

## 5. The development of the Prophet's medicine

During the formative period of Islamic law (2nd-3rd/8th-9th centuries), hadiths were accepted as a source of law of equal importance with the Koran. This roused an interest in collecting the Prophet's sayings on a variety of subjects. The importance of the hadiths was not restricted to ritual matters and questions pertaining to positive law, but the Prophet's example became normative in all aspects of life.

Among the hadiths collected there were sayings with a medical content. In the hadith collections the medical sayings are usually placed in separate chapters that have the title *Kitāb al-marḍā* (The book of the sick) or *Kitāb al-ṭibb* (The book of medicine).<sup>171</sup> Some of these hadiths refer to traditional medical practices of the Arabs and give the Prophet's opinion—either positive or negative—on them. For example the Prophet is reported to have said: "There is health in three things: drinking of honey, incision made by the cupper's knife and cautery with fire; I forbid my people to cauterize".<sup>172</sup> He has also said: "If there is one good system among your curing practices, then that is cupping".<sup>173</sup> Some of the hadiths contain the Prophet's instructions on the use of certain medicaments: "Use antimony, it improves the sight and makes the hair grow".<sup>174</sup> Some reflect the changes that Islam brought to the concept of illnesses as in the story told by Abū Huraira: "Someone mentioned fever in the presence of the Prophet and a man cursed it. The Prophet said: 'Do not curse fever. It removes sins like fire removes dross from iron.'"<sup>175</sup> The Koran and ritual prayer were introduced as new religious cures: "The Koran is the best medicine"<sup>176</sup> and "Rise to pray, for prayer is a cure".<sup>177</sup>

The Prophet's medical sayings were relatively few in number and they could not be considered to form a complete medical system. They did not, however, remain as curiosities in the hadith collections, but were taken up mainly by hadith scholars, who arranged them according to subject matter and gradually also analysed their medical content. The sayings were formed into *ṭibb al-Nabī* (the medicine of the Prophet). The first known treatise that had the title *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* was written by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb al-Sulamī al-Qurṭubī (d. 238/853), who was an Andalusian philologist, poet and historian, as well as being a jurist of the Maliki school. The book has not

<sup>171</sup> al-Bukhārī, al-Ṣaḥīḥ, vol. 4, pp. 40-49 (*Kitāb al-marḍā*) and pp. 50-72 (*Kitāb al-ṭibb*). Ibn Māja, al-Sunan, vol. 2, pp. 1137-1175 (*Kitāb al-ṭibb*).

<sup>172</sup> al-Bukhārī, al-Ṣaḥīḥ, vol. 4, p. 50 (bāb 3).

<sup>173</sup> Ibn Māja, al-Sunan, vol. 2, p. 1151 (hadith 3476).

<sup>174</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1156 (hadith 3495).

<sup>175</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1149 (hadith 3469).

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1158 (hadith 3501).

<sup>177</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1144 (hadith 3458). In this hadith prayer is said to cure stomach-ache.

survived and nothing is known of its contents.<sup>178</sup>

The oldest surviving book on the subject is *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* by the hadith scholar Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Sunnī al-Dīnawarī (d. 364/974) known as Ibn al-Sunnī.<sup>179</sup> His book was taken up and enlarged by Abū Nu‘aim al-Iṣfahānī al-Shāfi‘ī (336/948-430/1038).<sup>180</sup> Abū Nu‘aim was a hadith scholar and a historian, better known for his biographical work on the lives of saints, *Ḥilyat al-auliyā’*. Both Ibn al-Sunnī’s and Abū Nu‘aim’s books were influenced by the then already established Graeco-Islamic medicine in that the hadiths were arranged in chapters following the order of subject matter in the contemporary medical books.<sup>181</sup> The amount of hadiths quoted by Abū Nu‘aim was a lot larger than in the book of his predecessor. Whereas Ibn al-Sunnī quoted not more than three hadiths under each heading, Abū Nu‘aim’s chapters contain up to 40 hadiths each. In the whole book he quoted 838 hadiths,<sup>182</sup> an astonishing amount which is explained by the fact that Abū Nu‘aim included several variations of the same sayings. There are, for example, no less than 26 variants of the saying "for every illness there is a cure".<sup>183</sup> The volume of hadiths Abū Nu‘aim included in his book made it a valuable source for later writers on the subject. Even though Ibn al-Sunnī’s and Abū Nu‘aim’s books were arranged like medical books, they did not contain a discussion of medical theory nor did they contain medical analyses of the sayings.<sup>184</sup> Therefore the books can be considered specialized hadith collections rather than medical texts.

Also among the early texts is *Ṭibb al-Nabī* written by Abū al-‘Abbās Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad al-Mustaghfirī al-Nasafī (d. 432/1041), who was a Hanafite jurist and preacher.<sup>185</sup> One manuscript of the text has survived and is kept in Teheran,<sup>186</sup> but

<sup>178</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 30 and 118. Recep 1969, p. 4, item 2. GAL<sup>2</sup>, vol. 1, p. 156.

