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THE FIRST DIRECTORS OF VIENNA JOSEPHINUM - IOANNIS ALEXANDER VON BRAMBILLA AND FRANZ ANTON BRENDEL VON STERNBURG

Abstract: On November 7, 1785, Emperor Joseph II opened a medical-surgical academy in Vienna named after him Josephinum for the academic training of surgeons and doctors. The first director of the academy was Ioannis Alexander von Brambilla (1728-1800), responsible for the academization of surgeon training, who organized numerous instruments and the Josephinum library. His successor was Franz Anton Brendel von Sternburg (1723-1803) who, in addition to his professional and teaching work at the academy, founded a foundation that lasted until the First World War. In addition to the above information, we have presented recent insights from their private lives and completed their famous biographies. The first two directors of the Josephinum worked at the time of the “first Viennese medical school”, which, with Enlightenment ideas, directly participated in the academization of surgery and the transformation of pre-modern medicine into modern medicine.

Keywords: history of medicine, surgeons, medical school

Non MeSH: Josephinum, Ioannis Alexander von Brambilla (1728-1800), Franz Anton Brendel von Sternburg (1723-1803), Vienna

Introduction

In Vienna, on November 7, 1785, Emperor Joseph II opened, alongside the existing centuries-old medical faculty, a medical-surgical academy (*Academia Caesareo-Regia Iosephina, Collegium Medico-Chirurgicum Iosephinum*), named after him *Iosephinum (Joseph-akademie)*. The academy was built from 1783-1785, designed by the architect Isidor Caneval (1730-1786). It had six departments: anatomy, pathology, surgical operations, internal medicine, botany, and chemistry in addition to the mortuary with autopsy room, and the nearby main military hospital of Vienna (*Wiener Militär Garnisons Hauptspital*) was a clinic *Iosephinum* where the students practiced. Joseph II. he donated 30,000 guildens for the creation of wax anatomical, pathological, surgical and obstetric preparations made by the anatomist Paolo Mascagni (1752-1815) from Florence with the anatomist Felice Fontana (1720-1805).

Iosephinum was the most important and largest medical and surgical school of the Habsburg Monarchy, primarily for military doctors and surgeons, and by decree of Emperor Francis II/I since 1822, it has been given the status of a full university study. [1,2]

The first director of the *Iosephinum* was the *protochirurgus* and personal physician of Emperor Joseph II, Giovanni Alessandro von Brambilla, and after him Franz Anton Brendel von Sternburg, about whom we present more recent information in this announcement.

Giovanni Alessandro von Brambilla

Giovanni Alessandro Brambilla (Ioannis Alexander von Brambilla) was born in San Zenone on April 15, 1728, studied medicine in Pavia, then served as a junior military surgeon (germ. *unterchirurgus*) and surgeon (germ. *chirurgus*) of the personal German guard from 1755. years. In 1764, during the Seven Years' War, where he was a military surgeon, he came to serve in Vienna as the personal physician and protomedicus (*protochirurgus*) of the then Archduke Joseph II, later the emperor, and then became the chief surgeon of the Austrian army (*generalstabsarzt*). With Archduke and Emperor Joseph II he organized and reformed the medical service of the Austrian army based on the numerous experiences he gained as a war surgeon, especially in military surgical education based on the scientific foundations of the time. Thus, following the circumstances of the war and the need for a larger number of surgeons, he organized a half-year course for wartime military surgeons (whose education normally lasted two years at the time) at the Gumpendorfer anatomical-medical-surgical school on April 11, 1781. [1-3] In 1784, he published a manual for professors imperial and royal surgical military academy (*Instruktion für die professoren der k. K. Chirurgischen Militärakademie*). [4]

With the opening of the *Iosephinum*, Brambilla, by decree of Emperor Joseph II became the first director of the academy (*k. k. Leibwundarzt und Direktor de Jose-*

phinischen medizinisch-chirurgischen Akademie) (Fig. 1.). Not long after the opening of the academy, in 1786, von Brambilla issued the Decree and Statute of the Josephinum for education and the acquisition of the degree of Master and Doctor of Surgery, but according to the decrees at the time, doctors of surgery (*Doktor der Chirurgie*) were not also doctors of medicine (*Doktor der Medizin*). [5] Brambilla was declared a knight (germ. *Reichsritter*) of the Holy Roman Empire. He prepared a catalog with 600 sets of instruments for various operations, and with his contemporary and friend van Swieten, he believed that diseases should be treated in three ways: proper and healthy food and drink, medicines and surgical instruments, i.e. surgical procedures. Historians of medicine described him as a well-known and very skillful surgeon who gained numerous experiences as a war surgeon. From his time running the Josephinum, in addition to numerous anatomical wax preparations, cassettes with instruments for separate operations (trepanations, amputations, obstetrics) and autopsies, numerous pathological preparations, didactic preparations from biology (mineralogy, zoology and botany) which were then studied compulsorily at studies of surgery and medicine. [1,3,6]



