

Did Hippocrates really say that?

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Abstract. In this study, ten preventive medicine recommendations in Ibn Şerif's *Yadigâr*, attributed to Hippocrates, will be analyzed. However, these don't match Hippocrates' known advice, leading to confusion. Literature suggests these recommendations might be from Islamic physician Theyâzuk, not Hippocrates. This study aims to resolve this attribution confusion by analyzing and comparing the recommendations and clarifying their origin and authorship.

Key words: Ottoman Medicine, Transmission of Knowledge, Ibn Şerif, Hippocrates, Theyâzuk

Introduction

One of the important questions in medical history research is to find the source of medicine and medical advice. Many medical recommendations have been made from antiquity to the present day. The most famous of these are recommendations for healthy living. Although these recommendations changed in different cultures and times, they were united on the idea that people would be protected from diseases by regulating food, sleep, and sexual intercourse, which is preventive medicine. These preventive medicine recommendations are also common in Ottoman medicine. In this study, ten medical recommendations given by the famous Ottoman physician Ibn Şerif in his book *Yadigâr* with reference to Hippocrates will be analyzed. However, the content of these recommendations does not correspond to the known recommendations of Hippocrates. At the same time, it is also stated in the literature that the ten recommendations mentioned in *Yadigâr* were given by the Islamic physician Theyâzuk. There are also rumors in the literature that there are two different works by the same name. This situation reveals that there is confusion about the attribution of both *Yadigar* and the ten recommendations. Based on this problem, this study aims to

analyze the aforementioned recommendations and try to determine the possibility that they were given by Hippocrates.

Material and Methods

This study is based on document analysis method and consists of three parts. In the first part, information about Ibn Şerif and his book *Yadigâr* will be given. Ten medical recommendations, which are the subject of the study, will be included. In the second part, Hippocrates' medical recommendations will be analyzed and the possibility that these recommendations belong to him will be discussed. The third part will emphasize the possibility that Theyâzuk may have given these recommendations. The study utilized the manuscripts registered in Topkapı Palace Library (Revan: 1684) for *Yadigar-ı Ibn Şerif*, Köprülü Library Fazıl Ahmad Paşa Collection, number 00985-004 for *Havâsh ala'l-Adwîdiyyah al-Murakkabah min al-Mûjaz*. The study utilized the manuscripts registered in Topkapı Palace Library (Revan: 1684) for *Yadigar-ı Ibn Şerif*, Köprülü Library Fazıl Ahmad Paşa Collection, number 00985-004 for *Havâsh ala'l-Adwîdiyyah al-Murakkabah min al-Mûjaz*. *Corpus Hippocraticum*, *Kitâb al-Fihrist*,

Yadigar-ı Ibn Şerif, *Masalik al-Absar Fi Mamalik al-Amsar*, *Urjuzah*, *Anecdotes and Antidotes* and *The Best Accounts of the Classes of Physicians* were used as transcribed sources.

Results

Information about Ibn Şerif and Yadigâr

Yadigar-ı Ibn Şerif is a book written by Ibn Şerif. Although there is not much information about Ibn Şerif or Şerif-zâde, at the beginning of his book, he described himself as a person who was busy with medicine from childhood to old age (1). Based on this expression, we can infer that he wrote this book in his old age. He states that while writing this book, he benefited from the books of pre-existing and contracting doctors and read Persian and Arabic (1). For this reason, we can say that he knows Persian, Arabic, and Turkish. Like his counterparts, he benefited from Hippocrates' Arabic translations. This is important because he didn't refer to the original sources. In addition, the fact that he gives some plants with their Greek names may indicate dominance in the local language, although it does not provide us with the information that he knows this language for sure. Therefore, his reliance on translations and weakness in the original language indicates the uncertainty of taking Hippocrates' ten advice. Researchers have determined that the book was written in the 15th century (1). For this reason, it is thought that he lived in this century, although it is unknown. Especially according to the catalog records the book writing dates changed between the years of 1627-1634 and the book copying years changed between 1524-1848. But in 1628 we assume he was still living. Catalog records that have writing or copying dates are given in Table 1. The book is a product of the classical Ottoman copyright-translation tradition. There are not many citations in the book (1). Physicians were cited; They can be listed as Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna, İrefettin Sabuncuođ lu, Plato, and Ibn Baytar. In addition, a physician named Ferecullah and a physician who wrote a book called *Healing* were mentioned (1). Knowing the physicians he included in his book is important in terms of giving us information about the sources from which he was fed. We see that he

