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**ZORIANA BOLTAROVYCH –
A RESEARCHER OF UKRAINIAN FOLK MEDICINE**

It is impossible to examine folk medicine without considering the works by Zoriana Evhenivna Boltarovych, the researcher who made a great contribution to the study of this subject. Though she was interested in a number of themes in Ukrainian ethnology, and published the monograph “Ukraine in the Research of Polish Ethnographers of the 19th century” (1976), most of her time and strength was spent researching folk medicine which she saw an integral field of traditional folk culture. As a result of her prolonged work she gathered a large and, in many cases, unique body of original material. Boltarovych supplemented her field work with numerous archival sources, data from publications and specialized literature. These materials are focused not only on the folk medicine of Ukrainians, but also considered the folk medicine of many other nations¹.

Z.Boltarovych researched folk medicine in certain regions of Ukraine and published a series of articles and scholarly works². Two of her articles “Folk Medicine of Ukrainians in Polissia” and “Folk Medicine and Veterinary Medicine”³, she wrote together with the Belorus’ researcher L.Minko. These articles reveal the researcher’s interest in the specific aspects of Polissia’s folk medicine that are tied to the region’s social, economic and cultural development, as well as way of life, which fostered the preservation of traditions, including those associated with folk medicine.

The author researches such topics as the species of plants used in folk medicine, the methods of the production of plant medicines, medical substances of animal and mineral products, and the use of water and fire in medical magic. Relating the traditions, legends and popular beliefs that are connected with the gathering of medical herbs, their conservation and medicinal preparation in Polissia, the author recognizes similarities with other regions of Ukraine and even broader Slavic territories but focuses on distinguishing characteristics. For example, she highlights the use of plants characteristic for Polissia, such as acorus, marsh’s mud, mushrooms, Polissia melissa, buckwheat

flowers. She points out the use of poisonous plants, a wide use of medical plant mixtures, a characteristic feature of Polissia's folk medicine together with the wide use of medical plants' mixtures. In their folk self-treatments, the inhabitants of Polissia use a wide variety of mushrooms⁴.

It's worth mentioning that Boltarovyč's publications are among the few scholarly works devoted to the folk medicine of Polissia⁵. It's also important to emphasize that this field is still unstudied and requires scholarly attention. It is timely to turn our attention to this region, not only because of the tragedy in Chernobyl, but also because of Polissia's unique natural geographical conditions (almost inaccessible forests and marshes) and demographic development, which have contributed to the preservation of many ancient material and spiritual cultural features by the regions. These features go back to ancient times and are an invaluable source for the study of ethnic Ukrainian and also Slavic history.

The monograph "Folk Medicine of Ukrainians of the Carpathians at the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th century" by Boltarovyč is an important contribution. (Kyiv, 1980) The precise topics of her research are two ethnographic groups – the Hutsuls and Boikians. The choice of the theme was stipulated by the specific features of folk medicine, encountered among the inhabitants of the Carpathian Mountains. The folk medicine of this region preserves many archaic features due to the particular socioeconomic, traditional cultural and geographic conditions⁶ Boltarovyč pays particular attention to the treatments that use herbs, medical made of animal and mineral substances and considers medical magic. According to the author, the purpose of new research was "to show the place and the role of folk treatment in the life of the Carpathians' inhabitants, to dissociate the regional methods and ways of folk medicine from the actions and methods of medical magic so as to apply this knowledge in scientific medicine, and also to discover the specific characteristics of folk treatments of the Carpathian population and to identify the analogies with the folk medicine of other Eastern Slavs"⁷.

Z. Boltarovyč's work "Folk Medicine of Ukrainians" is also of interest. In this work, on the basis of literary sources, of archival data, and of field research, the author makes an attempt to reconstruct folk medicine practices of Ukrainians living at the end of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th century, and to place her findings in the context of East Slavic practices.

