

IVth SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS OF CENTRAL SOCIETY OF BALNEOLOGISTS OF AUSTRIA IN OPATIJA, 1904

IV. ZNANSTVENI KONGRES CENTRALNOG SAVEZA BALNEOLOGA AUSTRIJE U OPATIJI, 1904.

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SUMMARY

The authors were interested in the lectures' themes, organisation, the course, and the accompanied activities at the balneology congress in Opatija in 1904. The congress was organised by the principle of the health resort at the time Professor Dr Julius Glax, and consisted of two separate parts. The first part was held in Opatija from October 13 until 15, 1904. There were lectures, auto-papers, summaries, reports, discussions, and the afternoon expert trip to Crikvenica by boat. In Opatija the participants were shown the spa park, the rehabilitation paths for patients with heart difficulties, marine baths Angiolona and Slatina, the covered spa Erzherzog Ludwig Viktor Bad, and of the health institution Zander Institute. At the accompanying exhibition the Austrian and German companies represented their products, among them still recognised Bayer, C. Reichert in Karl Zeiß. Additionally, the owner of the Zanderinstitut in Opatija Dr Isor Stein presented his own therapeutic aid exerciteur there. The first part of the congress concluded on October 15, 1904 with the great banquet in the hotel Stephanie. The second part of the congress was held from October 16 until 20, 1904. The expert trip was organised to the Austrian Riviera on the Pannonia ship. The participants

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visited attractions and health institutions in Mali Lošinj, Pula, Brijuni, Rovinj, Grado, Aquileia and Trieste, where they also had expert lectures. The closing ceremony of the second part of the congress was in Trieste, from where the participants returned to Vienna by the special train.

Key words: *balneology; congress; Abbazia/Opatija; Austrian Riviera; history of medicine.*

The authors of this article were interested in organization of the congress, its course, its accompanying activities, and the themes of the lectures of the 4th Balneology Congress of Austria in Abbazia (nowadays Opatija, Croatia) in the year 1904.

Vienna physician, Professor Dr Johann von Oppolzer (1808-1871) has advised treatment with the adequate/dietetic nutrition and also recommended the balneology therapy to some of his patients. For this reason he is considered to be the first to introduce balneology as a type of therapy [1]. His disciple, Professor Dr Wilhelm Winternitz (1834 -1917), an Austrian specialist in internal medicine, hydrotherapist and balneologist, that owned hydrotherapeutic foundation/institute in Kaltenleutgeben in 1865, founded Department for Hydrotherapy at the Vienna University in 1899 [2]. The same year The Central Society of Balneologists of Austria organized the Ist Balneology Congress at Vienna from March 28 till March 30 [3]. The IInd Balneology Congress of Austria, held in Ragusa, included also the expert excursion to Ilidža. The congress lasted from March 30 till April 5, 1900 [4]. In the year 1902 the IIIrd Congress of Balneologists was organized in Vienna again from March 20 till March 25 [5]. At the beginning of December 1903 Professor Dr Julius Glax (1846-1922), the principal of the health resort and of the seaside spa Opatija, also a member of the Central Society of Balneologists of Austria, sent the proposition to the management to organize the IVth balneology congress in Opatija in October 1904. His proposition was accepted at the plenary meeting on December 18, 1903 [6]. Subscriptions for the congress had to be sent to the Central Society of Balneologists till the end of September, 1904. For the expert excursions to health resorts in Austrian Riviera, for the meetings and other social gatherings the subscriptions had to be sent till October 6 [7]. For the participants, the balneology society organized transport from Vienna to Opatija by a special train that started on October 12 in the morning from the south railway station. After 12 hours the train arrived at Matulji. Special committee/board was taking care of the transport of the participants and their luggage. The participants arrived to Opatija in the comfortable carriages and hotel omnibuses in a half an hour

ride [8]. At this time the tramway Matulji - Voloska - Opatija - Lovran was not yet available [9]. Special committee was established to take care of the accommodation. There were three large hotels operating in Opatija in 1904: Hotel Quarneo, Hotel Stephanie in Villa Amalia, owned by International Society of Sleeping Cars. Therefore, several participants of the congress had to be accommodated in small private hotels and boarding houses. The entertainment committee organized evening social gatherings for the congress participants in Adria-Club on October 13 and 14 [10].

