On the Occasion of 70th Anniversary of Life and 45 Years of Academic Work of Academician Izet Masic

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ABSTRACT

In the hilly Balkans, a folk proverb has been circulating for a long time, “It is most difficult to be a prophet in one’s own village”, which reflects the age-old mistrust of the population towards new ideas. This is not surprising in the least, because since the written history of the peoples of the Balkans has existed, a continuous series of conquerors and local rulers who subjugated the common folks and imposed their world view can be traced. Nevertheless, from time to time, people with great strength appear who not only break the shackles imposed by the powerful, but through their actions find a way to the souls of their compatriots and gain their unreserved trust. One of such spontaneous creators is professor Izet Mašić, who achieved a miracle of medical publishing in his Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina and traced the path of medical science. There may be thousands of medical journals in the world, more or less reputable, and researchers from the Balkans can publish their work in them, but only domestic medical journals can initiate and direct domestic medical research, and educate young researchers in the right way. Professor Mašić made it possible for authors from Bosnia and Herzegovina and other Balkan countries to present their results to the world and receive an incentive from impartial experts to continue their work and progress more and more by editing and publishing three domestic journals at once, which are visible in the most important world bases. The progress in research then translated into improving medical practice and health care of the population. The following details from Professor Mašić’s biography tell us how this miracle happened. This year, academician Izet Mašić, Editor-in-Chief of a few biomedical journals, including Acta Informatica Medica journal, celebrates his 70th birthday and also 45 years of his academic and scientific work.

Keywords: 70th anniversary of Izet Masic. academic work.

1. BACKGROUND

This year, academician Izet Masic, Editor-in-Chief of a few biomedical journals, including Acta Informatica Medica journal, celebrates his 70th birthday and also 45 years of his academic and scientific work. Acta was founded in the year 1993 by Izet asic and Zoran Ridjanovic during wartime in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995). His team organized 12 conferences under very difficult conditions in the besieged city of Sarajevo, published 47 books and monographs and 10 issues of the journals Medical Archives and Acta Informatica Medica. Thanks to these incredible activities in the wartime period Bosnian-Herzegovinian science didn’t stop to exist. The world scientific community was suprised with this work of the few enthusiastic persons who signed one of the miracles in Bosnia during wartime. In 1994, Izet Masic included Bosnian-Herzegovinian Society of Medical Informatics into the World Association and the European Federation of Medical Informatics (IMIA and EFMI). It was the first scientific institution from Bosnia and Herzegovina which became member of the most influential scientific institutions worlwide.

Izet Masic has published more than 100 books and monographs, including over 50 in the field of history of medicine (besides his textbooks on family
Figure 1. Cover pages of the published books of academician Izet Masic in the period 1980-2022.
medicine, social medicine, health management, medical informatics, science editing, which have been used by undergraduate and postgraduate students for their education). Over the last ten years Professor Masic has written very important books on the history of medical informatics and history of public health, and about these books the most influential experts in that fields expressed their opinions. You will find some of them in this part of the text (2-15).

From time to time, people with great strength appear who not only break the shackles imposed by the powerful, but through their actions find a way to the souls of their compatriots and gain their unreserved trust. One of such spontaneous creators is professor Izet Mašić, who achieved the the miracle of medical publishing in his Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina and traced the path of medical science. There may be thousands of medical journals in the world, more or less reputable, and researchers from the Balkans can publish their work in them, but only domestic medical journals can initiate and direct domestic medical research, and educate young researchers in the right way. Professor Mašić made it possible for authors from Bosnia and Herzegovina and other Balkan countries to present their results to the world and to receive an incentive from impartial experts to continue their work and progress more and more by editing and publishing three domestic journals at once, which were visible in the most important world bases. The progress in research then translated into improvements in medical practice and health care of the population. The following details from Professor Mašić’s biography tell us how this miracle happened (16-18).

2. BIOGRAPHICAL FACTS ABOUT ACADEMICIAN IZET MAGIC

Izet M. Magic, MD, PhD. (1952-) was born in Gracanica, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H). He is a pioneer of medical informatics in B&H and Balkan countries as one of the first MDs who earned MSc and PhD in medical informatics field (1, 2). He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine of Sarajevo University in 1976 and notified his medical diploma at the Faculty of Medicine at Innbruck University (Austria). He was a postgraduate student at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) in 1981/1982.

Izet Masic has been elected as Full Professor of Medical Informatics and Family Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine of University of Sarajevo and Full Professor of Social Medicine and Health Care Organization, and Health Management at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Zenica. In 2021 he has been elected as Professor Emeritus at Faculty of Medicine, University of Sarajevo. He is also a professor at several other universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia (Dubrovnik International University), as well as in other countries.

