

Ninth Days of Andrija Štampar: Štampar's Ideology and its Opponents – Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

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From its inception in 2004 and under the auspices of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Days of Andrija Štampar in Slavonski Brod became a recognizable brand and a platform for discussions on wide-ranging medico-historical topics, especially those directly concerning Andrija Štampar, the pioneer of public health and one of the founders of the World Health Organization, as well as contemporary issues in the organization of healthcare. Five years after the last conference, finally on 31 March and 1 April 2023, the Ninth Days of Andrija Štampar were held at the Hotel Art in Slavonski Brod. The break caused by the coronavirus pandemic not only offered a space to reevaluate Štampar's fight against acute infectious diseases in the first half of the twentieth century, but also provided precious time for a more objective gaze on various measures undertaken in the global attempt to defeat Covid-19. Taking all these factors into consideration, the scientific committee decided to dedicate the Ninth Days of Andrija Štampar to the analysis of Štampar's ideology and its opponents in the past, present and the future.

The conference, which was organized by the Croatian Medical Association and the General Hospital "Dr. Josip Benčević", was welcomed by the following members of the organizing committee: Mario Blekić, MD, PhD, the President of the Croatian Medical Association – Subsidiary Slavonski Brod, Josip Samardžić, MD, PhD, the director of the General Hospital "Dr. Josip Benčević", Mirko Duspara, MD, the Mayor of Slavonski Brod, and Danijel Marušić, DVM, the Prefect of Brodsko-posavska County. After the ceremonial opening, Martin Kuhar, MD, PhD and Professor Ivica Balen, MD, PhD, promoted the book *Andrija Štampar* authored by Ivica Balen and Marica Jandrić Balen. The book was published in 2019 as part of the edition *Croatian Giants* by the publishing house Privlačica from Vinkovci. With extensive use of Štampar's own reflections on various events and topics, it chronologically follows the life of Andrija Štampar and thus represents another respectable contribution to what is now a substantial amount of work that came out of the Days of Andrija Štampar.

During the two-day conference twenty researchers in a very interdisciplinary composition presented their valuable research. General historians, historians of medicine, physicians, economists, museologists, art historians, ethnologists and cultural anthropologists, pharmacists and the historians of pharmacy – they all reinforced the potency of Štampar's ideology. Its longevity was discernable not only in its original domain – public health, which until very recently operated under extreme duress and substantial pressures – but also at the level of basic research, which underscored the importance of primary prevention of disease.

Almost traditionally, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts

participated at the conference with three speakers: Prof. Silvija Brkić Midžić, the Manager of the Croatian Museum of Medicine and Pharmacy, Prof. Stella Fatović-Ferenčić, MD, PhD, the Director of the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science, and Martin Kuhar, MD, PhD, research associate at the Division for the History of Medical Sciences. Silvija Brkić Midžić presented a part of rich photographic collection kept at the Museum that best reflects Štampar's ideology. Martin Kuhar and Stella Fatović-Ferenčić presented the results of their research on the photographic material contained in Božidar Špišić's work on the rehabilitation of war veterans during the First World War, which was recently published in a prestigious journal *International Orthopaedics*. Together with Ivan Lukovnjak, Stella Fatović-Ferenčić brought a contemporary angle to Štampar's views through an innovative form of presentation – an "interview" with Štampar.



There are not many people in Croatia's scientific past that still can, many decades after death, gather researchers from multiple fields of study. Štampar's intriguing life, replete with seemingly insurmountable obstacles and challenges, still attracts modern interpreters who find in him not only an inspiration, but also solutions for myriad challenges plaguing modern healthcare.

