

Introduction

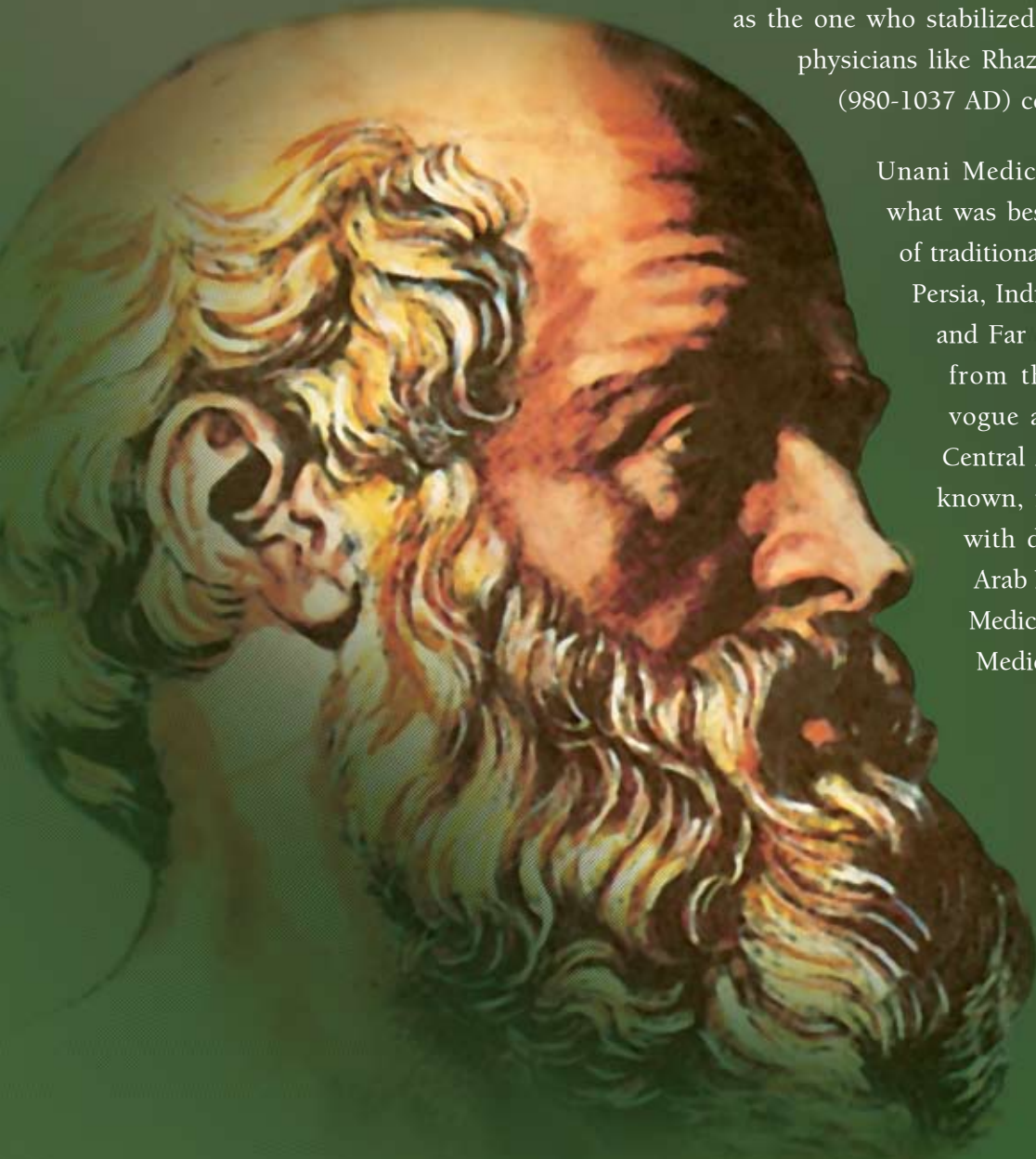
Origin and Development

The Unani System of Medicine, as its name suggests, owes its origin to Greece. The roots of this system go to Egypt and its sister civilization Mesopotamia. It was further adopted by the Arabs, and was developed and improved tremendously by them. The herbal basis of Unani therapy can be traced back to its earliest originators in ancient Egypt who gave primary place to plants in disease treatment. They also initiated the use of surgery as a method of treatment. The studies of Papyri show the ability of Egyptians in the field of Medicine. Imhotep (2800 BC) and Amenhotep (1550 BC) are some noted physicians of Egyptian period. Due to their great contributions in the field of Medicine, Mesopotamians also occupied an important place in history. They used urine sample as a diagnostic tool. The Greek period of Unani Medicine began with Asclepius (*Asqalībūs*-1200 BC), who was a great scholar of Medicine. During Asclepian period, the Greeks developed the art of Medicine in the light of medical knowledge of Egyptians and Babylonians.

It was the Greek philosopher-physician Hippocrates (460-370 BC) who freed Medicine from the realm of superstition and magic, and gave it the status of Science. He emphasized the natural causes of disease and recorded the existing medical knowledge to set the grounds for Medicine to develop as a systematic science. The three fundamentals of Hippocratic Medicine were observation, experience, and rational principles, which still hold valid in the field of Medicine and Science. The theoretical framework of Unani Medicine is based on the teachings of Hippocrates. After Hippocrates, a number of other Greek scholars enriched the system considerably. Of them, Galen (129-200 AD) stands out as the one who stabilized its foundation, on which Arab physicians like Rhazes (865-925 AD) and Avicenna (980-1037 AD) constructed an imposing edifice.

