



BIOGRAPHY

Hubaysh-i Tiflisi: Physician and Astronomer of the Twelfth Century C.E.

Introduction

Regarding the formation of the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate, it could be stated that the Seljuk Turkomans, who had migrated from Turkestan to Iran, set the scene for the establishment of a new dynasty after the defeat of Mas'ud I of Ghazni in 1040 C.E. by Tughril (Cahen, 1968, p. 22). This dynasty ruled most parts of Iran and founded a powerful state by 1058 C.E. (Figure 1).

Following the formation of this government, Turkoman tribes started their migration to Iran. Since the beginning of the governance of Tughril, the Seljuk statesmen realized that this wave of migration would have adverse effects on their government. Hence, they directed the new tribes to Anatolia (Asia Minor). This trend continued during the reign of Alp Arslan and his son Malik-Shah, culminating on August 26, 1071, with the Battle of Manzikert, which resulted in the defeat of the Byzantine army by the Seljuk army in Anato-

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lia. This battle can be considered one of the most influential battles throughout history because it led to the entrance of the Seljuk Turks into Asia Minor (Anatolia), conquering most areas of the region. The outcome of this battle was the establishment of a new government known as the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate (Peacock, and Nur Yildiz, 2013, p. 2), the government that ruled Asia Minor (Anatolia) from 1081 C.E to the fourteenth century C.E (Uzuncarsili, 2001. pp. 1-2; Shokr, 2006. pp. 18, 73).

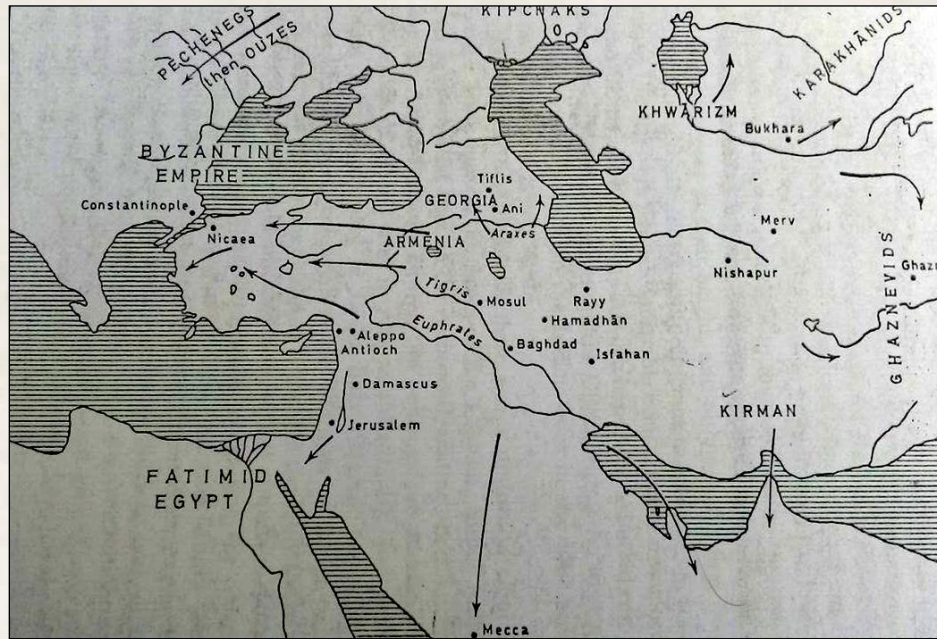


Figure 1. The Seljuk Empire at the end of the eleventh century (Cahen, 1968, p. 18)

Although the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate was established in the eleventh century, it gained considerable power one century later during the reign of Kilic Arslan II, the fifth Anatolian Seljuk ruler (Cahen, and Holt, 2000, pp. 10-11).

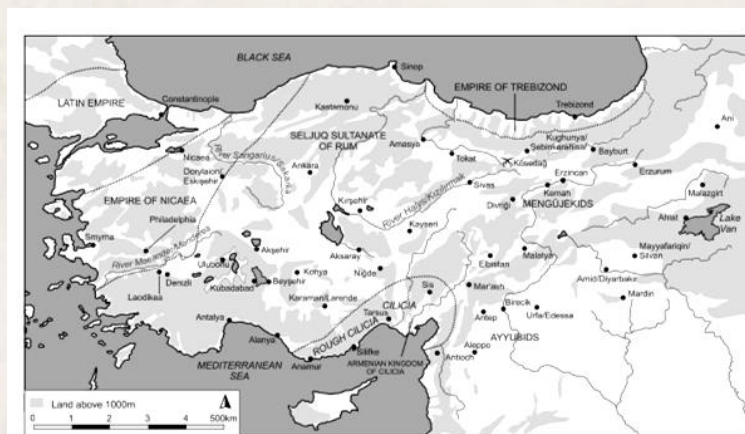


Figure 2. Anatolia in the Seljuk of Rum period (Peacock, and Nur Yildiz, 2013, p. 5)

