

# Quackery in the treatment of syphilis in Serbia

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## Abstract

During the multi-century Ottoman rule, there were no educated physicians in Serbia, and “folk healers” used to treat the sick. Just after the 3rd decade of the 19th century, when the first educated physicians came to Serbia, we can also speak about quackery. At that time, syphilis started spreading and some quacks became “specialists for syphilis”. They were most numerous in the North-East Serbia in the 4th and 5th decades of the 19th century. They represented a major problem, because people believed them more than they believed physicians, while the state authorities of just liberated country, tolerated them. The quacks were not familiar with the clinical features of syphilis, and mostly used mercury to treat it by fumigation and inhalation, rubbing it into the skin, proscribing mercury pills, while symptoms of severe, sometimes lethal intoxication were signs of successful treatment. They also used sarsaparilla. Authorities of the new Government often issued them permission to work, whereas professional control and prohibition of such treatment began in 1839, when the Health Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was established.

The most famous quack, “specialist for syphilis”, was Gojko Marković, who was also a “physician” and the first director of the Hospital for the treatment of syphilis in Serbia during a certain period. A married couple, Gaja and Kita Savković, were also well known, as well as Stojan Milenković, a young man in the service of Prince Miloš. There were, of course, many adventurers, imposters, travelling Turkish and Greek physicians, Gipsies, fortune-tellers, old women, and ignorant people of various professions. Their work was banned by the Government.

## Key words

History of Medicine; Quackery; Serbia; Syphilis; History, 19th Century

The Medical Annual of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1933, defines “quackery, as a concept and an activity, contrary to legal regulations, just like a statement and an offense, which began with the foundation of first medical schools, when educated physicians, although not always privileged, were only responsible for treating the sick”. Thus, quackery existed only in areas where educated doctors, though very few, practiced medicine (1). If this explanation is accepted as true, quackery in Serbia started not before the thirties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, because under the Ottoman rule, as well as during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were no educated physicians in Serbia. The first educated physician in Serbia, Dr. Alexandridi, started working in 1818 (2). After that, in

1823, Mito Romita was the physician of the Belgrade Vizier, and later of Prince Miloš. Not before 1829, T. Đorđević (3) specified the names of four physicians: Dr. Jovan Stejić, Dr. Kunibert, Dr. Đorđe Novaković (baptized Leopold Erlih), a surgeon in Jagodina, and a Russian doctor in Požarevac. There was also a Turkish doctor in Čačak.

Quacks should not be confused with “folk healers” who were present in our history during the multientury Ottoman rule, but at the time when there were no trained doctors in Serbia. Vuk Karadžić used to call them “natural doctors”, as they even had copies of treatment codes, which were passed on from generation to generation, as well as some other gathered knowledge. At that time, “folk healers” were the only

ones people sought help from, a kind of necessary evil, and they were not considered to be quacks. Quacks, on the other hand, as opposed to “folk healers” were charlatans: they practiced “healing” at the time when doctors and specialist already existed in Serbia.

### **Syphilis, quacks – “specialists” for syphilis, and the beginnings of quackery eradication**

“Specialists” for certain diseases appeared early among the quacks. However, specialists for venereal diseases appeared only after the I and II Serbian Uprising, when syphilis, till then just sporadic in Serbia, started spreading rapidly. Since no attention was given to gonorrhoea and soft chancre (soft sore; *chancre mou*) at that time, the term “specialist for syphilis” prevailed (4).

The first reported as well as the first registered endemic foci of syphilis were in Eastern Serbia, between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (4, 5), and that is where the quacks first started treating this disease. They were most numerous in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> decades. V. Mihailović emphasized their significance, and stated that without writing about the quacks, the history of venereal diseases in Serbia would be neither complete nor clear (4). Having a rich and polymorphic pathology, syphilis provided quacks a broad scope of work, so Crosby, an environmental historian claimed: “If anyone wanted to create a disease that would encourage charlatans, there was no better than syphilis” (6).

