

DOCTOR JOVAN STEJIĆ – THE FIRST SERBIAN DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

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Summary: Doctor Jovan Stejić was born in Arad on November 24, 1803. He was the first Serbian to hold the title of Doctor of Medicine and worked in the renewed Serbia. He was the creator of Serbian medical terminology, the first Serbian anthropologist, and the Chief of Sanitation for the Principality of Serbia. Additionally, he served as the Chief Secretary of the State Council, a fighter for the reform of the Serbian language and orthography, a great enlightener, and an advocate for the rights of individuals and citizens. Doctor Stejić was also one of the founders of the Society of Serbian Letters and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. His arrival in Serbia as the personal physician of Prince Miloš Obrenović marked the beginning of organized healthcare services in the country. He succeeded in bringing advanced medical ideas to Serbia, modeled after the country where he studied. He belonged to the first generation of Serbian intellectuals who invested their knowledge and efforts into the cultural enlightenment of the Serbian people and the building of the modern Serbian state in the 19th century. Some of the key messages of his works include natural rights, the right to freedom and equality, the right to honor and good name, and the right to property and acquired goods. His stance was that the state should be organized according to the law, and the law should be equal for all. He spoke about freedom and people's right to express their opinions. Significantly, he emphasized the educational role for younger generations. As a pioneer in many areas, through his literary work, he sought to highlight the foundations of moral values and the importance of a clear and peaceful conscience, thereby laying the foundations of medical ethics.

One of his notable contributions was the book he translated and supplemented as a student according to the needs of the Serbian people, "Macrobiotics, or the Science of Prolonging Human Life," which was the first medical book in Serbia. By translating this book, he initiated pioneering work on Serbian medical terminology. Doctor Stejić died of tuberculosis in 1853 in Belgrade. He left behind his son, Pavle Stejić, a renowned Belgrade surgeon.

Doctor Jovan Stejić distinguished himself through his diverse cultural, healthcare, and social work as a physician, writer, great scientist, and enlightener.

Key words: Jovan Stejić, prvi srpski doktor medicine, prva srpska medicinska knjiga

INTRODUCTION

Doctor Jovan Stejić, originally from Arad, was the first Serbian Doctor of Medicine in the renewed Serbia during the 19th century. He received his medical education in Pest and Vienna. Coming from the Habsburg Monarchy, he arrived in the renewed Serbia to serve as the personal physician of Prince Miloš Obrenović. His arrival marked the beginning of organized healthcare services in Serbia.

He was the creator of Serbian medical terminology, the first Serbian anthropologist, Chief Secretary of the State Council, and an advocate for the reform of the Serbian language and orthography. Doctor Jovan Stejić, together with Doctor Karlo Pacek, was a founder of the Serbian sanitary service. He was also one of the

founders of the Society of Serbian Letters and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Doctor Stejić laid the foundations of medical ethics and transfusion practices. The book he translated and supplemented according to the needs of the Serbian people, "Macrobiotics, or the Science of Prolonging Human Life," was the first medical book in Serbia. By translating this book, he initiated pioneering work on Serbian medical terminology.

As a writer, through his works, he fought for citizens' rights. Inspired by Kant's ideas, he preached morality, modesty, diligence, and a sense of duty, thereby influencing younger generations through education. Doctor Jovan Stejić successfully introduced modern and

advanced healthcare ideas to Serbia, modeled after the healthcare system of the country where he studied.

Doctor Jovan belonged to the first generation of Serbian intellectuals who dedicated their knowledge and efforts to the cultural enlightenment of the Serbian people and the construction of a modern Serbian state.

The aim of this work is to explore the life, education, career, and contributions to medicine of the first Doctor of Medicine in renewed Serbia, Doctor Jovan Stejić.

Picture1. Doctor Jovan Stejić

taken from: <https://www.sanu.ac.rs/clan/stejic-jovan/>



In that period, Serbia lacked qualified educational personnel, so in 1828, Jevrem Obrenović awarded Jovan Stejić a scholarship. In 1829, Stejić began working in Šabac. From 1830 to 1832, he moved to Kragujevac after Prince Miloš Obrenović appointed him as his personal physician and tutor for his sons, Milan and Mihailo. Prince Miloš highly valued Doctor Jovan both as a physician and as an advisor.

