

MEDICAL PROFESSION AND CLASSIFICATION IN UZBEK FOLK MEDICINE

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Abstract: This article focuses on the medical professions and classifications in Uzbek folk medicine and divides the views on medical traditions into two main groups: mystical and empirical, and provides a general view on their specific features. In the medical traditions of the Uzbek people, the views on the activities of the representatives of mystical and empirical medicine according to medical traditions and ancient folk views are evaluated on the basis of the analysis of ethnological literature. This article also provides ethnological information on the activities of doctors in modern society and the history and the stages of development of their roles in today's society.

Keywords: Medical traditions, Medical professions, Medical classifications, Surgeons

ÖZBEK HALK HEKİMLİĞİNDE HEKİM MESLEĞİ VE SINIFLANDIRILMASI

Öz: Halk hekimliği gelenekleri, uzun süreli ampirik bilgi birikimi, dinî görüşler ve insanlığın ekonomik geleneklerinin kazanımları sonucunda oluşmuştur. İlk zamanlarda tıptaki başarıların tüm insanlar tarafından kullanıldığı, ancak zamanla sadece belirli kişilerin bu bilgiyi edindiği ve tıbbın özel bir meslek haline geldiği tarihten bilinmektedir. Bu makale, Özbek halk hekimliğindeki tıp meslekleri ve sınıflandırmalarına odaklanmakta ve tıp gelenekleri hakkındaki görüşleri tasavvufî ve ampirik olmak üzere iki ana gruba ayırmakta ve kendilerine has özellikleri hakkında genel bir görüş sunmaktadır. Özbek halkının tıp geleneklerinde, tasavvufî ve ampirik tıp temsilcilerinin tıp geleneklerine ve eski halk görüşlerine göre faaliyetlerine ilişkin görüşleri, etnolojik literatürün analizi temelinde değerlendirilmektedir. Bu makale aynı zamanda modern toplumdaki doktorların faaliyetleri ve günümüz toplumundaki rollerinin tarihi ve gelişim aşamaları hakkında etnolojik bilgiler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tıbbî gelenekler, Tıp meslekleri, Tıbbî sınıflandırmalar, Cerrahlar

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INTRODUCTION

Traditions of folk medicine had been formed as a result of long-term accumulation of empirical knowledge, religious views, achievements of economic traditions of mankind. It is known from history that in the early days the achievements of medicine were used by the all people, but over time, only certain individuals acquired this knowledge and medicine became a special profession. As a result of the emergence of the medical profession, the secrets, achievements and experiences of the profession had become a dynastic tradition passed down from ancestors to generations. Depending on the diversity of medical knowledge and to the characteristics of the disease species, healers are also categorized by field. When categorizing healers, their type of activity are primary. In almost all nations, the types of healers are similar in type of activity. In general, practitioners of folk medicine can be divided into two major groups: “Traditional healers” and “the healers who treat through psychic influence” (shamans¹) or “spiritual healers” (shamans, bakhshi), “the healers who cures bodily ailments”, fortune tellers², in other words, “the healers with medicinal herbs” (based on empirical knowledge), “the healers who heals on the basis of divine, supernatural powers”³. This means that healers can be divided into healers who treat through psychic influence and healers who treat the body, so these two areas can be divided into several subgroups.

Historical sources provide information on the peculiarities of the field of medicine in Uzbek folk medicine. The oldest source on this subject is the sacred book of Zoroastrianism, the Avesta, in which doctors were divided into types: healers who treat with the word (pray), healers who treat with medicinal herbs and also correct with the help of a surgery⁴. In the various literature on medicine, it can be observed that mystical and empirical healers⁵ were divided

¹Bromley Yulian and other, “*Narodnaya meditsina kak predmet etnograficheskix issledovaniy*” [Folk medicine as a subject of ethnographic research], *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, № 5, 1976, p. 6.

