

Dr. Stanko Sielski (1891–1958): Physician, scientist, humanist

Husref Tahirović*

Department of Medical Sciences
Academy of Sciences and Arts
of Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Corresponding author:
husref.tahirovic@untz.ba
Tel./Fax.: + 387 35 303 740

Received: 23 November 2015
Accepted: 27 November 2015

Key words: Stanko Sielski ■ History of medicine ■ Archaeology ■ Ethnology ■ Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This work presents the results of research into the life and work of Dr. Stanko Sielski, related to his professional, scientific and humanitarian work. He was born in Gračanica, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) in 1891, to a family of Polish origins. He attended high school in Travnik and completed his studies of medicine in Vienna in 1919. During the First World War he served on the frontlines with the Austro-Hungarian army. He began his service as a doctor in Konjic, Prozor and Glamoč, and then worked in Varcar Vakuf, Zenica, Travnik, Bihać, Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Tuzla. At that time in BH living conditions were very bad, the level of education of the people insufficient, there were many epidemics of infectious diseases, and the mortality of the population was high. Dr. Stanko Sielski made a significant contribution to treating the sick, preventing various diseases and the health education of the people. In the realm of the history of medicine in BA, he researched the life and work of doctors from previous generations, the work of medical institutions, old medical manuscripts written in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, folk beliefs about the origins and treatment of a variety of illnesses, and the role of herbal medicine and amulets in treating the sick. In addition, he undertook research in the fields of archaeology, ethnology and sociology. He published the results of his research in scholarly journals. In the Second World War he saved the lives of many Jewish doctors and their families from persecution in concentration camps, and as a result in 2014 he was posthumously declared "Righteous Among the Nations". **Conclusion.** Dr. Stanko Sielski, alongside his work as a doctor, was also involved in a variety of scientific research and publication work, which contributed to the preservation and a better understanding of the material and spiritual heritage of BH.

Introduction

It will soon be 125 years since the birth of Dr. Stanko Sielski, the physician, humanist and scientist, who is worthy of our interest, not only in the field of medicine, but also in the fields of ethnology, ethnography, archaeology and sociology. He was a man, led by his feelings, who helped people in various ways, regardless of their social status, eth-

nic and religious affiliation, and sometimes even regardless of the current moral values of the environment he was working in.

The majority of the working life of Dr. Stanko Sielski was marked by the social and economic consequences of the First and Second World Wars. At that time in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) the living conditions were very bad, the level of education of the people poor, the hygiene of the population,

especially in the villages, was at a low level, infectious diseases frequently took on the characteristics of epidemics, and the resulting mortality of the population, especially children, was high. The life of society, in many aspects, was based on “customs”, which were deemed to be the best and only way to behave, and quackery (folk medicine) was deeply rooted.

Although he was a physician, who made a significant contribution to improving public health in BH in his time, a humanist and a fruitful cultural and scientific worker, no one has yet undertaken a thorough analysis, to research his life and work systematically, and present it to the wider cultural public of BH, but also the public of the wider environment. As a result his broad and varied opus of great importance for his own country, has mainly remained unknown, or is only mentioned in fragments.

This paper presents the results of research into the life and work of Dr. Stanko Sielski, relating to his professional, scientific and humanitarian work.

Childhood and education

Stanko Sielski was born in Gračanica, BH, in 1891, to a family of Polish origin, who moved to Bosnia from Tarnopol (Galicia) at the end of the 19th century. His father Stanislav was a geometer in civil service, and his mother Marija, nee Waldher, was a homemaker. His father was frequently sent to work in different places in Bosnia, so Stanko spent his childhood in Gračanica, Zenica and Travnik. He attended high school in Travnik, and after graduating in 1910 he enrolled to study medicine in Vienna, where at the same time he studied painting and the history of art for two years (1). During his studies, he served as a soldier on the front-line in the Austro-Hungarian army during the First World War, and later as a medic, working as a doctor. After the end of the war

in 1918 he was discharged from the army with the rank of Lieutenant. He then continued his study of medicine in Vienna and graduated on 16th June 1919 (1).

