

Two international projects should be mentioned in this context: the project *Aquadapt* was an interdisciplinary one and the results were published in a monograph *Kras: Water and Life in a Rocky Landscape*, with an extensive ethnological chapter entitled *Water and Culture*. The second one is the project *Etnofolk* on the preservation and enhancement of folk culture heritage in Central Europe.

Ingrid Slavec Gradišnik

MEDICA VIII. INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE *MEDICAL PLURALISM IN THE ERA OF DIGIMODERNISM*

November 28th, 2011. Estonian Literary Museum, Tartu

Kaarina Rein (Medicine in Tartu before the Foundation of the University and during the Academia Gustaviana Period) suggested that the history of medicine in Tartu began with medieval monastic medicine. An infirmary, an almshouse at the Church of Holy Ghost and a hospital for leprous patients were probably founded in the middle of the 13th century. The first pharmacy in Tartu was founded between 1422 and 1430 by a learned physician Johann Molner, and until the 17th century the owners of pharmacies were the only representatives of academic medicine in Tartu. With the foundation of the University in Tartu in 1632, three professors of medicine from Germany – Johannes Raicus (ca 1580–1632), Johann Below (1601–1668) and Sebastian Wirdig (1613 or 1615–1687) influenced the medical and local intellectual circle in Tartu. It is apparent from their works that J. Raicus found support in his ideas from the teachings of Paracelsus, and J. Below and S. Wirdig were following the humoral pathology. Although the beginning of the academic medical education was promising, for some of the time the professorship of medicine was actually vacant.

Ave Tupits (The Academics and the Recording of Folk Medicine during the Estonian Republic (1918–1940)) gave an overview of Estonian folklorists' interest in folk medicine during the Estonian Republic at the beginning of the 20th century. The folkloristic questionnaires compiled mostly in the 1920s and 1930s and directed towards the archives' correspondents, entailed questions about folk medicine and folk healing methods. Healers, illnesses and common curative practices were in the centre of attention. The academic medical circles also showed interest in the Estonian folk curing methods, and a few collections were started from their side with the Estonian National Museum and the Estonian Museum of Hygiene. Articles and other publications of the 1920s and 1930s give an insight into the general attitude of the academic medical circles, as well as individual opinions toward folk medicine practices, which were not always in unison. The general viewpoint, however, was that folk healing is degrading and medical professionals will prevail.

Kristiina Johanson (Is it Possible to Identify the Healing Instruments in the Archaeological Material?) touched on the examples from the Stone Age to the Late Iron Age. These healing instruments are not easily identified, since the artefacts used in magical

and healing practices might not stand out in the overall archaeological complexes. In order to identify these objects, alternative sources might be looked for – folklore texts and written sources from antiquity to the medieval period (e.g. medieval lapidaries). Kristiina Johanson discussed some of the healing materials used according to the 19th- and 20th-century folklore texts and then compared the findings from archaeological sites to identify the healing and magical instruments, also demonstrating the apparent or probable healing instruments in photos.

Svetlana Tsonkova (*Last Man Standing? Charmers, Illnesses and Healing in Bulgarian Early Modern Daily Life*) based her paper on early modern Bulgarian charms and non-canonical prayers, written in Old Church Slavonic language and preserved in manuscripts. She was treating the charms, charmers and crisis situations as cultural phenomena, and as subjects of interdisciplinary research. Svetlana Tsonkova demonstrated the difficulties and possibilities in tracing the specific features of the practitioners and users of charms, non-canonical prayers and other words of power, focusing on conjuring as an everyday practice and strategy to manage critical situations, affecting the health and life of humans and animals. S.Tsonkova sees the charmer as an influential figure, who communicates with the supernatural, influences the reality and is powerful enough to avert danger and death.

