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CIRCISSIAN FOLK MEDICINE AND DISABILITY TREATMENT IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Folk medicine plays an important role in the culture of each nation, being shaped by its geographical environment, natural flora and fauna, and dietary habits, which ensure community health. Travelers, missionaries and adventurers who explored the Caucasus contributed to the study and description of Circassian medical practices. Islamic culture has had a significant impact on the development of medicine in the North Caucasus. The practice of healing through the Koran, prayer and medical procedures contributed to the emergence of professional physicians. Circassian military medicine, based on a military lifestyle, accumulated many years of experience in dealing with wounds, fractures, burns and combat injuries. This knowledge was carefully preserved and passed down within a select group of families whose members, like the clergy, were held in high regard within society. Information obtained from the analysis of field materials from Turkey allows us to draw conclusions about the continuation of traditional medical practices after the exodus from the Caucasus. However, the limited availability of historical sources prevents the full disclosure of the secrets and methods of Circassian medicine.

Keywords: *Traditional medicine, military medicine, Adyghe, Circassians, Caucasus*

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