Professional work

After graduating from the Medical Faculty, Dr. Stanko Sielski remained in Vienna until 1st April 1919, when he worked as a Lieutenant in the Military Mission Service in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1). He began his state service as a doctor on 16th November 1919 in the District Administration of Konjic, Prozor and Glamoč, where he worked until 30th November 1920, as a honorary doctor, specialized in epidemiology combating typhoid and smallpox. After that, until 19th February 1924, he worked as a district doctor in Varcar Vakuf (Mrkonjić Grad), then he was appointed to Zenica in the same capacity until 12th November 1924, after which he continued to work in Travnik as a district doctor, the local sanitary officer and health advisor, until 3rd November 1931. By a decree of the Royal Ministry of Public Health of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia of 3rd November 1931, Dr. Stanko Sielski was transferred to Bihać, where up to 19th July 1941 he worked as a health advisor, and senior advisor and manager of the Public Health Centre (1).

In all these places, the sanitary and epidemiological situation was very severe, infectious diseases usually took on the characteristics of epidemics, and the hygiene of the population, especially in the villages, was at a very low level. As a physician Dr. Stanko Sielski made a very significant contribution in treating the sick, but also in the field of combating infectious diseases, parasite and fungal infections and pediculosis, and in providing health education for the people. His special contribution was in treating and preventing endemic syphilis in Bihać (2).

Dr. Stanko Sielski worked in Banja Luka during the Second World War (19.7.1941-25.8.1944). He was the head of the Institute for Combating Endemic Syphilis (the Institute) (Pictures 1, 2), which was founded by the Independent State of Croatia, in order to root out this disease once and for all, as quickly as possible from Bosnian villages (3).



Picture 1 The building of the Institute for combating endemic syphilis in Banja Luka 1941-1945.



Picture 2 Dr. Stanko Sielski at the time when he was working at the Institute for combating endemic syphilis in Banja Luka.

The seat of the Institute was in Banja Luka, but the actual work took place through the health institutes of that time, the public health centres, and other health institutions in BH, sometimes also improvised in-field clinics in the remote Bosnian villages (Picture 3) (4).



Picture 3 An improvised in-field clinic of the Institute for combating endemic syphilis.

Doctors from the Institute were mainly Jews from Croatia and BH, who had already been, or should have been deported to labor camps or death camps. Since the doctors were mainly accommodated in small Bosnian towns where there were no permanent or occasional doctors, they treated the population not only for syphilis but also for other illnesses.

Dr. Stanko Sielski worked in Banja Luka in the relatively short, but extremely complex and difficult period of the war. He also held the function of a managing civil servant in a state which from its very outset, following the example of the Third Reich, accepted and made law the National Socialist interpretation of race, which was mainly aimed against Jews and Roma, but also all those who did not agree with Ustasha politics (5). It was precisely in these circumstances that his altruistic character reached its full expression. He supported the People's Liberation Movement with hygienic and medical materials, and he enabled some Home Guard (Domobran) soldiers to transfer to Partisan units. His role in saving Jewish doctors, the employees of the Institute, from persecution in concentration camps was extremely im-

portant. According to the oral and written statements given to the writer of this text by the last living doctor from the Institute, Dr. Teodor Grüner from Zagreb, Dr. Stanko Sielski saved him and many other Jewish doctors and their families, whereby he also risked his own life (6). This testimony, along with the proposal (7) by the author of this text, was a crucial document for the posthumous declaration of Stanko Sielski as *Righteous among the Nations* at the end of 2014. This prestigious award by the State of Israel is awarded to non-Jews who exposed their own lives to danger during the Holocaust to save Jews from persecution by the Nazis and their collaborators. However, when this decision was rendered an unforgivable error was made, since Dr. Stanko Sielski was designated as Righteous of the State of Croatia, whereby BH was overlooked, that is the state in which he was born, where he was educated and in which he worked productively to the end of his life.

On 31st July 1944, Dr. Stanko Sielski was transferred to service in the Ministry of Public Education of the Independent State of Croatia, that is to the Faculty of Medicine of the Croatian University in Sarajevo (8). While he was still working in Banja Luka at the beginning of 1944, he was elected to be private assistant professor of the Chair of History of Medicine of the Zagreb Faculty of Medicine, in the subject of Folk Medicine (9), and soon after that he was also elected to be regular professor in the subject of History of Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo (10) and the first dean of that faculty (11). He worked as the dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo from 1st August 1944 to 13th May 1945. After the liberation of Sarajevo in April 1945 and the hand over of the Faculty to the new authorities on 13th May 1945, he was sent to work on the District People's Committee in Banja Luka (12). In June of the same year, he was sent to Kozara as part of a hygiene and epidemiological team

of the First Army, in order to help combat typhus (13). He stayed in Banja Luka until 2nd March 1946 when he was transferred to Tuzla (14).