As author and co-author, Prof Izet Masic has published one thousand different publications, most of them in peer-reviewed indexed medical journals. He is the author of 88 indexed books and monographs. His most important books in the field of medical informatics are (3-15) (Figures 1-3):

- “History of Medical Informatics in B&H” (2009),
- “History of Medical Informatics – an overview” (2013),
- “Contributions to the History of Medical Informatics” (editions: 2014, 2015),
- “Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics” (editions: 2015, 2016, 2017),
- “Honorary Fellows of EFMI” (2017),

In the year 2009 Izet Masic formed Academy of Medical Sciences of B&H (AMNuBiH) and became first President of Academy. He established Society for Medical Informatics in B&H in 1988. In 2000 he was founding member and Vice-President of the Association of Social Medicine—Public health of FB&H. Izet Masic is a member of the Council of EFMI (1994-present), the General Assembly of IMIA (1994-present), the International Society for Telemedicine & eHealth (2005-present), the Governing Board of the European Association for Public Health (EUPHA) (2000-present), and the European Association of Information Technology Managers (2007-2015). From 2012 to 2015 he was member of the Council of the European Association of Science Editors (EASE). In the year 2016 Izet Masic has been elected as Honorary Fellow of the European Federation for Medical Informatics (EFEMI) and Fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics (FACMI). In 2017 he has been elected as founding member of the International Academy of Health Sciences Information (FIAHSI). In the year 2019 Izet Masic has been elected as Associate Fellow of the World Academy for Art and Science (FWAAS). In the year 2021 Izet Masic has been elected as Ordinary member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (EASA) (Figures 4-8), Vice-President of the International Academy of Sciences and Arts in Bosnia and Herzegovina (IANUBIH) and Vice President of the Bosnian Academy of Sciences and Arts “Kulin Ban” (BANUK).

Prof Masic has organized over 100 scientific and professional conferences and among those 10 during the war time in Sarajevo. Izet Masic chaired the 22nd European Congress of Medical Informatics (“MIE 2009” Conference) held in Sarajevo. He also chaired the Mediterranean Seminars on Writing, Editing and Publishing – “SWEP 2016”, “SWEP 2018”, “SWEP 2020” and “SWEP 2021” (www.amn.ba),
On the Occasion of 70th Anniversary of Life and 45 Years of Academic Work of Academician Izet Masic

Figure 2. Cover pages of the published books of academician Izet Masic in the period 1980-2022.
He was actively involved as speaker and session chairman at various conferences worldwide in the fields of public health, medical informatics, family medicine and science editing.

Prof Masic has been awarded with a lot of awards domestic and international - as excellent student of the Faculty of Medicine he was awarded with gold and silver medals, and also with special certificates for his contribution to the development of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Sarajevo on the occasion of its 60th anniversary. He was awarded a prize in 2011 for establishing of Academy of Medical Sciences of B&H. For his contribution in developing of the medical informatics in Europe he has been awarded during MIE '22 conference in Nice, France.

Professor Izet Masic is one of the most cited scientists in Bosnia and Herzegovina and he is within 2% most cited authors of published papers deposited in the SCOPUS index database listed in the Stanford bibliometric list in 2020. His published papers are visible on the following websites: a) https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Izet-Masic, b) https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=masic+i, and c) https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=SraaV7oAAAAJ&hl=en (16-18).

3. THE LIST OF PUBLISHED BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS OF ACADEMICIAN IZET MASIC


Mašić I, Ridjanović Z. Sistem biomedicinskih naučnih i stručnih informacija. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1993: 96 str.

Mašić I, i sar. Almanah povodom 47. godišnjice Medicinskog fakulteta u Sarajevu. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1993: 40 str.


Rđanović Z, Mašić I. Medicinsko odlučivanje. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1994: 301 str. CIP: 616-035(075.8).


Figure 3. Izet Masic’s books promotion during wartime in besieged Sarajevo (1992-1995) in November 1994, a few of his books in English language are deposited at University Library in Vienna, Austria
Mašić I. Klasici arapsko-islamske medicine. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1995: 96 str.
Mašić I. Zdravstvo u BiH tokom Osmanskog perioda. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1995: 40 str.
Mašić I. Tarihi Muhameda Mašića. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1997: 80 str.
Mašić I, Budalica A. Znanstveni opus Zakariyayaa ar-Razija. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1997: 52 str.
Mašić I. Rad H. Karamehmedović i Š. Sikirića na prevođenju i istraživanju izvora za historiju islamske medicine. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1998: 24 str.
Mašić I, Kujundžić E. Uvod u izvore za istraživanje historije islamske kultures. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1999: 100 str.
Mašić I. Tematski pristup izučavanju islamske medicine. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 1999: 40 str.
Masic I. Arabic medicine. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 2001: 192 PP.
Masic I, Ridjanovic Z. Medical informatics, AVICENA, Sarajevo, 2002: 672 pp.
Mašić I. Korjene medicine i zdravstva u Bosni i Hercegovini. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 2004: 228 str.
Masic I. History of Medical Informatics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. AVICENA, Sarajevo, 2007: 76 str.


Masic I. Historical Background of Medical Informatics Development. Avicena. Sarajevo, 2022, 362 pp.

English versions of Izet Masic’s books are stored in University libraries in Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, Frankfurt, Prague, Paris, London, Liverpool, Athens, Washington, Oslo, Helsinki, Stockholm, Sydney, Chenai, Taipei, Istanbul, Shiraz, Zagreb, Belgrade, Ljubljana, Tirana, Split, Podgorica, etc. Izet’s papers are published in the indexed journals in more than 30 languages.