In 1832, a conflict arose between Prince Miloš and Doctor Stejić. One reason was that Doctor Stejić refused to let the Prince review the manuscript of his book, "Assembly of Truth and Science," before printing in the newly established State Printing House. This refusal angered Prince Miloš, who halted the printing process. In this book, Doctor Stejić discussed natural rights, the right to freedom and equality, the right to honor and good reputation, and the right to property and acquired goods. His stance was that the state should be organized by law, and the law must be equal for all. He advocated for freedom and people's right to express their

BIOGRAPHY

Doctor Jovan Stejić was born in Arad on November 24, 1803. He completed his primary education in Arad, and after receiving a scholarship from Sava Tekelija, he studied in Szeged, where he finished his secondary education and began studying philosophy.

He studied medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in Pest and earned his doctorate in Vienna in 1829.

opinions and addressed reforms in Vuk Karadžić's orthography, with which he partially disagreed.

After the first original text was printed, Doctor Jovan abandoned the newly accepted Vuk's orthographic reform. Due to this conflict, he left Serbia in 1832 and moved to Zemun, where he practiced private medicine for eight years. He occasionally returned to assist Doctor Kunibert in treating Prince Miloš's family.

In 1833, Doctor Stejić recommended introducing mandatory practical internships for young doctors. While living in Zemun, in 1837, he contributed to the Tyrolean calendar "Urania."

Doctor Jovan returned to Serbia in 1840. He was appointed Chief of Civil Sanitation and initiated efforts to open the first psychiatric hospital in Serbia. He also drafted the first regulations for burials.

In 1841, he became Chief Secretary of the State Council. He was one of the founders of the Society of Serbian Letters in 1842, which

later became the Serbian Learned Society in 1862, evolving into the Serbian Royal Academy and finally the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

In September 1842, the government dismissed him from public service, but he was allowed to remain in Belgrade as a private physician.

In 1843, he resumed his role as Chief of Civil Sanitation. During this tenure, he ordered vaccination for children against smallpox, issued guidelines to prevent dysentery, and organized efforts to combat syphilis.

On June 25, 1845, he was appointed Chief Secretary of the State Council. Doctor Stejić initiated efforts to document and preserve historical documents and monuments of Serbian history. He served in this role until his death in 1853.

In addition to medicine, Doctor Jovan Stejić was involved in literature and became a member of the German Enlightenment movement.

As a writer, through his works, he fought for citizens' rights. He wrote about natural rights, the right to freedom and equality, the right to honor and good reputation, and the right to property and acquired goods. His belief was that the state must be organized by law and that the law should apply equally to all. He advocated for freedom and the right to express opinions and discussed reforms to Vuk Karadžić's orthography. Inspired by Kant's ideas, he preached morality, modesty, diligence, and a

sense of duty, thereby influencing younger generations.

In 1826, Doctor Stejić translated the book "Macrobotics, or the Science of Prolonging Human Life" from German, which was printed in Vienna. This book is considered his most significant work. The book is a Serbian adaptation of an encyclopedic manual by German clinician Johann Peter Hufeland. In "Macrobotics," Doctor Jovan Stejić explored what would happen if young blood were transfused into an elderly person's body. The book is regarded as a precursor to transfusion therapy, which became widely practiced during World War I. It was the first book to mention hygiene in sexual relations in Serbian. The book was dedicated to Sava Tekelija, his benefactor.

