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REVIEW



The beginnings and the restoration of the Institute of Medical Physiology of the Faculty of Medicine University of Belgrade through the work and character of its restorer Professor Milutin Nešković

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Summary

With the passage of time and the lack of quality archival materials, both at the Institute and at the Faculty of Medicine and bearing in mind the "culture of memory", the work on this text, which is a continuation of the work on the published monograph on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Institute of Medical Physiology of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Belgrade and the beginning of classes, was an extremely challenging undertaking. The texts previously published by fellow teachers in faculty publications on various anniversaries, as well as in the "Serbian Archive" journal, significantly helped the realization of this undertaking. The willingness and kindness in providing important historiographical material, documents and photographs, by the family members of Professor Richard A. Burian from the USA (Richard M. Burian, Jim Huntington), Milutin Nešković from France and Belgrade (Nenad and Nikola Nešković, respectively) and Božidar Nikolić (Emilija Nikolić Đorić) should be appreciated, and then by numerous colleagues from our country, including Vojislav Voki Kostić, son of the famous professors Aleksandar Đ. Kostić and Smilja Joksić-Kostić. I owe everyone a big thank you, because they made it possible to systematize these important data. However, I am aware that this will not be a complete text, which primarily dealt with the beginnings of work and the restoration of the Institute, and with an exceptional professor and patriot, Prof. Dr. Milutin Nešković, the restorer of the destroyed Institute after the end of the Second World War, whose personality and work, as well as the strength of character, can be a role model for future generations of teachers and associates.

Keywords: Faculty of Medicine, Institute of Medical Physiology, Milutin Nešković, Richard Burian, University of Belgrade

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Institute of Medical Physiology "Richard Burian" of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade on 09.12.2022. marked the 100th anniversary of its founding with a festive symposium, during which a monograph was promoted and a lecture on the history of the institute was held (1,2).

ESTABLISHMENT OF PHYSIOLOGY INSTITUTE. ABOUT PROFESSOR RICHARD BURIAN (1871–1954), ITS FOUNDER

According to the memorial published by the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade in 1935, on the 15th anniversary of its work, the Physiology Institute (today the Institute of Medical Physiology) of the Faculty of Medicine was

founded in 1921 (3). At the request and proposal of the first dean of the newly founded Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, Professor Milan Jovanović Batut, at the session of the Council of the Faculty of Medicine on October 10 1920, Richard (Anton) Burian (in Serbian language the name is Rihard Burijan), born on 8th January 1871 in Vienna, former professor of the Faculty of Medicine in Leipzig, was elected full-time (contractual) Professor of Physiology, and this election made by a decree of His Majesty the King was soon confirmed (3).

According to Professors Milutin Nešković and Ilija Duričić, Professor Richard Burian, as a founder, started his first lectures in the fall term of the school year 1922/23, which were experimental at the very beginning and thus required great efforts. Professor Burian gave

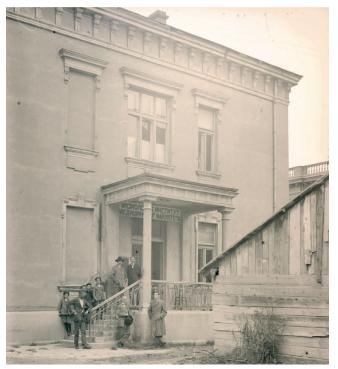






Figure 1. (left) Temporary accommodation of the Institute of Physiology from the Archives of the Institute of Histology and Embryology "Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Đ. Kostić", and (**bottom and right**) the view of the new and later bombed building and of the Physiology-Histology Institute; digitized in the Audiovisual Archive and Digitization Center of SASA (courtesy of Prof. Nela Puškaš)

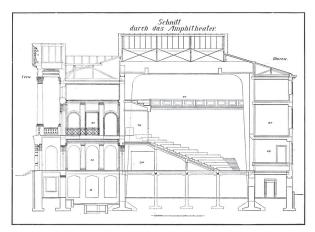




Figure 2. (left) Building plan for the construction of the Institute of Physiology (Richard Burian "Das Physiologische Institut der medizinischen Fakultat in Belgrad als Unterrichtsanstalt-New York: Rockefeller Foundation", 1930.), and (**right**) the layout of the training room.