In Tuzla he worked as the head of the health and epidemiology centre, later renamed the Institute of Hygiene, right up until his death on 31st October 1958. This was the period immediately after the Second World War, and the scope of work of that health institution covered the region of north-east BH. The social and economic situation in the state was difficult, the population were impoverished and exhausted after four years of war; hygiene, especially in village areas, was at a very low level, and epidemics of various infectious diseases were frequent, which contributed to the fact that mortality, especially amongst children, was high. Dr. Stanko Sielski, who was sometimes the only physician at such an important and significant health institution, made an important contribution to improving health in that area together with his co-workers. He died at the age of 68 in Zagreb, where he was buried in Mirogoj cemetery.

The scientific and publication work

Dr. Stanko Sielski was involved in scientific research work throughout his working life. Although he worked mainly in small towns and villages, this did not prevent him, far from major institutions, from taking a lively interest in the medical profession, and precisely in those small Bosnian towns, and he found subjects to satisfy his interest in research, subjects which were sometimes very close to him, and sometimes in complete contrast to his profession.

In the realm of the history of medicine in BH, he researched the life and work of doctors from previous generations, (15), the work of medical institutions, (16), old medical manuscripts written in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, (17), folk beliefs about the ori-

gins and treatment of a variety of illnesses, (18-22) and the role of amulets and folk medicine books in treating the sick (23, 24).

Of particular benefit for archaeological, ethnological and ethnographic science in BH was the constant contact and collaboration between Dr. Stanko Sielski and the museums in the places where he worked (25-28), his references to new archaeological finds and his assistance to museum experts during their in-field work (29, 30), as well as his research in the area around Travnik and Žepče (31) and Bihać (32, 33). There are many written documents and other exhibits in museums in BH and Croatia bearing testimony to this (34-37). In the final years of his life, Dr. Stanko Sielski was an associate of the Yugoslav Lexicographical Institute in Zagreb, in writing the first volume of the Medical Encyclopaedia, which was published in 1958 (38).

By careful research, I have found evidence to establish that Dr. Stanko Sielski published 20 papers: 16 from the realm of medicine, two from archaeology, and one each from the fields of ethnography and sociology (39). However, this does not mean that there are not other works by him for which I have not yet been able to find documentation. The lectures are also not listed here which Dr. Stanko Sielski presented at various professional congresses, symposia and other conferences, because I was not able to find documentation for them, although I learned about them from a variety of reports and the daily press.

The paper: "Brill's disease. IV. Study of 26 cases in Yugoslavia" of which he is one of the co-authors, was presented to the Epidemiology Section of the American Public Health Association at the Seventy-ninth Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California, on October 30th, 1951 and published in *The American Journal of Public Health* (40). It is so interesting that it deserves to have a separate article written and published about it. Oth-

erwise, all his other articles, published in the Bosnian language, are worthy of attention, however, the best insight into his entire work in research is given by the articles "Dr. Justin Karlinski", "Old Turkish and Arabic Medical Manuscripts in Bosnia and Herzegovina", "Amulets", "Archaeological Finds in the Area of Travnik and Žepče" and "Our Village Golubić – a contribution to research into health in the village and life there", and they therefore deserve a special mention here.

The article: "Dr. Justin Karlinski", which Dr. Stanko Sielski published in 1953 in the journal, *Higijena: časopis za higijenu, mikrobiologiju, epidemiologiju i sanitarnu tehniku* (Hygiene, journal for hygiene, microbiology, epidemiology and sanitary technology) (15) was the result of the interest of Dr. Stanko Sielski in the life and work of that physician. That interest was awakened in him by articles written by Dr. Justin Karlinski, which Dr. Stanko Sielski read whilst leafing through a copy of the journal *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu* (The Herald of the National Museum in Sarajevo), much earlier than the time when he decided to write about this famous doctor in BH. It is interesting how Dr. Stanko Sielski came upon the carefully preserved documentation of Dr. Justin Karlinski. After arriving in Tuzla, he met Mrs. Marcela Karlinski, the widow of Dr. Justin Karlinski and their daughter, Zosja, then Mrs. Opitz. From them he learned that Dr. Justin Karlinski, alongside his practice as a doctor, during his work in Bosnia had also been involved in scientific research work, and they had kept six hard covered volumes, comprising copies of his articles written in various languages and printed in various European journals, which formed both his private and official documentation. At his request, Mrs. Marcela Karlinski allowed Dr. Stanko Sielski to examine these documents, and he, after he had studied them in detail, wrote the article about his life and work. Dr. Justin Karlinski would have been completely

forgotten in BH, if Dr. Stanko Sielski had not written that article, which comprises 14 pages of densely typed text, with a picture of Dr. Justin Karlinski, and a list of his 80 publications written in the form of references. The text is a studious and well summarized analysis of the life and work of the interesting and unusual personality of Dr. Justin Karlinski. It is not necessary to go into more detail about this article here because that would be a summary of something that has already been summarized, but I warmly recommend it to those who are interested in how a highly educated physician and scholar lived and worked in BH at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