4. WHAT OTHER SCIENTISTS TOLD ABOUT SCIENTIFIC WORK OF ACADEMICIAN IZET MASIC

It should be emphasized the multiple value of the book “Roots of Medicine and Healthcare in Bosnia and Herzegovina” by Izet Mašić. It is not only the case of meticulously collected facts, but also about expertly sublimated historical experience of medicine and healthcare in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the last century, and even longer. The author simply provided the reader an image of the historical ambience of life in this region, highlighting, of course, its healthcare content in the foreground. In some of its segments, the book offers previously unknown or significantly different details about certain issues related to the historical development.
of medicine, that is, its educational and health-professional infrastructure (e.g., details about the founding of the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo, etc.). It is not without reason that it is said that those who do not value themselves do not deserve to be valued by others. And there is another postulate which states that the one who does not sublimate his own past experience is doomed to repeat it. We also know that repeated mistakes are always the most expensive. In relation with the above, I would like to ask myself: who, for example, could and should speak more competently about the experience of war medicine, after everything we experienced in the recent brutal aggression and genocide, I would even dare to say on a planetary level, than our doctors? Will they know how to use it as their own comparative advantage in medical professional communication with the world? It should not be understood cynically, but as something that is given to a nation only in a few generations. This book will be essential reading in the future for all those who wish to study the historical experience of medicine and healthcare in these areas with even more ambition.

Jusuf Žiga, Professor of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (2004)

Keith Barnard, MB, BS., one of Editors of the very famous medical journal „Circulation“ in the issue printed in 2007, September 4, page 159 stated: „Izet Masic, MD, PhD., Professor at the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Medicine, prolific author, and editor of several medical journals, challenges the traditional views of the first descriptions of the circulation of the blood. Most people in the Western world who search for information about the discovery of the circulation of the blood, including the pulmonary system, will most likely conclude that the major players were Miguel de Servet (1511-1553), physi- cian and theologian, and William Harvey (1578-1657), the famous English physician, but is this really the case? At least 740 years ago, Alauddin Ibn Al-Nefis, a physician from Egypt and director of the Hospital Al-Mansouri in Cairo, wrote an article about the pulse in which he described the pulmonary blood circulatory system. English-language sources rarely mention him, and most references to Ibn Nefis occur in the Arabic or Turkish languages. Dr Izet Masic, professor of Family medicine at the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Medicine to have referred to this discovery in the medical literature, considers this fact of importance for all those who wish to study the historical experience of medicine and healthcare in these areas with even more ambition.

Keith Barnard, MB, BS., Circulation journal, USA (2007) **

Izet Mašić, in explaining the congress motto “Medical In- formatics in a United and Healthy Europe”, clearly states that the motto: incorporates the role of medical informatics as a scientific, technological, philosophical, and medical discipline, and raises the question as to whether and to what extent medical informatics is contributing to a new scientific, cultural, social and political community in Europe. Mašić also calls attention that “the expansion of technological power raises the need for ethical responsibility and for the preservation and promotion of human health”. Let us hope that the result of MIE 2009 will really be a contribution to the advance of human health in Europe streaming to unity. The mandate to organize the MIE 2009 Congress in Sarajevo is the crown of all efforts of Prof. Mašić, struggling for it for a long time, supported by the Society for Medical Informatics of Bosnia and Herzegovina he is leading for years so successfully. Credit should also be given to EFMI, by deciding for Sarajevo, supporting building of “new medical, biomedical, and health informatics bridges between the western and eastern parts of the European world” ... 

Gjuro Đeželić, Professor of Medical informatics, “Public Health School “Andrija Stampar”, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia (2009)

I felt so relieved when I left we both had accomplished what we had promised in Lison in 1994 and we did it together with so many others, but as a team. It was not easy but result of a 15 year project was very good, it was near PERFECT! I hope the iTouch will be a valuable replacement of me, it talks, it shows you nice memories but doesn’ discuss.

Jacob Hofdijk, EFMI President, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (2009)
Dear brothers, Izet and Jacob, congratulations for the success of MIE '09 which made our MIE '94 serment in Lisbon effective. To build on this success I would like to make you aware of the comment I put on my evaluation form of the session I was co-chairing on Monday. I spoke about it with President of the SPC. It is to have an invitation from the International Journal of Medical Informatics to Stefan Shultz to coordinate an article the title “The ISPS 2009 process - attempt of a typology of a novel terminological system and -reengineered as he started to do in comparison with final paper of MIE '09. Long life to peaceful Bosnia and Herzegovina and EFMI. Jean-Marie Rodrigues, University of Saint Etienne, France (2009)

Keeping this in mind I know that it will take me long before I will be back from the special and unique experience we all had last week. Many colleagues from the EFMI Board and Council wrote you very impressive letters, probably better than I can write. Therefore, I will not be long, and I will just add a few sentences to the beautiful and warm words you justifiably earned, with hard work. I am happy the efforts you and your colleagues made, were crowned with such a great success - for highly successful conference. For leading the LOC to unusual achievements and mainly for your unlimited devotion, for all the above, and for more than was not mentioned, please, accept my, and many of our colleagues, appreciations and thanks. My dear friend Izet, You did it!

Assa Reichert, HealSis Ltd., Executive Vice President of EFMI, Tel Aviv, Israel (2009)

Marianna and I would like to express our sincere wish to thank you for all you have done and for the excellent hospitality in Sarajevo. My friend, I hope you have some time to relax and be back with your family before going back to the University duties.

John Mantas, EFMI Council Secretary, Athens, Greece (2009)

Thank you very much again for the excellent collaboration to make such a successful and demanding conference. I am looking forward to closer cooperating with you. In this context, the orientation of the University of Regensburg to act as gate and important partner of Central Europe to the Eastern European countries to academic/educational collaboration might be of special interest.

