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ISSN 2319-3077 Online/Electronic

ISSN 0970-4973 Print

UGC Approved Journal No. 62923

MCI Validated Journal

Index Copernicus International Value

IC Value of Journal 82.43 Poland, Europe (2016)

Journal Impact Factor: 4.275

Global Impact factor of Journal: 0.876

Scientific Journals Impact Factor: 3.285

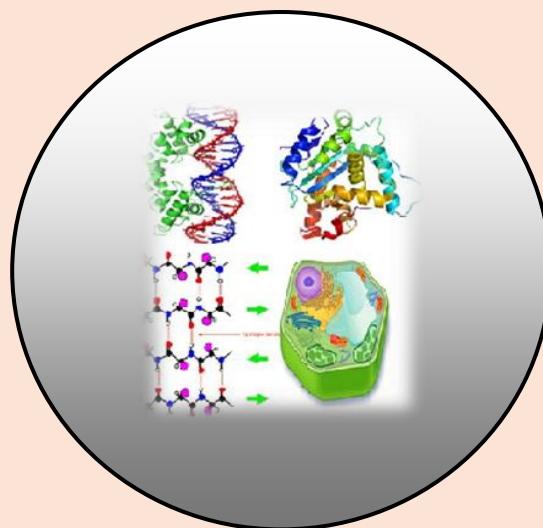
InfoBase Impact Factor: 3.66

J. Biol. Chem. Research

Volume 36 (1) 2019, Pages No. 160-167

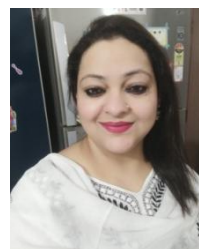
Journal of Biological and Chemical Research

An International Peer Reviewed / Referred Journal of Life Sciences and Chemistry



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RESEARCH PAPER

Received: 29/02/2019

Revised: 01/04/2019

Accepted: 02/04/2019

Mizaj (Temperament) and Ajnas-e- Ashra (Determinants of Temperament) in Unani System of Medicine- A Review

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ABSTRACT

The ancient Greco-Arab philosophers recognized temperament as an integral part of creation. Each and every atom, molecule, humour, organelle, cell, organ and body as a whole is furnished with a Mizaj (equilibrium). According to Tibb, the cause of health is the maintenance of normal temperament with in the cells, tissues, organs and the entire body. Maintenance of normal temperament means the maintenance of static or homeostasis in the internal environment of the cells or the whole body. The Arab physician applied the concept of Mizaj and its classification on universal scale. Ancient Unani physicians described various signs through which the states of temperaments of individuals are discerned. Some signs relate to the structure and some to functions and psyche.

Key words: Temperament (Mizaj), Ajnas-e-Ashra and Homeostasis.

INTRODUCTION

The human body is one of the greatest mysteries of the creations of God. The primary components for the human body are Arkan or 'Anasir (elements). They cannot be further resolved into simpler entities. The above account of elements is given by Ibn Sina. Contrary to the modern concept of cell, the lowest level of organization of the human body is the 'Unsur' (elements). About 2500 years back the ancient Greek Scholar Democritus and his pupils thought that all matters were made up of small indivisible units called 'atoma' (atoms). We are aware of the fact that the atoms are combined in different ways to yield monomers (amino acid, nucleotides, mono sugars) which are building blocks of biological macromolecules (proteins, nucleic acids, polysaccharides) – the constituents of our Akhlat (Humours). Macromolecules are combined with smaller molecules to form cell organelles. The organelles are combined to form cells, the cells to form tissues, the tissues to form organs and organs to form organisms. The human body is made up of four fundamental elements. These are fire (hot and dry), Air (hot and wet), water (cold and wet) and Earth (cold and dry). The elements influence our body in many other ways and they play an immense role in diagnosis and treatment of the disease. Each and every atom, molecule, humour, organelle, cell, organ and body as a whole is furnished with a mizaj (equilibrium). According to Tibb, the cause of health is the maintenance of normal temperament with in the cells, tissues, organs and the entire body. Maintenance of normal temperament means the maintenance of static or homeostasis in the internal environment of the cells or the whole body.