his first lectures in French and German, and to the third generation of students he did it in fluent Serbian (4). The temporary accommodation in the adapted building could not meet the needs of the Physiology Institute, both in teaching and in scientific work (Figure 1). In 1924, according to the conceptual design of Professor Burian and under his constant control, the construction of the Physiology-Histology Institute began - one wing for each institute, which was completed and decorated in 1926 with a modern amphitheater, exercise rooms, research laboratories and a vivarium, and activities in it began in 1927 (Figure 2). For the construction of vivarium, laboratories, the purchase of equipment and other contents, funds were provided from war reparations and loans, but to a large degree from the "Dr. Elsie Inglis" memorial fund from London as well (author's note: With the funds of this fund, several hospitals were built in Serbia and named after a military doctor of British origin, who fought with the Serbian army in the First World War, and who was awarded the Order of the White Eagle by the Regent Prince Aleksandar Karadordević for her many merits). Therefore, in gratitude for her support, the Physiology Institute named the laboratory for scientific research "Dr. Elsie Inglis", and a memorial plaque was placed in the hall of the building in 1929. The existence of the laboratory under the name "Dr. Elsie Inglis" is proved by affiliations and acknowledgments in the published works of researchers Ilija Đuričić and Milutin Nešković. Professor Burian wanted, from the very beginning, to make our school and physiology keep pace with the corresponding universities in Europe. Under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation, as part of the "Methods and Problems of Medical Education" edition, Professor Rihard Burian published a paper in German entitled "Das Physiologische Institut der Medizinische Fakultät in Belgrad als Unterrichtsanstal" in 1930, thus discussing at the international level the significance of the establishment of the Physiology Institute (5). It is worth mentioning that Prof. Richard Burian held the position of dean in 1923/24, 1926, 1933/34, and a vice dean in 1924/25, 1927/29,

1932/33. He selflessly helped the newly founded Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in the organizational and scientific aspects, so he was a member of the first Council of this faculty and the first vice-dean, and he was the dean in 1937/38. He and Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Đ. Kostić, in the role of supervisors, handed over the duty to the first dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Prof. Dr. Živojin Đorđević. Prof. Burian also participated in the founding of the Faculty of Pharmacy (1939).

According to Burian's first collaborators and successors, Professors Milutin Nešković and Ilija Đuričić (quote): "His rich research experience, extraordinary energy, idealism of a great scientist, day-and-night total dedication to work, school and science, tact and gentle consideration, readiness to advise and help, attracted a large number of excellent students-demonstrators to the Physiology Institute, who later grew into very successful doctors, teachers and scientists" (4) (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Professors Richard Burian and Aleksandar D. Kostić with colleagues in front of the building of the Physiology-Histology Institute. Seated (left to right): Branko Vlatković, Milutin Nešković, Aleksandar Kostić, Alida Hirsch (Prof. Burian's wife), Ilija Đuričić, Richard Burian and Antonije Vuković; standing Nedeljko Ercegovac (between Burian and Đuričić), Božidar Nikolić (above Mrs. Burijan), Aleksandra Volkanovska (next to Nikolić), Radmilo Anastasijević (between Kostić and Nešković), Aleksandar Sabovljev (in the 1930s, courtesy of Dr. Emilija Nikolić Đorić)

On the day of 14 December 1940 Prof. Richard Burian wrote a letter to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, in which he wrote that on January 8, 1941 he would turn 70 "and that according to legal regulations he should be retired" and which was sent to the Rectorate. Based on the attached documents, it could be seen that his work experience acquired before coming to Belgrade was also recognized. In the same year, the Council of the Faculty of Medicine elected Prof. Richard Burian as an honorary doctor of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade.

In the preface to the second edition of the Physiology Practicum (1941), professor Richard Burian says (quote): "Concluding this preface, glad that I have brought my teaching boat to a calm shore, I am even happier to state that the second edition of this book has been jointly published by Dr. Ilija Đuričić, Full Professor of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and my student and friend, and Dr. Milutin Nešković, Full Professor of the Faculty of Medicine, successor to my Chair. This cooperation is only a pale and modest reflection of the deeper community of understanding and activity that unites these two scientific workers. In this community I see the incarnation of my scientific activity" (6).

The year 1941 represented a tragic period in the history of the Institute. Although there was a clearly visible sign of the Red Cross on the roof of the building (underlined by the author), the Institute was bombed and destroyed on April 6, 1941 (author's note: According to the available memoirs of Professor Burian's daughter Maria Louisa, there was a conversation during an accidental meeting between her and a German officer in front of the destroyed Institute, where, when she asked why that had been done, he stated "that the building was not accidentally bombed"). Great material and spiritual assets were destroyed - buildings, schools, and a library richly equipped with books and journals. A lot of unpublished results of Professor Burian and his collaborators were lost forever – parts of the inventory, devices, a certain number of journals and books which Professor Burian enriched the library of the Physiology Institute with, as well as some documents. Everyone who was in that area took part in rescuing those things and Professor Nešković was one of them. This is how Professor Nešković was able to use the saved things – inventory and some of his studies immediately after liberation. On the day of December 17th, 1941, after Professor Burian's retirement, Professor Nešković takes over the duties of the director of the Physiology Institute. During the occupation, the Physiology Institute existed only nominally. The premises of the Institute were moved to the building of the Institute of Pathology, and only a few employees who remained in Belgrade worked there. Certain activities took place, as evidenced by the records from the "Administrative Protocol 1941-1945".

Among many good works that Richard Burian left behind, an extraordinary humane event from the period of the Second World War was recorded by the composer Vojislav Voki Kostić, the son of the famous medical professors Aleksandar Ð. Kostić and Smilja Kostić-Joksić, in the book entitled "Life with a deep pain in the soul" (quote): "In the evening hours of August 21, 1942 a young medical captain of the Wehrmacht visited our home (we concluded this by the markings on his uniform) and, without saying his name, he greeted us on behalf of Prof. Richard Burian, whose distant relative he was, and told us that he had asked him to intervene for Prof. A. Kostić, because he had found out that he was arrested. By the way, Prof. Burian was an anti-fascist, so he moved to the USA, where he died several years later. This was the last greeting to his good friend Professor A. Kostić" (7) (author's note: On the night of July 20, 1942 Prof. A. Kostić was arrested by the Special Police. He was released after countless interrogations, after almost a month (August 15, 1942) with a ban on leaving Belgrade).