The article: "Old Turkish and Arabic Medical Manuscripts in Bosnia and Herzegovina", which Dr. Stanko Sielski published in the book *Iz Hrvatske medicinske prošlosti* (From the Medical History of Croatia) in 1954 (17), did not occur spontaneously, but was the fruit of his many years of systematically collecting and researching historical data, various documents, manuscripts, articles and books, which were used long ago in Bosnia as a written source of knowledge for treating the sick. The article comprises 16 pages of dense, type-written text and has four illustrations. At the end of the article there is a chapter that explains the foreign words used and a list of literature. Although the article is not systematized in the sense of having titles and sub-titles, it is written in an orderly manner with recognisable paragraphs, and the text itself forms a well connected whole, which is easy to read and interesting.

On the first page, in the first paragraph, Dr. Stanko Sielski indicates the motives and reasons for writing this piece. This is how he describes it: "Loyalty to this country, where I was born, and have lived and worked, dictated these lines to me, where I will describe briefly the lives of some old eastern physicians and their work, which I have found in Bosnia". Later, also on the first page, he

writes about Bosnia: "There are few places in the world where contrasts have so obviously come into conflict. Through the ages fortified cities and towers have stood like wreaths around the borders of our republic. On this heroic battlefield and country, in which at one time everyone carried arms to be able to defend their golden freedom, our people fought and fell through the ages, and the innumerable memorial stones are the silent witnesses to plague, famine and war. The old memorials and walls are overgrown with brush and creeping vines, and the wind blows away the few reminders of those who worked, and as a result of historical events, ploughed hard furrows in the lives of their blood brothers".

At the end of the "introductory" part of the article, which comprises a text of more than three pages, Dr. Stanko Sielski writes that the purpose of the article was to present to our historians how oriental medical books were studied, revealing many writers, previously unknown to us, and including original Bosnian ideas, since, as he writes, the Bosnian scribes, at the very least, when they were copying the oriental manuscripts, added their own personal comments to them, their own experience, and their own methods of treatment.

Most of the remainder of the text relates to extensive or brief analyses of individual medical manuscripts found in BH. These analyses include brief or extensive biographical data on the authors of individual pieces, and there is also a detailed description of the work itself, in which he as a doctor emphasizes and comments on interesting chapters, and sometimes presents them verbatim in his text and links them to medical practice of his time.

Dr. Stanko Sielski pays particular attention to the text written in the margins, known as *marginalia*. This is to be expected from him, because the margins contained notes and comments by unknown local

scribes, who were to Dr. Stanko Sielski interesting, modest and extremely important characters. He frequently points out their Bosnian origins, which is also to be expected of him, because at all times he was primarily interested in Bosnia. In this way Dr. Stanko Sielski dealt with 7 medical works. At the end of the article he thanks his friend, Prof. Abdurahman Čokić from Tuzla, and Prof. Dr. Šakir Sikirić from Sarajevo, the well-known Bosnian Orientalist, for the assistance provided in translating those manuscripts.

In the article “Amulets” published in 1941, in the publication *Etnografska istraživanja i građa III* (Ethnographic Research and Materials, III) by the Croatian State Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb in 1941 (23) Dr. Stanko Sielski, as a proficient researcher, and a thorough and widely educated intellectual, describes various aspects of “various items” - from amulets and spells, to apotropaic scriptures, which helped people in various forms of trouble, or protected those who used them from different forms of evil, objects which he collected while he was working as a doctor, mainly from the Bosnian Frontier (*Bosanska krajina*), and he gave them or sold them to the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb. One of those objects is shown in Picture 4.

