



THE VIEWS OF EASTERN PHILOSOPHERS ON TRADITIONAL MEDICINE: A HISTORICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The article analyzes the views of Eastern thinkers on traditional medicine based on a historical and anthropological approach. In particular, the medical works of such scientists as Abu Ali ibn Sina, Abu Bakr ar-Razi, Muhammad ibn Fulad Tabib Samarqandi, Abu Rayhan Beruni explore the ideas of traditional medicine, the use of medicinal plants, and the treatment of diseases. The article also analyzes the importance of medical views put forward by Eastern scientists in modern medicine and the public health system.

Keywords: Traditional medicine, Abu Ali ibn Sina, medicinal plants, ethnoculture, healthy lifestyle, traditional methods of treatment, medical knowledge.

Introduction

The greatest condition in the world is, without a doubt, human health¹. Since time immemorial, our ancestors have written many works on medicine, contributing to the advancement of medicine. The traditions of medicine reflect the empirical experience of people. While Hippocrates studied medicine and health psychology in theory, Ibn Sina was a great scientist and physician who was equally engaged in both theory and practice². Sources indicate that the development of medicine and medical sciences in Central Asia has a long history. In the X–XI centuries,

¹ Хасаний М. Табобат уммонидан томчилар. Тошкент. ЎзССР “Медицина” 1989. 5-бет.

² Ибодулласев З. Жуманазар Бекназаровнинг «Буюк Сино» номли китоби ҳақида // Zamin.uz. – 2021. – 03 январь. [Электрон манба] URL: <https://zamin.uz/jamiyat/82426-zhumanazar-beknazarovning-bujuk-sino-nomli-kitobi-aida.html> (дата обращения: 17.06.2025).



during the time of Ibn Sina, the development of medical science reached its peak in this region.

Traditional medicine has developed in such fields of medicine as traditional medicine, herbal medicine, and surgery. Sources report that Abu Ali ibn Sina studied about 800 types of cocaine and used them to treat various ailments³, while the work “Laws of Medicine” was read by doctors and Taliban madrassahs for centuries as a reference work on medicine. In short, this legacy of Ibn Sina had a positive impact on the medical knowledge of the Eastern doctors who came after him.

Results and Discussions

Well-known medical works were considered essential works for doctors in Central Asia and were initially taught in madrasas as a guide to medicine. In particular, to become a strong doctor, it was necessary to study in a madrasah. Because to study traditional medicine, it was necessary to study both religious and secular sciences perfectly, as well as natural sciences, and to perfectly teach the works of Zaharie Ar-Razi and Ibn Sina on the preparation of herbs, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, doctors used Ibn Sina's writings to study the properties of medicinal herbs and treatment methods⁴. He also cites popular medical sources on various diseases, their diagnosis, and treatment for Boshitkhon ibn Zahidkhon Shoshi (1878–1959). In this work, the author highlights among the important sources in the field of medicine the works of Abu Ali ibn Sina, “Qanun” and “Adviya al-Kalbiya”, noting that they are appreciated among doctors as authoritative and educational medical manuals. He also cites popular medical sources on various diseases, their diagnosis, and treatment⁵.

The word “tibobat”, which is our main concept, comes from Arabic and means “practice related to maintaining health, treatment and medicines”, and is used in the form of tibobat⁶. The root of the word is the Arabic “tabba”, which means

³ Jumanov S. Mustaqillik yillarida Ibn Sino merosining o'rganilishi va uning tibbiyotimizdagi o'rni // Imom Buxoriy saboqlari. – Toshkent, 2016. – b. 12.

⁴ Hikmatillayev H. Sharq tabobati. – Toshkent: Abdulla Qodiriy nomidagi xalq merosi nashriyoti, 1994. – b.102.

⁵ Bositxon ibn Shoshiy Favoiudul – adviyayva mavoid ul – ag'ziyay (dorilarning foydalari va ovqatlar dasturxonining manfaatlari). Tabdil va so'z boshi muallifi M. Hasaniy. - Toshkent: Fan, 2007. – b.9.