²Grzywacz Zuzanna, *Traditional Kazakh medicine in change*, Poznan, publisher Henryk Janowski, 2010. p. 17.

³Jean-Francois Sobiecki, “The Intersection of Culture and Science in South African Traditional Medicine”, *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, Vol.14/1, 2014, p. 2.

⁴Homidiy Hamid, Duschonov Bakhodir, “*Avesto*” va tibbiyot [“Avesto” and medicine], Tashkent, publisher Ibn Sino, 2001. p. 22.

⁵Seyfulmulyukov I, “*K voprosu o tabibizme v Uzbekistane*” [On the issue tabibism in Uzbekistan], *Meditsinskaya misl Uzbekistana*, № 9-10, 1928, p. 64-65.

into mixed (both mystical and empirical)⁶, religious (through prayers), corrective healers⁷ based on magic, based on experience or knowledge.

In most Oriental peoples, healers were divided into two main groups based on their methods and means of treatment: representatives of mystical medicine and representatives of empirical medicine.

If we look at the doctors mentioned in the Avesto, it was possible to include healers who heal through prayer in the first group and healers with surgery in the second group

Mystical therapists treat patients by persuading them to heal through words, mainly as a result of influencing the patient's psyche. Each of the mystical healers also has its own methods and professional attributes. They are called by the people depending on the methods of treatment: baxshi, fortune teller, azaimkhan, sadoqchi, mullah, duoxon, parixon and so on⁸. Representatives of mystical healers, in turn, are divided into several subgroups:

- Healers of reciting prayers, giving amulets - within the framework of Islam, they are engaged in resting the patient with holy verses and prayers or writing a prayer on a piece of paper. Examples of this group are qori, mullah, azaimhon, qasidahon, duoxon.

- extraseans, healers through bioenergy⁹ - today it is called bioenergy and treats by directing internal bio power to the patient through his hands. They direct their bioenergy to the diseased member of the patient.

- reporting illness through spirits and healers - baxshi heal patients as a result of communication with the spirits of fortune-tellers' ancestors, or warn them of the causes of various accidents and illnesses.

Empirical medicine has accumulated drugs, treatment methods, and recommendations over the years through research and challenging experiments. This type of healer treats patients only by preparing medicines on the basis of natural remedies (herbs, animal organs, minerals). Empirical medicine practitioners, after a period of apprenticeship for a certain period of time, obtained the right to act independently by passing an examination under

⁶ Kushelevskiy Valerian, *Materiali meditsinskoy geografii i sanitarnogo opisaniya Ferganskoy oblasti* [Materials of medical geography and sanitary description of the Fergana region], Tom I, Noviy Margelan, publisher Lit. tipograf, 1891. p. 236.

⁷ Hohmann Sophie, "Ouzbekistan. Instrumentalisation politique de la medecine traditionnelle" [Uzbekistan. Political instrumentalization of traditional medicine], *Le Courrier des pays de l'Est*, Vol 3, 2008, p. 24.

⁸ Basilov Vladimir, *Shamanstvo u narodov Sredney Azii i Kazaxstana* [Shamanism among the peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan], Moskva, publisher Science, 1992. p. 48-52.

⁹ Grzywacz Zuzanna. *Traditional Kazakh medicine in change*, Poznan, publisher Henryk Jan-kowski, 2010. p. 16.

the supervision of teachers. Empirical medicine differs from mystical medicine in that while mystical medicine deifies various things and events and seeks healing from them, empirical medicine has proved the healing properties of those things and events by experience. In some nations, representatives of empirical medicine are divided into types depending on the service they provide to certain categories and by specialization. For example, in Iran, healers are divided into: civilian healers, sailor healers, healers serving in the land forces, and so on¹⁰. We try to study the following empirical healers in groups according to their general treatment and specialization. Based on available ethnographic data and historical sources, empirical physicians can be divided into seven specialties.