<sup>179</sup> al-Nasīmī claims that the book has not survived (al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 30f), but Ömer Recep maintains that Ibn al-Sunnī made an abridged version of the book and that this version has survived in ms. Fatih 3585. Recep also informs that it was this abridged version that Abū Nu‘aim used as a model for his own book (Recep 1969, pp. 4f, item 3).

<sup>180</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 36f. Recep 1969, p. 5, item 4. GAL<sup>2</sup>, vol. 1, pp. 445f and GALS, vol. 1, pp. 616f.

<sup>181</sup> On the arrangement of material in Abū Nu‘aim’s book: al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 43. Ömer Recep mentions that Ibn al-Sunnī’s and Abū Nu‘aim’s books had an identical arrangement (Recep 1969, p. 20).

<sup>182</sup> Recep 1969, p. 20.

<sup>183</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 2-11 of the Arabic text.

<sup>184</sup> The lack of medical analysis in Abū Nu‘aim’s book is mentioned in Recep 1969, p. 22 and al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 43 and 118. As to Ibn al-Sunnī’s book, Ömer Recep does not mention that there were any medical comments on the manuscript he consulted, so there obviously were none.

<sup>185</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 46. GALS, vol. 1, p. 617.

<sup>186</sup> Recep 1969, p. 6, item 5, ms. Teheran 1293. al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 46: al-Nasīmī claims that one incomplete manuscript is kept in Istanbul Kütüphanesi (no. 2814), but his short description of the text gives reason to believe that the text is not al-Mustaghfirī’s *Ṭibb al-Nabī* but a copy of the medical chapters of Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziya’s *Zād al-Ma‘ād*. al-Nasīmī writes: "yabda’u al-makḥḥūt min al-waraqā 98, wa-huwa yatakallamu ‘an al-siyar wal-maghāzī, thumma ba‘da dhālika fī warāqa 101 yabda’u bāb anwā‘ al-maraḍ." Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zād al-Ma‘ād*, vol. 3, p. 63: "wa-qaḍ atainā ‘alā jumal min hadyihi ṣallā Allāhu ‘alaihi wa-sallama fī al-maghāzī wal-siyar ... wa-naḥnu nattabi‘u

the text is also included in *Biḥār al-anwār* of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī. This text shows that al-Mustaghfirī confined himself to quoting some medical hadiths and did not analyse the medical issues presented in them.<sup>187</sup>

The famous Hanbalite theologian Abū al-Faraj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Jauzī (d. 597/1200), who held an influential position during the reign of Caliph al-Mustaḍī’ (d. 575/1180), wrote two books on medical subjects. Physical diseases and their cures were presented in *Luqaṭ al-manāfi‘ fī al-ṭibb* (Selections of the benefits of medicine).<sup>188</sup> Moral issues or moral illnesses such as stinginess or envy and their cures were the subject of his other book, *al-Ṭibb al-rūḥānī* (Spiritual medicine).<sup>189</sup> Here Ibn al-Jauzī discussed similar issues regarding the effects of ethics on the body and soul as did the doctors of the Graeco-Islamic school.

Ibn al-Jauzī’s *Luqaṭ* consists of 147 folios and contains a presentation of Graeco-Islamic medical theory. Ibn al-Jauzī also lists illnesses and their cures. The illnesses are arranged the same way as in contemporary medical books: from head to toe. The descriptions of both theory and practical applications are very short, and there are surprisingly few references to the sayings of the Prophet. Hadiths are quoted in connection with examples of prayers and incantations as cures. Furthermore, the existence of the evil eye and witchcraft is supported by reference to the Prophet’s experience. Only very few of the medical hadiths dealing with specific illnesses or other than religious curing methods are quoted. As in the earlier works of the genre, the content of these hadiths is not analysed or interpreted medically. They are merely quoted without comment.

A short treatise was written by Ibn al-Jauzī’s pupil, hadith scholar and historian, Ḍiyā’ al-dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn Aḥmad al-Maqdisī al-Ḥanbalī (d. 643/1245). One of the surviving manuscripts of his *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* consists of only two folios<sup>190</sup> and another of less than 14 folios written in broad handwriting, 11 lines on each page.<sup>191</sup> The brevity of the text indicates that it cannot discuss medical theory or the medical interpretation of the hadiths in any detail.

Some basic medical comments were included in the book written by another Hanbalite, Shams al-dīn Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Faṭḥ al-Ba‘lī (d. 709/1309), who was a jurist and a hadith scholar. His *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* contains forty medical traditions with short commentaries. The medical information is scanty and the book does not contain any general discussion of medical theory.<sup>192</sup> The fact that the book contains

dhālika bi-dhikri fuṣūl nāfi‘a fī hadiyihī fī al-ṭibb."

<sup>187</sup> al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 62, pp. 209-304.

<sup>188</sup> I have studied the manuscript kept in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin, ms. no. We 1180.

<sup>189</sup> Ibn al-Jauzī, *al-Ṭibb al-rūḥānī*, ed. Abū Ḥājir Muḥammad al-Sa‘īd ibn Basyūnī Zaghūl, Cairo 1406/1986.

<sup>190</sup> de Slane 1883-1895, ms. no. 2562/18, folios 297-298.

