

HISTORY OF AYURVEDA IN 'ISLAMI TIBB'

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ABSTRACT

'Islami Tibb' by Rehbar Farooqui is a book on history of medicine in Urdu. It was compiled and published in the period of the seventh Nizam of Hyderabad. It deals with the medical activities under the royal patronage in India and abroad, the history of Ayurveda in brief, the status of Ayurvedic physicians in o'den days, their confidence on their science, their experiences and the patronage they received under the royal courts of Baghdad. Its portion dealing with history of Unani medicine in India, has already been published in six articles in previous volumes of this Institute's bulletin i.e. Vols. XIV, XV, XVI, XVIII, XX, and XXI. Now the portion related with the history of Ayurveda is being presented in this article.

A SHORT HISTORY OF VEDIC MEDICINE :

It is believed by the Hindus that Brahmā had created a treatise 'Brahmā Samhitā' and that Dakṣa Prajāpati had received this science from him and wrote a Dakṣa Samhitā. Aśvini Kumārs learnt this science from Dakṣa Prajāpati and that they taught this science to King Indra. In the days of Indra this science reached its zenith. Subsequently the science declined, whereupon a number of ṛṣis gathered at Himālaya and began to think about the revival of this science and they

decided that Bharadvāja should go to Indra to learn this science from him for the benefit of the people. In short, an effort was made in this direction. After fully learning this science Bharadvāja spread this science among the people. Thereafter a perfect vaidya called Punarvasu Ātreya was born among whose disciples Agniveśa, Bhela, Jatūkarna, Parāśara, Hārīta, Kārapāṇi, attained great fame and each of them wrote a book by own name. But only one of these books, Hārīta Samhitā has survived¹. Thereafter once again the science of

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1. According to 'Encyclopaedia of Indian Medicine' page 89 all these early medical treatises have been lost, except Bhela Samhita, which has survived in a single manuscript (Translator).

life declined. After a long period Maharṣi Caraka was born in 320 B.C. who is considered by Hindus an AVATĀRA of Śeṣa (A one thousand headed serpent God). He studied the above mentioned six books and wrote "Caraka Saṁhitā". After Caraka, Divodāsa or 'Dhanvantari' was born who lived many years before Christ. He improved this science. He had a large number of disciples. One of them Suśruta earned great fame and wrote Suśruta Saṁhitā. After Suśruta, two hundred years before Christ, Vāgbhaṭa also wrote a book¹.

In the twelfth century A.D. Mādhavācārya was born at Golconda (Deccan) who wrote a few books on different arts among whom there was a book on medicine named Mādhavanidāna which is deemed to be an authentic work to this day.² After Mādhava, Bhāvamiśra was born in 1550 A.D. and wrote Bhāvaprakāśa. A number of herbs are mentioned in this. After Bhāvaprakāśa, Śāriṅgadhara was born. He has left a book on pharmaceuticals.

Thereafter Narahari son of Candeśwara resident of Kashmir wrote a detailed book on Ayurvedic single drugs called 'Rājanighaṅṭu'³. Ayurveda had gained great fame in the olden days on account of some of the exponents and masters of this science. Many people appeared to be fond of its practical and beneficial aspects.

Maulana Sulaiman Nadavi writes that traces of the beneficial services of this science were found in different countries even before the advent of Islam. Historical proof of the arrival of the Jats and their settlement in Arabia and Iraq is available in the period of Prophet. Apart from their military works, we find an account of their scientific and medical works also. Imam Bukhari (died in 256 A.H.) has narrated an event of the days of the Sahaba (the companions of the Prophet) in his book 'Kitab-al Adabul Mufrad' that, once Hazarath Ummul Mominin Ayesha Siddiqua (May Allah bless her) fell ill. Her nephews called for a Jat physician to

1. It is written in 'Encyclopaedia of Indian Medicine' that, there are two lines of development of Ayurveda. One is represented by Caraka, called the Atreya school and another one by Susruta named after Dhanvantari. Both Caraka and Susruta agree that Ayurveda was first formulated by the self born Brahma, who communicated the system to Prajapati, and then Prajapati to Asvins, who in their turn passed it on to Indra. After Indra, however, the lines separated. On Caraka's side Indra handed over Ayurveda to Bharadvaja, who taught it to the sage Atreya Punarvasu and other sages. Atreya had six disciples: Agnivesha, Bhela, Jatukarna, Parasara, Harita and Ksharapani. Each of them composed their own versions. On Susruta's side Indra taught Ayurveda to Dhanvantari appearing as the King of Kasi named Divodasa and taught the system to a group of students among whom Susruta was mentioned. (Translator).
2. Here, Madhava, the author of the Madhavanidana, who actually belongs to the 7th century A.D., is wrongly identified with the another Madhava, a brother of Sayana, according to the Encyclopaedia of Indian Medicine, P.No. 69. (Translator)
3. Tarekul Atibba by Gulam Jeelani.