Bernd Blobel, Professor, University hospital Regensburg, Germany (2009)

I have arrived last night in Timisoara with the satisfaction of being a part of a wonderful event. During my travel back I was thinking we can compare you with Martin Luther King with his “I had a dream”. Indeed, what else can fill your soul with happiness and joy more than seeing that the dream turns true! You and your team have done a wonderful job - this is not only my opinion, I think all our colleagues share the same view. We could appreciate your efforts still better after seeing the difficult conditions you had to work it. It required a full dedication and we deeply appreciate it. Your kind hospitality and friendship was welcome. All the social events were very nice and we were able to understand better the flavour of your country and people you should be proud of.

George Mihalas, Vice President of IMIA, Timisoara, Romania (2009)

Arriving home from Sarajevo, I would like again to thank and congratulate to your job. I have to declare, that none of us, including myself, started to work for hosting an MIE from such hard situation, as you. And none of us put so much effort into it. In Sarajevo everything went on smoothly, thank to you and your colleagues and assistants. And, I really hope, that this was not end of the story, and medical informatics will flourish in your country.

 Gyorgy Surjan, National Institute for Strategic Health Research, Budapest, Hungary (2009)

Dear Izet, I congratulate you and your team for the excellent organization of MIE congress. I enjoy also the restaurant for Council dinner and the old city of Sarajevo. I hope you will break even for the expenses to make it a plain success and in any case I will support you for any help of EFMI.

Pierre Le Beux, EFMI Council University of Rennes, France (2009)

Only in Sarajevo, and especially after our visit to the Tunel of Hope Museum I became able to appreciate how many obstacles were against MIE in Sarajevo, and how many barriers
you had to overcome. Thank you for your infinite energy and enthusiasm you charged your team to do their best and even more to organize this admirable MIE 2009.

**Michael Shifrin, Russian representative in EFMI Council, Moscow, Russia (2009)**

I have to thank you for organizing a great conference and for letting me participate. It was good to be in Sarajevo, Cordial greetings and congratulations.

**Reinhold Haas, IMIA President, Heidelberg, Germany (2009)**

I certainly enjoyed the meetings. I thought they were very well designed with a rich array of cutting edge leading medical informatics research and development reports from across Europe. I was honored to be able to participate and hope my keynote address was useful to this audience. I looked forward to future collaborations as those opportunities may arise. Thanks again for your general hospitality and I am pleased to have new colleagues in Europe.


I did it last year so I know what it takes to manage a successful conference as MIE 2009. You did it very well. I had no doubts about MIE 2009 in Sarajevo at any time because I know how important was for you and for your organization to arrange it. Many thanks to you and your co-workers for a great conference and I hope that you will be able to take some time off in order to and cure your health.

**Ragnar Nordberg, SFMI, EFMI Treasurer, Molndal, Sweden (2009)**

Many generations of professionals and thinkers, who walked ahead of time in which they lived, embodying their intellectual and creative potential in the foundation and development of the old and the new public health, devoted themselves to its aspirations, undertakings and achievements. Each of them built a precious stone in the great mosaic called the new public health. In the bosom of public health emerged professionals and wider, the health personnel and other players in the health field, who achieved their contribution to the development and promotion of social medicine and public health, as well as the professional and scientific literature in the field of public health to the new public health of today.

It is understood, the approach of an author couldn’t be sufficiently complete and comprehensive, despite the extensive use of direct archival and historical sources and references from various sources and internet. The author opted for the facts, without national, ideological, religious, political and other prejudices and differentiations. He marked life-paths of the most influential experts of public health, their work and views, delusions and illusions in some, beliefs and visions of the majority.

The author also accepted another challenge with hidden traps for comments, criticism and dissatisfaction. Unlike approaches in centuries or similar endeavors, where personalities are noted, who already reached the end of their life path, the author opted for a broader choice by including living contemporaries experts in all fields of public health, from all continents and from many countries worldwide. In most cases, those are prominent founders or fighters of social medicine and the new public health in their local communities, at the national and regional levels, and beyond at the global level. The author is aware of the risk of possible subjective evaluation. However, he felt that this lexicon of experts in public health would be incomplete if it does not spread to contemporaries who continue to embed their presence and professional contribution to better health in modern life and development in the 21st century. Some overlook and omissions are possible, as well as incomplete evaluations, and not sufficiently accurate data. Therefore, this endeavor should be considered as a wide open book for new correspondence, new additions and corrections in its subsequent editions.

However, given the content and value of this publication with a description of the life-paths of experts included and their contribution to the development and promotion of social medicine and public health, as well as the professional and ethical messages arising from it, we can rightly expect that this publication will serve as a useful guide and textbook for all teachers / educators and students in graduate MPH and doctoral studies in the field of public health, public health professionals and wider, the health personnel and other players in biomedical sciences and humanities, who deal and may contribute to the maintenance and improvement of health and quality of life in general.

**Prof Doncho Donev, MD, PhD., Faculty of Medicine, Uni-
Writing a Biographical Lexicon of Public Health is not easy. Public health has its own unique history and comes through antiquity to our modern society. From ensuring clean and safe environmental and living conditions and the control of infectious diseases, to addressing the causes of non-communicable diseases, through health promotion and addressing the wider determinants of health, public health has sought to tackle health threats over the decades and centuries. In today’s World, public health is high on the political agenda, at local, national and international levels and progress is only possible through inter-sectorial cooperation.

Public Health could not be successful itself without public health professionals. The most influential scientists in this field have played a huge role in the development of public health. Often their names and contributions are forgotten with the passage of time. The creation of a Biographical Lexicon of Public Health is one way in which we can try to prevent their contributions being lost, ensuring that there is recognition amongst their peers and the public more generally. This book is here to honor many of our public health scientists for their contributions, not only on national level but also at regional and international levels. The Lexicon is a mirror for this generation of scientists and all of the generations that have gone before, describing their roles and contributions in different areas of public health.