After the liberation of Belgrade, Professor Richard Burian, with the help of new authorities (author's note: He was helped by his former student Aleksandar Sabovljev, an officer of the national liberation movement and a high-ranking official at the time) moved to the USA, to Iowa City, joined his son Hermann, a student of medicine educated in Belgrade and later a famous American professor of ophthalmology, where, according to the announcement of the American news agency Associated Press, "Richard A. Burian died on April 6, 1954 in Iowa City, and he was one of the world's greatest physiologists and the founder of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Belgrade". As a pensioner, he often wrote to his associates from the USA and advised them how to rebuild the Institute (Figure 4). Instead of the commemoration that was never held, according to his contemporary Professor Aleksandar D. Kostić (8), its Physiology Institute made the decision to name the institution after its founder, in memory and respect for its first director, and to place a relief plaque with his name and image on a wing of the Histophysiology Institute building (1983). Also, busts to professors Aleksandar D. Kostić, Richard Burian and Milutin Nešković were placed and revealed in the hall of the Histophysiology Institute (2001). Professor Rihard Burian was earlier described in the edition of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) under "Life and work of Serbian scientists" (9). On the 55th anniversary of his death, in 2008, a scientific meeting of the Serbian Physiological Society was organized in Belgrade, an essay was published in the section of Famous European Physiologists on the website of the Federation of European Physiological Societies (FEPS), and an editorial was published in the leading international journal General Physiology and Biophysics published by the Slovak Academy of Sciences (10).

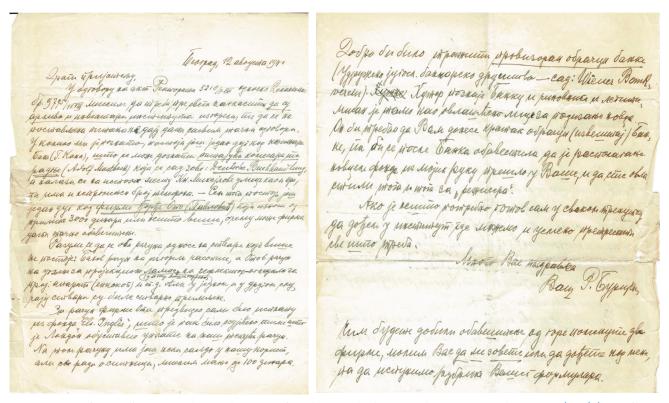


Figure 4. Letter from Prof. Burian, to the new director Prof. Nešković, with advice regarding activities at the Institute (1941) (copy of letter obtained thanks to the courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

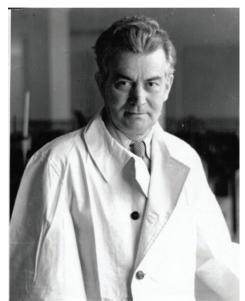
ABOUT PROFESSOR MILUTIN NEŠKOVIĆ (1894-1980), THE RESTORER OF THE INSTITUTE OF PHYSIOLOGY AND THE FOUNDER OF THE INSTITUTE OF BIOCHEMISTRY

As a long-time associate and professor at the Institute of Medical Physiology of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, I came across numerous written data from various sources about Professor Richard Burian, the founder of the Institute, including data from the unpublished family memoirs of his daughter, which I received with a courtesy and blessing of his family (grandson Richard M. Burian from Virginia and grandson Jim Huntington from California). I wrote about this in detail in the Institute's published monograph (1), as well as in an earlier internationally published editorial (10). Numerous written data are also available on one of the first professors of Physiology, the famous Professor Ilija Đuričić (11). As the first graduate student of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, Dr. Ilija Đuričić was appointed an assistant on July 2, 1926 and as an assistant professor on November 28, 1929, and in 1936 he was elected as a Full Professor for the subjects of Physiology and Pathological Physiology at the newly established Veterinary Faculty in Belgrade. In the period 1938-1941, he was the dean of the Veterinary Faculty. Prof. Dr. Ilija Đuričić founded the Physiology Institute of the Veterinary Faculty, after war he was the founder and director of the SASA's Institute for the Study of Physiology of Work (1947-1954), the dean of the Veterinary Faculty (1945-1947, 1948/49), the rector of the University of Belgrade (1950/51, 1951/52, 1954/55), a vice-president

and the president of SASA (1960-1965), and one of the initiators of the founding of the Yugoslav Society of Physiology (November 23, 1956) and the Serbian Physiological Society, whose president he was later. He died suddenly in Belgrade on April 2, 1965.

