

---

# ODNOS DO SMRTI Z ZGLEDOM HOMEOPATSKEGA TABUJA MED NOSEČNOSTJO

---

Irena Rožman

---

285

**Ključne besede:** tabu, homeopatski tabu, kontagiozni tabu, numinozno, sveto, nosečnost, nasilna smrt, koline, nosečnica, kri, obred, rojstne šege

## Uvod

Namen članka je nakazati nekatere dileme pri poskusih definiranja tabuja. Razrešitev ni preprosta, kljub bogati etnološki, sociološki in antropološki tradiciji, na katero se ta prizadevanja navezujejo. Da bi stopili na pot analize dilem, ki so povezane s poskusi opredelitev tabuja, se je treba odločiti za smer obravnave. Najbolj problematična se mi je zdela tista smer, ki tabu razume kot kategorijo svetega. Tako imamo že na samem začetku opraviti z dvema neznankama, s tabujem na eni strani in svetim na drugi. Zato se za začetek zgoščeno seznanimo z obema pojmovoma.

## Tabu in sveto

Tabu je polinezijska beseda, ki označuje z ene strani sveto, posvečeno, z druge strani pa strašno, nevarno in nečisto (Freud 1969: 141). Izvirno označuje tisti moment svetega, ki še ne ločuje med svetim in nečistim. Pri tem gre za svojevrstno občutenje svetega, ki ga je Rudolf Otto imenoval *numinozno*. Prednost pojma je v tem, da označuje tako podvrste in razvojne stopnje svetega kot posebno občutenje nadnaravnega. Sveto kot tako, numinozno, je brez moralne in racionalne prvine; moralnost in racionalnost postaneta njegovi sestavini šele v razvitih, teističnih religijah.<sup>1</sup> Numinozno je

---

<sup>1</sup> V prispevku ne bom razpravljala o Ottovi trditvi, da je numinozno brez moralne in racionalne prvine. Antropologi se npr. strinjajo v tem, da je pokojnik oziroma truplo pokojnika numinozno, *tremendum et fascinans*. Isto velja za kršitelja religioznega tabuja "Ne ubijaj!". Njegovo numinozno naravo določata dva momenta. Če upoštevamo mehanizem okužbe, lahko trdimo, da je kršitelja okužila numinozna narava ubitega, kar nazorno pove rek, da ima nekdo omadeževane roke s prelito krvjo. Tudi Levy-Bruhl, raziskovalec tako imenovanih primitivnih družb, kjer še ni sledu o teistični religiji, pravi, da numinozna narava bojevnik izvira iz madeža prelite krvi. Iz tega sledi, da tabuji ne

ambivalentno, je *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. Otto je mnenja, da obstaja posebno čustvo, ki se izraža v človekovem občutenju lastne ničnosti, v tako imenovanem občutju *kreaturnosti* (Otto: 13-45).

Ottova definicija svetega omogoča, da tabu pojmujeemo kot religiozni fenomen. Mnogi antropologi so imeli tabu za magijski fenomen. Da bi se odločili, ali je tabu magijski ali religiozni fenomen, bi bilo treba najprej postaviti strukturno razliko med magijo in religijo, kar pa presega namen referata. Vendar naj za nadaljnje razumevanje tabuja povemo le to, da se obe praksi, magijska in religiozna, nahajata vedno le znotraj nam znane kozmosa in da tekmujeta, vendar pa tudi prehajata druga v drugo. V nadaljevanju ne bomo govorili o razmerju med religijo in magijo oziroma religijo in tabujem, ampak se bomo posvetili družbeni moči tabujev. Oprli se bomo na spoznanja Jeana Cazeneuva, ki je v svojih delih sledil Durkheimovemu izročilu. Oba pripadata sociološki šoli, za katero je značilno, da ne izhaja iz svetega kot svetega, kot na primer Rudolf Otto, ampak iz svetega kot sakralnega; iz takšne svetosti, ki je sankcionirana z zakonom.