⁶ Жуманазаров Х.С. Ўзбекларнинг халқ таботати билан боғлиқ анъаналари (тарихий–этнологик тадқиқот). Тарих фанлари бўйича фалсафа доктори (PhD) илмий даражасини олиш учун ёзилган диссертацияси автореферат. Тошкент-2018. Б-14.



“treatment”. The term “traditional medicine” is also popularly used as a synonym for “traditional medicine”. The World Health Organization defines the term "traditional medicine" as follows: Chinese traditional medicine is based on the teachings of Ying Yang, Japanese traditional medicine is based on the teachings of Kampo, Korean traditional medicine is based on the teachings of koryo, ancient Indian medicine is one of the basic concepts of the system based on the teachings of Dosha, and represents the natural power of the human body and the psyche is in the mind.

In the works of Ibn Sina, the doctor’s personality was required to know such questions as in which cases the patient can be given herbs made from insects, reptiles, when the patient is in serious condition or is in danger of death, whether it is possible to treat something that is also prohibited in Islam or unacceptable. Therefore, true healers should have known about all sciences as well as scientists⁷. Now (skilled, knowledgeable) healers have rediscovered new herbs as a result of many years of self-treatment. For modern doctors, the theory and practice of medicine are equally important. In this regard, reading and studying the above-mentioned medical works, as well as the widespread use of the medicines and treatment methods contained therein, were important. During this period, the diagnosis of the disease by pulse was widely used in eastern medicine. In particular, regional doctors of the 19th and 20th centuries resorted to Ibn Sina’s experiments and methods in ethnomedicine in this regard. In particular, the “Treatise on the Pulse”, written in Persian by Ibn Sina, first defines the pulse, and then outlines the essence and types of pulse. The terms in Persian and Arabic given in this treatise were considered important. This booklet corresponds to the section of Ibn Sina’s work, The Canon, devoted to this topic⁸.

Ibn Sina explains why he chooses the wrist to check the pulse as follows: this is due to the tightness that the patient feels when showing the wrist to the doctor, as well as the fact that the radial artery is located close to the heart. The difficulty of this diagnostic method lies in the fact that in Islam it is forbidden to touch and look at other people’s women (non-mahram). Since most of the doctors were men, this created a number of difficulties. Traditional medicine used various

⁷ Жуманазаров Х.С. Ўзбекларнинг халқ табobati билан боғлиқ анъаналари (тарихий-этнологик тадқиқот). Тарих фанлари бўйича фалсафа доктори (PhD) илмий даражасини олиш учун ёзилган диссертацияси автореферат. Тошкент-2018. Б-14.

⁸ Hikmatillayev H. Sharq tabobati. – Toshkent: Abdulla Qodiriy nomidagi xalq merosi nashriyoti, 1994. – b.50.



methods of diagnosis and treatment of diseases. However, a deep understanding of mizoj was not available to everyone, as it required many years of practical experience, long-term training under the guidance of a mentor, as well as deep thinking and innate potential to acquire this knowledge. Even the great doctors of the past could not agree on the definition of maz. Moreover, their opinions in one area did not coincide. As the famous medical scientist Muhammad Salih ibn kutlukboy writes in his book “Risolai hikmat” (the primer of wisdom): The judges say that a person has 3 types of misodus: the first is hot, the second is medium, and the third is cold. People with a hot temperament should eat foods with a hot temperament, and if they eat them in large quantities, their body will increase thermal energy. If a person with a cold temperament eats a lot of cold food, humidity and lethargy will increase in his body. People with an average temperament will benefit from neither hot nor cold food⁹.

