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Source / Izvornik: **Acta medico-historica Adriatica, 2006, 4, 331 - 336**

Journal article, Published version

Rad u časopisu, Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://um.nsk.hr/um:nbn:hr:184:698268>

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2025-02-22**



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ON THE OCCASION OF THE 40TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE CROATIAN
SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF
MEDICAL CULTURE

U PRIGODI ČETRDESETE OBLJETNICE DJELOVANJA
HRVATSKOGA ZNANSTVENOG DRUŠTVA ZA
POVIJEST ZDRAVSTVENE KULTURE

Ante Škrobonja*

In mid 1960s a group of medico-historical enthusiasts from Rijeka, most of whom were teachers at the Rijeka University School of Medicine, decided to give structure to their informal gatherings by founding a medico-historical society. This was the time when medical history department was headed by a Belgrade professor Zdenko Levental, who in fact was a Zagreb University graduate. Professor Levental was a colleague and friend to a number of our founding enthusiasts, and he introduced them to the activities of the Yugoslav Scientific Society for the History of Medical Culture. His was the initiative to establish a Rijeka chapter of the society, which took place at one gathering in the home of professors Marijan and Radmila Matejčić on 29 May 1966. This founding meeting was also attended by Nikola Korin, Mileva Korin, Drago Vrbanić and Eugen Cerkovnikov.

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They came up with a statute that defined the Society's main goals:

- to gather historians, healthcare workers, cultural and public persons or associations whose aim was to support and advance medical culture;
- to advance medico-historical and similar research, especially in Humanities;
- to popularise history of medicine and Croatian medical heritage;
- to organise meetings, lectures and study trips;
- to publish relevant literature; and
- to establish cooperation with other associations at home and abroad.

It is interesting to note that young as it was, the Society immediately attracted an unexpectedly large number of intellectuals from different walks of life, from medical professions (human and veterinary medicine, dentistry, and pharmacology) to biologists, chemists, physicists, historians, lawyers and philosophers, promoting thus an interdisciplinary approach to medical history.

The Society organised great many thematic meetings and study trips; their members participated in countless local and international congresses and published valuable articles on local and national history of medicine. According to many, two national (then Yugoslav) annual meetings organised by the Rijeka chapter stand out; the first took place in Crikvenica in 1968 and the second in Poreč in 1976. Followed the "Thalassotherapia '90", an outstanding international symposium held in Crikvenica in 1990, and a scientific colloquium on the Church in Croatian medical history held in Trsat in 1991. The Society's merits were recognised as soon as 1969 when it received the annual award from the City of Rijeka.

With Croatian independence in 1991, the Society left the Yugoslav association and registered under the name of "Hrvatsko znanstveno društvo za povijest zdravstvene kulture (Croatian Scientific Society for the History of Medical Culture)" as the national association with a seat in Rijeka. At the same time it became the member of the International Society for the History of Medicine (ISHM).

Over the 40 years, the Society has held 208 professional and scientific meetings in Rijeka, neighbouring towns, and nation's capital Zagreb, and organised a number of study trips to Slovenia, Italy and Austria.

Among scientific meetings over the last several years, six stand out that were dedicated to Rijeka and its residents in medical history, but

which also included contributions about other places in Croatia and abroad. These meetings have become traditional and one of the kind in Croatia.

The Society also boasts the publication of AMHA - *Acta medico-historica Adriatica*, an international biannual journal established in 2003. The journal's title stresses its primary goal, that is, to publish contributions which promote knowledge of the history of medicine and other sciences, especially in the context of the Adriatic and Central European cultural heritage. The contributions are bilingual and include languages spoken in the Adriatic or Central European countries and English.

The Editorial Council of the journal boasts not only to include medical historians and medical professionals, but a variety of scientific profiles, counting no less than 50 highly reputed scientists from 11 countries.



Figure 1. Members of the Croatian Scientific Society for the History of Medical Culture with guests at the jubilee concert on the occasion of the Society's 40th anniversary held in the Marble Hall of the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral Rijeka on 1 June 2006.

Slika 1. Članovi Hrvatskoga znanstvenog društva za povijest zdravstvene kulture i brojni gosti na svečanom koncertu u prigodi 40. obljetnice Hrvatskoga znanstvenog društva za povijest zdravstvene kulture, održanom 1. lipnja 2006. u Mramornoj dvorani Pomorskog i povijesnog muzeja u Rijeci.



Figure 2 Among performers at the jubilee concert were the musicians of Physicians' Chamber Music orchestra "Pro medico" of the "Dr Lojz Kraigher" Clinical Hospital and School of Medicine cultural club from Ljubljana, Slovenia, conducted by professor Pavle Kornhauser.

