ABSTRACTS
OF THE 29TH
BALTIC CONFERENCE
ON THE HISTORY
OF SCIENCE

19–21 September 2019
Vilnius, Lithuania
Program Committee
Akad. Jūras Banys – President of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences
Akad. Vincas Būda – Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Nature Research Centre
Dr. Cecilia af Forselles – The Finnish Society for the History of Science and Learning and the Finnish National Library
Prof. Algimantas Grigelis – Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Nature Research Centre
Prof. Rimantas Jankauskas – Vilnius University
Dr. Kastis Krikštopaitis – Vilnius University
Prof. Rimvydas Laužikas – Vilnius University
Prof. Anto Leikola – University of Helsinki
Dr. Peeter Müürsepp – Tallinn University of Technology
Dr. Sigita Narbutas – Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences
Prof. Ilkka Niiniluoto – University of Helsinki
Prof. Juris Salaks – Rīga Stradiņš University
Prof. Romualdas Šviedrys – New York University
Dr. Erki Tammiksaar – University of Tartu and the Estonian University of the Life Sciences
Prof. Alida Zigmunde – Riga Technical University

Local Committee
Dr. Ramūnas Kondratas – Chair
Dr. Romualdas Juzefovičius
Dr. Libertas Klimka
Dr. Alvydas Noreika
Barbara Omelčenko
Dr. Birutė Railienė
Dr. Aistis Žalnora

Editor of abstracts book: Ramūnas Kondratas
The language of the texts has been edited. The content of the abstracts remains the responsibility of the authors.

Cover: Emblem of the Baltic Association of the History and Philosophy of Science created by Juozas Algimantas Krikštopaitis (1991)

Copyright © 2019 [Author]. Published by Vilnius University Press
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited

ISBN 978-609-07-0254-3 (digital PDF)
https://doi.org/10.15388/BCHS29.2019
© Vilnius University, 2019
The Beginnings of Medical Education at the University of Vilnius: Vision and Challenges of the Commission of National Education

On 21 May 1782, by decree of the Commission of National Education, the name of Vilnius University was changed to the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In his inaugural address of 24 November 1781, the new rector Marcin Poczobutt (1728–1810) announced the faculties that would be formed and that, for the first time in university history, medical sciences would be taught – in the medical college (Collegium Medicum). This important date marked not only the beginnings of formal medical education at the university, but also the emergence of modern medicine in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). Previous historiography extensively discussed the late start of medical education in the GDL and the possible reasons for it. But little attention has been paid to the circumstances which allowed for the establishment of the medical college and the challenges associated with the introduction of lectures on medical subjects at Vilnius University. These particular issues are going to be the main focus of this presentation. The establishment of the medical college will be discussed within the broader context of scientific development in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Western Europe.

After the suppression of the Jesuit Order in 1773, Vilnius University became a secular institution of higher learning under the authority of a Commission of National Education for Poland and Lithuania. This presentation will analyze this commission’s vision of how medicine and the natural sciences were to be reformed at Vilnius University. It will also discuss the challenges faced by this commission in establishing the medical college and how those challenges were met. This presentation will also look at the study program for the medical college within the context of Enlightenment-era medical education in Western Europe.