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The 1st Congress of Healing Art (1920) and the Foundation of the ISHM

It was only from 1870 on that in the world the first chair for the History of Medicine was created in Paris. Thereafter, at the end of the 19^o century, a lot of medico-historical treatises were published in Europe and in the USA.

From 1900 on several national societies for the History of Medicine were founded in Europe. During the 27^o International Congress of Medicine in London in 1913 a motion was carried by famous medical historians, prof. Wellcome (GB), prof Südhoff (D) and prof Wickersheimer (F) with the wish to set up an International Federation of all this societies and in 1914 (the 400th anniversary of the birth of Vesalius) an analogous proposal was adopted. All this efforts were interrupted by the first World War.

In 1919 prof Blanchard from Paris and prof Tricot-Royer from Antwerp united their endeavours to create an International Society. Unfortunately Blanchard died during the same year. A first International Congress for Healing Art was held in the Medical House of Antwerp in 1920 without specific topics, but with 191 participants from 10 different countries attended it. At this event Tricot-Royer obtained the support from the French professors Jeanselme and Ménétrier to create officially the International Society for the History of Medicine the following year at the second congress in Paris in 1921. Tricot-Royer became the first president of the new society.

During the first years there was some reticence to accept German members, but in 1925 prof Südhoff became the first German member. Very famous names during the first years of the existence of the ISHM were, beside the founding members, the Italian prof Giordano, the Romanian prof Gomoiu and the two first French general secretaries, prof Laignel Lavastine and prof Guiart.

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