

## HISTORICAL REVIEW

In his book *Život i djela Ante Šercera* (Life and Work of Ante Šercer) from 1997, Professor Ivo Padovan states that the fourth step of otorhinolaryngology development in Zagreb started with Professor Ante Šercer's appointment as head of the ENT Department at Sestre milosrdnice Hospital in 1946, i.e. seventy years ago<sup>1</sup>. Professor Šercer was one of the renowned physicians from our Hospital. Professor Šercer as an excellent surgeon, dedicated scientist and teacher recruited a number of young physicians to the ENT Department, thus having transformed it into the widely recognized and renowned ENT teaching unit. At the same time, he was very active in many other fields. Among Zagreb physicians, Professor Andrija Štampar, president of the then Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (now Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts) and dean of the Zagreb School of Medicine paid great respect and honor to Professor Šercer and proposed him to be reappointed Full Professor of Otorhinolaryngology at the Zagreb School of Medicine in 1955. Nine years later, in 1964, the ENT Department grew into Clinical ENT Department of the Zagreb School of Medicine. Then, Professor Štampar suggested Miroslav Krleža to appoint Professor Šercer Editor-in-Chief of Medical Encyclopedia, the first volume of which appeared in 1957, followed by ten volumes until 1965. Professor Šercer's appointment as Professor of ENT raised some issues related to teaching activities at our Hospital, such as construction of the new lecture room initiated by Professor Šercer, along with Professor Kadrnka, Professor Sučić and Assist. Prof. Ivo Padovan. The lecture room and staff-room were constructed with great help of Dr Stanko Cesarec, then head of the Hospital, and dean Andrija Štampar. At the same time, construction of the Central Medical Library was also initiated. Professor Šercer was a great book-lover and history admirer, as evidenced in his books, from *Povijest traheotomije* (History of Tracheotomy) through editing Medical Encyclopedia, and in particular *Otorinolarinologija* (Otorhinolaryngology) in two volumes (Volume 1 in

1951 and Volume 2 in 1965), published by Leksikografski zavod.

Professor Šercer left our Hospital fifty years ago, in 1966, when he was retired. He described his close and long-standing bonds with the Hospital in the speech he held at the ceremony organized at his Department in 1956, on the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and 35 years of his career. Here



Professor Ante Šercer  
(photograph from 1954)

are his words: "I just want to emphasize that I have my practical training acquired in this Hospital, where I had the privilege to work as a *famulus* during World War I, with the founders of modern medicine in Croatia, Wickerhauser, Čačković, Gutschy, Marković, Hühn, and in particular Dr Mašek, my first teacher in otorhinolaryngology, who was a true noble man, an example of devotedness and loyalty to his vocation and initiator of three specialized professions in our country, i.e. otorhinolaryngology, urology and dermatology"<sup>2</sup>.

Professor Šercer was a great teacher and gifted disciple; the more so, he was proud of the history of his profession and as a genuine physician, scientist and intellectual, he knew how to transfer it to all those listening or reading him. That is why his disciples also were highly successful and respected their teacher, in particular Professor Ivo Padovan showing this through his book.

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### References

1. Padovan I. Život i djelo Ante Šercera. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Globus, 1997; p. 123. (in Croatian)
2. Padovan I. Život i djelo Ante Šercera. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Globus, 1997; p. 141. (in Croatian)