

**SOCIETY OF MEDICAL BIOCHEMISTS OF SERBIA
THE MONOGRAPH SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION »PROFESSOR IVAN BERKEŠ«
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY OF MEDICAL BIOCHEMISTS OF SERBIA**

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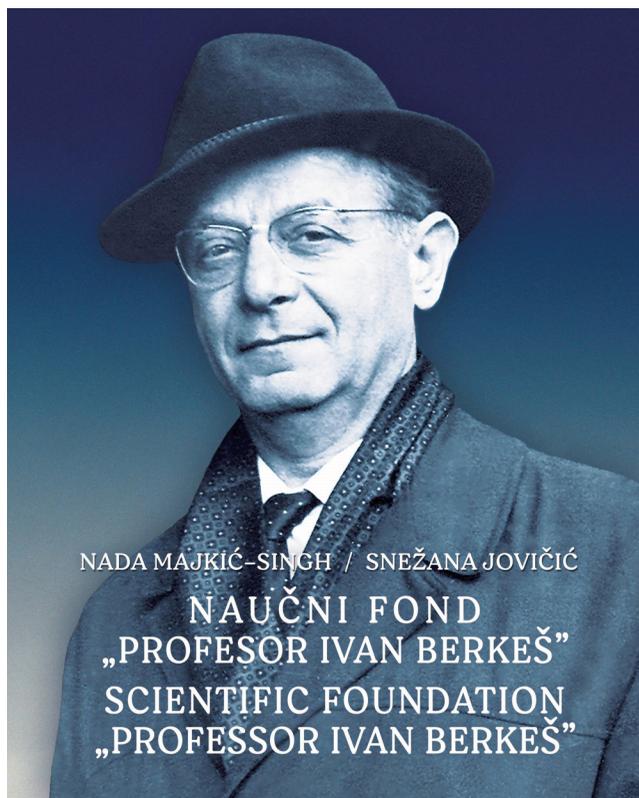
In 2020, the year of the global pandemic the activities of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS) were suspended. Planned activities, like the national congress and the Belgrade Symposium for Balkan region were postponed, and the annual scientific conference »Professor Ivan Berkeš« did not take place. However, the year 2020 was also the year of the 110th anniversary of the birth of Professor Ivan Berkeš. On this occasion, SMBS published a monograph dedicated to professor Berkeš's life and work, to the review of the previous scientific conferences organized to honour his legacy, also to the Foundation »Professor Ivan Berkeš«, and to the laureates of its annual award. The authors of the monograph are Professor Nada Majkić-Singh, the founder of the Foundation and its *spiritus movens*, and Snežana Jovičić, who, as the IFCC eNewsletter liaison member, was writing a series of articles covering the conference over the past years.

Professor Ivan Berkeš established medical biochemistry as a modern scientific and diagnostic discipline of medicine and pharmacy in Yugoslavia and Serbia. Under his guidance generations of medical biochemists were educated at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Belgrade. But not only. As a versatile individual (he was passionate in music, art, history, and philosophy, and spoke five languages) he inspired his students with his charismatic personality. Professor Berkeš graduated and completed his Ph.D. thesis in Zagreb, Croatia. He worked at several universities in former Yugoslavia – at the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb, Faculty of Medicine in Skopje (North Macedonia), and Faculty of Pharmacy in Belgrade (Serbia), where he was elected Senior Professor in medical biochemistry and was a long-term director of the Institute of Biochemistry until his retirement. For nearly 20 years professor Ivan Berkeš invested all his efforts into the methodological

research in clinical biochemistry, general and clinical enzymology. This work resulted in numerous specialists, master, and doctoral theses. During his working years, professor Berkeš published several books and over 200 scientific papers in renowned journals in Yugoslavia and worldwide. He was actively engaged in the Federal Committee for Medical Biochemistry and the Section of Medical Biochemistry of the Pharmaceutical Society of Serbia.

Appreciating the work of their teacher and a renowned expert, professor Ivan Berkeš, upon the proposal of Professor Nada Majkić-Singh, in 1997 the Society of Medical Biochemists of Yugoslavia at the time, now the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia, and the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, established the Scientific Foundation and the Annual Scientific Conference „Professor Ivan Berkeš«. Beginning in 1998, Scientific Conferences have been presenting masters and doctoral theses in medical biochemistry and related disciplines defended during the previous academic year. Also, the best graduate students in pharmacy and medical biochemistry of the Faculty of Pharmacy in the previous academic year have been awarded the monetary awards of the Scientific Foundation. The monograph reviews all the twenty-one scientific conferences that took place so far, concluded with the last one, held in December 2019. Also, presents the biographies of all the forty-eight laureates of the Scientific Foundation, informing us briefly about their careers in pharmacy and medical biochemistry, in Serbia and worldwide. The 2020 Scientific Conference could not take place because of the restrictions imposed by the global pandemic that prevented us from gathering. However, the Foundation did not miss to hand the well-deserved awards to the best students of the Faculty of Pharmacy in 2020, Milena Simić (Master of Pharmacy-medical biochemist) and Milan Beljkaš

(Master of Pharmacy). SMBS congratulate them on their first success, wishing them fruitful careers in pharmacy and medical biochemistry, like the ones their predecessors have. We hope that the 2020 would be the only year in which the Scientific Conference did not take place, and that the memory of Professor Ivan Berkeš will be alive for many years to come through the activities of Scientific Foundation, annual Scientific Conference, and many young laureates of the Foundation award.



Book cover of the monograph *Scientific Foundation »Professor Ivan Berkeš«*.



Professor Berkeš with his collaborators and specialists at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, 1970.



Professor Nada Majkić-Singh and the laureate of the Foundation award for the year 2020, Milena Simić.



Professor Nada Majkić-Singh and the laureate of the Foundation award for the year 2020, Milan Beljkaš.