Already at the beginning of this article, Dr. Stanko Sielski, with enviable interest, unravels and explains folk beliefs about objects with “talisman powers”, telling how these objects had an important role in our folk medicine and beliefs. He attempts, on the basis of the knowledge he acquired during his many years of research, to categorize and define the differences between true amulets, amulets against spells, talismans and similar objects, stating thereby that it was difficult to differentiate them, or even impossible to define clear boundaries between them. He describes apotropaic scriptures, stating that they were adjusted to the religion of those wearing them, and how previously the cus-



Picture 4 Enamluk, a container for texts from the Quran (*enam*) made from silver leaf, decorated with filigree, amethysts and coral (against spells). Pendants – more recent. Allegedly once the property of a captain from Tuzla in Travnik. Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, inv. no. 13698.

tom had been that a hodja would write them for Christians or Christian priests for Muslims, but that had already become a rarity, because Catholic and Orthodox priests had stopped writing apotropaic scriptures long before, whilst hodjas still did so.

With an enviable and undisputed feeling for research into these items with mysterious power, Dr. Stanko Sielski describes what apotropaic scriptures were for, what they looked like, their size and the material they were written on, the writing implements used and the way they were written, and the places on the body where they were worn, which often reveals the essence of the written text. They frequently included statements by those who wrote them, or the people who wore them. In this way, through 49 pictures, showing more than 100 items with accompanying texts, he describes the various items used by the people of the Bosnian Frontier for different types of problems, or which “defended” them from spells.

The article: “Archaeological Finds in the Area of Travnik and Žepče” was published

by Dr. Stanko Sielski in the *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovina* (The Herald of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina) in 1931 (31). The article covers six pages, organized into six chapters, after which there is a summary in German. There is an Appendix to the article, consisting of 12 tables printed on a separate sheet of paper, marked in Roman numerals from 5 to 16, in which there are black and white sketches of items found, mainly life-size, numbered from 1 to 149, to which the author refers in the textual description. These are rare examples of the artistic work of Dr. Stanko Sielski, because his works of art have mostly not been preserved.

The first chapter: *A Neolithic Settlement in the Valley of the River Bila*, begins with a brief description of the site, its geographical position and a description of the research. The author goes on to state that flint knives, scrapers, arrows, stone axes, wedges, grinders and hammers fragments of clay pots with or without ornamentation were found there. On the basis of the items found, the author presumes: "our ancestors living on the banks of the River Bila easily met their everyday needs". He then states that the research was not systematic, that is that the dig was random, that the order of the layers was mainly doubled, and there follows a systematized description of the items found. At the end of this chapter, the author points out that amongst the bronze items he also found a brooch decorated with some form of flower and dots, which is similar to a brooch or pendant described by Kellner in his article "Remains of Roman Settlements on Ilidža", which was published in The Herald of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, volume 5, 1897, on page 149, and he concludes that this brooch dates from the Roman era.

There follows a shorter chapter: *Bronze Finds in the Valley of the River Bila*, which describes the location of the site, and the findings of bronze jewellery, consisting of

twisted necklaces with no ornamentation, two spiral bracelets, a spiral ring and a double clasp. The third chapter: *Bronze Finds in Brezovo Polje*, begins with a brief history of the discovery and a description of the location of the site of a bronze store, comprising 16 celts, 3 spears and one sickle, where all the items except the sickle have been well-preserved and covered in beautiful green patina. The textual description of these items is given in a clear and systematized table.

In the fourth chapter: *Bronze finds from Koričani*, there is a description of a well-preserved, ornamented bronze celt (an implement like a chisel or axe head), covered in green patina, which was found by a shepherd in the village of Koričani in the county of Jajce. This is followed by chapter five: *The find of coins of King Tomaš*, which describes the location, the circumstances of the discovery, the appearance and details on the head and tail sides of 13 coins, dating from the period of the reign of King Tomaš (1444-1461). In the description of the appearance of these coins, the description of a smaller circle is emphasized, which is found on both the head and tail sides, of which the author writes: "He has not noticed any earlier description of these on coins of this type, so he does not know whether the description had simply been omitted or other coins of this type do not have these circles, but this unusual feature needs to be noted since the circle was formed with unusual delicacy."

The final, sixth chapter: *Medieval finds from the Village of Zabilje in Travnik County*, gives a presentation of the discovery and description of two iron spurs and one iron knife in the "fort" above the village of Zabilje. The author points out that these items were found by the farm labourer Nezir Karahodža, when he was clearing the forest, in a barrow with human bones, and they were kept on the roof of a house. At the end of this short chapter, the author writes: "Knives like this have been found frequently

in pre-historic pile dwellings (Radimsky pile dwelling near Ripač, Journal, vol. V, page 41) as well as amongst Roman remains, but according to this find, it is probable that these are medieval items.”

