

## Doctors in Timočka krajina after World War II

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#### I

This research covers the period of early post-war years 1944, 1945 and 1946. Those were very difficult years in the life of the people in Timočka Krajina, with population healthcare at a low level. Population healthcare needs by far exceeded what the state and private medical practice could offer. The urban population was in a more favourable situation because doctors, except in a few rural settlements (Salaš, Jabukovac and Andrejevac), all lived and worked in the towns. The larger rural population, especially those in remote villages, found it difficult to reach doctors and often died from diseases that were treatable or from the consequences of injuries due to the inability to timely seek and receive medical help. For the purpose of describing the life and work of doctors in the area in more detail, archival material of the Historical Archives "Timočka krajina Zaječar (1,2)" was used in this paper.

#### II

Doctors are the pillar of healthcare system in an area, assisted in their work by medical staff. A "List of medical personnel on the territory of the district of Zaječar on the 27th April, 1944" shows which doctors treated patients in Timočka Krajina, where, in addition to patients from the area, sick and wounded soldiers from the front, refugees and prisoners of war sought medical treatment. From the abovementioned list, one can see that at the time when it was made in the area of Timočka krajina, there were 39 doctors "on site", or one doctor per 7,387 inhabitants. One should keep in mind that given the time covered by this research, the number of doctors was constantly changing, increasing and decreasing, primarily depending on the need for doctors at the front and in the army, in the then administration, in relation to mobilization and demobilization or to those who returned from captivity.

*The following doctors worked in Zajecar:*

MD Milan B. Mitrović, served as the commissioner, and MD Branko P. Kosanović, as

the medical officer of the Regional People's Committee. The medical officer of the command was MD Stanislav Tadić. MD Ahilo Grezo was a doctor from the Zaječar area, MD Jevrem Stanojević was a doctor at the "Serbian Balkans" mine; MD Olga Pavlović was the garrison doctor, and MD Radomir Nikolić was the doctor of the District People's Committee.

Hospital doctors in Zajecar were:

MD Ljubica Arsović, an internal medicine specialist, was head of the "internal department" of the hospital,

MD Krunoslav Popović was hospital manager and the head of the gynaecology department,

MD Miroslava Grujić-Đorđević, was head of the department of surgery at the hospital,

MD Desanka Đermanović-Ivanović, worked as a doctor in the health centre,

MD Cvetko Gligorijević was the town doctor and MD Leposava Stevović was a doctor-clerk of the district office in Zaječar.

MD Mileva Kestić practiced private medicine in Zaječar.

*The following doctors worked in Negotin:*

MD Svetislav P. Atanasković, a malariologist, was the manager of the healthcare facility and the district medical officer of the People's Committee,

the doctors of the local command were MD Nikola Andjelković and MD Darinka Letić-Nikolić.

At the hospital, MD Midrag K. Kostić was a surgeon, hospital manager and head of the department of surgery. Head of the department of internal medicine of the hospital was MD Stanislava Ružić-Perić.

Private doctors in Negotin were MD Draginja Zdravković and MD Milan Đ. Stojković.

*The following doctors worked in Bor:*

MD Božidar S Ivković, served as manager of the hospital of Bratinske blagajne (a special type of social and health insurance for miners) and the district Medical Corps. Officer;

MD Georgije Pedanov, surgeon and doctor of Bratinske blagajne

MD Lepold Brnčić, dentist, doctor of Bratinske blagajne,

MD Stevan Jokanović who was a doctor of the local branch of Bratinske blagajne.

MD Mihajlo Petrovski was a doctor at the health co-operative in Zlot.

*The following doctors worked in Knjaževac:*

MD Leka. Djoković, served as district medical officer of the People's Committee,

MD Radmilo Janković was acting hospital manager

MD Radomir Vladić, surgeon at the department of surgery at the hospital.

MD Evgenija K. Fijošina worked as a private doctor.

*In addition to those mentioned, the following doctors also worked in Timočka krajina:*

MD Radmilo Jokanović, served as acting manager in Boljevac,

MD Jovan Panajotović was a doctor at the Bratinske blagajne in Majdanpek and

MD Stojan Nikolić, served as the district clerk of the People's Committee in Donji Milanovac.

