
Academician Professor Emeritus Izet Masic, for Whom Medicine is Destiny and Writing is Greatest Passion

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Medicine is the adventure of academician Mašić, his actually way of life, which is impressive and spectacular at the same time. Intellectual curiosity of academician Mašić is a great and fascinating. Academician Mašić is a renaissance type of the scientist and creator whose features are encyclopedic erudition and great spiritual curiosity. With stylistically recognizable expression, which successfully has connected one versatile, not only medical, but universal education and intellectual playfulness, academician Mašić realized his whole creative opus. The certain writing in the whole scientific opus of the academician Mašić has a specific position. The thought of one of the greatest European lyrists, Rainer Maria Rilke (1926–1975), could refer to academician Mašić: "Would I have to die, if writing were denied me?"

Scientific and creative way of academician Mašić is more than impressive. Representative of that scientific way, creator of these creative ideas and the interpreter of new attitudes in modern medical science, Mašić can only do Bosnian-Herzegovinian medicine honor and respect. Nowadays, we can speak about "phenomenon Mašić", his influence, popularity and readability. Academician Mašić permanently finds new readers even in our "scarce time" which is lacking in spirit and passion.

In short, academician Mašić succeeded to create so grandiose opus, thanks to his great medical erudition, excellent knowledge of different segments of medicine, extraordinary knowledge of informatics and his critical attitude. But, not to forget, academician Mašić has medicine as the only passion and vocation. Mašić organized his all the life to be a medical doctor and he found his homeland in medicine as the "only way of his life".

Academician Mašić realized very early, that maybe, medicine is the most complete science and at the same time, the mirror of life. It's not necessary to say that medicine is the art created by man and with the roots of creativity, as in the action, either in all the relations. Medicine is more and more related to technology and many people experienced that in-

credible technological breakthrough in medicine as dehumanization of medicine. That's indisputably that technology contributed very much to expected lasting of life. It is made longer and significantly improved quality of life of patients. Technology makes weaker relations between medical doctors and patients, which is fundamental thing for final recovery and return to normal life. But still, academician Mašić has put a patient who needs help in the centre of his life, patient with the whole his suffering, pain and despair. Therein lies the greatness of medical doctor Mašić. But medicine is universal and if many things separate us on national, religious, political, economic and social level, it's medicine that brings us together and reunite us. And academician Mašić was aware of all of these things when he was enrolled in the studies of medicine.

But, do not forget that profession of medical doctor is the most humane profession. Academician Mašić approached medicine as patient also, with a lot of love, empathy and understanding. Because of that, it's possible to apply to academician Mašić three wonderful thoughts of the giants of medicine as they are Theoprastus von Hohenheim Paracelsus, Hermann Nothnagel and Karl Jaspers.

Great Theoprastus von Hohenheim Paracelsus (1493–1541) said: "Love is the deepest basis of medicine". That feeling of love and empathy towards patient, academician Mašić expressed in a miraculous way. Famous German internist, Hermann Nothnagel (1841–1905) said: "Only a good man can be a good medical doctor". If this famous thought of great internist Nothnagel, whose bust is in the hall of the University of Vienna and on which are the words that can be applied on to someone – then it's without a doubt, academician Mašić. According to great and famous psychiatrist Karl Jaspers (1883–1969), medical activity is on the two pillars: on natural-scientific cognitions and knowledge and on the ethos of humanity.

Ethos of humanity is dominant in the opus of academician Mašić, because Mašić is a humanist, altruist and scientist in Renaissance concept of scientist who



Figure 1. Academicians Vjekoslav Gerc, Mirko Grujic, Sukria Zvizdic and Izet Masic (from left to right)

is characterized by Renaissance erudition and above all, humanity. Scientific and creative way of academician Mašić is more than impressive. The bearer and representative of such scientific thoughts, creator of such great ideas and interpreter of new attitudes in modern medical science, can only do honor and reputation to Bosnian–Herzegovinian medicine and science. Generally speaking, Mašić's work is completely considered as extraordinary and incomparable personally contribution and the most important medical modern reference.

In general, academician Mašić succeeded to make a complex and unique complete work in medicine. Not only as a medical doctor, professor, academician, but as the lexicographer, showed with his work *Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics* specialty of his lexicographic work and skills, linguistic inventiveness and polyhistorical knowledge. And exactly, this lexicon is undoubtedly about that academician Mašić is polyhistor in the really sense of that word. *Habent sua fata libelli*, books have their own destiny, old Latin sentence.

Great writer and university professor Umberto Eco (1932–2016), expanded this sentence in his famous novel *The name of the Rose* (*Il nome della rosa*): Books share their fate with readers. Actually, from the ability of the readers, how the book will be experienced, also depends on the fate, but readability of the books. In the cases of *Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics* and *Biographical Lexicon of Public Health*, the fate of these books is so bright, because the books are accepted by the readers greatly and read it with great interest, and also, because these books present on very modern, contemporary and comprehensive way all the medical doctors and scientists who marked significantly that important

moments of informatics and public health.

Le monde est fait pour aboutir à un beau livre – the world was created to be ending with beautiful book, wrote great Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898), one of the greatest French and European lyrists, creator of absolute poetry. Mallarmé meant under the name book the whole scientific or artistic creativity. Maybe, this book *Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics* by academician Mašić is the summa of his creative work. The sooner, it deserves to be read. However, creative, scientific and intellectual attempts are too great that he would stop to create, when he is at the peak of his creative and intellectual powers.

Academician Mašić is at the same time an unsurpassed essayist. As the essayist, academician Mašić is among the other things, found his real genre. Encyclopedic knowledge and analytical passion expressed themselves in the best way in the free optional form of essay, in which his aphoristic shrewdness and writer's vitalism. Academician Mašić brought a lot of different topics in the essays, where about these topics writes knowledgeable, sovereign and authoritative.

I would like to finish this essay about academician Mašić with the thought of our common spiritual father, Hippocrates of Kos (c. 460–c. 370 BC), where he succinctly presented the difficulty of medical profession: "Life is short, art is long, the opportunities are fickle, experience is deceptive and the judgement is difficult". Generations that come after us will surely, know to appreciate which he bequeathed to them. Besides that, I think and I am sure, generations of medical doctors that come after us, will know to respond to all the challenges of modern medicine in the 21st century. That will surely know, because forty five

years so human, devoted, sophisticated and above all, scientific and professional work of academician Mašić are pledge and obligation that they will continue on the way of their great predecessor, medical doctor, university professor, altruist, humanist, intellectual, polyhistor, cosmopolitan, polyglot, a great European and scientist – academician Mašić (1-3).

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