treat her.¹ The names of some Indian drugs were famous even in the days of the Prophet. Two of the names are very famous one as Qust-e-Hindi². The other one as Zanjabeel. The original Hindi name is Zanjabeera which has been Arabicised. This word is also found in Suratud Dahar in the Holi Quran. The last words of the verse are 'Wa kana Mizajuha Zanjabeela' (and its taste is that of Zanjabeel).

PATRONAGE OF VEDIC MEDICINE AND VAIDYAS IN THE COURT OF CALIPHS :

A great account of Indian system of medicine as Yahya Barmaki made the first endeavour to provide an opportunity for the Muslims to ponder over the Indian medicine as he had done in the case of Greek medicine and by virtue of his world-renowned patronage of arts and sciences, he opened the ways of research for broadening the basis of the medical science. The

science which Muslims were trying to formulate and for raising its standard he ordered that a person should go to India and after reaching there he should conduct a thorough research on the vedic science and then collect rare Indian drugs and herbs and return to the capital and try his utmost to bring the scholars of this science from India to the caliphate by giving them hope of royal bounties and gifts. Thus, on account of these efforts a team of scholars came from India to Bagdad among whom the names of Manaka, Ibn-e-Dhan³, Salay bin Bahla⁴ Kanaka⁵ and Shahnag⁶ are worth mentioning. Yahya patronised these people greatly. Thus he appointed Ibn-e-Dhan as the Chief Officer of his hospital. Among these Indian vaidyas Manaka occupied the most important place. As regards his arrival at Bagdad it is written that once Haroon-al-Rasheed fell serious ill. All the physicians of the capital failed to cure him. In those days the

1 'Kitab-al-Adabul Mufrad' by Imam Bukhari, Kitab (Chapter) Baiul Khadim p.35 printed in Egypt.

2. Saheeh Bukhari, Volume-2, Kitab (Chapter) Muraza, p.849

3. The name of this pandit's father was Dhan. Therefore he became famous among the Arab as Ibn-e-Dhan, so no one knows his original name. But Professor Zekhov in the preface of his book 'India', has made an effort to trace out his original name vide p. 22 of the preface (English translation). He was the chief of the hospital of Barmacides. He had translated a book under the title of SANDISTAQ.

4. Most of the historians mentioned his name as SALEH.

5. Kanaka was among the most famous physicians in India. He was very proficient in medical sciences. He had acquired mastery in the knowledge of properties of the medicines. Abu Maashar has mentioned his name in his book 'Kitab-ul-Uloof' and writes that he was the most expert among the Indian physicians. Among the books written by him are 'Namuzar Fil Admar', 'Asarul Mawaleed', 'Qaranatus Sageer', 'Qaranat-ul-Kabeer' and one book named 'Kunnash' (Qarabadin) etc. the work of translation was also entrusted to him.

6. Shanaq—according to presumption of the writer of Albaramika, his name was Sanaka. It is written that he was expert in treatment and he was adept in astronomy. Most of his sayings on the subject of medicine are reproduced in history books. Among the books written by him, we find the names 'Kitab-ul-Baitara', 'Kitab-fi-Ilmin-Nujoom', 'Kitab-Muntahal-ul-Jaaher'.

fame of Paṇḍit Manaka had spread far and wide. It appears that in Bagdad also a number of people were acquainted with his name. As such Abu Amar Ajami who was close to the Sultan requested him to summon Manaka for treatment. In compliance with the royal command Manaka reached the caliph's court and treated him and the king recovered his health by the grace of Allah. Haroon showered gifts and honours on him¹. Manaka had taken up his residence in Bagdad only, and had gained proficiency in the Persian and the Arabic languages and used to translate Sanskrit books into Arabic language. By the order of Yahya-bin-Khalid-Barmaki, he had also translated the book of Suśruta. After completion of the translation of the book entitled Suśruta Saṁhitā, the caliph ordered that it should be used as a Qarabadeen (pharmacopoea). It is said that this book is a standard book on Anatomy and Surgery. The second book which was translated by him in Persian was Caraka Saṁhitā. Thereafter Abdul ah bin Ali translated it into Arabic².

