
ALI SO METODE ALTERNATIVNE MEDICINE V SLOVENIJI RES NEKAJ POVSEM NOVEGA?

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IZVLEČEK

V članku avtorica ugotavlja, da imajo številne ideje, metode in tehnike alternativne medicine, ki jih danes kot novosti sprejemo od zunaj, pri nas določeno tradicijo, ki pa je bila za nekaj časa bolj ali manj pretrgana. To obkazuje na primerih naravnega zdravljenja kroničnih bolezni, homeopatije, studenčarstva oz. radiestezijske, bioenergije, zeliščarstva, zdravljenja s pomočjo kristalov in kovin, manipulativnih terapij, masaž, diet in urino terapije.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Slovenija, etnologija, terminologija, ljudska medicina, alternativna medicina

ABSTRACT

The author establishes that many ideas, methods and techniques belonging to alternative medicine, which are nowadays imported, have a certain tradition in Slovenia, but that this tradition was discontinued for some time. She has found evidence of the following in the past: natural treatment of chronic diseases, homeopathy, dowsing or radiesthesia, bioenergy, treatment with medical herbs, crystals and metals, manipulative therapy, massages, diets and urinotherapy.

KEY WORDS: Slovenia, ethnology, terminology, folk medicine, alternative medicine

Uvod

V zadnjem desetletju ali dveh je tako pri nas kot tudi drugod po svetu veliko govora o takoimenovani alternativni medicini. Raziskave tako v Evropi kot tudi Severni Ameriki in Avstraliji kažejo na njen vse večji pomen (Sharma 1993: 15). Iste ugotovitve veljajo tudi za Slovenijo. Posebno v zadnjih desetih do petnajstih letih lahko sledimo nenehni rasti tako uporabnikov kot izvajalcev. Tudi same metode zdravljenja se menjajo. Na območje Slovenije s pomočjo medijev, knjig in posameznikov prihajajo nove metode, enkrat je bolj "moderna" ena, potem spet druga. Ko govorimo o alternativni medicini v Sloveniji, pa pogosto pozabljamo, da imajo tako nekatere njene ideje kot tudi nekatere tehnike, ki jih danes kot novosti sprejemamo od zunaj, pri nas določeno tradicijo, ki je bila za nekaj časa bolj ali manj pretrgana. Ker se je slovenska etnologija v preteklosti ukvarjala predvsem s kmečko kulturo, imamo pač največ zapisov o ljudski medicini. Veliko tistega, kar je etnologija odkrivala in beležila kot del ljudskega zdravilstva, pogosto

tudi v povezavi s praznoverjem in magijo, bi lahko danes z vidika tehnike uvrstili v okvire alternativne medicine.

Terminologija

Pri **uradni medicini** gre za medicino, ki temelji na razumevanju človeškega telesa in njegovega delovanja, kakor ga je sprejela zahodna družba. Gre za koncept bolezni in zdravljenja, ki je v danem okolju politično in kulturno sprejemljiv, predvsem pa za institucionaliziran medicinski sistem, ki ga je državni aparat priznal ter vključil v uradni sistem izobraževanja in zdravstvenega varstva neke države. Uradna medicina torej pomeni uradno medicinsko doktrino v neki državi in "zagovarja le tiste terapevtske pristope, katerih učinkovitost se da preveriti s kliničnim eksperimentom. Za te vrste zdravljenja obstajajo znanstveno-racionalne osnove ali hipoteze" (Rozman, Godec 1989: 109).

Nasprotje uradne medicine je **neuradna medicina**. Kot možni sinonimi zanjo se največkrat pojavljajo: mazaštvo, šarlatanstvo, padarstvo, paramedicina, ljudska medicina, tradicionalna medicina, alternativna medicina, komplementarna medicina, nekonvencionalna medicina, neortodoksna medicina, celostna medicina in naravna medicina. Lahko jih razumemo bolj ali manj kot nekakšne sinonime, lahko pa tudi kot termine, ki imajo določene pomenske odtenke. Kadar govorimo o neuradni medicini kot o šarlatanstvu, mazaštvu, padarstvu... gre vsekakor za slabšalni prizvok (prim. Ržrbye 1982: 57).

Etnologi v okviru preučevanja medicine v najširšem pomenu besede ne moremo mimo tako imenovane **ljudske medicine ali ljudskega zdravilstva**. Ljudska medicina pomeni medicino, ki je del ljudske kulture, razumljene predvsem v pomenu kmečke kulture.¹ Gre torej za medicino, ki je bila v predindustrijski dobi razširjena med kmečkim prebivalstvom, nekateri njeni elementi pa so se ohranili še do danes. Razlike med uradno in ljudsko medicino so v izobrazbi oziroma znanju, statusu in socialnem izvoru tistih, ki zdravijo, in tistih, ki se zdravijo.

Termin **alternativna medicina** pomeni različne preventivne, diagnostične, terapevtske in rehabilitacijske pristope, ki so se pri nas, podobno kot tudi v drugih, predvsem razvitih državah, razširili približno v zadnjih dvajsetih do tridesetih letih in niso del uradne medicinske prakse. Nekaterim etnologom se zdi, da je alternativna medicina nekakšna sodobna različica ljudske medicine (npr. Motyčková in Wiegelmann), medtem ko se drugi zopet zavzemajo za termina, kot sta alternativna oziroma komplementarna medicina. Primernejša se zdi druga možnost, predvsem zato, ker danes alternativna medicina, četudi z nekaterimi metodami ljudske medicine, deluje v povsem drugačnem kontekstu. Uporabljajo jo iz drugih razlogov kot nekoč ljudsko medicino, razlike pa so tudi v ekonomskih in ideoloških temeljih. Ljudska medicina je bila stvar nižjih socialnih slojev, predvsem kmečkih. Slovenski kmet se je zatekal k ljudski medicini, npr. k zeliščarju, ker mu je bil tako socialno kot krajevno najbližji. Zdravnikov je bilo

¹ Ljudsko medicino lahko razumemo tudi kot medicino, ki je razširjena med najširšimi sloji prebivalstva v pomenu "popularne" medicine.

malo, med njimi in kmeti pa je zijal velik socialni prepad; običajno so bili zdravniki predaleč in še predragi povrhu. Poleg tega zdravnikom in zdravilom kmetje niso kaj dosti zaupali, problem pa je bil tudi jezik, saj je bilo še v 19. stoletju med zdravniki zelo malo domačinov. Na zdravnika so se kmetje obrnili le v najnujnejših primerih, ko pogosto ni bilo več kaj storiti (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 484, 485). Vloga današnje alternativne medicine je v marsičem drugačna. Nanjo se ljudje vse pogosteje obračajo kljub dobro urejeni in vsakomur dostopni javni zdravstveni službi. Za zdravljenje so pripravljene celo plačati in tudi krajevna oddaljenost zdraviteljev ne predstavlja posebnega problema. Socialni razkorak med današnjim zdravnikom in pacientom ni tak, kot je bil v preteklosti med zdravnikom in kmetom.

