

Review Article

The Concept of Quwat Tabiya in Context of Health and Disease: A Review

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Abstract: The concept of Quwat Tabiya, originating from traditional Unani System of medicine, refers to the innate healing power within the body. This natural force is believed to maintain health and combat disease when in balance. In this paper, we explore the significance of Quwat Tabiya in both health and disease contexts, examining its role in traditional healing practices and its relevance in modern medical understanding. Through an analysis of historical perspectives and contemporary research, we aim to shed light on the intricate interplay between Quwat Tabiya and overall well-being.

Keywords: Quwat Tabiya, Sue Mizaj, Health and Disease, Unani System of medicine, GTCH.

INTRODUCTION

In ancient Unani System of medicine, there's this idea called Quwat Tabiya, which basically means the body's natural ability to heal itself. It's like a built-in superpower that helps us stay healthy and fight off sickness. Even though modern medicine focuses a lot on drugs and technology, people are starting to get interested again in this natural healing power. This paper is all about exploring what Quwat Tabiya is, where it comes from, and how it can help us stay healthy. We'll look at both old ideas and new science to understand how this natural healing power works and how we can use it to keep ourselves well.

Quwat Tabiya (The Vital Force): Quwat Tabiya, also known as the vital force, is a central concept in Unani medicine. It represents the inherent power or energy within the human body that governs physiological.

Functions: Quwat Tabiya plays a crucial role in maintaining health and combating disease. It is responsible for maintaining homeostasis, regulating bodily functions, and ensuring overall well-being.

Quwat Tabiya encompasses several factors:

Arkan (Four Basic Constituents): These are fire (Nar), air (Hawa), water (Ma), and earth (Arḍ). These constituents form the foundation of the body and contribute to its functioning.

Mizaj (Temperament): Refers to the inherent balance of qualities (hot, cold, wet, dry) within an individual.

Akhlat (Humors): The four humors—blood (Dam), phlegm (Balgham), yellow bile (Safra), and black bile (Sauda)—are influenced by Quwat Tabiya.

Aza (Organs): Quwat Tabiya operates through various organs, ensuring their proper functioning.

Arwah (Spirit): The vital force extends beyond the physical body and includes spiritual aspects.

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Quwa (Energy): Quwat Tabiya provides the energy necessary for bodily processes.

Afal (Functions): It governs all physiological functions [16-21].

Unani philosophers and scholars have extensively discussed Quwat Tabiya, emphasizing its significance in health and disease management.

Ibn-e-Sina's Perspective:

Al-Qanoon-Fil-Tib: Ibn-e-Sina (Avicenna) emphasized the role of Quwat Tabiya in health. He described it as the capacity to resist diseases and create a defensive barrier against disease-causing agents (Madda-e-Marz).

Liver as the Seat: According to Ibn-e-Sina, the seat of Quwat Tabiya is the liver. It is from here that the vital force operates, maintaining equilibrium and defending against imbalances [1].

Holistic Approach:

Unani system of medicine views health as a holistic concept, considering physical, mental, and spiritual aspects. Quwat Tabiya is at the core of this holistic approach.

The liver is the largest and most unique organ, considered as the source of hararat-e-ghariziya (innate heat) for the body. Therefore, it has been extensively discussed in Unani literature (Ishtiyah Ahmad, 1983). Galen (129-217 AD) even equated the liver with the sun, as a source of energy for other planets [4].

The basic functions are conveniently grouped under:

- a. Vascular functions
- b. Excretory and secretory functions
- c. Metabolic functions and
- d. Detoxifications functions [2].

In Unani Medicine (Greco-Arab Medicine), the liver is considered an organ for the production of akhlat (humours), and its four vital powers (quwaa), namely quwat-e-jaziba (power of absorption), quwat-e-ghaziya (power of digestion), quwat-e-masikah (power of retention), and quwat-e-dafiya (power of excretion), perform all functions related to the liver. The derangement of the function of any of these four powers produces derangement in the temperament of humours. Moreover, the deranged temperament of the humours leads to the accumulation of mawad-e-fasida (morbid material) and ultimately pathological changes in the liver.

According to Rabban Tabari (898 AD), the derangement of the temperament of humours may be simple (sada), which requires simple therapeutic measures, or it may be compound (maddi), in which organic disturbances and quantitative changes take place in the liver cells [6].

Health according to Unani System of medicine

According to Unani medicine, health is considered a state of the body with humors in equilibrium and normal body functions. Health is based on six essential elements: 1. Air 2. Drinks and food 3. Sleep and wakefulness 4. Excretion and retention 5. Physical activity and repose 6. Mental activity and repose. This theory indirectly bears partial similarity to the accepted definition of health as a state of physical, mental, and social wellness. The Unani system of medicine addresses the homeostasis of the body, which depends on the balance of the four humours. Disturbance in the six essential factors such as atmospheric air, diet, sleep and wakefulness, elimination and retention, mobility, and psychological condition can become causes of disease. Understanding these doctrines to find the cause is the key to treatment. Hence, the practical science is based on the fundamental principles rooted in the oldest classical texts of Unani system of medicine [10, 15].

Health according to Unani System of medicine

A number of liver diseases are mentioned in the Unani System of Medicine, such as Su-e-Mizaj (Abnormal/Pathological temperament of the Liver), Zauf-e Jigar (Dullness of Liver, Hepatosis, or Hypocholeretic), Sudda-e-Jigar (Hepatic obstruction), Dard-e-Jigar (Hepatalgia), Warm-e-Jigar (Hepatitis), Zarba-e-Jigar (Trauma), Dabila-e-Jigar (Hepatic Abscess), Segar-e-Jigar (Cirrhosis of Liver), Su-ul-Qinaya (Anemia), and Istiska (Ascites) [1, 8, 9].

ETIOLOGY

The causes of Su' mizaj har are enumerated below: Intake of hot food, drinks, medications, and regimens, putrefaction, vigorous physical and mental exercise, occupation which produces heat, anger, and mild worry.

The causes of Su' mizaj barid are: Excessive activity leading to dispersion of innate heat, excessive repose leading to suppression of innate heat, food and drinks in excess (overeating), marked reduction in food (undernutrition), cold foods,

drinks, medications, and regimens, undue retention of fuzlat (morbid material), obstruction from the accumulation of fuzlat, occupation which produces cold, excessive worry, joy, pleasure, fear, and anxiety [1, 12-14].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Unani System of Medicine provides a comprehensive understanding of Quwat Tabiya, attributing them to various factors affecting the temperament and function of the liver. From Su-e-Mizaj to Su' mizaj barid, the system delineates the causes of liver disorders, ranging from dietary and lifestyle factors to emotional and environmental influences. By recognizing the delicate balance of humours and the impact of external and internal stimuli, Unani medicine offers a holistic approach to the prevention and treatment of liver ailments. This ancient system's emphasis on restoring equilibrium and addressing the root causes underscores its relevance in contemporary healthcare, highlighting the enduring wisdom and practical insights found in its classical texts.

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