The district medical officer of the People's Committee in Andrejevac was MD Jovan Zguricos while the district medical officer doctor of the local command in Jabukovac was MD Mirko Subotić.

The duty of the district medical officer of the Municipal People's Committee in Salaš was performed by Stevan Ilić.

The private doctor in Kladovo was MD Ljutica Đ. Dimitrijević.

The abovementioned list also includes the following doctors: MD Branko Krstić, Medical Corps. major, MD Dragutin Paunović and MD Milutin Milenović, who returned from captivity and were "proposed to be taken over". MD Milić Milivoje, who lived in Gamzigradska Banja spa, ill and unable to work, was mentioned.

Most doctors in Timočka krajina served in the civil service as health commissioners and district and medical officers of regions and district, doctors of the local command and town doctors, then worked as hospital doctors, doctors of Bratinske blagajne in Bor and Majdanpek, and only a small number of them were private doctors. As doctors were few and people's needs for them were great, regardless of the functions and duties they had in the then healthcare system, they parallelly worked, as needed, in the hospital, local command, health

centres, public clinics and hospitals and clinics at Bratinske blagajne and wherever it was absolutely necessary.

Given the needs of the people for treatment, in 1945, doctors were allowed to undertake private medical practice in their free time when they were not on an "official job". In an act dated on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1945, the Health Department of the Health Commission of ASNOS in Belgrade made it clear to the District People's Liberation Committee in Zaječar that the ban for doctors to work privately was contrary to the rights of patients to "be able to choose or call for their treatment any doctor they want ". It further states that "private practice is not, nor can be prohibited by the decision of the ONO until orders are issued in that regard." Along with the act, a rulebook on the rewards they could collect from the patients was submitted for a "daily examination (from 6 am to 8 pm - 250 dinars, and in the patient's flat 350 dinars. For an intravenous injection they charged 160 dinars, for an intramuscular injection 80 dinars and for a subcutaneous one 50 dinars.

Among the doctors mentioned earlier, 30 of them were men and 9 were women. Four female doctors were single and two were widows. Among the male doctors, three were single and one was a widower. Most of the doctors were family people with a lot of children. Two doctors had four and three children respectively. Twelve doctors had two children each, and each of nine doctors had one child. Four doctors didn't have any children. Male doctors were mostly aged between 41 and 50 - 18 of them, and between 51 and 60 - 7 of them. One doctor was aged between 21 and 30, one between 31 and 40 and one between 61 and 70. When it comes to female doctors, the situation is similar. 5 of them were aged between 41 and 50, one between 31 and 40 and one between 51 and 60. Doctors made a lot of money, so it can be said that they lived better than others. Most of them had a maid.

### III

One of the reasons for the changes in the number and composition of medical staff in Timočka krajina was the mobilization of doctors for army medical corps. From one act of the District People's Liberation Committee from the 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1945, it is possible to find out which medical staffs were mobilized from the mentioned district (3). The Health Commission

of the Presidency of ASNOS in Belgrade was warned that the recruitment of medical staff, most of whom were doctors, would have "consequences in the medical organization of the District that could not be remedied and as a result of which both military and civilian medical care would suffer."

A total of 18 doctors were mobilized: MD Mićo Mićović, epidemiologist and manager of the public health centre, MD Bosiljka Popović, head of the department of tuberculosis at the hospital, MD Dimitrije Popović, paediatrics specialist from Zaječar, MD Stevan Jokanović, doctor at the mine in Bor, MD Veljko Milanović, doctor of the local command in Andrejevaca, MD Stevan Ilić, district doctor in Salaš, MD Dara Letić-Nikolić, infectious disease specialist, MD Staslava Perić-Ružić, hospital doctor and MD Draginja Zdravković, private doctor from Negotin as well as MD Slavko Pištelić, district doctor and manager of the hospital in Kladovo to the military hospital in Kruževac.

