


## LETTER TO EDITOR

### The Report of *Abu Zayd al-Balkhi* about the Importance of Jondishapoor Hospital on *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus*

Dear Editor,

The Sassanid Empire (637-224 AD) is one of the most important periods in the history of science and especially the history of medical science in Iran. During the Sassanid era, on the one hand, Iranian medicine became an independent school but more integrated in interaction with Greek medicine, and on the other hand, an extensive administrative organization was formed in which the management of the country's health was managed. From the point of view of medical history, the Sassanid Empire is a link between ancient Persian Medicine and the Islamic era, that play on important role in achievements of the golden age of Islam. (Zargaran, 2020,

Sobhan Ghezloo<sup>1</sup>  
Kamran Mahlooji<sup>2</sup>

1- M.Sc. Student, Department of History of Medicine School of Persian Medicine, Tehran University of Medical Science, Tehran, Iran

2- M.Sc., Department of History of Medicine School of Persian Medicine, Tehran University of Medical Science, Tehran, Iran

**Correspondence:**

Sobhan Ghezloo  
M.Sc. Student, Department of History of Medicine School of Persian Medicine, Tehran University of Medical Science, Tehran, Iran

ssobhanghezloo@gmail.com

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pp.156-157) JondiShapoor Hospital and the process of transferring knowledge from Iran to Baghdad, which we call the second migration, is one of these important historical horizons. This hospital in southwestern Iran has been mentioned in various historical texts, such as the book *Ferdows al-Hekmah*, in which Ali Ibn Sahl Rabban al-Tabari mentions his meeting with the manager of this hospital. (Mahlooji, and Abdoli, 2021, pp. 199-202) Or in Shahnameh, which knows the place of death of the Iranian prophet Mani in front of this hospital. But despite the many historical documents, some researchers, due to their lack of familiarity with the medical history texts of this period, have stated that the existence of this JondiShapoor hospital in this historical period is like a myth. And the oldest text known for the existence of this place has been mentioned in the works of historians such as Al-Qifti (died 1248). (Pormann, and Savage-Smith, 2014, p. 52) but, the existence of JondiShapoor Hospital has been mentioned many times in important and significant works throughout history and before Al-Qifti, as mentioned above. One of these works is the book *Masalih al-abdan wa al-anfus* written by Ahmad ibn Sahl Balkhi (Abu Zayd al-Balkhi). Ahmad Ibn Sahl (d. 235-322 AH / 849-934 AD), was a writer, theologian, philosopher, geographer and scholar of various sciences. he was born in the Shamistian area. His father was a Sistani teacher. Apparently, Abu Zayd chose the same job for a while, but after a while, due to his vast knowledge and abundant information in various fields, he was noticed by the rulers and elders, and caught Abu Ali Jihani's, the minister of Nasr ibn Ahmad Samani, (301- 330 AH). Attention. He was welcomed by jihani, as well as dignitaries such as Hussein bin Ali Marvroudi and they gave him a pension and gifts. (Velayati, et al., 2010, p. 53)

In the book "*Masalih al-abdan wa al-anfus*", part of al-Darasah, Tamhid fi Taras al-Hefzelsehat, part one: Hefzelsehat fi al-Hezarat al-Ghadimeh, he refers directly to Jondishapoor Hospital and deals with the important role of this hospital in Jondishapoor.

The Jondishapoor School and it's hospital had a distinguished civilized position. And natural treatments were used with stroking, baths, sports, and special nutrition (Balkhi, 2009, p. 27).

This text clarifies some important points. First, Abu Zayd refers directly to the school. Jondishapoor Hospital has been mentioned in the texts before, but this text clearly clarifies the position of doctors' education and training



during the flourishing period of this school. As I saw with Ali Ibn Raban Tabari, he introduced therapies in Jondishapoor under the influence of folk remedies. And of course the position of Greek medicine in this school can not be ignored. Combined traditions in treatment and the position of translation of medical texts in these schools is a point that has escaped the eyes of many researchers such as Dimitri Gutas (Mahlooji, and Abdoli, 2018, pp. 209-216) A point that can help a lot in better understanding the translation movement.

Secondly, in this paragraph, special treatment methods such as exercise, bath and special diet are mentioned. This indicates the existence of experienced medical staff and familiar with various treatment methods. This shows the coherent and planned mechanism of this hospital and medical school

Thirdly, this paragraph emphasizes the privileged position of the Jondishapoor Hospital and School. Emily Savage mentions in her book *Medieval Islamic Medicine* that this hospital has a little importance and was probably just a copy of the Christian resting places that were in the church and was a simple place for patients and poor people . But this text shows that he is completely wrong, and this hospital-school was considered one of the unique places in the history of science in its time.

Research on the scientific position of Jondishapoor in the civilization of ancient Iran and the transfer of knowledge from Iran to Islamic civilization is still in its infancy.

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