Zavedati pa se moramo, da so razmerja in meje med uradno in neuradno medicino, ljudsko in alternativno medicino, lahko zelo nejasne, saj ne gre za neke konstante, ampak lahko pride do prehajanj. Ista metoda zdravljenja ima lahko v različnem času in prostoru povsem različen položaj. 141

Primerjave

V zmoti smo, če mislimo, da so **naravne metode zdravljenja** s pomočjo vode, svežega zraka, gibanja v naravi in primerne prehrane iznajdba novejšega časa. Že sredi 19. stoletja so iz Nemčije k nam prodrle in se udomačile ideje o zdravljenju kroničnih bolezni s pomočjo naravnih metod. Te metode so temeljile predvsem na empiriji, niso pa bile znanstveno dokazane. Utemeljitelji tovrstnih metod so bili večinoma laiki, ki so zdravilne metode naključno odkrili, oziroma so imeli z njimi lastne izkušnje. Po tujih zgledih so tudi v Sloveniji začeli ustanavljati naravna zdravilišča in kopališča. Najbolj sta se razširili naravni zdravilni metodi, katerih utemeljitelja sta bila nemški duhovnik Sebastian Kneipp in švicarski tovarnar Arnold Rikli. Kneippova metoda je imela največ privrženecv med preprostimi ljudmi, Riklijeva pa je bila dostopna le bogatejšim (Borisov 1968: 47).

Kneippovim načelom so sledili v Ljubljani in Kamniku. Konec 19. stoletja je bilo v Ljubljani ustanovljeno društvo Kneippovih privrženecv. V Tivoliju so leta 1899 zgradili nekakšno kopališče, imenovano Wörishofen. Ob lesenem objektu, ki je bil razdeljen v več kabin, je tekel potoček. V njem so si namakali noge in bos hodili po rosnj travi. Kopališče je delovalo še nekaj časa po prvi svetovni vojni. V Kamniku je bilo leta 1876 ustanovljeno kopališče in vodno zdravilišče, katerega lastnik je bil Alojzij Prašnikar. Leta 1891 je začelo zdravilišče slediti Kneippovim metodam. Že naslednje leto se je število gostov zelo povečalo, saj je Kneipp zaradi prezasedenosti zdravilišča v Wörishofnu pošiljal ljudi v Kamnik. Zdravilišče je delovalo do prve svetovne vojne (Borisov 1968: 48–51). Nekateri kmetje in kmetice so konec 19. stoletja obiskovali tudi Krapinske toplice na Hrvaškem (Kotnik 1952: 127), kjer so prav tako sledili Kneippovim navodilom. Po prvi svetovni vojni uradnih Kneippovih ustanov ni bilo več, vendar so se nekatere Kneippove metode, kot so hoja po jutranji rosi (prim. Makarovič M. 1983–1987: 18), prhanje s hladno vodo in bosonoga hoja po snegu, ohranile tudi še po drugi svetovni vojni.

Leta 1904 je začel v Gorici izhajati mesečnik *Knajpovec*, časopis za negovanje zdravlja po Kneippovem sestavu, za pouk, vzgojo otrok in zabavo. Njegov glavni urednik

je bil J. Okič, ustanovitelj in ravnatelj Kneippovega zdravilišča v Krapini. Ker je imel mesečnik premalo naročnikov, je izhajal le do konca leta 1906. Sicer pa so knajpanje propagirale tudi številne druge revije, časopisi in razni priročniki.

Sloveče naravno zdravilišče je delovalo na Bledu. Ustanovil ga je švicarski tovarnar Arnold Rikli. V mladih letih je zbolel in potem ozdravel s pomočjo hidropatije, zato ni čudno, da je postal navdušen hidropat. Osebne izkušnje z naravnim zdravljenjem je imel tudi v kasnejših letih, ko je prebolel pleuritis in je prišel kot rekonvalescent na Bled. Kraj ga je tako navdušil, da se je odločil v njem postaviti naravno zdravilišče. Leta 1855 se je preselil na Bled (Borisov 1975: 168). Njegovi bolniki so se morali držati zelo strogega dnevnega reda. Vstajali so zgodaj zjutraj, uživali brezmesno hrano, kajenje in uživanje alkohola je bilo prepovedano. Bolniki so bivali v lesenih kolibah, veliko so se gibali in se predajali vodnim, zračnim in sončnim kopelim. Zdravljenje je bilo dolgotrajno (vsaj en mesec) in drago, privoščili so si ga lahko le bogati meščani. Podobna zdravilišča je Rikli ustanovil še v Trstu, Firencah in pri Meranu. Rikli je nasprotoval uporabi zdravil, ki so jih predpisovali zdravniki, zato je bil z njimi v sporih, večkrat so ga tudi tožili (Borisov 1975: 171). Ker je število obiskovalcev naraslo, sta mu pomagala še dva zdravnika hidropata. Po njegovi smrti leta 1906 je zdravilišče vodil njegov sin. V prvem desetletju 20. stoletja je po Riklijevem zgledu ponujal gostom sončne in zračne kopeli tudi Blejec Vouk. Riklijevo zdravilišče je po prvi svetovni vojni prenehalo delovati (Borisov 1975: 173).

Homeopatija je bila v Sloveniji razširjena že v 19. stoletju. Med njenimi izvajalci so bili tako zdravniki kot laiki. Homeopati so bili iz vrst duhovnikov, s homeopatijo so bili seznanjeni nekateri plemiči, razširjena pa je bila tudi med kmečkim prebivalstvom. V Ljubljani je bil med zdravniki velik zagovornik homeopatije v prvi polovici 19. stoletja takratni prior reda usmiljenih bratov Faust (Matevž) Gradišek. Leta 1807 je postal upravnik ljubljanske bolnišnice na Ajdovščini. Naslednje leto je v okviru bolnišnice ustanovil klinično šolo, kjer so se izobraževali bodoči homeopati. Leta 1811 je Gradišek bolnišnico prepustil francoskim oblastem in ko so red usmiljenih bratov razpustili, se je preselil v zasebno hišo pod Šmarno goro pri Ljubljani, kjer je imel homeopatsko ordinacijo (Borisov 1985: 312, 355). Ljubljanski homeopati so imeli svoje privržence tako med preprostimi ljudmi kot med nekaterimi izobraženci in zdravniki. S svojim delovanjem so ogrožali uradno medicino. Leta 1819 je bila homeopatija prepovedana tako za civilno prebivalstvo kot za vojsko, vendar so jo nekateri ljubljanski homeopati z Gradiškom na čelu gojili še naprej (Borisov 1977: 142). France Prešeren je na račun Gradiška spesnil gloslo z naslovom *Préd pevcu, potlej homeopatu*.

Ljubljanski homeopati so povzročali precej težav mestnim oblastem. Proti njim se je boril predvsem Fran Viljem Lipič, ki je postal leta 1832 provizorični okrajni zdravnik in leto kasneje pomočnik ravnatelja bolnišnice na Ajdovščini v Ljubljani, vendar se je moral, ker ni bil kos ljubljanskim homeopatom, poražen umakniti iz mesta. S pomočjo homeopatije so zdravili tudi nekateri drugi zdravniki, tako npr. Jožef Kos, ki je bil najprej okrožni kirurg in porodničar v Bistri, leta 1821 pa je postal okrožni ljubljanski kirurg (Borisov 1977: 236–237). V Narodnem muzeju v Ljubljani hranijo homeopatsko lekarno iz časa zdravnika Modra, ki naj bi med drugim zdravil Frana Levstika (1831–1887).