- Siniqchilar

The most common physicians in folk medicine are these siniqchi, and in some cases they are also referred to as “shikastabandlar¹¹”. Siniqchi mainly treat people with bone fractures, cracking, displacement, and meat injuries. In ancient times, siniqchi gained experience by studying the bones of animals¹². They diagnose the patient by monitoring the general condition of the patient and holding the injured area. It should also be noted at this point that the oral question-and-answer method of siniqchi, like other physicians, was not a primary diagnostic tool¹³. The siniqchi will have full knowledge of the human bone structure (anatomy). The siniqchi method of treatment is to tie the patient’s injured area with gauze using an egg yolk, gilmoya, and a board or stick, depending on whether the bone is broken or protruding. In some cases, other materials were used instead of boards. For example, Khorezm healers made plaster from reed twigs for a broken place¹⁴. The method of using reeds is also available to Tajik¹⁵ siniqchi healers, who used mainly fresh reed twigs to treat the fracture site. The moshtabib, on the other hand, made effective use of the method of placing a broken arm or leg on the board and putting the gilmoya. If the meat was bruised as a result of various external influences, the

¹⁰ Jurayev Azimjon, *Xalq tabobati* [Folk medicine], Tashkent, publisher Orient, 2008. p. 13.

¹¹ Urolov Adkham, *O`tmishda davolash muassasalari* [Medical organization`s in the past], Tashkent, publisher Science, 1990. p. 10.

¹² Abilqasimov E, *Qazaqtin xalq medisinası* [Folk medicine of Kazakhs], Almati, publisher Atamuro, 1993. p. 13.

¹³ Suprpto A., et al, *Study on traditional bone healing (research report)*, Surabaya, 1996. p. 47.

¹⁴ G`oyibov Masharif, and other. *Xıva tabobati* [Khiva medicine], Tashkent, publisher Ibn Sino, 1995. p. 30.

¹⁵ Monakov Nikolay, “*Vozmojnost ispolzovaniya sposobov immobilizatsii, primenyayemix narodnoy meditsinoy v Tadjikistane*” [The possibility of using immobilization methods used by traditional medicine in Tajikistan], *Izvestiya Akademiyi Nauk Tadjikskoy SSR. Otdeleniye yestestven*, 1954. p. 70.

doctors used a massage procedure. Almost all *siniqchi* doctors have acquire skills this procedure well. There are also separate massage healers, who are called “*Siloqchi*” and massage the injured limb of the patient¹⁶.

It has long been a tradition among Uzbeks to hold *kupkari* (*uloq*) or *kurash* competitions at all weddings. Special *siniqchi* were also invited to the round ahead of the tournament, who were ready to help in case of an emergency. As with all areas of medicine, *siniqchi* have been able to teach their secrets to family members, resulting in a healer-specific dynastic family. For example, in the village of “*Khonqiz*”, Fergana district, Fergana region, *siniqchi* are well-known around the country, and along with the men of the family, women are also engaged in this profession¹⁷, and also in this regard, it is necessary to mention the Tashkent dynasty “*Moshtabillar*”, which is famous throughout Uzbekistan.

- Healers treating midwives and women (gynecological);

Midwives not only control the process of childbirth, but are healers who treat all diseases that occur in women¹⁸. This profession dates back to ancient times in the history of folk medicine. Primitive people, in addition to knowing the medicinal properties of various medicinal herbs, were well versed in helping a woman who was giving birth to a child¹⁹. This means that women in the medical profession have long been practiced on an equal footing with men.

It is known from history that until the first quarter of the XX century, special midwives worked in all neighborhoods and villages. Although they did not graduate from the educational institution in their profession, they studied oriental medicine in depth and became famous doctors and midwives as a result of many years of experience²⁰. The midwife was well aware of a mother expecting a child, the attitude of the future parents towards the child (those who have been expecting a child for a long time, those who are having children for the first time) also he was well aware of the position of that family in society and acted accordingly. As a result of these factors, trust in midwives

¹⁶ Kadirov Asadulla, *Ob uzbekskoy narodnoy meditsine* [About Uzbek folk medicine], Sbornik nauchnix trudov Ministerstvo zdravooxraneniya Uz SSR, Tashkentskiy Gosudarstvenniy meditsinskiy institut, Tom XX, Tashkent, 1961. p. 16.