The temperament of an individual is not an incidental phenomenon. One attains temperament while in the womb by heredity from parents and intra-uterine environment and after birth by extra uterine environment. Once a temperament is established during fetal life it will be modified by ambient environmental factor alone (Zaidi, 1999).

The ancient Unani physicians have divided the entire period of life into four stages.

1. SIN-E-NAMU (the period of growth and development). This includes
 - a. Sin-e-Tufulah (Infancy) – up to one year.
 - b. Sin-e-Saba (childhood or adolescence, up to 13 years).
 - c. Sin-e-Tara'u' (childhood or adolescence, up to 13 years).
 - d. Sin-e-Bulugh (Puberty, up to 19 or 21 years)
 - e. Sin-e-fata, (up to 30 years).
2. SIN-E-WAQUF (Manhood-from 30 to 40 years).
3. SIN-E-KUHULAH (Aetus verelis) from 40 to 60 years.
4. SIN-E-SHAYKHUKHAH (Old age or Aetus cripta).

The temperament of SIN-AL-NAMU (Period of growth and development) is hot and moist. During this period the organs of the body continue to grow. In this period production of heat is greater due to Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR). With the advancement of age, the B.M.R. gradually falls.

Domination of certain khilt (Humour) necessarily exerts its influence on the mizaj (temperament) of a man. On the basis of domination of khilt there are four types of temperament.

1. Damvi-al-mizaj – Hot and Moist Temperament
2. Safrawi-al-mizaj – Hot and Dry Temperament
3. Balghami-al-mizaj – Cold and Moist Temperament
4. Saudawi-al-mizaj – Cold and Dry Temperament
- 5.

These four temperamental personalities have different characteristics which make them different.

MIZAJ (TEMPERAMENT)

The Arab medical authors worked on the theory of temperament most assiduously, and its description is found in the Arabic medical literature under the heading – 'mizaj'. The concept of temperament prevailing in Unani – Tibb at present is in the form, which Arab physicians finally gave it.

The Arab physician applied the concept of mizaj on universal scale.

According to Azmi (1995) "There is another word 'constitution' which is used as an equivalent to mizaj. This word means the natural condition of body and mind: when it is used in chemistry; it denotes not only kinds and number of atoms but also the way in which they are linked. This last meaning is fully in accordance with the elemental concept of temperament which I hold correct ..."

Since the word 'temperament' and humoral admixture are mostly used as synonyms and as according to Azmi (1995) the humoral interpretation of temperament is not correct. Probably it may also be a reason why Azmi holds the use of word 'constitution' as an equivalent to 'mizaj' more correct. Shah (1972) writes, "In modern medicine the terms constitution and temperament are after used synonymously but not so in the canon (of Avicenna). Constitution is tabi'ya, comprised of seven physical factors- umur-e-tabi'ya of which temperament mizaj is one.

Now, it could safely be said that word 'temperament' though not exact equivalent of mizaj is used commonly as a default. In this thesis, therefore, the word 'temperament' has been used.

Prominent among these Arab physicians were defined temperament in the following words:

"All sorts of bodies (light or heavy) which are found in this ever changing world, are formed by four elements (ustuqssat) after mixing in different or uniform quantities in accordance with the needs (of the body). As a result of this mixing one or two qualities become dominant over the body this is called temperament (mizaj). It is derived from Arabic word "imtizaj" meaning to mix with each other (Majusi, 1889; Azmi, 1995).

Abu – Sehal Masihi described mizaj as:

“Because there are so many primary components (ustuqssat) of body which are mixed together not in close proximity. Thus, it is necessary that the qualities of primary components must be mixed as a whole. New qualities arise from inter – mixing of primary components which will be in between the previous qualities called temperament” (Mashisi, 1993; Zaidi and Zulkifle, 1999 – b).

