

## ABSTRACT

The present thesis examines the phenomenon of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and explores its role in relation to mainstream medicine. It relies on the idea that medicine, both conventional and unconventional, should be examined as knowledge, philosophy and practice, constituted by and transformed through broader social developments. The main argument of the study is the statement that CAM is undergoing an active process of institutionalisation, implementation and integration into modern healthcare system(s) as a result of the biomedicine's transformation caused by advancement of medical knowledge, development of medical philosophy and changing societal requirements, needs and expectations.

The object of the study is CAM and its place within healthcare, and the purpose of the study is to examine the process of institutionalisation of CAM, its reasons and consequences for the mainstream medicine. Applying qualitative descriptive methods of research, literature analysis, comparative analysis and examination of case studies, the thesis examines how global social transformations elicit varieties of CAM, and how CAM philosophies and practices are co-produced in the context of social change. CAM is reconceptualised as a set of practices and knowledge-making processes, and opened up to new forms of analysis.

For the last decades, CAM has been gaining more ground within medical community, gradually attracting scholarly attention as well. This happened partially due to the general reconsideration of its role within healthcare systems around the world and a paradigm shift to a broader, more inclusive vision of health. Despite the rising number of publications on CAM, many aspects have been relatively or even totally unexplored by researchers. The current thesis attempts to fill in the gaps and offers a thorough analysis of this phenomenon.

The present work attempts to analyse the processes of medical knowledge institutionalisation. It comprises 171 pages. It includes thesaurus, list of abbreviations, introduction, four chapters, conclusion and bibliography with 220 positions. The first chapter entitled “The Evolution of Medical Knowledge” discusses the development of medical knowledge and demonstrates how it is determined by time, place and attitude. Through discussing the processes of medicalisation and iatrogenesis, it presents a critical view on the contribution of medicine to health

improvement. It also discusses the notion of constructed medical knowledge with different and equally well-founded thought styles co-existing in a given domain, not only diachronically, in distinct historical periods, but also synchronically and within the same cultural universe.

The second chapter “The Human Body in Conventional and Alternative Medicines” investigates two major approaches to the body – biomedical and holistic models – that demonstrate the complexity of the relations between the two medicines' worldviews. The first approach conceptualises the body as purely a biological object of medical examination and analysis, separated from mind and social relations and environment, criticised for treating patients as bodies rather than as persons with experiences and feelings. On the other hand, according to the holistic approach, the body is perceived as a dynamic functional unit, the person as body-mind-soul, a more integrated biological whole. However, due to the individualised character of the holistic approach and its underdeveloped research methodology, its efficacy and safety are considered questionable.

The third chapter “The Institutionalisation of CAM” studies a widespread phenomenon nowadays which has been termed “camisation”, the process of institutionalisation, organisational transformation and standardisation of CAM practices. The chapter examines various categories of CAM and their functioning in different parts of the world as well as provides criticism of CAM and identifies a number of concerns of ethical, legal and scientific nature.

The final chapter entitled “Integrative Medicine: The Evolution of CAM or Conventional Medicine?” explores interdisciplinary thinking as an emerging philosophy underpinning medical science. It explains the rise of integrative medicine as a result of the paradigmatic shift in understanding health and illness, criticism of mind-body duality and the increased trend towards patient-centred medicine.

In conclusion, it is stated that the process of institutionalisation of CAM and the way it is being implemented into healthcare is a result of the development of medical thought. Although the status of CAM and the level of its recognition differ in various countries, it cannot be denied that transformations in modern medicine have been largely influenced by CAM. Analysing the effects of interdisciplinary approaches in medicine is important in order to identify steps which could be taken for implementation of CAM into healthcare and possible risks and dangers connected with it.

The study helps to establish the ways and conditions of institutionalising a medical practice

within a healthcare system and reveals that medical knowledge as well as medical standard are concepts that are in flux and vary depending on a period of time and/or geographical area they are used in. Finally, the analysis of CAM and “camisation” allow to explore the complicated relationships between recognised and unrecognised medical practice and how one can be transformed into another. The findings of the study have opened space for further investigation into the notions of medical knowledge, conventional and unconventional medicines, integrative medicine and initiated a more open discussion on some of the alternative medical systems.