Unani Medicine got enriched by imbibing what was best in the contemporary systems of traditional medicine in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Persia, India, China and other Middle East and Far East countries. It also benefited from the native medical systems in vogue at the time in various parts of Central Asia. That is why this system is known, in different parts of the world, with different names such as Greco-Arab Medicine, Ionian Medicine, Arab Medicine, Islamic Medicine, Traditional Medicine, Oriental Medicine, etc.

*Hippocrates (460-370 BC) –
the Father of Unani Medicine*





Ibn Sīnā (980-1037 AD)



Abū al-Qāsim al-Zahrāwī (936-1013 AD)

Unani System of Medicine was introduced to India by the Arabs, and soon it took firm roots in the soil. The Delhi Sultans, the Khiljis, the Tughlaqs and the Mughal Emperors provided state patronage to the scholars and even enrolled some as state employees and court physicians. The system found immediate favour with the masses and soon spread all over the country. During the 13th and 17th century, Unani Medicine had its heyday in India. Among those who made valuable contributions to this system in the period were, to name only a few, Abu Bakr bin Ali Usman Kashani, Sadruddin Dimashqui, Bahwa bin Khwas Khan, Ali Geelani, Akbar Arzani and Mohammad Hashim Alvi Khan.

Unani System of Medicine came to India in the eighth century and developed as a comprehensive medical system due to multi-pronged original contribution and new applications by scholars of successive generations. It has been practised, taught and scientifically documented in different parts of the country and flourished as a scientific medical system. The Government of India facilitated the growth and development of Unani Medicine by recognizing its utility and scope and integrated it into healthcare delivery system. With its wide network of quality educational institutions, comprehensive healthcare facilities, state-of-the-art

research institutions and quality drug manufacturing industries and on account of its utilization by a large number of people for their healthcare needs, India has emerged as the global leader in Unani System of Medicine.

