

Historical Evolution of the Psychoactive Substances Use

Evolução histórica do uso de substâncias psicoativas

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to do a historical course revision of the substance psychoactive use, involving the users' posture from a restricted consumption to certain social groups until the obscure use of the contemporary. The historical trajectory of substances was approached about the humor alterations produced and minimize pains effect and sufferings caused by existential crises. We reported the interference and importance of the marketing of the therapeutic effects presented by philosophers, by the magic in the religious faith context in small communities and indigenous tribes and by the performance in the medical therapy. It was demonstrated in the pages turnings of the literature that tells the history about the drug that the opium and yours derived began the history of the chemical dependence. At last, from the 7th century, the opium began to be sold in larger amount between Turks and Arabs in Occidental Asia and the market expansion of drug in the world.

KEY WORDS: psycho active substance, drugs, chemical dependence.

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RESUMO

Objetivou-se neste estudo fazer uma revisão do percurso histórico do uso de substância psicoativa, envolvendo a postura dos usuários a partir de um consumo restrito a determinados grupos sociais até o uso indistinto da contemporaneidade. Abordou-se a trajetória histórica de substâncias que produzem alterações de humor e minimizam dores e sofrimentos causados por crises existenciais. Relatou-se a interferência e importância da propaganda dos efeitos terapêuticos apresentados por filósofos, da magia no contexto da crença religiosa em pequenas comunidades e tribos indígenas e da atuação na terapia médica. Demonstrou-se, nas páginas viradas da literatura que conta a história da droga, que foi o ópio e seus derivados que iniciaram a história da dependência química. Por último, apresentou-se o início da comercialização do ópio no século VII entre turcos e árabes na Ásia ocidental e a expansão do mercado de todo tipo de droga no mundo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: substância psicoativa, droga, dependência química.

INTRODUCTION

The search for the drugs is not a new event. As a matter of fact, speak about drugs use in the humanity is to do a long historical course from 2000 b.C. until our contemporary, from the restricted consumption to certain social groups as the Egyptians and Persian of the old age, until the wild and compulsive use in the contemporary. It reflects the own human genesis in the defense against the pain, the suffering, the social alienation, the consumerism and the own values and relationships changes, that happened him in uncoiling of the times, demanding a new adaptation with the new patterns and new paradigms ⁽¹⁾.

The literature shows the opium and yours derived began that search for something that produced alterations in the humor and in the sensations and that could appease the pains caused by a series of existential sufferings ⁽²⁾.

The opium was considered as a present of God in the antiquity, inspiring myths and epic poems. Hipocrates, the medicine's father belonged one to the first philosophers to mention the therapeutic effects of that substance, prescribing it for several illnesses. Other doctors like Greek Galeno that worked in Rome followed that practice and turned up the opium preparation a stander procedure using for the gladiators ⁽³⁾.

From the 7th century, the opium began to be sold in larger amount and marketed between the Turks and the Arabs from occidental Asia. That

expansion happened for the discovery that its effects showed more strongly when the smoke was inhaled of the solidified juice of the plant enlarging like its use and commercialization ⁽⁴⁾.

The opium use was also diffused in India and in China during centuries to alleviate the pain, the hunger and the malnutrition.

The opiate diffusion was made by the use of the product as medication and sold with therapeutic intentions in the 15th century in Europe. England was the first country to be reached by the drug use, for having commercial relationships with India. Paracelso, doctor and Swiss alchemist, elaborate a poppies concentrate juice well-known with laudanum and he recommends it for cure of several diseases. Poppy is the popular name of *Papaver somniferum*. Poppy is described in an ideogram of this people as the *joy plant* ⁽⁵⁾.

The opium use on the laudanum form is documented in the Thomas De Quincey book, author's *The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*. But same before of that registration, Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, already made use of the substance, being considered the first drug addict of the history ⁽⁴⁾.

The English domain on India facilitated still more the plant trade in Europe. Ships coming from the orient bringing tons of drugs to chemists and pharmacists in every Gran-Britain. As promising market, with advantageous profits, Gran-Britain had

the disseminated use in the population under the most several medicines forms. In this time, some doctors already alerted for the drug risks an excessive consumption, however, and it didn't exist anything document. No public and no authorities didn't know about the possible damages of drug use in wide scale ⁽³⁾.

In the 18th century, Seguin, Napoleon's army chemical and Seturner in Germany discovered the action of another substance, isolating the narcotic elements of the opium. Seturner named its morphine discovery, referring to the Greek God of the rest, Morfeu. Its use was collaborated by the improvement of the hypodermic syringe in 1850, turning possible to inject the morphine for intra-veined road, guaranteeing like this a fast absorption ⁽⁶⁾.

The morphine commercialization represented one of the most important economic activities of the time, because there was beside the medical indication of the opium and its derived, the opium eat in England, the laudanum use as appetizer in Central America or of the opium smoked all over the world.