Slika 2. Kao gosti na koncertu nastupili su članovi kulturno-umjetničkog društva Kliničkog centra i Medicinskog fakulteta Dr. Lojz Kraigher iz Ljubljane, odnosno njihov Liječnički glazbeni komorni ansambl "Pro medico", pod vodstvom prof. dr. Pavla Kornhausera.

AMHA is published in 300 print copies and is available on the Internet. It is exchanged for 25 journal titles, proceedings and other publications with 33 institutions, and is donated to 32 libraries in the world and 13 at home.

In 2005, AMHA launched a special edition of monographs entitled "Biblioteka AMHA (AMHA Book Collection)" dedicated to world's leading medical historians, to scientific meetings on great medical personalities, and other relevant subjects. Two monographs have already seen the light of day and three are pending publication.

Today the Society counts fifty active members from every walk of life including medical professions, historians, lawyers, philosophers, chemists, biologists, and physicists. One of the Society's special activities is the "School of Local/Home Medicine" which gathers medicine students who

wish to learn more about local and national histories of medicine. There is another relatively new informal group of medicine students who are music enthusiasts dedicated to Aesculapius (Asclepius) and Orpheus, and who are interested in the relationships between music and medicine, and who organise thematic gatherings and interesting concerts.

The achievements of the first forty years strongly encourage us to continue with the existing scope of activities, including thematic meetings in Rijeka and other towns, traditional scientific meetings “Rijeka and its Inhabitants in Medical History”, publication of AMHA and its special book collection, and close cooperation with colleagues at home and abroad in promoting research of the history of medicine.

SAŽETAK

U prigodnom prikazu aktualni predsjednik HZDPZK-a podsjeća na osnivanje Društva koje je na inicijativu prof. dr. Zdenka Leventala održano u stanu obitelji prof. Marijana i prof. Radmile Matejčić 29. svibnja 1966. Osnivačkom sastanku prisustvovali su još: prof. dr. Nikola Korin, mr. ph. Mileva Korin, prof. dr. Drago Vrbanić te prof. dr. Eugen Cerkovnikov. Društvu uskoro pristupaju brojni intelektualci raznih struka – od medicinara, svih profila (doktori medicine, stomatologije i veterinarske medicine, magistri farmacije...), preko biologa, kemičara i fizičara, do povjesničara, pravnika i filozofa, koji afirmiraju interdisciplinarni pristup medicinskoj prošlosti. Aktivnost se provodi kroz tematske sastanke, izlete, sudjelovanje na domaćim i međunarodnim skupovima, publiciranje vrijednih priloga iz lokalne i nacionalne medicinske povijesti. Uz to je uspješno organizirano i nekoliko većih domaćih i međunarodnih skupova u Crikvenici 1976. i 1990., u Poreču 1976., na Trsatu 1991... Za iskazane uspjehe Društvo dobiva Godišnju nagradu grada Rijeke 1969. Nakon osamostaljenja Hrvatske 1991., riječko Društvo registrira se pod novim imenom Hrvatsko znanstveno društvo za povijest zdravstvene kulture kao nacionalna udruga sa sjedištem u Rijeci.

U proteklih četrdeset godina održano je 208 stručnih i znanstvenih skupova u Rijeci, mjestima Primorsko-goranske i Istarske županije te u Zagrebu, i organizirano više stručnoznanstvenih izleta u Sloveniju, Italiju i Austriju.

Od najznačajnijih aktivnosti posljednjih godina ističe se šest znanstvenih skupova s glavnom temom Rijeka i Riječani u medicinskoj povijesti, na kojima se predstavljaju i slobodne teme iz povijesti medicine drugih sredina, tako da je to jedini tradicionalni skup te vrste u Hrvatskoj i s međunarodnim sudjelovanjem.

Druga je važna aktivnost međunarodni časopis AMHA – Acta medico-historica Adriatica, koji izlazi od 2003. redovito sa po dva broja godišnje, a od 2005. i prateća Biblioteka AMHA – niz monografskih knjiga posvećenih najznačajnijim povjesničarima medicine.

Društvo ima pedesetak aktivnih članova. Kao posebna aktivnost, u Društvu se provodi i tzv. Škola medicine zavičaja koja okuplja studente medicine, a odnedavno djeluje i skupina medicinara i zaljubljenika u glazbu, koja pod motom U slavu Asklepiju i Orfeju afirmira vezu između medicine i glazbe preko tematskih istraživanja, prigodnih predavanja te osebujno koncipiranih koncerata.

