

THE LOŠINJ DAYS OF BIOETHICS

Our very first bioethical symposium in Mali Lošinj was held between 24th and 26th September 2001 under the title *Bioethics and Science in the New Epoch*. Van Rensselaer Potter's audio-visual welcoming address, directed to the symposium participants but a few months before he passed away, furnished the symposium with a special historical, distinctive and symbolic significance. In his address, Potter expressed – amongst other things – hope that the symposium “will give a new impetus to bioethics in Croatia and all of the neighbouring countries”. Clearly, Potter's hope did acquire both the character and power of the blessing that the “father of bioethics” gave in his final days – already in 2002 the Croatian Philosophical Society, the Croatian Bioethics Society and the Town of Mali Lošinj instituted the *Lošinj Days of Bioethics*, a scientific-cultural manifestation. Moreover, only a few years later Mali Lošinj started hosting the annual international conference entitled *South-East European Bioethical Forum* (since 2005), as well as the *International Summer School of Integrative Bioethics* (since 2006), a postgraduate course organised by the Ruhr University Bochum and the University of Zagreb.

In the meanwhile, the *Lošinj Days of Bioethics* have grown into a cornerstone institution of bioethical life and discussion in this part of Europe. The lead role in the *Lošinj Days of Bioethics* is, most definitely, played by the international symposium bearing the title *Integrative Bioethics and New Epoch*. Besides the symposium itself, the scientific section of the gathering hosts not only roundtable conferences – which annually centre on some of the most current bioethical issues – and student bioethics workshops, but also book presentations of the latest bioethical editions. The symposium's cultural-artistic programme is variegated and embraces theatre plays and concerts, exhibitions and literary readings.

Programmatically speaking, the scientific section of the symposium rests on the idea of “integrative bioethics”, which – methodologically speaking – links diverse perspectives into a unique pluri-perspectival model of orientative knowledge. As for the symposium's object of interest, we focus on countless problem networks, ranging from medical care and biomedical research, through the problems of non-human living beings and the general conditions of the preservation of life (ecology) to the critical questions of contemporary civilisation. This concept allows us not only to discuss the widest possible range of actual bioethical issues – from issues of clinical practice to global ecological problems – but also to penetrate their most profound dimension, which opens up questions about the character and weariness of the scientific-technological era, about the methodological constitution and historical role of modern science, and about the state of flux in the fundamental relations between man and nature. This is a philosophical-historical perspective, from which we can detect and follow the processes of the world-historical eras turning.

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Lošinj Days of Bioethics