

Abstract

The thesis is based on three months of participant observation in a long-term care facility in 2010 and interviews conducted during next three years. It draws from a perspectives of medical anthropology and anthropology of institutions. The focus is on an ethnography of institution for clients with chronic mental disease, dementia and substance abuse. The thesis is mapping institution's components and actors, their social life and relationships in the institution. The analyses is based upon the concept of total institution by Erving Goffman, and draws from thoughts of Josef Pieper, Martin Buber, Emanuel Lévinas and Michel Foucault. A long-term facility is an institution, which shares clients and some of problems with classical examples of total institutions, but recent reforms aimed to minimize features of total institutions. Still it does not seem to be a vital institution and new aspects of social situation of staff and clients are recognized. Among new problems is non-existence of therapy for the inhabitants, their marginalization through poor financial situation in an institution, where lot of services are paid and little continuity to other forms of care of more community and ambulant character.

Key words: total institution, long-term facility, psychiatric care, medical anthropology, anthropology of institutions, clinical social work, mental disease