Prof Masic in his Preface clarifies the meaning of the terms Lexicon and bibliography and the concept of Social medicine in the former Yugoslavia and Europe, setting the strategic scene for the Biographical Lexicon of Public Health. The Lexicon can be seen as milestone in the history of Public health being among the first bibliographic books in the area of public health. The contributions to the book are from across the globe, allowing the reader and public health professional to connect with scientists from Africa, Asia, Europe, the USA and beyond. The reader can hear of the successful stories of Public health on an international scale, providing inspiration whatever stage the reader is at in their career and wherever they are practicing. Prof Izet Masic is a prolific communicator and advocate for Public health. His extensive knowledge of his subject, expressed in his many books, articles, essays and reports, in addition to his active participation in scientific societies, international projects and gatherings. Over the 15 years prof Masic very successfully edited internationally recognized public health journal “Materia Socio-Medica”, indexed and abstracted in more than 20 databases, including PubMed, PubMed Central, EBSCO, HINARI, etc. It means that Prof Masic is ideally placed to create this Lexicon. But besides these opportunities, his positive energy, spirit and passion for public health has ensured that this book is so comprehensive. Many will say, as usual, “congratulations” to Prof Masic, perhaps a few will say “OK, it is a good book but not enough”, I think that Prof Masic has established a milestone in Public health which few others could do. The Lexicon helps us answer the question “I know what I need to do but from where and when I can start?”, giving a direction, saving time and helping us finish the job. In giving us a place to start from, Prof Masic, is our public health Columbus, everyone should follow his success in being a pioneer on the Biographical Lexicon of Public Health.

Izet Masic presents us with a courageous and thorough undertaking in his exposition regarding the formidable task of writing a Biographical Lexicon of Public Health. The author’s approach is conceptual: he researches and describes biographies of approximately 750 specialists, prominent professionals, with a clarity which is both simple and elegant. It therefore gives me great pleasure to read the Biographical Lexicon of Public Health, motivated by my deep concern regarding the dramatically changing field of public health, over the past decades. Izet Masic strongly infers that during the past century of Public Health training, the decoupling of public health from medicine, has weakened medicine’s natural role as an advocate for the disenfranchised, and has led to an era in which disease etiology is often attributed to a purely biological source. However, this overly reductive approach has contributed to medicine gradually being regarded by neoliberal policies and practices that exacerbate social injustices and drive disease patterns at “population level” as beyond its purview. Interestingly, this argument is illustrated by Masic reminding the reader of the work of Nineteenth-century Prussian physician and activist Rudolf Virchow, a founder of social medicine - a field predicated by the understanding that disease is never purely biological but influenced by social, cultural, and environmental factors - and aptly to be celebrated as an archetype of a model which future healthcare professionals should aspire to, in that “doctors are natural attorneys for the poor,” Importantly, the Lexicon carries forward this same torch nearly 150 years after Virchow. Izet Masic’s courage and inspiring approach is also accompanied by caution, however the text contains extraordinary scholarship. Masic has assembled the best scientists within field of public health, from throughout the world. If I may speak directly: we as Public Health professionals are extremely fortunate that there is a lexicon such as this to guide us along the fascinating history of public health both old and relatively modern. Essentially, this volume enables us to comprehend the connections between different peoples, cultures, education in a specific field of public health, experiences, and to begin to understand the complexities and the difficulties which many of them face. The Lexicon is an excellent source of information and it is intended primarily for all specialist of public health, but also for all health workers who are curious to form an in depth understanding of the lives and biographies of specialists within the field of public health.

Izet Masic is well qualified for the task which he has now accomplished, having previously written separate texts for both fields, however, this new work which attempts to combine them, is more ambitious. He shows his readers the way in which the two streams of thought converge into smooth or sometimes turbulent currents and he illustrates how both sets of thought, as well as their junction, are used as a logical basis for medical reasoning. This is especially important for those readers who have difficulty trying to keep up with specific scientists; the scientists included, have therefore been chosen with a specific criterion in mind.
Izet Masic has prepared the Lexicon to additionally answer questions which emerge repeatedly for many of public health specialists, searching for pertinent sources of information. Therefore, this volume is aimed at health professionals, social justice activists, educators, progressives, and anyone else concerned about our current political and public health landscape. Different readers, as might be expected, may have preferred an alternative approach. For instance, some might have wanted more details of the scientists curricula, some may wish more data about motivation of scientists oriented in public health field; however, the outstanding, incontrovertible feature of the text is its role as a compendium. It contains accounts or references for almost any query which the reader might want to know in the constantly developing roles of public health in modern medicine. All in all, Izet Masic continues to enlarge the Lexicon. It is therefore my hope that the reading of this lexicon will encourage a good number of colleagues to gain insight and understanding of scientists who have lived during different times and within a variety of environments. There will undoubtedly be omissions; however, the author has gathered a formidable composite of specialists within his chosen field. Above all, this is the Lexicon for us to read, to study, and to enjoy. It is essentially an enjoyable yet highly academic read and provides a valuable contribution to current public health debates. However, considering the global challenges facing public health, as I perused this volume, I felt that also it would be an extremely useful guide for those who like me, wish to seek out and link with other colleagues in Public Health, regarding the possibility of immediate and future collaboration in the field. Written in English the text is the best described in a splendid French phrase. It is a tour de force. Ultimately, this volume is more significant for its contributions than its omissions, and adds a proud chapter to the long humanitarian history of public health. To conclude, I therefore most earnestly and humbly commend to the reader, Izet Masic’s Biographical Lexicon of Public Health as an inspired and outstanding contribution to the field of 21st Century Public Health knowledge and aspiration.