In the pavilion of the former warm and cold marine baths there was an exhibition of the products which complemented balneotherapy or were otherwise important from the medical point of view offered by the Austrian or foreign companies. Bayer, Juschitzka & Schmidt, Novelly & Zell, A. Recknagel, C. Reichert, Rohrbeck, Dr. Sedlitzky, Rud. Siebert, Dr. Theinhardt Hygiana and Karl Zeiss were exhibiting. The owner of the Zanderinstitut in Opatija Dr Isor Stein (1860-?) presented his own therapeutic aid (utility) Exerciteur at this exhibition [11].

The congress began with unofficial activities in the morning on October 13, 1904. The participants had a guided tour of the seaside health resort, of the rehabilitation path of the first category for the patients with heart difficulties, of the both marine spas Slatina and Angiolina, of the covered spa Erzherzog Ludwig Viktor Bad and of the health institution Zander Institut [10]. The official congress opening was at 11.00 a.d. in a Hotel Stephanie. Professor Dr Wilhelm Winternitz, the President of the Central Society of Balneologists of Austria and the university professor at the Department for Hydrotherapy at the Vienna University, opened the congress with a welcome speech and with the lecture on the importance of the modern balneology [12]. After him Professor Dr Julius Glax, the principal of the seaside health resort, and the mayor of Opatija Dr Andrija Stanger (1853-1934) welcomed the participants. The official language of the congress was German. The exception was made for Dr A. Stanger, who began his welcome speech in Croat and continued in German [13]. (Fig. 1)

There were 254 officially registered participants of the congress. The majority of the participants were physicians and students of medicine (177). No woman physician participated, as in Austro-Hungarian Empire the university study for women was allowed only in the academic year 1900/01 [14]. There were 25 representatives of the pharmaceutical companies, the spa and hotel owners, entrepreneurs, constructors, economists and journalists.

Möge reicher Erfolg Ihre Tätigkeit lohnen und mögen die Tage, die Sie hier verbringen, Ihnen Freude und Genuß bereiten : jetzt und einst in der Erinnerung !

Bürgermeister Dr. Stanger: Velenčena Gospodo! Kao načelnik ove obciine, kojoj je pripala čast, da vidi u svojoj sredini sakupljeno toliko učenjaka, častim se u imenu domoćeg pućanstva ponajprije srdaćno Vas, ćastna gospodo, pozdraviti i zahvaliti Vam se na ovom velevaźnom posjetu koji će u projeűti naűeg liećiliűta zatilzeűm biti kono volo vaűna toćka napredka istoga i to nesamo radi posjeta sama i ćasti naűem liećiliűta istim izkazane, nego i radi koristi kojoj se naűe liećiliűte moűe u svakom obziru od rad Vaűih gűpodstva nadati.

Figure 1. Welcome speech from Dr A. Stanger, mayor of Volosko-Opatija during the IV congress of austrian balneologists in Opatija, 13.10.1904
(Source: *Publications of Austrian balneological society*, 1905)

Slika 1. Pozdravni govor dr. A. Stangera, gradonaćelnika općine Volosko-Opatija na IV. kongresu austrijskih balneologa u Opatiji, 13. listopada 1904. (Publikacija Saveza balneologa Austrije, 1905).

There were 54 of the companions of the congress participants (spouses, daughters and secretaries). There was no special lady program for them. They attended the expert lectures, social evening gatherings and expert excursions [15]. Also the important politicians attended the congress: Minister for the interior, the head of the health department at the same Ministry, and also the officer for health and the sanitary inspector from the regional administration in Trieste [10].

