Medicine and Treatment in Savavid Era in Verses of Taleb Amoli

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Abstract: Medical terms and concepts relating to medicine are the important elements which create theme of Persian Speaking poets’ verses. There are rarely complete poetical works in which we don’t find points about medicine and treatment when turning their pages. Taleb Amoli is a poet of century 11 A.H. who has not disdained this important point and has taken advantage of medical information and application of terms relating to this knowledge. In this paper, attempt has been made to study methods of curing diseases and common medical terms of Safavid era in verses of Taleb Amoli.

Key words: Taleb Amoli, disease, treatment methods, medicine.

INTRODUCTION

Mohammad Taleb Amoli in 994-1036 A.H. having pen name of Taleb and known as Taleba and prince of poets is one of the great Iranian poets of decade 11 A.H. and was born in Amol. He having entered the courier of Jahangir Shah reached rank of prince of poets and lived there until he died. Medicine and issues relating to medicine and treatment is one of the capitals of our writers and has emerged in any part of literary works and especially verses and poets. Therefore, we find the poets who didn’t communicated with medicine and medical practice but medical words and terms have gifted very precious senses to their verses. By paying little attention to this important point, we find that Taleb has also alluded to these cases particularly in his poetical verses. In this paper, attempt has been made to criticize and analyze small part of treatment methods and medical terms of Taleb Amoli’s era.

Medicine and Treatment:

Medical Terms and Diseases:

Taleb sometimes has pointed to some medical terms and name of diseases such as smallpox, polyphagia, fever and chill etc in his verses which indicate progress of science in life of Taleb. For example, we point out some cases:

Smallpox: this disease has been introduced in two forms in verses: one is contagious and his verses show that he has suffered from this disease for a while and another one means the wound caused by hard labor and friction of hand and foot and also means the disease which is formed by vesicles.

O’ soil, there is kohl of sun in you, there is smallpox of sun on your way (Amoli, Bita, 918)

Taleb who was captive of rambling, his feet were afflicted with smallpox due to abrasion of forehead (931)

He alludes to loss of eyelashes due to smallpox:

Without thorn, the oppressed man is ashamed; he lost his eyelashes due to smallpox (the same,917)

My heart had worn out due to sorrowing for you two worlds see the smallpox eyelashes (the same,980)

Tasleb also alludes to his discomfort and pains due to smallpox in Masnavi:

Soil of my body has been fluffed due to smallpox for six months I am twisted in that like dust (the same,145)

Vitiligo: it is a common dermal disease which results from hepatitis and dirty blood which causes skin to be brightened in some parts.

We are the mournful people whose night forehead is marked with vitiligo unlike flower of morning (the same,899)

I am not the person who gets along with avarice or gets along with vitiligo like old sky (the same,966)

Anaesthesia : lack of pain or sense due to use of anesthetic medicine or for another reason.

I fainted when I smelled your dress, did it have anesthetic medicine? (the same,912)

As the grass yard was so odorous that air was filled with anesthetic medicine (the same,210)

Fever: increasing warmth of the body’s blood so excessively that it causes illness. It is used with “running a fever” and “having a fever”.

Tureh was filled with fever it turned into sweat and dripped the body (the same,903)

Considering his disease, Taleb alludes to a fever from which he has suffered for long:

I am fretful for long and there was no night that I don’t have a forever (the same,913)
Corps of fever invaded my body as flame is thrown on army (the same,135)

Until my side was warmed with fever turbulent flame of fever was not thrown on me (the same,901)

Herpes simplex: it is smallpox which emerges as result of fever on lips and it is a vesicle which emerges beside lip or mucus due to acute infection of body.

Any teardrop on wound is blister any gem of secret is fever blister on my lips (the same,909)

Lip turns into fever blister with blood all fever blisters on lip lead to lamentation (the same,195)

Fever and shivers: a fever in which body shivers with involuntary movements.

You sometimes made me shiver you lifted the ground with earthquake (the same,135)

Insanity: madness and insanity are the opposites of wisdom and sagacity and have been interpreted as devilishness, demonomania, mania, insanity and madness. Word “insanity” implies that because the former people didn’t know quality and scientific cause of diseases, they attributed them to incarnation of evil spirits and penetration of evil, jinn and fairy in human body:

Cure him with ointment of attainment otherwise, his madness will exceed insanity (the same,132)

Tonight, what a pity my soul left my body due to unhappiness (the same,915)

Polyphagia: it is a diseases which the afflicted person is not satiated with food and constantly feels hungry.

One is satiated with touching and watching but is not satisfied with kissing (the same,941)

Blood: he says about blood circulation in veins and life giving:

I want to get permission to empty my vein and fill it with sincerity (the same,140)

Abscess: it is an ulcer which swells and festers and sometimes swells out and sometimes it should be punctured with lancet.

Enemy is exhausted of your existence blade abscess is attached to your arm like amulet (the same,131)

Mouth ulcers: it is a kind of infectious disease which is caused by different inflammations in mucus of mouth:

I get close to Chesan who has bad breath like mouth ulcer in summer (the same,974)

Headache: it is a disease which afflicts head and Taleb is moaning of this pain and sometimes twists due to excessive disease:

I had a headache in a week and I could sleep and eat at that time (the same,140)

I suffered from that disease and twisted in corner of house like serpent (the same,145)

Melancholia: it is a disease which afflicts human skin, makes skin scratchy and lasts for long time.

Again, this afflicted head suffered from melancholia I moaned due to this pain (the same,900)

Cephalalgia: it is headache.

Physician cured my headache with help of flame spark on my forehead (the same,135)

Bile: it is one of the four humors and is a yellow bile which is called Talkheh in Persian and Pateh in Indian Language.

