

The promotion of the book “Neurodegenerative Diseases – Dementias” at the Campus of the University of Rijeka in Rijeka

AUTHORS:

VLADIMIRA VULETIĆ

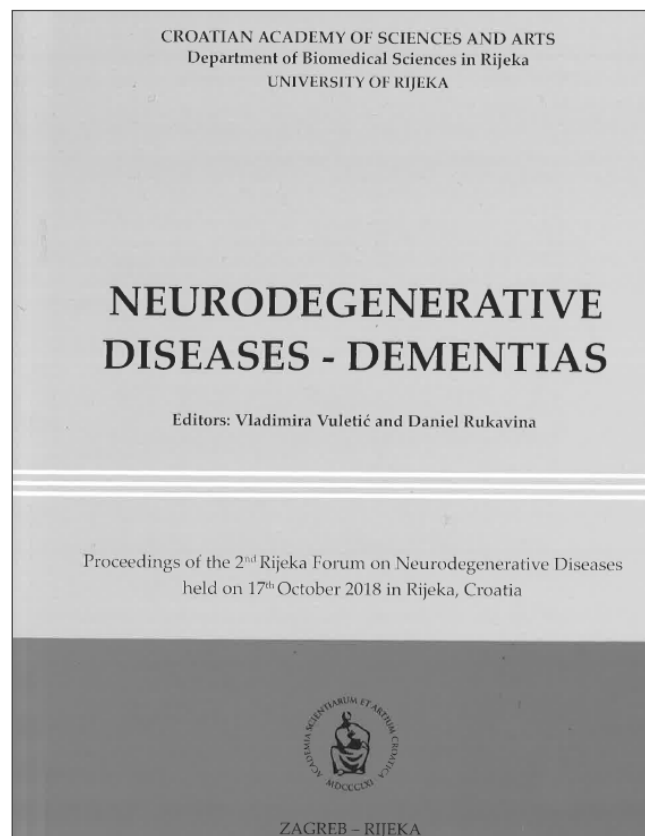
DANIEL RUKAVINA

The promotion of the book “Neurodegenerative Diseases – Dementias” took place at the University of Rijeka campus on 17th of September 2019, as part of the 34th Symposium of the Department of Biomedical Sciences in Rijeka of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The title of the symposium was “A modern approach to diagnosis and prevention of dementias”. The book is published by the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, with main editors Academician Daniel Rukavina and Ass. Prof. Vladimira Vuletić. The promotion and symposium were very well attended, with approximately 70 participants. Welcome words were given by the editors and two reviewers, Prof. Emerit. Juraj Sepčić, and Academician Vida Demarin, on behalf of Academician Zvonko Kusić, who could not attend the meeting.

Both reviewers congratulated and remarked on the extraordinary quality of the book proceedings, as well as the timing of the main topic, as dementias become a greater issue to the older general population in the developed world. The articles published in this book are contributions of invited speakers attending the 2nd Forum on Neurodegenerative Diseases which was held in Rijeka on October 17th, 2018. Co-organizers of the Forum were the Clinical Hospital Center in Rijeka, the University of Rijeka Faculty of Medicine, and the Croatian Medical Association – Branch office Rijeka. The symposium was endorsed by the European Association of Neurology (EAN) and was held under the auspices of the University of Rijeka, which celebrated its 45th year of the foundation of modern University and 385 years of the University of Rijeka's establishment by the Jesuits.

The meeting aimed to introduce to all those interested on what happens when a person loses the guaranteed wealth of his most isolated organ - the brain, by the devastating effects of chronic diseases. From that meeting, a book was created, that covered the topics spoken about at the meeting and primarily covers the clinical face of neurodegenerative diseases with dementia: Parkinson's disease, Lewy body dementia, vascular pathology of the brain, prion diseases, cognitive issues in multiple sclerosis, neuroimaging diagnostics and pathology, as well as pharmacological therapy and prevention options.

In the articles presented in the first part of the book some basic mechanisms were discussed. Professor Hardy gave an overview of genomic analyses of neurodegenerative diseases identifying many genes involved in their pathogenesis. Professor Revesz presented from the neuropathologists perspective and professors Manganotti and Babić from neurophysiological and neuropharmacological aspects. Professor Vida Demarin gave a focus on approaches for prevention. Clinical aspects and pathophysiological mechanisms were in the focus of presentations of Professors Bogdanović, Padovani, Pirtošek and Vuletić. Cognitive problems in the field of demyelinating diseases of the central nervous system were highlighted by Professor Fredrikson and other clinical aspects were in the focus of articles of Professors Borovečki and Klepac. We are delighted with the contribution of Professor Eric Smeets who gave an overview on clinical management of the very rare disease called Rett syndrome. The reviewers remarked that neuroscience attracts clinicians and



researchers from various scientific disciplines and many, including some of those present, consider it one of the most challenging frontiers of science. It is no coincidence that the “brain decade”, which ended in the last century, is followed by the “century of the mind”. The progress made in recent decades in understanding the biology of the nervous system is remarkable; however, the results of continuous research are still insufficient to resolve the many unknowns in understanding the etiopathogenetic mechanisms of numerous nerve disorders, especially those that lead to progressive and irreversible brain failure - dementia.

With this book, the readers have been given a valuable, pluri-dimensional book. The very well documented chapters combine the fundamental and clinical aspects of dementia in neurodegenerative diseases. Attention has also been paid to health and social programs aimed at improving the prognosis of dementia, previously considered fatal. This book will, of course, have a primary educational function. According to reviewers opinion it will serve healthcare professionals (and associated professions) by enriching their professional biomedical culture, improving their day-to-day work and the services they provide to such patients; discussions will stimulate researchers with ideas for new projects and stimulate all of us, professionals and laypeople, to change our “lifestyles” and preserve the health of our brains. There is no health without brain health!

The book before us is a contribution to a better knowledge of the chronic diseases of the central nervous system that affect our existence, take it and open it; on its pages, among the multitude of paragraphs and facts, each of us will find sentences written for him.