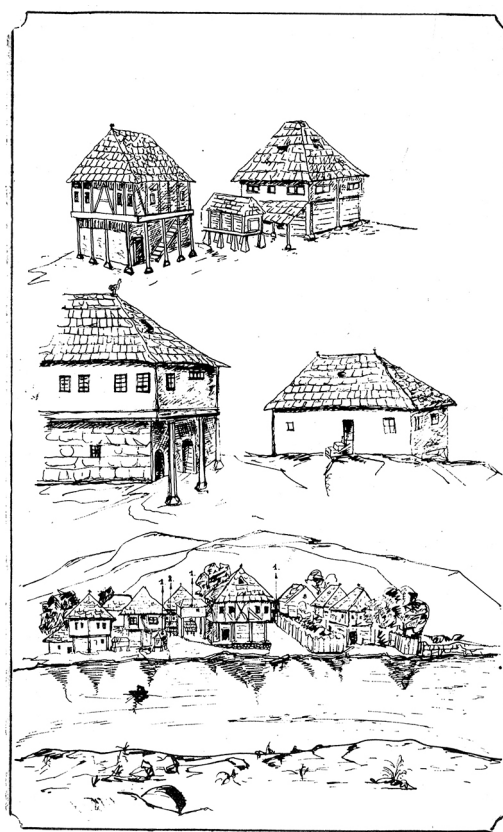
“Our Village Golubić – a contribution to research into health in the village and life there” is an article published in the journal *Socijalno medicinski pregled* (Social Medical Review) in 1939, which was published in Belgrade (33). It covers 22 pages in Cyrillic script, and is illustrated with black and white sketches, with a summary in German and no literature listed. In it, Dr. Stanko Sielski describes the social conditions in the village of Golubić, which is located near Bihać, and sometimes comments on their effect on the health of the population.

He writes of his choice of that village: “This village was chosen because it is only six kilometres from the health centre, that is from the centre of our work, so it is easily accessible. But it was also chosen because there are Orthodox and Catholic believers as well as Muslims living together there, so it is interesting not just from a geographical but also from an anthropological and ethnographic point of view”. There follows a geographical and historical description of the village, then chapters on the population, the climate, the way the land was worked, fruit growing, trades, folk costumes, the furnishings of the houses, how rooms are decorated, types of houses, yards, barns, family life and customs, the social status of men and women, customs and diet.

It is important to point out that in the chapter entitled: *The Population*, alongside general information, the author gives specific results of anthropometric measurements made, the frequency of blood groups, eye colours, the shape of shoulder blades, and when menstruation begins and ends in the women. The folk customs are described in more detail in this chapter, as practised by the inhabitants, and this description is ac-

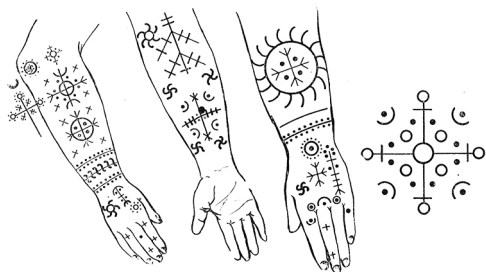
companied by an explanation of their significance. The last chapter: *Diet*, is the most extensive and also the most detailed part of the article. In the introductory part of this chapter the author gives a detailed description of food production in relation to the religious affiliation of the population, the most frequent vegetable and animal food products raised, how the food produced was preserved and managed, and the diet of the population in relation to the season, the composition and number of daily meals, preparation of winter preserves, and preparation of the most frequent meals, as well as the opinions of the inhabitants about their diet.

The article is illustrated with black and white sketches - grouped in eight units, under each of which there is a brief descriptive text. The group sketches are located beside the appropriate text, but are not mentioned in it. They show: various types of houses

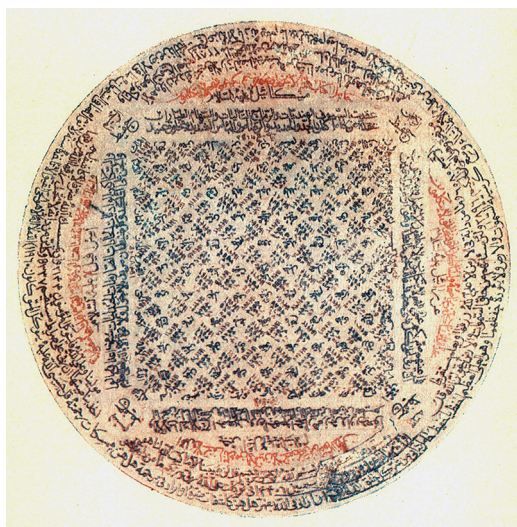


Picture 5 Various types of houses.

