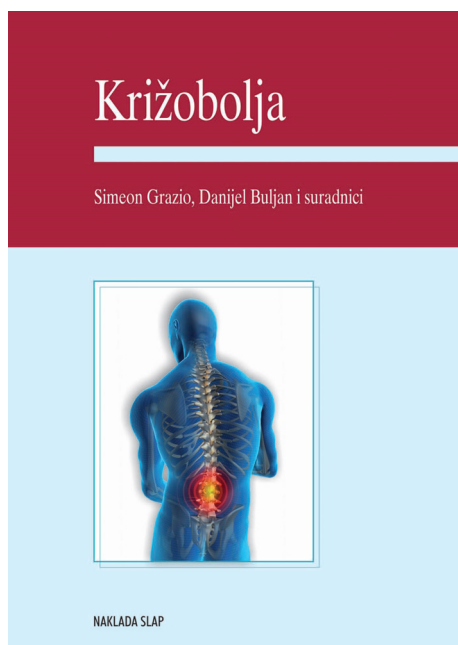


BOOK REVIEWS



LOW BACK PAIN / KRIŽOBOLJA,
by Simeon Grazio and Danijel Buljan, editors,
 Naklada Slap, Samobor, 2008, hard cover, size
 175x245 mm, 504 pages, 27 tables, 112 figures.
 ISBN 978-953-191-368-3; CIP 680090

To this very day, low back pain remains an enigma posing a burden upon the individual and the society. It is associated with a high prevalence (according to some data, as many as 80% of people experience at least one episode of low back pain during lifetime) and frequent relapses, while progression to chronic low back pain entails a significant rate of disablement. Low back pain is the most common cause of activity limitation in <45 age groups, thus posing a major socioeconomic and eventually economic problem. In the past twenty years, the approach to patients with low back pain has profoundly changed. The exclusively somatic viewpoint has now been substituted by inclusion of the psychological and

social aspects, while the opinion based on strict bed rest has been replaced by recommending the patient to maximally avoid rest and restrict it to 2-3 days at the most because clinical studies have demonstrated this new approach to result in faster recovery.

Professor Simeon Grazio, MD, PhD, physiatrist-rheumatologist, and Professor Danijel Buljan, MD, PhD, psychiatrist, with a group of coworkers have embarked upon a demanding and responsible task to write a book on low back pain. The task is serious indeed due to an array of difficulties encountered in the very definition of low back pain, understanding its etiopathogenesis, rationality of diagnostic procedures, choice of therapeutic options, and evaluation of therapeutic outcome. In addition, the task is extremely difficult because low back pain is burdened with a number of densely interwoven somatic and mental/psychological factors about which no consensus has yet been achieved. To provide relevant result in their book, the authors had to analyze evidence-based data, which is by no means an easy job to do because they may not always be readily available, and when they are, one is faced with the problems of possible bias and interpretation. In spite of the numerous and novel diagnostic methods, the cause of low back pain cannot be identified with certainty in the majority of patients, while the effects of many therapeutic procedures (non-pharmacological, pharmacological and operative) cannot be always exactly evaluated despite new models of outcome evaluation.

In this extensive publication of 504 pages (33 chapters, 112 figures and 27 tables), its nineteen authors have for the first time in Croatia conveniently included all relevant issues of low back pain, i.e. epidemiology, etiopathogenesis, clinical picture, diagnosis, treatment, prevention and work ability from the somatic and psychological/psychiatric point of view.

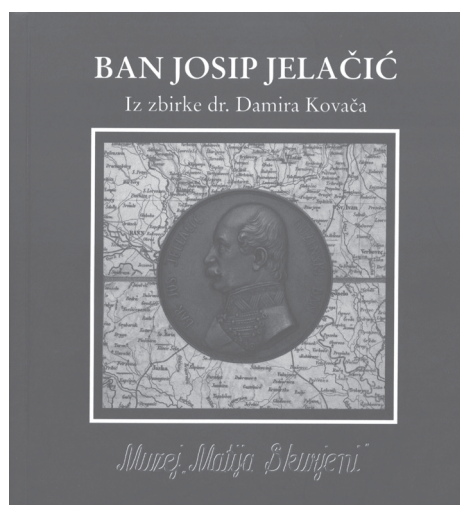
This demanding task has been varyingly accomplished, therefore the chapters vary in extent relative to their relevance; however, the overall value of the book is not impaired because the authors demonstrate pro-

found knowledge of the issue, thus having produced a highly useful educative-scientific reading. The book is the result of comprehensive knowledge and rich experience of professionals from various fields of medicine dealing with low back pain patients. Most of the authors have already published a number of professional and scientific papers in the field of chronic painful disorders including low back pain. Close collaboration of the two main authors and editors, one of them dealing with somatic and the other with psychological aspects of low back pain, has resulted in this publication where the biopsychosocial model and holistic approach to low back pain are underlined and corroborated by scientific evidence as hardly ever before.

