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WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SLOVAK PUBLIC HEALTH LITERATURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract
The great strides the medical science made in the 19th century and the accompanying changes in government policy resulted in a radical transformation of women's and children´s healthcare. The government´s primary goal was to lower the high incidence of maternal mortality and a high death rate of new-borns and children. The 19th century saw the establishment of modern obstetrics and paediatrics as well as the introduction of new modes of dissemination of medication and health-related information. Selected types and genres of Slovak medical literature focus on female medical issues, childbirth and childcare, including works published by medical authorities, which mediated new scientific knowledge, diagnostic and therapeutic methods, as well as works rooted in the traditional medicine and folk healing. The paper concludes with an analysis of how women´s and children´s health were treated in contemporary press and periodicals, where we examine in detail sections dedicated to medical issues and health advice.
Key words: *Slovakia, 19th century, healthcare, medical literature, women and children*

The development of healthcare for women and children in the long nineteenth century has been documented in historical sources, which are currently the subject of interdisciplinary research. The aim of this study is to highlight specific types and genres of public health literature from the period which addressed the Slovak population and which have the potential to be of interest to researchers in the fields of medical history and public health as well as in other disciplines,

such as ethnology. Over the long nineteenth century, the foundations of modern obstetrics and paediatrics were laid, and forms of targeted public health awareness emerged. Specified sources record the development of medical knowledge and opinions, and specifically the regulation of healthcare and the state of health of the population.

To a significant extent, they also present information about the state of healthcare for women and children as well as changes that took place over the period, while also informing about people's lifestyles, living conditions, dietary habits, and other aspects of life connected to health and healthcare. The analysed material reveals the parallel existence and mutual influence of both official medicine and traditional healing practices.

In the following, the most significant types of literature (written in the Slovak language of the time) which addressed the professional community and the wider public, and which included mention of birth and healthcare for women and children, will be described without claiming to be a truly comprehensive analysis in itself. The wide spectrum of studied public health literature from the period has been divided into two groups. The first group includes printed forms of public health literature genres, which make up the bulk of this article. Works of official medicine, which presented new scientific findings as well as diagnostic and therapeutic methods, are also included, as are works on traditional forms of folk medicine. The final part of this study comprises an exploration of selected periodical literature, where the defined scope of analysis is discussed.

The population's state of health in the nineteenth century

The whole nineteenth century witnessed a significantly high rate of mortality among the population due to prevailing undesirable health conditions resulting from warfare, epidemics of infectious diseases, an unbalanced diet among most of the population, housing which was perilous to health and social conditions, and inadequate communal and personal hygiene. The greatest risk to health was posed by infectious diseases, which accounted for up to 43.1% of all deaths (Junas, Bokesová, 1985: 441). Among these diseases, smallpox (*variola vera*) had a devastating effect on the population, particularly on children, and had a mortality rate of 15 to 40%. Other infectious diseases, such as chickenpox (*varicella*), measles (*morbilli*), diphtheria, and scarlet fever (*scarlatina*), were just as dangerous and widespread. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, infants and children under the age of five made up a large part (nearly 40%) of the total mortality rate (Bokesová, 1989: 90). Even in the early twentieth century up to 1914, one in five children in Slovakia would die in their first year of life (Hapák,

1986: 178). The overall child mortality rate for the Kingdom of Hungary in the 1890s was 376.7 per 1000 live-born children. The mortality rate among mothers was also high; the Hungarian average was twenty deaths per 1000 mothers, and at the end of the 1890s, an outbreak of puerperal fever in Orava saw the mortality rate among mothers there rise to 52 per 1000 (Kiss, 1997).

The core components of regulated healthcare for the general population emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century alongside the building of the modern absolutist state in the context of scientific enlightenment. The constitution of public health in the Habsburg Monarchy was primarily influenced by the concept of the medical police (in the literature this is also referred to as "state medicine"), which was most comprehensively formulated by the German doctor Johann Peter Frank (1745–1821) in his extensive work *System einer vollständigen medizinischen Polizey* (1780–1819). The medical police was a body of administrative regulations, which sought to maintain public health and protect society from diseases. It also included a system of normalization of public health practices and education as well as the integration of health workers into the state's public administration (Tinková, 2012: 42–51).[1] The organization of public health over the nineteenth century experienced a number of changes which broadened the structure of its operational components and the forms and methods of provided medical care, and which modernized the education of doctors, chemists, midwives, and orderlies (Bokesová, 1989). An important part of public health was health training and education, which had its beginnings in the Age of Enlightenment.[2]

1. WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN PUBLIC HEALTH BOOKS

1.1. Scientific/official medicine in literature

The immense development of the natural and technical sciences and the application of medical discoveries stimulated the development of theoretical and clinical medical specializations. Over the long nineteenth century, independent fields of obstetrics and paediatrics were formed in the Kingdom of Hungary, and as

[1] The most significant successor to Frank as the founder of the discipline of public health in the Kingdom of Hungary was the Pressburg (Bratislava)-based doctor Zacharias Gottlieb Huszty (1754–1803), who in his two-volume work *Diskurs über die medizinische Policey* (Pressburg – Leipzig, 1786) clarified how the state should regulate and implement public healthcare measures.

[2] For a more detailed look at health conditions in Slovakia and the development of public health in the nineteenth century, see the relevant chapters by Bokesová (1989) and Pekařová (2015c).

a result the first maternity and children's hospitals were established in what is now modern-day Slovakia. The influence of the Enlightenment saw a greater emphasis placed on prevention, a healthy lifestyle, and hygiene. In healthcare for women and children, there was a greater emphasis placed on hygienic practices at birth, during postnatal care, and in the treatment of children (Junas, Bokesová, 1985).