The most important problem of that time, both for quacks and even for some physicians, was that neither knew the real nature of this disease. In 1844, Dr. Lindenmayer, later the Director of the Health Department, wrote in his book about “a disease little known of – frenga” (4). In 1845, Dr. J. Hirš a physician in the Krajinski District, wrote about a disease spreading in the region: “frenga is related with many other diseases, leprosy, syphilis, scabies, and scrofula, but it does not show the pure nature of either one or the other, but is more similar with syphilitic diseases” (7). The Austrian Consulate was also concerned about the existence of an unexplained infectious disease on the southern border (4). This should not be surprising: in the late 18th and early 19th century, venereal diseases represented both a diagnostic and a therapeutic problem in Europe. When it came to the pathology of syphilis and gonorrhoea, the medical world

was still divided: the monists believed that syphilis and gonorrhoea were one and the same disease, with mild and virulent forms, or they were various phases of the same disease, whereas the dualists believed that they were two different diseases (8). It was not until 1838 in Paris, when Ricord proved that syphilis and gonorrhoea were two different diseases, based on his famous self-experiment (9).

In 1839, the Health Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) was founded, and Dr. Karlo Pacek, a qualified doctor (10) was appointed as its director. He vigorously fought against quackery and on eradication of syphilis, but it all took a lot of time. One of the most important tasks of the newly founded Department was to investigate “frenga”, and in 1846 an Expert Commission found that it was syphilis (4). Although this professional body prohibited quackery, they anonymously and secretly, sometimes even in public, continued treating the sick. Severe consequences of their work were encountered even after the First World War: a case of a young woman was described, who died due to mercurial fumigation, as confirmed by laboratory findings of mercury in her organs (11).

At that time, quacks were a diverse group indeed: «self-trained doctors» and empirics (self-trained persons who gained knowledge from physicians), old women, fortune-tellers, Gipsies, Greek self-taught doctors, mullahs and dervishes (4, 12). Quacks, whether they learned by working with physicians, or, which was more often the case, from each other, had a similar approach to the treatment of syphilis: they often made no distinction between diseases; they used preparations whose effects they did not know, and incorrectly evaluated the severity of toxic symptoms (13). However, quacks were self-confident, primitive and greedy, and stressed their own importance and powers to ignorant people.

State authorities received alarming reports by a few physicians: in 1845, Dr. Šauengel (later baptized as Jovan Pavlović), a district doctor from Knjaževac (Gurgusovac), informed the MIA about “persons” who treated “frenga” - not only they did not help the patients, but they “brought them into greater danger... robbing them as well” (14). In the same year, Dr. J. Hirš, a physician from the Krainski District, wrote to the Office of the Karainski District, using even worse descriptions: “charlatans, all sorts of Turks,

mostly old women, wondering around, use cinnabar fumigation”, so that most patients” are permanently crippled or dead». He suggested foundation of a hospital for patients suffering from “frega”, otherwise “all the people will be poisoned” (7). At first even the highest State authorities were without definite attitudes towards quackery, so “specialists for syphilis” were given approval to work by the Governship, the State Council and Magistrates, sometimes even by the Health Department of the MIA. It remains unclear under which criteria they did it (4), bearing in mind that competence and attitude of public and health institutions were not in accordance at various levels. It was also important that people were used to “folk healers” for centuries of their slavery and they trusted them more than the doctors (4). Those who were superstitious were also very friendly and kind to quack doctors, so they cared about them, hid them in the times of troubles, whereas delivery of their names to the authorities was sometimes considered a sin in God’s eyes. Even in fatal torment, caused by the treatment of quacks, people consistently refused to reveal the perpetrators of their misfortune (11). Although to a lesser extent, the problem existed in the enlightened Europe as well: in 1906, there were 31.304 physicians and around 10.000 quacks in Germany (12); it is also a well known fact that in the 18th and 19th century the number of quacks treating syphilis in England was extremely high (15). Apart from that, physicians were very rare in Serbia for a long time: in 1837 there were only 9 physicians in the country (16).

### **Therapeutic modalities of quacks – “specialists for syphilis”**

Before presenting quack doctors individually, we will explore what were the therapeutic means at their disposal. During almost four centuries the standard anti-syphilis therapy included: *mercury*, *guaiacum*, *sarsaparilla* and *sassafras* (17). According to available data, quack doctors in Serbia used *mercury* and *sarsaparilla*.