"Ukrainian Folk Medicine" by Z. Boltarovyč is more popular in character and intended for the general reader. The work offers concrete advice and recommendations for various ailments on the basis of folk remedies.

The value of Z. Boltarovyč's works is that they collect, systematize and analyze age-old experiences, methods and practices of folk medicine. Boltarovyč has studied numerous aspects of folk medicine including medicinal magic and treatments using herbs. She has devoted time to the study of medicine made from animal and mineral products, and has considered the origins of the popular names of diseases, their aetiology and diagnostics. The researcher claims that science is of overwhelming importance, but the achievements of folk haven't lost their significance and shouldn't be forgotten"⁸. Z. Boltarovyč does not agree with those researchers who separate folk medicine from sorcery, and views such distinction as arbitrary because "the latter is not only based on irrational experiences, but its methods and ways of treatment connect rational practices with magical activities. Putting aside the magical component, it is necessary to acknowledge the rational knowledge and accumulated experiences that inform the work of specialists, who sometimes achieve phenomenal results in their branch of treatment"⁹.

Z. Boltarovyč studies the folk medicine of Ukrainians within the Eastern Slavic context; she draws comparisons and analogies with the folk medicine of Russia and Belarus. She concludes that "the overwhelming majority of prophylactic cures for ailments, the world outlook regarding illnesses and their causes, and opinions about folk doctors and their means of treatment have much in common among the different Slavic peoples"¹⁰.

Z. Boltarovyč believes that "the methods of folk medicine mustn't be forgotten. The studying of folk medicine requires a multidisciplinary approach, including the collaboration of ethnographers with experts in the medical biological sciences. Ethnographic studies on folk medicine can be a significant source for the discovery of new medicines and methods of treatment"¹¹.

¹ Кирчів Р. Кілька слів про авторку та її працю // Українська народна медицина. – Київ, 1994. – С. 282.

² Болтарович З.Є. З народної медицини українців Полісся // Народна творчість та етнографія. – № 2. – 1986; Болтарович З.Є. Народна медицина та ветеринарія // Бойківщина. – Київ, 1983; Болтарович З.Є. Народна медицина та етнографія // Гуцульщина. – Київ, 1987; Болтарович З.Є., Минько Л.И. Народна медицина и ветеринарія // Общественный, семейный быт и духовная культура населения Полесья. – Минск, 1987; Болтарович З.Є., Скрипник Г.А. Народна медицина // Поділля. – Київ, 1994.

³ Болтарович З.Є. З народної медицини українців Полісся; Болтарович З.Є., Минько Л.И. Народная медицина и ветеринария.

⁴ Болтарович З.Є. З народної медицини українців Полісся.

⁵ Древяни. – Київ, 1996; Київське Полісся. Ч. I – Київ, 1997; Полісся України. Ч. II. – Київ, 1999; Волинь – Житомирщина. Історико-філологічний збірник з регіональних проблем. Вип. I. – Житомир, 1997.

⁶ Болтарович З.Є. Народне лікування українців Карпат. – Київ, 1980. – С. 5.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Болтарович З.Є. Народна медицина українців. – С. 183.

⁹ Ibid. – С. 10.

¹⁰ Ibid. – С. 183.

¹¹ Ibid.

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ЗОРЯНА БОЛТАРОВИЧ – ДОСЛІДНИЦЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ НАРОДНОЇ МЕДИЦИНИ

Зоряна Болтарович – дослідниця народної медицини українців, заслуга якої полягає у тому, що вона збирала, систематизувала, узагальнила конкретні дані багатовікового досвіду, способів і засобів народного самолікування, намагалась дослідити всі ділянки народної медицини – лікувальну магію, траволікування, – займалась вивченням ліків тваринного та мінерального походження, народних назв хвороб, їх етіології та діагностики. Була переконана, що вивчення народної медицини вимагає комплексного підходу, тісного співробітництва етнографів із спеціалістами медико-біологічних наук.