He was interested in science, culture, and literature. His court was the house of scholars,

physicians, poets, and literary figures. He distributed the important cities of his territory among his children to enable them to operate independently in their cities. His children also considerably valued physicians, poets, scientists, and secretaries. During the reign of Kilic Arslan II, scholars, poets, and other great scientific and literary figures gradually set foot in the Anatolian Seljuk courts due to the political stability of that time. With the attempts made by these thinkers, the light of knowledge was shed on Anatolia and soon on other parts of this land. One of these thinkers and scholars was Hubaysh Ibn Ibrahim (Turan, 1995: 109-111). (Figure 3).

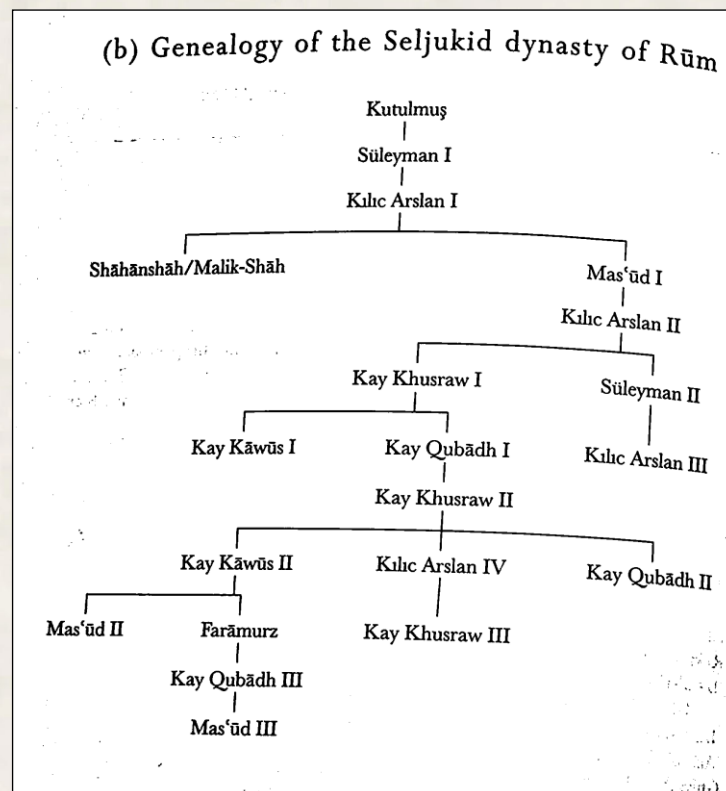


Figure 3. Genealogy of the Seljukid Dynasty of Rum (Cahen, and Holt, 2000, p. 278)

Hubaysh Ibn Ibrahim Al-Tiflisi

Sharaf al-Din Abulfadl Hubaysh (or Hussein) Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Mohammad Al-Tiflisi was the first physician and literary figure of the court of Kilic Arslan II. The information on the life of this great Persian scholar is scarce, but his multitude of works on medicine, astronomy, and literature made him a significant figure (Riahi, 1981, p. 620; Nazari, 2000, p. 30). Hubaysh Ibn Ibrahim Al-Tiflisi was born in the far west of the cultural territory of Iran, i.e., the city of Tbilisi. Although his exact birthdate is unknown, it is assumed that he was born in the twelfth century C.E. based on the dates he mentioned in his books. As regards his birth date, it could be stated that since he penned *Qanun Al-Adab* in 1150 C.E., *Kefayat al-Teb* in 1155 C.E., and *Dimensions of Quran* in 1162 C.E., he was probably born 30 years before 1150 C.E., which is around 1121 C.E. Haji Khalifa and Baghdadi believed he passed away in 1231. However, it is unlikely that he lived for more than 110 years. Brockelmann and Kahala believe he died in about 1203 C.E. based on the years of



compilation of his books (Haji Khalifa, 1967, p. 1379; Kahhalah, 1957, p. 189).