<sup>191</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 56f: ms. Istanbul no. 3474, the 14 folios contain two texts: al-Maqdisī’s *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* and al-Suyūṭī’s treatise *al-Maradd fī karāḥiyat al-su‘āl wal-radd*.

<sup>192</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 62; al-Nasīmī’s description is based on ms. 1118 (Istanbul) consisting of 21 folios. Two other manuscripts are mentioned in al-Munajjid 1959, p. 333: Ṭal‘at 536 ṭibb and Taimūriya 2 ṭibb.

exactly forty hadiths shows that it belongs to the *Arbaʿīn* literature, a special group of hadith literature consisting of selections of forty traditions. These types of selections were based on the words of the Prophet: "Anyone who preserves forty beneficial traditions for my *umma* will be asked to enter paradise from any door he wishes".<sup>193</sup>

These early books on the Prophet's medicine written by scholars of religious sciences did not contain a very thorough medical analysis of the hadiths. For the further development of the Prophet's medicine it was important that it did not remain a subject of interest only to hadith scholars and theologians, but that also some physicians would concern themselves with it. The oldest known treatise containing an expert analysis is ascribed to Muwaffaq al-dīn ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (d. 629/1231), even though the book was actually assembled by his student: *al-Arbaʿīn al-ṭibbīya al-mustakhraja min sunan Ibn Māja wa-sharḥuhā lil-ʿallāma al-ṭabīb ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī ʿamala tilmīdhuhu al-shāikh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Birzālī* (Forty medical traditions taken from the *Sunan* of Ibn Māja and their commentary by the doctor ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī, prepared by his student Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Birzālī).<sup>194</sup>

ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī was a versatile scholar, who, apart from being a philosopher and practising doctor, was also interested in hadiths, which he learned and passed on. He was born in Baghdad but spent many years in Syria and Egypt. His pupil, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Birzālī (d. 636/1239) is not known as a doctor but as a hadith scholar. According to the book's preface, al-Birzālī had travelled to Damascus in order to study hadiths. He decided to study Ibn Māja's *Sunan* under the guidance of al-Baghdādī. When al-Birzālī reached the medical hadiths of the *Sunan*, he had asked al-Baghdādī to explain them to him, and it was these explanations that al-Birzālī then assembled in the book *al-Arbaʿīn al-ṭibbīya*. As the title indicates, the book belongs, like the above-mentioned book of Muḥammad al-Baʿlī, to the *Arbaʿīn* literature. In order to reach the figure 40, al-Birzālī had to include four hadiths which did not relate to medicine.<sup>195</sup> Even though the book contained much medical information, it was still a hadith collection. The author's motive was to gain religious merit and not to create a new form of medicine.

Another pupil of al-Baghdādī, Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Tifāshī (d. 651/1253) also wrote a book on the Prophet's medicine. His book is titled *al-Shifāʾ fi al-ṭibb al-musnad ʿan al-sayyid al-muṣṭafā* (Cure in the medicine transmitted from the Prophet).<sup>196</sup> al-Tifāshī was a man of letters and functioned as a judge in his native area Qafṣa. He was also known to be an expert in precious stones.<sup>197</sup> In spite of the fact

<sup>193</sup> The tradition of *Arbaʿīn* literature is discussed by Khalid Alavi 1983, pp. 71-93. The tradition with variations, *ibid.* pp. 75-78.

<sup>194</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 47f. According to al-Nasīmī there are two manuscripts of the book. One of them is in Cairo: Maʿhad al-makḥṭūʿāt al-ʿarabīya, it is entitled *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* by ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī and it consists of 97 folios. The other manuscript is in Tangier: al-Khizāna al-Kanūnīya. This manuscript has been printed by Majallat lisān al-dīn, 1370/1951.

<sup>195</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 47-54. al-Nasīmī's description of the content of the text is based on the printed edition mentioned in the note above.

<sup>196</sup> *ibid.*, p. 58: Ms. Maʿhad al-makḥṭūʿāt al-ʿarabīya, Cairo. The manuscript consists of 90 folios. al-Munajjid 1959, p. 286: Ms. Ṭalʿat 515 ṭibb.

that he had been al-Baghdādī's student, his interest in curative medicine seems to have been moderate, at least he did not write any treatises on it. The books he wrote dealt with minerals, sexual desire and the five senses.<sup>198</sup> His lack of knowledge in medical matters was probably the reason why his book on the Prophet's medicine was actually an abridged version of Abū Nu'aim's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*. It differed from the original in that he left out the chains of transmitters and avoided repeating the same traditions under various headings. al-Tifāshī did not add any medical explanations to the hadiths.<sup>199</sup>