According to Ibn Sina: “Temperament is a quality resulting from the interaction of opposite qualities present in elements consisting of each of the elements may touch most of the others. Thus when these particles act and react on one another with their properties there emerges from their total properties, a uniform quality which is present in all of them. This is temperament” (Ibn Sina, 1993).

Ibn Sina further writes; “Since the primary properties in the aforesaid elements are four namely, hotness, coldness, moistness and dryness, it is obvious that the temperaments of integrating and disintegrating bodies are the product of these very properties” (Ibn Sina, 1993).

Ali Ibn Abbas Majusi Discuss ‘Intermixing’ (Imtizaj) in this way.

“Imtizaj is of two kinds, simple mixture (Imtizaj – e – Sadah) and real mixture (Imtizaj – e – haqiqi). In simple mixture the temperament of mixing substance remains unchanged. For instance, if water is mixed with syrup, they come together and stand mixed, but their temperament is not changed and nothing new comes out. On the contrary, in real mixture, all mixing components unite in such a way that each one of them gives up its temperament and the formed compound gets new temperament, i.e. a uniform quality is generated, which becomes dominant over the compound” (Majusi, 1889; Azmi, 1995).

Thus,

- a) Temperament of a compound is a uniform quality, which is produced as a result of mixing up of four primary qualities associated with primary components (ustuqsaat) entering into the formation of the compound.
- b) Temperament is formed by real admixture (Imtizaj-e-haqiqi) of primary components.
- c) Mixing of primary qualities i.e. mixing of element takes place in accordance with the needs of a compound. In other words, temperament of a compound is responsible for its properties and function.

TYPES OF TEMPERAMENT

According to Ibn Sina

“A rational classification of temperament, if it is considered absolutely on theoretical basis without a reference to anything, must be of two kinds. One of them is that the temperament be equal in the sense that the quantities of opposite qualities combine in equal degrees of potency and the temperament becomes a quality which is exactly their mean (mutadil haqiqi). In the second kind the temperament is not exactly centered in the opposite qualities but is inclined towards one of them – either towards one of the opposite qualities as coldness or hotness, and moistness or dryness, or to any two non-opposites. But in medical practice a temperament does not admit of being equable or non-equable. The physician should learn from physics that what is equable in this sense (mutadil haqiqi) really does not exist, much less in the temperament and organs of human beings” (Ibn Sina, 1993; Ibn Sina, 1290).

Ibn Sina further writes, “It must be known that ‘equable’ (mutadil) a term used by physicians in their discussion does not mean a balance in weight but equitable distribution (Adlfil Qisma). That is, the elements mix up qualitatively and quantitatively in the human body as a whole or any of its organs, so as to produce equipoise in relation to the human temperament. It so happens that the equitable disposition of human beings with which they are endowed is very close to the absolute and real equability (mutadil haqiqi) described in the beginning.

The equability in respect to the human bodies too is one which is considered in relation to non-human bodies, having neither this equability nor that closeness to equability which the human beings have as mentioned under the first kind (Ibn Sina, 1993; Ibn Sina, 1290).

From the above statement of Ibn Sina, it is evident that, as real or absolute equability does not exist, therefore the term ‘equable’ used in Tibb is always relative. In this regard Shah (1972) observes:

