

SOME SOURCES ON MUSLIM CHEMISTRY AND MEDICINE DURING THE EASTERN RENAISSANCE AND THEIR EARLY TRANSLATIONS

Abdurahimov Javlonbek son of Bahodirjon

07.00.02 - Doctoral Student of the 1st Stage, Majoring in the
History of Science and Technology of Fergana State University
Phone: +998901503112, E-mail: abdurahimovjavlonbek11@gmail.com

Abstract

In this article, some sources related to the chemistry and medicine of the Muslim East in the Middle Ages and which are now considered the most important in these areas are researched. In particular, Ibn an-Nadim's "Kitab al-Fihrist al-'ulum" ("The Book of the Bibliography of Sciences"), "Tarikh al-Baghdad" ("History of Baghdad") by Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi), Ibn al-Qifti's "Ikhbar al-'ulamo' bi akhbar al-hukamo" ("The Book of Acquainting Scholars with Information About Judges"), "'Uyun al-Anba' fi Tabaqat al-Atibbo" ("The Categories of Doctors" by Ibn al-USaybi'a some comments about his works named "main messages about".

Keywords: Jabir ibn Hayyan, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Abu Bakr al-Razi, chemistry, medicine, Ibn an-Nadim, Central Asia, Eastern Renaissance.

Introduction

Bio-bibliographic sources created in the 10th–13th centuries are of great importance in illuminating the development of chemistry and medicine in the Muslim East in the Middle Ages, as well as the scientific activities and legacy of scholars who worked in these fields. In this regard, the most reliable sources in this field are Ibn al-Nadim's "Kitab al-Fihrist al-'ulum", al-Khatib al-Baghdadi's "Tarih al-Baghdadi", Ibn al-Qifti's "Ikhbar al-'ulama' bi akhbar al-hukama", and Ibn al-USaybi'a's "'Uyun al-anba' fi tabaqot al-atibbo". Ibn al-Nadim's "Kitab al-Fihrist al-'ulum" ("Book of Bibliography of Sciences") was first published with German annotations in Leipzig in 1872 by Professor G.Flugel [10. 725]. A two-volume English translation of the same work was published in 1970 by J. Boyard in New York [12. 1137]. The author's life and work have been studied to this day by J. Fyuk [7. 259-389].

The original Arabic version of the work "Ta'rih al-Baghdād" ("History of Baghdad") by al-Khatib al-Baghdādī and its German translation were published in 1901 by J. Brown [4. 897]. The book was also translated into English in 1985 and published in London [3. 956].

The original Arabic version of Ibn al-Qifti's "Ikhbar al-'ulama' bi akhbar al-hukama" ("Book of information about the judges for the scholars") was first published in 1903 by J. Lippert [5. 356], which was prepared for publication by the famous Islamic scholar A. Muyüller. Some shortcomings in the work were eliminated in the 2005 edition, which was published with



additional comments in English. This edition was published by Professor Ibrahim Sams-ad-Din in Beirut [6. 326].

The German translation of Ibn al-Usaybi'a's work "‘Uyun al-anba’ fi tabaqot al-atibbo" ("Basic information on the categories of physicians") was first published in Leiden in 1885 by the aforementioned A. Muyüller [13. 1059]. In 2020, this work was published in English by the famous Brill publishing house in Leiden [8. 2510] under the joint editorship of E. Savage-Smith, S. Swain, G.J. van Gelder.

Main Part

“Kitab al-Fihrist al-‘ulum” (“Book of Bibliography of Sciences”) is a work by a Baghdadi historian whose full name was Abu al-Faraj Muhammad ibn Ishaq al-Nadim ibn Abi Ya’qub Ishaq al-Warraq, who lived approximately in 932–995. The word al-Warraq in the scholar’s name indicates that he was engaged in the book trade, that is, a bookseller. It is reported that from the age of six he studied in a madrasa and received a comprehensive education in Islamic studies, history, geography, natural sciences, grammar, rhetoric, and Quranic studies [10. 4-5]. “Kitab al-Fihrist al-‘ulum” was written and completed in 998. The work is also known in science as “Kitab al-Fihrist” (“Catalog of Books”). It is a large collection of works on the history of Islamic science and literature of the tenth century. It contains about 10,000 books and 2,000 authors.

The “Fihrist” provides information about authors who worked in different periods, along with literary criticism. An-Nadim freely selected and cataloged the rich culture of his time from various collections and libraries. The arrangement is primarily chronological, with works listed in four internal orders: genre; orfann (chapter); makala (speech); and Fihrist (whole book). These four chronological principles of his basic system help researchers interpret the work, extract incomprehensible information, and understand Ibn an-Nadim’s style of composition, ideology, and historical analysis [10. 6].

