



Marko Polo's Diary

Stella Fatović-Ferenčić, ESHDV representative of Croatia

Fortbildungstagung der Österreichischen Akademie für Dermatologische Fortbildung (ÖADF), Bad Ischl, June 10-12, 2004

The popularity rise of hydrotherapy as a method in healing diseases started strongly during the period of 18th to 19th century. Its tradition and development are particularly linked to Germany and Austria, wherefrom it also spread to our territory. It was in Ischl where the healing power of salt water baths in the Salzkammergut was discovered at the beginning of the 18th century, and since that time the remote salt village as well as the whole region transformed to a fashionable spa and a picturesque recreational setting. Furthermore it grew into a glamorous summer holiday retreat of the Habsburg Empire, where Franz Joseph spent all his summer holidays up to 1914, except in 1878. Various historical places, museums and parks preserve traces of the monarch's regular visits in the period up to World War I. Consequently the lovely spa-town surrounded with Alpine scenery was a perfect choice for the Austrian Academy of Continuous Education in Dermatology too. The main organizers, Professor Norbert Sepp and Dr. Gudrun Ratzinger had set up a successful event that comprised an acne symposium, diseases of vulva, labor in practice, new insights in psoriasis, hot topics in dermatology and discussions dedicated to the 30th anniversary of cortisone therapy. Not surprisingly for such an historical place, the history was an integral part of the symposium. It included topics dedicated to important texts and works in dermatology as well as its iconography during the time of emperor Franz Joseph. The gathering succeeded in assembling younger and older generations of dermatologists, teachers and residents, so the whole atmosphere was electrifying, challenging and constructive. One could strongly feel

how harmoniously the history and recent times met within this symposium as well as in the well thought-out mixture of yellow and rose stockades colors, and in particular traditional dressings of the Ischl's residents. Even the smell has a traditional touch, particularly when one enters the famous *Zauner* existing since 1832, which offers 200 different types of fresh pastries daily.

Renaissance heritage: Philosophy, Science and Art, Slano, October 6-7, 2004

Early October, a philosophy meeting that I was invited to in Slano, was a marvellous experience not only because of the attractiveness of the main symposium topic, i.e. the Renaissance, but particularly for the openness of the colleagues and true responsiveness that I was surrounded with, all the time. Philosophy and history rarely meet understanding within the medical community, and I got more than used to that during my participation in various medical meetings. This symposium, set up by Matica hrvatska Department of Philosophy, on the contrary, was a pleasant event of proximity and mutual understanding at many levels, which enriched and stimulated my enthusiasm enormously. The phenomenon of philosophicalerenity and spiritual revival during the Renaissance was the symposium leitmotif. Presentations dealing with ideas of M. Ficino, J. Dragišić, N. Kuzinski, H. Dalmatin, N. Gučetić, F. Petrić, E. Rotterdamski, Aristotle, T. Mooreus, K. Pooper, M. Luther and others, as well as with the phenomenon of women in the Renaissance philosophy, Dubrovnik Machiavellism and republicanism and everyday life, created an extraordinary atmosphere for contemplation and different viewpoints. The topic I prepared in cooperation dealt with medical and poetic insights in the issue of syphilis in the 16th century Dubrovnik, which turned easily into a debate and

surpassed its biology. It touched the phenomenology, culture, human rights, empathy literature and all that we should keep in our minds when investigating human nature. Again, like many times before, I felt pity for those medical practitioners that had lost any philosophical dimension of exploring life within their daily routine. This might be among important causes of alienation that usually characterizes us, and certainly imposes questions of re-

lationships which are hardly established properly. Philosophy, no doubt, is one of the many ways in searching it.

The world is waiting, sretan vam put!

stella@hazu.hr



From the "Nivea" collection of Zlatko Puntijar