Kaže, da so bili dobri poznavalci homeopatije tudi nekateri duhovniki. Tako Trdina



Etui s homeopatskimi zdravili, najden leta 1963 med knjigami Muzejske knjižnice. Hrani ga Narodni muzej Slovenije. Po vsej verjetnosti izvira iz kakšne grajske knjižnice. (Foto Tomaž Lauko)

v svojih zapiskih iz obdobja 1870–1879 omenja mirnopeškega homeopata župnika Mlakarja, ki “ima že tudi mnogo simpatij pri ljudeh in vere” (Trdina 1987: 832). Brez dvoma je bil homeopat tudi metliški župnik Daniel Terček (1819–1887), o čemer priča njegova zapuščina, ki jo hrani Narodni muzej v Ljubljani. V Trziču sta bila homeopata župnika Janez Zalokar (1828–1835) in Simon Peharc (Kragl 1936: 195, 261). S homeopatijo so zdravili tudi nekateri plemiči. Na Gradu Hmeljnik na Dolenjskem je bil homeopat baron Franz Wambolt von Umstadt (1829–1908), po smrti pa je njegovo delo nadaljevala žena baronica Maria Wambolt (1848–1915) (Potočnik 1994: 73). S pomočjo homeopatskih zdravil je v začetku tega stoletja zdravila ljudi in živino. K njej so prihajali tako ljudje iz bližnje okolice kot tudi iz bolj oddaljenih krajev. V Arhivu Republike Slovenije hranijo zvezek, ki vsebuje seznam ljudi, ki so obiskali baronico, njihov kraj bivanja in predpisano vrsto homeopatskih zdravil (glej Dolenc 1989: 199).² Kar nekaj homeopatom je v 19. stoletju delovalo v Trziču. Zelo slaven je bil Henrik Weis (1815–1892), pa Elizabeta Peharc in tovarnar Rajmund Jaboring pl. Altenfels (Kragl 1936: 261).

Na podeželju je bila homeopatija še posebno razširjena konec 19. stoletja, ko naj bi bilo število samoukih homeopatom precejšnje (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 489). Veliko naj bi jih bilo po Trdinovih zapiskih na Dolenjskem. “V Stopčah ozdravlja ljudi mlinar Jerič s homeopatijo iz bukev, ali ne slovi tako, kakor Marente v Šent-Petru ali nikar kot Varavn, prvak vseh dolenskih homeopatom” (Trdina 1987: 832). Konec 19. stoletja je v

² M. Dolenc je menil, da gre za zdravljenje z zelišči, a gre zagotovo za homeopatska zdravila.

Kronovem pri Beli cerkvi s pomočjo homeopatije brezplačno zdravil župan, veleposestnik in mlinar Jakob Košak. Varavn kot najbolj ugleden dolenski homeopat je imel menda konec 19. stoletja toliko dela, da je moral delati tudi ponoči (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 490). Tudi v obdobju med prvo in drugo svetovno vojno je bilo menda v Sloveniji veliko homeopатов (Kunze 1928: 711). Po drugi svetovni vojni naj bi v Sevnici umrl zadnji homeopatski zdravnik v Sloveniji (Pope-Toth 1994: 14) in tako je bila homeopatska tradicija za nekaj časa prekinjena.

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Danes se veliko govori o **radiestezi**. V preteklosti so za podobne dejavnosti uporabljali izraza bajaličarstvo in studenčarstvo. S pomočjo bajalice – leskove ali vrbove veje so iskali podzemno vodo, pa tudi razne minerale in rudnine. Bajaličarstvo izhaja iz besede bajalica oziroma bajaranica – šiba za iskanje vode in drugih predmetov, bajaličar oziroma bajaničar pa je oseba, ki zna ravnati z bajalico (SSKJ 1987: 90). Studenčarstvo je povezano z določanjem lokacije vodnih virov s pomočjo bajalice in kopanjem vodnjakov. Na Slovenskem je bila stoletja znana domača obrt studenčarstvo, s katero so se oz. se še ukvarjajo redki studenčarji. Omenjena obrt je povezana z iskanjem vode, kopanjem vodnjakov in nameščanjem vodnih črpalk. Studenčarji so bili zelo cenjeni, saj je bilo iskanje vode in kopanje vodnjakov življenjsko pomembno. Po prvi svetovni vojni srečamo studenčarje celo med registriranimi obrtniki. V ljudskem izročilu so ohranjeni spomini na iskanje vode s pomočjo enoletnih vrbovih šib, imenovanih “bajalice”. Znano je bilo tudi, da so za bajaličarstvo potrebne posebne sposobnosti, torej to ni opravilo za vsakogar (Bogataj 1989: 186).

Za Prekmurje npr. je znano, da so bili iskalci vode vedno moški, znanje pa so si pridobili od prednikov. Vodo so iskali tako, da so enoletno vrbovo vejo vtaknili v zemljo. Če se je nagnila, je to pomenilo, da je v bližini voda. Vodo so iskali tudi tako, da je vodeničar držal pred seboj dve enoletni vrbovi šibi, pri čemer sta se odrezana konca dotikala telesa. Ko je prišel v bližino vode, sta se tanjša konca približala drug k drugemu. Pri tretjem najbolj razširjenem načinu iskanja vode v Prekmurju sta sodelovala dva moža, od katerih je bil eden iskalec vode. Pred seboj sta držala v vsaki roki enoletno vrbovo šibo tako, da je bil odrezani konec šibe trdno uprt v mezinec vsake roke. Počasi sta se premikala in opazovala, kdaj se bo tanjši del šibe upognil v stran ali navzgor. Če sta se šibi nagnili v stran, je to pomenilo, da je tam vodni tok, če pa sta se šibi obrnili navzgor, je to pomenilo stoječo vodo. V začetku šestdesetih let so bili v Prekmurju trije znani iskalci vode (Koren 1962: 86).

Bajaličarstvo oziroma studenčarstvo pa v preteklosti ni bilo razširjeno le med kmečkimi sloji. Z bajaličarstvom naj bi se npr. ukvarjal že Valvasor, v začetku 20. stoletja pa je bil zelo znan iskalec vode tudi ljubljanski baron Anton Codelli (Rak 1988: 114). Iskalce vode naj bi imeli v stari avstrijski in jugoslovanski vojski. Bajaličarstvo oziroma studenčarstvo pokriva del tistega, kar danes obsega radiestezi. Leskove in vrbove veje so zamenjali drugi pripomočki, kot so nihala, biotenzorji in lantene, poleg iskanja vode, mineralov in rudnin pa radiesteziijo uporabljajo še v številne druge namene.