¹⁷ Ashirov Adkham and other. *Mindon va mindonliklar* [Mindon and mindonids], Tashkent, publisher New Release, 2015. p. 245.

¹⁸ Abdullayev A., “*Narodnaya meditsina Xorezma*” [Traditional medicine of Khorezmi], *Sovetskoye zdorovoxraneniye*, № 5, 1977, p. 83.

¹⁹ Kadirov Asadulla, *O`rta Osiyo meditsinasini paydo bo`lishi* [The emergence of Central Asian medicine], Tashkent, publisher Ibn Sino, 1990. p. 27.

²⁰ Muminova Gavhar, “*Xalq tabobati tarixidan*” [History of folk medicine], *Health*, № 1, 1999, p. 19.

increased and family members treated her as “their own person”. The midwives grew up mainly among women who had many children and several grandchildren and raised them in an exemplary manner. They performed childbirth and postpartum procedures, and in even in some nations midwives directly assisted with household chores until the mother’s health was restored²¹. The midwives directly supervised the healthy birth of the child and the health of the mother. They relied on empirical experience and later gave advice to some young mothers on child rearing or treatment of diseases observed in both women and children. As a result, they had a great reputation among the people and were specially invited to the ceremonies dedicated to the child who was born. The profession of midwife is present in the medicine of all peoples and they are honored by different names. For example, the Uzbeks call a midwife “bibi halfa²²”, “momo”, “kushnoch momo²³”, the Bashkirs call them “kindikchi²⁴”, and the Tatars call them “kindik buvi²⁵”.

- Surgeons

Surgery, like the medical fields listed above, has been involved in restoring people’s health. Their activity was caused by pieces of wood, thorns, and later being pierced by a bullet wound to the human body. These circumstances led primitive people to develop unique surgical skills²⁶.

The healers were perfectly aware of the complex surgical practice of their time. They focused on the patient’s age, the specifics of the disease, and whether the patient had another type of disease before practice²⁷. One of the important rules of surgery is to observe cleanliness, so the doctors sterilized the surgical instruments by heating them in a fire and cleaning their hands with onions²⁸.

²¹ Handayani Lestari and other, “Traditional system of medicine in Indonesia”, *Traditional Medicine in Asia*. New Delhi, publisher WHO, 2001. p. 61.

²² Axmedov R., Naimov N., *Buxoro tibbiyoti tarixi* [Historical medicine of Bukhara], Bukhara, publisher University, 2009. p. 19.

²³Field record. Samarkand region, Kattakurgan city. 2015 year.

²⁴ Minibaeva Zarya, *Narodnaya meditsina Bashkir Kurganskoy oblasti (kones XIX-nachalo XXv.)* [Folk medicine of the Bashkirs of the Kurgan region (late XIX - early XXI centuries)], Abstract of thesis. diss. Ph.D., Ufa. 2011. p. 16.

²⁵ Kadirova Lilya, *Narodnaya meditsina Sibirskix tatar* [Folk medicine of the Siberian Tatars], Avtoref. diss. k.i.n, Moskow, 2004. p. 14.

²⁶Bromley Yulian and other, “*Narodnaya meditsina kak predmet etnograficheskix issledovaniy*” [Folk medicine as a subject of ethnographic research], *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, № 5, 1976, p. 27.

²⁷ Smith Emille, “Practice of surgery in Islamic lands: myth and reality”, *Social history of medicine*, Vol.13/ 2, 2000, p. 311.