#### **Mercury**

From the earliest times, *mercury* was associated with medicine and chemistry, but special emphasis was given to it since the end of the 15th century, when syphilis began to spread across Europe (18). Medicine

of that time was under great influence of “humoral theory”, and it was believed that *mercury* healed by inducing “pittuit” or “phlegm” secretion causing venereal poison leaching. The treatment of syphilis using *mercury* was performed by: *inunction of mercury*; *fumigation* or using *mercurial plasters*; since 1536 peroral pills were used; intramuscular injection of *mercury* appeared later, and it was the only advance in the treatment of syphilis at the end of the 19th century (17). The criterion used in the assessment of drug effects was increased salivation: it was advised to secrete at least three pints of saliva a day, in order to achieve therapeutic effects; if the quantity was lower, the dose of *mercury* was increased; tooth loss and oral ulcerations were evidence of adequate treatment (17).

However, Discorides, a classical author, already wrote that mercury was a “deadly poison”, while in the 18th century, there were some doctors who required decrease in the amount of salivation, thus considering decrease in the quantity of mercury. Using mercury as a treatment option was a problem from the very beginning, because the therapeutic dose (*dosis curativa*) and the highest tolerated dose (*dosis tolerata*) were very close (17), so doctors were searching for the optimum dose and efficacy of mercury, as well as for the best route of administration: there were those who were in favour of peroral therapy (19), as the best and the most common (20), whereas the others thought *inunction* and *fumigation* were better, because the drug did not get directly to the liver, as by oral administration, causing no damage to internal organs and general condition of the patient. Considering the fact that *inunction* (rubbing mercury into the skin) caused soiling the clothes, *fumigation* had plenty of supporters. Mercury vapour was used by combustion of a mercury preparation and it was done in two ways: *fumigation over the skin* under a plastic layer which enclosed the body and the source of mercury vapour, closed around the neck, so that the head was free and the respiratory organs were spared (21); the other way was *fumigation by inhalation of the mercury vapour* (8, 20). Patients were also required to be on a certain diet (20). In 1831, suppression of mercury started by initiation of potassium iodine in the treatment of secondary syphilis; later it was accepted by quacks as well, so patients used to buy it themselves as “white iodine”; Salvasan was discovered in 1909 (8), and Bismuth in 1921 (22).

Nevertheless, in the 19th and in the first half of the 20th century, mercury remained an important medication for quack doctors in Serbia, and they abused it a great deal (11). It was sold in almost every grocery store, called cinnabar or red mercury. In the therapy of syphilis, it was used as *inunction*, as a drink, alone, or in brandy, with pounded, vitriol and in the form of pills (11).

However, in our people the most widespread was *fumigation by inhalation* (13): in the way it was performed one can recognize the scheme of medical fumigation, impaired by primitivism and ignorance; it was also associated with dramatic and mystic features, whereas severe toxic signs were presented as evidence of successful treatment. There are several descriptions of how quack doctors performed *fumigation*: the patient was covered with blankets and blindfolded in a closed and darkened room while breathing in the smoke of the mercury burning on clips of corn, bitter oak or red-hot iron. At the end of the session, the patient remained in the smoke for another ten minutes, then he would be uncovered and his eyes unfolded. Then he would have a glass of sarsaparilla, after which he was put to bed, and covered with the same blankets till sweating through, and remained closed in the room for three more days. During the treatment he could only eat unsalted bread and drink milk and grape-brandy, and should not change his underwear till the end of treatment. We can conclude that in this way a very high uncontrolled mercury resorption was achieved: on the second or third day of treatment, blisters appeared in patients' mouth; only a minority of patients endured this treatment completely. After the treatment, patients were not allowed to eat chicken, carp and spotted runner beans for a year. Some patients were healed, some had recurrences, and some died (23). Sometimes even children underwent *fumigation*, and most of them died (11, 12). In all these cases, quack doctors randomly dosed mercury, commonly "by the eye", and applied it till severe toxic symptoms appeared, which often ended in death (11).