The congress activities were carried out in 4 plenary sessions, on Thursday afternoon, on Friday morning, on Saturday morning and afternoon. There were presented 5 papers, 13 auto-papers, 3 reports, 1 report with the demonstration and 57 discussions. The themes were on balneology (Novelties in Balneology, Mechanical and Balneology Approach/Treatment of the Heart Diseases, The Importance of bath in gout, Balneotherapy at the Combination of Heart, Nervous and Women Difficulties ...), and free themes (Vegetarian Diet, Fighting Malaria in the Costal Region, Etiology and Prophylaxis of the Night Sweating at the Tuberculosis, Pre-Menstrual Temperature Rise at the Pulmonary Tuberculosis, Initial Tuberculosis and the Menstruation, Auto-Toxic and Alimentary Dermatitis ...). Some physicians presented their experiences with thalassotherapy (Therapeutic Importance of the Marine Bath on Adriatic, Marine Climate and Tuberculosis) [10]. Six papers and auto-papers from the IVth scientific congress were published *in extenso* in the later issues of the journal *Wiener Medizinische Wochenschrift* [17].

The expert trip was scheduled for the participants of the congress on Friday afternoon. They sailed to Crikvenica on the ship *Liburnija*. Dr Herman noble Coltelli de Roccamara, the principal of the health institutions in Crikvenica, showed to the participants of the congress the military sanatorium, health resort for children Ladislaus/Ladislavovec, health hotel *Therapia* and the spa park. On the ground floor of the hotel *Therapia* there was a hydropathic/hydrotherapeutic institution with the most modern equipment for physiotherapy. The spa park was proud of their children's playground and the course for lawntennis [18].

The Congress concluded on Saturday afternoon. In the evening the banquet was organized where the president of the Society of Physicians of Opatija, Professor Dr Glax paid tribute to all of the participants for their contributions by the written acknowledgement that his daughter the painter Stefanie Glax (1876-1952) designed (Fig. 2).

On the next day the expert excursion to the health resorts in Kvarner and Istria was organized for the congress participants. They sailed on the ship *Pannonia* to Mali Lošinj, and admired this the most south located health resort on the island and Cicala bay. Late at night they arrived to Pula, where they spent the night. On Monday morning they visited the harbour of the Austrian Navy and the old city with the Roman amphitheatre. On the afternoon they visited Brijuni islands. In the evening there was a social gathering with the dancing for the congress participants and for the important representatives of Pula. On Tuesday after a two and a half hour journey to Rovinj the congress participants initially visited the old city, and after this the marine hospice San Pelagio. The Head of the Hospice, Professor Dr Monti gave a lecture for the congress participants presenting the methods and success of treatment in this institution. Primarius Dr Kien presented several successfully cured patients before dismissal home. After the lectures the congress participants collected and donated K 1300 to the hospice. Journey to Grad followed, where they stayed overnight, and enjoyed the city, the famous dunes, and Aquileia. On Thursday part of the congress participants travelled by ship and others by train to Trieste, where they had a joint lunch in a *Hotel de la Ville* with the solemn closure of the Congress. The congress participants had a free afternoon. They could visit Miramare, Opicina or Aquarium in Trieste. In the evening a special train was organized for them from Trieste to Vienna [19].



Figure 2. Appreciation Letter from the president of Medical association of Opatija prof. Glax to all participants who contributed to organisation of the IV. balneological congress. (Kindly provided by Mr. Andreas Inhofner, Vienna).

Slika 2. Zahvalnica predsjednika Liječničkog društva Opatija prof. Glaxa svima koji su sudjelovali u organizaciji IV. kongresa balneologa.
(Ljubaznošću g. Andreasa Inhofnera iz Beča).

THE HISTORICAL MEMORY / CONCLUSION

The information that the IVth Congress of Balneologists was organized in Opatija in 1904 was found in a book *Opatijski album* by Boris Zakošek issued in 2005 as a special publication of the State Archive in Rijeka (20). The first more detailed information was found in the daily newspapers of the time. The journal *Neue Freie Presse* published a call for participation in the Congress, and the announcement about the special train being offered from Vienna to Opatija for the participants. In the journals *Neue Freie Presse* and *Das interessante Blatt* two short reports on the expert and social activities at the Opatija Congress were published, and the names of the prominent physicians and politics that actively participated at the Congress were listed. We found it interesting that in *Das interessante Blatt* along with the report about the Congress also the full-page photography of the congress participants was published [21] (Fig. 3). In the 43rd issue of the weekly paper *Wiener Medizinische Wochenschrift* that was published in duration of the congress in Opatija besides the reports on the congress also all ceremonial speeches were published. In the later issues of this weekly paper six papers from the congress were published [22]. All papers mentioned were available at ANNO - *AustriaN Newspapers Online*.