During the British rule, Unani Medicine suffered a setback, but since the system enjoyed faith among the masses, it continued to be practiced. It was mainly the Sharifi Family in Delhi, the Azizi Family in Lucknow and the Nizam of Hyderabad due to whose efforts Unani Medicine survived in the British period. An outstanding physician and scholar of Unani Medicine, Ḥakīm Ajmal Khan (1868 -1927) championed the cause of Unani System of Medicine in India. The Hindustani Dawakhana and the Ayurvedic and Unani Tibbia College in Delhi are the two living examples of his immense contribution to the multipronged development of the two Indian systems of medicine – Unani Medicine and Ayurveda.

The Majeedi family of Delhi, especially Ḥakīm Abdul Hameed (1908-1999), made valuable contribution towards modernization of Unani drug industry. Ḥakīm Abdul Hameed also established an Institute of History of Medicine and Medical Research (IHMMR) in New Delhi that developed into a deemed university – the Jamia Hamdard in 1989. Also, some other families such as the Niamathullah Family of Madras (now Chennai) and the Usmani Family of Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh) played significant role in the advancement of Unani Medicine in the 20th century.

The development of Unani Medicine as well as other Indian systems of medicine gained considerable momentum after independence. A Health Survey and Development Committee appointed in the year 1943 underscored the future role to be played by the indigenous systems of medicine of India. In 1946, the conference of health ministers resolved that adequate provisions should be made at the Centre and provinces for research in indigenous systems of medicine, Ayurveda and Unani. The conference also recommended starting educational and training institutions of these systems. In pursuance of the recommendations of the conference, a number of committees were appointed by the Government of India, famous of them being Colonel R.N. Chopra (1946) and C.G. Pandit (1949) Committees. These committees recommended detailed outline for the development of Indian systems of medicine.

The Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy including Unani System of Medicine got a boost in 1969 with the Government of India establishing Central Council for Research in Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy (CCRIMH) to conduct research and scientific activities. The dissolution of CCRIMH in 1978 to accord focused attention for research in individual systems led to setting up of four separate research



Hakīm Muhammad Ajmal Khan (1868-1927 AD)

councils – one each for Ayurveda & Siddha, Unani Medicine, Yoga & Naturopathy, and Homoeopathy. Initially, the Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy (ISM&H) were taken care of by a division within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. In March 1995, it was replaced by a full-fledged Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy in the ministry, which was renamed as Department of AYUSH in November, 2003 for overall development of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy. With the aim of providing focused attention to the development of education and research in AYUSH systems of medicine, the Department of AYUSH has been elevated to a full-fledged Ministry of AYUSH with effect from 09 November, 2014.

At present, Unani System of Medicine, with its own recognized practitioners, hospitals and educational and research institutions, forms an integral part of the national healthcare delivery system. The Government of India is providing increasing support and funds for the manifold development of Unani Medicine as well other indigenous medical systems to have the fullest advantage of these systems in healthcare delivery to the masses.

Major Milestones

5000 BC	Use of medicinal plants by Egyptians as recorded in the Papyri
3000 BC	Medical writings by Mesopotamian Physicians
3000 BC	Establishment of some medical schools in Egypt like Heliopolis, Sais, Memphis, Thebes and Abydos Medical Schools
3000 BC	Morphological study of the sheep's liver in Mesopotamia
1800 BC	Kahun Papyrus dealing with women's health and gynaecological disorders
1600 BC	Edwin Smith Papyrus carrying description of 48 surgical cases
1552 BC	Berlin Papyrus dealing with medical and surgical cases
1300 BC	Hearst Medical Papyrus dealing with general ailments
1200 BC	Initiation of experimental method to study diseases and their treatments by Asclepius and his descendants
580-489 BC	Pythagoras introduced the four proximate qualities - hot, cold, wet and dry and described the crisis period of diseases.
500 BC	Discovery of the first antidote by Asclepius II