Preten se seznanimo z Cazeneuvevo opredelitvijo tabuja, je treba pojasniti še pojma *homeopatski* in *kontagiozni tabu*. Delitev na homeopatske in kontagiozne tabuje je vpeljal sir James Frazer, čeprav je zamisel Tylorjeva, kasneje pa so jo uporabljali in jo z manjšimi pomenskimi odtenki še vedno uporabljajo tudi drugi. Za homeopatsko magijo velja tradicionalni zakon podobnosti, za kontagiozno magijo tradicionalni zakon dotika (Frazer 1977: knjiga 1, 29). Frazer je na podlagi primerjalne metode z etnografskim gradivom iz različnih kulturnih okolij prišel do ugotovitve, da so tabuji posebna oblika magijske prakse, da je tabu negativna magija (Frazer 1977: knjiga 1, 29). Takšno delitev je sprejel tudi Cazeneuve, vendar z razliko: nasproti homeopatskim in kontagioznim tabujem je postavil *tabu nečistosti* (Cazeneuve 1986: 41-54).

Tabu nečistosti opredeli takole: »Predvsem tabu ne more biti prepoved, ki bi bila lahko razumsko utemeljena. V tem je navsezadnje njegova specifičnost. Od drugih oblik prepovedi se razlikuje po tem, da ni motiviran; represija, zaradi katere je obvezen, ni posledica intervencije nekoga tretjega, in nevarnost, na katero opozarja, ni očitna. Razloček med magijskim tabujem in tabujem nečistosti najbolje začrtamo, če kot razločevalno načelo upoštevamo mehanizem sankcije« (Cazeneuve 1986: 41, 42). To je pred Cazeneuvm storil že Durkheim (Durkheim 1937: 430). Kriterij med tabujem nečistosti in homeopatskim tabujem je sankcija oziroma, bolje rečeno, oblika sankcije. Medtem ko homeopatski tabu prepoznamo prav po podobnostnem razmerju med prepovedjo in posledico, pa v tabuju nečistosti ni skupnega merila za prepovedano dejanje in posledico kršitve tabuja (Cazeneuve 1986: 43). Nadalje Cazeneuve pravi, da je pri homeopatskem tabuju posledica kršitve individualna in materialna, pri tabuju nečistosti pa splošna in kolektivna (Cazeneuve 1986: 46). Tabuje, kakor nasploh vse vrste obredov, lahko proučujemo iz vidika njihove funkcije, pomena in učinka (Radcliffe-Brown 1994: 159-161). Cazeneuve se je osredotočil na raziskovanje učinkov tabujev, ti pa so lahko psihološki in sociološki. Po tej delitvi bi veljalo, da so psihološki učinki pridržani

---

obstajajo najprej v obliki mitične zgodbe, iz katere se naknadno izlušči moralna prвина. Menim, da je ta neposredno vsebovana v vsakem tabuju. Videnje iracionalne komponente zgoj v okužbi je navidezno. Že na tej stopnji je razumska, moralna komponenta prisotna, vendar se kaže na drugačen način (prim. Cassirer 1985: 87-89).

homeopatskim tabujem, sociološki učinki pa tabujem nečistosti oziroma pravim tabujem. Taka delitev pa seveda ni dopustna.

Prav tako se ne moremo strinjati s trditvijo, da je tabu prepoved, ki je ni mogoče razumsko utemeljiti, pa vendarle v določeni družbi deluje (Cazeneuve 1986: 41). Če se strinjamo, da imajo tabuji družbeno funkcijo, pomeni, da so smiselni. In če so smiselni, pomeni, da jih je razumsko mogoče utemeljiti. Seveda ni nujno, da jih raziskovalec racionalizira, bistveno je, da je takšen za njihove nosilce.

Homeopatski in kontagiozni tabuji za nosečnice tako izvirajo iz prepričanja, da materino počutje, čustva, dejanja vplivajo na telesno in duševno zdravje ter značaj otroka. Najdlje so se ohranili v vaških okoljih. Številni etnologi jim niso prišli do dna in jih imajo preprosto za nerazumljive prepovedi, ki so se kot prežitki arhaične ontologije ohranile skozi ustno izročilo ali skozi kontinuiteto tradicionalnega življenja. Če se poglobimo v preučevanje njihove družbene vloge, spoznamo, da razkrivajo nekaj več. Ta "nekaj več" bi lahko imenovali življenjski koncept. Tabuji so odsev človekove težnje po varnem življenju brez pretresov in anomalij.

