Biographical Lexicon of Public Health

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At this point of time with dramatic fundamental changes in the world and crucial battle for better health and health care, extending the life expectancy of the people and improving the quality of life, as well as for preventing further degradation of the environment and ensuring sustainable development at all, in front of us it is available a unique and indispensable useful book that represents the most influential representatives in the historical development of preventive and social medicine, old and new public health, especially in the last two centuries up to the modern contemporary living in various countries worldwide.

There are huge historical records and facts, archaeological evidence and contemporary literature about many pioneers of public health, their initiatives and activities for maintaining and improving the health from the ancient period and throughout all stages of the formation and maturation of social-medical ideas and thoughts to today's new public health as philosophy, conceptual approach and art of the possible, a field of knowledge and practice by joining the biomedical focus and understandings of health and diseases with the clinical, social and life sciences, health technology, health systems organization and management, and health promotion.

Many generations of professionals and thinkers, who walked ahead of time in which they lived, embodying his 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 in a precious stone in the great mosaic called new public health. In the bosom of public health arose some great and important personalities, minds and builders, fighters and visionaries. And each of them left recognizable traces in traditional combating of infectious diseases and modern prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and the wider determinants of health, with a multidisciplinary and multisectorial approach, better organization for increased availability and quality of health care, and with the active involvement of the population in the local community in the preservation and promotion of health and creating healthy conditions of life and work. In this tumultuous, dramatic and worrying time for further stability in the world, sustainable development and long-term survival of mankind, the author felt the need to prevent the risk of forgetting and to extract a number of them, more or less, known and unknown personalities of preventive and social medicine and public health, who devoted their life, work and work, and left a mark in history, in the historical and present development of society in general.

Tribute goes to the author, Prof. Dr. Izet Masic, thanks to his enthusiasm and efforts, we are granted a comprehensive publication of this kind, with written facts about the historical development of public health and biographies of about 500 prominent professionals included into a lexicon of the most influential experts in public health from various countries. We know it is a difficult task and a huge load for an enthusiastic author. Usually it is a task and

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responsibility for collective action of numerous scientific institutions and professionals, such as an encyclopedic approach requires. This book made a first step, as an attempt to a wider challenge, to fill an important gap in the professional and scientific literature in the field of public health in the world.

It is reasonable that a team work and differentiated approach in narrower areas in public health would provide opportunity for a more qualified choice with meritocratic critical overview, but it is good that a modest pioneering endeavor is done, to collect a wider range of approximately 500 public health experts, from the first roots of social medicine and public health to today's the new public health.

It is understood, the approach of an author couldn't be sufficiently complete and comprehensive, despite 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 broader choice by including living contemporaries - experts in all fields of public health, from all continents and from many countries worldwide. In most of the cases, those are prominent founders or fighters of social medicine and the new public health in their local communities, at national and regional levels and beyond, globally. The author is aware of the risk of the possibility of subjective valuation. However, he felt that this lexicon of experts in public health would be incomplete if it does not spread to contemporaries that in the 21st century continue to embed its presence and expert contribution to better health in modern life and development. Some overlook and omissions are also 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 the 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, and professional and ethical messages arising from it, we can rightly expect that this publication will serve as a useful guide and textbook to 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 preserving and improving the health and quality of life in general.

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