

# ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Introduction of Hand-Written Manuscript of *Bāh Nāmeḥ* Available in Liden Library of Netherlands

### Abstract

The present article makes an attempt to introduce and review the hand-written of *Bāh Nāmeḥ*, known as *Zard Gilīm*. The manuscript is kept in Liden library in Holland, under the reference No: 604. This hand-written manuscript contains three different books. The first is called *Mokhtasar andar Elm Teb*, the second with *Bāh-Namah* and the third with *Yadegar*. In this 167-page manuscript, 20 pages are allocated to *Bāh Nāmeḥ*. In this article, primarily, the authenticity of the author is reviewed, the work is analyzed and finally, the index of content of the book is mentioned.

**Key words:** *Zardgylm*, *Bāh Nāmeḥ*, Strengthening Sexual Powers

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## Introduction

Personal hygiene and strengthening sexual power are issues which have been recommended in traditional medicine. Writing about sexual issues, due to strict morality standards of the society has remained as a taboo; however, its scientific method is noticeable and valuable enough to have a look at. The manuscript that is about to be introduced relates to the field of medical science kept in Liden library of Holland, under reference number 604. The question of sexual relationship (*Mujāmi'at*) has been one of the issues in which medical Physicians have shown some degree of interest and some have elaborated on this subject. Ibn-Nadīm in an index of Greek Roofus (Physician) refers to a book under the name of "Albāh".<sup>1</sup> Abu-Zaid Hunain-Ibn Ishāq Ibādī, *Qusṭā Bin-Luqā Ba'lbakkī* (3<sup>rd</sup> century A.H.) in their book under the name of "*Fi-Aḥwāl Albāh va Asbābih*" dealt with sexual issues in a manner of question and answer.<sup>2,3</sup> *Muḥammad-Ibn Zakarīyyā Rāzī*, (Razes) the prominent Iranian Physician tackled the issue of sexual relationship issue in his "article in Bāh" or "*Risālah Fi Albāh*"<sup>4,5</sup>. It is worth mentioning that the term "Bāh" means getting engaged and have sexual relationship and instinct. The science of Bāh or sexual relationship is a part of medical science which looks at sexual problems and the quality of medical cures.<sup>6</sup>

- 1- Ibn Nadim, 1973: 350.
- 2- Ibn Nadim, 1973: 353.
- 3- Ibn Abi Usaibai, 2001:255.
- 4- Ibn Nadim, 1973: 197, 357.
- 5- Baghdadi, 1951, Vol. 1.: 76, 94, 144, 250, 339, 836; Vol. 2.: 28, 117, 146, 405, 463, 518, 519.
- 6- Haji khalifeh, n.d.: 218, 219.
- 7- Zardglim, manuscript no.: 604: 1.

## Introduction of 604 Manuscript

This manuscript, as one of the Liden library reverence books, enjoys 167 pages in total, containing three different books about medical science. Pages from 1 to 70 of this manuscript relates to "*Mukhtaṣar Andar Elm Ṭibb*" (Figure 1), page70 to 90 relates to the *Bāhnameh* and from page 90 onwards (Figure 2), relates to "*Yādigār*"(Figure 3). The first book, under the heading of "*Mukhtaṣar Andar 'Elm Ṭibb*", is written by *Ḥakīm Abūsa'īd Zardglim*, a Jewish Physician.<sup>7</sup> The authors of the second and the third books are not known (Figure 4). The manuscript 604 is in Persian Nastaligh, having been put together in measurements of 7 by 20 centimeters and in 16 lines, with an introduction, conclusion and separate chapters for each section. The manuscript also has index of materials and seems that the numbering has been employed at the end of the book.

## The Author

The subject of the book on sexual practices (*Mujāmi'at*) is written in Persian. In the contents of the manuscript, nothing has been mentioned about the name of the author, title, author's name, year of writing, language and other things (Fig-



ure 2). Therefore, relying on the index, writers like Monzavi, who have confirmed that this book belongs to *Zardglym*,<sup>8</sup> through introduction and the review of his work. Considering that the author in *Mokhtasar Andar Elm Tebb* reference to has made a note of the date of his writing as the Thursday, the month of *Ramaḍan* 530 A.H. (Figure 2), therefore, the *Bāhnameḥ* belongs to the early part of the 6th century. Of course, this is only the unconfirmed supposition by Monzavi, while, there is no document or evidence to support the case of *Zardglym* to be the author of the *Bāhnameḥ*. In the index of *Zardglym*, besides “*Mukhtaṣar Andar ‘Elm Ṭibb*”<sup>10</sup>, known as “*Mukhtaṣar al Ṭibb*”, the “*Athāre Fawayide Ṭibb*”, “*Bāh-nemeḥ*”, the “*Mufradāt and Murakkabāt*” (in Persian in 10 chapters according to Abjad letters),<sup>9-11</sup> all have been attributed to him due to being related to medical topics. Of the total works of *Zardglym*, “*Mukhtaṣar Andar ‘Elm Ṭibb*” has remained, which is known as No. 604 kept in Leiden library. We do not have any address about other texts.