Da bi se približali razumevanju tabujev, je skoraj neogibno, da skupaj z Marcelom Maussom domnevamo, da so tabuji totalen družbeni fenomen, v katerem se vse vrste ustanov izrazijo hkratno - religiozno, pravno, moralno in ekonomsko (Mauss 1970: 1).

Tabuji se največkrat izražajo v simbolih. V tem primeru moramo raziskovanje usmeriti v razvozlanje njihovih pomenov. Zgodovinsko gledano se simboli arhaičnih ali tradicionalnih družb razlikujejo od simbolov tehnološko razvitejših družb. Da bi razumeli povezave med pomenom in funkcijo tabuja, moramo poznati sistem verovanj in mitičnih predstav, iz katerih izvirajo tabuirana dejanja, čustva, želje, živalske in rastlinske vrste, predmeti, določene kategorije ljudi itn.

Kršitve različic homeopatskih tabujev med nosečnostjo imajo usodne posledice: otrok bo krvolok, sadist ali celo morilec. Da se to ne bi zgodilo, nosečnica ne sme klati perutnine, prestrezati krvi, ko koljejo prašiča, ne sme jesti krvavic ali mesa, iz katerega se kri še ni povsem izcedila. Preden nadaljujem z razlago, bom navedla neko pripoved.

*Prašiča so privlekli do praga svinjaka. Žival se je upirala, pa so jo strici trdno zgrabili za ušesa in eden za rep, vlekli so ga, da je glasno zakrutil, če ne že grozno, potem pa, kot bi že vse vedel, začel predirljivo cviliti, podobno kot ljudje, ko jih zares stisne. Medtem je teta šla v hišo in iz zidne omare pograbila posodo z blagoslovljeno soljo. Iz posode je vzela ščepec soli, jo vrgla v moder emailiran lonec in še predno je stekla ven, da bo stregla kri, mi je v roke potisnila flašo šnopsa in štamperle z besedami: "Pa jim natoč pol." Na dvorišču pred svinjakom je mesar zamahnil in prašiča mojstrsko zabodel v srce. Drgeti, zadnji, so prehajali z umirajočega telesa v roke tistih, ki so ga držali. Videla sem, kako mu je en uhelj visel na odprto modro oko, ki je bilo presenetljivo podobno očem pripadnikov mojega plemena.*

*Pohištvo so v hiši že zjutraj znosili nekam drugam. Sredi mrzle in izpraznjene sobe so stale na ključ zložene tri mize, prekrite z brezhibno belimi rjuhami, na njih pa so bili zloženi kupi še krvavečega mesa in kri se je cedila po belih rjuhah. Tesnoben občutek me je prevzel. Dosti let kasneje me je podoben občutek groze in tesnobe obšel, ko je na istem mestu na belem odru ležala mrtva stara mama.*

Pripoved je dovolj nazorna: pokaže, kaj omenjeni homeopatski tabu prepoveduje. Kratko rečeno - prepoveduje ubijanje. Antropolog Robert Minnich, ki je raziskoval furež v Halozah, pravi: »Uboj teh najbližnjih, v kmečki družbi udomačenih družabnikov, njenih svinj, je moralni prekršek, ki doseže vrhunec v dramatizaciji osnovnih vidikov lokalnega družbenega in moralnega reda« (Minnich 1987: 136-143). To je seveda le eden od vidikov obravnave kolin, ki se razločno kaže v homeopatskem tabuju, obstajajo pa še drugi, kot npr. ekonomski in eksistencialni. Slednji s stališča zakona preživetja zakol prašiča, uboj, upravičujejo. Zakon preživetja vključuje diametralno nasprotje prepovedi, ker predvideva specifično situacijo, ki kršitev prepovedi upravičuje.

288 Če navedeno apliciramo na značilnosti homeopatskih tabujev med nosečnostjo, jih smemo po Cazeneuvevi opredelitvi tabuja (po podobnostnem razmerju med kršitvijo in sankcijo) imeti za homeopatske.

