**The history of natural medicine**

 *„In every culture and every medical tradition before ours*

*healing was done by energy movements.“*

Albert Szent-Györgyi

The energy of life bears a different name according to different culture and life philosophy. However, regardless of the variety of terminology, the conception of life energy is the same in all cultures and philosophies: the energy of life is an active principle constructing every living being.

The fact that this energy is invisible and shapeless makes the members of Western cultures quite unable to understand natural medicine. As opposed to Western medicine, based on material conception of diseases, natural medicine is based on the conception of energy.

The earliest records of medicine originate from ancient Egyptian medicine, Babylon medicine, ancient Indian medicine, traditional Chinese medicine and ancient Greek and Roman medicine. Archaeological findings and cave art provide us an insight into the medical practices prior to written history. A long time ago, diseases were thought to be caused by witches, demons, evil forces, spirits and will of the gods, so medicine was first empirical, demonic and magic-religious.

Healing with life energy is one of the oldest healing methods revered worldwide. Traditional Chinese medicine and ancient Indian medicine look at a human being as a circuit of energy between heaven and earth. The energy of life flows in all living beings through specific paths (Meridians, Nadis), and disharmony (disease) is caused by impediments to its free flow.

What today is called natural medicine was in fact the only method of treatment for thousands of years. Only later, as an alternative, the scientifically based medicine started to develop. Namely, with the emergence of the Hippocrates School and the Greek rational thought, medicine was separated from philosophy and theurgy, and became a profession.

The idea that there is a life force flowing through the body via special channels as well as powering this force by prodding thin needles, caused a lot of scoff in the official medical circles. When distinguished American doctors, invited by the Chinese president Mao to personally witness the performance of acupuncture, returned to America, they had to confusedly admit that acupuncture worked. In 1978 The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognised acupuncture as a healing method and made a list of illnesses that it successfully treats.

What is the true age of medicine? How has it changed through history? What is the attitude of official medicine toward natural medicine? Is there scientific proof of life energy? These are only some of the numerous questions we deal with within the module „The history of Bioenergy Therapy“.

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