- 8- Monzasvi, 2004: 3307, 3690.
- 9- Ibid.
- 10- Monzasvi., 1970: 595-596.
- 11- Daneshpajouh, 1970: 599.
- 12- Ibid.
- 13- Monzasvi., 1970: 595.
- 14- Monzasvi, 2004: 3307, 3615.
- 15- Farkhondehzadeh, 2017: 87.



Figure 1. Introduction of Manuscript  
(*Mokhtasar Andar Elm Tebb*)

Among Islamic physicians, *Ḥakīm Abūsa‘īd Zardglym*, the Jew, is not a prominent one. The index writers refer to him as *Zardglym Abūsa‘īd* or *Abusa‘īd*, the son of Husain, the Jewish physician.<sup>12, 13</sup> Interesting thing here is his Islamic name and Jewish identity. One possible answer could be that he could have been a convert. Monzavi, in his introduction of this physician’s text, goes on to say that he was the personal physician of the governor *Sayyed-Naṣr Aljīyūsh*, and because of this, he has allocated one of his medical texts to this governor.<sup>14, 15</sup>



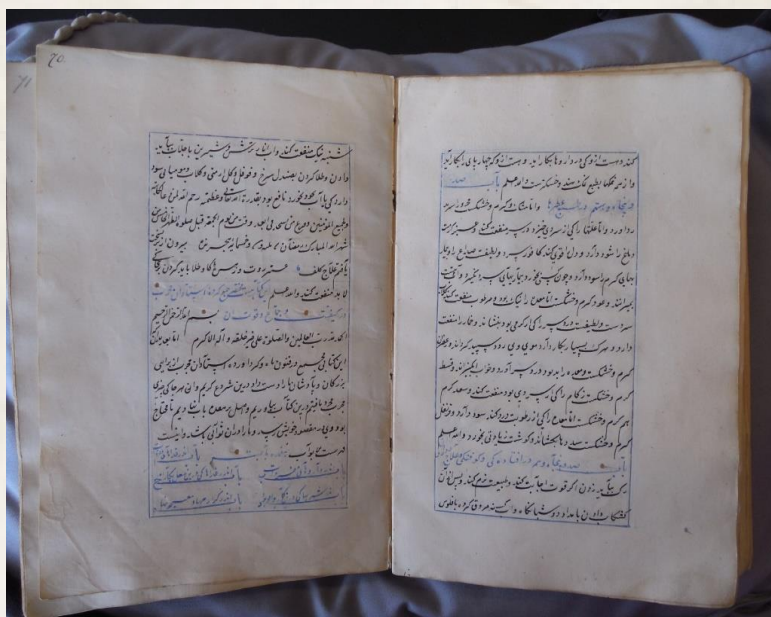


Figure 2. The second book (Manuscript of *Bāh Nāmeḥ*)

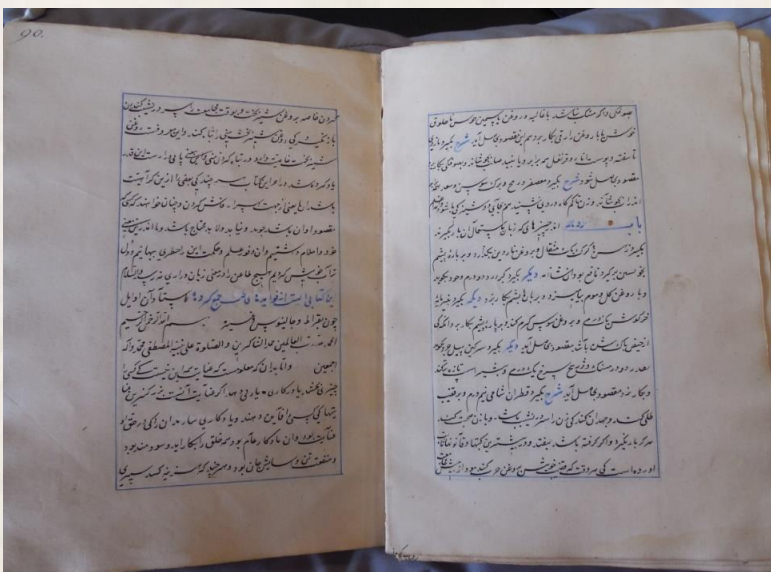


Figure 3. The third book of the manuscript (*Yadegar of Gorgani*)