Na prvi pogled se tudi zdi, da prepoved ni razumska, da je kazen individualna, konkretna in materialna, in ne splošna in kolektivna. Za marsikoga prepoved ni racionalno utemeljena. To pa ne velja za nosečnico in vse tiste pripadnike skupnosti, ki verjamejo v njegove učinke. Seveda je mogoče, da nosečnica tabuja ne bo kršila še iz drugih razlogov, npr. iz strahu pred sankcijo, občutka krivde kot posledice kršitve iz malomarnosti, ali drugih razlogov. V tem primeru je tabu kategorični imperativ. Pri življenju ga ohranja bojazen pred sankcijo, ki je v tem primeru na eni strani materialna, konkretna in individualna (otrok bo krvoločan, morilec itn.) in splošna na drugi (skupnost bo morala zaradi kršitve tabuja v svoji sredi trpeti krvoločneža in bo tako omadeževana). Ugotovitev problematizira Cazeneuvevo delitev tabujev na prave in neprave oziroma homeopatske. Cazeneuve namreč meni, da predmet homeopatskega tabuja ni numinozne narave (v našem primeru so v določeni situaciji numinozne narave ubijanje, kri kot simbol življenja, klavec), da je za razloček od pravega tabuja motiviran. Za zgled Cazeneuve navede pravi tabu iz Nove Gvineje, ko kršitelja lastninskega tabuja doleti zelo splošna kazen (zaradi kršitve postane nabuhel ali celo umre in tudi skupnost je prizadeta) (Cazeneuve 1986: 43, 44). V tem primeru je kazen resda kolektivna, vendar je hkrati tudi individualna in materialna, zato je vsakdo motiviran, da tabuja ne krši.

V našem primeru je bila vsaka nosečnica, ki je verjela v posledice kršenja tabuja, motivirana, da ga ni kršila. Če bi izčrpnjeje obravnavali vse tabuje, ki so veljali za nosečnice, bi videli, da se dotikajo vseh področij človekovega življenja in da je njihova vloga ustvariti v vseh pogledih brezhibnega otroka. Naj si dovolim podmeno, da takšni tabuji posnemajo vzorec božje stvaritve človeka, ki je popolna. Otrok se tako nahaja v materinem telesu še v nediferencirani, brezoblični modalnosti predstvarjenja, naloga matere pa je, da ga ob spoštovanju tabujev ustvari. Na ta način se skozi tabuje kaže tako skrb skupnosti za posameznika kot skrb posameznika, da stori za skupnost vse, kar je v njegovi moči. Skupnost si želi zdravih otrok, ker je to neobhodno povezano z njenim obstojem in normalnim delovanjem. Drugačni so anomalija vsake družbe. Zato omenjenega tabuja ne moremo reducirati na higiensko ali medicinsko prepoved, kakor bi bilo mogoče, če bi pri njegovi opredelitvi upoštevali le podobnostno razmerje med kršitvijo in sankcijo. Vedeti je treba, da imajo včasih pomembne stvari preprosto obliko. To velja tudi v primeru, ko spoznamo, da tudi za kmete koline niso (bile) le veseli domači praznik, nujen za njihovo eksistenco, ampak tudi moralno in religiozno neopravičljivo dejanje.

LITERATURA

- CAZENEUVE, J., 1986: Sociologija obreda, Ljubljana.
- CASSIRER, E., 1985: Mitsko mišljenje, Novi Sad.
- DOUGLAS, M., 1966: Purity and Danger. An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo, London.
- DURKHEIM, E., 1937: Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse, Le système totémique en Australie, Paris.
- FRAZER, J. G., 1977: Zlatna grana 1, 2, Beograd.
- FREUD, S., 1969: Totem i tabu, Novi Sad.
- HRIBAR, T., 1990: O svetem na Slovenskem, Ljubljana.
- HRIBAR, T., 1991: Tragična etika svetosti. Sofoklova Antigona v evropski in slovenski zavesti, Ljubljana.
- LEACH, E., 1983: Kultura i komunikacija, Beograd.
- LEVY-BRUHL, L., 1954: Primitivni mentalitet, Zagreb.
- MAUSS, M., 1970: The Gift - Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies, London.
- MINNICH, R., 1987: The Gift of Koline and the Articulation of Identity in Slovene Peasant Society, v: Glasnik Slovenskega etnološkega društva 27, št. 1-2, str. 115-122.
- OTTO, R., 1993: Sveto. O iracionalnem v ideji božjega in njegovem razmerju do racionalnega, Ljubljana.
- RADCLIFF-BROWN, A. R., 1994: Struktura in funkcija v primitivni družbi, Ljubljana.
- ROŽMAN, I., 1992: Magijski in religiozni tabu. Diplomsko naloga na Oddelku za sociologijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani. Tipkopis.
- ROŽMAN, I., 1989-1998: Terenski zapisi.