“Ta’rikh Baghdad” (“History of Baghdad”) is the work of a historian whose real name was Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Tabih ibn Ahmad ibn Mahdi al-Shafi’i, who lived in 1002–1072. In the history of science, he is mainly known under the name al-Khatib al-Baghdadi or “The Lecturer of Baghdad”. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi was born on May 10, 1002, in the village of Hanikiya, south of Baghdad. He was the son of a preacher and studied with his father and other sheikhs from a young age. Over time, he also studied other sciences, but his main interest was the science of hadith. When his father died at the age of 20, he went to Basra in search of hadith. In 1024, he set off on a second journey to Nishapur and collected hadith in Ray, Amal, and Isfahan. It is not known how long he traveled, but his own calculations place him back in Baghdad in 1028. One of the biographers, al-Dhahabi, says that contemporary teachers and propagators of traditions usually had al-Baghdadi verify the material they had collected before using it in their lectures or sermons [2. 325].

The work mainly lists important works related to medicine. In this regard, information is provided on more than 20 works by Abu Zakaria Yuhanna ibn Musawayh (777–857), such as “Eye Diseases”, “Medical Miracles”, “Barley Water”, “Properties of Foods and Vegetables”, “Knowing the Eye and Its Structure”; more than 100 works by Hunayn ibn Ishaq (809–877) on



medicine, pharmacology and other sciences, including the most famous of them, “Ten Articles on the Eye” and “Medical Issues”.

“Ikhbar al-‘ulama’ bi akhbar al-hukama” (“A Book of Information on the Judges for Scholars”) is a famous work by the historian Jamaluddin Abu-l-Hasan Ali ibn Yusuf Ibrahim ibn Abdulwahid al-Shaybani al-Qifti, who was born in 1172 in the city of Qift in Egypt and died in 1248 in Aleppo. Appointed as a minister by the governor of Aleppo in 1236, Ibn al-Qifti served in this position until the end of his life [11. 412]. The historian, who died in Aleppo in the month of Ramadan in 646 AH (1248 AD), was buried near the “Place of Ibrahim” (Maqami Ibrahim) on the outskirts of the city.

The most important of the scientist's works that have survived to our time is "Ikhbar al-‘ulama’ bi akhbar al-hukama" ("A book introducing scientists to news about the judges"). This work is better known as "Tarih al-hukama" ("History of the Judges"). It contains biographies of 414 scientists who lived from ancient times to the author's time, a significant part of whom were scientists from Khurasan and Transoxiana. This work was published in Leipzig in 1903 and in Cairo in 1908.

The work classifies the main works on chemistry by Jabir as follows: "The Book of Stones", "The Book of Mirrors", "The Book of Poison and Antidote", "The Book of Mercy", "The Book of Turning Hidden Potential into Reality", "The Secrets of Chemistry", "The Methods of Chemistry", "Corrections to the Books of Plato", "The Yeasts", "The Properties".

“Uyun al-anba’ fi tabaqot al-atibba” (“Basic Reports on the Categories of Physicians”) is a work by Ibn Abi Usaybi’a Mu’affaq al-Din Abu al-‘Abbas Ahmad ibn al-Qasim ibn Khalifa al-Khazraji (1203–1270), a Damascus physician and historian.

He studied medicine in his hometown and then ophthalmology at the Nasiri Hospital in Cairo, where he received special lessons from the physician and botanist Ibn al-Baytar. The scientist died near Damascus in January 1270 [14. 79].

There are two manuscripts of his large collection, “Uyun al-anba’ fi tabaqot al-atibba” (“Basic Reports on the Categories of Physicians”). The first was compiled in 1241, and the second edition was edited with some additions by A. Müller in 1884 [9. 924].

This book is considered to be the most complete history of medicine in the Muslim East. It quotes some of Galen’s sayings about Jews and Christians. It even mentions Galen’s work “On Grief”, which is of the greatest importance for the history of Roman libraries and has been rediscovered in the last few years. It contains many materials from Hunayn ibn Ishaq, including a personal account of his misfortunes and information about the translators who actively participated in the movement to translate Greek science into Arabic.

Translations of parts of the work were made in different years. For example, the Royal College of Physicians in London also has unpublished English translations of Galen's section. In 2011, a complete translation of the work was published by the United States National Library of Medicine. Ibn Abi Usaybi'a's book consists of 5 volumes, totaling 4,513 pages, including various random poems by the author. In addition, 62 pages of notes were later added by M. Plessner in Jerusalem. The work, which contains valuable information about 380 physicians, contains many notes about Central Asian scientists.



Conclusion

The above information is important for the study of the history of science, bio-bibliographic studies created in the Middle Ages, which provide a detailed list of biographies and works of scientists who lived in previous periods. This aspect allows you to conveniently get acquainted with information about scholars and thinkers who have worked in various fields of science.

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