Textbooks for midwives

One of the important state strategies in lowering the mortality rate among children and mothers was the regulation of midwives and ensuring that they received adequate training. From the end of the eighteenth century, midwifery was gradually formed as the first female profession to benefit from education and training supported by the state, and it was provided in all provincial languages of the kingdom (Deáky, 1996). In the first half of the nineteenth century, either the training of midwives took the form of university courses ("diploma midwives") or a form of training led by county doctors ("listed midwives"). A milestone in the systematic institutional education of midwives took place in the 1870s, when vocational schools were established in the Kingdom of Hungary which were specifically designed to train midwives. One of the first of these schools was the royal midwifery school established in 1872 in Bratislava.[3]

Textbooks were one of the primary requirements for the specialized training of midwives. The first textbooks for Hungarian and Slovak midwives were translations of works by professors of obstetrics based in Vienna. Whereas Hungarian midwives would see a new textbook published every decade over the course of the nineteenth century (Deáky, 1996),[4] Slovak midwives had to content themselves in terms of core literature with a 1778 translation by Ján Černej (Cherney) (1747–1828) of a textbook written by the Viennese obstetrician Raphael Johann Steidele (1737–1823) for nearly one hundred years. This textbook was divided into four parts, with the last part focusing on the postnatal period and caring for a new-born infant. According to Deáky (1989: 19), the most widely-used textbook on this subject, which was written by Károly (Krenmüller) Tormay (1804–1871), who would later become the head doctor of Budapest, was

[3] For more on the education of midwives in the second half of the eighteenth century, see Praženka (2013). For an evaluation of the significance of the first school in Bratislava for midwives, see Morovicsová and Morovics (2013). For a summary of the training of midwives in the past, see Bokesová (1989).

[4] In the first half of the nineteenth century, the authors of these works were mostly county doctors. Only in the last third of the century were these books written by professors of obstetrics.

supposed to have been translated into Slovak in the 1850s.[5] The first original Slovak textbook came out at the beginning of the 1870s and was written by Ján Ambro (1827–1890), one of Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis's first adherents and the first director of the midwifery school in Bratislava. The textbook was conceived in the spirit of the fundamental principles of modern obstetrics, with the chapters dealing with prevention, hygiene, and dietary and daily habits for pregnant women and mothers in the postnatal period being of particular value. In comparison to what had previously been written in the field, this book represented a significant advancement in knowledge (Falisová, Morovicsová, 2011). Two more Slovak translations of textbooks, which served as a learning aid for midwives in specialized schools would appear before the dissolution of Austria-Hungary. Jozef Bella (1864–1946), a native of Liptovský Mikuláš and a graduate of the faculty of medicine in Prague, who also worked as an assistant at the midwifery school in Bratislava from 1890 to 1894, prepared a translation of a textbook by Teodor Kežmarský (Kézmárszky) (1842–1902), who was a Budapest university professor and a native of Spišské Podhradie. The last textbook in the period under analysis was written to meet the needs of the standardized training of midwives in the Kingdom of Hungary. This textbook received government approval and was written by Jakub Mann (1848–1923), the director of the school of midwifery in Szeged; its Slovak translation was published in 1903.

For the needs of county doctors, who mostly trained the midwives in the villages, concise versions of these textbooks were made available. In an accessible way, these texts contained the most important theoretical and practical information, which they needed. Only two such shortened textbooks in Slovak have been preserved in printed form. The first of these was written by the Skalica town doctor Jan Nepomuk Schuster in 1819, and the second one was written by doctors from the Tekov-Hont medical association in the 1870s (Pekařová, 2013). The county doctors presumably also taught Slovak midwives using their own texts. This is confirmed by a preserved textbook in manuscript form written by the Nitra county doctor František Biringer (1859–1931) (Falisová, Morovicsová, 2016: 40).[6]

Textbooks for midwives in the nineteenth century reveal a gradual progress in medical knowledge in the field of obstetrics, with priority being given to principles

[5] However, the translation is not included in any bibliographies, and the textbook has not been preserved in any accessible library collections.

[6] This didactic text was preserved under the name *V otázkach a odpovediach, ktorú v rukopise som si zadržal a ktorá by hádam zaslúžila časom byť vydaná, lebo ako rukoväť by mohla slúžiť pre baby malých obcí* (Concerning the questions and answers which I have recorded in this manuscript, and which I think in time could be published, because as a handbook it could serve midwives in small settlements).

of modern hygiene, antiseptic and aseptic measures, the principles of an expertly handled birthing procedure, and rational care for mothers and children. Midwives were expected to know how to teach pregnant mothers about healthy choices concerning diet and everyday habits, and were expected to give advice should any difficulties arise. Midwives had roles concerning the lives of women after they gave birth: giving new mothers advice on dietary and everyday habits; informing them on the correct methods of breastfeeding and breast examination; and advising them on bathing, swaddling, and clothing babies. The textbooks included appendices, which elaborated further obligations, which included informing municipal authorities of an abortion, a premature birth, and a child's death.