Hubaysh became familiar with Persian, Arabic, Syriac, Romani, and Greek languages in Tbilisi and studied sciences such as medicine, astronomy, and linguistics with great effort and perseverance. However, the civil unrest in Tbilisi forced him to leave his hometown. To illustrate, it is important to note that Tbilisi was conquered by Muslim forces early in the spread of Islam. Over time, Islamic and Iranian cultures gradually took root in the region, as some Georgians converted to Islam and Muslim conquerors settled in the city. In the early twelfth century, however, the Georgians regained power and launched an uprising against the occupiers. Around 1120 C.E., with the support of David II, the Cuman tribe, and other non-Muslim groups, they revolted (Riahi, 1981, p. 620). Although Muslim rulers and sultans made several attempts to reconquer Tbilisi, their efforts only escalated the conflict and plunged the city into further chaos. Notably, Mahmoud ibn Mohammad Seljukid (an Iraqi Seljuk), Ilqari Artaqi, Debis ibn Sadaqeh, and Tughril ibn Mohammad (Saheb Aran) advanced on Tbilisi with an army of thirty thousand troops.

They were defeated by the Georgians, with many either killed or captured. The Georgians then laid siege to Tbilisi, a conflict that persisted until 1121 C.E., when they finally seized the city. Upon its capture, they set Tbilisi ablaze, leaving it in ruins. This marked the end of the prolonged rule of Muslim leaders in the city (Riahi, 1981, p. 620).

Due to the chaos in Tbilisi, many Muslim fugitives and homeless residents fled the city, seeking refuge in other Islamic regions, including Baghdad. It appears that Hubaysh ibn Ibrahim left Tbilisi for Baghdad around the same time or possibly a year earlier. In Baghdad, he gained the respect of *Naqib al-Noqaba* Sharaf al-Din Ali ibn Torad ibn Mohammad Zeynabi, a minister under Caliph al-Mustarshid, who became his patron. Taking advantage of Baghdad's stability and intellectual environment, Hubaysh al-Tiflisi composed *Taqvim al-Adwiya*, a medical encyclopedia detailing various drugs and their properties in Persian, Arabic, Syriac, Romanic, and Greek. In recognition of Sharaf al-Din's unwavering support, he dedicated the work to him (Riahi, 1981, p. 620).

Before departing for Anatolia, he traveled to Khorasan, where in 1155 he dedicated his medical work *Kefayat al-Teb* to Sultan Sanjar (Ahmad Sanjar) (Parsapoor, and Isfahani, 2009, p. 2). This dedication likely stemmed from the intense events unfolding in Khorasan at the time. Just two years earlier, in 1153, Sultan Sanjar had suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Oghuz Turks, who took him and his wife, Terken Khatun, captive. During their imprisonment, Terken Khatun fell gravely ill, and *Kefayat al-Teb* may have been composed in part to aid in her treatment. Tragically, despite these efforts, she succumbed to her illness in 1156 (Husseini, 1984, p. 123).

The precise length of Hubaysh ibn Ibrahim's stay in Baghdad remains unclear, but his writings indicate that after spending several years there, he eventually departed for Rome, where he would live the rest of his life. During this period, Rome was under the rule of Kilij Arslan II, a sultan celebrated across the Islamic world for his patronage of culture and learning. Given the sultan's well-documented support for scholars and intellectuals, it is highly probable that Hubaysh deliberately chose to settle within his domain. Some researchers also argue that, "In his search for the market of Persian knowledge, Al-Tiflisi eventually travels to Rome" (Riahi, 1981, pp. 621-622).

Hubaysh Ibn Ibrahim entered the territory of the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate and its capital, Konya, under these circumstances. Konya proved to be a suitable place for Hu-



baysh-i Tiflisi to spend the final years of his life. During this period, he compiled several important works, including *Kamel al-Tabir*, *Kefayat al-Teb*, *Seheh Al-Abadan*, and *Javameh al-Bayan*—a translation of the Noble Quran. Notably, *Kamel al-Tabir* is the oldest Persian book written in Anatolia. This work is a dream interpretation guide arranged in alphabetical order. Hubaysh Ibn Ibrahim wrote it for Kilic Arslan, the father of Rukn al-Din Suleiman Shah (Nazari, 2000, p. 30).