A HINDU PHYSICIAN REVIVES THE CALIPH'S BROTHER :

About Salay Bin Bahla, whose name we have already mentioned

above, Maulana Sulaiman Nadavi writes that he had accepted Islam. We have read about a peculiar method of treatment in 'Tabaqatul Atibba' that he cured the Caliph's cousin who was suffering from apoplexy in a marvelous manner, about whom Jibrael Bin Bakhtishu had declared that he was dead. The details of this event are given as follows : Once the dining cloth (Dasterkhan) had been spread before Haroon Rasheed, and all the courtiers were present, but contrary to practice, the physician Jibrael Bin Bakhtishu was absent. There upon the king ordered the physicians to bring Bakhtishu before him. A search was made for him everywhere. But Jibrael was not found anywhere. When the Caliph was informed of this he was very much annoyed and began to abuse Jibrael in his absence. In the meanwhile he himself turned-up and said to the caliph 'Your Majesty, it would be better for you to shed tears for your cousin Ibrahim in silence instead of abusing me now'. Haroon was worried to hear this and began to make inquiry about his cousin. Thereupon Jibrael said 'He is about to die' 'perhaps he may not live even till the Isha prayer. On hearing this Haroon began to weep bitterly and

1. Tabaqatul Atibba Vol. 2 p. 33.

2. An Ayurvedic pharmaceutical company established in Lahore in 1905 A D. had started translating Ayurvedic books in Urdu. Thus it translated the book Suśruta Saṁhitā and Caraka Saṁhitā into Urdu and published them in 1913. We have seen these books in the library of Maulvi Hakim Qasim Ali Akhgar.

3. Ibn-e-Nadim p. 303.

the 'Dasterkhan' was removed. Upon seeing this condition of the caliph the gathering was dispersed, and every one was worried. Jafer Barmaki came forward and submitted to the caliph 'Jibrael treats with Unani medicine it will be proper if Your Majesty commands that the patient should be treated by Salay who is an Indian physician. If Your Majesty commands I shall summon him and send him to examine Ibrahim. The caliph accepted Jafar's submission. Salay went and examined Ibrahim fully and returned and told Jafer that, he did not want to disclose the condition of the patient to any one except the Caliph. On hearing this Jafer took him to Haroon. Thereupon Salay swore upon his life and said 'Your brother Ibrahim will not definitely die of this disease tonight, and if, Allah forbid, this happens, all my properties, all my slaves and slave girls etc. may be confiscated as waqf properties all my wives may be deemed to have been divorced'. Haroon said 'I wonder on what basis you are telling me about Gaib (Future happening) on oath'. Salay submitted 'no doubt what your majesty says is right. But what I am saying has no connection with Gaib, on the other hand I am submitting this on the basis of my scientific knowledge and experience'. On hearing this Haroon kept quite. But when the time for the Isha prayer came it was reported to him that Ibrahim had died. On hearing this, Haroon went to Jafar and began to

abuse Salay, on account of his assertions, saying that 'the curse of Allah be upon India and its science of medicine'. In short, he reached Ibrahim's house in deep sorrow and anxiety. All the people were standing in complete silence and Salay was also present on one side. Frankincense was being burnt and smoke was rising from the burners. Suddenly Salay cried out and began to say 'As a matter of fact all my wives will be divorced and marry others. By God, Your Majesty should not feel sorrow. Your cousin is alive. What a tragedy it would be if Your Majesty buries him alive. I request Your Majesty to permit me to go inside and examine him'. Haroon permitted him to do so. Salay, all alone, reached Ibrahim, and after sometime returned in great joy and said 'Oh, Ameerul Mominin, I request you to come with me so that I may show you a wonderful drama'. Therefore Haroon accompanied him. Salay pierced the muscle with a needle below the thumb of the right hand of the dead man, where upon the dead-man pulled up his hand. Salay said 'Oh, Ameerul Mominin can it ever happen that a dead man moves on account of some pain?' Then Salay said again 'Oh, Ameerul Mominin, by Your Majesty's grace Ibrahim can talk within a few moments. But I am afraid that he should actually die of fear of fright on seeing himself clad in the burial

attire and seeing the burning frankincense. Therefore his burial attire was removed and he was given a bath once again and dressed in kingly costumes and scents were sprinkled on him and he was laid on his bed in the room. Thereafter Salay turned his attention to medical treatment and took some measure on account of which Ibrahim sneezed and turned on to one side. After that Ibrahim fully recovered and became hale and healthy. After recovering his health Ibrahim was appointed as the Governor of Egypt and Palestine by the Caliph. He died in Egypt only.¹

TRANSLATION OF AYURVEDIC BOOKS :

The names of the following books have been mentioned in detail in 'Al-Fahrist of Ibn-e-Nadeem' as translated from Sanskrit or Hindi. The author who died in 385 A.H. mentioned that, he himself had perused these books.