### Sarsaparilla

Sarsaparilla was the second remedy that was used by our quack doctors: it is a climbing plant native to swamps and woods of Mexico and North Brazil; it was given in the form of drink and its actions were described as

vague, with a tendency to restore health; diuretic and diaphoretic properties were also attributed to this plant (24). Given the aforementioned, spontaneous clinical remissions and activation of the disease, without a diagnostic feedback, it was impossible to establish the success of therapy using sarsaparilla; withdrawal of symptoms was considered a successful outcome.

In the local "burning" treatment of firm chancre of syphilis and external wounds, quack doctors recommended vitriol powder or stone, *Lapis caustica*, and *Aqua phagaedenica* (mercury) (4). It is unnecessary to discuss the deceptive success of this therapy.

Finally, one must wonder if quackery was more dangerous than syphilis itself?

### Well known quacks – "specialists for syphilis" and a persistent fight against quackery

The first archive document about folk healers in Serbia, or "natural healers" as they were called by Vuk Karadžić, who treated venereal diseases in the restored Serbia, originates from 1818, when there were still no trained physicians in Serbia. This document is about Anastas Teodorović, about whom there are no other data, but that he asked Prince Miloš to pay for his treatment (against venereal disease) of servants Vule, Mileta, Krža and Sima Paštrmac, the Prince's flag bearer in the Uprising, (3).

Then followed a long period without mentioning the treatment of syphilis or "folk healers" or quacks who treated syphilis, perhaps because the archival documents of this period were scarce. Since the beginning of the 4th decade of the 19th century, the network of quacks was already well developed, mostly because of the spread of infectious diseases; however, the State Government did its best to put them under control and thus some written documents about them remained.

*Gojko Marković* was the most active and important, as well as the most prominent representative of quack doctors among the "specialists for syphilis". V. Mihajlović said that his life somewhat resembled a novel: he was born in Dobrinje village in the Požarevac District; during the Uprising, in 1813, he was captured and taken to Smyrna and Alexandria, where he was "handed over" according to T. Đorđević (3), or "sold" according to V. Mihajlović (4) to a Greek "doctor", where he learned "practical" healing.

After returning to Serbia, from 1836 to 1838, Gojko Marković treated people from “frega”, from village to village, in North-East Serbia (3).

Back in 1836, Gojko Marković even established a private hospital (25), and in some periods he even kept proper records of his work. He made a list of patients from 6 counties (46 villages), but specified only their number – 149 patients, 69 male and 80 female. According to V. Mihajlović, it might have been the first statistics about syphilis in Serbia (4). Gojko Marković was a very distinguished person: on October 11, 1838, the State Council decided to pay his fees for treating the poor, while he was to charge the rich himself (3, 4). It was the first time that free treatment of patients with syphilis was available, although for a limited number of people. In the same year, the Magistrate of the Gurgusovac District decided to open a hospital exclusively for patients with syphilis. It was done for many reasons: syphilis was spreading, it was hard for “doctor” Gojko to visit village after village, and the “diet” he prescribed could not be carried out. Considering the fact that Gojko Marković enjoyed great popularity and reputation among the people and authorities, he was intended for the “physician” and the director of the hospital. After the State Council approved this project, the Magistrate rented an empty Inn for 120 groshes on the outskirts of the town, and the patients were settled comfortably. Thus, this hospital, directed by Gojko Marković, was approved from the highest levels as the first hospital for treatment of syphilis in Serbia. The hospital worked a little longer than a year, and despite its all shortcomings, it was the first attempt of organized treatment of syphilis in Serbia (3, 4).

However, Dr. K. Pacek, head of the newly founded Health Department, opposed the decision that an incompetent person should be in charge of a hospital (4): and at his request, a surgeon, Đ. Novaković, submitted a comprehensive report on the work (see below) of Gojko Marković and of the newly founded hospital, concluding that “it was completely inappropriate” and that a more experienced physician should be sent to assess the work of Gojko Marković (4).