However, for reasons unclear to me, there is far less written information about the versatile personality of extremely strong character, Professor Milutin Nešković (a patriot, a doctor, a professor, a scientist, a teacher, a social worker, a poet, a writer, a hunter, etc.), born on September 7, 1894 in Kragujevac, from father Veljko Nešković ("boss Veljko", a respected and wealthy merchant) and mother Bosiljka Todorović (originating from a merchant family) who gave birth to twelve children, of whom Milutin was the tenth in line. Milutin belonged to the generation that survived two world wars and changes in the social and ideological organization of the states in which he lived and created (Figure 5). Despite his sufferings, and perhaps owing to that, he preserved his inexhaustible life and creative energy, and in a philosophical sense, searching for meaning and origin, he initiated the artistic expression of his personality, and he often returned to his native land, to which he remained faithful until the end of his life. He was a restorer (so to say the "re-founder of the destroyed Institute"), according to the Institute's chronology, the second elected teacher and director, who participated in the construction of the new building after the Second World War, selected and educated younger staff, renewed teaching and scientific research work, and laid the foundations of the modern Institute, as we have known it in recent decades. According to the certif-





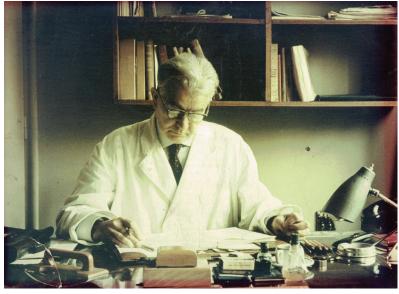




Figure 5. Photos of Professor Milutin Nešković from different periods of his life, in the top row left (in Lausanne, Switzerland, 1919), as well as during his duties as professor, the director of the Institute, and the dean of the Faculty of Medicine (photos obtained thanks to the courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

icate of the Yugoslav Ministry of Army and Navy A. No. 9896 from October 3rd 1928, Milutin Nešković was on military duty as a medical worker during the First World War, from the beginning of August 1914 to June 27, 1919 (**Figure 6**). He enrolled in medicine in the academic year 1913/14, and graduated on November 17, 1921, at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Lausanne. His father Veljko educated him with his personal funds.

He was an assistant and the head of practical classes under Professor Maurice Arthus at the Institute of Physiology of the Faculty of Medicine in Lausanne (Figure 7), and as soon as July 27, 1922 he was appointed as a prosector at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Belgrade (Figure 8). He was elected assistant professor of Physiology on October 9, 1924, an associate professor on September 15, 1927 and as a full professor on July 6, 1940 at the same faculty (Note: The data partly differ from the data presented in the published monograph and

were taken from the decision of the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia - General department P. No. 16725, dated November 3rd 1933). His long-time associate and former student, Prof. Miodrag D. Cvetković, Full Professor of Biochemistry at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Belgrade, in the book entitled "Professors of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade - from its foundation to the 1950s" (12), wrote about Professor Nešković (quote): "He was a very intelligent man and an extraordinarily strong personality. His thoughts and remarks in the introductory class in Physiology were a great incentive to study this fundamental subject at the Faculty of Medicine. In Kragujevac, where he was born, he finished elementary school and high school. He enrolled at the Faculty of Medicine in Lausanne (Switzerland) in 1913. After the outbreak of the First World War (1914), he returned to his homeland, where for a time he was engaged in the health service in Kragujevac. Then he moved

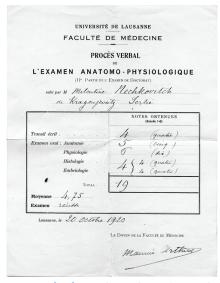
Министарство просвете Кралевине Југославије Опште оделење П.бр.16725 З повемора 1933 год. Београд Нешковић д-р Милутин, ванредни професор медицинског факултета Универзитета у Боограду, чиновник IV положа је групе 1 степена, молно је да му се на основу § во тач. 4 финанси јоког закона за 1933/34 год. урачуна за напредовање и пензију време које је провео као медицинар за време рата и да ну се додели одговарајућа група, Удео сам у расматрање нолбу г. Нешнконића па сам нашао: 1/ да је именотани према уверењу иннистаротва војске и морнарице д.бр. 9896 од 3 октобра 1928 год. био на војној дукнооти као медицимар за време светскога рата, и толод почетка августа 1914 до 27 јуна 1919 год. што чини укупно . . . 2/ да је именовани дипломирао на Медицинском фанулгету Универзитета у Лорани 17 новембра 1921 год. што значи да је за време рата био студент медицине пишто је иколске 1913/14 године уписан на Недиции-ски факултет Универзитета у Лозани о чему је као доказ поднео уписницу; 3/ да је први пут постављен за просектора на жедицинском факултету Универзи+ тета у Веограду 27 јула 1922 год. и служно до 9 октобра 1924 год. када је постављен за доцента на истом факултету и у том звању служно до 15 августа 1927 год. иста је дана указом постављен за ванредног професора истог Факултета у коме се звашу и данас надави;





Figure 6. Milutin Nešković, a Serbian soldier-medic with his comrades in the First World War on the islands of Corfu and Vid (copy of the decision of the Ministry of Education and photos obtained thanks to the courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

to Albania with the Serbian army and worked as a medical worker on Corfu island and Vid. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Lausanne in 1921, after which he worked as an assistant to Professor Arthus at the Institute of Physiology of the Faculty of Medicine in Lausanne. In 1922, he moved to Belgrade to the newly founded Facul-