Textbooks for teachers' institutes

The nineteenth century witnessed a gradual professionalization of the teaching profession. The specific position of teachers in society, and particularly in rural areas, required them to know how to provide practical knowledge. Health science was one such practical area; it was taught for the first time in the Kingdom of Hungary in the 1830s as a subject for aspiring priests and teachers at the respected college in Blatný Potok (now Sárospatak, modern-day Hungary) (Kiss, 2014). Health science was an important part of teacher training and was taught independently as well as within pedagogical programmes. No specific textbook in this area was published for Slovak teaching trainees. However, there were educational textbooks, which contained chapters on childhood healthcare, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, treating common illnesses, and providing first aid. At the end of the 1840s, a Slovak translation of an educational textbook written by István Majer (1813–1893), who was a church dignitary working at the Catholic teaching institute in Esztergom, was published. The translator of *Prostonárodnó vichovoslovi čili Paedagogia populárna* (Folk education, or popular teaching) was Andrej Caban (1813–1860), a 34-year-old Catholic priest and advocate for the Slovak nation. Healthcare (including healthcare for pregnant women) and the most common diseases make up about one third of this educational work. Almost 25 years later, another educational textbook was published in Slovak. This time it was an original publication, although it did borrow heavily from the works of German teachers. The prominent pedagogical theoretician Samuel Ormis (1824–1875) wrote this work to meet the needs of the educational hotbed that had emerged at the first Slovak secondary grammar school, which was based in Revúca. In a part of his work entitled *Telesná výchova* (Physical education), Ormis focused on a healthy lifestyle, caring for younger and older children, and the treatment of common diseases. An interesting aspect of this textbook is the

fact that it promotes homeopathy. When discussing caring for newborn infants, and particularly the treatment of diseases, Ormis takes advice from the German homeopath Arthur Lutz (1817–1870). The book even contains a suggestion for a Slovak term for homeopathy (*klinklinová liečba*, meaning a treatment of "fighting fire with fire") and a homeopath (*klinklinár*, meaning someone who "fights fire with fire"), which was based upon his naming of homeopathy as *klinklinová kúra* (meaning a "fighting-fire-with fire" therapy) (Ormis, 1871: 113).

In the Kingdom of Hungary, there was an established tradition of homeopathy. In 1871 the faculty of medicine in Budapest established a department of homeopathy; a number of homeopathic hospitals and homeopathic departments in general hospitals were also established in various parts of the country (Kölnei, Kóczián, 2002). As a method of treatment, homeopathy was very popular in what is now modern-day Slovakia, particularly among the Protestant clergy. Supporters included Jozef Miloslav Hurban, who was a leading figure in the Slovak national movement, and Protestant teachers from the Slovak secondary grammar school in Revúca (Pukančíková, 2011).

Texts promoting vaccination

Another area of public health literature in the nineteenth century dealt with the fight against infectious diseases. The most noteworthy documents addressing the Slovak population on this matter were on the promotion of vaccination against smallpox, which was the greatest threat to both children and adults at that time. These texts were mostly in the form of circulars and brochures and were printed as the result of decrees by the Hungarian health authorities or counties, or as the result of initiatives by doctors and other educated people.

One of the first methods of prevention against smallpox was variolation (inoculation using material containing the virus), which had been an earlier practice in the Orient. In 1721 the Prešov doctor Ján A. Raymann (1690–1770) was the first person to practise variolation in the Kingdom of Hungary by doing so on his own daughter (Junas, Bokesová, 1985: 390). This technique became widespread in the latter decades of the eighteenth century because of continuing epidemics. In 1798 the English doctor Edward Jenner (1749–1823) published a work on vaccination, a safer and more effective method of immunization,[7] which

[7] Vaccination is a form of immunization using a weaker form of the infection. As Jenner used inoculation material from cows, this form of immunization became known as vaccination (Lat. *vacca* = cow).

reached people in the Kingdom of Hungary by way of Vienna. Information about the positive effects of vaccination spread through the printed media before its compulsory implementation. The recipients of texts on vaccination were leading figures in county councils, doctors, surgeons, and the educated public. The aim of these texts was to explain the method of vaccination and inform the wider public about its importance.

One of the most widely circulated works promoting immunization, and one, which was heavily translated into Slovak, was written in 1802 by the university professor Ferenc Bene (1775–1858), who described smallpox, its history, and the vaccination method. This work was published in a reworked edition in 1816. Both editions were translated into Slovak. The most active in the translation of Bene's work was the county of Orava. In the introduction to an undated publication, András Meskó Jnr writes that Orava had commissioned him to translate the work in January 1801. This means that Meskó translated Bene's work from 1800 (when Bene still promoted variolation) which the Governor's Council recommended and distributed to all counties in the Kingdom of Hungary (Kiss, 2010a: 61). The second edition of Bene's work was translated by the Dolný Kubín pastor Pavol Crancrini (1779–1844) under the authorization of the Orava county authorities. Probably the most well-known translation of Bene's work was that done by the county physician Teofil Keliny (1752–sometime after 1811) under the authority and with the financial support of the county of Turiec in 1804. The translator of the last known edition of Bene's work (1818), which was published with the authority of the Governor's Council, has not yet been identified.

Alongside the translations of Bene's work, the Slovak population also received a translation of a work by András Bossányi (1754–1826), the director of the St Rochus Hospital in Pest. He published an educational text in Hungarian and then in Slovak one year later in 1809; there is a strong assumption that he translated the work himself (Kiss, 2010b: 83–88). Juraj Marikovszky (1771–1832), the county doctor in Gemer, who was one of the first promoters of vaccination in Slovakia; he wrote a text on vaccination, which was then translated into Slovak (Kiss, 2015: 46).