Another practising doctor who was interested in the Prophet's medical sayings was 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Karīm ibn Ṭarkhān ibn Taqī al-Ḥamawī known as 'Alā' al-dīn al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān (d. 720/1320). He was an oculist and a man of letters, who lived in Ṣafad in Palestine. He is also reported to have held the position of the treasurer of Ṣafad.<sup>200</sup> His book is called *al-Aḥkām al-nabawīya fī al-ṣinā'a al-ṭibbīya* (The Prophet's decisions in the medical art).<sup>201</sup> In the introduction the author quotes the Prophet's saying about memorizing 40 hadiths<sup>202</sup> and thus included his book in the *Arba'īn* literature. The book contains 40 hadiths on specific diseases and on the prevention of illnesses and another 40 hadiths on various curing methods. In addition to these the author listed 83 simple drugs or foodstuffs each supported by a medical or non-medical hadith.<sup>203</sup> Whereas 'Abd al-Laṭīf's medical commentaries dealt only with hadiths in the *Sunan* of Ibn Māja, al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān used considerably more extensive source material. He used all six standard hadith collections: the *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, the *Sunans* of Abū Dā'ūd, Ibn Māja, al-Tirmidhī and al-Nisā'ī and in addition to these Mālik's *al-Muwatta'*. Further he extracted medical hadiths from the earlier books on the Prophet's medicine, namely those of Ibn al-Sunnī and Abū Nu'aim. In his medical commentaries he referred not only to the acknowledged authorities such as Ibn Sīnā and al-Rāzī but also to the book *al-Arba'īn al-ṭibbīya* by 'Abd al-Laṭīf.<sup>204</sup> In spite of the extensive source material and the list of drugs included, the book is still only a collection of medical hadiths and does not present the Prophet's medicine as a comprehensive medical system.

Both al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's *Aḥkām* and 'Abd al-Laṭīf's *al-Arba'īn al-ṭibbīya*, the two books containing commentaries of practising doctors, formed the foundation for a further development of the Prophet's medicine in the 8th/14th century. The hadith scholar Muḥammad al-Dhahabī used the medical views expressed in these books when writing his *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*. He several times mentions 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-

197 al-I'ṭām, vol. 1, p. 273. al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 58.

198 GAL<sup>2</sup> vol. 1, p. 652 and GALS, vol. 1, p. 904. al-Munajjid 1959, p. 286.

199 al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 59-61.

200 al-I'ṭām, vol. 4, p. 302. al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 63. Ibn Ḥajar, al-Durar, vol. 3, p. 62.

201 I have studied an edition made by 'Abd al-Salām Ḥāshim Ḥāfīz, printed in Cairo 1374/1955. Manuscripts are listed in al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 63f and Recep 1969, p. 13, item 24.

202 al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān, al-Aḥkām al-nabawīya, p. 8.

203 Table of contents in al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 66-72.

204 al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's sources are listed in al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 72f.

Baghdādī's *al-Arbaʿīn* as his source. He also borrowed from al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's *al-Aḥkām* but without naming it as his source.<sup>205</sup> He extracted the Prophet's sayings not only from the six standard books mentioned above but also from the Sunan of al-Baihaqī and from Abū Nuʿaim's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*.

al-Dhahabī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* is divided into three parts. The first part deals with theoretical issues explaining the elements and humours and giving the general causes for illnesses, it also describes the methods for preventing illnesses. The second part contains an alphabetic list of the names and uses of different foodstuffs and medicaments. The third part presents specific illnesses and their cures. al-Dhahabī was not distressed by the relative scarcity of medical hadiths, but freely described medicaments and illnesses not recorded in the Prophet's sayings. He included plants used for medication by the doctors of the Graeco-Islamic school such as *uṣṭūkhūdus* (lavender), *anīsūn* (anise) and *bābūnaj* (camomile) in his list of simple drugs.<sup>206</sup> The illnesses he added were obviously common afflictions also in his time, e.g. *ruʿāf* (nosebleed), *suʿāl* (cough) and *qaulanj* (colic).<sup>207</sup>

al-Dhahabī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* follows the example of Ibn al-Jauzī's *Luqaṭ* in being a fairly comprehensive medical handbook. They both cover basic issues of medical theory and give instructions in practical treatment. The difference is that al-Dhahabī refers to the Prophet far more often than Ibn al-Jauzī. The latter accepted the Prophet's guidance mainly in connection with religious cures, whereas al-Dhahabī presented the Prophet's words on a variety of medical subjects. This difference was based on the fact that al-Dhahabī was able to avail himself of the books by al-Baghdādī and al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān. The medical analysis of the hadiths given by the two physicians enabled al-Dhahabī to include the Prophet's advice to a greater extent than Ibn al-Jauzī. In Ibn al-Jauzī's *Luqaṭ* the Prophet's words are separated from the purely medical issues, but in al-Dhahabī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* they are more integrated into the medical text.

A further stage of development is shown by Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*. Ibn al-Qayyim discussed the theological implications of medical theory in much more detail than al-Dhahabī. al-Dhahabī generally accepted the current Graeco-Islamic theory, whereas Ibn al-Qayyim was more inclined to modify it to meet the theological demands. Like al-Dhahabī, Ibn al-Qayyim also began with a discussion of medical theory, but in contrast to al-Dhahabī, he did not just reproduce the generally accepted theory of elements and humours. He analysed it on the basis of the Koran and found that it could not be accepted without some changes. He clearly stressed the importance of following the teachings of Islam not only in the treatment of illnesses but also in formulating medical theory. His book reveals an attempt to create a medical book, in which the teachings of Islam, the Prophet's sayings and views of

<sup>205</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 83f: al-Nasīmī has come to this conclusion after comparing the phraseology of al-Dhahabī and Ibn Ṭarkhān.