---

# ATTITUDES TO DEATH WITH REGARD TO A HOMEOPATHIC TABOO DURING PREGNANCY

290

---

Irena ROŽMAN

---

**Key words:** *taboo, homeopathic taboo, contagious taboo, numinous, sacred, pregnancy, violent death, pig slaughtering, pregnant woman, blood, ritual, birth customs*

## Introduction

The aim of this paper is to highlight certain dilemmas in attempts to define taboo. The solution is not simple, in spite of the rich ethnological, sociological and anthropological traditions, on which these efforts rely. It is necessary to decide on the direction of analysis, before commencing the analysis of the dilemmas that are connected with attempts to classify taboo. The most problematic direction would appear to be that which understands taboo as a category of the sacred. Thus, it is necessary to deal with two unknown factors at the very beginning, with taboo on the one hand and with the sacred on the other. It is therefore appropriate to begin with a summary of both concepts.

## Taboo and sacred

Taboo is a Polynesian word, which can mean either sacred and dedicated, or terrifying, dangerous and unclean (Freud 1969, 141). It originally denotes the particular moment of sacredness, which does not separate out the ideas of sacred and impure. This is a special way of relating to the sacred, which Rudolf Otto termed numinous. The advantage of this concept lies in the fact that it denotes both subtypes and degrees of sacredness as a special feeling of the supernatural. Sacredness as something numinous, is without moral and rational principles; morality and rationality only become an integral part of this in developed theistic religions<sup>1</sup>. The numinous is ambivalent, it is *mys-*

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper will not discuss Otto's assertion that the numinous is without moral and rational principle. Anthropologists, for instance, agree that the deceased or the deceased's body is numinous, *tremendum et fascinans*. The same is true of the person who breaks the religious taboo "thou shalt not kill!". His numinous nature is defined by

*terium tremendum et fascinans*. According to Otto, there is a special emotion, which is expressed in a person's feeling of his own worthlessness, in the so-called feeling of contemptibility (Otto, 13-45).

Otto's definition of the world permits us to characterise taboo as a religious phenomenon. Many anthropologists define taboo as a magical phenomenon. In order to decide whether taboo is a magical or a religious phenomenon, it would first be necessary to define the structural difference between magic and religion, which exceeds the parameters of this paper. However, for the further understanding of taboo, it should be stated that both magical and religious practices only take place within a cosmos, which is known to us, and that they compete, but always merge into each other.

The rest of the paper will not consider the relationship between religion and magic or magic and taboo, but will confine itself to the consideration of the social power of taboos. The author finds support for this in the work of Jean Cazeneuve, whose work followed the tradition of Durkheim. Both of them belong to the particular sociological school, whose approach does not take the sacred as sacred, as Rudolf Otto does for example, but from the sacred nature of something, which is sanctioned by the law.

Before further considering Cazeneuve's classification of taboo, it is first necessary to clarify the concepts of *homeopathic taboo* and *contagious taboo*. The division into homeopathic taboo and contagious taboo was undertaken by Sir James Frazer, although it was originally conceived by Tylor. Both concepts were later used with slight conceptual changes by other writers. Homeopathic magic is characterised by the traditional law of similarity, whilst contagious magic utilises the traditional law of contact (Frazer 1977, book 1, 29).

On the basis of comparison of ethnographic data from different cultural backgrounds, Frazer concluded that taboos a specific form of magical practice, that taboo is negative magic (Frazer 1977, book 1, 29). This definition was also accepted by Cazeneuve, but with an essential difference: he placed the *taboo of impurity* in opposition to the opposition of homeopathic and contagious taboo (Cazeneuve 1986, 41-54).

