

Sestre milosrdnice



University Hospital

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Until World War I, the majority of Croatian physicians were educated in Vienna and Graz. At the time, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had excellent medical schools and other scientific and professional institutions. Our physicians Kurt Hühn, Srećko Hoffmann and Lujo Križ received education at one of these institutions, the famous Holz knecht Institute of Radiology. Dr Srećko Hoffmann was the first radiologist employed at our Hospital. He came to the Hospital in 1923 and from 1924 headed the then established Department of Diagnostic and Therapeutic Radiology. The ninety-year history of our Hospital radiology had an interesting initial stage of development, so to say, a pre-history beginning towards the end of the 19th century. It was the period from publication of Röntgen's discovery in 1896 until 1924. Our physicians in Croatia followed all those new discoveries; an article on Röntgen's discovery appeared in *Liječnički*

vjesnik as early as forty-nine days of its publication¹. Dr Kurt Hühn, later ophthalmologist, and Dr Miroslav Čačković, surgeon, were our first physicians dealing with radiology. The Hospital management purchased the first x-ray device on Dr Wickerhauser's proposal in 1901, and as early as 1907 Dr Čačković published in *Liječnički vjesnik* the first professional article in the field of radiology in Croatian medicine. Even before this, in 1905, he published images of the Krapina Man skeleton, printed in the book written by Dr Dragutin Gorjanović Kramberger, our world-known paleontologist, entitled *Der Diluviale Mensch von Krapina in Kroatien, 1906*². Dr Ferdo Petrovčić, one of the first radiologists that completed residency in radiology at our Hospital, wrote an interesting article on the history of our radiology, in which he describes difficult working conditions, physical lesions sustained by physicians, consequences of inadequate



Fig. 1. First x-ray: image of Mrs. Berta Röntgen's hand (1895).



Fig. 2. Hand image obtained by a modern x-ray device (comparison).



Fig. 3. Image of the anatomist Albert von Kölliker's hand obtained during Professor Röntgen's lecture.

knowledge about the harmful effects of irradiation, etc., which resulted in numerous health and existential problems in the first generations of physicians radiologists and radiological technicians working unselfishly to the benefit of their patients. Descriptions of the then work and technical circumstances seem to belong to some dark and frightening past time, however, we should not forget it as evidence of the development of a profession where current technology enables excellent and specific diagnostics in all fields of medicine. The courage, dedication and hard work of our radiologists, along with development of radiology worldwide, have enabled fast progress of this profession at our Hospital as well. Our Department of Radiology is Clinical Department of the Zagreb University School of Medicine since 1950 and of the School of Dental Medicine since 1971.

It is not possible to predict how will future developments in radiology (technological advancements are expected beyond doubt) influence our ninety-year-old profession because novel achievements are expensive; yet, we do believe that there will always be individuals who are ready, like our first radiologists, to make up for all that is not affordable by their courage, enthusiasm, kind relationship with patients and understanding their problems.

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References

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