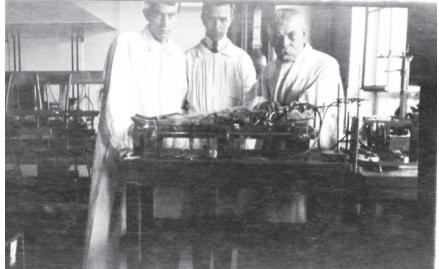


Figure 7. (left) Certificate of passed exams for habilitation ("doctorate"), (right) Milutin Nešković during experimental work in the laboratory of Prof. Maurice Arthus, Lausanne, Switzerland, immediately after the end of the First World War (courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

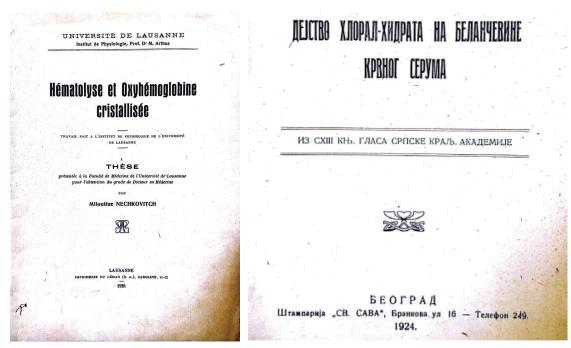


Figure 8. (left) Title page of habilitation thesis in French by Dr. Milutin Nešković (1921), (right) title page of PhD thesis by Dr. Milutin Nešković (courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

ty of Medicine. Soon upon his arrival in Belgrade, he was chosen as an assistant at the Physiology Institute. He was appointed director of the Institute of Physiology in 1941. He remained in this position until his retirement in 1964. During the German occupation of our country, he was persecuted by the Gestapo and the Special Police."

IMPRISONMENT AT THE BANJICA CAMP

According to his grandson Nikola Nešković, this happened because he refused to sign the infamous "Appeal to the Serbian People" dated August 13, 1941 and for a time he was at the Banjica camp. Belgrade, as a university and cultural center, housed many prominent cultural and public workers, friends of books and science, who were under constant surveillance by the occupation authorities. In them, the fascists saw potential opponents, whose views and attitudes could represent an additional danger in the otherwise dire situation in Serbia that arose after the uprising. That is why the occupying military administration decided to eliminate that danger by arresting prominent public and cultural workers. On November 2, 1941, on behalf of the commanding general in occupied Serbia, Turner, the chief of the military staff, signed an order for an operational group of the German Police and security service, in cooperation with the Belgrade Special Police, to undertake an extensive action against intellectuals, "whose behavior in the past years was anti-German" and who were mostly "members of the lodge of freemasons and communists." On the basis of this order, a massive arrest of intellectuals was carried out in Belgrade on November 4, 1941. They were brought to the Banjica camp and placed in special rooms, separated

from other detainees. Those were room 3, which was vacated for them, and rooms 35 and 36, which were ready and waiting for them. The treatment for arrested intellectuals and prominent citizens was somewhat more favorable and lenient. They had beds and bedding, which they received regularly from houses, a longer walk in the camp grounds, less abuse by the camp staff. The other detainees called this part of the camp where this group of intellectuals was housed "Masonic rooms". Those were mostly professors and teaching staff of the University of Belgrade, several well-known professors from Belgrade secondary schools, former ministers, businessmen, writers and artists, lawyers, and doctors. There were 176 names on one list, and 192 names on the other list (three of whom were added later), therefore also those who were taken to the Banjica camp later following the same Turner's decision. Among the renowned professors of the University of Belgrade, the group of arrested intellectuals included physiologists, biologists and pathologists: Dr. Ivan Đaja, Dr. Milutin Nešković, Dr. Siniša Stanković (arrested again in 1944 as an active participant in the national liberation movement) and Dr. Ksenofon Šahović (13). As they represented a concentrate of knowledge from various scientific disciplines, and they lived in more tolerable conditions, they initiated various lectures (the initiator of the lectures was Dr. Aleksandar Belić, the president of SASA and the president of the Kolarac Foundation), whereby one lecture was held in the morning around 10 a.m., and the second in the afternoon around 4 p.m. Various lectures influenced the hostages not to think about their unenviable position. Conversations after lectures helped to break monotony in prison. These lectures enriched knowledge and cheered the spirit. According to the preserved diary of Vladislav Pavlović, pre-war official

at the Ministry of Social Policy and Public Health, the list of topics included a lecture by Dr. Milutin Nešković, a university professor entitled "Man in continuous space". By the beginning of January 1942, when Vladislav Pavlović was released from the camp, 36 lecturers spoke on 68 topics (14) (Figure 9).