²⁸Jovliyev A., “*Temur va temuriylar saltanati davrida O`zbekiston hududida jarrohlikning rivojlanishi*” [Development of surgery on the territory of Uzbekistan during the reign of Timur and the Temurids], *newspaper Family doctor*, 21 april 2000 year.

In Uzbeks, surgeons knew how to remove teeth, circumcise, draw blood, and other complex surgical techniques. The peculiarity of surgery is that, in addition to surgeons, individuals of other professions were also involved in the field. According to some authors, the term “hirurgiya” was coined as a result of surgery, which means “xir” - hand, “ergon” - craft. The reason for this naming was that other professionals (hairdressers) also practiced surgery²⁹. On the other hand, it may have been so named in order to show the importance of the human hand in surgical practice. The surgery was performed by blacksmiths³⁰ and hairdressers³¹, who also knew how to circumcise and extract teeth. They did not have special surgical equipment and did this work with barber tools prepared by blacksmiths. Although leeches were used in medicine to obtain blood, it was difficult to maintain and breed leeches during the winter months, and this task was performed by a barber³². Healers use a funnel made of nashtar, qartik and an item made of animal horns to draw blood. Surgeons from Bukhara kept their equipment in separate leather containers³³ and dressed cleanly. The reason is that the client, who came to the surgeon, first of all paid special attention to the healer's head and the tools he uses.

- *Dorigarlar, attors;*

Most healers have prepared the necessary medications for patients themselves, and the composition and method of preparation of some drugs have been kept strictly secret. In the big bazaar of the East there were rooms for the reception of special patients and stalls selling medicines, for example, in 1740 in the Khiva market there were 80 shops selling medicines³⁴. The tradition of trading in medicinal herbs in the bazaar has survived to this day. Currently, traders in various bazaars of the country only collect and sell herbs, although they know how to prepare Turkish drugs, they do not have the knowledge to prepare complex drugs.

²⁹ Nazarov S. and other, “*Abu-l-Qosim Az-Zahravi-o`rta asrlar amaliy jarrohligining asoschisi*” [Abu-l-Qosim Az-Zahravi- founder of medieval applied surgery], *Medical journal of Uzbekistan*. № 2-3, 2002, p. 112.

³⁰ G`oyibov Masharif, and other. *Xiva tabobati* [Khiva medicine], Tashkent, publisher Ibn Sino, 1995. p. 21.

³¹ Logofet Dmitiry, *Buxarskoye xanstvo - pod russkim protektoratom* [Khanate of Bukhara - under the Russian protectorate], Tom II, Sanktpeterbur, publisher V.Berezovskiy, 1911. p. 137.

³² Lakoshchyn Nikolay, “*Sartarashp*” [Hairdresser], *Turkestanskiy vedomosti*, № 75, 1903.

³³ Bogdan Ryk, “*Buxarskiy xirurgi*” [Bukhara surgeons], *Turkestanskiy vedomosti*, № 53, 1903.

³⁴ Sobirov Rajab, *Xorazm an`anaviy tabobatida dorivor o`simliklarni o`rganishva ulardan foydalanish* [Study and use of medicinal plants in traditional Khorezm medicine], Khiva, publisher Khorezm Mamun Academy, 2011. p. 28.

Healers began to involve other people in the tasks of preparing simple medicines and collecting medicinal herbs in order to make the best use of their time (this work was done by disciples or people near to the mountain where the herbs grew), as a result, special drug manufacturers emerged in a state of inseparability from the healer.

People living in remote areas were provided with various medicinal herbs by attors. They mainly supplied local and imported finished products, rarely collecting herbs themselves³⁵. According to the sources, the attors were mentioned among various trade representatives and they had special shops in the bazaars as they traded not only medicinal herbs but also other household and household items³⁶. Most of the attors were aware of basic medical knowledge, they knew the names of herbs, what diseases it could cure. Most attors had clients. If the medicine the client asked for was not available, he found it through others.