MD Mićo Mićović was mobilized as a doctor of the "14<sup>th</sup> Corps of the Hospital", and so was MD Dimitrije Popović, head of the children's department, MD Radmilo Spalajković, ear, throat and nose specialist, head of the department of otorhinolaryngology and MD Časlav Babić, surgeon and head of the department of surgery at Zaječar Hospital. Apart from the above-mentioned doctors, the following doctors were also mobilized: MD Branko S. Milosavljević, single, private doctor, MD Vladimir Kujundžić, doctor of the children's home in Negotin, MD Borivoje Ilić, traffic doctor from Knjaževac and MD Sotir Stavridis, surgeon, head of the department of surgery at Knjaževac hospital, MD Kosta Mihajlović, officer of the medical command in Boljevac, MD Aleksandar D. Anastasijević doctor of the local command in Bor, MD Milivoje S. Kosanović district doctor in Salaš, MD Miodrag Jelisijević, surgeon, major of medical service and MD Svetolik Pacić, dispensary doctor, MD Božidar Stanojević, doctor of school polyclinics from Zaječar and MD Radomir Vladić, surgeon, head of the department of surgery from Knjaževac.

The District People's Liberation Committee was particularly interested in demobilization of MD Slavko Pištelić, who enjoyed a large trust of authorities at the time and performed important public health functions of a district doctor, and the medical officer of the Command in Kladovo and at the

same time ran the hospital, and mobilization, in his place, of MD Ljutica Dimtrijević a doctor, "a former MP and the best of the bunch from Stojadinović and Cvetković, who is neither capable nor trustworthy to replace the mobilized MD Pištelić at the NLC, at the Command and to run the hospital (4), so he would be suitable for military service." It was also demanded that Mićo Mićović, epidemiologist "manager of the Public Health Centre, medical officer at the local command and one of the main administrators of the Medical School in Zaječar for military and civilian paramedics should not be mobilized (5)." His poor health and the fact that he had had a kidney removed were emphasized. It was requested that MD Stanislava Ružić-Perić, acting head of the internal department at the Negotin hospital should not be mobilized because she was in the sixth month of pregnancy, and that instead of them, a private doctor MD Milan Stojkocić, who was single and without children, be mobilized. The reply to these requests was that nothing could be done because it was "a matter for military authorities related to the needs of our army". In the early post-war years, it was difficult to find a way to secure medical personnel so that the needs of the "People's Liberation Army and the civilian needs of the district's medical services would not suffer..."

#### IV

On the 10<sup>th</sup> September, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia ordered that all doctors be registered - and a directory of doctors be compiled, as well as that a certificate of registration be issued to each doctor when he changed his place of residence and service. Having made the list of their doctors, the district people's committees were obliged to send it to the Ministry, which then compiled the main directory for Serbia. From the lists of doctors, basic biographical data from other sources were published along with appropriate commentary. The obligation to register doctors could not be avoided, because those doctors who did not submit to it could be punished. When a doctor was entered in the register, he received a "written confirmation", so that when he left the area where he worked, he was obliged to contact the District People's Committee to get a certificate of withdrawal without which he could not be entered in the directory of the District Committee of the new territory.

From the preserved "Questionnaires for doctors" which were used for registering in the

register of doctors in Timočka krajina, biographical data were obtained for the following doctors:

*MD Jokanović Lj. Stevan*, a general practitioner, serving in the hospital of Bratinske blagajne in Bor, was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1899 in Aachen, Germany. He was a Serb of Orthodox faith, a Yugoslav citizen. He was married and had four sons: Ljubomir, Živorad, Miloš and Vojislav. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade in 1928, and in 1929 he acquired the right to work. He spoke Serbian and also used French and German. During the war, he worked in Brestovačka Banja spa as the manager and spa doctor and as a doctor at the hospital of Bratinske blagajne. He took part in the national liberation struggle "ideologically and propagandistically". He dwelled in "the Bor mine" at 10, Sarajevska Street.