Abu Bakr ar-Razi in his work “at-Tibb al-mulukiyy” (“Medicine of Kings”) wrote: “In traditional medicine, treatment was carried out in three ways. First: regime (order), second: diet, third: medicines, herbal treatment”, he wrote. The medical work “Horses delicacy and Khan's blessing”, written in 1883 by the famous Bukhara doctor Rahmatullah Bukhari, shows which food is the cure for which disease, the benefits and harms of bakery products and sweets for human health¹⁰. In medicine, doctors began to determine the quality and composition of each medicinal product and prepare them in the form of books. The brochure “tibnomai Turkey” (Turkish book of medicine), written by Muhammad Akbar Arzani, greatly helped doctors to collect information about medicines and herbs, to learn them or to determine how to act for the treatment of sick people. This work is included in the complex, published in Tashkent by lithographic method. The brochure also describes the properties of herbs and medicines used in traditional medicine, which anyone can prepare and use to treat diseases¹¹.

Abu Ali ibn Sina, referring to the fact that the authors who preceded him worked a lot on temperament, writes: “Doctors say that there are seventy types of temperament. They are difficult to identify, so modern doctors have reduced these seventy varieties to seven and have learned to determine the constitution using these seven varieties”. Other doctors mainly relied on Ibn Sina to determine the

⁹ Tabobat xazinalari durdonalaridan. Tuzuvchi, tarjimon Xasanij M. – Toshkent:1987. – b,65

¹⁰ Hikmatillayev H. Sharq tabobati. - Toshkent: Abdulla Qodiriy nomidagi xalq merosi nashriyoti, 1994. - b. 103.

¹¹ Al - Haraviy Muhamad at - tabib. Mizoj haqida risola. - Toshkent: 1991. b 5.



miz. Ibn Sina in his book “Orjusa fit – Tib” (“the doctrine of the Tib”) He points to nine varieties of mizoj and says in his verse: “I ended up borrowing nine varieties of mizoj, and I didn't talk about it on my own. Therefore, if we want to determine the temperament of a person or grass, we first define its four aspects: hot, cold, wet and dry”. Then, if these mizoji are together, we call them intermediate mizoji. “For example, if someone says that such–and–such's temperament is dominated by cold rather than warmth, then these are just his words. When it is said that warmth and dryness, cold and humidity prevail in it, it means that two different temperaments combine together¹²”.

Abu Bakr ar–Razi, a famous Oriental medical scientist, introduced a number of medicinal herbs and minerals into traditional medicine, and ointments, powders, and tinctures were prepared from some animal organs. It was popularly called “turkena dori” – ‘home medicine’. Based on the disease, he identified the following diseases in folk medicine: measles, mumps, sore throat, diphtheria (plague), stomatitis (pain in the mouth), malaria (malaria), furuncle (chipmunk), lichen (tetanus), etc.

The science of traditional medicine, presented in the work of Abu Rayhan Beruni “As–Saidana fit–tib” (“Pharmacology in Medicine”), occupies a special place in the history of traditional medicine in the countries of the East, including Central Asia¹³. One of the famous folk healers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Mahmud Yaypaniy, independently studied the works of Aristotle, Plato, Hippocrates, Galen, Abu Bakr ar–Razi, Ibn Sina and other thinkers¹⁴. He first tested the effects and results of drugs on animals, and then gave them to patients. Yayapani's house had rectangular vessels for distilling water (separation into components, evaporation of liquid and transformation of steam into water) and oblong vessels for herbs or medicines. Yapi left a great scientific legacy, consisting of eight books written in various fields of traditional medicine. Among the author’s most famous works are two important medical treatises.: “Tariq al–ilaj” (“The Way of Healing”) and “Qanun al–ilaj” (“The Rules of Healing”). One of them, Tariq al–Ilaj, was written in 1913 and consists of three parts.

¹² Abu Ali ibn Sino. Tibbiy risolalar. Nashrga tayyorlovchilar: O‘.I. Karimov, H. Hikmatullayev. - Toshkent: Fan, 1987. - b.24.

¹³ Sharq tabobati. Nashriyotga tayyorlovchi, tarjimon, maqolalar va sharqlar muallifi Hikmatullayev. H. – Toshkent: A. Qodiriy nomidagi xalq merosi nashriyoti, 1994. – b.288.