<sup>206</sup> DH, p. 56 (*uṣṭūkhūdus*), p. 57 (*anīsūn*) and p. 58 (*bābūnaj*). These items are mentioned in the list of medicaments of Siddiqī 1959, Appendix 2, pp. 127 (*uṣṭūkhūdus*) and 129 (*anīsūn* and *bābūnaj*).

<sup>207</sup> DH, pp. 177 (*ruʿāf*) and 178 (*suʿāl* and *qaulanj*).

Graeco-Islamic medicine are woven together to form a complete pattern.

In presenting illnesses Ibn al-Qayyim confined himself to those mentioned in the hadiths. Each chapter dealing with an illness starts with the words "guidance of the Prophet on...". Also his list of drugs and foodstuffs shows a closer adherence to hadiths than al-Dhahabī's list. Ibn al-Qayyim quoted 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī as his authority in some cases, but his major source was al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's *al-Aḥkām*, even though he never mentioned the book or the author. Ibn al-Qayyim systematized and rearranged al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's material so that in his book all the hadiths pertaining to a subject were dealt with under one heading, whereas al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's material was spread throughout the book. Ibn al-Qayyim's text reveals juridical and religious dimensions that are deeper than the discussions found in al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's book. Moreover, Ibn al-Qayyim's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* contains chapters not present in *al-Aḥkām*.<sup>208</sup>

The medical chapters in Ibn Muflīḥ's *al-Ādāb al-shar'īya wal-minaḥ al-mar'īya* show an indebtedness to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya, although he never mentions Ibn al-Qayyim as his authority. Especially in the theologically relevant issues he very closely follows Ibn al-Qayyim's reasoning. Like Ibn al-Qayyim he supports aspects of medical theory with references to the Koran and hadiths. Ibn Muflīḥ's text does not constitute a well-organized medical handbook like al-Dhahabī's *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*. Ibn Muflīḥ discusses various issues related to health and quotes the relevant hadiths including their medical analysis. The text deals mostly with the qualities and uses of various medicaments and foodstuffs. Individual illnesses receive less notice. His aim has not been to create a comprehensive medical book but to stress the relevance of the Islamic tradition in the issues of health and sickness.

Ibn al-Qayyim's pupil, the Hanbalite jurist Jalāl al-dīn Abū al-Muzaffar Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad al-Surramarrī (d. 776/1374) also wrote a book on the Prophet's medicine. The book is titled *Kitāb shifā' al-ālām fī ṭibb ahl al-islām* (The book on curing pains in the medicine of the people of Islam).<sup>209</sup> Like al-Dhahabī, al-Surramarrī arranged his material in three main parts: the first dealt with theoretical issues, the second gave the alphabetic list of medicaments and foodstuffs and the third described the symptoms and cures of individual diseases. Also like al-Dhahabī, he did not only deal with illnesses mentioned in the hadiths, but described what he himself defined as "common ailments".<sup>210</sup>

Among later authors there were two Yemeni physicians, whose texts have been classified as the Prophet's medicine.<sup>211</sup> One of them was Mahdī ibn 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm

<sup>208</sup> al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 92-99; al-Nasīmī has compared the two books and has found that Ibn al-Qayyim sometimes quoted al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān word for word. al-Nasīmī says that Ibn al-Qayyim even repeated al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān's erroneous information on the source of a hadith (ibid., pp. 98f). He further states that Ibn al-Qayyim seems to have himself studied 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī's *al-Arba'īn*, because he occasionally quoted it more extensively than al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān (ibid., p. 93).

<sup>209</sup> Dietrich 1966, pp. 117-121: mss. Samsun, Gazi 2777 and Istanbul, Fatih 3584.

<sup>210</sup> ibid., p. 120; description of the ms. Samsun, Gazi 2777.

<sup>211</sup> Ullmann 1970, p. 188.

al-Şanaubarī (al-Şubunrī) al-Yamanī (d. 815/1412). His book is called *Kitāb al-raḥma fī al-ṭibb wal-ḥikma* (The book of mercy in medicine and wisdom).<sup>212</sup> The other was Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr al-Azraq (d. after 890/1485) and his book is *Kitāb tashīl al-manāfi‘ fī al-ṭibb wal-ḥikam* (The book on the benefits of medicine and wisdom made accessible).<sup>213</sup> Nothing much is known of the authors except that they seem to have been practising physicians. The books concentrate on giving practical advice to treat illnesses and theoretical issues are discussed only very briefly.

al-Şanaubarī’s *Kitāb al-raḥma* is written in a very concise form. It deals with the basic theoretical issues and gives a list of drugs and foodstuffs. The theological problems connected with medical theory—such as contagion—are not discussed. The main part of the book describes cures to a large number of illnesses. The references to the Prophet are scarce, and the traditions are given without any chains of transmitters. Of the other authorities, Hippocrates, Galen and al-Rāzī are mentioned.