Predstave o tem, da imajo roke nekaterih ljudi posebno moč, danes bi ji rekli **bioenergija**, s katero lahko ozdravljajo druge, naj bi bile indoevropske (Minařík 1971: 26). Sredi 19. stoletja je bil na Slovenskem poznan Mesmerjev magnetizem. Najbolj znana



Nagrobnik in spominska
pološča Juriju Humarju
(foto Gorazd Makarovič,
Primskovo pri Litiji, 1999)

oseba, ki se je ukvarjala z magnetizmom, je bil vsekakor duhovnik Jurij Humar, “čudodelnik” s Primskovega (tam je služboval kot duhovnik od 1876 do 1890), ki naj bi zdravil z osebnim magnetizmom (glej Žurga 1969). Sam si v svojem času (1819–1890) ni znal razlagati, od kod mu njegova nenavadna moč. Edino podobnost je našel z dunajskim zdravnikom Franzom Antonom Mesmerjem (1734–1815), ki je začel preučevati učinke magneta in magnetnega polja na zdravljenje. Mesmer je magnetizem pojmoval kot splošno razširjen, fin in nemerljiv fluid, ki naj bi vplival na ves mikro- in makrokozmos. Na začetku je zdravil z magneti, kasneje pa z dotikom. Sledila je ugotovitev, da lahko zdravi tudi le s koncentracijo svoje volje (Pintar 1950: 256–257). Jurij Humar je veljal v svoji ožji in širši okolici za zelo uspešnega zdravitelja z izjemnimi sposobnostmi; k njemu so se prihajali zdraviti tudi številni tujci. Spoznal se je na zdravilna zelišča, poleg jasnovidnosti pa naj bi obvladal tudi telepatijo in hipnozo. Danes bi rekli, da je bil bioenergetik in radiestezist. Dolenjski kmetje so ga imeli zaradi njegovega uspešnega zdravljenja ljudi in zaradi zgodbe o tem, kako je oživel mrtvo žensko, za vsemogočnega (Trdina 1987: 868). Po njegovi smrti so se hodili zdraviti na njegov grob, nekateri pa s tem namenom tja zahajajo še danes.

Na Slovenskem so bile v preteklosti še druge osebe, ki naj bi zdravile z energijo rok. Na Prevaljah je bil pred prvo svetovno vojno kovač, priznan domači zdravnik, ki je zdravil revmo in protin (Oder 1992: 291); “prijel je bolnika za rame, da se bolezen in zdravje sprimeta, kakor je dejal, in potem bolezen odmolil” (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 97). Pred drugo svetovno vojno so bili na Gorenjskem znani ljudje, ki so “polagali” roke. Verjetno bi jih lahko primerjali z današnjimi bioenergetiki.

Zeliščarstvo je verjetno ena od redkih metod zdravljenja, za katero vsakdo ve, da je bila na Slovenskem v preteklosti zelo razširjena in nam je še danes nekako najbližja.

Nekateri sodobni zeliščarji pri svojem delu celo izhajajo iz receptur, ki so dediščina slovenske ljudske medicine. Zastavlja pa se vprašanje, ali je šlo res v vseh primerih zeliščarstva v preteklosti le za delovanje zdravih sestavin zelišč ali pa so bila zelišča v nekaterih primerih morda le zunanja, navidezna metoda zdravljenja. Nekateri sodobni zdravitelji so namreč prepričani, da so imele njihove matere in stare matere, ki so se deklarirale za zeliščarice, tudi druge sposobnosti, ki bi danes lahko sodile npr. pod okrilje radiestezije in bioenergije.

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Znano je, da je bila na Slovenskem razširjena vera v moč dragih in poldragih kamnov ter kovin, kar je primerljivo z današnjo **kristaloterapijo**. Tako so bile znane "jagode za oči", neke vrste verižica ali trak, na katerem so bili nanizani poldragi kamni iz ahata, brušenega stekla in jaspisa, ki naj bi vplivali na dober vid oziroma na zdravje oči nasploh. Tisti, ki so imeli težave z očmi, so si obesili kamne okoli vratu in jih imeli na sebi vso noč oziroma ves čas, ko so ležali. Ko so vstali, so ogrlico položili v posodo z vodo. V Selški dolini, v Poljanskih hribih, v Škofji Loki z okolico in v Kropi so "jagode za oči" uporabljali vsaj do okoli leta 1900 (glej Andrejka 1934: 183–185; G. Makarovič 1981: 307). Na Kočevskem so posebno moč pripisovali kamni streli. Kot "kačji kamen" je bila sredi 19. stoletja znana tudi drugod po Sloveniji. Polagali so jo na mesta kačjih pikov (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 507). Na Koroškem so skozi "kačji kamen" (običajno kremenjak, ki je imel v sredi luknjo) precedili mleko in ga dali piti otroku, ki je imel ponoči krče (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 101). Na Dolenjskem so zdravili zobobol s pomočjo modrikastega kamna z rdečimi žilami (Trdina 1987: 925). Razširjeno je bilo tudi prepričanje v zdravilno moč kovin. Zlate uhane v obliki obročka ("oringelj") ali z glavo "zamorca" (od tod "murčki") so nosili tudi moški, da bi jih obvaroval glavobola, boleznin oči in zlih pogledov (primerjaj Andrejka 1934: 184; G. Makarovič 1981: 304; M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 507). V Prekmurju so nosili uhane, da bi si ohranili dober vid. Zlat nakit naj bi jih obvaroval pred zlatenico, kovinske zapestnice so bile proti revmi, na levi roki pa so nosili kovinske zapestnice v primeru visokega krvnega pritiska (Zadravec 1985: 284, 50, 154, 130). Na čebelji, osji in sršenji pik so polagali bel kamen, prav tako na krvavečo žilo (Zadravec 1985: 233, 131).

Tudi **urinoterapija**, ki se je vidneje pojavila pri nas v zadnjih nekaj letih in jo uporabljajo predvsem težji bolniki, na slovenskih tleh ni nova. Tako naj bi v preteklosti npr. Predgrajci, ki so imeli jetiko, pili svoj urin in si z njim izpirali rane (M. Makarovič 1985: 432); izpiranje ran z urinom je bilo razširjeno tudi med koroškimi Slovenci. Prepričani so bili, da se tako rane hitro zacelijo in se jih ne prime prisad. Boleče grlo so ovijali z nogavico, namočeno v urin, z urinom prepojene krpe pa so polagali tudi na zvine. Vodenične bolnike so zdravili z obkladki grškega sena, namočenega v urinu zdravega otroka (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 86, 91, 92, 105, 109). Tudi na Koroškem so uporabljali urin kot zdravilno sredstvo do druge svetovne vojne (Oder 1992: 297). Na Štajerskem naj bi ga bolniki pili na tešče. V Prekmurju so z njim spirali rane, uporabljali urinove obkladke za zdravljenje protina, revmatizma in boleznin srca, ga pili kot zdravilo proti kožnim izpuščajem in pri oslovskem kašlju. Oči so spirali z urinom ob vnetju očesne veznice in v primeru trahoma (Zadravec 1985: 191, 220, 235, 238, 157, 151, 124, 80, 88, 290, 291). V Dobrovi pri Ljubljani in v Poljanski dolini naj bi v preteklosti pili



“Jagode za oči” iz zbirke Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja (foto Janja Žagar)

svoj urin tisti, ki so imeli rano na želodcu (Möderndorfer 1964: 149). Tudi Trdina omenja, da nekateri Dolenjci “pijo svojo scalnico – in to za en čas pomaga” (Trdina 1987: 249); urin pa so uporabljali tudi za sveže rane (M. Makarovič 1983–1987: 18). V Jurkloštru so ga zivali na krvaveče rane (Terčak 1956: 123), na območju slovenskega Krasa pa so z njim razkuževali manjše rane (Čok, Kovačič 1984: 169).