The intelligentsia, primarily priests and teachers, also raised public awareness and promoted vaccination. The most well-known text from this group of authors was a work by Juraj Palkovič (1769–1850), a versatile and tireless educator of the Slovak people, who published it at his own expense, and who with the help of clergy and printers had it distributed free of charge to people living in villages (Vyvíjalová, 1968). He considered the discovery of vaccination to be the "greatest triumph of human reason" and a "great benefaction for mankind". In his text, he briefly described the discovery of vaccination and its day-by-day progress; he highlighted its advantages, and in conclusion he presented examples

of successful vaccinations and the expansion of this practice both locally and abroad (Palkovič, 1802).

From a handbook on dietetics to modern health science

The end of the eighteenth century saw a growth in medical literature for educational purposes in provincial languages which was written by authors who were doctors and whose intended audience comprised priests, teachers, landowners, and rulers: i.e., educated social classes who were in positions of authority when dealing with the everyday problems of the rural population. The first medical handbooks written for Slovak readers were translations of works by French and German authors. These works placed an emphasis on prevention, which was an important part of applied medicine. They also presented the fundamental aspects of a healthy lifestyle. All of this literature defined the "six non-natural factors" – *sex res non naturales* – of Galenic medicine; these are factors which are separate from the body but which have a decisive influence on its health (i.e., air, food and drink, motion (exercise) and rest, sleeping, retention and evacuation, and passions of the mind [i.e., emotions]). These handbooks also included a description of the most common diseases, their treatment using simple resources, and advice on delivering first aid when dealing with various injuries and accidents (Tinková, 2012; 2013).[8] The authors of these works also focused on healthcare for women and children in specific chapters.

A medical handbook by the Swiss doctor Samuel-Auguste Tissot (1728–1798) which enjoyed success throughout Europe was translated into the Slovak language used at the time by the Skalica doctor Ján Prokopius (1732–1806). His translation, entitled *Zpráwa pro Lid obecný* (Information for people in communities), has not been subjected to a deep analysis. However, the explanations, which accompany the main text make it clear that he had included his own experiences (Bednárová, 2015: 34). In the book's introduction, Prokopius states that he had left out two chapters of the original text. One of these chapters concerned immunization against smallpox, which in his view was a subject of divided opinion. In the chapter focusing on women's health, he presented recommendations for coping with health difficulties relating to menstruation, pregnancy, birth, and the postnatal period. In the following chapter, he focused

[8] These enlightened public health handbooks and their translations, representing the beginnings of targeted public health education, have been analysed in detail by Tinková (2012, Chapters 3 and 4; also 2013).

on caring for new-born infants and the most common childhood diseases (Tissot, 1788). Palkovič, a significant figure in Slovak national history, was one of the first translators of one of the most popular books on dietetics at the time, which was written by the founder of macrobiotics, Christoph Wilhelm Friedrich Hufeland (1762–1836). Educational works from the first half of the nineteenth century recommended *Kunšt prodlauženj žiwota lidského* (The art of prolonging human life) as supplementary reading for teachers, and Ľudovít Štúr (1845) recommended it to Sunday school teachers. For the purposes of this study, it is worth noting that the second part of the translated work deals with caring for children up to two years of age (Hufeland, 1800).

The German physician Bernhard Christoph Faust (1755–1842) focused healthcare for children from birth up to the age of attending school on a popular and many times translated medical handbook. This book was primarily intended to be of use as a teaching aid in schools and at home; this is clear enough in the book's layout of having questions accompanied by answers. Slovak readers could access this work through the published translation provided by Jur Ribay (1745–1812), a prominent promoter of enlightened science. However, the model for *Katechizmu o zdrawj* (A catechism of health) was not the German original, but rather the Hungarian translation by József Kis (1765–1830), who had adapted the original work to better fit the conditions present in the Kingdom of Hungary (Ricziová, Pekařová, 2015). Both the Hungarian and Slovak versions of the work focus on "people in communities", and then children, and therefore can be seen as a guide to a healthy lifestyle for the broader population as such. In a chapter dealing with bringing up children, there is a concentration of knowledge on healthy dietary and everyday habits for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, caring for new-born infants, and the dietary and everyday habits and hygiene of older children (i.e. those attending school).

The promising genre of medical handbooks for the Slovak population reached its peak in the 1810s thanks to two works by Bohuslav Tablic (1769–1832). Both *Lidomil* (The humanitarian) (1813) and *Kratičká Dyetetyka* (A short dietetics) (1819) were based on a number of German works. Within a small chapter in the first of the abovementioned books, Tablic included a discussion where he points out the dangers posed to newborn infants by mothers and wet nurses if they are taken to bed to sleep with them for the night. However, he does not dedicate a full chapter to women and children as such.

Over the following decades, there was a lull in the publication of medical handbooks for the Slovak population. The second half of the nineteenth century saw "home doctor" publications become a favourite among readers. In Slovakia, teachers instead of doctors compiled these works. Their form very much resembled books of folk prescriptions. However, they also contained instructions