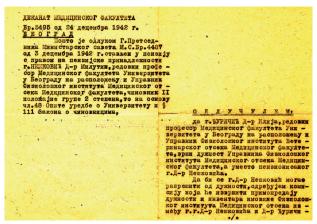
Figure 9. A drawing of a camp inmate Professor Milutin Nešković, made on kraft paper from a package for camp inmates, during his imprisonment at the Banjica camp (drawn by camp inmate Risto Stijović on December 4, 1941, later an academician of SASA, a famous Yugoslav and Montenegrin sculptor) (a copy of the drawing obtained thanks to the courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

After leaving the Banjica camp, Professor Milutin Nešković soon assumed the position of the director of the Physiology Institute. A little later, the typhus epidemic (spotted fever), which broke out in that period, required the engagement of a larger number of medical workers. That is why the Dean's Office received a request from the Institute to hire Prof. Milutin Nešković, with a certain number of collaborators (Act of March 9, 1942, Administrative Protocol 45/42). A student Đorđina Škerović

was in this group of collaborators, who stopped studying medicine during the war, but when she graduated from the faculty after the end of the Second World War, Professor Nešković immediately admitted her to the Institute, where she, after his retirement, as his devoted student and follower, managed the Institute from 1964-1985, when she retired.

EARLY RETIREMENT AND REMOVAL FROM THE FACULTY

As he continued with showing disagreement and resistance during 1942, by the decision of the President of the Ministerial Council M.S. No. 4487 from December 3, 1942 he was suddenly retired, and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, and by decision No. 5495 from December 24, 24 1942 it was decided that Prof. M. Milovanović would replace Prof. Nešković, and as a new director Prof. Ilija Đuričić was appointed, who was also supposed to handle duties and inventory (Figure 10). As it seems, it did not go smoothly, as in a short period of time the duty of temporary director of the Institute was given to Prof. Ksenofon Šahović (December 31, 1942), and as soon as on January 31, 1943 Prof. Nešković was relieved of his duties not only as the director of the Physiology Institute, but also of his title of Full Professor (author's note: At the dean's request on 23 November 1942, the Institute sent the requested report on the scientific research work of Prof. Milutin Nešković). On February 4, 1943 the position of the director of the Institute was taken over by Prof. Ilija Đuričić, a professor of Physiology at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Prof. Dr. Milutin Nešković refused to receive the pension that was given then during the entire war period. Even though the police returned his personal document on February 12, 1943 (Administrative Protocol 22/1943), Prof. Nešković was out of the University. In that period, Prof. Nešković spent a year as the head of the central lazarett for refugee children. However, after the liberation, by the decision of the Ministry of Education dated June 26, 1945, V No. 7570, Prof.



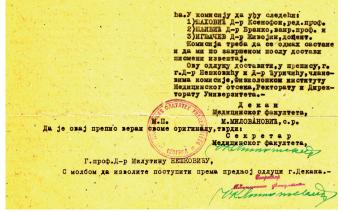


Figure 10. Copy of the document on the retirement and dismissal of Prof. Milutin Nešković and the appointment of Prof. Ilija Đuričić to the position of the director of the Institute during the Second World War was obtained thanks to the courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković

Milutin Nešković was accepted to the Faculty of Medicine, and as soon as June 28, 1945, he was appointed to attend the ceremony of the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb.

Immediately after returning to the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, Prof. Nešković worked on the reconstruction of the Institute of Physiology and the Faculty of Medicine, but also in other fields - he was the first postwar commissioner for public health in the city of Belgrade. In 1949, the reconstruction of the destroyed part of the building was completed, when the institute moved to new premises with a modern amphitheater, training rooms and equipment, a preparatory laboratory and an operating room. In the basement and on the first floor of the building there were scientific research laboratories, the office of the Institute and the library. In the preface to his work "Practical Teaching in Physiology" from 1950, Professor Nešković said (quote): "Earlier, I expressed the opinion (author's note: Practical Teaching in Physiology, second edition, 1941) that practical work in physiology has two main goals: to facilitate understanding and learning of facts presented in theoretical lectures and to educate medical students in a physiological way of reasoning (in the spirit of understanding) that a good doctor can only be one who thinks physiologically. Today, this opinion of mine, remaining essentially the same, has been given a fuller expression. The opinion that teaching in physiology, and especially practical teaching, should also fulfill this higher task: to nurture in future doctors with a physiological way of reasoning about the facts that will be played out in front of them, should be completed with a concrete statement: that the task of medical teaching (including physiology) is to build a new type of doctor, a medical practitioner, who thinks physiologically when faced with professional problems, and works in the social community as a socially aware individual" (15).

