



The guardians of public health in Niš in war and peace (1878–1941)

Čuvari narodnog zdravlja u Nišu u ratu i miru
(1878–1941)

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“The Guardians of Public Health in Niš in War and Peace (1878–1941)” was written by Slavica Popović Filipović, B.A. in the English language and literature, translator, publisher, researcher, and writer of the history of Serbian medicine and the world and Serbian philanthropy. She authored 10 books and over 100 research papers in the above fields.

This book was published on the occasion of the 145th Anniversary of the Military Hospital in Niš. It is dedicated to all public health workers in Niš, in war and peace, who participated in the development and prosperity of the Serbian medicine and Serbian Medical Corps. All events from 1878 until 1941 are presented chronologically and laid out clearly, including the founding of various institutions, a listing of important dates, biographies of outstanding individuals, original reports, and personal writings of the contemporaries.

The book has 594 pages and it is divided into 11 Chapters: The Great Military Hospital of Niš; the Niš District Hospital and Municipal Physicians in Niš; From the First Royal Serbian Military L. Pasteur Research Center to the modern Institute for Public Health; The Leaders of the Serbian Military Medical Corps; First Women Physicians and Pharmacologists; Foreigners in the Serbian Medical Corps and public health in Niš and its district; Medical Assistants in the Morava Permanent Military Hospital in the Great War; Volunteer Nurses, Qualified Nurses, and

humanitarian women workers; Establishment of the first Pharmacies and development of the Pharmaceutical guild in Niš; The “Morava” Permanent Military Veterinary Hospital and the Serbian Red Cross Committee in Niš.

The Chapter “Leaders of the Serbian Military Medical Corps” is dedicated to the following outstanding individuals: Dr. Sava V. Popovic, General of the Medical Corps; Prof. Dr. Mihailo V. Petrovic and Dr. Vladimir Stanojevic, both Generals of the Medical Corps; Dr. Jovan Hadzi-Bogdanovic and Dr. Dragutin S. Petkovic, both Colonels of the Medical Corps; Dr. Aleksa Savich and Dr. Milan Petrovic, both Lieutenant Colonels of the Medical Corps. The book has 313 original photos (many from personal family albums, first time published). There are about 1,000 listed references from Serbian history, foreign sources of literature, and contemporary international newspapers.

“The Guardians of Public Health in Niš in War and Peace (1878–1941)” presents an objective, unbiased, and analytical approach to the history of not just the Military Hospital in Niš but of the whole health system in Niš and its environs from 1878 until 1941. Included are many important details from the history of Niš and Serbia, cultural events, health conditions, and wartime epic suffering lasting almost 65 years. It was also a picture of a difficult, dynamic, and turbulent life in Serbia at that time when there were three regional wars and one world war – the period of immense

wartime suffering, cataclysmic upheavals, and historic changes at the local, state, and global – international level. All that impacted the work of the health professions, their active participation, and the whole Serbian people.

Only ten days after the end of the Second Serbian-Turkish War, on January 22, 1878, Dr. Vladan Djordjević initiated the formation of the Great Military Hospital in Niš, today's Military Hospital in Niš. Under his guidance, the first military medical hospital was established with 1,000 beds spread over five sections. From those first formative days of the well-organized medical services up to today, during 145 years of its operation, many generations of health workers of different profiles have contributed by their dedicated work and creativity to the high reputation of the Military Hospital in Niš.

This significant volume, like the majority of the books published by this author so far, aims to enlighten, uncover, and bring closer to the health professionals and the general public the rich tradition of Serbian medicine by using positive examples to encourage the formation and strengthening of appropriate professional, ethical, and patriotic principles within present and future generations of

physicians, and other health professionals, as well as the wider community. That way, we shall appreciate better and face the difficulties, problems, and challenges we are facing today.

This manuscript also sends a message that transcends time through epochs: no civilization should suffer such a great tragedy as war, its consequences, and deep wounds. This is something that both present and future generations should be well aware of. All our potential energy, strengths, skills, and creativity should be used for general well-being and towards a better and more humane world.

“The Guardians of Public Health in Niš in War and Peace (1878–1941)” will be of great benefit to historians, physicians, medical students, professional soldiers, as well as a wider general public not only around the city of Niš but also throughout Serbia. In her extensive and all-encompassing book, the author included the writings of the past times but left room for further new research.

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