Figure 1. Giovanni Alessandro von Brambilla

He was especially emotionally deteriorated by the death of Emperor Joseph II February 20, 1790 from tuberculosis, in whose treatment Brambilla actively participated together with the court protomedicus Anton v. Störck (1731-1803). The deathbed of Emperor Joseph II with both doctors and a friar confessor was immortalized by the painter Löschenkohl in 1790. Brambilla died in Padua on July 30, 1800. [3] His tomb-

stone is located in the monastery of St. Anthony of Padua (Fig. 2.), whose image and translation from the Latin language we bring in its entirety [7]:

*Ivan Alexander of Brambilla
By the Pope of the crowned (emperor) Joseph II Augustus Protosurgeon
Knight of the Holy Roman Empire
According to court advice Founder of the Royal and Imperial Academy in Vienna which
took care of the health of soldiers
To the President, Law Writer, Manager who published (wrote) many books and generously provided instruments and equipment to the archigymnasium, hospital and library
in Ticin with the aim of acquiring knowledge of treatment
Exceptionally venerable, who a few days after he came to Padua in 1800, was taken
alive in the same city
Wife and regretful sons
In the ancestral bosom of the most excellent husband and father
prevented by fate from placing, this stone we place in a foreign land*

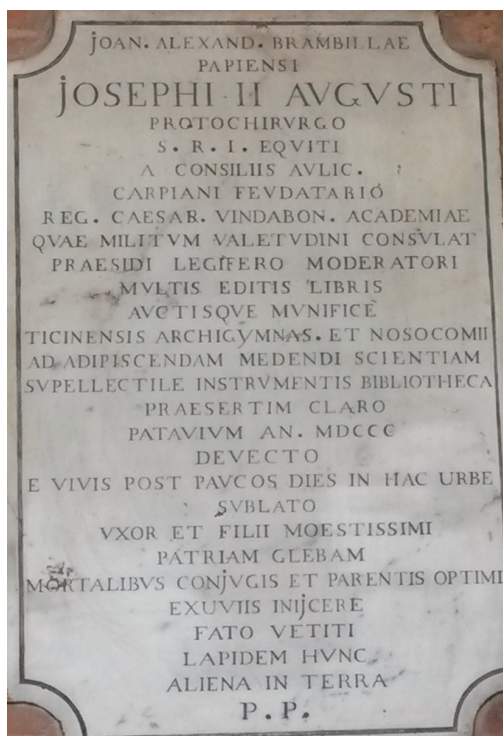


Fig.2. Tombstone of Giovanni Alessandro von Brambilla in Padua (author's photography)

Franz Anton Brendel von Sternburg

Franz Anton Brendel von Sternburg (fig. 3), born in 1723, was a descendant of a distinguished German doctors family. After finishing his studies, he was a war surgeon. He was wounded on the battlefield in Silesia in 1745, participated in the Seven Years' War as a *Feldarzt*, and was then promoted to staff and senior staff surgeon (*Oberstabschirurgus*). From 1785 he was *Stabschirurgus Protochirurgus* (Chief Surgeon) in Vienna and employed at the Josephinum, and after the death of Brambilla, he was the director of the Josephinum. Before his retirement, he worked in super-arbitrary commissions in the Vienna General Command and the Vienna Invalidenhaus. He worked as a surgeon for over 50 years, passing through all social levels and ranks, awarded numerous orders, as well as the highest military order of Maria Theresa.

Emperor Leopold granted him the nobility „von Sternburg“ by charter dated October 16, 1790. He also acted as a humanist and a representative of contemporary surgical thought, so in 1785 he founded a foundation to reward military surgeons for solving a given thesis that will be published every year by the Josephinum Military Medical Academy of Vienna. Foundation *k. k. Feld Stabsarzt Franz Brendl* was used until World War I. Brendel died three years after Brambilla, in 1803. [1,2,8,9]

Members of his family also lived in Bjelovar, a city that was the headquarters of the Varaždin Generalate during the existence of the Habsburg Monarchy. Maria Brendel von Sternburg, born in 1845 and died on July 8, 1917 at the age of 72, and then Stefania Čubelić, born in 1884 and died in 1972, were buried in the family tomb at the Bjelovar city cemetery. [10]

