

Ο ΒΙΟΣ ΤΗ ΧΕΙΡΟΥΡΓΙΚΗ ΑΝΑΦΥΕΤΑΙ

Dimitrios Linos^{1,2,3,4}

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In 1902, at the Congress of Belgian Surgeons with guests from France, Germany, and Switzerland, it was decided to establish an International Surgical Society (ISS), “La Société Internationale de Chirurgie” [1]. The Chair of its first International Congress, held in 1905, was the Swiss Theodore Kocher. He was the first surgeon to ever receive the Nobel Prize “for his work on the physiology, pathology, and surgery of the thyroid gland,” but not the only “endocrine surgeon” to head the society. The Swiss F. de Quervain, known for his work on thyroiditis, managed to keep the Society alive through political turmoil in the 1920s.

But, it was not until 1979 at the International Congress in San Francisco that the International Association of Endocrine Surgeons (IAES) was born, as the first “child,” the first Integrated Society of the ISS. The need for the formation of IAES, based on the vision of Dr. Peter Heilmann, was described as follows: “IAES is a forum for the exchange of views of those who are involved in expanding the frontiers of endocrine surgery, whether by clinical experience, laboratory investigation or in any other way.”

It is that broad “any other way,” which I am most curious about and hope to engage all of you—to help define the future of IAES.

How many of you have looked carefully at the logo of our “mother” Society, designed in 1954 by the then President of ISS/SIC Robert Danis [1]? The engraving shows a young woman rising from the operating table, her knees covered by a surgical cloth, looking toward the sun, with a fountain on the left, an inscription in Greek reads: “Ο ΒΙΟΣ ΤΗ ΧΕΙΡΟΥΡΓΙΚΗ ΑΝΑΦΥΕΤΑΙ.”

BΙΟΣ is the first part of our logo, translated into English as LIFE. Βίος captures three distinct but interrelated dimensions, according to the Lexicon of Homeric Dialect [2], the duration of one’s life, the course of life, and the manner of living (including one’s career or profession). It is the root of the English term “biography,” i.e., the record (account) of how we invested (or spent) our physical lives.

The second part of our logo “ΤΗ ΧΕΙΡΟΥΡΓΙΚΗ” derives from the Greek words Cheir (hand) and Ergon (action), meaning the action made by hand, surgery. The meaning of our third Greek word “ΑΝΑΦΥΕΤΑΙ,” according to the Liddell–Scott Lexicon [3], means produce again, grow again. Metaphorically, “recover, make a fresh start.” Putting together the three components of our logo, Ο ΒΙΟΣ/ΤΗ ΧΕΙΡΟΥΡΓΙΚΗ/ΑΝΑΦΥΕΤΑΙ, “the official” translation is: “Life is reborn through surgery.” The question is “Whose life is reborn through surgery?”

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✉ Dimitrios Linos
dlinos@hms.harvard.edu

¹ School of Medicine, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens, Greece

² International Association of Endocrine Surgeons, Calgary, Canada

³ 5th University Surgical Department, Evgenideio Hospital, Athens, Greece

⁴ 20 Papdiamantopoulou Street, 115 28 Athens, Greece

Life is reborn through surgery for our “global” patients

The obvious answer is that surgeons offer new life to their patients. Yet, according to the recently formed Global Alliance for Surgical, Obstetric, Trauma, and Anesthesia