“These qualities (heat, cold, dryness and moisture) are neither entirely absent from the constitution of any object, nor are they present in an absolutely equal proportion. Temperaments of objects are, therefore, balanced or imbalanced relative to one another. The balance as a medical term, does not, however mean the equality or inequality in the quantitative proportion of primary qualities but their presence in man in such a proportion that the resulting pattern of the body as a whole or of its parts, is the one which is most appropriate for him under his particular set of conditions or circumstances and that it is the normal for him.” Hakim Abdul Latif while describing ‘attemperament (tadil `), drew the conclusion, that equipoise is a relative condition acquired by one species or individual with reference to other species or individuals (Latif, 1972). Ibn Sina further divided this equability into eight different forms. Similarly, the inequable temperament has also been divided into eight kinds. The inequable temperament is simple and its deviation (from the equable) is only in relation to one contrary quantity, or it is a compound and its deviation is in relation to two contrary qualities at the same time (Ibn Sina, 1993). These kinds of temperament as mentioned by Ibn Sina are put in a simplified manner by Ala-u-din Qarshi as follows:

According to Qarshi (1998) there are nine kinds of temperament. One is equable (mutadil) and eight kinds are inequable (ghayr mutadil).

Equable Temperament: - Equable temperament is of two kinds.

a) Real equable or equiponderant (Mutadil haqiqi).

b) Tibbi equable or normal (Mutadil tibbi).

a) **Real equable:** This temperament is one where in the contrary qualities and quantity of all the participating elements in a compound are equal, which is impossible. Therefore, this kind of temperament does not exist and is never referred to in Unani-Tibb.

b) **Tibbi Equable:** In this type of temperament, the contrary qualities and quantity of participating elements (arkan) in a compound are not equal, but are perfectly balanced according to the required properties and functions of that compound. Hence Tibb is concerned with this Tibbi equable or normal temperament.

Tibbi equable has been divided into following eight kinds.

i) Mu` tadil nau` i bil qeyas ila-al-kharij.

ii) Mu` tadil nau` i bil qeyas ila-al-dakhil

iii) Mu` tadil sinfi bil qeyas ila-al-kharij

iv) Mu` tadil sinfi bil qeyas ila-al-dakhil

v) Mu` tadil shakhsi bil qeyas ila-al-kharij

vi) Mu` tadil shakhsi bil qeyas ila-al-dakhil.

vii) Mu` tadil uzwi bil qeyas ila-al-kharij

viii) Mu` tadil uzwi bil qeyas ila-al-dakhil.

These eight kinds of equability often called types of equable tibbi temperament, are actually the ranges of temperament, within which temperament of a species, race, or an individual or organ vary. There is an ideal equable each for species, races, individuals and organs, relative to which temperament of a species, race, individual or organ is described. As mentioned earlier, that the term equable used in Tibb is a relative term and therefore, temperament is always measured against an ideal equable. For example, the human species is considered most nearer to absolute equability, and this is the ideal equable for species, relative to which temperament of other species is measured. Similarly, inhabitants of equinoctial circle are more equable (as per Ibn Sina), relative to which temperament of other races is said to be hot or cold. Likewise, when it is said that the temperament of a person is hot, means his temperament is relatively hotter than the person having mutadil mizaj (equable temperament). Skin is considered to be having equable temperament and temperament of other organs is said to hot or cold relative against this ideal equable (skin).

DETERMINANTS OF TEMPERAMENT

Ancient Unani physicians described various signs through which the states of temperaments of individuals are discerned. Some signs relate to the structure and some to functions and psyche. At present, in Unani – Tibb the temperament is determined by the help of ten determinants of temperaments called “Ajnas – e – ashra’ as described by Ibn Sina.

However in Unani literature it was found that many other Unani physicians have a limited the number of determinants of temperament to four or five. The determinants of temperament as described by various Unani physicians are presented here.

Galen says “we shall enumerate the symptoms of each temperament beginning with the brain. We have to consider five original classes in regard to our knowledge of a patient.

- 1) The configuration of his head;
- 2) The merits and demerits of his sense of perception;
- 3) Action of a person;
- 4) His power of reasoning;
- 5) Functions of the body;

Ali Ibn Abbas Majusi has described the following five parameters for assessment of temperament (Majusi, 1889).

- 1) Palpation (Malmas)
- 2) Color of the skin (Laun)
- 3) Hairs (Sha`r)
- 4) Structure of the body (Sehna)
- 5) Functions of the body (Afal-e-badan).