(Picture 5), ground plans of Muslim, Catholic and Orthodox homes, various household objects, sketches of tattoos on the front and back of Catholic women's hands (Picture 6), graves (stone urns) with ornamental details, details of grave stones, and sketches of various amulets found in the village of Golubić. Although it is not mentioned in the article who drew these sketches, it may be assumed with great assurance that they were drawn by Dr. Stanko Sielski. There is also an original colour drawing of a apotropaic scriptures, found in the village of Golubić, allegedly from the time when the plague was rife in that region (Picture 7).



Picture 6 Tattoos of Catholic women from the village of Golubić.



Picture 7 Apotropaic scriptures from Golubić allegedly from the time when the plague was rife in that area.

Conclusion

Dr. Stanko Sielski spent his entire working life in BH, almost exclusively in the interior of the country and at a time burdened by difficult and complex social and political circumstances. This did not prevent him from devoting himself not only to his professional work, but also to scientific research and publishing. He performed his work as a physician in a humane manner, contributing to the improvement of the health of the people of BH. His publication work was based on the results of his own research work in the fields of the history of medicine, archaeology, ethnology and sociology, which all in all contributed to better knowledge and understanding, and the preservation of the material and spritual values of the historical and cultural heritage of BH.

Conflict of interest: The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

References

1. Archives of Maja Juras's family. The Ministry of Public Health of the National Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina Personal and official data of Dr. Sielski Stankov Stanko No. 22674 of December 24, 1946 [in Bosnian].
2. Vuletić A. The purpose of the survey and its organization [in Croatian]. In: Endemic syphilis in Bosnia. The survey of the School of Public Health in Zagreb [in Croatian]. Vuletić A, editor. Zagreb: Naklada Škole narodnog zdravlja u Zagrebu; 1939. p. 5-13.
3. The statutory provisions on the establishment of the Institute for combating endemic syphilis. In: Junašević J, Šantek M, editors. Proceedings of the laws and orders of the Independent State of Croatia [in Croatian]. Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara; 1941. p. 217-9.
4. Anonymous. Statistical data II. A brief presentation of the first year of work on combating endemic syphilis (from August 15, 1941 to August 15, 1942) [in Bosnian]. Vjestnik Zavoda za suzbijanje endemskog sifilisa. 1942;1(5-6):65-9.
5. The Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography [homepage on the Internet]. Zagreb: the Indepen-

