

## Dr. Mozes Karoly (1917-2005), pioneer of nursing education, on a historical medical ex-libris

### Dr. Mozes Karoly (1917-2005), pionier al educației nursing, un ex-libris medical

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#### Abstract:

This historical vignette displays an ex-libris dedicated to Doctor Mozes Karoly, created by the well-known Oradea artist Karoly Roman Radvany. This artwork displays the portrait of an old man with beard examining a skull and surrounded by books. There is the vanitas theme influence in this between-wars artwork. Doctor Mozes Karoly contributed decisively to the launching of the „sanitary school” from Oradea, Bihor County and thus he contributed to the teaching of nursing in Western Transylvania. Beside the first publication of this ex-libris, the present vignette of history of medicine shows the role of dr. Karoly in the development of nursing in this country.

#### Rezumat:

Această vignetă istorică prezintă un ex-libris dedicat medicului Mozes Karoly, efectuată de bine-cunoscutul artist plastic orădean Karoly Roman Radvany. Lucrarea de artă reprezintă portretul unui bărbat care ține în mână un craniu și este înconjurat de cărți. Se găsește tema vanitas în această lucrare de artă interbelică. Doctorul Mozes Karoly a avut contribuții decisive la inaugurarea școlii sanitare din Oradea, Bihor și prin aceasta a contribuit la învățământul de nursing din Vestul Transilvaniei. Pe lângă publicarea inedită a acestui ex-libris, această vignetă de istoria medicinei prezintă aportul dr. Karoly la dezvoltarea nursingului în țara noastră.

**Key-words:** *history of medicine, history of nursing, Mozes Karoly, Karoly Roman Radvany, ex-libris*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *istoria medicinei, istoria nursing, Mozes Karoly, Karoly Roman Radvany, ex-libris*

#### Introduction

We present in this historical vignette, for the first time to our knowledge, in a medical journal, the ex-libris of Doctor Mozes Karoly (1917-2005) from Oradea, created by an outstanding Oradea visual artist, during the between-wars period.

#### Doctor Mozes Karoly (1917-2005)

Doctor Mozes Karoly was a very active supporter of nursing education and the founder of the nursing high school in Oradea, Western Transylvania. He was born just during the World War I, in 1917, in the village Crișul Repede, now Bihor County, then in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, in a Jewish family (Anonymus, 2002). He studied medicine in Cluj and graduated during the 2nd World War also in Cluj, while the main Romanian University was

in refuge in Sibiu. Just after graduation, he started working in Budapest in the Jewish hospital. Soon, he was sent to the Eastern front as military medical doctor in forced labor army units (Anonymus, 2002). He worked and endured difficult life conditions but overcome the war and became very active soon after the war time.

He worked in Oradea immediately after the war becoming head of the department of infectious diseases. Beside this, dr. Karoly was very much interested in the training of nurses. Therefore, he decisively contributed to the founding of the nursing school, called at that time „sanitary school” in 1948.

This action represents a milestone in the evolution of nursing in Western Transylvania and generally spoken, in Romania. For 20 years he was director of this school but meanwhile he

still worked as infections physician. For the nursing students he wrote several textbooks on the general and special care to the patients. Some of them were successful and republished in several editions (Karoly, 2020).

The last years of his life he migrated to Israel, to follow his family. However, he continued to represent an important contributor to Oradea health care system and became citizen of honor of the city. He donated his library to the Bihor County Library. In 2005 he died in Israel, but his memory is yearly celebrated in Romania, when the Dr. Mozes Karoly Awards are offered to outstanding nurses for their activity. Fig. 1 displays a medal coined in his memory and distributed to the awardees.



Fig.1. Medal featuring the portrait of Dr. Mozes Karoly.