490-430 BC	Concept of four elements by Empedocles
460 BC	Concept of Atomism by Democritus
460-370 BC	Concept of four humours (<i>Akhlāt</i>) and medical ethics by Hippocrates
384-322 BC	Comparative study of Anatomy and establishment of Lyceum Academy by Aristotle
370-287 BC	Theophrastus founded a Herbal Medical Museum
322-283	Alexandria's Museum, Library and Medical Faculty were founded
310 BC	Erasistratus dissected human bodies and founded human physiology
305 BC	Herophilus (Father of Anatomy) dissected a large number of human dead bodies
1st Century AD	Compilation of illustrated book "De Materia Medica (<i>Kitāb al- Ḥashā'ish</i>)" consisting of 600 drugs by Dioscorides
200 AD	Organization of the Unani System of Medicine by Galen
400-500 AD	Establishment of Academy of Jundishāpūr, Iran
737-831 AD	Development of Pharmaceutical Chemistry by Geber
750-850 AD	Translation of Greek medical texts into Arabic
800 AD	Establishment of <i>Bayt al-Ḥikma</i> (House of Wisdom), Baghdad for translation and compilation of Unani Medicine related works
800 AD	Introduction of Unani System of Medicine in India
865-925 AD	Description of infectious diseases by Muḥammad ibn Zakariyya Rāzī
936-1013 AD	Invention and description of surgical instruments by Abū al-Qāsim al- Zahrāwī in his book, <i>Kitāb al-Taṣrīf</i>
980-1037 AD	Compilation of an encyclopedia of Unani System of Medicine Canon of Medicine (<i>al-Qānūn fi'l-Ṭibb</i>) by Avicenna (<i>Ibn Sīnā</i>)
1200-1526 AD	Development of Unani System of Medicine in India during Sultanate Period
1526-1857 AD	Development of Unani System of Medicine in India during Mughal Era
1595 AD	Establishment of Dār al-Shifā', the first Unani teaching hospital of Deccan founded by <i>Sulṭān Muḥammad Qulī Quṭub Shāh</i>
1865 AD	Initiation of a course on Unani System of Medicine by Punjab University

1891 AD	Establishment of Madrasa Tibbiyya, Hyderabad, founded by <i>Navāb Mīr Maḥbūb ‘Alī Khān Āṣif Jāh VI</i>
1904 AD	Establishment of Hindustānī Dawākhāna – a manufacturing unit of Unani Medicine in Delhi
1906 AD	Establishment of All India Ayurvedic and Unani Tibbi Conference by Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān
1909 AD	Establishment of Girls’ Tibbi School (<i>Madrasa Tibbiyya Zanāna</i>) by Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān
1920 AD	Resolution of All India Congress Committee for Promotion/Official Patronage of Indian Systems of Medicine (Ayurveda and Unani)
1921 AD	Inauguration of Ayurvedic & Unani Tibbia College, Delhi by Mahatma Gandhi
1926 AD	Establishment of Research Committee and Research Unit at Ayurvedic & Unani Tibbia College, Delhi
1927 AD	Establishment of Ajmal Khan Tibbiya College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh with five years degree programme of Unani System of Medicine
1935 AD	Establishment of Department of Unani Medicine (<i>Maḥkama Ṭabābat Yūnānī</i>) in the State of Hyderabad by <i>Mīr ‘Uthmān ‘Alī Khān</i> , VIIth Nizām
1952 AD	Establishment of All India Unani Tibbi Conference by Ḥakīm ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd
1962 AD	Establishment of Institute of History of Medicine & Medical Research, New Delhi
1963 AD	Establishment of Ibn Sīnā Academy, Aligarh
1964 AD	Setting up of Unani Pharmacopoeia Committee by Government of India
1969 AD	Establishment of Central Council for Research in Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy
1970 AD	Setting up of Pharmacopoeial Laboratory for Indian Medicine (PLIM)
1971 AD	Enforcement of Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970, and establishment of CCIM
1972 AD	Initiation of Postgraduate education in Unani System of Medicine at Ajmal Khan Tibbiya College, AMU, Aligarh and Government Nizamia Tibbi College, Hyderabad