- dent State of Croatia [in Croatian]. [updated 2013 December 29; cited 2015 October 12]. Available from: <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?ID=43670>.
6. Archives of Husref Tahirović. Written testimony of Dr. Teodor Grüner of October 26, 2012 on the role of Dr. Stanko Sielski in saving Jewish doctors at the Institute for combating endemic syphilis in Banja Luka during the Second World War.
 7. Archives of Husref Tahirović. Proposal for posthumous award of the medal of the Righteous Among the Nations to Dr. Stanko Sielski, for his sacrificial work in saving Jews during the Second World War, dated July 12, 2013.
 8. Croatian State Archives. The Ministry of Health and Society of the Independent State of Croatia. Approval No. 15.810-0-I-1994 of May 30, 1944 [in Croatian].
 9. Croatian State Archives. The Ministry of National Education of the Independent State of Croatia. Appointment No. 21 31-1994 of October 31, 1944 [in Croatian].
 10. Croatian State Archives. The Ministry of National Education of the Independent State of Croatia. Resolution No. 33809-1994 of May 25, 1944 [in Croatian].
 11. Archives of Maja Juras's family. The Ministry of National Education of the Independent State of Croatia. Resolution No. 33808-1944 of May 25, 1944 [in Croatian].
 12. Archives of Maja Juras's family. The Ministry of Public Health of the National Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Resolution No. 788/45 of May 13, 1945 [in Bosnian].
 13. Archives of Maja Juras's family. The Ministry of Public Health of the National Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Decision No. 1199/45 of June 5, 1945 [in Bosnian].
 14. Archives of Maja Juras's family. The Ministry of Public Health of the National Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Decision No. 2525 /45 of December 31, 1945 [in Bosnian].
 15. Sielski S. Justin Karlinski [in Bosnian]. *Hig Cas Hig Mikrobiol Epidemiol Sanit Teh.* 1953;5(2):147-60.
 16. Sielski S. Something about the history of health care institutions in Bosnia in combating endemic syphilis. Manuscript [in Bosnian]. Not published. Archives of Husref Tahirović.
 17. Sielski S. Old Turkish and Arabic medical books in Bosnia and Herzegovina [in Croatian]. In: From Croatian medical history. Memorial book of the Croatian Medical Association [in Croatian]. Grmek MD, Dujmušić S, editors. Zagreb: Zbor liječnika Hrvatske; 1954. p. 168-81.
 18. Sielski S. What old manuscripts about syphilis and its treatment in Bosnia tell us [in Bosnian]. *Vjestnik zavoda za suzbijanje endemijskog sifilisa u Bosni i Hercegovini.* 1942;1(5 and 6):1-15.
 19. Sielski S. Folk medicine and amulets [in Bosnian]. *Vjestnik Zavoda za suzbijanje endemskog sifilisa.* 1942;1(1):8-11.
 20. Sielski S. Folk treatments and a book of folk medicine from Bosnian Croatia (Part 1) [in Bosnian]. *Vjestnik zavoda za suzbijanje endemijskog sifilisa u Bosni i Hercegovini (Part 1).* 1942;1(2):1-5.
 21. Sielski S. Folk treatments and a book of folk medicine from Bosnian Croatia (Part 2) [in Bosnian]. *Vjestnik zavoda za suzbijanje endemijskog sifilisa u Bosni i Hercegovini.* 1942;1(3):19-25.
 22. Popović A. La Magie chez les musulmans des Balkans (II) L'apport du docteur Stanko Sielski (1891-1958) [in French]. *Proceedings of the Faculty of Philosophy Belgrade [in Serbian].* Beograd: Filozofski fakultet; 2009. p. 45-84.
 23. Sielski S. Amulets [in Croatian]. *Etnografska istraživanja i grada III.* Zagreb: Hrvatski državni etnografski muzej; 1941. p. 81-120.
 24. Đuričić A, Elezar S. Overview of the history of pharmacy in the Bosnia and Herzegovina [in Bosnian]. Sarajevo: Centralni higijenski zavod; 1958. p. 1-317.
 25. Regional Museum of Travnik. Book inventory [in Bosnian]. 2015.
 26. Sergejevski D. In memoriam Dr. Stanko Sielski [in Bosnian]. *GZM, Arheologija.* 1959;14:5-6.
 27. Mitrović Ž. Museum of Vrbas Banovina in Banja Luka [in Serbian]. *Politika.* 1936 June 9; p. 11.
 28. Archives of Husref Tahirović. The Council for Education and Culture of the People's Committee of the City of Tuzla. The decision on the establishment of the Museum Council. No. 302 of January 15, 1952 [in Bosnian].
 29. Sergejevski D. Japodi urns [in Bosnian]. *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini.* 1949-1950; (n. s. IV-V):45-93 + Tbl. I-XIII.
 30. Benac A. Some new prehistoric cultures in north-east Bosnia [in Bosnian]. *Articles and material for the cultural history of Eastern Bosnia [in Bosnian].* Tuzla: Zavičajni Muzej Tuzla; 1957. p. 209-11.
 31. Sielski S. Archaeological findings in the area of Travnik and Žepče [in Bosnian]. *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini.* 1931;43(2):1-6.
 32. Sielski S. Traces of ancient culture in Pounje [in Bosnian]. *Razvitak.* 1939;6(6):184-90.
 33. Sielski S. Our Village Golubić – a contribution to research into health in the village and life

- there [in Bosnian]. *Socijalno medicinski pregled*. 1939;9:210-31.
34. Regional Museum of Tuzla. Book inventory; 2015 [in Bosnian].
35. Ethnographic Museum Zagreb. Book inventory; 2015. p. 2669-92 [in Croatian].
36. Archives of the Department of the history of medicine of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts.
37. Museum of the Republika Srpska. Book inventory; 2015 [in Serbian].
38. Grmek M.D. Sielski S. Disease from the perspective of folk medicine. *Medical Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. [in Croatian]. Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod FNRJ; 1958. p. 150-1.
39. Archives of Husref Tahirović. Reprints of papers of Dr. Stanko Sielski.
40. Murray ES, Psorn T, Djakovic P, Sielski S, Broz V, Ljupša F, Gaon J, Pavlevic R, Snyder JC. Brill's disease. IV. Study of 26 cases in Yugoslavia. *Am J Public Health Nations Health*. 1951;41:1359-69.