¹⁴ Asadov D.A., Karimova S.O‘. Медицина и здравоохранение во второй половине XIX - начале XX века в Коканде. - Волгоград: 2014. – с.78



The first part of the work provides a brief overview of the historical events of the Fergana Valley and the Kokand Khanate. The third section is entirely devoted to medicine and contains specific information about the diagnosis of diseases, treatment methods and medicinal plants. Consider yourself scientists. The third section is entirely devoted to medicine and contains specific information about the diagnosis of diseases, treatment methods and medicinal plants. On the last pages of the work, the names of medicinal substances and herbs that were widely used at that time are collected in the form of a list. The book “Qanun al–ilaj” is entirely devoted to folk medicine and medicines¹⁵.

In his book, Yapani mainly mentions poor nutrition, hard physical labor and nervous tension as factors that negatively affect the body and the human body. Poet and physician Qari Rahmatullah ibn Muhammad Oshur Bukhari; “At that time, medicine and herbs in the Turkestan region were in the hands of authors and religious scholars. Among them were special healers who treated the sick and cooked and sold herbs,” the report says. According to Beruni, although medicines were usually sold at various kiosks in markets, sometimes there were special warehouses in big cities. They contained medicines of large and different sizes. This type of warehouse or herb shop consisted of one or two shops¹⁶.

Bottles or empty wine bottles hung in several rows on ropes stretched on the walls. Half of the containers are filled with herbs, and the other half is left empty, tightly closed and sealed. Shelves were made of planks on the walls, on which various roots, herbs, plant stems, leaves, flowers, seeds, dried fruits and powders stood in bags or wrapped in paper, and in small quantities. These pharmacies also have wooden boxes, like in European pharmacies. In addition, containers were used to prepare medicines – iron vessels, pestles and mortars made of wood and metal¹⁷. Another major work by another scientist is Zubdat al–Shifo (“Cream of Healing”). Muhammad ibn Fulod Tabib Samarqandi. The work consists mainly of two parts. The first part is devoted to “Medicines and other substances taken orally as laxatives”, and the second part is devoted to “Medicines applied to the skin and used in surgery”¹⁸.

¹⁵ Nazirov M.N. “Tariq ul - iloj” turkiy tilda yozilgan eng mukammal tibbiy asar // O‘zbekiston tibbiyot jurnali. - 2013. - b.143 - 146.

¹⁶ Sharq tabobati. Nashriyotga tayyorlovchi, tarjimon, maqolalar va sharqlar muallifi Hikmatullayev. H. - Toshkent: A. Qodiriy nomidagi xalq merosi nashriyoti, 1994. – b.290.

¹⁷ Shadmanova S.B. XIX asr oxiri XX asr boshlarida Turkistonda tibbiyot va xalq tabobati. – Toshkent: O‘zbekiston Respublikasi Fanlar akademiyasi “Fan” nashriyoti, 2020. – b. 316.

¹⁸ Xulosat ul - hukamo (“Xakimlar hulosasi”). –Toshkent, 2011. - b. 25 - 26.



Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that Eastern thinkers, especially the sages who lived and worked in the Middle Ages, developed traditional medicine on a scientific basis. Their works reflect not only medicine, but also the daily life of the people, the experience of living in harmony with nature. The works of Oriental scientists on traditional medicine are recognized as an important part of our ancient scientific heritage. Thanks to these works, we see that the field of medicine has emerged as a system with a scientific basis, not just an empirical one.

Some traditional methods used in this field, such as ignotherapy (acupuncture), plant-based treatment (phytotherapy) and healing using essential oils (aromatherapy), are widespread throughout the world and are effectively used in practice. This knowledge, which forms the basis of traditional medicine, remains relevant not only in ancient times, but also today such as ignotherapy (acupuncture), plant-based treatment (phytotherapy) and healing using essential oils (aromatherapy), are widespread all over the world and are effectively used in practice. This knowledge, which forms the basis of traditional medicine, remains relevant not only in ancient times, but also today.

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