Prof. Dr. Naser Ramadani, MD., PhD., MPHE., CMIS., CIEH. Director, National Institute of Public Health University Hospital Center Prishtina, Republic of Kosovo (2015)

At the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the publication of “Medical Archives”, its readers should be informed of the availability of a new book by its prolific Editor Professor Izet Masic. He just published the first biographical lexicon in the field of Public Health. It includes about 750 names in alphabetical order. This work is an original contribution to the history and to the state of the art in Public Health. It describes the life and work of prominent contributors to the wide field of population based health improvement, disease prevention and community care. These biographies cover all five continents with personal stories about the development of public health in 50 nations and through international cooperation.

The main usefulness of this work is to provide a large set of references to professionals all over the world. In addition, Professor Masic wrote in his book a comprehensive Preface that clarifies the meaning of the terms Lexicon and Biography. He also described historical milestones in the concepts of Social Medicine, Statistical Analysis, Epidemiologic Studies, Communicable Diseases Prevention, Chronic Diseases, Epidemiology, Health Services Organization, Health Economics, Medical Record Linkage, Health Informatics, Quality of Care Indicators, Health Policies, Social Coverage, Risks Factors Intervention Trials, as well as key-role players in the former years for the advances in these various areas. The specific contribution of South East European countries is particularly well described. It adds knowledge for the public health scientists from other European countries and from other continents. As underlined by the author, this Lexicon might require a constant updating. Even if this First Edition contains worldwide biographies of a very large number of developers for many aspects of Public Health, some names might be missing and could be added in a Second Edition. Another point that might be taken into account is a more standardized presentation of some biographies. It is not always possible to obtain enough information on date of birth, nationality and the original character of the contribution of each person listed. Finally, after closing the book, I wondered if we could not have a dream for a longer term future edition: to obtain an index of the specific areas of Public Health in which each name listed in the Lexicon has mainly contributed. This might remain a dream, because requiring an enormous work. Such a suggestion only indicates that this publication is an important input to the not always well understood and regularly renewing field of Public Health. Izet Masic gives to his readers not only information that was missing. He stimulates his readers to help him to go further in his way.

Also, “When opening your Public Health Lexicon in Greek, I was happy to see the picture of Henry Blackburn who was the Promotor of my M.S. Thesis in Public Health (Biometry, major, Epidemiology, minor) at the University of Minnesota in 1972. The “small world” of Public health and Information sciences pioneers owes you very much for your publication of their names and achievements that, otherwise would be quickly forgotten, like some names on pictures taken during scientific conferences. Thanks again for your work”

Francis Roger France, MD, MS, PhD. Professor Emeritus of the University of Louvain, Belgium (2015, 2018)

Thank you very much for including me in your biographical lexicon of Public health. It is a most worthy enterprise and I warmly commend you for it. You are brave - braver than I was! - to include some historically important figures from the past. I did this, as you know, in the Dictionary of Public Health. The greatest challenge I faced in that work was striking a balance between parsimony and comprehensiveness in compiling this list. I tried also to bear in mind the sentiments of national pride.

John M Last, OC, MD. Emeritus professor, University of Ottawa School of Epidemiology, Public Health and Preventive Medicine (2015)

...It is now more than twenty years since when Izet Masic, at that time already well known in EFMI/IMIA circles, entered the world of medical informatics (MI) publishing by starting in 1993 his journal “Acta Informatica Medica” (Acta Inform Med), in which he continuously serves up to now as its Editor-in-Chief. After Acta Inform Med has been accepted 2011 for archiving in PubMed Central, now its articles are cited in
On the Occasion of 70th Anniversary of Life and 45 Years of Academic Work of Academician Izet Masic

prestigious online databases, including PubMed, Scopus and EMBASE, crediting the continuous and successful efforts of its editor-in-chief to raise the journal’s quality. Last year, at the MIE 2014 Istanbul, Masic presented a new evidence of his inexhaustible editing energy, by gathering a respectable group of to-day’s renowned medical informaticians as authors, including himself, to edit with the help of George Mihas as co-editor the nowadays well-accepted book under the title “Contributions to the History of Medical Informatics”. Knowing that any new scientific field (and MI is one of such fields) starts to develop by the work of its pioneers, Masic devoted a remarkable part of this book to the biographies of such persons, presented in the chapter authored by him under the title “The Most Influential Scientists in the Development of Medical Informatics”, collecting 38 biographies in total. It is important to emphasise, that in the conclusion of his text Masic, aware that new scientific forces unremittently continue to expand the initial achievements of the pioneers, Masic wrote: “Let this text, which in the nature of such compendia is necessarily incomplete, be the beginning of a future Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics, for which international collaboration is welcomed.” And now – the result of his hard work appears in the public. In an amazingly short time we have the first edition of Masic’s “Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics” – a huge work containing now over 400 biographies of MI scientists from the whole world. It is worth mentioning, that the acceptance of Masic’s endeavour in the MI community is very positive, thus showing that his ideas are an important contribution to the development of MI as a rather young field in the history of biomedical sciences. Consequently, as one of the reviewers of this publication I am glad to recommend it to the reader. I am also suggesting anyone who would like to add some improvements and additions to the text, as well as to recommend inclusion of some missing biographies, to do so as the author Izet Masic announced new editions to appear before future MIE and MEDINFO conferences...

