

# Historical Sanatoriums in West Pomeranian Voivodeship – 100 years ago. Part 1 – Sanatoriums for Tuberculosis, Scrofula and Rickets

## Historyczne sanatoria w województwie zachodniopomorskim 100 lat temu. Część I: Sanatoria dla chorych na gruźlicę, skrofulozę i krzywicę

Andreas Jüttemann<sup>1</sup>, Natalia Strugała<sup>2</sup>

Charité Universitätsmedizin, Berlin

**Streszczenie.** Na początku XX wieku obywatele europejscy, zwłaszcza ci z klasy robotniczej, cierpieli choroby spowodowane niedoborami substancji odżywczych. Oprócz gruźlicy, która szerzyła się w biednych dzielnicach miast, rozpowszechniły się także skrofuloza (tak zwana gruźlica węzłów chłonnych) i krzywica. W celach profilaktycznych lub rehabilitacyjnych wzdłuż wybrzeża Bałtyku na Pomorzu Zachodnim budowano domy dla osłabionych i niedożywionych mieszkańców. Dlatego też sanatoria te nazywano w języku niemieckim "Seehospiz" lub "Heilstätte". Poniżej przedstawiamy najważniejsze obiekty, które istniały około 100-125 lat temu na terenie obecnego województwa zachodniopomorskiego.

**Abstract.** In the early 1900s, European citizens, especially from the working class, suffered from diseases caused by nutrient deficiencies. In addition to tuberculosis, which was spreading in poor city quarters, so called skrofula (a lymphadenitis of the cervical lymph nodes associated with tuberculosis) and rickets were also spread. Houses for weakened and malnourished residents were built on the Baltic coast for preventive or rehabilitation purposes. That is why these spas were called "Seehospiz" or "Heilstätte" in German. The article presents the most important objects that existed about 100-125 years ago in the territory of the present West Pomeranian Voivodeship.

**Słowa kluczowe:** sanatorium, gruźlica, skrofuloza, krzywica, Rewal, Kołobrzeg, Koszalin

**Keywords:** sanatorium, tuberculosis, skrofula, rickets, Rewal, Kołobrzeg, Koszalin

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence address: Dr. rer. med. Andreas Jüttemann, M.Sc., Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Institut für Geschichte der Medizin, Thielallee 71, 14195 Berlin-Dahlem, e-mail: andreas.juettemann@charite.de

cand. med. Natalia Strugała, e-mail: natalia.strugala@charite.de

<sup>2</sup> Cand. med. Natalia Strugała, e-mail: natalia.strugala@charite.de

## Rewal

The proposal for the building plot was developed by the lawyer Fleischmann (grown up in Gryfino, niem. *Greiffenberg*, died 1909). He approached the pastor of the Christuskirche Parish at Berlin, Dr. Reiche, as a parishioner. Fleischmann knew Rewal (niem. *Rewahl*) from his childhood and also owned properties in the village. He offered the pastor, who was also the chairman of the Brandenburg Provincial Committee for Inner Mission, a land of about one acre and also promised to donate 100,000 bricks for the construction of a children's sanatorium. In his function as head of the provincial committee, the priest accepted Fleischmann's offer on August 1, 1904<sup>3</sup>.

On June 24, 1906, the "Crown Princess Cecilie" Seehospiz near Rewal was opened with a speech by Pomeranian Superintendent General Büchsel. The institution was named after the German crown princess Cecilie:

A bright ray of hope was the gracious benevolence which Her Imperial and Royal Highness the Mrs. Crown Princess bestowed on our work by giving it the name Crown Princess Cecilie-Seehospiz. We know what beautiful memories the high woman has of the sea, the distant beach of the south<sup>4</sup>.

The aim of the foundation was to establish a 'boarding school for children in need of recreation, mainly from the middle class, from the province of Brandenburg'<sup>5</sup>. Many donors from the mining industry in Łużyce as well as the Nowawes Stock Spinning Mill (today Poczdam), the Schultheiss Brewery Berlin and the Ostbank für Handel und Gewerbe from Poznan supported the project<sup>6</sup>. One of the biggest supporters, however, was the owner of the printing press Theodor Grimm from Berlin (died 1908)<sup>7</sup>.

