



## A comprehensive review of History of Unani Medicine

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### Abstract

The origin of medicine is unknown. There is no documental fact about the first medicine or doctor or the first patient. The Jews consider Moses as the founder of medicine, while Zoroastrianism or Mazdayasna consider Zoroaster as the one who started medicine. Similarly, the Hindus believe Lord Brahma as the founder of medicine. Asclepius or Hepius is a hero and God of medicine in the ancient Greek religion and mythology. Legends say that Asclepius was trained in medicine by Hermes, who is considered the herald of the Gods, the protector of human heralds, travelers, merchants and orators. Hence an attempt has been made to understand the contribution of various physicians of the Unani medicine and a review has been made in the science of Unani Medicine regarding the historical contributions of various physicians.

**Key words:** Unani, Greek, History

### Introduction

Greece was the center of all sciences, including the medicine. Buqrat also known as Hippocrates of Kos or Hippocrates II, was known for delivering some landmark researches in the domain of medical sciences. The pre-Hippocratic era was known for the medical treatment through religious and magical procedures. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

The Unani Medicine can be divided in 2 periods viz - The Pre Hippocrates-Period and Post Hippocrates-Period. Few famous medical practitioners of the pre-Hippocrates era were Asclepius 1, Ghoras, who was the most famous medical practitioner after Asclepius 1. Ghoras was known for training many medical practitioners. (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup> (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup>

Another known physician of the same era was Menes, who was born after 856 years of Ghoras. In his entire life of 84 years, Menes spent most of his life in travelling and learning medicine. He spent the later part of his life in teaching and training medical professionals. Menes has trained many medical professionals who believed in the experiments designed to test assumptions. (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

Bermanedes was another famous medical practitioner of the Pre Hippocrates-Period. He was born after 75 years after Menes. His philosophy and way of thinking was different from others. He thought regarding treatment based on assumptions was different. (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

### Famous Physicians in the History of Unani Medicine

#### Hippocrates (460 BC-377BC)

Hippocrates, known as Father of medicine, was from 12<sup>th</sup> generation of Asclepius, Buqrat was born in 460 BC in Jazeera Kos, as per Jamaluddin Qufti, he was the resident of Qairooha, which is Known as Hemes in Syria. Before

Hippocrates, the medical education was accessed to a few special disciples. It was him who introduced the domain of medical education to the general masses but before receiving medical education his students took oath to the Gods of healing of Greek pantheon, commonly known as Hippocratic oath. He authored more than seventy books, out of which some were quite popular. Some of his famous books were Kitab al Ajniha, Kitab Tabiyat al-Insan, Kitab al Ahvia wa Miaat wal Abdaan, Kitab al- Fusool, Kitab al-Amrazul Hadda, Kitab al-Akhlat, Kitab al Aghzia, Kitab al-Kasr wal Jabr. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Jafri, 1975)<sup>[9]</sup> (El-Gammal, 1993)<sup>[2]</sup> (Indla & Radhika, 2019)<sup>[8]</sup>

#### Role of Hippocrates in Present line of treatment

Before Hippocrates, the treatment was full of dogmas, he changed the line of treatment from religious believes, magic and dogmas to proper treatment through medicines and gave the humor theory. As per his humor theory, the equilibrium between four body humors i.e Dam (Blood), Balgam (Phlegm), Safra (Yellow Bile), Sauda (Black Bile) are necessary for health. (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>.

#### Aristotle (384-322 BC)

He was the renowned Unani Philosopher, who was also popular as the Sayyadul Hukma (Leader of physicians). In his philosophy, he described in length about animals. His father Nicomachos was the physician of King of Macedonia, Amyntas-II. He received his early education from his father and later on becomes disciple of Plato. In nutshell, he was great philosopher, physician and author. Some popular books penned by Aristotle were Kitab al-Haiwan, Kitab Fil Tibb, Kitab fil Azm, Kitab Al Riyazat, Kitab fil-Nafs uddam, etc. (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup> (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Pearce, 2016)<sup>[14]</sup> (Misselbrook, 2015)<sup>[11]</sup>

### Herophilus (300BC)

He was remembered as the father of Anatomy. Herophilus was student of known philosopher Pythagoras. He received his education from School of Alexandria. He served as physician, researcher and author but was popular in the field of anatomy, He worked on approximately 200 cadavers, and developed the techniques on working on cadavers. He introduced various terminologies such as Nervous System, Cardiovascular System, & Reproductive System. Herophilus invented an instrument to hear fetal heart sound named embryotome, discovered many hemostatic medicines. He authored some books like "Anatomy of the eye". (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Jafri, 1975)<sup>[9]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

### Erasistratus (310-250 BC)

He was ace in the field of anatomy and physiology, also known as founder of physiology. His parents were physicians. He was physician, author and author, but his main skills were seen in the field of physiology. His contribution in physiology was great and his main discoveries were structure of brain and its functions, functioning of nervous system, functions of heart and blood vessels with details of functions of semilunar valves and tricuspid valves. He authored more than 60 books. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup> (Sapsakos, *et al.*, 2019)<sup>[16]</sup>