benefited from the physicians of ancient Greek, Islamic, and Ottoman medicine. In addition, the Ottoman physicians he cites are important because they can also give us information about the date he lived, or the date of the copy analyzed. Another significant point is the difference between it and the works of the Ottoman renewal period. Early Ottoman works rarely refer to physicians who were not involved in Islamic medicine other than Hippocrates and Galen. On average, after the 17th century, during the *Tıbb-ı Jadid* period, the names of European physicians are more common. In this respect, Ibn Şerif's book is among the books reflecting classical Ottoman medical thought. General information about the book is given above. After starting his book with *salat* and greetings, he tells stories about the importance of medicine from the stories of the prophets. This is the classical Islamic-Ottoman scholarly tradition of book writing. He explains the purpose of writing the book in the following way: "Furthermore if this book is in the hands of a competent person, there is no need for a physician to maintain health and prevent diseases." (1). He stated that the book is a useful summary book. As Ibn Şerif himself stated, his book contains a lot of preventive medicine recommendations and healthy life recommendations, which are also the subject of this article.

The book I examined in the translated form of the copy in Topkapı Palace Library (Revan: 1684) consists of 5 parts. But other versions which I examined like 45 Hk 1861 and 06 Mil Yz B 782 have 3 parts and 03 Gedik 5145; 03 Gedik 5146 and 06 Mil Yz FB 495/1 were classified differently. Parts of the translated Topkapı version;

1. Six Necessary Causes
2. Diseases and Their Drugs
3. Febrile Diseases, Hasbe (Measles), And Smallpox
4. Swelling, Burns, And Wounds
5. Fractures, Displacements and Drains, Medicines, Physicians' Advice, Etc.

Content of the book

In general, the book is based on humoral pathology. The book has been written as a summary so that the public can benefit in the absence of a physician.

In this context, the term “public” does not have a narrow meaning. Fazlıoğlu divides the addressee into five groups: 1. a student at the beginning of his scientific life 2. a member of a professional class 3. the Turkish-speaking public 4. a member of the political will 5. a language-conscious addressee (2). When talking about drugs, it indicates which material is good and where. This may suggest that you are a knowledgeable physician about drugs and drug materials. The use of languages such as Greek, Persian, Turkish, and Arabic while giving plant names shows that he has extensive knowledge of local botanical names. It is seen that Galen’s citations are mostly about drugs. In this period, there is an understanding that there is no disease; there is a patient. However, diseases and their treatments are also mentioned in general. For example, cupping is generally described as a treatment method, but the condition of the person whom it is being applied is also effective in the treatment decision. Likewise, the humor of the person is also effective in the treatment methods. Hygiene is one of the key concepts in the book. Mentioning it without describing the diseases is similar to the Hippocratic and Galenic schools. He also talked a lot about his own experiences in the book. He also narrated the events he witnessed. But this should not mislead us into the illusion that the book is purely a casebook. Nor is it a positivist book in the modern sense. In the book, the Occult sciences accepted at that time were also used, albeit a little. For example, making a charm for spleen swelling is described.

The 10 recommendations are the subject of this article:

Bokrat says: Whoever practices ten things will not enter his body except for death. First: Not to eat on it when there is food in the stomach. Second: Not chewing anything that weakens the teeth. Because chewing it weakens your stomach. Third: Going to the hammam twice a week. Because it removes diseases from the body. Fourth: Not to give cupping to most of the blood when there is no reason to draw blood. Fifth: Vomiting once a week.

Sixth: Not holding one’s urine when it comes, even in the saddle. Seventh: Going to the toilet before sleep. Eighth: Not to use medicine when there is no need. Ninth: abstinence from intercourse, because it extinguishes the

light of life. Tenth: Not having intercourse with an old woman, because it brings death. Practicing all these makes living beautiful and perfect. (1)

As can be seen, Ibn Şerif stated that Hippocrates gave these recommendations. It is important to note that only one of the *Yadigar* copies that I have access to includes this advice. 45 Hk 1861 and 06 Mil Yz B 782 are missing the last two chapters and 03 Gedik 5146 does not include the ten recommendations although it consists of five parts. Since the date of the copy recorded in Revan 1684 is not known, it is difficult to determine whether additions were made between early and late copies. I was intrigued by these recommendations and based on this, I searched for them in the works attributed to Hippocrates. In the next section, I will first give brief information about Hippocrates and his works, and then discuss whether the recommendations are compatible with the Hippocratic doctrine.

Hippocrates and his works

The famous Greek physician and father of medicine is known to have been born on the island of Cos in 460 BC (3). The reason why he is considered the father of modern medicine today is that he did not resort to invisible elements in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and tried to explain them with the medical observation of that period (humoral theory) (3). The medical corpus, known as the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, contains books referred to him, although the exact number is unknown (3). Although it is not known that they were written by him, they are works that are thought to reflect his medical and philosophical views (3). Within the scope of this research, 10 recommendations were sought in both the English version of the Hippocratic aphorism and of the works attributed to Hippocrates. These recommendations were not found in the analyzed works. On the contrary, Hippocrates’ recommendations that contradict them were identified (3–9).