**Gjuro Dezelic, Zagreb, Croatia (2015)**

...It gives me great pleasure to commend to our colleagues and friends your outstanding effort in putting together this magnificent document that details the lives and accomplishments of so many of our colleagues and friends around the world. The time and effort that you have put into producing the Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics will be a historic and encyclopedic document for our field for years to come. This monumental effort of 523 pages giving us a visual joy to see our friends pictured, as well as your telling a brief summary of each informaticians accomplishments is indeed a labor of love, which you yourself have undertaken for the past few years. Many of us have the highest respect for you as a professor of Medical Informatics and indeed someone who has done so much for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many of us have enjoyed your company and admired your boundless energy at professional meetings for many years. I will never forget your devotion to IMIA when you came to Dresden Germany for an IMIA meeting in the middle of the war years in your country driving all night in the dark with no headlights, risking your life to be with your colleagues and to share professional experiences of your colleagues (you are an IMIA hero). Thank you for all you have done and for your devotion to our field. I am sure that the MIE conference in Madrid will pay homage to this magnificent effort on your behalf to share your Lexicon with all our colleagues. HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS...

**Marion Ball, Baltimore/Boston, USA (2016)**

...It now seems a long time since we received a letter from Prof François Grémy inviting the British Computer Society’s Medical Specialist Group to participate in an international committee “to talk about medical informatics”. Technical Committee 4 of the International Federation for Information Processing was born in 1969, flourished and eventually IFIP/TC4 became the International Medical Informatics Association. It has been a long journey and your lexicon describes so many of our friends with whom we have worked on that journey – as well as listing so many who are taking that journey into the future. As one small example of that future, I have today opened an e-mail from the President of the Royal College of Physicians of London advising doctors on the use of Medical Apps to help them to protect their patients. Congratulations on the extraordinary effort that you have put into your lexicon. Yout book is epic...

**Barry Barber, Malvern/London, UK (2016)**

...Thank you very much for sending me the final version of the Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics. The result of your work is impressive! No one before you had the courage to carry out such a heavy workload to assemble a list of pioneers in the new field of Medical Informatics all over the world, to contact them, to add many names to the first version, to edit each biography, to take into account comments and keep each description both short and significant. The medical profession as well as all other actors belonging to the community of health informatics (chemists, economists, lawyers, statisticians, hospital managers, nurses, …) owe you very much for your splendid initiative. Your book can be considered as a cornerstone for references, useful not only for history but also for the future of Medical Informatics. I am sure that you will enjoy the feedback that will be generated by your work. CONGRATULATIONS...

**Francis Roger France, Brussels, Belgium (2016)**

...Not just a “Who-is-who in …”. Over the past some 50 years, Medical Informatics has grown to a self-standing science, where computer applications to benefit patients, physicians, and other healthcare professionals are focused. Still, the community is small, but very personal. The Lexicon compiles unique CV’s of key contributors to the field, all reflecting this personality of Medical Informatics. By far, it is more than just a database of names and degrees: reading the CV’s gives a comprehensive understanding of Medical Informatics in all its facet’s, and you’ll certainly feel inspired to join the community contributing your visions for a better future – worldwide...

**Thomas M. Deserno (né Lehmann), Aachen, Germany (2016)**

...You are an extremely hard worker. Nobody has dared to undertake the writing of a lexicon. You did. I admire you...

**Jan van Bemmel, Roterdam, The Netherlands (2016)**
...I wish to thank you very much indeed for all you have done with the Lexicon for medical informatics community. You really did the incredible work and reached the great objective. Everybody has to take into account your achievements...

**Jana Zvarova, Prague, Czech Republic (2016)**

...Creating Bibliographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics you once more demonstrated imagination and effort to remind the present generation and point future generations to the long journey of creating medical informatics as a profession and the people who were involved. Lexicon reminds us also to those who are no longer among us, the people who pave the paths of medical informatics. Thanks to them, the medical informatics today found its place both in educating new generations of health professionals as well as practice of medicine and health care. Recommendations for training in medical informatics for medical informatics specialists and users of medical information technologies and the Code of Ethics for Medical Informatics are significant works of these people and a beacon in a sea of medical informatics. Bibliographic Lexicon represents your great and valuable work. You’ve earned the admiration and gratitude of all of us. You showed the younger generation, to those that are yet to come, in which ways to go and how to work in medical informatics profession, science and education...

**Josipa Kern, Zagreb, Croatia (2016)**

...This is an immense undertaking that I am hoping is not an April Fools’ joke. I can’t imagine how you will get anything like sufficient input prior to your deadline. It’s a nice compendium of many people in the field. It seems like it is nicely done...

**Dominic H. Couvey, Waterloo, ON, Canada (2016)**

...Congratulations for your excellent initiative and your hard work compiling this new book...

**John Mantas, Athens, Greece (2016)**

...Very impressive publication. People are very impressed with your work...

**Andrew Balas, Augusta, GA, USA (2016)**

...I wish you all the best, a great health for all your great work, a lot of energy and support...

**Christian Lovis, Geneva, Switzerland (2016)**

...Many thanks for your work with the interesting collection of most of the persons who has worked and are working within our field...

**Ragnar Nordberg, Molndal, Sweden (2016)**

...This is really an interesting idea that includes people worldwide. I like your initiative, and thank you for sharing...

