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**EVOLIUCINĖ MEDICINA:
ŽMOGAUS RAIDOS PERSPEKTYVOS IR SVEIKATA
BESIKEIČIANČIOJE APLINKOJE**

**EVOLUTIONARY MEDICINE:
PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH
CONSEQUENCES IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

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AN UNUSUAL COMMON MEDIAN–ULNAR NERVE TRUNK IN THE CUBITAL FOSSA: A NINETEENTH-CENTURY ANATOMICAL SPECIMEN AND ITS CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

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Background and Aim: Historical anatomical collections are a valuable yet underexplored resource for studying anatomical variability in past populations. Although modern anatomical literature extensively documents neural variations, little is known about their occurrence in earlier centuries. The aim of the present study was to analyse nerve variations in historical dry specimens preserved at the Department of Anatomy, Histology and Anthropology, Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University.

Materials and Methods: Preparations more than 200 years old, attributed to the anatomist Adam Bielkiewicz and created using corrosion techniques, were investigated. These preparations allow detailed visualisation of anatomical structures and provide a unique opportunity to investigate morphological diversity in historical populations.

Results: A rare variation involving the median and ulnar nerves was identified in a preserved right upper limb. Normally, the ulnar nerve arises from the medial cord of the brachial plexus, while the median nerve originates from both the lateral and medial cords. Although communications between these nerves are well documented, the arrangement observed in this specimen differed markedly from previously reported patterns. The specimen, transected at the distal humerus, precluded assessment of the complete brachial plexus. The most notable finding was observed in the cubital fossa, where the ulnar nerve originated from a common trunk shared with the median nerve. To the authors' knowledge, this configuration has not been previously described. A separate nerve descending posterior to the medial epicondyle was interpreted as the dorsal branch of the ulnar nerve rather than its main trunk. Additional communications were observed between this dorsal branch and the ulnar nerve in the forearm, and between the ulnar and median nerves in the palm.

Conclusions: These findings highlight the importance of historical anatomical specimens for documenting rare anatomical variants and improving our understanding of long-term human morphological variability. Recognition of such variations remains clinically relevant for surgical procedures and for the interpretation of atypical neuropathic presentations.

Keywords: anatomical variation, median nerve, ulnar nerve