Doctor Jovan Stejić's literary works in the field of physical and spiritual hygiene include titles such as:

"Reflections on Diversity"

"What to Eat and Drink"

"On the State from Weber's Democritus"

"Europe from the State Dictionary of Rothe and Welker"

"Critique of Vuk's Translation of the New Testament"

"Anthropology, or the Science of Man"

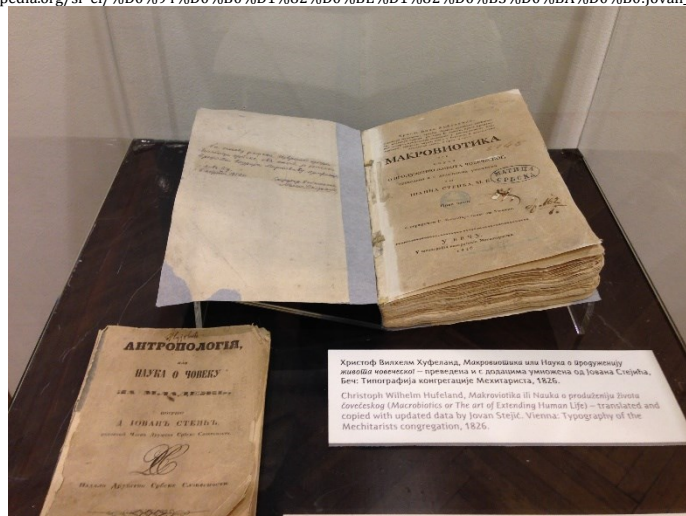
"Proposal for a Serbian Dictionary and Serbian Grammar"

"Entertainment for Mind and Heart"

"Macrobotics, or the Science of Prolonging Human Life".

Picture 2. Book: "Macrobotics" by Doctor Jovan Stejić

Taken from: https://sr.m.wikipedia.org/sr-el/%D0%94%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BA%D0%B0%Jovan_Steji%C4%87_MD.IMG_2057.jpg



He often collaborated with the Glasnik of the DSS and served as its editor-in-chief for a time. He also contributed to the publications Dnevnik and Srpski narodni list. Among his published works, the most notable is Makroviotika ili nauka o produženju života čovekova (1826, Vienna). This is a Serbian-adapted translation in the form of a textbook, an encyclopedic handbook of the German clinician Johann Peter Hufferland. In this work, hygiene of sexual relations and the idea of blood transfusion were mentioned for the first time in the Serbian language.

Pijanstvo (1827) provides a vivid depiction of the causes and consequences of alcoholism, as well as methods for treating alcoholics. Zabava za razum i srce is a collection of texts with health messages, published in five volumes (Vienna, 1828; Buda, 1831; Zemun, 1834; Buda, 1836; and Novi Sad, 1839). The third book consists of translations of texts by other authors under the title Mudra izrečenija iz raznih pisaca (Wise Sayings from Various Authors), while the fourth book, titled Ogledi umne nauke (Essays on Intellectual Science), was written for a general audience.

Antropologija ili nauka o čoveku za mladež (Anthropology or the Science of Man for Youth) was published in 1850. In Srpski pravopis (Serbian Orthography) from 1852, he expressed his views on the need to adopt new terms and expressions in various scientific fields. His Predlog za srpski rečnik i srpsku

gramatiku (Proposal for a Serbian Dictionary and Grammar) was published in 1853 as vice president of the Društvo srpske slovesnosti (Society of Serbian Letters) and represents a continuation of the debate started in 1832 regarding Vuk Karadžić's spelling reform.

To this day, his marital status remains unknown, but it is known that he had a family and that his son was named Pavle Stejić, a renowned Belgrade surgeon. Dr. Jovan established his family home in the center of Belgrade, on Makedonska Street, in 1845, where he lived with his family. Dr. Jovan Stejić passed away in Belgrade on November 21, 1853, from tuberculosis and was buried in the cemetery near the Church of Saint Mark, which existed at the time.

CONCLUSION

Dr. Jovan Stejić was a significant figure in Serbian culture and medical history. He was considered one of the most respected intellectuals in shaping Serbian culture, particularly its medical history. He was a pioneer of preventive medical care in Serbian territories and one of the founders of civil healthcare services. Dr. Stejić was a physician, author of numerous articles and other literary works, especially in medical and health education, a translator, and a political and cultural activist. Dr. Stejić's most significant achievement is that he created Serbian medical literature and medical terminology and founded the civil healthcare system in Serbia.

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