The Congress Proceedings was published by *Central Society of Balneologists of Austria* in 1905. The Editor was its secretary Assistant Professor Dr Karl



Figure 3. Photograph with participants of IV. congress of austrian balneologists in Opatija, 14.10.1904 (Source: *Das interessante Blatt*, 20.10.1904).

Slika 3. Fotografija sudionika IV. kongresa austrijskih balneologa u Opatiji, 14.listopada 1904. (*Das interessante Blatt*, 20.10.1904).

Ullmann (1860 – 1940). In the Proceedings there are detailed reports on both expert tours. As well as all welcome and memorial speeches dedicated to the diseased Austrian balneologists, papers, auto-reports and lectures were published. The Proceedings is kept in the Library of the Medical University in Vienna and was available to us in e-form, payment was required. In the State Archive in Rijeka no documents on the IVth Congress of Balneologists could be found. The Congress was only mentioned in the records of two meetings of the Health resort Opatija administration, that were taking place on December 7, 1903 and on September 23, 1904. On the first meeting the proposition by Professor Glax to send the offer for the organization of the congress to the Central Society of the Balneologists at Vienna was accepted. On the second meeting they were discussing the organization and payment of the transport for the attending congress participants and their luggage from Matulji to Opatija [23].

Today we can find on the internet only a few names of the prominent and distinguished physicians that actively participated on the IVth Congress of Balneologists. Most of them are already forgotten.

On the website *Povijest Opatije – Opatija Online (The History of Opatija – Opatija Online)* the IVth Congress of Balneologists is not mentioned, though it was of the utmost importance for promotion of Opatija. In Opatija that proudly calls itself the Town museum, on any public building there is no memorial tribute of the very important event that lasted for several days, and was significant for the promotion of the Austrian Riviera, the climate sea-side health resort and marine baths.

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SAŽETAK

Autore članka zanimale su teme predavanja, organizacija, tijekom i popratne aktivnosti kongresa balneologa održanog u Opatiji 1904. Kongres je u dva dijela organizirao tadašnji ravnatelj lječilišta prof. dr. Julius Glax. Prvi se dio održao u Opatiji od 13. do 15. listopada 1904. Obuhvaćao je predavanja, referate vlastitih znanstvenih radova/djela, njihove sažetke, poruke, diskusije i poslijepodnevni stručni izlet parobrodom u Crikvenicu. Sudionici kongresa razgledali su u Opatiji lječilišni park, rehabilitacijske staze za srce, morska kupališta Angiolina i Slatina, pokriveno kupalište Erzherzog Ludwig Viktor i Zanderjev institut. Na pratećoj izložbi svojim su se proizvodima predstavile austrijske i njemačke tvrtke, između ostalih još danas poznati Bayern, C. Reichert i Karl Zeiß. Na izložbi je svojim terapeutskim pomagalom exerciteur sudjelovao i opatijski liječnik dr. Isor Stein. Prvi dio kongresa zaključen je 15. listopada 1904. velikim banketom u hotelu Stephanie. Drugi dio kongresa održanog od 16. do 20. listopada 1904. obuhvaćao je stručnu ekskurziju po lječilištima austrijske riviere parobrodom Pannonia. Sudionici kongresa posjetili su i lječilišne ustanove i znamenitosti u Malom Lošinj, Puli, Brijunima, Rovinju, Gradu, Aquilei i Trstu gdje su imali i stručna predavanja. Drugi dio kongresa završen je svečanošću u Trstu odakle su se sudionici posebnim vlakom vratili u Beč.

Ključne riječi: balneologija; kongres; Opatija; Austrijska rivijera; povijest medicine.