Also al-Azraq’s *Kitāb tashīl* contains descriptions of a large variety of ailments from headache to gout and fevers. It also gives the methods of how to beget a male child and instructions on how to colour hair. Most of the subjects discussed in the book are not covered by the Prophet’s sayings. Nearly one third of the book consists of a list of drugs and foodstuffs. Many of the items included in the list have not been mentioned by the Prophet. Apart from simple medicaments al-Azraq also gave instructions on electuaries (*ma‘ājīn*), ointments (*marāḥim*) and complex laxatives (*musahhilāt*). As his major sources Ibrāhīm al-Azraq mentioned Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Ghaith al-Kamarānī’s *Kitāb shifā’ al-ajsām* (The book on the cure of the bodies). Among his other sources are al-Rāzī’s *Bur’ al-sā‘a* (Recovery of an hour), a treatise on illnesses that can be cured within an hour, and ‘Izz al-dīn Ibrāhīm al-Suwaidī’s *Tadhkira* (Memorandum). Apart from al-Şanaubarī’s *Kitāb al-raḥma*, the only other book on the Prophet’s medicine quoted by him was *al-Luqaṭ* of Ibn al-Jauzī.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>212</sup> GAL<sup>2</sup>, vol. 2, p. 242; Brockelmann gives the name as al-Şanaubarī, but in al-I‘lām this is considered an error and al-Şubunrī is given instead (al-I‘lām, vol. 7, p. 313). The book is often erroneously ascribed to Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī, see GALS, vol. 2, p. 252. The printed edition, Cairo 1313/1895-6 that I have used also gives al-Suyūṭī as the author. This printed edition seems to be identical with the ms. no. We 1190, which is described in Ahlwardt 1893, Band 5, p. 564. There the author is identified as Muḥammad al-Mahdī ibn ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Şanbarī (or al-Şubunrī). Several mss. are given in al-Munajjid 1959, pp. 311f. The author’s name is rendered al-Ş-b-y-rī al-M-h-j-mī (Mahdī ibn ‘Alī).

<sup>213</sup> GALS, vol. 2, p. 170. The year of his death is given in al-I‘lām, vol. 1, p. 46. I have studied an edition of al-Azraq’s book that was printed in Cairo, 1313 AH. al-Munajjid 1959, p. 272; ms. Walī al-dīn 2486, ms. al-‘Adaliya/Zaitūna 4194 and ms. al-Aḥmadiya/Zaitūna 5445/4. al-Munajjid further mentions that the text has been printed several times in Cairo, e.g. 1307 AH (in its margin al-Dhababī’s al-Ṭibb al-nabawī).

<sup>214</sup> The sources are listed in Ibrāhīm al-Azraq, *Kitāb al-tashīl*, p. 3. al-Azraq gives the *nisba* of Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Ghaith as al-Kamarānī, but Brockelmann considers the form al-Kirmānī more correct (GALS, vol. 2, p. 170). Mu‘jam al-mu‘allifīn renders the *nisba* al-Kamarānī and informs us that Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Ghaith (d. 857/1453) was a Shafī‘ite jurist from Yemen, who was among other things also interested in medicine (Mu‘jam al-mu‘allifīn vol. 11, pp. 113f). His book *Shifā’ al-ajsām fī al-ṭibb* is mentioned in Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, vol. 4, p. 50. al-Rāzī’s *Bur’ al-sā‘a* is mentioned in Manfred Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam*, p. 135 and al-Suwaidī’s *Tadhkira*, *ibid.*, p. 284. ‘Izz al-dīn Ibrāhīm al-Suwaidī died in 690/1292.



There continued to be writers who preferred to limit their presentation to the Prophet's medical sayings. Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī (849/1445-911/1505), the Egyptian hadith scholar and historian wrote *al-Manhaj al-sawī wal-manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī* (The correct method and the thirst-quenching spring of the Prophet's medicine).<sup>215</sup> The book seems to consist of only hadiths without any medical explanations. The arrangement of the chapters follows that of the standard medical books. Because the Prophet's traditions do not deal with all aspects of medicine, the chapterization of the hadiths is sometimes artificial. For example of the six traditions quoted in Chapter 12: "Diagnosis of diseases by body colour" none is relevant to the subject mentioned in the heading. Also only a few of the hadiths quoted in Chapter 7: "Anatomy" deal with that subject.<sup>216</sup> al-Suyūṭī's *al-Manhaj* did not bring anything new to the theoretical foundation of the Prophet's medicine. His book is comparable to the early un-commented compilations of medical hadiths.

