the current therapy.

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The era of current scientific development has overshadowed more than 2000-year-old knowledge about medicinal plants collected (and documented) according to the principles of holistic medicine. However, the current state of medical knowledge in the Western world, which has been collected and documented for 150 years according to the principles of Evidence Based Medicine (EBM), indicates that we can find information in holistic sources that are up-to-date and useful. This dissertation describes/presents the significance of a medicinal plant from the family *Asteraceae* – *Artemisia vulgaris* L. (common Mugwort) in the history of pharmacy and in the current therapy

In this dissertation, both medical indications for medicinal raw materials as well as various forms of application of medicaments from this species have been presented in chronological order of their documentation throughout history (from antiquity to modern times).

Due to its prevalence on the European continent, the plant was widely available and its healing effect in gynecological and perinatal ailments had been already described in the first medical books of our civilization.

Together with development of the ancient medical art and the philosophy of healing - over the harmony of opposites ("eucrazy") and the theory of four elements (water, soil, air, fire), through the science of body fluids ("humores") and the scheme of primary qualities (hot-cold, wet-dry), up to the systematic humoral pathology of Hippocrates in antiquity - *Artemisia vulgaris* obtained further therapeutic indications such as cold-induced abdominal pain.

After the twilight of ancient world, the Middle Ages had also recognized the health benefits of mugwort and continued to use it for the treatment of women's complaints and gastric ailments.

The discovery of printing had preserved the place of *Artemisia vulgaris* in the herbal books.

The core of this dissertation is the analysis of German-written leading (and sometimes groundbreaking) sources in the field of herbal medicine. Two epochs – Renaissance and Modern – are presented in a comparative analysis using appropriate Polish sources.

During the period when holistic medicine was flourishing in Europe - from the 15th to the 18th century, the basic indications for treatment with mugwort were, apart from female ailments, health problems due to cold and humidity, which mainly affected two functional circuits: spleen and liver (*orbis lienalis/orbis hepaticus*). These and other holistic concepts began to disappear during the Enlightenment, being consistently replaced by the materialistic vocabulary of emerging, evidence-based medicine (EBM).

Unfortunately, together with loss of the “dictionary of holistic medicine”, a very important aspect of the treatment with mugwort had also disappeared, which in the end (dated by the German Kommission E statement from 1988) led to the fact that - according to EBM standards - the therapeutic values of this plant had been denied.

It was only with the award of the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 2015 for the research of the annual Mugwort (*Artemisia annua* L.) that scientific interest in other species of the genus *Artemisia* L., including *Artemisia vulgaris* L. had risen again. As a result, professional research on the chemistry and biological activity of extracts and essential oils obtained from the herb and roots of mugwort was started. They showed a whole range of therapeutic effects resulting from its antibacterial, antioxidant, hepatoprotective, spasmolytic and other activities. Studies have also drawn attention to the possible cosmetic benefits of this species.

Therefore, in order to complete the therapeutic portrait of common mugwort, the world of science is now looking forward to seeing the results of research which could prove the validity of the oldest therapeutic indications (i. e. gynecological – obstetric and gastroenterological disorders) coded with the ICD diagnoses (International Classification of Diseases and Medical Procedures) and carried out within RCT standards (randomized controlled trials).

To better appreciate the therapeutic benefits of *Artemisia vulgaris* L., today we have an additional opportunity to tap into the resources of today’s holistic medical system, namely

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). With the knowledge of TCM we can rediscover and fully exploit the forgotten healing potential of *Artemisia vulgaris* L.

In order to make it easier for the reader to understand the philosophy of healing in Traditional Chinese Medicine, the dissertation presents some terms and topics in this field.

This dissertation is accompanied by two tables presenting therapeutic indications as well as forms and methods of application of *Artemisia vulgaris* preparations from antiquity to the twenty-first century. The tables are an integral part of the work.