#### The ex-libris of Dr. Mozes Karoly

We present the ex-libris of Doctor Mozes Karoly created by the artist Karoly Roman Radvany (Fig. 2). This is an ancient ex-libris from the years between the world wars, probably in the late 30s of the 20th Century. The size is that of a game card and the paper has the colour and patina of the time. This is a typical art deco graphic work. As technique, this is a woodcut.

Ex-libris (in Latin: “from the books of...”) were initially labels printed or stuck on the first page of a book to identify the owner of the book. In time it became a field to exercise art works of graphic in different techniques

(etchings, woodcuts, silk cuts etc.).

Medical doctors are known as collectors of ex-libris and between them there is the well-known Brasov physician Dr. Emil Bologna.

Karoly Roman Radvany (1900-1957) is an important artist from Oradea. He was born in the same city in 1950 in a modest family; therefore he was oriented to the workers' leftist ideology. He worked as book printer but also studied the graphic arts with Roman Mottl (Hirca, 1974). Later, he became an important author of ex-libris and a keen collector of ex-libris. Among his clients was also the Doctor Nicolae Igna from Cluj.

No wonder that he created and printed this ex-libris for Dr. Karoly, which is less well known by medicine historians. This artwork has not only its significance for the history of medicine and for the artistic work of Radvany. The artist died young in Oradea in 1950.

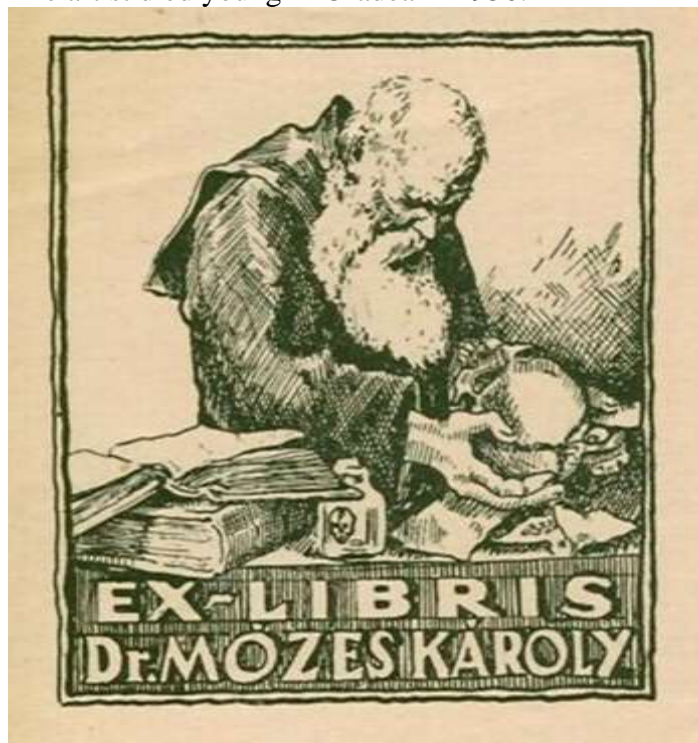


Fig. 2 Ex-libris of Dr. Mozes Karoly by Karoly Roman Radvany

This ex-libris is another token of the connection, physicians had with ex-libris artists. The interest of doctors as art collectors is well-known but less is known about medical collections of ex-libris (Brin de Chantemerle, 2016; Kreyenberg, 1983). However, there are some important medical collectors of ex-libris, and the case of Dr. Emil Bologna (1916-2001),

dermatologist from Brasov, is outstanding. He was indeed the promoter of ex-libris collecting in Romania early in the years 60s of the 20th century.

### Conclusion

This historical vignette introduces the ex-libris by Karoly Roman Radvany from Oradea, created by woodcut in art deco style, inspired by the vanitas theme for the doctor Mozes Karoly, galleon figure of nursing teaching in Oradea city, Western Romania.

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### Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### Authors' contributions:

Conceptualizare DLD, culegerea datelor LD; DLD; LR, analiza datelor: LD, DLD; LR, scrierea și pregătirea textului inițial DLD, revizuire LD; DLD; LR.