on how to preserve one's health and maintain a healthy lifestyle. At the beginning of his teaching career, Ferdinand Viliam Jesenský (1844–1911), a native of Martin, published a work entitled *Prostonárodní lekár* (The national doctor) (1869), which was targeted at "the lower social strata of the Slovak nation". A short introductory chapter summarizes the key rules to living a healthy life, very much doing so in the style of publications on dietetics written by German doctors. The main part of the text comprises straightforward instructions and advice on the treatment of common diseases in the home environment. A separate chapter deals with childhood diseases and discusses nutrition in the first months of life as well as common ailments (e.g., fever and colic). The book concludes with a "home pharmacy", which was a list of resources commonly found in the garden or kitchen (e.g., elderflower, sugar, milk, and wine) which could be used to treat health problems. A similar amount of attention was given to home treatments for people and animals at the end of the nineteenth century in the book *Prostonárodní Domáci lekár* (The national home doctor) (1894), which was compiled by Ján Kováčik (around 1844–1900), who was a teacher from Bohdanovce nad Trnavou. In the introduction and conclusion to the work's first part, which focuses on treating people, he described some central rules to good health: cold baths, moderation, and movement (exercise). In the most detailed entry, entitled *Pestovanie malých dietok* (Cultivating young children), he relied upon a series of articles by the doctor and journalist Július Markovič which had been published in the magazine *Dom a škola* (House and school) (1885 and 1887). This part deals with the treatment of children, starting from new-born infants, as well as the most common illnesses suffered by younger and older children, and the provision of first aid when children are injured.

The end of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of a generation of Slovak doctors who had graduated from universities in Prague and Vienna, and who contributed to the publication of medical literature. Alongside other members of the Slovak intelligentsia, particularly those grouped around the magazine *Hlas* (The voice), they attempted to raise the level of people's education. In this environment, the doctor Vavro Šrobár (1867–1950), who would later become a significant Slovak politician, called on doctors to write a book on health science for Slovak readers. This endeavour never came to fruition. The author of the first such book, which represented a milestone in health education in Slovakia (Falisová, 2012), was none other than Šrobár himself (1909). He used his time spent in prison for his political activities to write this book. Šrobár's *Ľudová zdravoveda* (Guide to public health) was peer reviewed by Dušan Makovický (1856–1921), who history records as being the personal doctor to Leo Tolstoy. The work, which was written, based on modern Czech as well as Russian, German, and Hungarian literature, was firm proof of Šrobár's medical and health education

knowledge. The book contains a modern explanation of infectious diseases and chapters reflecting new approaches to public health, such as in the area of social medicine. It also dealt with sexual maturity and sexually transmitted diseases for the first time. Its value is accentuated in no small measure with illustrations. Even though Šrobár did not have a specific chapter on women's health, he did have a detailed chapter on children and school. He gave only brief attention to newborn infants and small children, and recommended readers consult Jozef Burjan's work (1906), which will be discussed below. Šrobár primarily focused on children and the school environment as a place, which affects children's health. His work was republished in 1918 and in 1922, so it was much sought after by the public.

As a part of a publishing programme by Kníhtlačiarsky účastinársky spolok (The book printing holding association) in its *Čítanie pospolité* (Communal reading) series, a slim brochure, which simply and accurately described the basic factors affecting health in everyday family life was written by Burjan (1912), who was a doctor from Ružomberok. In addition to personal and home hygiene, food, and clothing, Burjan highlighted the importance of safety when working or at leisure. He did not have a specific chapter dealing with women and children, but in the brochure's final short chapter, he did present some practical advice on looking after children.

Another noteworthy publication was *Slovenský domáci lekár a radca* (The Slovak home doctor and adviser) (probably 1920), which chronologically is outside the current scope of interest. Nonetheless, its somewhat mysterious author Július Carmen (real name: Alfonz Zhorský, 1868–1936) had worked on this publication for two decades. In the 1890s Carmen had moved to Detroit in the United States, where he lived among Slovak and Polish immigrants. His expansive work of almost one thousand pages featured many illustrations and was divided into forty chapters covering, among other things, anatomy, physiology, hygiene, infectious diseases, the treatment of common illnesses, a description of healing plants, and even a collection of Slovak recipes. Diseases commonly suffered by children and women were covered in extensive individual chapters (Vencel, 2007).

Separate works on caring for women and children

While there has been a tradition in Hungarian public health literature of original or translated works addressing mothers in relation to child care from the beginning of the Enlightenment (Pekařová, 2015a), this topic has only been covered in book form in Slovak literature from the end of the nineteenth century.

The first endeavour in this area was a popularizing lecture given by Ján Petrikovič (also Petrikovich) (1846–1914) at the Turiec casino in 1892. His lecture included the latest findings on caring for children up to the age of fifteen. Core themes included personal and home hygiene, eating and drinking, sleeping, and the proper organization of children's daily routines. His critical approach towards preschools (then known by the term *ovoda*) is worthy of note; he believed that such institutions caused children to fall behind in their physical development (Petrikovič, 1892). One year later, the well-known teacher, printer, publisher and pastor Karol Salva (1849–1913) published a translated work by the Budapest doctor Koloman Szegő (1863–?) which had received an award from the Budapest Doctors' Association. In his work, Szegő focused on healthcare for children up to the age of three. The translator Juraj Babka (1868–1942) supplemented the original text by adding an introductory chapter dealing with the recommended dietary and everyday habits for pregnant women, which he based upon a work by Markovič (1885). However, Babka did not translate Markovič so precisely; he added in his own examples regarding cautioning pregnant women against "being absorbed" (Babka, 1893), which Markovič himself considered to be something which was scientifically unproven.

However, the most noteworthy work in this area is the one by Jozef Burjan (1859–1916), who wrote his text after being motivated by a competition announced by the Živena women's association in 1906. Basing his work upon the latest German and Hungarian sources, he summarized contemporary knowledge on child healthcare and the upbringing of children in their first two years of life. As most births took place at home, the first chapters dealt with giving birth and the examination of the new-born infant. In other parts of the book, Burjan gives advice on the safe handling of new-born infants and children in their first and second years of life, taking into account all aspects of their physical and mental development. He advises "dear mothers" and "respectable parents", yet also warns against the incorrect practices which were widespread at the time in rural areas. The success of his publication resulted in it being republished after 1918.