My bile was not sound due to this acerbity (the same,983)

O’ Taleb, don’t be bad-tempered with promiscuity don’t make your gloomy bile yellow (the same,980)

Plague: it is an infectious and contagious disease which mouse transmits. Taleb regards it as sedition:

Blessing of breeze in morning was destroyed by the seditious plague (the same,178)

Heat rash: is a disease with prickling and redness which is caused by burning sensation resulting from sweat in hot weather:

He suffered from heat rash due to warmth of body like tear on eye of armor (the same,200)

Gripe: gripe is in fact a disease which causes disease in large intensity.

In these two days which I am deprived of your court I suffered from gripe (the same,127)

Weak stomach: it is effects of the weakness which is due to discomfort and hunger in body:

With such weak stomach he is debilitated (the same,128)

Sty: emergence of whiteness on darkness of eye which is called sty:

I am glad that my sty was cured and teardrop remained in rose water glass (the same,785)

Fistula: it is a wound which is infectious and is found around larmier and anus and root of tooth.

I am proud of my deprivation I am pride of my fistula (the same,948)

Therapeutic Methods:

Taleb has pointed to some common therapeutic methods which were common in his era like bleeding, sizzling old wound with cotton, use of sour fruits such as citron and lemon for curing bile: Inhalation therapy: it was common that the patient was given inhalation of plats and herbal medicines to cure some diseases:

He is inhaled in brazier of blessing on his face like smiling flower in blessing (the same,186)

He was inhaled nearly and distantly like Indian brides (the same,206)

Abstention: one should try to cure some disease by abstaining from eating some foods. Taleb also referred to this method:
I drink wine and don’t abstain from drinking how much I should abstain (the same, 795)
Basil seed causes warm the body: basil seed has medicinal properties and has warm nature, for this reason, it was applied for curing cold natures:
Basil seed of hair means mole it increases warmth of love (the same, 239)
Citron and lemon which cure bile: in traditional medicine, type of disease and its treatment method were specified based on four humors. Bile is one of four humors which should be cured with some fruits such as citron and lemon:
My bile was not sound due to this acerbity (the same, 983)
Kohl: it is a kind of eye medicine.
I saw a story from soil of your foot spit turned into kohl in eye (the same, 131)
O’ soil, there is kohl of sun in you, there is smallpox of sun on your way (the same, 929)
Colocynth: it is another name of Hendevaneh Aboojahl which is cultured for medicinal use and is a bitter and conic fruit and is a strong purgative fruit which is used in hepatic diseases and veterinary medicine. Taleb also refers to its bitterness against sweetness.
If colocynth of my death is squeezing the throat my nature doesn’t take sugar of sorrow from taste (the same, 928)

Sizzling old wound with cotton: in the past, the old wounds were sizzled with cotton to cure them:
This cotton has fallen from our chest or they have removed it from the old sizzled wound (the same, 942)
Curing fever with magic: in the past periods, magical methods were used to cure fever and Khaghani also referred to this therapeutic method in his poetical works and word of Taleb also confirmed this fact:
To cure fever, when a magician blew air on my body my thin body sounded like reed (the same, 1011)
Sandal tree which cures headache and closeness of eye: Taleb spent his major life in India and climatic conditions of this land were such that some trees such as sandal are abundant in it. Taleb has mentioned therapeutic properties in his verses, for example, he has said that sandal could cure headache:
Taleb! don’t advise the unwise people that this powdered sandal cures our headache (the same, 285)

Bleeding: in traditional, there was belief that much blood in body causes disease, therefore, the patient could be cured by cutting his vein and taking some blood out.

When the wise people advised bleeding intensity of disease is caused by corrupt blood (the same, 723)
For this reason, it was necessary to reduce blood in such cases:
Lancet of northwesterly wind became bleeder of spring veins of the blood were bled (the same, 171)
Of course, Taleb pointed to necessity of bleeding in verses for curing his disease:
My bleeding was necessary such that I begged radial lines for wound of sting (the same, 140)
Application of Glasses: Taleb has paid attention to the use of glasses for seeing better in the following verses:
He accompanies the good natured people he wears glasses and forecasts (the same, 208)
Camphor: Taleb alluding to camphor and its therapeutic property mentions in his verses:
The sky gave the mixed spark to you to cure wound with some blessing plants and camphor ointment (the same, 137)

Ointment: is an oily and soft product which is obtained by combing a plant resin and one or some types of mineral and plant wax with one of two oily matters. Taleb introduces application of ointment as a way of curing wound:
Flower of blood blossomed from dew of morning I was reminded of morning ointment (the same, 920)
I have no way but forbearance without scourge of love I put ointment on the uncured wound (the same, 967)

Lancing: is a method which took pus and blood out by puncturing the body with lancet.
Taleb! your heart is ready for shot of evil eye any artery is perished by hundred lancets.
Salting: spraying salt was common in the past and was used for preventing bleeding and infection by spraying it on its wound.
If I resort to sea for curing my wound fish on the bottom of waters will be salted (the same, 924)

Antidote: is called curing medicine and is an amalgam which has been regarded effective and useful for curing wounds smeared with poison.
Oh, arbitrator who sprayed antidote like Christ (the same, 152)

Result
Taleb Amoli is one of the distinguished and known poets of Indian style who lived in Safavid era. Study of medical popular beliefs in verses of Taleb Amoli was main purpose of this paper and the studied showed that
considerable volume of his verses indicated his valuable skill and experiences in different fields while indicating his sharp-sighted look. The presence of medical terms, diseases therapeutic methods, beliefs and superstitions each applied beautifully by poet who has created some innovative and beautiful images using them confirmed this claim that his verse indicates different life aspects of different classes of people at their era and it was mirror of all social life of Safavid period.

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