The scientific way sought a treatment for the morphine use that had as consequence to the discovery, in 1837, of the heroine substance or diacetylmorphine, also derived of the opium. The heroine is today one of the drugs more consumed in the world, representing that the more sought by the dependent youths. It is responsible for a voluminous international traffic.

As well as the Briton, the Americans, that began to stick the commercialization of those products, were not very inclined to see the dangers of the opium and of its derived. The pharmaceutical industry and multinational laboratories grew in United States. From 1830 to 1870 the consumption of the imports increased in 20 times to this country.

In the end of the 19th century, in United States, the drug embraced alarming proportions and the country was referred as the *paradise of the demon drug* ⁽³⁾.

In England already began to notice the damages caused by the drug, although the percentile of dependents were smaller than in United

States. England starts to set up strategies to restrict the consumption for medical use and social groups begin being organized against the opium. Meanwhile, in United States, with the existence of factors as the population increase and the capitalist apology of the individual freedoms cult, the consumption starts to happen more and more in way frightening.

In 1906 there were in United States about 50.000 medications facts to the opium base. Its consumers were already the middle class high, old ladies of the northeast of United States and white men of the south.

At that time, many took high daily doses and for long periods. Soon people's complaints that presented the intoxication symptoms and dependence as insomnia, anguish, palpitations, concentration lack, medicines obsession and above all, the abstinence of the drug. In 1920, in four cities of United States just enrolled already about 300.000 dependent of the opium and derived. Slowly the population began the awakening for the gravity of the epidemic.

According to the Economic and Social United Nations Council, in 1956, the Permanent central Commission of Narcotics calculated that before 1914 the dependents number of opiate oscillated between 400.000 and 600.000 for a population that didn't correspond in half of the current.

Due the gravity, International Conferences were accomplished all over the world as the objective of breaking the production of substances narcotics. However, such encounters seem to have favored the great pharmaceutical industries, because in 1930 it was insured the comercialization freedom for legitimate of drugs use, so that the purchase about business were not harmed.

Starting from the fifties, a fall was verified in the consumption of opium and it was being substituted by the laboratory synthesized drugs. It was also in the same period that the secret trade of those substances appeared. It was sold as medication freely in the pharmacies. One of the

consequences was the marijuana use, that until then, it was planted in fields of the south of United States and that started to do part of the drug traffic, thwarting its original functions in the culture and in the natives' intention.

The cocaine was discovered 2.500 b.C. in leaves form in the tombs of Huaca Prieto's archaeological ranch at the north of Peru. Other references affirm that at the South of Lima, the Indians from South America already used the leaf of coca more than 4.500 b.C. ⁽⁴⁾.

The before Columbus civilizations left the marks of the cocaine use represented in the ceramic art, in characters with cheeks in ball form for the continuous habit of the leaves mastication. It was a magic plant for them, it occupied the honor place in all of the rituals and it constituted the offering preferred for all the spirits. The cocaine was present in the parties and the dead took it in the tombs in sacks form full of cocaine leaf.

The cocaine was studied for the first time by Lamark in 1783, determining that belonged to the Erythroxylaceae family. The legend says that the cocaine was given to the man as a present so that the hunger was satiated, new vigor was granted to the tired and weak, and that the unhappy ones forgot its poverty ⁽⁷⁾.

Albert Nienann obtained for the first time in Europe the purified product in laboratory, denominated of cocaine between 1858 and 1860. It facilitated the popularization of that product then, as the chemist's of Corsega case, Angelo Mariani, that threw a wine with this substratum in 1863, considered as capable to cure countless diseases.

Freud in the year 1884 wrote an article about the cocaine, speaking about the use of the drug in wars, in trips and going up mountains in the course of expeditions. It also recommended to the ingestion in the asthma treatment and in the most varied psychic disturbances, as the hysteria, the hypochondria, melancholy and stupor. He also made recommendations as morphine substitute, however, it shown inefficient in elapsing of the

treatment, once the doses increase provoked intoxications and the abstinence ⁽⁴⁾.

Those noxious aspects difficult Freud to accomplishing researches with the cocaine in local anesthetic's function. ⁽⁵⁾.

The cocaine habit for road of nasal aspiration begins in United States between 1902 and 1903 turning up a true epidemic. Its use was limited in Europe, making part of the artistic centers of Paris, London; even so with the First World War there was a growth of the chemical industry that made to appear great amounts of that substance in the market. The course of the drug facilitate to Europe to stay on the final straight line, but the heart of the monopoly concentrated in the Bolivia, beginning there in the last decades, a proliferation movement progressively growing. To assist the smaller purchasing power clientele, the international market it put in circulation the drug known as " crack ", besides other cocaine derived, done for producers and consumers in a more rudimentary, and less onerous way.

Disseminated in Europe and in United States and backed by the Italian and American Mafia, the drug is consumed, second research accomplished in 1968 about 20 million Americans, that ingest occasionally and a million almost make daily use, as show the newspaper La Republica de Roma in article published on July 20, 1986.

