

Robert Koch in his Laboratory (c. 1891)

Abstract

Central to the production of knowledge in modern Germany was research specialization. Characterized by problem-solving élan, painstaking adherence to methodical procedure, imaginative persistence in the face of obstacles, and the thrill of discovery, research specialization presupposed the fragmentation of intellectual endeavor into ever-smaller domains of exacting concentration. Epitomizing both the rigor and the payoff of specialization was Robert Koch (1843–1910), the founder of modern bacteriology. His work on infectious diseases, above all tuberculosis, drew connections between certain microorganisms and specific diseases, greatly advancing the cause of public health. In 1905, his contributions to research were recognized with the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

Source



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