1. 'Kitab Istankar-ul-Jama' compiled by Ibn-e-Dhan.
2. 'Kitab Serak' by Abdullah Bin Ali. It is said that it was the first book which was translated into Arabic language. From this it is inferred that the Muslims of this

period had learnt Indian language also.²

3. 'Kitab Mukhtasar lil Hind Fil Aqaqeer' containing Indian herbs and their properties.
4. 'Ilajat-ul-Hubala-al-Hind' dealing with obstetrics according to Indian medicine.
5. 'Kitab-e-Toqshatal (Nokshanal): This book contains two parts. In first part One hundred diseases and the methods of their treatment have been given. The second part deals with Hypochondriasis and its causes.
6. 'Kitab Rausa-al-Hindia' containing peculiar diseases of women. It is said that this book was written by a woman whose name was Rausa.³
7. Kitab Asma-al-Aqaqeer-ul-Hind by Manaka dealing with herbs and ten synonyms of each of them. This book was translated into Arabic for Sulaiman bin Ishaq.
8. 'Kitab-Roy-al-Hindi' by Roy dealing with different kinds of snakes and their poisonous effects.⁴ This branch of science is called Sarpvidya.

1. Tabaqat-ul-Atibba Vol. 2. page no. 34 Egypt and Akhbar-ul-Daul Chapter 4, page 103.

2. Maqalat-e-Tahaffuz-e-Uloom-e-Qadeema page 19.

3. Arab-o-Hind Ke Taalluqat page 150.

4. Ibn-e-Nadeem pp. 303.

9. 'Kitab-ul-Samoom' (Shanaq-al-Hindi)' by Manaka which contains the names of Indian poisonous medicines. It is written that in olden days the Indian Rajas after learning this science use to kill their enemies. Therefore, Shanaq wrote this book for them. It was available till the seventh century A.H. An account of this book is given in *Tabaqat-ul-Atibba* in detail. It is said that the work was divided into five chapters. Manaka had translated it into Persian with the help of Abu Hatim Balakhi for Yahya Barmaki. Thereafter Abbas bin Sayeed Jaohari re-translated it into Arabic for the caliph Mamoon.¹
10. 'Nidan' Sulaiman Nadavi has mentioned this work in his book *Arab wo Hind Ke Taalluqat* at page 149 with reference to *Yaqoobi Awwal* page 105. He writes that the diagnosis and symptoms of 400 diseases were given in that book.
11. A book was written on intoxication.²
12. With reference to *Masoodi*, Maulana Nadavi writes that a big book on medicine was written for the use of Raja Korash in which not only the causes of certain diseases, their treatment and medicine were given, but also the identification of the drugs was described and sketches of herbs were given.³

1. *Tabaqatul Atibba* p. 33.

2. *Arab-o-Hind Ke Taalluqat* page 150.

3. *Ibid.*

सारांश

इस्लामी तिब्ब में आयुर्वेद का इतिहास

—यस. ए. हुसैन

‘इस्लामी तिब्ब’ रेहबरफारुखी द्वारा आयुर्विज्ञान इतिहास पर उर्दू में लिखित एक पुस्तक है। इसका लेखन व प्रकाशन हैदराबाद के सातवें निज़ाम के समय में हुआ। इस पुस्तक में राजकीय आश्रय तले भारत एवं बिदेशों में आयुर्विज्ञान संबंधित गतिविधियों के वर्णन के साथ साथ आयुर्वेद का संक्षिप्त इतिहास, आयुर्वेदाचार्यों की प्राचीन काल में प्रतिष्ठा, अपने विज्ञान में उनकी पूर्ण आस्था, उनके अनुभव तथा बागदाद के राजदरबारों तले उनको प्राप्त आश्रय आदि विषयों का भी प्रतिपादन किया गया है। आयुर्वेद के इतिहास से संबंधित इसी अंश को इस लेख में प्रस्तुत किया गया है।