Ahmad-ul-Hassan Jurjani has described following five determinants (Jurjani, Y.N.M.)

- 1) Palpation (Malmas)
- 2) Flesh and fat (Lahm-wa-shahm)
- 3) State of flesh (Aza-salabat wa la`inat)
- 4) Hair-texture, Color, shape and distribution (Sha`r)
- 5) Complexion (Laun-al-badan)

Razi (1991) mentioned following five determinants of temperaments.

- 1) Body complexion (Laun-al-badan)
- 2) Structure of the body (Sehna)
- 3) Palpation (Malmas)
- 4) Functions (Af`al)
- 5) Excreta (Fuzlat-al-badan).

Ibn Sina (1993) described the following ten parameters for the determination of temperament of a person called ajnas - e - ashrah.

- 1) Palpation (Malmas).
- 2) Flesh and Fat (Lahm wa shahm).
- 3) Hair of the body (Sha`r).
- 4) Body complexion (Laun - al - badan)
- 5) Physique (Haiyat - al - aza).
- 6) Responsiveness of body (Kayfiyat - al - infaaal)
- 7) Sleep and wakefulness(Naum wa yaqzah)
- 8) Functions of the body (Afal - al - aza)
- 9) Excreta of the body (Fuzlat - al - badan)
- 10) Psychic reactions (Infialat - al - nafsaniyah)

These ten parameter (Ajnas – e – Ashra) are described in detail as under:

1) **TOUCH** (feel, palpation): If the feel of a person is similar to that of a person of normal temperament, then it should be treated as normal if different, as abnormal in the same quality which has been felt by the person of equable temperament. To wit the feeling, person should be normal, otherwise if e.g. his hand is warm will not feel the warmth and similarly if his hand is cold he will not feel the coldness. If a normal person touching a body does not feel it warm or cold, the latter should be understood to be normal, i.e. neither hot nor cold, but if it feels warm or cold then it should be taken to be warm or cold.

2) **FLESH AND FAT**: Excess of flesh and fat in the body results from excess of moisture; and their scarcity from dryness. Then excess of flesh results from excess of heat and moisture. And that of fat from excess of cold and moisture. That is to say that for corpulence of the body whether due to flesh or fat, in every case, excess of moisture is necessary. The difference is that flesh will indicate heat while fat will indicate cold as set forth under temperament.

3) **HAIR OF THE BODY**: Exuberance of hair, their thickness, curliness and darkness indicate heat and dryness and being otherwise, indicates cold and moistness. The climates of different countries differ and their inhabitants are affected by it, hence it is clear that temperaments of people of different places cannot be the same. Just as the color of people of different places differs so does their hair. In fact, variety of hair is an obvious evidence of the variety of temperament.

4) **COLOUR OF THE BODY**: Fairness of the complexion is an evidence of preponderance of coldness and phlegm, its redness that of heat and blood. A mixture of fairness and ruddiness is an evidence of at tempered heat and cold. Wheatish color (brunette) and yellow color are evidences of preponderance of choler or paucity of blood as is found in debilitated patients after illness. Darkness of color indicates excess of cold and preponderance of black bile. Here it is to be borne in mind that the color of skin and hair is affected by the climates of the countries and zones.

Accordingly, Avicenna writes that one should not expect Negroes to have fair hair. Similarly, those peoples and nations who naturally possess dark skin do not exhibit the preponderance of the other humour although it may exist in their bodies, through the color of their skin. Accordingly, preponderance of yellow bile in the blood of dark – skinned people does not have shown itself by the yellow color of the manifested during Jaundice. Similar is the case with preponderance of blood and phlegm.

(5) **PHYSIQUE**: Broadness of chest and conspicuity of vessels, high pulse, and prominence of arms, legs and joints are indications of hotness, and their opposition of coldness.