Shams al-dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Ibn Ṭūlūn al-Dimashqī (d. 953/1546), the author of *al-Manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī*,<sup>217</sup> was a Hanafite scholar of Islamic sciences, but he showed an interest in other sciences as well—among these medicine. At some point he studied with Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī in Cairo. Ibn Ṭūlūn's book is a compilation with extensive quotations from the earlier authors on the Prophet's medicine, 'Abd al-Laṭīf, al-Dhahabī and Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya. He took further medical information from Ibn Sīnā's *al-Qānūn* and from *al-Mūjaz* written by a more recent medical scholar, Ibn al-Nafīs (d. 687/1288). Ibn al-Nafīs' *al-Mūjaz* was a summary of

<sup>215</sup> Manuscripts in Turkish and Indian libraries are listed by Azmi 1985, pp. 97-99. Manuscripts in Syrian, Iraqi and Turkish libraries are listed by al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 100-102. al-Suyūṭī listed his works in his autobiography. The list does not include *al-Manhaj al-sawī wal-manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī*, but a book titled *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* is mentioned (al-Suyūṭī, al-Taḥadduth, vol. 2, p. 112, item 19). According to the editor of al-Taḥadduth, E. M. Sartain, this should be an abridged version of *al-Manhaj* (Sartain 1975, vol. 1, p. 185, item 19). Because *al-Manhaj* is not mentioned in the list, I think the title *al-Ṭibb al-nabawī* might be an abridged form of the title *al-Manhaj al-sawī wal-manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī* and not necessarily an abridgement of the book itself. Several manuscripts of *al-Manhaj* are mentioned in al-Munajjid 1959, p. 308.

<sup>216</sup> Azmi 1985, pp. 102-106. Azmi's description is based on the ms. in the Institute of History of Medicine and Medical Research, Delhi (no number is given). Another description of al-Suyūṭī's *al-Manhaj* is given in al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, pp. 104-109. It is based on ms. 168/tn in al-Zāhirīya, Damascus. The opening sentences of these two manuscripts—i.e. Damascus and Delhi—are identical and so is the heading of the first chapter. In describing the rest of the texts Azmi and al-Nasīmī differ greatly. When I compared al-Nasīmī's description of the Damascus manuscript to Ibn Ṭūlūn's *al-Manhal al-rawī*, I found them very similar—apart from the opening sentence and the heading of the first chapter—but to conclude that the Damascus ms. is actually Ibn Ṭūlūn's *al-Manhal* requires a close comparison of the two texts, which I have not been able to make. Also ms. Spr 1880(2) in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin is similar to the printed edition of Ibn Ṭūlūn's *al-Manhal*, although the ms. is ascribed to al-Suyūṭī in Ahlwardt 1893, Band 5, p. 562.

<sup>217</sup> Ibn Ṭūlūn, *al-Manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī*, ed. 'Azīz Baik, Hyderabad 1987. About the author: Mu'jam al-mu'allifin, vol. 11, pp. 51f. al-I'lām, vol. 6, p. 291. GAL<sup>2</sup>, vol. 2, pp. 481-483. 'Azīz Baik, the editor of Ibn Ṭūlūn's *al-Manhal al-rawī* points out in his preface (p. bā') that Ḥājjī Khalīfa erroneously ascribed both *al-Manhaj al-sawī wal-manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī* and *al-Manhal al-rawī fī al-ṭibb al-nabawī* to al-Suyūṭī (Ḥājjī Khalīfa, Kashf al-zunūn, vol. 6, pp. 221 and 224). According to 'Azīz Baik the latter should have been ascribed to Ibn Ṭūlūn. Referring to the information given by Ḥājjī Khalīfa on the content of the two texts, 'Azīz Baik further states that it was Ibn Ṭūlūn's *al-Manhal al-rawī* and not al-Suyūṭī's *al-Manhaj al-sawī*, which was organized like Ibn al-Nafīs' *al-Mūjaz*.

Ibn Sīnā's *al-Qānūn* and served as the model for Ibn Ṭūlūn's book in the arrangement of his material. He did not have anything original to say about the Prophet's medicine.<sup>218</sup>

The Twelver Shi'a had their own medical tradition parallel to the medicine of the Prophet—the medicine of the Imams, *ṭibb al-a'imma*. The text that is among the oldest in this genre is *al-Risāla al-dhahabīya fī uṣūl al-ṭibb wa-furū'ihī* (The golden note on the basic rules and applications of medicine) that has been traditionally ascribed to the 8th Shi'a Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā (148/765-203/818). Imam 'Alī's treatise was addressed to the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mūn (ruled 198/813-218/833). According to the Shi'a tradition Caliph al-Ma'mūn once inquired of Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā what he knew about medicine. As an answer Imam 'Alī wrote this treatise where he summarized his medical knowledge acquired by experience and study. The caliph was impressed by the text and ordered it to be written in gold.<sup>219</sup> There exist several manuscript copies of the treatise and it has also been printed.<sup>220</sup>

The content of the treatise indicates strong influence of Galenic medicine. The text has clearly been written by a person who has accepted and internalized the terminology and theoretical views of Galenic medicine. Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā's treatise consists of dietary instructions and ways to prevent illnesses. There is only occasional advice on how to cure specific illnesses. The most obvious Galenic influence is present in the paragraphs explaining how the seasons of the year affect the temperaments of people. The text instructs what foodstuffs are the most beneficial in each month of the solar year starting from the first spring month *adhār* (March).<sup>221</sup> The Prophet is not mentioned in the text but some of the expressions are clearly extracted from his sayings. For example, the sentence: "Know, Commander of believers that God did not afflict the believing servant with an affliction without creating a medicine for him to treat it with"<sup>222</sup> is a paraphrase of the hadith: "God did not give an illness without giving it a cure".