It could accommodate 100 children and 24 adults at the same time. Preference was given to patients from Berlin and the province of Brandenburg. The boys and girls were to be eight years old at the most, later the age limit was raised to 14 years. Tuberculosis was generally excluded from admission, as well as children with 'nervous disorders' (e.g. Chorea Huntington, 'bed-wetting' and 'weak-mindedness') and from families in which infectious diseases occurred in the last six weeks. 'The introduction of an infectious disease into the children's home can lead to claims for compensation', is noted in an advertising brochure of the institution. At the same time, the institution's

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<sup>3</sup> A. Jüttemann, 2018, Zur Geschichte der Brandenburgischen Seehospize: Das Kronprinzessin-Cecilie-Kindererholungsheim in Rewahl an der pommerschen Ostseeküste, „Brandenburgisches Ärzteblatt“, 6, s. 24-26.

<sup>4</sup> P. Von Troschke, 1911, Das Kronprinzessin Cecilie-Seehospiz bei Rewahl. Eine Beschreibung der Anstalt, ihrer Geschichte und ihres Betriebes. Provinzial-Ausschuß für Innere Mission in der Provinz Brandenburg, Berlin, Nachlass des Diakoniewissenschaftlichen Instituts der Universität Heidelberg, w/o pages.

<sup>5</sup> P. von Troschke, 1911a, Kinder-Erholungsheim des Provinzial-Ausschusses für Innere Mission in der Provinz Brandenburg. Berlin-Lichterfelde, w/o pages.

<sup>6</sup> Troschke, 1911.

<sup>7</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Poczdamie (LHA Potsdam) syn. Rep 35 Provinzialverband VII b 115.

management asks 'the parents to personally ensure that the children's teeth are fixed before departure'<sup>8</sup>.

According to the house rules, children with lice and 'bed-wetter' were also sent back home at their own expense. When an illness occurred, the young fosterlings were taken to the district hospital in Trzebiatów (niem. *Treptow an der Rega*).<sup>9</sup>

The children's home had 125 beds on four floors. In addition, rooms were reserved for the nuns<sup>10</sup> in need of rest. The different houses were appropriated in a clear structure:

The structural layout was designed as clearly as possible so that our guests could find their way around it without having to think about it from the very first moment. According to the ground plan we designed, it breaks down into the main house and the hall building adjoining on the sides<sup>11</sup>.

In an advertising brochure, the management of the institution described the building's design in the following words: 'The fresh, vivid colours have a pleasing effect on the children's goods, simply because of their architectural style'. A hall with two sliding windows was highlighted as a special feature. The room with a wooden ceiling was also used for devotions. In the dining room, ship models hung from the ceiling as decoration. Picture friezes in some of the rooms were also considered to be particularly worth seeing. All the rooms were 'furnished with simple but dignified furniture, made after original drawings by a Berlin furniture draughtsman, and white iron beds'<sup>12</sup>.

A look at the daily routine at the *Seehospiz* is historically interesting in that some differences can be seen in comparison to today's facilities. For example, it is noticeable that the rules regarding content and procedure were very strictly defined.

The strict order already began with the admission conditions: the children had to bring two pairs of shoes, as much "bodywear" as possible, one pair of morning shoes, six pairs of stockings, two suits, one of which was a Sunday suit, a warm outer garment as well as bathing clothes (swimming trunks for boys, bathing suit for girls).

The children had to get up at 6:30 a.m. and at 7:30 a.m. the first breakfast was served. Afterwards a morning service followed, which was obligatory. 'After the devotions, the girls cleaned their shoes, the boys did that the evening before', the house rules prescribed the daily routine. There were also fixed time slots for bathing in the sea: from eight to nine o'clock the boys were allowed to bathe, and from nine to ten o'clock the beach was open for the girls. After the second breakfast at ten a.m., which should be taken outside (e.g. in the 'forest' near the *Seehospiz*) if possible, until noon the house bell and the gong rang for lunch<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Troschke, 1911a.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> Care and supervision were in the hands of deaconesses of the Berlin Paul-Gerhardt-Stift. The home was under constant medical supervision.

<sup>11</sup> Troschke, 1911.

<sup>12</sup> Troschke, 1911.

<sup>13</sup> Jüttemann, 2018, s. 26.

The house came under Polish administration in 1945, was preserved as a children's home and changed hands in 1959, 1981 and 2000. Today the still quite well-preserved building<sup>14</sup>, which is located in the forest between the today Polish seaside resorts Rewal and Niechorze, is a home for children and young people who are difficult to educate.

