

This work contains a deep study of status of mentally ill persons from antiquity till present. It closely analyses the understanding of abnormal mental manifestations during the ages. Mental disorders are as old as the mankind itself. The society has always responded to them. It has coped with their bearers by ways reflecting cultural maturity of a given social group. I have methodically examined these specific reactions of society to insane persons in every era. I have discussed every period so elaborately so that their social status is clear. I have also dealt with present-day approaches to mentally ill persons and social consequences of mental illness. It was not possible to elaborate this theme without covering age-old conceptions of illness and status of mentally ill persons in the past. In my work I continuously make references to changes that occurred in treatment with mentally ill people. I intended to point out suffering of mentally ill persons before it came to understanding that all people are equal. I also present considerations of alternatives of traditional hospital treatment. One of the possibilities how to get to understanding of a mentally ill persons is the projection given by imaginative literature. Therefore I have worked out an essay on literal characters that suffered from a mental illness.

The compilation of the individual themes is based on my long time study of professional books. I have proceeded from respectable information and avoided obscure literal sources that intentionally distort the psychiatric problems.

In my work I have also integrated essays which reflect experiences of mentally ill persons as written in valuable pieces of home and foreign provenience. The imaginative literature has been used as a secondary literature.

I have also taken into consideration my experience from short-term attachments in organizations occupying with social rehabilitation of persons that have experienced schizophrenia.