In the 4th/10th century the brothers 'Itāb 'Abd Allāh and al-Ḥusain ibn Biṣṭām ibn Sābūr wrote a book titled *Ṭibb al-A'imma* (Medicine of the Imams).<sup>223</sup> The book is a compilation of medical sayings of the Imams. The hadiths are arranged in chapters

<sup>218</sup> The description is based on the printed version edited by 'Azīz Baik.

<sup>219</sup> al-Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, vol. 62, pp. 307 and 356.

<sup>220</sup> Manuscripts are listed in GALS, vol. 1, p. 319; GAS, vol. 1, p. 536 and Recep 1969, p. 4, item 1. al-Nasīmī claims the text to be lost (al-Nasīmī 1987, vol. 1, p. 30). The text has been printed as Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā, *Ṭibb al-Riḍā*, ed. al-Sayyid Murtaḍā al-'Askarī, al-Najaf s.a. I have used this edition. *al-Risāla al-dhahabīya* has also been published in al-Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, vol. 62, pp. 309-356. A further edition has been made by Muḥammad Mahdī Najaf. It is printed in *Majmū'at al-āthār*, al-Mu'tamar al-'ālamī al-awwal lil-Imām al-Riḍā 'alaihi al-salām, al-Lajna al-thaqāfiya lil-mu'tamar al-'ālamīya lil-Imām al-Riḍā 'alaihi al-salām, Meshhed 1406, pp. 385-427. The edition is based on three mss. all of them kept in Maktabat al-Imām al-Ḥakīm, al-Najaf.

<sup>221</sup> Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā, *Ṭibb al-Riḍā*, pp. 38-42.

<sup>222</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>223</sup> Ullmann 1970, p. 189. The text has been translated into English by Batool Ispahany with the title *Islamic medical wisdom—the ṭibb al-A'imma*. My description of the contents is based on this translation.

according to the subject matter, but there are no further explanations of the diseases or cures mentioned in them. The book does not contain any discussion on general medical theory and no list of drugs or foodstuffs is included.

A later Shi'ite author was Aḥmad ibn Šāliḥ ibn Ḥājji al-Baḥrānī (d. 1124/1712).<sup>224</sup> His *al-Ṭibb al-aḥmadī* (The most praiseworthy medicine)<sup>225</sup> presents—through hadiths—some general issues such as the permissibility of medical treatment, whether men are allowed to treat women and vice versa and whether *dhimmīs* are allowed to treat Muslims. Apart from listing the four humours, medical theory is not discussed. The hadiths dealing with individual diseases are collected in the section titled "Aujā' al-jasad min al-ra's ilā al-qadam" (The pains of the body from head to foot). This arrangement of diseases was usual in Graeco-Islamic medical books. Aḥmad al-Baḥrānī did not discuss the symptoms or causes of the illnesses mentioned nor did he present their cures in a systematic manner. He confined himself only to quoting the hadiths under the relevant headings but did not add any comments. Like *Ṭibb al-A'imma* of the two Sābūrs, *al-Ṭibb al-aḥmadī* is also a hadith compilation, in which they are not placed in a precise medical framework.

On the basis of the very few Shi'ite texts that I have studied, it seems that their arrangement was similar to the corresponding Sunni compilations, i.e. the hadiths were assembled in chapters according to the subject matter and these chapters were further organized in the order current in the medical books or summaries. The Shi'ite texts indicate an acceptance of the Graeco-Islamic theory, although they do not include a separate presentation of the theory. The three Shi'ite texts I have studied do not represent the same stage of development as al-Dhahabī's and Ibn al-Qayyim's texts, where the hadiths are closely connected to the medical theory. Whether the Shi'ite genre developed in this direction is impossible to say on the basis of the material I have had at my disposal.

The history sketched above shows that the Prophet's medicine developed from collections of traditions without comments into a more systematic presentation of medicine sanctioned by hadiths. The 8th/14th century texts of al-Dhahabī, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzīya and Ibn Muflīḥ represent the latest stage of the development. The authors combined the Prophet's medical sayings with the teachings of Graeco-Islamic medicine in their descriptions of aetiology, prevention and treatment of illnesses. On the basis of the material I have consulted, they seem to have been the first ones to systematize the Prophet's medicine in this manner. Considering the works of their predecessors it is evident that this stage of development could hardly have been reached much earlier. It needed the preparatory works of authors such as al-Kaḥḥāl Ibn Ṭarkhān and 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghādāī who had the medical competence to prove that the Prophet's instructions on illnesses were in fact acceptable in the light of the authoritative medical theory of the time. It therefore seems justified to assume that there occurred an important development in the Prophet's medicine in the 8th/14th century. This

<sup>224</sup> Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn, vol. 1, p. 251.

<sup>225</sup> Recep 1969, p. 12, item 21. I have studied the ms. no. Spr 1881 in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

development was evident in the texts of the three scholars—al-Dhahabī, Ibn al-Qayyim and Ibn Mufliḥ—who all followed the doctrines of Hanbalite theology.