Based on that report, a very active correspondence began between the Gurgusovac Magistrate, Health Department of the MIA, the State Council, the

Governorship, even Prince Mihailo, which lasted from October 1838 until the end of 1839. The correspondence started with a challenging letter of the Health Department of the MIA, informing the State Council that it was “dangerous to put partly toxic drugs at the disposal of a man with merely empiric knowledge... that it was outrageous to entrust a whole hospital to a man who knew nothing about hospital routine...”. The State Council and the Governorship did not accept these suggestions, so the MIA (Health Department) issued an act to keep Gojko Marković as the director of the hospital “until doctors showed enough experience and knowledge and guaranteed that they were capable to treat this disease like him” (25). Gojko Marković received 200 thalers for his work, and this Act was signed by Prince Regents: Avram Petronijević, Efreim Obrenović, and Toma Vučić-Perišić (4). Obviously, members of the State Council and the Governorship were insufficiently informed, often uneducated and inclined to the public opinion. The wage to which Gojko Marković was entitled to was good, because at that time salaries of physicians and pharmacists ranged from 150 to 500 thalers (25). Vojislav Mihajlović did not exclude the possibility that Gojko Marković had a patronage of some members of the State Council, so that the MIA was forced to entrust the hospital in Gurgusovac to a quack doctor, but after this affair, his name was no longer found in any reports. Further correspondence between the MIA and the Governorship showed that they began accepting opinions of professional institutions. In 1839, all districts got trained physicians (25), implementing active fight against quackery.

Today we are familiar with the diagnostic and therapeutic procedures of Gojko Marković due to the abovementioned report of the surgeon Đ. Novaković. First of all, Marković used the term “frega” for a great number of diseases, such as various skin growths, ulcers, asthma; venereal diseases were known as “wet frega”; whereas internal diseases, jaundice and similar diseases were included into tropical diseases. All patients were treated by mercury, without determined doses (by the eye), in forms of pills, inunction and fumigation, as well as sarsaparilla boiled with sugar. He attributed special significance to diet: patients were allowed to eat only bread and brandy, while the treatment lasted from 20 to 100 days. External

wounds were treated with *Oleum vitrioli*, *Lapis caustic* and *Aqua phagaedenica*. According to this report, Gojko Marković treated around 250 – 300 patients, out of which 10 died, whereas patients considered him a miracle worker (4).

A well-known couple, “specialists for syphilis”, Gaja Savković (somewhere known as Gavril Savić) and his wife Kita, were born in Koraćica (Belgrade district) (23), and signed their reports as doctors (3, 23). After they healed themselves, they started their “doctor job” from the half of the fourth decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1840. It was recorded that they treated the sick in a wide area, like in Gurgusovac and Smederevo Districts, in Čuprija (23), probably in Kragujevac district, and in the Posavina County (23). According to a report from Dr. Beloni from 1839, which related only to their work in Čuprija, they treated just „frenga“, implicating under it venereal diseases and chronic wounds as well. They both used sarsaparilla, which was given only during full moon, while Kita used spells, so that magic was used too (23). Their work was approved by the “former Prince“, the State Council, and even by the Health Department of the MIA. This is the first discrepancy, because the MIA considered those medications not dangerous. Data about using mercury as a medication in the Gurgusovac District are neither public nor reliable, although they probably existed (23). They experienced the same problem as Gojko Marković regarding treatment of the poor in 1840, but in their case the State Council denied paying for the treatment, because Gajo „could not heal frenga“ (23). This was the second discrepancy in making decisions when the highest State and Health departments were concerned.

Here we need to mention Stojan Milenković, also known as Stoka, a man in the service of Prince Miloš, who sent him to Kruševac in 1838 to treat the sick with „frenga“ (23). At that time, the Health Department had not been established yet, and Prince Miloš, as the only authority in the Country, implemented and organized health services in accordance to what he had seen in Hungary and Austria (3); at the same time he was superstitious, he believed in quacks and spells, and used to say „one should try whatever may help“. There are no other data about Stoka’s previous work or experience in treatment of „frenga“. These patients were also treated in a rented Inn, using sarsaparilla

during 7-8 days, after which they were released as „healed“. Patients had to pay for the treatment themselves, because Prince Miloš thought „that it was enough to provide them with a doctor who can treat them“. Further destiny of Stoka and his patients remains unknown (23).

Apart from these quack doctors – „specialists for syphilis“, known in many regions and who treated the sick during longer periods of time, there were others, less known, who „treated“ the sick in some towns or districts.