*MD Pedanov I. Georgije*, surgeon, doctor at the hospital of Bratinske blagajne of the Bor mine, was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1887 in Neforošč, in Poltava province in Russia. He was a Russian, a "Yugoslav subject" of Orthodox faith. He was married and had a son, Evgeni, and a daughter, Katarina. He graduated from the Medical Faculty in Odessa on the 6<sup>th</sup> September, 1913. He acquired the right to practice medicine in October 1924. He spoke Russian and Serbian. After the capitulation of Yugoslavia, he got a job as a surgeon at Bratinske blagajne at the Bor mine. He participated "ideologically" in the national liberation struggle.

*MD Ivković Božidar*, a general practitioner, manager of the hospital of Bratinske blagajne of the Bor mine, was born in 1902 in Prokuplje. He worked part-time as a medical officer for the Bor district. He was a Serb, a Yugoslav citizen, of Orthodox faith. He had a wife Sofia and a son Danilo. He graduated from the Medical Faculty in Belgrade in 1931. He acquired the right to practice medicine in 1932. He spoke French and German. From the moment of the capitulation of Yugoslavia, on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1941, until the 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1942, he spent time in Germany as a Yugoslav prisoner of war, and from January 1943 he worked as a doctor in the hospital of Bratinske blagajne of the Bor mine in Bor. He participated in the national liberation struggle "ideologically". He lived in the Bor mine at 2, Ljubljanska Street.

*MD Anastasijević D. Aleksandar*, general practitioner in the hospital of Bratinske blagajne of the Bor mines in Bor, was born on the 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1900 in Kragujevac. He was also a doctor at the local people's committee in Bor. He was a Serb, a Yugoslav citizen, of Orthodox faith. He graduated from the Medical School in Vienna in 1927. He had had the right to practice medicine since 1929. He spoke French and German. He spent the time during the capitulation as a doctor in the hospital of Bratinske blagajne in Bor. He participated "ideologically" in the people's liberation movement. He was married, without children. He lived in the Bor mine at 5 a, Sarajevska Street.

*MD Džinić Fadil*, gynecologist and surgeon, doctor of the department of surgery at the hospital of local Bratinske blagajne in Bor, was born on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1909 in Banja Luka. He was a Croat, a Yugoslav citizen, of Muslim faith. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb. He spoke French and German. From the moment of the capitulation of Yugoslavia until 1942, he spent time as an assistant at a gynaecological clinic in Zagreb, and from that year until the liberation he worked in Germany. After the Liberation for a while, he worked at the 4<sup>th</sup> ward of the Main Military Hospital in Zagreb, and after that to this moment in the hospital of Bratinske blagajne of the Bor mine. He was married and had a daughter, Farida.

*MD Brenčić J. Leopold*, a dentist at the hospital of local Bratinske blagajne in Bor, a specialist in oral and dental diseases, was born on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1905 in Petac, Slovenia. He was a Slovenian, a Yugoslav citizen, of Catholic faith. He graduated from the Medical faculty in Prague. From the moment of capitulation of Yugoslavia until the liberation, he worked as a dentist in the hospital of local Bratinske blagajne in Bor. He did not participate in the People's liberation movement. He was married, without children. He lived in the Bor mine at 1, Sarajevska Street.

*MD Panajotović J. Jovan*, doctor of Bratinske blagajne in Majdanpek, was born in 1877 in Belgrade. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Graz, Austria. He had had the right to practice medicine since 1906. He spoke German. He spent the time from the capitulation of Yugoslavia until the liberation in Belgrade and Majdanpek, where he still worked as a doctor for Bratinske blagajne. He did not take part in the national liberation struggle due to his age and illness. He was married, without children.

*MD Gligorijević I. Milan*, district medical officer, was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1895 in Donji Milanovac. His "secondary service" was a doctor of Bratinske blagajne in Donji Milanovac and the Directorate of River Navigation. He was a Serb, a Yugoslav citizen, of Orthodox faith. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade in 1930. He had had the right to practice medicine since 1931. He did not have a particular specialty in the profession. He spoke German, French and Romanian.

As the manager of the military hospital in Kruševac in 1941, he was captured by the Germans and released home in May as a patient. Since then, he lived in Donji Milanovac, fired from the civil service by the occupiers. On the 9<sup>th</sup> September, he voluntarily joined the units of the 25<sup>th</sup> Division, as a doctor of the 16<sup>th</sup> Brigade. He worked as a doctor in the surgical team of those units and as an epidemiologist until the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1945, taking part in all the battles of these units in Serbia and Bosnia. He was married and had two sons.