### Yahya Nahwi or Joannes Grammaticus

An Egyptian Christian, Yahya Nahwi or Joannes Grammaticus was a sailor up to the age of 40 years. He was one of the seven physicians of the School of Alexandria who composed books of Galen. A great philosopher and physician, Grammaticus authored *Tarikhul atibba al-qudama*. He also wrote sharah of books of Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

### School of Alexandria

School of Alexandria was one of the essential pillars of education, including the Greek Medicine. In 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, Alexander developed a city near Mediterranean Sea and named it Alexandria. After the death of Alexander, the great, his kingdom was divided into three parts, one part came under his brother Ptolemy-I, who developed School of Alexandria in the name of Alexander the great. In school, different disciplines were taught like medicine, philosophy, literature, chemistry, mathematics, etc. Every discipline has its own department and have its own library, reading room, classroom, theater and museum. Separate laboratories as per requirement were developed. Ace faculties of every department gave education to students. In this school, the department of medicine was very popular for treating patients suffering from different ailments and disorders. Affiliated physicians called Alexandrian. In this school the curriculum includes sixteen books of Galen which was known as Alexandrian collection. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup> (Oliver, 2015)<sup>[13]</sup>

### Rise of Greek Medicine in India

Ancient India was the original birth place of many great sciences, it attracted attention of the entire ancient world and streams of inquisitive men travelled long distance braving mainly many difficulties in their journey to come to India. (Murthy, 1968)<sup>[12]</sup>

In India Greek (Unani) Medicine was started from Ghazni Dynasty and continued in dynasties of Gauri, Khilji, Lodhi and Mughals. Its fall started in the British Era. Unani Medicine regained popularity after Independence (1947). Around 1335-1351AD Zia Mohammad Masood Zangi was the famous physician of period of Sulatan Mohd Bin Tughlaq. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

In Lodhi period, Bahua Bin Khawas Khan (1517 AD) was son of a minister of Lodhi government, was expert in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and Indian medicine as well as Unani Medicine, Madan as-Shifa Sikandar Shahi is his famous book. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Jafri, 1975)<sup>[9]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

In Gujarat, Shahab bin Abdul Kareem Nagauri (around 1393 AD) contributed immensely in the domain of Unani Medicine. His famous book in Persian language is *Mazhar e Awwal Shah*. (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup>

In Mughal dynasty, there was enormous rise in Greek medicine. At the time of King Babar. Hakeem Yousuf bin Mohammad, who was famous by the name of Hakeem Yousufi, was the main physician of that period (1530AD). *Ain ul-Hayat*, *Bahrul Jawahir*, *Shifa un-Naas*, *Dalail e-Nabz*, *Dalail e-Baul*, *Ilaj ul Amraz*, *Riyaz ul-Advia*, *Fawaid ul-Aqaqeer* were his famous books. Hakeem Ali Gilani was born in 1554AD and was very famous physician at the time of King Akbar and died in the year 1668. He was a prominent author. His main book compositions were *Mujarrabate Ali*, *Sharah Qanoon*, *Sharah Kulliyat e-Aamli*, *Sharah Moalajat*, *Tareekh e-alfi*. Hakeem Sadra was the prominent physician at the time of Shahjahan, died in 1656AD in Kashmir. Alvi Khan was another popular practitioner of his time. His real name was Syed Muhammad Hashim Bin Qalandar Bin Syed Muzzaffaruddin. He was born in 1669 AD at Shiraz and came to India in 1700 AD, died in 1779AD. Sharif Khan was born in 1725 AD at Delhi and he was one of the most famous physicians of his era. He was conferred with the title of *Ashraf ul-Hukma*. Sharif Khan died in 1807 AD. (Falahi, 2017)<sup>[3]</sup> (Khan, 2009)<sup>[10]</sup> (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup> (Hamdani S. K., 2001)<sup>[5]</sup> (Azmi, 2004)<sup>[1]</sup>

The list of physicians who have earned recognition in the field of Unani Medicine in India is quite long. Other popular Hakeems were Mir Momin, Ahmed Gilani, Rustam Jurjani, Abul Qasim Farishta, Azam Khan, Hakeem Mohd Hashim, Hakeem Mohd Ajmal Khan, Hakeem Abdul Hameed, Hakeem Mohd Mirza, Hakeem Mohd Askari etc. (Firoz uddin, YNM) (Hassan Nigrami, 1989)<sup>[7]</sup> (Qadeer, 2005)<sup>[15]</sup> (Hamdani S. K., 2008)<sup>[6]</sup> (Hamdani S. K., 2001)<sup>[5]</sup> (Azmi, 2004)<sup>[1]</sup>

### Conclusion

This review article evolves around the history of the Unani Medicine or Greek Medicine. The history of Greek Medicine is divided into 2 parts *viz.*-Pre Hippocrates-Era and Post Hippocrates Era. Hippocratic era was started around 460 BC. Unani Medicine spreads to different parts of the world, including the Indian subcontinent. This article throws light on various famous Unani Medical Practitioners of different times. In India Greek (Unani) Medicine was started from Ghazni Dynasty and continued in dynasties of Gauri, Khilji, Lodhi and Mughals to till date. Landmark researches, books and other literature written by different practitioners in brief are also discussed.

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