### Kołobrzeg

Directly in the centre of Kołobrzeg (niem. *Kolberg*) was a facility for tuberculous children, the Christian children's sanatorium called 'Siloah'<sup>15</sup>. It is one of the oldest sanatoriums in West Pomerania and can also look back on an interesting history.

In June 1874, the Jewish spa guest N. Oppenheim from Berlin wrote a letter to the mayor of Kołobrzeg offering him a donation of 500 talers of Prussian Courant for the construction of a Protestant spa hospital on the 'Colberger Münde'. It was already remarkably pointed out that a Jewish citizen laid the financial foundation for a Christian spa hospital. In addition, Empress Augusta donated 200 marks, and the district of Kołobrzeg also gave 200 marks p.a. for five years. In addition, all these donations had the effect that in August 1880 the property at Kołobrzeg, Hafenstraße 5 (ul. Portowa) was acquired for a total value of 27,000 Marks by means of a down payment of 12,000 Marks. Oppenheim donated a further 1500 Marks for the purchase. The costs for the interior decoration amounted to 6000 Marks<sup>16</sup>.

On 1 July 1881, the sanatorium for scrofulous children in Kolberg was opened with 42 patients. The first head physician was Privy Councillor Dr. von Büssau, and he was not represented by Dr. Rohde. The organisation of the care was the responsibility of 25 deaconess sisters of all denominations. On 24 July 1881 the ceremonial inauguration took place<sup>17</sup>.

Dr. Rohde, the staff physician, died in 1896, and the new director was the district physicist and privy medical officer Dr. Behrend, who led the institution until his death in 1918. Under his leadership, the neighbouring property was purchased on 10 June 1902. There, a new children's sanatorium was built with financial aid from the Pomeranian State Insurance. The building costs amounted to 74,671.83 marks. On June 8, 1914 a sanatorium for bone, joint and glandular tuberculosis was built on the new property<sup>18</sup>.

The sanatorium name was "Siloah", a name that is still used by many hospitals. Siloah is the name of a holy pond in Jerusalem, where the Jewish king Salamon is said to have been appointed. It is also said that a water-drawing procession was held here, in which Jesus made a blind man see again with the pond water. This pond is also

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<sup>14</sup> Młodzieżowy Ośrodek Wychowawczy, Klifowa 17, 72-344 Rewal.

<sup>15</sup> A. Jüttemann, 2016, Die preußischen Lungenheilstätten. Lengerich, s. 223.

<sup>16</sup> W. Behrend, 1931, Festschrift zum 50jährigen Jubiläum des Christlichen Kurhospitals und der Kinderheilstätte 'Siloah', Kolberg, w/o pages.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem.

considered holy by Muslims. The name Siloah was probably chosen because it is a symbol that connects the religions, just as the foundation of the hospital was based on an interdenominational gesture: 'A donation by the Jewish entrepreneur Oppenheim for a Protestant hospital in 1874'<sup>19</sup>.

The entire complex was a reserve military hospital from 1914 to 1919. After the war the sanatorium got into economic difficulties. In 1930 there were 113 employees. For every 30-40 children there were 3-4 nurses, distributed over seven floors in several houses. Each floor had its own couch hall, which was oriented to the south. There were also bedrooms and dining rooms, a tea kitchen, a laundry, a shower room and brine bath and – very advanced – dumbwaiters for transport from the kitchen to the dining rooms<sup>20</sup>.

On 6 June 1893, the *Brandenburg Seehospiz* was opened as the second institution of its kind in Kołobrzeg. In order to ensure the permanent operation of the hospice, a charitable association was founded in February 1895: 'The Brandenburg Children's Hospice was founded at the time to help needy, weak, miserable and scrofulous children to regain their strength and health'<sup>21</sup>.

The construction of the institution began in the summer of 1892, and for a long time the city council of Kołobrzeg resisted the reclassification of the 'Maikuhle' City Park (today Park im. Jedności Narodowej), where the *Seehospiz* was to be built. But the charitable purpose was then decisive for the approval of the project. For the one and a half acre plot of land in the middle of the Park im. Jedności Narodowej the city of Kołobrzeg raised an annual rent of 100 marks. The construction costs amounted to 45,000 Marks<sup>22</sup>.