All dorigar and attors were in close contact with direct healers. The reason was, firstly, that in different regions not only attors but also healers were regular customers, secondly, the healer's name served as an advertisement for the attor and thirdly, some medicines needed healer's advice and knowledge.

- Ophthalmologists; (Kahhollar)

In medicine, there were specialized healers dealing with eye diseases, and they were called "kahhol". Judicial documents of the 16th century provide information about the work of healers and ophthalmologists in Samarkand³⁷. The valley healer and his medical equipment, who successfully operated on "cataracts" in the late XIXth century, are mentioned in historical sources³⁸. It should be noted that this surgical procedure was also directly monitored by Russian doctors, who noted that the operation was successful. There were also reports that a thirteen-year-old girl in Tashkent, known as an "Afghan healer", was treated with herbs alone for twenty to thirty days³⁹.

³⁵ Ogudin Vladimir, "Attari-aptekari narodnoy meditsiny musulmanskogo vostoka" [Attars-pharmacist of folk medicine of the Muslim East], *Etnograficheskaya obozrenie*. № 2, 2001, p. 115.

³⁶ Suxareva Olga, *Kvartalnaya obshina pozdnefeodalnogo goroda Buxari* [Quarter community of the late feudal city of Bukhara], Moskva, publisher Science, 1976. p. 258.

³⁷ Usmonov Shoxin, "Ilk shifo maskanlari" [The first healing places], *Science and life*, № 6, 1998, p. 28.

³⁸ Kushelevskiy Valerian, *Materiali meditsinskoy geografii i sanitarnogo opisaniya Ferganskoy oblasti* [Materials of medical geography and sanitary description of the Fergana region], Tom I, Noviy Margelan, publisher Lit. tipograf, 1891. p. 264-266.

³⁹ Ikrom Mavlon, "Oldingdan oqqan suv" [Water flowing in front], *Literature and art of Uzbekistan*, № 28, 1984.

There were also healers who treat *skin and venereal disease* as well as internal medicine. Healers of skin venereal disease have been involved in the treatment of various skin diseases such as wounds, measles, and white spots. Healers dealing with internal medicine deal with gastrointestinal disorders and diseases that occur in the internal organs. Depending on the type of skin disease, the treatment period lasts a long time and consists of several stages. Treatment of internal diseases also takes a long time. For this reason, the confession and recognition of the above two healers has sometimes taken several years longer than that of other healers.

CONCLUSION

While the emergence of the medical profession based on empirical knowledge stemmed from the daily needs of people, their division into different areas was due to the complexity of human physical structure (anatomy) and the different range of diseases in the organs. In the early days, doctors struggled with all the ailments in man. Later, the effects of climate, the type of farming of the people, the diversity of the surrounding vegetation, and in some places more than just one type of disease were observed, or the diseases spread en masse in one geographical area. These factors have led healers to grow into mature professionals in a narrow range and to be divided into disciplines.

On the other hand, when healers had sufficient experience and knowledge in a particular field of medicine, they kept a strict secret that this knowledge would serve only their own generations in the future. As a result of the transmission of this knowledge from ancestors to generations, the emergence of qualified healers is increased in a particular field of medicine.

On the third hand, the political, economic and social processes that have taken place in a certain period of history have also had an impact on this area. In particular, incessant wars, mass displacement of the population, or religious views have led to an increase in demand for certain areas of medicine over a period of time (injuries during war and migration, increase in injuries), or to stagnation in other areas (prohibition by religion to dissect the human body). As a result of the state's attention to medical science (translation of various books, creation of conditions for healers to conduct experiments), the field of medicine has also increased. However, it should be noted that the division of healers into separate areas is a relative process. Although they are healers in one field, they always feel the need for medical knowledge in another field. In particular, surgeons are required to know the structure of human bones and painkillers outside of practice. Oriental medicine studies and treats the human body as a whole, which means that the traditions of folk

medicine and the knowledge of doctors in the field give effective results in mutual cooperation.

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