1.2. Natural medicine in printed works

Over the long nineteenth century, scientific medicine was slow in gaining the trust of the general population. Accessibility to healthcare remained uneven despite the tremendous advances in the medical sciences, the development of healthcare provision, the growing number of doctors and other health professionals, and the growing number and modernization of healthcare facilities. For one thing, healthcare was concentrated only in the towns and cities. According to Junas

(1996), at the end of the nineteenth century only 17% of the population in the counties of Upper Hungary had been examined by a doctor at least once in their lives; in Orava this figure dropped to only 10.8% of the population. Alongside scientific medicine, there was therefore a widespread use of traditional forms of medicine as well as new natural healing practices.

Folk medicine – books of prescriptions

Traditional literary genres of folk medicine include "books of prescriptions", essentially books on herbal medicine, which were highly popular among Slovak readers. The authors of these works, which were in print form and in the Slovak language, were teachers and priests. Their aim was to provide simple solutions, which usually involved natural treatments, to cure common illnesses among the general population. While the most popular of these publications came out in the second half of the eighteenth century, they were republished a number of times in the nineteenth century. One of the older texts, from 1771, was compiled by a pastor from Istebné called Ján Tonsoris (1724–1781), who compiled his work upon the basis of a number of medical books. His work, entitled *Zdrawá radda lékářská* (Healthy medical advice), was approved and approbated by the county surgeon František Ignác Ecksteinn. There was a high demand for this book, which was republished seven times up to 1918. Tonsoris had specific chapters, which dealt with giving advice on various treatments for diseases commonly suffered by women and children. In the part dedicated to women's health, he dealt with common ailments suffered by women (most often problems connected with menstruation), focusing in particular on difficulties and complications during pregnancy, giving birth, and the postnatal period. Among childhood diseases, he gave the most attention to caring for children from the time their umbilical cord is treated through to when their first teeth appear. Two decades later, another popular book of prescriptions, under the name *Zeľinkar* (The herbalist) (1793), was published in Skalica by Juraj Fándly (1750–1811), who was one of the most important propagators and authors of enlightened information. Fándly borrowed heavily from Tonsoris, whose work he recommended to readers. However, *Zeľinkar* had a different concept to it and did not have specific chapters dealing with women or children. A specific feature in this area of public health literature in Slovakia was the publication of "healing oils" books which offered remedies for diseases commonly suffered by women and children (Junas, 1999: 305–307).

Hydrotherapy

Over the nineteenth century, traditional medicine was supplemented by new alternative methods of treatment, which in some forms have remained a part of healthcare in the present day. The most popular of these treatments, and the one which has been most acceptable to medical professionals, is hydrotherapy. The discoverer of this method and the founder of the first hydrotherapy facility (in Gräfenberg, now Jeseník in the Czech Republic) was Vincenz Priessnitz (1799–1851), whose form of treatment was highly popular in the 1830s and 1840s. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the German priest Sebastian Kneipp (1821–1897) was behind the revival of this method of treatment. Hydrotherapy found its supporters in the Kingdom of Hungary among both poorer and wealthier social strata, and its therapeutic application caught the attention of doctors. Proof of this can be found in the number of dissertations on this theme, which were defended at the faculty of medicine in Pest in the first half of the nineteenth century (Bugyi, 1977). Over the century, a number of hydrotherapy facilities were established. Bardejov and Starý Smokovec were two of the first locations where hydrotherapy was practised in the Kingdom of Hungary, which had ideal conditions for the application of this form of medical treatment (Kiss, 1999).

The healing effects of water were presented to Slovak readers in book form for the first time in the 1840s by the pastor Ján Šulek (also Ssulek, 1774–1837) from Sobotište in a work entitled *Wodolékař* (Water doctor), which was published posthumously. In the introduction, he briefly summarized the history of hydrotherapy treatments from antiquity through to Priessnitz's discoveries and included his own experiences of treatment for cholera in 1831. In addition to an explanation of the general positive effects of using cold water, he gave an overview of certain diseases which water could help cure and described the various forms of treatment (e.g., spa treatments and wet packs). It is interesting to note that he even recommended cold baths for children: one cold bath once a week and washing daily with cold water. His coverage of diseases included a method for treating scarlet fever, which at that time was considered to be a childhood disease.

One of the most vocal disseminators of hydrotherapy and natural medicine at the turn of the twentieth century was the teacher, writer and journalist Ján Zigmundík (1846–1938). After the deaths of his six children, Zigmundík started to examine issues relating to diet, everyday habits, and methods of natural healing. He published a number of articles in the local and expatriate Slovak press as well as in the German press; the most important of these texts were also compiled in book form (Zigmundík, 1905). In his essays on children, he promoted physical exercise and natural healing methods, and recommended hydrotherapy as

a form of prevention against illness. When discussing the care of small children, he put forward a number of principles: the use of cold baths from birth, which should harden the body and make it more resilient against diseases; an adequate amount of time spent outside in the fresh air; and an emphasis on breast milk (breast feeding) for children's nutrition. Zigmundík paid particular attention to vaccinations for smallpox, which he firmly opposed. In his opinion, smallpox could be cured safely using hydrotherapy (Zigmundík, 1905: 104–105). In some detail, Zigmundík examined factors of healthcare for schoolchildren, focusing in particular on school buildings from a health and hygiene perspective. He considered it to be of the utmost importance for every school to have a well with a pump and a good source of healthy water. He also recommended that every school install a "cold bath" where pupils could bathe under supervision. In addition, he highlighted the importance of movement for children's health and discussed the content of health science as a school subject (Zigmundík, 1905).

2. WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SELECTED PERIODICAL LITERATURE

In addition to book publications, new knowledge in the area of healthcare for women and children was disseminated through an increasing number of periodical publications. Over the whole nineteenth century, calendars, which were a source of both education and entertainment, were the most read pieces of literature after the Bible. Almost all the Slovak calendars contained sections where compilers or publishers would present a whole array of useful advice on health and remedies for common illnesses. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, Slovak calendars maintained a general character, whereas Hungarian calendars began to specialize at the end of the century in order to cater for certain professions or social strata (Gešková, 2015). Among those calendars which focused on raising health awareness, the most highly regarded among both the Hungarian professional and wider public was *Egészség Naptár* (A calendar of health). Its aim was to promote a healthy lifestyle and protect both women and children (Kapronczay, 2006). Another calendar of interest is *Magyar bába-kalendárium* (A calendar for midwives), which was edited by the prominent gynaecologist and teacher Gustáv Dirner (1855–1912), who was a native of Gelnica (Deáky, 1996: 155).

Healthcare for women and children had had its own space in calendars from the beginning of the modern period. One of the first compilers to expand his calendar with a section on the postnatal period and caring for newborn infants was Ján Neubart. His greatest contribution in this area is considered his recommendations on the importance of cleanliness and adequate nutrition for mothers during the

postnatal period, although a lot of his other advice from a present-day perspective falls into the realm of superstitions (Kapronczay, 1994).

In the first half of the nineteenth century, calendars provided information on nutrition, hygiene, and a healthy lifestyle in the spirit of enlightened handbooks on dietetics, and often in the form of verse or as a list of "commandments on health". The health sections in all Slovak calendars over the nineteenth century often contained brief pieces of advice and instructions for treating the most common illnesses, including those suffered by women and children. The theme of healthcare for women and children in the form of detailed articles did not have a significant presence in earlier Slovak calendars. Exceptions to this were Palkovič's *Wětssj a zwlásstněgssj nowý y starý kalendář* (A larger and more impressive new and old calendar), which promoted vaccination against smallpox, and from the second half of the nineteenth century *Slowenský kalendár* (The Slovak calendar), which was edited by Daniel Gabriel Lichard (1812–1882), one of the most prominent Slovak figures in promoting science. On the pages of this calendar, there are various recommendations for treating common childhood diseases (e.g., eye infections and worms) as well as contributions on the diet of young children. A noteworthy text was the warning against children being kissed by unknown people (*Proti bozkávaniu* [Against kissing], 1877). The final decades of the nineteenth century saw a prevalence of doctors among the authors of texts on health awareness in published calendars. At the turn of the twentieth century, the calendars published by *Hlas* magazine featured a number of texts on infectious diseases which particularly affected children. In 1913 Šrobár wrote an expansive essay on the most common diseases among schoolchildren and the main factors affecting children's health at schools (e.g., school buildings, facilities, and equipment in class) (Pekařová, 2015).[9]

Alongside calendars, there was another form of periodical literature in Slovak which gave space to spreading health awareness. *Staré nowiny literárního umění* (The old gazette of literary art) was one of the first monthly Slovak-language publications. In 1785 and 1786 it was edited in Banská Bystrica by the pastor Ondrej Plachý (1755–1810), who, among other things, focused on children's healthcare (Vlček, 1954). In the first half of the nineteenth century, the most significant relevant texts in periodical literature were published in Palkovič's *Týdennjk aneb Cýsařské Králowské Národnj Nowiny* (The weekly, or imperial-royal national gazette), which was published in Bratislava from 1812 to 1818. In an irregular section entitled *O wychowáwánj djtek* (On the upbringing of children), Palkovič published continuations of parts of his 1802 work. Here he

[9] This is primarily a shortened chapter from his *Ľudová zdravoveda* published in 1909.

described the historical discovery and the day-by-day progress of vaccination, while also highlighting its advantages and presenting new information on the history of vaccination both domestically and abroad as well as a list of the most important regulations concerning vaccination in the Habsburg Monarchy. His most valuable texts are the reports in the early nineteenth century on successful and unsuccessful vaccination methods in the Kingdom of Hungary, particularly in the territory that makes up modern-day Slovakia (Vyvíjalová, 1968: 276). In this same section, he published parts of a manuscript by the Protestant dignitary and teacher Daniel Lehocký (1759–1841) on caring for new-born infants and older children. Lehocký had prepared a manuscript entitled *Slabikář wětssi, pro sskoly neywjc dědinské y domácý potřeby* (A larger reading book for village schools and home needs), which was structured in the form of an encyclopaedia and which had been ready for publication as early as in 1799 (Palkovič, 1813).

One of the most popular and longest-running publications among the increasing number of Slovak periodicals in the second half of the nineteenth century was the magazine *Obzor* (Horizon), which was founded in 1863 by the highly versatile Lichard.[10] *Obzor* primarily focused on issues relating to agriculture and craft production. However, it also published a considerable number of articles on the natural sciences, education, and health awareness. It had a whole section on medicine, which provided practical advice on the treatment of common illnesses and contained more detailed texts on health education. Initially the writers of these texts were not medical professionals. However, over time and in the latter decades of the magazine's existence, doctors became more active as contributors to this section. One of the most prolific contributors was the previously mentioned physician Markovič. The presence of various aspects of caring for mothers and children in the magazine has been shown in Falisová's analysis (2013) of its section on medicine in the last ten years of its existence.

