

20th Scientific Conference Rijeka and its Citizens in Medical History, 4th November 2022

In one of the most beautiful parks, in one of the most beautiful villas in Rijeka – the former residence of Archduke Joseph – the scientific conference *Rijeka and its Citizens in Medical History* was again held this year. The 20th scientific conference in the organisation of the Croatian Scientific Society for the History of Health Culture and the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Rijeka was the host of 15 oral presentations. A ceremonial opening of the conference and a warm welcome with several introductory words on conference contents and topics to all present was wished by the secretary of the conference, Marko Medved, and the president of the Organising Committee, Ante Škrobonja.

Before the very beginning, Zmagor Turk, a representative of the Medico-historical Section of the Slovenian Medical Association, held a small ceremony, informing the attendees that Ante Škrobonja had been elected as an honorary member of the Section.

The program comprised two sessions. Bruno Atalić, Toni Buterin, Željko Dugac, Ana Alebić-Juretić and Janez Fischinger were moderators of the first session. The first session closely connected the town of Rijeka and its citizens in medical history, emphasising scientific achievements and Rijeka's medical history topics. Bruno Atalić presented the foundations of the scientific conference during the past twenty years, together with the co-author Ante Škrobonja, entitled *Twenty scientific conferences "Rijeka and its Citizens in Medical History"*, where he emphasised the significant progress and attendance over the past twenty years of the conference. Precisely on the path of the growth and development and the very historical and medical heritage, Toni Buterin concisely, clearly, and interestingly presented the topic *Two decades of the scientific publication and preservation of historical and medical heritage through scientific journal AMHA – Acta medico-historica Adriatica*, written in co-au-



Photograph by Robert Doričić

thorship with Igor Eterović and Robert Doričić. In order to continue the series of positive events, Željko Dugac very detailed presented Tatjana Čulina's book *"Historical medical and public health reflections of the uneven economic development of Rijeka and its surroundings in the 19th century"*. Ana Alebić-Juretić, with her topic, *Mass vaccination in Rijeka at the end of the 19th century*, presented the current problem of immunisation, with which we dealt much easier in history than we do today. With the aim of indicating that medicine is sometimes (or for some) much more than the professional execution of learned or acquired skills at an individual and social level, Vesna Pešić presented a work she co-authored with Eduard Pavlović under the title *Some physicians from Rijeka / "Rijeka's" physicians (the first half of the 20th century): Primary vocation and "non-medical" activities*. With the topic of the *Health magazine of the climate and sea health resort in Opatija (Zdraviliški časopis klimatskega zdravilišča in morskega kopališča Opatija)*, we were briefly taken to Opatija by Janez and Duša Fischinger, who presented the undoubted success of the magazine of the same name. Robert Doričić, in co-authorship with Igor Eterović, delivered the presentation about the rich inventory of Veprinac Parish through sacred heritage and a wealth of impressive data, entitled *Veprinac Parish through the prism of historical and medical reflection*. The first session was concluded by Marko Medved, who, in a scientific and critical manner, presented a work entitled *Ilija Lučkinić from Senj and his work Način pomoći k zveličanju umirajuće*, on the



Photograph by Vedran Karuza, Novi list

occasion of the 300th anniversary of the publication, which can undoubtedly be of interest to the history of medicine of the 18th century in this area.

After a short break with coffee, tea, and sweets, the second session with free topics was chaired by Zvonka Zupanič Slavec, Dubravko Habek, Nikola Kujundžić and Marko Medved. The aforementioned moderator Zvonka Zupanič Slavec held a presentation entitled *History of the vaccination movement and the contemporary response to them*. A special emphasis is placed on the flow of information and decision-making for yourself and your body precisely on the subject of vaccination. Dubravko Habek presented the story about Dr Mirjam Hafner Iveković. In the paper entitled *Doctor Mirjam Iveković (1900–1984), a surgeon from Pakrac, Nova Gradiška and Gospić*, her history of education and work are described, as well as the fact that she was among the first three female surgeons in that era. Zmago Turk presented a co-authored work with Elko Borko and Dušica Mičetić-Turk, i.e., the biography of the honorary member of the Croatian Medical Association, Prof. Zora Janžeković under the title *Prof. Zora Janžeković – the genius of plastic surgery*. As this year marks the 140th anniversary of the beginning of higher education teaching in pharmacy at the University of Zagreb and the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the independent Faculty of Pharmacy, Nikola Kujundžić presented a topic entitled *The first dean of the independent Faculty of Pharmacy, a professor of pharmacognosy, Antun Vrgoč (1881–1949) – the fate of scientists in the whirlwind*

of two world wars. In order to learn about the facts on the first records of animal infectious diseases, Vojteh Cestnik, in co-authorship with Andrej Pengov, presented the topic on *Veterinary publications of the 18th and 19th centuries in the territory of Slovenia*. Towards the end, Bruno Atalić took us to Slavonia, more precisely to Osijek, with the topic *Medicine in Osijek during the time of Franz Joseph I - The establishment of the Huttler-Kohlhoffer-Monsperger Foundation Hospital*, in which he conveyed the historical progress of health care in Osijek and Slavonia in a very interesting and comprehensive manner. Mojca Ramšak concluded the 20th jubilee conference with an engaging topic entitled *Uporaba smole iglavcev za samozdravljenje v Sloveniji (The use of resin needles for self-healing in Slovenia)* and educated those present about the possibilities and reasons for using pine needles for health purposes.

After the final discussion and the conclusion of the conference secretary, Marko Medved, a small reception was held where the attendees continued to discuss certain topics from different perspectives informally. After a two-year break due to the COVID-19 disease pandemic, medical historians finally gathered again in Rijeka. The large attendance of participants and audiences testified to the long-awaited comeback of this unique and important event not only on the historical and medical map of Croatia but also for the wider region, which celebrated its big round anniversary this year.

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