The cure for the sickly children consisted mainly of a good diet. 'Clean air, physical cleanliness and care' should also have a good effect. In the first five years more than 700 children (of any denomination) were admitted to the *Seehospiz*. The upper age limit for admission was twelve years for the boys and 14 years for the girls. There was also a twelve-room wing with a view of the Baltic Sea, especially for self-paying adults in need of recreation.

The day at the *Seehospiz* began – like in Rewal – early at six o'clock in the morning with a 'light' saltwater bath in the bathhouse, which was located in the garden of the institution. At a quarter past nine a second breakfast was offered, milk dishes were the main part of the meal. Afterwards there was a devotional service: 'Fresh and cheerful the children's voices sounded to the tones of the harmonium'<sup>23</sup>. After breakfast we went to the beach, until at 12 o'clock the bell rang for lunch. Afterwards a rest period

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<sup>19</sup> J. Hansel, 2013, Die frühere Lungenheilstätte Kolberg: Heute ein Kurheim. <http://www.kolberg-cafe.de/meldungen-aus-kolobrzeg-kolberg/items/die-fruehere-lungenheilstaette-kolberg-heute-ein-kurheim.html>

<sup>20</sup> Behrend, 1931.

<sup>21</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Poczdamie (LHA Potsdam), sygn. Rep. 55 Provinzialverband der Provinz Brandenburg VII b 110.

<sup>22</sup> Troschke, 1911

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem.

was planned until afternoon coffee. 'After the coffee we played, sang and marched', according to the description in the annual report. At 18 o'clock the pediatrician came for the daily examination. Afterwards there was a dinner and an evening service<sup>24</sup>.

In July 1943 the evacuation of the institution was ordered for the reception of 180 bomb-damaged families from the Ruhrgebiet. The facility, which no longer exists today, was probably destroyed in the last days of the war with the conquest of Kołobrzeg by the Red Army, when almost all of Kolberg was razed to the ground<sup>25</sup>.

### Koszalin

In the forest near the slope of Góra Chełmska (in German: *Gollenwald*) near Koszalin (in German: *Köslin*) a tuberculosis hospital was opened in November 1928 for 64 patients of both sexes<sup>26</sup>. Special hygiene requirements were taken into account as far as possible in the design of this institution. Construction began in early July 1927 and despite the particularly long and hard winter of 1927/1928 in Pomerania, the building was ready for operation in November 1928<sup>27</sup>. The institution was run by the *Hinterpommersche Heilstättenverein Köslin*. In 1930 the director of the asylum was Dr. Haese<sup>28</sup>.

The tuberculosis hospital was built in 1928 by the city of Koszalin and private investors from the city as well as by the studio of Mohr and Weidner B.D.A. Berlin-Charlottenburg. According to sources, the construction costs, including extensive additional equipment and interior decoration, amounted to 660,000 marks. The cost of a bed for a sick person was about 10,000 marks. These costs do not include the cost of the new access road and supply line outside the hospital, which required an additional 90,000 Marks. The construction work was usually carried out by local workers, but many construction companies were based in Berlin – presumably because of the location of the architects' office<sup>29</sup>.

The main task of the building was to accommodate and treat so-called 'tuberculosis spreaders'. Unfortunately, this group of patients poses a particular threat to their families and is also not suitable for treatment in a general treatment facility. Only under the unfortunate living conditions that many people with tuberculosis had at that time, staying ill was not conducive to their recovery. That is why the fight against tuberculosis was so important, and that is why such centres to fight tuberculosis were created as in Koszalin.

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<sup>24</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Poczdamie (LHA Potsdam), sygn. Rep. 55 Provinzialverband VII b 108, Provinzialverbandes Jahresbericht 1923, s. 169.

<sup>25</sup> A. Jüttemann, 2019, Zur Geschichte der Brandenburgischen Seehospize (Teil 2): Das Kindererholungsheim Kolberg an der pommerschen Ostseeküste, „Brandenburgisches Ärzteblatt“, 6, s. 22-24.

<sup>26</sup> F. Helm, 1930, Tuberkulose-Heilstätten im Deutschen Reich, Düsseldorf, s. 104.

<sup>27</sup> Jüttemann, 2016, s. 226.