(6) **RESPONSIVENESS OF THE BODY**: Quality of reaction is the quality of the body being affected quickly or slowly by the four fold states of hotness, coldness, moistness or dryness. Quickness of the body in reacting to a certain states is the evidence of preponderance of that state in the body. For example, certain people are quickly affected by cold air and cold season and cold things and suffer harm, others by hot things. Those harmed by cold should be considered cold and those by heat as hot.

(7) **NORMAL FUNCTIONS OF THE BODY**: Here normal functions mean all those actions which take place as demanded by the physiology whether those are physical actions (action of nutrition and growth) or psychic or animal. Normal functions do not exclusively mean actions of nutrition and growth as understood technically. Perfection of somatic function is an evidence of balanced (equable) temperament and their being defective or wrong that of cold temperament confusion of actions (tashwish-e-af'al) is an evidence of hotness and their sluggishness that of coldness. There is a difference between defectiveness and confusion (tashwish) of actions, because in case of confusion movement is unusually great, but it is not regular, rather irregular and disorderly. And it is accepted that heat produces movement, hence confusion of actions is an indication of hotness and defect that of coldness. The incidence of defect or falsification of action as a result of coldness is statistical, otherwise, sometimes, the same takes place by virtue of heat also.

(8) **EXCRETA OF THE BODY:** Superfluities excreted by the body, e.g. urine, faeces, perspiration, etc. strong smell and deep color of excreta is an evidence of hotness, and the contrary that of coldness. Strong smell and deep color of the excreta indicates severity of putrefaction and that the processes of alteration and decomposition are active which can only take place under influence of heat.

(9) **SLEEP AND WAKEFULNESS:** Excessive sleep is an evidence of coldness and moistness. Excess of wakefulness indicates heat and dryness. And their being of moderate degree indicates equity. Those persons whose bodies are fat and phlegmatic have been mostly observed to sleep much and contrarily people of bilious temperament have less of sleep.

(10) **PSYCHIC REACTIONS:** Psychological influences, e.g. sorrow, anger, joy, etc. Strong and active reaction to psychic influences and its excess is an evidence of hotness, while its slowness that of coldness, its durability indicates dryness and transitoriness.

Cowardice is an indication of coldness and cardiac debility. Shame faced ness, loss of temper, boldness, hot temper, talkativeness; fast, persistent and coherent speech are evidences of hotness. High degrees of bashfulness and graciousness are indications of coldness. Strength of psychic reactions is exemplified by excess of anger, their swiftness, e.g., easy excitation, their excess, e.g., repeated anger. Weakness of psychic reactions is exemplified by less frequent anger, or difficulty of acquisition of pleasure. The indications mentioned above refer to simple temperaments in which only one quality is in excess. But the evidences of compound temperaments, i.e. those in which two qualities are in excess, can be found by combining the above mentioned evidences of simple temperament.

DISCUSSION

The concept of Temperament (Mizaj) is one of the major pillars of Unani medicine on which the diagnosis, treatment and the prevention from the disease is based upon. Every person has possessed a unique temperament, which includes his physical characteristics, physiological profile and psychological as well as emotional state which attribute to Mizaj. Thus, as no two individuals are same or alike, so is their temperament. In Unani system of medicine, each individual, due to his temperament is said to possess certain innate strengths and deficiencies, for which he reacts differently to a given set of environmental conditions. As a consequence, tends more towards diseases of his particular type, requires different types of diet and life style for healthy living.

CONCLUSION

Mizaj (Temperament) is a quality of an internal resultant of various body composition reactions, occurs in each and every cell of the body. Normal Mizaj is defined as a condition in which a person survives comfortably with all signs of healthy life. Mizaj of the body fluctuate within between certain minimum and maximum normal range according to the composition (quality as well as quantity), age of the body and environmental factors in which a person reside. So from all these information it is proved that Mizaj (Temperament) has very much importance in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of a disease as well as for healthy life.

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