The taboo of impurity is defined as follows: a taboo, above all, cannot be a prohibition, which is rationally based. This is its essential specification. It differs from other forms of prohibition in its lack of motivation; the repression, which makes it obligatory, is not the result of the intervention of a third party or entity, and the danger, of which it warns, is not obvious. The distinction between magical taboos and impurity taboos can be best defined, if the mechanism of sanction is respected as the defining principle (Cazeneuve 1986, 41, 42). Durkheim defined this before Cazeneuve (Durkhe-

---

two elements. If one takes into account the mechanism of infection, then it may be asserted that the offender was infected by the numinous nature of the murdered person, which is well illustrated by the phrase that someone has their hands stained with blood. Levy-Bruhl, the researcher of so-called primitive societies, where there is no trace of theistic religions, also states that the numinous nature of the warrior derives from bloodstains. It thus follows that taboo does not have a prior existence in the form of a mythic story, from which moral principles are later derived. It is the author's opinion that this is directly encapsulated in every taboo. The visibility of irrational components merely as infection is more apparent than real. The rational, moral component is already present at this level, but it is shown in a different way (e.g. Cassirer 1985, 87-9).

im 1937, 430). The criteria between impurity taboos and homeopathic taboos is the sanction, or rather the form of sanction. Whilst homeopathic taboos are precisely recognisable by the similarity in the relationship between the prohibition and the consequence, the impurity taboo does not have a defined relationship between the prohibited action and the consequences of breaking the taboo (Cazeneuve 1986, 43). Cazeneuve further states that the consequences of breaking a homeopathic taboo are individual and material, but the consequences of breaking an impurity taboo are general and collective (Cazeneuve 1986, 46). Taboos like all other forms of ritual can be studied from the point of view of their function, meaning and effect (Radcliffe-Brown 1994, 159-161). Cazeneuve concentrated on research into the effect of taboos, which can be psychological and sociological. It is asserted in this division that psychological effects are confined to homeopathic taboos, whilst sociological effects are confined to impurity taboos or true taboos. However, such a division is insupportable.

Equally one cannot agree with the assertion that a taboo is a prohibition, which cannot be logically explained, but which functions in a certain society (Cazeneuve 1986, 41). If it is agreed that taboos have a social function, then it follows that they are logical. If they are logical, then it follows that they have a reasonable foundation. It is not necessary that they can be rationalised by the researcher, because it is important that they can be rationalised by the person, who practices them.

Homeopathic and contagious taboos for pregnant women as such derive from the belief that a mother's welfare, emotional state and activities have an effect on the physical and mental health and character of her child. These beliefs survived longer in the village environment. Numerous ethnologists have not fully understood them and have simply classified them as inexplicable customs, which are relicts of an archaic ontology that survived through oral tradition or through continuity of traditional ways of life. A deeper analysis of their social role leads to the realisation that they reveal much more. That "much more" might be termed a lifestyle concept. Taboos are a reflection of the human inclination towards a stable life without conflicts and anomalies.

One is almost unavoidably led to the presupposition reached by Marcel Mauss, in order to understand taboos. This is that taboos are an all encompassing social phenomenon, in which all types of institutions, religious, legal, moral and economic, are expressed at the same time (Mauss 1970, 1). Taboos are most frequently expressed through symbols. In this case research must be directed towards the unravelment of their meaning. The symbols of an archaic or traditional societies often differ from those of technologically developed societies from an historical point of view. The understanding of the connection between the meaning and function of taboos can only be achieved through knowledge of the system of beliefs and mythic conceptions, from which tabooed actions, emotions, wishes, animal and plant species, objects, certain categories of people, etc., are derived.

The transgression of various homeopathic taboos during pregnancy has important consequences: the child will be bloodthirsty, a sadist or even a murderer. In order to avoid this, the expectant mother must not slaughter chickens, or catch blood, when pigs are slaughtered. She must not eat blood sausage or meat, which has not been completely drained of blood. A story will be related before the discussion is continued.



*They dragged the pig to the threshold of the pigsty. The animal struggled against them, but the uncles held it firmly by ears and tail, dragging it so that it squealed loudly, if not even horribly. Then it began to squeal piteously, like a person in great agony, as if it knew what fate awaited it. While this was going on my aunt went into the house and took a vessel of consecrated salt from the wall cupboard. She took a pinch of salt from the pot and threw it into a blue enamelled pot. Just before she ran out to catch the blood from the pig, she pressed a bottle of spirit and a shot glass into my hands and said: "pour them half." In the courtyard in front of the pigsty, the butcher struck once and expertly stabbed the pig through the heart. The last shudders from the dying body passed into the hands of those, who held it. I saw how one ear hung over an open blue eye, which was surprisingly like the eyes of my kind.*