V zapisih o slovenski ljudski medicini večkrat srečamo osebe, ki so poznale razne tehnike, s pomočjo katerih so v primeru zlomov, zvinov in izpahov ravnale kosti. Trdina npr. omenja, da “/.../ doktor ’Navžil’ ali ’Pavlek’ je doma iz srednj. Lipovca – uro hoda od Žužemberka – roke in noge zna res popraviti /.../” (Trdina 1987: 175). V Solčavi je bil v začetku 19. stoletja kmet, ki je uravnaval zlomljene roke in noge (Kotnik 1952: 126). V Ziljski dolini je bila ženska, ki je uravnavala kosti v pravo lego (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 110). Tudi v Beli krajini je bil pred drugo svetovno vojno mož, ki je naravnaval izpahnjene sklepe in zlomljene ude (Dražumerič, Terseglav 1987: 231). Nekateri moški so si tovrstno znanje pridobili na fronti med prvo svetovno vojno, nekateri pa so ga podedovali. V Prekmurju so poznali več načinov odpravljanja bolečin v hrbtu. Če je koga zbolelo v križu, je prekrizal roke na prsih, od zadaj pa ga je nekdo dvignil za komolce ali mu pokleknil na križ ali pa so jim otroci hodili po križu. Razširjeno je bilo

tudi "phanje maka", pri čemer so si bolnika naložili na hrbet tako, da sta se oba hrbta stikala, zdrava oseba pa se je nagnila z bolnikom na hrbtu naprej (Zadravec 1985: 150). Predgrajce, ki so imeli išijas, so pred drugo svetovno vojno zdravili s posebno masažo, pri čemer so po bolniku gazili (M. Makarovič 1985: 433). Morda bi lahko tovrstne postopke primerjali z današnjimi **manipulativnimi metodami zdravljenja**. Marsikje po Sloveniji so poznali v preteklosti tudi učinke masaže, še posebej v kombinaciji z drugimi metodami zdravljenja (npr. z zarotitvami) (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 97).

Del ljudske medicine so bile tudi **diete**, ki so bile v marsičem drugačne od današnjih, a so zagotovo imele določen pomen v času, ko se je celotna prehrana precej razlikovala od današnje. Med jedi, ki naj bi delovale krepilno, je sodilo npr. kokošje meso in juha, jajca, prežganka pa še kaj. Med pijačami so zdravilno moč pripisovali npr. vinu.

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V preteklosti je bilo razširjeno obiskovanje romarskih cerkva. Med poglavitnimi razlogi za romanja so bile vsekakor priprošnje ali zahvale za telesno in duševno zdravje. V zvezi z nekaterimi cerkvami je bilo razširjeno prepričanje, da so povezane s čudežno božjo (po)močjo. Med drugim naj bi tam prihajalo tudi do čudežnih ozdravitev. Tudi danes ljudje obiskujejo določene kraje, bodisi da verjamejo v moč tamkajšnjega svetnika ali pa v prepričanju, da gre za **energetsko močne zdravilne točke**, na katerih naj bi, po prepričanju nekaterih, stale številne cerkve, za katere pa vemo, da jih na Slovenskem ni ravno malo. Danes so nekateri zdravitelji prepričani v posebno **moč besed**. Lahko gre le za razgovor z zdravljenci, lahko pa gre tudi za neke vrste molitev oziroma prošnje, s katero se obračajo na Boga. Tudi v slovenski ljudski medicini je imela beseda lahko posebno moč, bodisi da je nastopala samostojno, npr. v primeru zagovorov (primerjaj Dolenc 1999), ali je spremljala druge postopke zdravljenja. Posebno moč so pripisovali tudi priprošnji oziroma molitvi, s katero so se obračali na svetnike, Jezusa, Marijo ali neposredno na Boga.

Danes se v zdravilne namene izvaja tudi **hoja po žerjavici**. Ogenj kot očiščevalno sredstvo se je v preteklosti uporabljal v najrazličnejših obredih za čiščenje ljudi, živali in rastlin, najpogosteje v primerih, ko je nastopila kužna bolezen. Najbolj učinkovito pa je bilo očiščevanje v samem ognju, prehod ali skok čez plamen. Ko je sredi 19. stoletja pri nas razsajala kolera, so ponekod zunaj vasi zakurili ogenj. Kdor se je želel obvarovati kolere, je moral trikrat skočiti čez ogenj. V najrazličnejše namene so uporabljali tudi dim in pepel (Lenček 1943: 61). Zelo pogost način zdravljenja je bil metanje žerjavice čez bolnikovo glavo v vodo. Glede na cvrčanje žerjavice so prognozirali potek bolezni (Mrkun 1934: 28). V Dobropoljski dolini so s pomočjo žerjavice, ki so jo gasili z vodo, preganjali uroke. Uročen človek se je moral držati nad dimom, ki je uhajal iz pogašene žerjavice (Mrkun 1937–1939: 6).

Kot vidimo na nekaterih primerih, so bile v Sloveniji v preteklosti v uporabi številne metode zdravljenja, ki jih lahko primerjamo z metodami današnje alternativne medicine. Pri vseh alternativnih metodah zdravljenja, ki jih danes – marsikdaj z velikim navdušenjem in nekritično – sprejemamo kot nekaj povsem novega, pa se ne zavedamo, da ima marsikatera pri nas že določeno tradicijo in je že bila v uporabi. Nehote pa se nam lahko pri tem zastavlja tudi vprašanje o tem, ali razne metode zdravljenja delujejo univerzalno ali pa imajo morda boljši učinek v "domačem" okolju.

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METHODS OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE – ARE THEY REALLY QUITE NEW IN SLOVENIA?

Nena Židov

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Introduction

In the last decade or two alternative medicine has become a widely discussed issue in Slovenia as much as it has in the rest of world. Researches carried out in Europe, North America and Australia indicate its increasing significance (Sharma 1993: 15). Slovenia is no exception to this trend. For the period of the past ten to fifteen years a continuous increase of the numbers of users and providers of alternative medicine can be established. The methods of treatment are changing too. The media, books and individuals are continuously introducing new methods in Slovenia, which are “modern” or fashionable for some time and soon followed by others. But when we discuss alternative medicine in Slovenia, we often forget that some of its ideas as well as techniques, which are today imported from abroad as novelties, have a certain tradition in this country; a tradition which was, however, discontinued more or less for some time. In the past Slovene ethnology primarily researched peasant culture and what is recorded is therefore mostly related to folk medicine. Much of what ethnology discovered and recorded as part of folk medicine, and which is often connected with superstition and magic, would today be classified as alternative medicine.

Terminology

Official medicine is medicine based on Western society’s understanding of the human body and its functioning. This is a concept of illness and health, which is politically and culturally acceptable in the given environment, especially to the institutionalised health systems, which are acknowledged by the administration and incorporated in the official system of education and health care of an individual country. Official medicine thus means the official medical doctrine in a country which “acknowledges therapeutic approaches only, if their effect can be verified through clinical experiment. Treatments of this type are based on scientific, rational premises or hypotheses” (Rozman, Codec 1989: 109).

The opposite of official medicine is **unofficial medicine**. The following synonyms are most commonly used: quackery, charlatanry, miracle healing, paramedicine, folk

medicine, traditional medicine, alternative medicine, complementary medicine, unconventional medicine, unorthodox medicine, holistic medicine and natural medicine. These terms can be understood as more or less synonymous, but also as terms which denote differences in meaning. When referring to unofficial medicine as charlatanry, quackery, miracle healing, etc., the reference is, of course, deprecatory (prim. Ržrbye 1982: 57).