Among Hubaysh ibn Ibrahim's Persian works is *Kefāyat al-Ṭibb* (also cited in some sources as *Bayān al-Ṭibb*). Dedicated to Qutb al-Dīn Malikshāh—son of Kilij Arslan II and ruler of Sivas and Aqsara (Riahi, 1981, p. 623)—this medical compendium is structured in two parts: the first covers general medicine, health preservation, and disease treatment, while the second examines food, compound drugs, and the properties of medicinal substances (Felfalduleh, 2004, p. 282). Hubaysh's corpus extends beyond this work, encompassing both Persian and Arabic texts. His Persian writings include: 1) *Qanun al-Adab Fi Zabt Kalamat al-Arab*; 2) *Bayan al-Sana'at*; 3) *Daniel's Molhameh or Osul al-Malahem*; and 4) *Bayan al-Nojoom*. Examples of his Arabic works include 1) *Ekhtesar Fosul Boqrat*, 2) *Odieh al-Advieh*, 3) *Bayan al-Tasrif*, 4) *Tahsil al-Seheh Belsabab al-Sette*, 5) *Taqadam al-Alaj* and *Badraqal Menhaj*, and 6) *Al-Talkhis Fi Elal al-Quran*. His most important work is *Qanun al-Adab Fi Zabt Kalamat al-Arab*, a Persian dictionary in which 60 Arabic words are translated into Persian. This work is considered one of the earliest and finest Arabic-to-Persian dictionaries (Nazari, 2000, p. 30).

Medical Works of Hubaysh-i Tiflisi

Of Hubaysh's 28 known works, at least 14 books and treatises are devoted to medicine and pharmacology. One of his most significant medical contributions is the book *Kefayat al-Teb*, which, although written in Persian, is sometimes identified in references as an Arabic text. This medical encyclopedia was dedicated to Sultan Sanjar. It is organized into two main sections: the first addresses medical knowledge, health, and the treatment of diseases, while the second focuses on food, medical compounds, and the characteristics of various substances. Most surviving versions of *Kefayat al-Teb* are presented in tabular form. Due to its unique features, this work has held a prominent place in traditional Persian medicine since the 12th century. Some of these distinguishing characteristics are as follows (Nafisi, 1984, p. 128; Safa, 1984, p. 998):

- 1- The reliability of the information and quotes from different physicians.
- 2- References to the great Iranian, Greek, Roman, Arabic, and Indian physicians and their opinions.
- 3- Systematic presentation of medical information (including description of diseases and treatment methods).
- 4- Introduction to different foods and drugs.

Structurally, *Kefayat al-Teb* comprises three principal sections:

The first part provides comprehensive reviews and descriptions of diseases, along with their treatment methods. The second part covers simple foods and drugs, while the third part focuses on compound foods and drugs (Parsapoor, and Isfahani, 2009, pp. 3-7).

The first section of the work discusses the significance of medicine, knowledge of tastes and temperaments, human anatomy, symptoms of diseases, signs of recovery, the climates of various cities, and the four seasons. This content is methodically organized in tabular



The Nine Medical Theses: In the library of Princeton University, a 360-page manuscript, including nine Arabic theses, is introduced. This manuscript was penned in 1337-1338 C.E. in Golestan City (Caucasus) and is attributed to Hubaysh. These theses are as follows: *Taqadam al-Alaj va Tadaraq al-Menhaj* (a thesis on medical principles); *Odiah al-Advieh* (on mixing, preparing, and using drugs) which is also known as *al-Daviah al-Mofrad va Keyfiah Akhzaha va Sighatha*; *Romooz al-Menhaj va Kanooz al-Alaj* (presents the names of diseases and symptoms and a list of practical prescriptions and drugs); *Al-Resalah al-Mote'arefah be Asma-eha al-Moteradefah* (which is a medical dictionary);

Labab al-Asbab (provides the definitions of diseases, causes, symptoms, and treatments); *A Description of the Selected Problems from the Canon of Medicine* (selected excerpts from the Canon of Medicine by Avicenna); *Tahsil al-Sehat be al-Asbab al-Settah* (on hygiene rulers); *Resalat fi Mayata'aloq be al-Aqziah al-Motlaqah va al-Davaeeyah* (on avoidances); *Ekhtesar Fosul Boqrat* (a summary of the Arabic translation of Hippocrates' Fosul) (Hubaysh-i Tiflisi, 1957, p. 280; Hubaysh-i Tiflisi, 1961, p. 9).

Sehat al-Abdan is a treatise on hygiene and medicine that Hubaysh mentions in the introduction to Kamel al-Tabir. Although Ismael Pasha Baghdadi refers to this work, no copies have been found to date (Bagdatli, 1992, p. 263).

Taqvīm al-Adwiyah wa al-Qazāyā is a pioneering multilingual medical encyclopedia authored by Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Ṭarād ibn Muḥammad Zaynabī (1070–1144 CE), who served as vizier to the Abbasid caliphs al-Mustarshid (1118 - 1135) and al-Muqtafi (1136 to 1160). Written between 1128–1135 CE, this groundbreaking work is recognized as the first comprehensive medical compendium of its kind (Uzunçarşılı, 2001, pp. 1–2).