A gradual differentiation in periodical literature emerged with the establishment of a number of educational magazines. After a number of short-term attempts, *Dom a škola* enjoyed a longer period of existence after it was founded in 1885; it was edited in Ružomberok by Salva. In terms of healthcare for women and children, the abovementioned series of articles by Markovič, where he discussed healthcare for children from birth through to "the age when they leave the family home" (1885 and 1887), is worth mentioning once again. In the mid-1890s, the Myjava doctor Ján Slabej (1866–1945) wrote two comprehensive essays on healthcare and childhood diseases. The magazine also published a number of contributions, which highlighted the hygienic conditions in schools

[10] The magazine was published until 1905.

and the teaching of health science as a school subject. A respectable level of writing in the area of healthcare was also achieved in the educational magazine *Rodina a škola* (Family and school), whose main editor, Svetozár Hurban Vajanský (1847–1916), provided space for texts on children's healthcare. The authors of the magazine's articles on children's hygiene, nutrition, and looking after children's teeth were all teachers.

Women's magazines form the final group of periodical literature which had a significant number of articles on healthcare for women and children. In comparison to other countries, Slovak women's magazines emerged relatively late, doing so only at the turn of the twentieth century. The circumstances leading to the establishment of the *Dennica* women's magazine and its significance has been outlined in a number of works by Karol Hollý (2004; 2011; 2013). *Dennica* was founded in the spirit of women's emancipation, but it was primarily connected to the development of the Slovak national movement. According to Hollý (2013), *Dennica* was targeted at women with a lower level of education, aiming to instil in them reading habits as well as national awareness. It was published from 1898 to 1914 and was edited by the well-known writer Terézia Vansová (1857–1942). While the texts published in the magazine's sections on education (and subsequently health) emphasized the importance of raising children in a Christian and national spirit, there was an array of health information for Slovak mothers and mothers-to-be. The magazine did not cooperate with doctors, so the most valuable items on healthcare for children were written by teachers. A series of articles in 1903 under the title *Rodinná výchova* (Family upbringing) was written by a Protestant teacher from Dolné Srnie called Ľudovít Bunčák (1880–1920), who wrote about healthcare for very young children as a part of "physical education". The Czech teacher and writer Karel Kálal (1860–1930) played a key role in founding the magazine, and in his educational writings he placed an emphasis on the importance of a healthy lifestyle for children (Hollý, 2011: 33; Kálal, 1899).

Živena was another women's magazine of the period. It was published by a women's association of the same name from 1910 (Kodajová, 2011: 215–232). While most of the magazine's content falls into the category of fiction, it did contain sections on how to run a household and raise children, and on health science. Like *Dennica*, the editors of *Živena* did not work with medical professionals. The magazine informed readers at length on Burjan's (1906) and Šrobár's (1909) important publications on health awareness. However, asides from an article on caring for preschool children (Socháň, 1911), it only offered a few short pieces of healthcare advice for women and children.

In Slovak periodical literature at the end of the nineteenth century, there was a growing presence of official scientific medicine concerning healthcare for

women and children. Folk medicine (including healing practices for women and children) was gradually edged out of newspapers and magazines, but it caught the attention of ethnographers and those working in the developing field of ethnobotany, and thus had a presence on the pages of scholarly journals. Examples of such writing include articles by Rehor Uram Podtatranský (1896, 1897 and 1898), Petrikovič (1897, 1900 and 1906), and Halaša (1902), which were published in *Sborník Museálnej slovenskej spoločnosti* (Review of the Slovak Museum Society), and Holuby's ground-breaking study entitled *Domáce lieky slovenského ľudu* (Home medicines of the Slovak people), which was published in 1873 in *Letopis Matice slovenskej* (The chronicle of Matica slovenská). Holuby would also write on this theme in later years.

Conclusion

This study has presented source material, which captures the healthcare practices for women and children as well as their transformations over the long nineteenth century. There were two co-existing and complementary approaches in Slovak medical literature over the period. Official medicine was found in the professional and educational genres of public health literature. Given the historical development of the Slovak nation within the Kingdom of Hungary, there is an absence of expert texts addressing doctors in the Slovak language. Instead, in the Slovak context, textbooks for midwives and teachers were a form of literature based upon new scientific findings which were designed for the expert community. Texts promoting vaccination addressed both experts as well as the educated public. A large part of the studied material came from the genre of enlightened literature, which in the first half of the nineteenth century was aimed at the educated sectors of the population before targeting the broader population in the second half of the century. Over the whole nineteenth century, a significant majority of the population still used traditional and newer forms of natural medicine when dealing with the health of women and children as well as in other areas. The examination of the periodical literature shows that there was a gradual increase and dominance of scientific medical texts, and that in the final decades of the nineteenth century there was a greater presence of Slovak doctors among those authors who wrote texts on health awareness. In spite of this, the first decades of the twentieth century still witnessed a notable role in the writing of texts on health education being played by other members of the Slovak intelligentsia (particularly teachers). Natural medicine became an item of interest for ethnographical and ethnobotanical circles at the turn of the twentieth century.

The selected literature presents a range of research material concerning the history of medical science and public health in Slovakia, and is also of use when researching cultural history, ethnography, and anthropology. Newer forms of research, which examine the history of the human body and corporeality in its social environment, will also find such literature useful. Further interdisciplinary research could bring a more comprehensive perspective to the gradual transformation of everyday healthcare for women and children among the broader Slovak population.

Translated by John Peter Barrer Butler

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