152 In the context of researching medicine in the widest possible sense of the word, ethnologists cannot ignore what is generally called **folk medicine**. Folk medicine is medicine which is part of folk culture, and folk culture is primarily understood as peasant culture.¹ It is medicine as it was common among the peasant population in the pre-industrial era; some elements of this medicine have survived into the present. The differences between official and folk medicine lie in the education, knowledge, social origin and status of those who practice either medicine and of those they treat.

The term **alternative medicine** refers to various preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitation approaches, which have spread in Slovenia as elsewhere, especially in the developed countries, in approximately the past twenty to thirty years, and which are not part of official medical practises. Some ethnologists consider alternative medicine to be a modern variety of folk medicine (e.g. Motyčková and Wiegelmann), while others prefer to use terms like alternative or complementary medicine. The second option seems to be more appropriate, especially because alternative medicine today operates – though it involves some methods of folk medicine – in a completely changed environment. Alternative medicine is used for other reasons than folk medicine was used in the past, and there are important differences in its economic and ideological foundations. Folk medicine was limited to the lower classes of society, especially to the peasants. Slovene peasants resorted to folk medicine, e.g. to a herbalist, because socially as well as geographically it was the closest option they had. There were very little doctors at the time and there was an big social gap between doctors and peasants; in general, doctors were based too far away and, in addition, their services were too expensive. Furthermore, peasants had little confidence in doctors and medicines, and another major obstacle was of a linguistic nature: there were very few Slovene doctors in the 19th century. Peasants saw a doctor only in the most urgent cases, when there was often nothing they could do anyway (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 484, 485). The role of present-day alternative medicine differs in many aspects. People turn to it increasingly in spite of the existing well organised public health service which is universally accessible. People are even prepared to pay for alternative medicine, and the distance they have to cover to receive treatment is not an obstacle to them. The social gap between a contemporary doctor and his patient is no longer what it used to be between a 19th-century doctor and peasant.

We have to be aware, however, that the relations and borders between official and unofficial medicine, folk and alternative medicine, can be quite indistinct as they are not constant and transitions may occur. The same method of treatment can have a completely different position in different times and spaces.

¹ Folk medicine can also be understood as the medicine which is common among the general public in the sense of “popular” medicine.

Comparisons

To think that **natural methods of treatment** are a recent invention would be an error. As early as the mid 19th century ideas about treating chronic diseases with natural methods were introduced in Slovenia from Germany and became accepted. These methods were primarily based on experimentation and were not validated scientifically. The founders or initiators of these methods were in general laymen, who had discovered healing methods by chance or had had personal experiences with them. Foreign examples led to the establishment of natural health and bathing resorts in Slovenia. As the most popular natural healing methods emerged those developed by Sebastian Kneipp, a German priest, and by Arnold Rikli, a Swiss industrialist. Kneippism was mainly popular among the common people, while only well-off citizens had access to Rikli's method (Borisov 1968: 47). 153

Kneipp's principles were observed in Ljubljana and Kamnik. Towards the end of the 19th century a society of Kneipp adherents was founded in Ljubljana. A bathing resort was built in Tivoli Park in 1899 and called Wörishofen. The wooden building, close to a stream, was divided into several cabins. People bathed their feet in this stream and then walked the dew-covered meadow barefoot. The resort continued to operate for a while after the First World War. In Kamnik a health and bathing resort was established in 1876, owned by Alojzij Prašnikar. It started to apply Kneipp's methods in 1891. The following year the number of guests already increased substantially, also because Wörishofen could not cope with the huge interest and Kneipp referred patients to Kamnik. The resort operated until the First World War (Borisov 1968: 48–51). In the late 19th century some peasants also used to visit the Krapina spa in Croatia (Kotnik 1952: 127), which also applied Kneipp's methods. After the First World War there were no official Kneipp institutions in existence, but some of his methods, barefoot dew walking barefoot (cf. Makarovič M. 1983–1987: 18), cold water showers and barefoot walking in snow, survived until after the Second World War.

In 1904 a monthly journal was started in Gorica, entitled "*Knajpovec, časopis za negovanje zdravja po Kneippovem sestavu, za pouk, vzgojo otrok in zabavo*" ("The Kneipp fan, a journal for health care based on Kneipp's principles, for instruction, education of children and entertainment"). Its editor in charge was J. Okič, the founder and manager of the Kneipp spa in Krapina. The journal did not attract enough subscribers and was published only until the end of 1906. Kneippism was also promoted by many other magazines, newspapers and various manuals.

The natural health resort in Bled, founded by the Swiss industrialist Arnold Rikli, became quite famous. In his youth Rikli was affected by a disease and recovered through the use of hydrotherapy, which led him to become an enthusiast hydrotherapist. He had another personal experience with natural treatment when he was older and caught pleurisy. After he recovered, he came to Bled as a convalescent. He was so impressed by the environment that he decided to establish a natural health resort there and moved to Bled in 1855 (Borisov 1975: 168). His patients had to follow a strict daily routine. They got up early, ate no meat, and smoking and alcohol consumption were forbidden. The

patients stayed in wooden huts, had a lot of physical activity and exposed themselves to water, air and sun baths. The treatment, which took quite some time (at least a month), was very expensive and only wealthy bourgeois could afford it. Rikli founded similar spas in Trieste, Florence, and near Merano. He opposed the use of medicaments, prescribed by doctors, which led to frequent conflicts with them and Rikli was sued in court by doctors on several occasions (Borisov 1975: 171). When the number of visitors increased, Rikli appointed two doctors-hydropaths. After his death in 1906 the spa was run by his son. In the first decade of the 20th century a certain Vouk from Bled also started to offer his guests sun and air baths after Rikli's model. Rikli's spa stopped its operation after the First World War (Borisov 1975: 173).

154 **Homeopathy** was well-known in Slovenia already in the 19th century. It was practised by doctors as well as laymen. Homeopaths were from the ranks of priests and some aristocrats were familiar with its effects, but it was also known among the peasant population. An ardent supporter of homeopathy among the doctors of the first half of the 19th century was the then prior of the Order of the Hospitallers, Faust (Matevž) Gradišek. In 1807 he was appointed manager of the Ljubljana Hospital in the Ajdovščina quarter. One year later he founded a clinical school in the hospital to train future homeopaths. In 1811 Gradišek passed the hospital to the French authorities and when they dissolved the Order of the Hospitallers, he moved to a private property under Šmarna gora near Ljubljana, where he set up a homeopathic practice (Borisov 1985: 312, 355). The Ljubljana homeopaths had adherents among the common people, but some intellectuals and doctors also supported them. Their activities became a threat to official medicine, and in 1819 homeopathy was forbidden for the civil population and for the army, but some Ljubljana homeopaths led by Gradišek continued to use the method (Borisov 1977: 142). France Prešeren scoffed at Gradišek in a short poem, entitled "*Préd pevcu, potlej homeopatu.*" ("To a former singer, now a homeopath")

The Ljubljana homeopaths caused the city authorities a lot of problems. Their major opponent was Fran Viljem Lipič, who became the district surgeon in 1832 and was appointed assistant manager of the hospital in Ajdovščina, Ljubljana, one year later. He was, however, no match for the Ljubljana homeopaths and had to leave the city. Some other doctors also used homeopathic treatments, e.g. Jožef Kos, who was first a district surgeon and obstetrician in Bistra and who was appointed district surgeon of Ljubljana in 1821 (Borisov 1977: 236–237). The National Museum in Ljubljana has a collection of homeopathic medicines from the period of doctor Moder, who is said to have treated among others Fran Levstik (1831–1887).