The book is intended for a wide circle of readers, professionals dealing with the issue of low back pain, primarily physicians such as physiatrists, rheumatologists, neurologists, psychiatrists, radiologists, neurosurgeons, surgeons and family physicians, but will also be a welcome reading to a broad spectrum of other professionals like physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nurses, and others. The book also offers an array of practical advice that will help clinicians in their daily work with these patients, and may provide a basis for further research into the issue of low back pain.

I do believe that this book as a reference reading will find way to all those providing care for patients suffering from low back pain.

Božidar Ćurković



BAN JOSIP JELAČIĆ, The private collection of Damir Kovač

BAN JOSIP JELAČIĆ, Iz zbirke dr. Damira Kovača. Muzej Matije Skurjeni, Zaprešić, 2008.

Dr. Damir Kovač had already exhibited a part of his archaeological collection devoted to phallic amulets in 2003 in the Zagreb City Museum. In archaeological circles, the collection was pronounced a major revelation, since it showed numerous objects and numismatic rarities hitherto unknown.

Now, we present another section of the objects from the private collection of Damir Kovač, in Matija Skurjeni Museum in the Jelačić's Novi dvori, this time devoted to more recent Croatian history. For the first time,

the collection of medals dedicated to Ban Josip Jelačić is being shown to the Croatian public. One of the main features of this collection is great diversity of the materials and replicas of some medals, considerably adding to the importance of the collection.

At the time of Josip Jelačić, some of distinguished medal-makers and sculptors of Europe made his portraits. Some of these works of art demonstrate a high level of artistic skill and remarkable meticulousness of the technique in various materials.

It is well known that collectors tend to be owners of certain items of fine arts. It is the value of what they possess that is generally spoken of, and sometimes written of, often in realistic terms, even to the point of exaggeration. However, it is the time and passion, the endeavors and the money that have been invested, that is of relevance in the life of a collector, whereas all other components are often forgotten. It should be noted that the basis and origin of many a museum frequently derive from private collections as an initial initiative and stimulus for the foundation of museums, or being added to museum collections with time. In the past, collectors were not only distinguished for their passion for accumulation, but often provided a basis for the foundation or nourishing culture and history of their nations.

The personality of Ban Josip Jelačić has always been controversial. In professional historical and legal circles, there have long been debates pursuant to existing documents about the numerous roles he took in the Croatian history. This collection is not preoccupied with such problems, for the basic concentration and objects of this extremely valuable collection of material tell about the



Double sided medal of Ban Josip Jelačić

phenomenon of the artist challenge for medal-makers and print-makers that tackled the topic of Ban Josip Jelačić as a historical personality. In addition, some of the personal items of the Jelačić estate are shown. The figure of Ban Josip Jelačić is very much present in the Croatian people's consciousness and he is often referred to and invoked, in difficult times in particular.

For Dr. Damir Kovač, the idea of collecting items about Ban Josip Jelačić was a long-term stimulus. Along

with medals and objects, he also collected prints and postcards to complement the overall impression of his collection, the observer being given the idea of a whole and an insight into an important segment of the Croatian history.

The idea to exhibit the collection that is fully devoted to the personality of Ban Josip Jelačić in Matija Skurjeni Museum was born spontaneously. The impetus was the Museum position of a cultural institution devoted to Matija Skurjeni, a naive artist from Zaprešić, located in one of the buildings of the Novi dvori estate. With his historical role, Ban Josip Jelačić marked the entire Zaprešić area and the history of Croatia. He is a historically and sociologically important personality, deeply rooted in the Croatian people's consciousness. Therefore, it appears to be fully justified to first exhibit this collection to the public in the Ban's Novi dvori (New Palace).

*Mario Lenković
Director, Matija Skurjeni Museum*



First picture postcards of Zagreb

