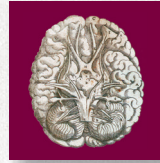




440



# ABSTRACTS OF THE 24TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF THE NEUROSCIENCES

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Vilnius, Lithuania



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# Description of Seizures in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Vilnius Clinics

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The aim of this study is to present descriptions of seizures in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Vilnius clinics. We analyzed “Medical – obstetrical inaugural dissertation exhibiting a pair of observations on puerperal seizures” (*Dissertatio inauguralis medico – obstetrica exhibens observationum par in convulsiones puerperarum cum epicrisi*), defended at the Imperial university of Vilnius by Paulus Mokrzycki in 1824.

The importance of brain localization was emphasized in VU clinics, associating cortical lesions with seizures and paralysis. However, in other dissertations epilepsy and some other nervous system (NS) diseases (including St. Vitus dance) were stated to be a spinal cord pathology. Typical focal motor seizures, evolving to bilateral convulsive seizures, with foaming at the mouth, involuntary urination, and postictal somnolence, were clearly described. Although the seizure semiotics for the determination of the epileptogenic focus had not yet been considered, the onset of puerperal seizures was closely monitored. It was thought that a plethoric patient (presenting as robust, red-faced, and suffering from frequent headaches, with a full and hard pulse) had a higher risk of convulsions and, therefore, antiphlogistic treatment (especially bloodletting) was considered as the best choice.

Even though in Vilnius, as in other European clinics, the causes of NS diseases were sought in the cerebrum and spinal cord (the influence of solidism doctrine), bloodletting, the use of purgatives, leeches, and cupping therapy were frequently used as treatment options for patients presenting with epileptic seizures.