*That morning, the furniture in the house had already been taken elsewhere. Three tables stood in the centre of the cold, empty room. They were covered with spotless white sheets. Heaps of bloody meat were laid on the table, blood running from them over the white sheets. I was seized by a feeling of tightness. Many years later, I felt a similar feeling of horror and tightness, when my dead grandmother lay in the same place on the white platform.*

The tale is self-explanatory: it shows, what the above-mentioned homeopathic taboos forbid. It can be summed up as the prohibition against killing. The anthropologist Robert Minnich, who studied pig slaughtering (*furež*) in the Halože hills, states: "The killing of the closest of domesticated companions in a peasant society, the pig, is a moral transgression, which reaches its climax in the dramatisation of the fundamental views of the local social and moral order (Minnich 1987, 136-143). Naturally, this is only one view of the study of pig slaughtering, which is clearly places emphasis on homeopathic taboo. There are others, however, e.g. economic and existential studies. The latter excuse the slaughtering, or killing, of the pig from the standpoint of the law of survival. The law of survival combines two diametrically opposed prohibitions, which foresees a specific situation, in which the transgression of the prohibition can be excused.

If the above is applied to the characteristics of homeopathic taboos during pregnancy, then they can be taken as homeopathic taboos in the Cazeneuve classification of taboos (the similarity in the relationship between transgression and punishment).

It also seems, at first sight, that the prohibition is illogical and that the punishment is individual, concrete and material, not general and collective. The prohibition is seen to have an irrational foundation by many people. However, this is not true of pregnant women and all members of a particular group, who believe in their efficacy. It is also possible that a pregnant women will not break the taboo for other reasons, e.g. for fear of sanctions, a feeling of guilt, as a result of transgression through carelessness, or other reasons. The taboo is categorically imperative in this case. It is kept alive by fear of sanction. In this instance, it is, on the one hand, material, concrete and individual (the child will be bloodthirsty, a murderer, etc.), but on the other hand it is general (because the taboo was broken, the group will suffer the presence of a bloodthirsty individual in its midst and will, thus, be compromised). These conclusions highlight problems with Cazeneuve's division of taboos into true taboos and fictitious or homeo-

pathic taboos. Cazeneuve is of the opinion that the object of a homeopathic taboo is not numinous in nature (in this case, killing, blood as a symbol of life and the knocker have a numinous nature in certain situations), that it can be differentiated from a true taboo, because it is motivated. Cazeneuve uses an example of a true taboo from New Guinea. Here, the transgressor of a property taboo suffers a very general punishment (the transgressor becomes swollen and may even die and the entire group suffers) (Cazeneuve 1986, 43, 44). In this case, the punishment is genuinely collective, as well as being individual and material, so everyone is motivated to keep the taboo.

294  
In the case under consideration, all pregnant women, who believed in the consequences, were motivated to avoid breaking the taboo. An exhaustive study of taboos, relating to pregnant women, would show that they touched on all aspects of human life and that, to all intents and purposes, their aim was to create a perfect child. It is the authors opinion that the model for such taboos is the divine creation of man, before his fall from grace. The child, thus, exists in its mother's body in a still undifferentiated, formless modality and the mother's task is to create it through the proper respect of taboos. The care of the group for the individual and the desire of the individual to do his utmost for the group is expressed through the medium of taboos. The group desires a healthy child, because such an individual is intimately connected with the continued existence and functioning of the group. The different, the other is anomalous in all societies. For this reason, the taboo under consideration cannot be reduced to a hygienic or medical prohibition. This would be possible, if the only factors under consideration were the similarity in the relationship between the transgression and the sanction. One should remember that important things sometimes take a relatively simple form. This is also true in the case, when it becomes clear that peasants did not simply regard pig slaughtering as a local holiday, which was vital to their existence, but also a morally and religiously inexcusable act.

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY see page 289

#### BESEDA O AVTORICI

Irena Rožman, dipl. etnologinja, mlada raziskovalka in asistentka na Oddelku za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani. Ukvarja se s problematiko kulture rojstva, smrti, družinskega in spolnega življenja v vaških skupnostih v 19. stoletju in v prvi polovici 20. stoletja z vidika socialne in duhovne kulture.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Irena Rožman is an ethnologist, young researcher and assistant at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Ljubljana. She studies the problematic of the culture of birth, death, family and sexual life in village communities in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century from the stand point of social and spiritual culture.