The encyclopedia's innovative tabular format systematically organizes pharmacological knowledge across several key dimensions. The tables in the first part of the encyclopedia list well-known simple drugs in multiple languages, including Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Roman, Greek, and Turkish. Additionally, the work provides descriptions of the pharmaceutical properties of these drugs, methods of administration, and references to authoritative physicians (Hubaysh-i Tiflisi, 1545, pp. 1–2) (Figure 5).

Adviah Mofradeh va Morakabeh, a 93-page Persian book on pharmacy was written in 1248 AD (Bavi, 2003, p. 5). *Mokhtasar Andar Elm Teb* is a medical book composed in both Persian and Arabic (Montasab Majabi, 2006, p. 352). It should be noted that another author named Zardgylm, a Jewish physician from Greater Khorasan, also wrote a book with the same title. This work is discussed in the article "Introduction of Manuscript: Mokhtasar Andar Elm Teb (Available in the Library of Leiden, The Netherlands)" (Farkhondehzadeh, Golshani, and Golshan, 2017, p. 87).

Hubaysh-i Tiflisi's influence on physicians after him

Hubaysh-i Tiflisi should not be confused with Hubaish ibn al-Hasan al-A'sam, the niece and most prominent student of Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-Ibadi (808–873), who was a translator of medical texts from Greek into Arabic and Syriac and lived in Baghdad during the second half of the 9th century (Golshani, et al., 2014, p. 177; Mohammadi Nasab, Emadi, and Ghazi Sh'arabaf, 2018, p. 239). Hubaysh's medical works and ideas have had a profound impact on subsequent physicians, as evidenced by his name and the medicinal compounds he mentioned alongside great figures such as Avicenna, Galen, and Ibn Masawaih. His name and works appear in important medical texts including *Qanushah* by al-Jaghmini (d. 1221), *Tohfe-al-Momenin* by Hakim Momen Tonekaboni (17th century), *Qarabadin-i Kabir* and *Makhzan-ol-Adviyeh* by Aqili Alavi Shirazi (1670–1747), and *Exir Azam* by Hakim Azam Khan Chishti (1814–1902) (Al-Jaghmini, 2010, p. 330; Tunakabuni, 2011, p. 562; Aqili Alavi Shirazi, 1844, p. 571; Aqili Alavi Shirazi, 1860, Vol. 1, p. 647; Hakim Azam Khan Chishti, 2008, p. 51). It remains uncertain whether the name "Hubaysh" mentioned in two significant medical works—*Kitāb al-Jāmi' li-Mufradāt al-Adwiya wa-l-Aghdhiya* by Ibn al-Baytar (1197–1248) and *Kitāb al-'Umda fi 'l-ġirāḥa* by Ibn al-Quff (1233–1286)—refers to Hubaysh-i Tiflisi. However, given the extensive



discussion of pharmacology in these texts, it is most likely that they refer to his lasting influence.



Figure 5. The introduction to the simple drugs in *Taqvim al-Adwiya* (Hubaysh-i Tiflisi, 1545, p. 4)

Conclusion

The Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate's strong support for scientists and scholars attracted many prominent figures, scientists, and physicians from various regions. Among the major Seljuk rulers, Kilic Arslan II stands out not only for stabilizing the political landscape of the Seljuk territories but also for fostering a vibrant cultural and literary environment at his court. His deep interest in culture and literature transformed his court—and those of his children—into safe havens for poets, writers, and intellectuals. Kilic Arslan II ac-

tively promoted cultural and civilizational growth by constructing public cultural institutions throughout his realm. Hubaysh-i Tiflisi was one of the great medical figures bridging Iranian-Islamic civilization, Georgia, and Asia Minor. He introduced the sciences of medicine, astronomy, philology, and the Persian language to Anatolia. His scholarly works significantly contributed to the advancement of science in this region. Moreover, Hubaysh's medical and pharmacological writings influenced physicians in Iran, India, and other parts of the Islamic world, who frequently cited his works, underscoring his enduring importance in medical knowledge.

Authors' Contribution

The authors confirm their contribution to the paper as follows: Conceptualization, Writing-Reviewing, Resources: Seyyed Alireza Golshani, Jamshid Roosta, Supervision: Jamshid Roosta. Validation and Editing: Babak Daneshfard.

All authors read and approved the final version of the work.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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