The drugs use is also part of the construction of our history, above all for the hallucinogenic plants presence. However, differently of the other countries, in Brazil the motivations for the consumption are related with several partner-cultural aspects, due the strong existent miscegenation in our people. The Brazilian indigenous populations, for example, used it in the sacred cults to the earth and to the fecundity. Ethnic and cultural aspects favored the evolution of this habit ⁽⁸⁾.

The marijuana, diamba, liamba (Cannabis sativa) is the drug whose use is not limited the indigenous populations, but it extends to a great number of followers ⁽⁹⁾.

It is important to stand out that the mystic and religious aspect incorporated to the use of the marijuana in Brazil was developed as inheritance of the African and indigenous habits. It is an important factor to evaluate the consumption extension during the history. The Indians of the Funi-ô tribe chew or to smoke marijuana cigarettes for they get hallucinogenic effects and through the states can establish communication with the superior spirits and divinities ⁽¹⁰⁾.

That use form shared with the objective of evoking spiritual entities is still today practiced frequently in our culture for some religious segments of Afro-Brazilian descendants.

In Brazil, the use of the marijuana until the beginning of the 19th century was considered as a habit or a social behavior out of the normality patterns socially accepted, but that didn't demand an intervention in health public terms or in juridical terms.

In the end of the 19th century the consumption of drugs raisin to reach all the social spheres, demanding a fast and incisive intervention of epidemic control. It was scheduled collective actions, in political, doctors and cultural terms that try to give a meaning of illness the marijuana ingestion.

The medicine presses the public authorities to that concrete measures about the drugs use in Brazil are taken in the beginning of the 20th century. The drugs use becomes in this time a health collective problem, but particularly in social medicine that starts to develop techniques and strategies to combat the drugs use. On that historical moment the use of the marijuana assumes a character of social pathology, without the individuals have own responsibility for their acts.

Even so the concern with the use of drugs and its consequences is extended the juridical way and policeman. The silence backed by the regulation of September 25, 1851 (article 51) of the Empire to the republic proclamation brings a new code, code of 1890 that starts to consider the substances use a crime against the public health. But

it is the psychiatry that demonstrates an authentic concern, believing to be the drug use is one of the main causes of the mental alienation.

The alcohol ingestion is considered by some psychiatrists the main cause of the mental alienation in Brazil. Those statements do with that the doctors press the authorities to dependents be treated at psychiatric asylums. However, those measured didn't contribute to the decrease of the marijuana use.

From the 1940, the marijuana becomes objective of campaigns. The use for the less favored economically classes, criminals and alienated, suggested preventive measures, as it establishes the Ordinance no. 891 from November 26, 1938 that prohibited the cultivation of narcotics substances in the national territory.

Due to that preoccupying reality, the law 6.368 of October 21, 1976 appears and has to have measured so much preventive as repressive about the illicit traffic and improper use of psicoactive substances. This seems to be an important about the drugs use, because the drugs dependence considered become a disease should be seen by the health public net.

CONCLUSIONS

The understanding around the phenomenon of the toxicant substances use to promote a physical, social and psychological well-being of the communities, requests the measures presence with scientific back-up. It is a phenomenon that acquired alarming dimensions, whose limits are ignored, throwing consequences in the health, education and too much social structures.

It's common today discussions about that theme among educators, health professionals and researchers and in the press has been disclosing use of drugs is reaching besides the adults, layers more youths of the population, independently, besides, of the social class which belong.

The increase toxicant substances use for the youths has been assuming indexes quite elevated all over the world, showing the need to promote

effective programs to stop or to minimize the harmful effects of the excessive consumption among this age group.

Youths are entering in contact with drugs in an age group more and more precocious, showing the gravity of the problem in terms epidemic expansion. Beyond, indicator of lowering of the age for the beginning of the consumption, the street children are being slain by drugs as the shoemakers' glue, solvents and medications. Forums and debates discuss the moral subjects, politics and social that surround the abusive drugs use as an element that contributes to the disintegration of the society.

Studies demonstrated that the use of toxicant substances for children, adolescents of low income and frequently in structures families socially committed, it reached the high index of 86,4% of shoemaker's glue and medications use as syrups and others. The internal pressures of those family contexts are added to the external pressures as the hunger, abandonment and violence feeling ⁽¹¹⁾.

In the Pernambuco State the reality becomes still more chaotic, compared the states of the South of the country, with few resources financial for the health in our area. The socioeconomic factor has direct reflex in the type of chosen drug, doing with that the people of smaller purchasing power seek for cheaper drugs, and that tend to be more aggressive, in tolerance terms, as it is the case of the alcohol ingestion .

Some indicators pointed in 1980 elevated indexes of drugs use in the metropolitan area of Recife. According to information of the Division of Mental Health of the Health Clerkship of the Pernambuco State, the growing increase of the illicit drugs abuse already reached, at that time, considered of high risk.

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