Some priests also seem to have been quite familiar with homeopathy. In his notes on the 1870–1879 period Trdina mentions as a homeopath the priest Mlakar from Mirna Peč "who was popular with many people and trusted by them" (Trdina 1987: 832). Another known homeopath was the parish priest of Metlika, Daniel Terček (1819–1887), as is confirmed by his legacy, which is in the National Museum in Ljubljana. Homeopaths in Tržič were the parish priests Janez Zalokar (1828–1835) and Simon Peharc (Kragl 1936: 195, 261). Some aristocrats also used homeopathic treatments. Baron Franz Wambolt von Umstadt (1829–1908) from Hmeljnik Castle in Dolenjska practised homeopathy, and after his death his widow Baroness Maria Wambolt (1848–

1915) continued his work (Potočnik 1994: 73). She treated people and livestock with homeopathic medicines in the early 20th century. Her visitors came from the castle's environs and from more remote places. The Archives of the Republic of Slovenia have a copy-book in which the baroness entered the names of the people who visited her, their places of residence and which homeopathic medicines she had prescribed for them (see Dolenc 1989: 199).² Further homeopaths in Tržič in the 19th century were the famous Henrik Weis (1815–1892), Elizabeta Peharc, and Raimund Jaboring von. Altenfels, an industrialist (Kragl 1936: 261).

In the countryside homeopathy was particularly common towards the end of the 19th century, when the number of self-taught homeopaths is thought to have been considerable (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 489). According to Trdina's writings many were active in Dolenjska. "In Stopče people are treated with homeopathy, based on a book, by the miller Jerič, but he is not as famous as Marente from Šent-Peter and far less than Varavn, the champion of all homeopaths in Dolenjska" (Trdina 1987: 832). In the late 19th century the mayor, landowner and miller Jakob Košak treated people with homeopathy free of charge in Kronovo near Bela cerkev. Varavn, the most distinguished homeopath in Dolenjska, is said to have been so busy at the turn of the century, that he had to work at night too (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 490). In the inter-war period there were quite a lot of homeopaths in Slovenia (Kunze 1928: 711). After the Second World War the last homeopath is reported to have died in Sevnica (Pope-Toth 1994: 14) and the homeopathic tradition was discontinued for some time.

Radiesthesia is another popular topic nowadays. In the past similar activities were called divining and dowsing. A divining or dowsing rod – a hazel or willow twig – was used to search for underground water, and also for various minerals and ores. The word *bajaličarstvo* (divining, dowsing) is derived from *bajalica* or *bajanica* – a rod used for finding water and other objects, and a *bajaličar* or *bajaničar* is a person who knows how to handle a dowsing rod (SSKJ 1987: 90). Dowsing is connected with determining the location of water sources with a dowsing rod and with well-digging. For centuries dowsing was a occupation in Slovenia, carried out by acknowledged dowsers, and some of them are still active. The occupation was connected with searching for water, well-digging and installing water pumps. Dowsers were highly respected, because finding water and well-digging were activities of vital importance. After the First World War some dowsers were even registered as tradesmen. Folk tradition preserves references to dowsing for water with a one-year old willow twig, called *bajalica*. It was also well known that dowsing required special skills and that it was not something anybody could take up (Bogataj 1989: 186).

In Prekmurje water dowsers were always men who were passed on the knowledge by their ancestors. Water dowsing was carried out by sticking a one-year old willow twig in the ground. If bent, water was near. Water was also searched for with another method: the dowser held two one-year old willow twigs stretched out in front of him, with the cut ends touching his body. When he came close to water, the thinner ends would approach one another. The third most common method of dowsing for water in

² M. Dolenc thought herbal treatment was involved, but it is certain that she used homeopathic medicines.

Prekmurje required the co-operation of two men, one being a dowser. They both held one-year old willow twigs stretched out in front of them, with the cut ends pressed tightly to the little fingers of both hands. They progressed slowly and watched for the thin ends of the twigs to bend either aside or upwards. If the twigs bent aside, this meant a water course in that direction, and if they bent upwards, it meant that there was standing still water. In the early 1960s three dowsers were still active in Prekmurje (Koren 1962: 86).

Divining and dowsing were not limited to the peasant population in the past. Even Valvasor is said to have engaged in it, and in the early 20th century a well-known dowser was baron Anton Codelli (Rak 1988: 114) from Ljubljana. The Austrian and Yugoslav armies of the period before the Second World War also employed water dowsers. Divining and dowsing partially covers what is today called radiesthesia. Hazel and willow twigs have been replaced by other accessories: pendulums, bio-tensors and l-antennae; beside for seeking water, minerals and ores, radiesthesia is also used for numerous other purposes.

The idea that some people have special powers in their hands – the modern term would be **bioenergy** – and can use it to cure other people, is thought to be of Indo-European origin (Minařik 1971: 26). In the mid 19th century Mesmer's magnetism was well known in Slovenia. The most famous individual, who was involved in magnetism, certainly was the priest Jurij Humar, the “miracle worker” from Primskovo (where he served as a priest from 1876 to 1890), who is said to have cured people with his personal magnetism (see Žurga 1969). Humar himself (1819–1890) had no explanation for his unusual powers. The only similarity he could see was with Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), a doctor from Vienna, who was the first to study the effects of magnets and the magnetic field on healing. Mesmer saw magnetism as a universal, subtle and non-measurable fluid, which influences the entire micro-cosmos and macro-cosmos. At first he treated people with magnets, later by laying hands on them. He then established that he could treat by merely concentrating his will-power (Pintar 1950: 256–257). Jurij Humar was widely held to be a very successful healer with exceptional powers, and numerous foreigners visited him to be treated. The peasants of Dolenjska thought that Humar was omnipotent because of his successful treatment of people, and because of the story that he had once resuscitated a dead woman (Trdina 1987: 868). After his death people continued to visit his grave for treatment, and some do so even nowadays. In modern terms Humar would be called a bioenergetic therapist, a radiaesthetist, and a clairvoyant, who was also connoisseur of telepathy, hypnosis, and herbalism.

In the past there were other people in Slovenia, who treated people with the energy from their hands. Before the First World War a smith from Prevalje was a well-known home “doctor”, who treated rheumatism and gout (Oder 1992: 291). He used to “catch a patient by the shoulder... to make health and sickness stick together”, and then “prayed the illness away” (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 97). In Gorenjska several people were known, who laid on hands before the First World War. They can probably be compared with present-day bioenergetic therapists.

Herbalism probably is one of the rare methods of treatment everyone knows to have been very common in Slovenia in the past, and even today many people are familiar with it. Modern-day herbalists sometimes use recipes, which belong to the heritage of

Slovene folk medicine. It is however an open issue, whether all instances of herbalism in the past involved only the medical substances of herbs, or whether in some cases herbs were merely used as a pretended method of treatment. Some contemporary healers are indeed convinced that their mothers and grandmothers, who called themselves herbalists, had other powers too, and these would be classified as radiesthesia and bioenergy in modern terms.