Valentina Kharitonova (*Russian (Neo)Shamanism in the Last Quarter of the 20th Century: Religion, Creativity and Healing*) pointed out the transformations connected to (neo)shamanism, against a background of common changes in religious, cultural and medical spheres in the Russian Federation. V. Kharitonova was looking at (neo)shamanism in the context of religious issues, folk healing in biomedicine, public health, alternative and complementary medicine, as well as state and alternative education, and scientific institutionalizations. She also analysed the personalities of (neo)shamans in comparison with epic and lyroepic singers. V. Kharitonova demonstrated with colourful examples how (neo)shamans create their identity and credentials. The presented materials were collected from different regions in Siberia as well as from Moscow.

Tatjana Bulgakova (*Shamanistic Healing from the Position of Transpersonal Anthropology*) demonstrated that viewing the shamanistic cure through the lens of transpersonal paradigm gives a chance to view it as a whole psychological experience in the context of traditional magic and mysticism. Through transpersonal approach the shaman and also all kinds of diseases can be seen as experiences of contacts with the layers of psyche that are inaccessible in daily life. Such an approach contrasts to the nature of diseases as seen from the emic position. In view of the shamanic tradition carriers, the reasons or cure for shamanic diseases are not related to human contact but to the creatures (energies) remaining outside the human that can influence the psyche but exist regardless of the human.

Mare Kõiva (*Constructive Alternativism and the Healers*) demonstrated, based on archival materials and Internet sources on folk healers, how different contemporary healers build up self-presentation, using different interpretations in the context of the surrounding environment and culture. Different healers design their own supporting rituals and social interaction to balance the personality and to solve the health problems within the altered space and place, or within differentiated physical environment and altered mentality. Mare Kõiva demonstrated the rituals and practices developed and used by healers and also discussed the role of healers in the discourse of printed

medical books. The examples included known and popular Estonian healers Aleksander Heintalu, Luule Viilma, Gunnar Aarma, and also Irje Karjus, who has combined folk knowledge with modern village tourism.

Mihály Hoppál (*Experiences with Shamanistic Healers*) described different shamanistic healers and their practices within the framework of curative procedures and belief systems. The well-known researcher of shamanism and the president of the Society for Studies in the Field of Shamanism as well as the editor-in-chief of the journal *Shaman* paid attention to how shamans study popular religion and medicine, and participate in the discourse of the published books. He also spoke about his personal experiences with shamans.

Piret Paal discussed in her poster report (*About Keila Nursing Hospital, Caring and Palliative Welfare Services*) the importance of palliative medicine and care in the future medicine. She declared that in view of the cultural pluralism of the globalising world also ethnologists, folklorists and medical anthropologists will have an important role to play in the interests of patients and their families. She also suggested that, arising from the dynamics conditioned by the small size of Estonia, a well-organised network of palliative services could even be one of the so-called Estonian Nokias, which means that high quality care services are offered to the citizens and their family members.

Ave Tupits

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHARMS, CHARMERS AND CHARMING

On October 27–29, 2011, the Marc Bloch Russian-French Centre for Historical Anthropology at the Russian State University for the Humanities in cooperation with the International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR) and the Russian Academy of Sciences organised a conference on oral charms.

The conference aimed at focussing on one folklore genre, whereby embracing the maximum range of topics: problems, geographical and historical background. The investigation of oral magic has remained on the borderline of several scientific spheres – folkloristics, linguistics, history of literature, ethnology and psychology. The conference discussed the following issues: geography and history of the charms tradition, distribution of various charm types; possibilities for systematising and labelling the databases of national charms corpora; charms and mixed forms (Christian prayers and prayer-like charms, apocryphal prayers, curses, etc.); charms in oral and written tradition; magical inscriptions on various objects; medieval charms in archaeological records; social functioning of the charm tradition; charms and their performers; the role of the church and clerics in the spread of charms, their difference in catholic, protestant, orthodox and non-Christian religions; psycho-social sources of suggestion. The participants of the conference discussed how charms worked, why they were relevant, how ‘charming with