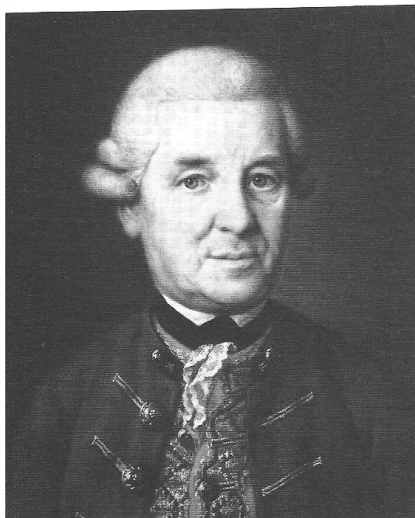


Fig. 3. Franz Anton Brendel von Sternburg

Discussion

War surgery was the basis of the development of modern surgery, and numerous doctrines for the treatment of various injuries arose from war medicine. Thus, in the time of pre-modern medicine in the 18th century, scientific medicine was studied at the studios, which provided surgeons with knowledge of anatomy and clinical medicine, as a necessary and fundamental occupation on the battlefields, and at the same time became the basis for the academization of surgery into the system of modern medicine as a whole. Surgical procedures of the 18th and first half of the 19th century were: trepanations, amputations, incisions, repositioning of fractures and dislocations, laparocentesis, lithotripsy and herniotomy, and the witnesses of that time and of such numerous procedures are precisely the preserved instruments of Josephinum, which were originally created by von Brambilla. In the former Josephinum, today is the original medico-historical museum and a realistic representation of the time of the academization of medicine and surgery in the era of the first Viennese medical school. [10-12]

Surgery practitioners were students of the Josephinum, and after passing practical work, they received a confirmation and recommendation (approval, attestation) that they became lower surgeons (*unterchirurgus*) and were able to perform their work. Thus, numerous such certificates were issued by the then proto-surgeons of the Josephinum in Vienna, von Brambilla (...von Brambilla approbiert...), von Brendel or protomedicus Graffenhueber through the so-called *Assent list* to the competent unit or military hospital of the Imperial Army where they come to serve (Fig. 4).

The staff regimental surgeon (*Staabs chirurgus*) or the professor of surgery gave a written report and evaluation about the completed interns-junior surgeons, which then conditioned further military health promotion from junior surgeon-junior doctor (*Unterfeldscher, Unterchirurgus, Unterarzt*) to senior surgeon-senior doctor (*Superior chirurgus, Oberchirurgus, Oberarzt*), which is also evident from the personal data of individual surgeons in their profiles [1,12].

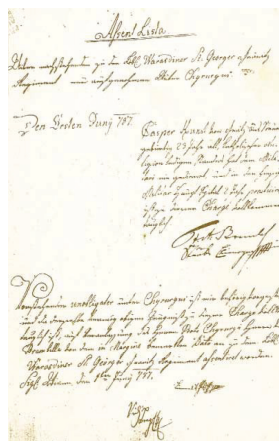


Figure 4. Original Assent-Liste for the surgeon Casper Kunst form June 1, 1797 with the signature and recommendation of Brambilla [13].

Numerous well-known surgery teachers worked and taught at Josephinum and made their treatment methods famous to this day, such as prof. Kern and his methods of open wound treatment. Thousands of students of surgery and medicine at this academy acquired their knowledge and skills based on the curriculum that was set and upgraded by its first directors, about which we have presented new knowledge from their private lives in this paper and completed their famous biographies. [12] The organization of the Josephinum as a teaching and scientific base for military medicine of the Habsburg Empire, the academization of surgery and the integration of medicine just began with the work of von Brambilla and his successor Brendel. It will last almost a whole century until the transformation of pre-modern medicine into modern medicine, which the two, the first directors of the Josephinum, did not experience and could not anticipate.

Rezime

U Beču je 7. novembra 1785. godine car Josif II otvorio, pored postojećeg viševerkovnog medicinskog fakulteta, medicinsko-hiruršku akademiju (Academia Caesareo-Regia Iosephina, Collegium Medico-Chirurgicum Josephinum), nazvanu po njemu Josephinum (Joseph-akademie). Akademija je građena od 1783-1785, po projektu arhitekta Isidora Kanevala (1730-1786). Imala je šest odeljenja: anatomiju, patologiju, hirurgiju, internu medicinu, botaniku i hemiju pored mrtvačnice sa salom za obdukciju, a obližnja glavna vojna bolnica u Beču (Wiener Militär Garnisons Hauptspital) bila je klinika Josephinum-a gde su studenti vežbali. Josif II poklonio je 30.000 guldena za izradu voštanih anatomskih, patoloških, hirurških i akušerskih preparata koje je izradio anatom Paolo Maskanji (1752-1815) iz Firence sa anatomom Felisom Fontanom (1720-1805). Josephinum je bila najznačajnija i najveća medicinska i hirurška škola Habzburške monarhije, prvenstveno za vojne lekare i hirurge, a ukazom cara Franje II/I od 1822. dobija status pune univerzitetske studije. Prvi direktor Jozefinum-a bio je protohirurg i lični lekar cara Josifa II Đovani Alesandro fon Brambila, a posle njega Franc Anton Brendel fon Šternburg, o kome u ovom saopštenju donosimo novije podatke.

Ključne reči: istorija medicine, hirurzi, medicinska škola Jozefinum, Đovani Alesandro fon Brambila (1728-1800), Franc Anton Brendel fon Šternburg (1723-1803), Beč

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