It is further well-known that the belief in the power of precious and semi-precious stones and metals was common in Slovenia, and this would be comparable with modern gem or crystal therapy. One of the past forms was called “eye berries”, a kind of necklace or ribbon to which semi-precious stones, made of agate, cut glass and jasper, were attached. These stones were supposed to have a beneficial effect on a person’s sight and the health of his eyes in general. People who had problems with their eyes, hung such stones around their neck and wore them all night or all the time they were resting. When they got up again, the necklace was put in vessel with water. In the Selca Valley, the Poljana hills, Škofja Loka and its environs and Kropa, “eye berries” were used until at least 1900 (see Andrejka 1934: 183–185; G. Makarovič 1981: 307). In the Kočevje area special power was attributed to rock crystal. Elsewhere in Slovenia it was known as “snake stone” in the mid 19th century. It was laid on snake bites (M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 507). In Koroška a “snake stone” (usually a pebble with a hole in the centre) was used to filter milk before giving it to children who had spasms at night (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 101). In Dolenjska tooth-ache was treated with a bluish rock with red veins (Trdina 1987: 925). Metals were also believed to have healing powers. Golden ear-rings in the form of a ring (“oringelj”) or the head of a “Negro” were also worn by men to protect themselves against head-ache, eye diseases and the evil eye (cf. Andrejka 1934: 184; G. Makarovič 1981: 304; M. Makarovič 1988–1990: 507). In Prekmurje ear-rings were worn to preserve one’s good sight. Gold jewellery was thought to protect against jaundice, metal bracelets against rheumatism, and metal bracelets were worn on the left hand in cases of high blood pressure (Zadravec 1985: 284, 50, 154, 130). Bites of bees, wasps and hornets so were treated with a white stone, and so were bleeding veins (Zadravec 1985: 233, 131).

Urinothrapy, which has appeared more recently and is primarily used by people who are seriously ill, is not really new in Slovenia. In the past people of Predgrad for instance, who suffered from consumption, drank their urine and washed out wounds with it (M. Makarovič 1985: 432); the latter practice was also common among the Slovenes of Carinthia. It was thought that it made wounds heal faster and prevent gangrene. A soar throat was wrapped with a stocking, soaked in urine, a sprained arm or leg was treated with a cloth, soaked in urine. Oedematous patients were treated with compresses of Greek (Bockshornklee Griechisch Heu), soaked in the urine of a healthy child (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 86, 91, 92, 105, 109). Urine was also used for treatment in Carinthia until the Second World War (Oder 1992: 297). In Štajerska patients drank urine on an empty stomach. In Prekmurje urine was used to wash out wounds, urine compresses against gout, rheumatism and heart diseases, and urine was drunk to treat rashes and whooping cough. Eyes were washed out with urine in cases of conjunctivitis and trachoma (Zadravec 1985: 191, 220, 235, 238, 157, 151, 124, 80, 88, 290, 291). In Dobrova near

Ljubljana and in the Poljana Valley people with stomach ulcers are reported to have treated themselves by drinking their urine (Möderndorfer 1964: 149). Trdina also mentions that some people from Dolenjska “drink their urine – and it helps for some time” (Trdina 1987: 249), and urine was also used for fresh wounds (M. Makarovič 1983–1987: 18). In Jurklošter urine was poured over bleeding wounds (Terčak 1956: 123), and in the Slovene Karst it was used to disinfect minor wounds (Čok, Kovačič 1984: 169).

Records on Slovene folk medicine often contain references to people who knew several techniques to set broken, sprained and dislocated bones. Trdina e.g. mentions that “/.../ doctor ‘Navžil’ or ‘Pavlek’ from Srednji Lipovec – a one-hour-walk from Žužemberk – knows how to set arms and legs /.../” (Trdina 1987: 175). In the early 19th century a peasant from Solčava set broken arms and legs (Kotnik 1952: 126). In the Gail Valley (Carinthia) it was a woman who set bones right (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 110). And before the Second World War a man lived in Bela krajina, who reset dislocated joints and broken limbs (Dražumerič, Terseglav 1987: 231). Some men had acquired these skills at the front during the First World War, other had inherited it. In Prekmurje several ways were used to relieve back-aches. A person with a back-ache, crossed his arms on his breast and was then lifted from behind by the elbows by another person; or someone kneeled on his back or children walked over it. Another common practice was called “poppy pounding “: a healthy person would stand back to back with a patient and would then bend forward, lifting the patient on his back (Zadavec 1985: 150). Before the Second World War people in Predgrad suffering from sciatica were treated with a special massage: people walked over them (M. Makarovič 1985: 433). Treatments of this kind might be compared with modern **manipulative treatment techniques**. In many places in Slovenia the effects of massage were known in the past, especially combined with other methods of treatment (e.g. incantations) (Košir, Möderndorfer 1926: 97).

Another constituent of folk medicine were **diets**, which were quite different from those used today, but they certainly were significant in a period when the entire diet was very different from today’s. Food considered to invigorate was e.g. chicken meat and soup, eggs, brown roux soup and the like. Wine was the principle beverage considered to have healing powers.

Visiting pilgrimage churches was very common in the past. The principle reasons for a pilgrimage of course involved petitionary or thanksgiving prayers for physical and mental health. Some churches were believed to be connected with God’s miracle-working powers. Miracle recoveries from illnesses were said to occur there. Even today people continue to visit certain places, either because they believe in the power of the local saint or because they believe that they are **powerful energy sites with healing powers**. Many churches were thought to have been erected in such locations and since Slovenia is dotted with churches... Some contemporary healers believe in the **power of words**. This may refer to talking to the patient but also to some kind of prayer or petition, addressed to God. In Slovene folk medicine words could have special powers either independently, e.g. in incantations (cf. Dolenc 1999), or in combination with other treatments. Special power was attributed to petition prayers, addressed to the saints, Jesus, Mary or directly to God.

Nowadays fire-walking (walking across red-hot embers) is used for treatment purposes. Fire as a means of purifying was used in the past in a great variety of rituals intended to purify people, livestock and plants, and it was most common used for epidemic diseases. Purification was most effective in the fire itself, either by walking through a flame or jumping over it. In the 19th century, when cholera spread in the country, fires were made outside the villages in some areas. Those who wanted to protect themselves against the cholera had to jump over the fire three times. Smoke and ashes were also used for many different purposes (Lenček 1943: 61). A very common practice was to throw smouldering embers in water over a patient's head. The course of the disease was then predicted from the sizzling embers (Mrkun 1934: 28). In the Dobropolje valley embers were also used: they were put out with water to chase away spells. A person under a spell had to stand in the smoke which rose from the extinguished embers (Mrkun 1937–1939: 6).

These examples show that many techniques of treatment were used in the past which can be compared with the methods of contemporary alternative medicine. Alternative treatments are today often accepted as something completely new, with great enthusiasm and uncritically, and people are not aware that many of them have a certain tradition in this country and were used in the past. Involuntarily the question arises whether various treatments are universally effective or whether they have better effects in their “home” environment.

LITERATURE see page 149

BESEDA O AVTORICI

Nena Židov, dr., kustodinja v Slovenskem etnografskem muzeju. Je urednica muzejske periodične publikacije *Etnolog* in knjižne zbirke *Knjižnica Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja*. Naslov njene doktorske naloge je *Alternativna medicina v Sloveniji, Etnološki vidik* (1996). Objavila je knjigi *Občina Ljubljana Bežigrad* (1991) in *Ljubljanski živilski trg* (1994) ter vrsto člankov na temo urbane etnologije, alternativne medicine in etnološke bibliografije.

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