Panta Popović from Nemenikuće, Belgrade District, treated patients with „frenga“ in places around Mladenovac in 1840. His work was approved by the Health Department, whose chief was Dr. Jovan Stejić, based on “certificates”, vague and ambiguous, obtained from several patients whom he had healed (4).

Local authorities also issued approvals to individuals performing „treatment“: in 1838, in Crna Reka District, whereas Janja Đorić and his friend Steva have committed themselves to cure everyone with „frenga“, so the Magistrate directed the authorities to allow them to work (4).

Apart from quack doctors, who were under the surveillance of the authorities, there were various vagabonds and swindlers, especially a great number of those were Turkish doctors who usually worked secretly. In the forties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a certain Asanaga from Smederevo used to treat syphilis in remote villages where “doctors” for this disease have never been seen, and none knew the name of the disease. He used mercury *fumigation* and sarsaparilla, but considering the fact that he could not visit all patients with „frenga“, he used to teach them how to heal themselves: believing that „only the most toxic remedies“ could heal the sick, so many of them died (23). He used to pass his knowledge to some old women as well. Another Turk, Hadži Ahmed, used to heal venereal diseases in 1848, but as his pills only aggravated the patient’s condition, his work was banned by the MIA (26). T. Đorđević quoted archival documents from 1836, about Rista the Farrier and Stevan the Coachman, who treated people with „frenga“. The State Council had approved selling remedies in Bazaars, so that many shops were selling „fake drugs, which were harmful for people“, while

Rista the Farrier was sentenced to 25 strokes, in order „not to exercise doctor's job“ anymore (3).

Furthermore, in 1845, a certain Sima Gipsy and Sava Pandur were forbidden to treat venereal diseases; Đorđe Komljenović was allowed to treat „frega“ from 1850 to 1856, but no other data were available about his work for us. Quackery was even more flourishing in places which remained under the Turkish rule till 1912, and these travelling quacks were the only ones treating the sick (26).

In the thirties of the 20th century, a „dangerous“ quack, Aleksej Suvorin, was known to treat 95% of all diseases, including syphilis, venereal and skin diseases, by starvation (1).

After all, the question of quacks - “specialists for syphilis“ is certainly not exhausted: the period till the Balkan wars was unfavourable for them, firstly because of the growing number of doctors, and secondly because of the introduction of new drugs in the treatment of syphilis. After the I World War, syphilis started spreading again, while our poor and devastated country was without doubt a fertile ground for the restoration of quackery. Despite difficult circumstances, the health service was reorganized, together with its discipline dermatovenereology: much effort has been put into suppressing quackery, by education of physicians, establishing a network of specialized health facilities and hospitals in Serbia, and by enlightening the people.

## Conclusion

Apparently, spread of syphilis and quackery lasted almost parallel from the 4<sup>th</sup> decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That period was also characterized by hard and continuous development and activity of an organized medical service. It was not until the discovery of penicillin and eradication of syphilis in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when quacks - “specialists for syphilis“, finally disappeared in Serbia.

## Abbreviation

Ministry of Internal Affairs - MIA

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## Nadrilekari u lečenju sifilisa u Srbiji

### Sažetak

Nadrilekarstvo: Prema Medicinskom godišnjaku Kraljevine Jugoslavije iz 1933. godine, „nadrilekarstvo kao pojam i radnja, protivno zakonskim propisima, kao istup i prestup, počinje tek od vremena kad su nastale stručne lekarske škole, kad su iz tih škola, a kasnije i sa medicinskih fakulteta, počeli da izlaze izučeni lekari, jedino pozvani, iako ne i uvek povlašćeni, da leče bolesnike“. Nadrilekari su, znači, postojali samo tamo gde je bilo lekara, čak i malobrojnih.

Za vreme turske okupacije u Srbiji nije bilo lekara, bolnica i škola. Narod su lečili „narodni lekari“, dok se prvi školovani lekari javljaju posle I i II ustanka, u vreme kada se zemlja oslobađala, pa se o nadrilekarima može govoriti tek u obnovljenoj Srbiji.