*MD Atanasković P. Svetislav*, malariologist, manager of the health centre in Negotin, was born on

the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1895 in Mozgovo, in the Aleksinac district. His immediate service was - district medical officer and traffic doctor. He was a Serb, a Yugoslav citizen, of Orthodox faith. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Paris in 1924. He had had the right to practice medicine since 1925. After the capitulation of Yugoslavia, he was in captivity for a while, only to end up as a refugee in Negotin, where he cooperated with the district people's liberation committee until the liberation. He was married and had a son (6).

*MD Stojković Đ. Milan*, a doctor of all medicine, a private doctor, was born on 20<sup>th</sup>, 44 1889 in Negotin. He also worked as a traffic doctor was a Serb, a Yugoslav subject, of Orthodox faith. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in 1924 in Paris, and had had the right to practice medicine since 1918. Before World War II, he was an MP and launched initiatives for the construction of water supply systems in some villages of the Negotin region. From the moment of the capitulation of Yugoslavia until the liberation, he was in captivity for some time and then found himself in Negotin. He participated in the national liberation struggle as a doctor of the command of the place and the area. He was single. He lived in Dušanova Street in Negotin (7).

*MD Andjelković Il. Nikola*, a general practitioner, who worked as a dispensary doctor-clerk, was born on the 28<sup>th</sup> December in Negotin. He completed the study of medicine in January 1924, when he acquired the right to practice medicine. On the 6<sup>th</sup> September, 1944, he was mobilized and worked as a doctor for the local and regional command. He was married and had one child. He lived at 13, Voskresenjska Street in Negotin (8).

*MD Kostić K. Miodrag*, surgeon, manager of the hospital in Negotin and head of the department of surgery, was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, 1895 in Kragujevac. He was a Yugoslav citizen of Orthodox faith. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine on the 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1922 in Lyon, France. He acquired the right to practice medicine in 1923. He spoke French well and used English and German. After the capitulation of Yugoslavia, he was in captivity for two years, and after that he returned to Negotin. He did not take part in the national liberation struggle, except for the treatment of the wounded. He was married, without children. He lived at 4, Kraljevića Marka Street in Negotin (9).

*MD Arsović S. Ljubica*, an internal medicine specialist, head of the department for internal medicine of Negotin hospital, was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> December, 1900 in Belgrade. She was a Serb, a Yugoslav subject, of Orthodox faith. She graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1926, and had had the right to practice medicine since 1930. She spoke French and German. In the period from the capitulation of Yugoslavia until the liberation, she worked as a doctor of the internal department at Zaječar hospital, and then in the same

position, from the 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1945, at Negotin hospital. She did not take part in the national liberation struggle. She was single. She lived at 3, Stanoja Nešića Street, in Negotin (10).

Apart from the abovementioned, the following doctors also worked in Timočka Krajina at the beginning of 1946: MD Radomir Nikolić, born in 1899, from Trnovac, worked as a district medical officer, MD Cvetko Gligorijević, born in 1915, from Mali Jasenovac, worked as the town medical officer in Zaječar, MD Leko Đolović, born in 1893, worked as a medical officer in Knjaževac, MD Milutin Milenović, born in 1901, from Knjaževac, worked as a doctor in Knjaževac, MD Aleksandar Pavlovski, born in 1904 in Kiev, MD Kosta Mihajlović, born in 1883 in Trnjane and MD Stevan Ilić, born in 1898 in Donja Kamenica.

#### Data sources

1. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXX/ 1945.
2. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI/1946.
3. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXX, number 1555/2/1945.
4. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXX, number 1555/2/1945,
5. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI, number 2330/14/1946.
6. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI, number 2330/14/1946.
7. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI, number 2330/14/1946.
8. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI, number 2330/14/1946.
9. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI, number 2330/14/1946.
10. Historical Archives Zaječar, ONO fund, file folder XXXI, number 2330/14/1946.