<sup>28</sup> Deutsches Zentral-Komitee zur Bekämpfung der Tuberkulose, 1930, Verzeichnis der deutschen Einrichtungen für Tuberkulose, Berlin, w/o Pages.

<sup>29</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Koszalinie, Zbiór Zbigniewa Wojtkiewiczza, sygn. 1078.

Secondly, the nurses were supposed to give the carers the opportunity to monitor suspicious cases and, in certain circumstances, to look after the nurses until they were admitted to another health centre. The building was also treated surgically against tuberculosis by specialists. The building is habitable for 62 patients of all sexes.

The hospital is particularly remarkable from an architectural point of view. At that time, the secession style formally ended and passed into modernity. References to Art Nouveau were still used in the architecture. During the construction of this building, the most modern style of the time, Modernism, was not decided. Art Nouveau was also quite refined, so the trend with pilasters and cornices was more classical and referred to neo-baroque. At the same time, the modernity of the building was complemented by the placement of sharp crystal motifs in various places.

The complex is divided into a main building, a pub and an outbuilding. The first two are connected by a covered passageway. The whole block looks like a pennant with an eagle with outstretched wings. In Koszalin there was a rumour that the architect made a deliberate attempt to include the eagle as the heraldic animal of Pomerania in the building, but it is possible that this is a pure coincidence, supported by the fact that such an eagle would not have a head.

The hospital is equipped with various architectural details. Flat, wide, not very distinctive Doric pilasters, which give style to the walls, are mixed in different parts of the facade. They diversify the flat surface of the walls. White boxes between the windows together with pilasters form vertical stripes that emphasize the verticality of the building. The verticalism is interrupted by a cornice between the ground floor and the first floor.

On the south facade, where there is a two-level arcade for patients, there are small reliefs with the crystal motif. This motif is repeated in different parts of the building, giving it character and distinguishing it from buildings in the historical style. The crystal motif can also be seen in the sharp arches of the upper part of the arcade, the skylights and in the greatest architectural detail of the building, i.e. in a very decorative portal over the passage from the northern part to the southern part of the building. The prominent coronation cornice and the broken roof at the ends of the southern façade also refer to this detail.

The main building has rooms for patients. The building block is open to the south and is curved in the wings for better protection against wind. On the ground floor there are rooms for men and on the upper floor women. The arrangement of the building should make the patients in the hospital more comfortable. The hospital rooms are located to the south and are therefore sunny. There is also an arcade for walks in the halls. These walks were important for the treatment of tuberculosis, as fresh air, coastal and forest air should help to treat this lung disease.

In recent years, the history of the building has been quite turbulent. The building belongs to the Marshal of the Voivodeship. The building was rented for years by the Marshal of the 'Medison' company. It had over 100 patients under its wings. The contract was valid until January 31, 2013. Until 2013, there was to be a day psychiatric ward, as well as a ward for the treatment of alcohol withdrawal syndromes, a ward for the treatment of abstinence syndromes after psychoactive substances, a psychiatric

care and treatment ward for adults, an inpatient psychiatric ward and a forensic centre<sup>30</sup>.

Initially, Medison hoped that they could agree to the new owner and continue operations. However, due to the very high maintenance costs, the voivodeship management decided to sell the property. The Marshal hoped (as did 'Medison') that there would be no situation in which a private company, i.e. a new buyer, would stop operating the hospital. Otherwise, many patients would have to find places in other hospitals.

'Medison' is no longer active in the building. In 2016 she finally moved to the newly built psychiatric hospital in Koszalin at street Sarżyńska 9. The building of the former tuberculosis hospital in Koszalin is still empty today (March 2020). More than eight times the Marshal of the province tried to sell this building in Koszalin, but in vain.

The former hospital seems to be an ideal place for a hotel, but there are some restrictions. According to the Marshal's Office, the local spatial development plan prescribes certain guidelines for the future owner. According to the decision of the Koszalin City Council of 24 November 2005, the basic function of the building is public services with a special focus on health services. However, part of the area is designated in the plan as forest with a ban on building<sup>31</sup>. Many inhabitants of Koszalin, including one of the authors, are watching anxiously for the future of this beautiful building<sup>32</sup>, which is unfortunately now deteriorating.

## Outlook

The second part will deal with the history of convalescent homes for mental illness and psychiatric sanatoriums in West Pomerania, 100 years ago.

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