### Distinct Characteristics of *Bāh-Name*

By referring to the hand-written text, it becomes obvious that the author did not choose any topic for his writing and after referring to the contents of the text, the indexing has classified it as *Bāh Nāmeḥ*.<sup>16</sup> The author has mentioned the reason of writing book in his introduction and that the content merely reflects the views of experts, prominent individuals and the kings. In this book, some extracts from Iranian physicians like *Muḥammad-Ibn Zakarīyyā Rāzī*, and Greek physi-



cians like Galenos, are mentioned. According to the author, this article has been compiled in seventeen chapters; however, by referring to the index of contents, fourteen chapters are mentioned and within the book fifteen chapters have been elaborated. At the end of the book, the author has mentioned his reason for writing the book, being aware of the fact that sexual matters are considered immoral and somewhat taboo for some; however, due to the importance and necessity of the issue, they are dealt with in this book.

17- Zardglim, manuscript no.: 604: 70- 80.

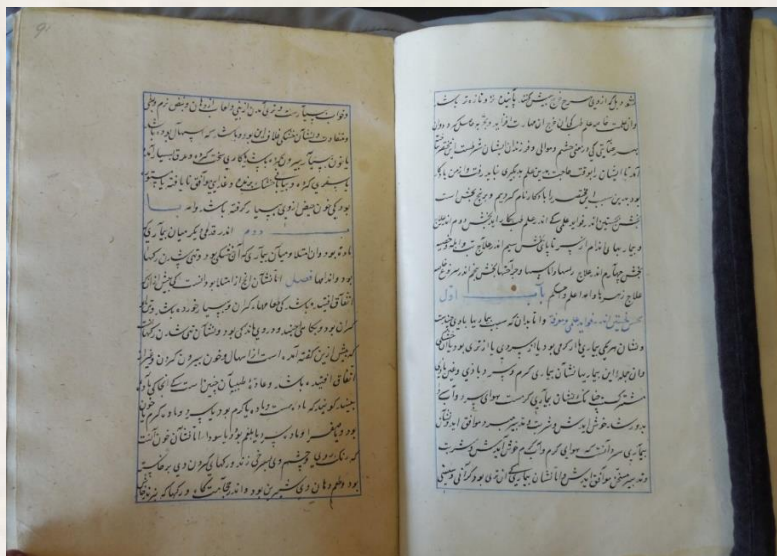


Figure 4. *Yadegar of Gorgani*

The chapters of the book and the index of the books are as follows: chapter one: the individual food items that are not mixed with anything; Chapter two: the medicines that are not mixed; chapter three: the effect of the food and each single medicine; chapter four: the beverages; chapter five: digestion and concoctions; chapter six; the moods of different people; chapter seven: the agreeing pulses and seeds; chapter eight: desirable acts; chapter nine: furthering sexual enjoyment; chapter ten: effect of a suppository; chapter eleven: different positions of sexual relationship; chapter twelve: male sexual organ; chapter thirteen: steps to treat wounds; chapter fourteen: medicine for women. The topics of chapter fifteen and sixteen are not been mentioned<sup>17</sup> (Figures 2-5).

The manuscript starts with the importance of dealing with the issue, followed by sarcastic criticism of his work by others. Then, the book starts to deal with the issue of having “excessive sexual conduct”. Here, the author elaborates on the importance of having sexual relationship and its positive and negative effects on the health of individuals and then moves on to food and its effects on the production of sperm.



After some explanation which could be considered as a preface to the book, the chapters of the book start. Chapter one deals with each single food that improves the sexuality of the people; chapter two relates to the effect of every single medicines that has positive effects on sex drive; chapter three is about the effect of mixed-food on sex drive; chapter four relates to the beverages that have positive effects on the action; chapter five deals with the concoctions and the digestives which improve the quality of intercourse, chapter six deals with different moods that affect the hardness of the male organ, chapter seven elaborates on the pills that one should keep in the mouth (the chapter about the trousers and the belts has no number and here the author points out the benefits of wearing suitable clothing) (Figure 6). Chapter eight deals with desirable acts, chapter nine is about things that improve the quality and enjoyment of sex for male and female; chapter ten deals with the effects of suppository that strengthen the sexuality; chapter eleven is about the effect of enema that had been administered through rectum to strengthen sexual drive; chapter twelve relates to all the sexual positions that improves the quality of the relationship; chapter thirteen deals with the ways of enlarging the male genitals; chapter fourteen is about the medicine that tighten the female genitals; and chapter fifteen is about using things to enable the women get pregnant. One of the chapters in the book is not numbered and in the book itself, sixteen chapters are mentioned. Having covered all chapters, the author once again at the end, emphasizes the importance and the necessity of the issues pertaining to the sexuality of the people, and disregards the concerns of others, even when it is frowned up on by some.