LIFE AND CREATIVITY AFTER WORLD WAR II

Shortly after the end of the Second World War and the great efforts to restore work at the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade and the Institute of Physiology, personnel and ideological problems arose in addition to material problems. Some professors were accused of "espionage work for foreign services" (D. Borić, Svetislav Stefanović, Milivoj Genčić), membership in freemasons, "Serbian chauvinism", getting rich through private practice, cooperation with Germans and chetniks (A. Kostić, S Barjaktarović, D. Borić, Aćim Marković and others), sabotage, immoral behavior (A. Kostić, among other things, was accused of dealing with "pornographic writings" and "weak criteria for student lovers") (Note: of Đorđe Stanković's private collection, UDBA reports for NRS by faculties, September 7, 1948). After the conflict with the Soviet Union in 1948, information about the attitude towards the conflict and the Resolution of the Informburo was

especially highlighted in the features, reports, and analyses. At the time, the supervision of the Communist Party and State Security over professors was even more intensified, as well as the activity of individuals who openly or anonymously provided party or state authorities with data on the behavior of professors during the war, their attitude towards the Informburo, etc. The competent authorities checked the submitted data in detail, interrogated the accused, and controlled the situation at the University in order to prevent the "potential danger from the information bureau, but also from the "reactionary" actions of individuals and groups (note: AS, MNK NRS, f. 17, Interrogation in a State Security of Milutin Nešković and Marko Anaf, teachers at the Faculty of Medicine). In addition, for personnel advancement, in addition to moral and political suitability, research papers were also required, which of course could not be in the appropriate number and quality, because the horrors of the war and the Nazi camps had just passed (16). In this sense, the request dated April 16, 1952 could also be interpreted. The dean Prof. Vladimir Spužić demanded from Prof. Milutin Nešković a "survey sheet asking for a list of doctors' research works in the post-war period".

Furthermore, Professor Miodrag Cvetković says: "Professor Milutin Nešković was the founder and the director of the Balneoclimatology Institute of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, and the founder and director of the Biochemistry Institute of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade (quote from the records of Prof. Dorđina Škerović-Mijušković: "It is a long time to teach at the Institute included the combined contents of physiology and biochemistry. Later, due to the constant development of biomedical science and an increase in the volume of materials from both subjects, there was a separation, that is, the formation of the Institute of Biochemistry of the Faculty of Medicine in 1959"). Professor Nešković wrote several textbooks and monographs in the field of physiology and biochemistry. He wrote the Physiology Practicum with Professor Ilija Đuričić, and then he wrote the Supplement to Physiology, Practical Teaching in Physiology, the monograph Ferments, etc. He published numerous research papers in the field of physiology and biochemistry, for which he received the 7th July Award in 1962, and in 1971 he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Belgrade (Note: According to his son Nenad Nešković, he was one of the first professors of physiology at the newly established Faculty of Medicine in Tunisia over the period 1965-1967, and at that time he lived with his wife in Carthage.). He is the holder of domestic and foreign decorations, among others he is the holder of the Royal Order of the Yugoslav Crown in 1936 and the Legion of Honor, which the French President awarded him in 1958" (Figure 11). In the post-war period, Prof. Nešković was a vice dean in 1954/55 and the dean twice, in 1955/56 and 1956/57. He is one of the founders and the president of the Yugoslav Society of Physiologists (later



Figure 11. Order of the Legion of Honor awarded to Prof. Milutin Nešković by the President of the Republic of France (courtesy of Nenad and Nikola Nešković)

Yugoslav Physiological Society), and in 1961, he was the founder and the president of the section for Serbia of the Yugoslav Society of Physiologists (Society of Physiologists of the Republic of Serbia, later Serbian Physiological Society). For many years, the department was a nursery of staff not only in the clinics (teaching bases) of our school, but also in numerous faculties of the former Yugoslavia (Figure 12, Figure 13). For several years, Professor Milutin Nešković taught Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje and Biochemistry at the Faculty of Medicine in Niš, he participated and assisted at the newly founded medical faculties in Novi Sad and Sarajevo. According to the records of Prof. Julijana Vojvodić (quote): "During the dean's term in 1956/57, Professor Nešković, on the initiative of the Faculty of Medicine's Student As-

sociation, allowed converting several rooms into reading rooms for students in the facilities of the Faculty of Medicine. As a sign of respect and appreciation, the Faculty Board presented Professor Nešković with a hunting gun after the dean's term expired."

According to the memories of his grandson Nikola Nešković, grandfather Milutin was interested in everything - books, poetry, paintings, movies; he went to the cinema, hung out with fellow artists, wrote poems and essays. Professor Trajanović, the builder of the incredible bridge on the Đurđevića Tara, used to come to his place on Slava (St. Michael the Archangel). His radio was always on. When his grandson Nikola, who worked for many years at Radio Belgrade, edited and hosted the most popular rock and roll radio show "Friend of the Stars", which the whole country listened to at the time, his grandfather's question was: "Do you think only young people listen to this?" He went to football matches too. On one occasion, when his grandson Nikola told him that he had had lunch with Moša Marjanović (because he used to hang out with his daughter) (author's note: Blagoje Marjanović Moša, famous Yugoslav football player), his grandfather Milutin told him to say hello to Moša, even though he personally preferred Tirke (author's note: The famous football player Aleksandar Tirnanić Tirke). Tirke and Dr. Mihailo Andrejević Andrejka (author's note: Serbian doctor, football player and prominent football worker) were regular guests of his Slava. Grandson Nikola remembers that his grandfather Milutin took him to the match between veterans of Serbia and Croatia in 1954 at the Yugoslav Army stadium, and he also told him that he was present at the old Belgrade fair, when in 1937 televi-