Nadrilekari „specijalisti za sifilis“: Vrlo rano, Među nadrilekarima izdvojili su se „specijalisti“ za pojedine bolesti, te su se „specijalisti za sifilis“ pojavili kada se ovo oboljenje počelo i širiti. Prvo registrovano ognjište sifilisa razvilo se u severoistočnoj Srbiji od II do IV decenije XIX veka, pa su se tamo javili i prvi nadrilekari ovoga tipa. Oni su bili najbrojniji u IV i V deceniji i predstavljali su vrlo šaroliku skupinu: samouki lekari, empirici, stare babe, vračare, kartare, Cigani čergari, grčki putujući lekari samouci, hodže i derviši. Njima je narod verovao više nego lekarima, a državna vlast u početku nije imala određen stav prema njima, tako da su neki od njih dobijali i odobrenje za rad – lekara je inače u to vreme bilo malo.

Lečenje: Od lekova su najčešće upotrebljavali živu, čiju su količinu određivali „odoka“. Lečenje su obično sproveli u vidu kađenja živinom parom, koju su davali do pojave znakova intoksikacije, što se neretko završavalo smrću. Upotrebljavan je i dekokt od

sarsaparile, koja je, navodno, „pročišćavala krv“. Uz to nisu poznavali kliničku sliku sifilisa, niti su pravili razliku među mnogim bolestima koje su se javljale u narodu. Na kožne promene stavljali su i lokalna kaustična sredstva.

Poznati nadrilekari „specijalisti za sifilis“: Gojko Marković je bio najznačajniji i najizrazitiji predstavnik nadrilekara „specijalista za sifilis“. On je narod u severoistočnoj Srbiji lečio od „frenge“. Čak je 1836. godine imao i „privatnu bolnicu“, a 1838. godine ga je državna vlast postavila za lekara i upravnika prve bolnice za lečenje sifilisa u Srbiji. Posle osnivanja Sanitetskog odeljenja, 1839. godine, izvršen je stručni nadzor nad njegovim radom iz koga se vidi da je živom i sarsaparilom lečio veliki broj najrazličitijih bolesti, koje je nazivao „frenge“, a polne bolesti „vlažna frenge“. I pored zahteva Sanitetskog odeljenja da se ukloni sa mesta lekara navedene bolnice, državna vlast ga je podržavala.

Bračni par Gaja i Kita Savković, u IV deceniji XIX veka lečili su venerične bolesti i druge hronične rane u istočnoj i centralnoj Srbiji. Od lekova su upotrebljavali sarsaparilu, a verovatno i živu. Oni su za rad imali odobrenje državne vlasti, pa čak i Sanitetskog odeljenja.

Stojan Milenković, momak kneza Miloša, imao je zakupljen han u Kruševcu, gde je 1838. godine lečio obolele od „frenge“. Upotrebljavao je sarsaparilu u toku 7-8 dana i posle toga bolesnike otpuštao kao izlečene.

Panta Popović je 1840. godine, u okolini Mladenovca, lečio obolele od „frenge“ sa odobrenjem Sanitetskog odeljenja.

Postojale su i razne lualice i varalice. Veliki broj ovakvih

„lekara“ Turaka, radio je krijući svoju delatnost od državne vlasti. Jedan od njih, Asanaga, lečio je živom i sarsapatrilom, podučavao ljude kako da se sami leče, a i nekim babama je prenosio svoje znanje. Još jedan Turčin, Hadži Ahmed, lečio je „pilulama venerične bolesti“. Poznati su bili i Rista Potkivač, Stevan Kočijaš, Sima Ciganin i Sava Pandur. Državna vlast

im je zabranjivala rad, a neke je i kažnjavala batinama. Zaključak: U XIX veku, u Srbiji se sa širenjem sifilisa, gotovo paralelno, razvijala pojava nadržilekarstva, ali se razvijala i organizacija sanitetske službe. Tek sa otkrićem penicilina i eradikacijom sifilisa u V i VI deceniji XX veka, u Srbiji je definitivno završena era nadržilekara – „specijalista za sifilis“.

### **Ključne reči**

Istorija medicine; Nadržilekarstvo; Srbija; Sifilis; Istorija 19. veka