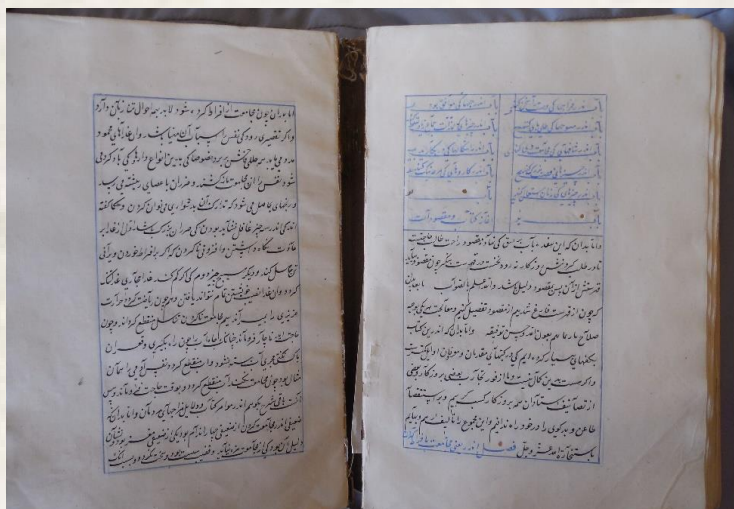


Figure 5. Manuscript of *Bāh Nāmeḥ*

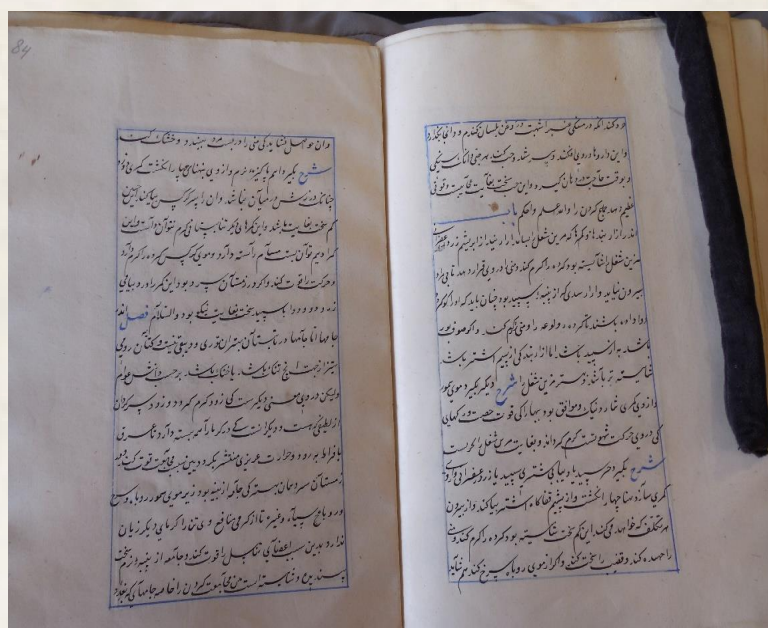


Figure 6. Manuscript of *Bāh Nāmeḥ*

The chapters of the book lack proper order, rendering the book somewhat disorganized. As it was mentioned earlier, the book was written in seventeen chapters, but only fifteen chapters are numbered. Another interesting matter relates to the fact that the contents of this book have been classified, both in “*Faṣḥ*” (chapters) and “*Bābs*”. So much so that, from the beginning up to chapter seven, the book is organized in chapters, whereas from then on, right to the end of the book, the “*Bābs*” classification has been employed. Another point that has added to the confusion is that, the author has divided the contents of chapter six into eight “*Bābs*”, thus, mixing the main and the secondary points.

### Result

*Bāh Nāmeḥ* is a unique manuscript which probably dates back to the fifth century A.H. Although in the absence of sufficient information and reliable sources, it is not possible to identify the author precisely. However, it is assumed that author lived in the 5th century A.H. There is no information about *Kātib* and the date of its writing. If *Zardgīlīm* was considered the author of this manuscript by a list of writers and also because of his references to the documentation of *Muḥammad-Ibn Zakarīyyā Rāzī* (313A.H.), it would be possible to date this book to be circa fifth century A.H.

The entire contents of the book revolve around medicine and medical matters in an encyclopedic format. In this book, the author in a hand-written text, refers to the subject of rejuvenating and invigorating sexual desire and power in a



scientific way, indicating that the author has sufficient command over such matters. Another indicator, which renders the recognition of the text more valuable, is its contribution to identifying the distinct characteristics of herbal medicine that could become a stepping stone to a better guidance and pattern for reviving the traditional medicine.

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