Figure 12. The staff of Prof. Dr. Milutin Nešković, the director of the Institute of Physiology. In the first row, from left to right, seated: Miodrag Cvetković, Mihailo Mojović, Đorđina Škerović, Milutin Nešković, Radmila Šegović, Dragoljub Petković, Mileva Ivić and Veselinka Šušić. In the second row, first from the left, Julijana Vojvodić; in the middle, Đorđe Popović Erak in a dark suit; in the same row, first on the right, Dragica Matejević Stranjanac (behind Mileva Ivić) (photographed by Dr. Nenad Nešković in 1961)

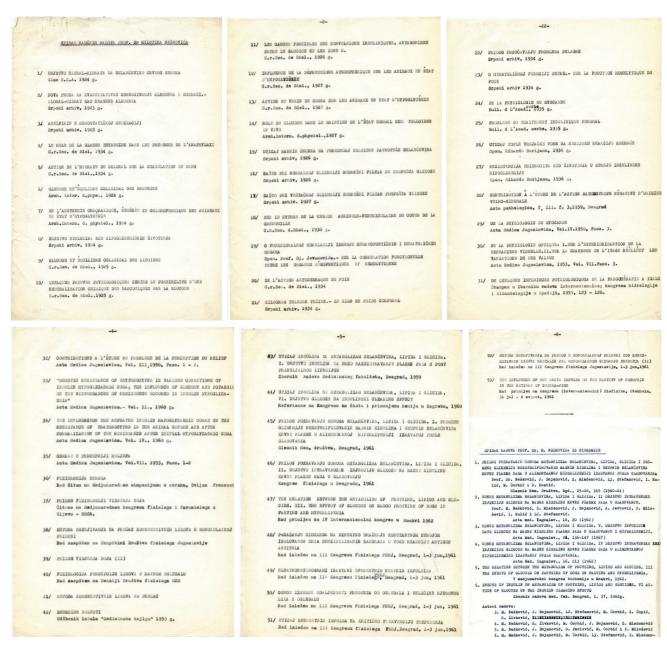


Figure 13. The list of publications by Professor Milutin Nešković in the scientific fields of physiology and biochemistry (in Serbian)

sion was presented for the first time in southern Europe.

Professor Dr. Milutin Nešković, one of the first professors of the newly founded Faculty of Medicine, died on August 13, 1980, in Belgrade. He was buried in the Alley of Meritorious Citizens in Belgrade. On this occasion, the newspaper "Politika" published the article entitled "In Memoriam Prof. Milutin Nešković" on August 15, 1980. He was married and had two sons: Prof. Predrag Nešković, a professor of Microbiology at the Faculty of Dentistry, and Prof. Nenad Nešković, a former assistant at the Biochemistry Institute of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, later a professor of Biochemistry, who lives in Strasbourg, France. Grandson Nikola Nešković, who helped me tremendously in the preparation of this text, is the son of Professor Predrag Nešković.

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POČECI RADA I OBNOVA INSTITUTA ZA MEDICINSKU FIZIOLOGIJU MEDICINSKOG FAKULTETA UNIVERZITETA U BEOGRADU KROZ STVARALAŠTVO I KARAKTER OBNOVITELJA PROFESORA MILUTINA NEŠKOVIĆA

Dragan Djurić¹

Sažetak

Sa protokom vremena i u nedostatku kvalitetne arhivske građe, kako na Institutu, tako i na Medicinskom fakultetu, a imajući u vidu "kulturu sećanja", rad na ovom tekstu koji predstavlja nastavak rada na publikovanoj monografiji povodom obeležavanja 100 godina od osnivanja Instituta za medicinsku fiziologiju Medicinskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu i započinjanja nastave, bio je izuzetno izazovan poduhvat. Tekstovi koje su kolege nastavnici ranije objavili u izdanjima fakulteta povodom raznih jubileja, ali i u časopisu "Srpski arhiv", značajno su pomogli realizaciji ovog poduhvata. Posebno treba istaći spremnost i ljubaznost u pružanju značajnog istoriografskog materijala, dokumenata i fotografija, članova porodica profesora Riharda Burijana iz SAD (Jim

Huntington, Richard M. Burian), Milutina Neškovića iz Francuske i Beograda (Nenad i Nikola Nešković) i Božidara Nikolića (Emilija Nikolić Đorić), a zatim i mnogobrojnih kolega iz naše zemlje, uključujući i Vojislava Vokija Kostića, sina čuvenih profesora Aleksandra Đ. Kostića i Smilje Joksić-Kostić. Svima dugujem veliku zahvalnost, jer su omogućili da se ovi važni podaci sistematizuju. Ipak, svestan sam da ovo neće biti potpun tekst, koji se pre svega bavio počecima rada i obnovom porušenog Instituta, kao i jednim izuzetnim profesorom i patriotom, prof. dr Milutinom Neškovićem, obnoviteljem porušenog Instituta posle završetka Drugog svetskog rata, čiji lik i delo, kao i čvrstina karaktera, mogu biti uzor budućim generacijama nastavnika i saradnika.

Ključne reči: Institut za medicinsku fiziologiju, Medicinski fakultet, Milutin Nešković, Rihard Burijan, Univerzitet u Beogradu

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