**Vimla L. Patel, New York, USA (2016)**

...Thank you very much for inserting the new version of my CV in the lexicon and thank you for the tremensdous work, you have done...

**Günther Gell, Graz, Austria (2016)**

...Your work is amazing, incredible. A lot of people I know, and a lot of people I don’t know. It is a non-ending Biographical Lexicon...

**Valerio Yacubsohn, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2016)**

...I would like to express my thanks and full appreciation for this brilliant initiative “Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics”. It is my pleasure to be included in the book...

**Bakheet Aldosari, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2016)**

Dear Professor Masic,

Every medical domain researcher in Iran knows you very well. You are very famous and popular here not only for your impressive and glorious scientific background, but also for your support and help to researchers from developing countries such as Iran to publish their valuable works and to give them this chance to be visible throughout the world. Really appreciate it and really kind of you.

**Dr Kambiz Bahaadini, MD, PhD; Associate Professor of Medical Informatics (Telemedicine); Emergency Medicine Specialist; Kerman University of Medical Sciences, Kerman. Iran (2016)**

...As president of the Health Informatics Society of Ireland, I wish to congratulate you on this important and outstanding collection...

**Gerard J. Lyons, Galway, Ireland (2016)**

...Glad to know about your work on “Biographical Lexicon of Medical Informatics”. I got your email from one of my friends and colleagues from eHealth circles (Dr. Alvin Marcelo). I really appreciate your effort in compiling the bio of Medical/Health informaticians...

**Jai Ganesh Udayasankaran, Andra Pradesh, India (2016)**

...Thank you so much for an incredible job! Who else could have done this work...

**Bernd Blobel, Regensburg, Germany (2016)**

...Congratulations with your work. I always have the idea that you live twice as much in the time period in which I live once. You did a wonderful job...

**Arie Hasman, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (2016)**

...Thank you for the incredible job, and your persistence. We look forward to see the book, and also to learn how this information cane a resource for the other efforts to collect our history...

**Anne Moen, Oslo, Norway (2016)**

...Congratulations for finalising this hard work. Well done, Izet, as usual. This will be a very usefull book for all the MI community...

**Etienne De Clercq, Brussels, Belgium (2016)**

...Congratulations, it is, indeed, a very good job...

**George I. Mihalas, Timisoara, Romania (2016)**
...Congratulations for the new born Izet. Enjoy the result of your hard work...

*Lacramioara Stoicu-Tivadar, Timisoara, Romania (2016)*

Professor Izet Masic has made such incredible contributions to the field of Medical Informatics throughout his life, and he still does not consider stopping. He still has so much energy and so much more to contribute. As always, he keeps us informed of his activities and shares with us all. His incredible energy is visible through publications, books and papers that he has contributed throughout his life. He is a remarkable individual and I will never forget how Izet came to IMIA General Assembly meeting in Dresden in September of 1994, when I was president of IMIA, driving through war zones to support the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) by including Bosnian-Herzegovinian Society of Medical Informatics to IMIA family.

Izet Masic is a remarkable gentleman, and we are all better off for all that he has done and contributed to the field of Medical informatics. Let me take this opportunity again to congratulate Izet on his incredible new publication entitled “Historical Background of Medical Informatics Development” as a great and important collection of contributions by the most influential scientists and experts within biomedical scientific and academic fields, who have written historical facts about development of Health/Medical/Biomedical Informatics during past 70 years. My respect and congratulations to Izet for this excellent work...

**Professor Emeritus Marion J. Ball, University of Texas at Arlington, USA (2022)**

In Nice, France on May 30th, 2022, during 32nd MIE 2022 Conference was promoted the book “Historical Background of Medical Informatics Development”, edited by EFMI Honorary Fellow, academician Izet Masic. A few important experts within the field of Medical informatics expressed their very positive comments about idea and contents that this book needed to be published: “Congratulations. A wonderful contribution to Medical informatics.” (Ed Hammond), “Great book! Thank you for keeping our history alive!” (Elizabeth Borycki), “Impressive. Bravo. My hearty congratulations.” (Doncho M. Donev), “Great! Congratulations!” (George Mihalas), “Congratulations on the publication.” (George M. Hripcsak), “This publication is an absolutely incredible issue, such a detailed history with magnificent pictures and descriptions. You are to be congratulated on this contribution you’ve made to our profession.” (Marion Ball), “I am in total agreement with Marion’s words. To produce a publication like this takes hard work.” (Terry Hannan), “Congratulations Izet. This is a great document.” (Vimla Patel), etc.

These words was basic key that Izet Masic decided to complete his knowledge and experiences collected during 30 years of his activities in EFMI and IMIA as official representative of Bosnian-Herzegovinian Society of Medical informatics, where he contributed with a lot of educational and historical contributions, including also his personal achievements in the development of Medical informatics.

**Catherine Chronaki, EFMI President, Brussels, Belgium (2022)**

5. **INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION**

Every era has its heroes. Once upon a time, heroes defended their homeland against invaders and then gave their energy and lives to fight hunger and poverty. Today, we need heroes who will save us from inaccurate, false, or manipulated information that can lead the entire humanity to ruin. Professor Mašić is one of the, unfortunately few, heroes of today who protect us all and enable progress with his decades of work in the field of medical informatics and publishing. His personal contribution to medical science can be described without exaggeration as titanic - and just as the earth rested on the original titans, so our present-day Balkan edifice of medical science rests on pillars such as Professor Izet Mašić.

**REFERENCES**