Examples:

1. *In different ages the following complaints arise: to little children and babies, aphthae, vomiting, coughs, sleeplessness, terrors, inflammation of the navel, watery discharges from the ears (10).*

As can be seen here, *vomiting*, which seems to be recommended for all ages among the recommendations, is described here as a complaint seen in young children.

2. *Preferable to unetion is a tepid shower-bath. It is also beneficial to have in summer a short, occasional siesta, to prevent the body being dried up by the season. In spring it is a good thing to purge with hellebore after a vapour bath; then the usual diet should be restored gradually, as this type of man, like the preceding, must not go about duties fasting. With this treatment, such a soul may be highly intellectual* (10).

Hippocrates also recommended bathing and washing, considering the season, age, and gender. On the other hand, in 10 recommendations, it was said that it was necessary to bathe twice a week regardless of age, gender, and season.

3. *When a bath is desired, let it be cold after exercise in the palaestra; after any other exercise, a hot bath is more beneficial. Sexual intercourse should be more frequent at this season and for older men more than for the younger. Emetics are to be used three times a month by moist constitutions, twice a month by dry constitutions, after a meal of all sorts of food...*(10)

As quoted here, Hippocrates recommended bathing after exercise and recommended hot or cold water depending on the type of exercise. He also gave different recommendations regarding the frequency of sexual intercourse according to age and sex. He also recommended vomiting and the use of emetics with different frequencies in different seasons for people with (different) dry and humid temperaments. In terms of the differences between Hippocrates and the 10 recommendations, in addition to the previously mentioned differences for bathing and vomiting, differences were observed in this example regarding time and how they should be performed. In contrast to this example, sexual intercourse was expressed as an act to be completely avoided in the 10 recommendations.

Although it is possible to increase the number of examples, I will stop here for the sake of the purpose.

Theyāzuk

During my research, I came across texts claiming that these ten recommendations were given by the Islamic physician Theyāzuk (d. early 8th century AD) (6,11). Theyāzuk is introduced by Ibn Al-Nadim (c.998) in *Kitāb al-Fibrist* as two different persons, *Theodoros* and *Theyāzuk (Theodocus)* (12,13).

Theodoros He was a Christian for whom Shapiir [II] Dha al-Aktaf built the churches in his city, though it is also related that the person who built them for him was Bahram Gir. His [work] translated into Arabic is *Pandects of Theodoros* [*Pandectae medicinae*](12).

Theyāzuk (Theodocus) He was the physician of al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf [d. 95/714], the governor of al-Iraq (12).

However, recent studies show that the two were the same person and that Theyāzuk lived for about 130 years (14). It seems impossible that someone could have lived 130 years. And in the original article, when referring to Theodoros, “This name seems to be a mistake. Theodocus was the name of al-Hajjaj’s physician” (15). Theodoros is Theodocus or not, Theyāzuk gave this advice. The recommendations attributed to Theyāzuk and mentioned in Ibn Abī Usaybi’ah seem to be the same as those mentioned in Ibn Šerif’s book (1,16). Theyāzuk’s advice to the king is as follows.

A certain king is said to have asked Tayādhūq for advice when he saw that the physician had reached a great age, for he was more skilful and learned than any other practitioner of that age, and the king feared that there would be no one of equal stature to succeed him when he died. Accordingly, he went to Tayādhūq and said to him, ‘Give me some precepts upon which I can rely and which I can use to guide my life and apply as long as I live, for there can be no certainty that you will not die, and if you do, I may be unable to find anyone as skilled as you.’ Tayādhūq replied, ‘Majesty, it is my pleasure to state ten precepts for you, which you should mark well. Avoid these things, and you will never fall ill as long as you live. Eat nothing if you already have food in your stomach. Do not swallow anything that your teeth are unable to chew,

as it will cause cramps in your stomach. After eating, drink no water until two hours have elapsed, for dyspepsia is the origin of disease, and food followed by water is the origin of dyspepsia. Go to the bath once every other day; hygiene will eliminate what medicine cannot. Augmenting the blood in your body will preserve your life. Take an emetic and a laxative in every season of the year. Never try to hold in your urine, not even while riding. Always visit the latrine before going to bed. Do not engage too frequently in sexual activity, for whether frequent or infrequent, it draws upon the fire of life. Lastly, sexual congress with an old woman is sudden death.' (17)

As can be seen from the above quote, it is more likely that the Islamic physician Theyâzuk is the author of the advice mentioned in the quote. Ahmad ibn Yahyâ ibn Fadl Allâh al-'Umarî's (d. 749/1349) book "*Masalik al-absar fî mamalik al-amsar*" is also mentioned in the same way (18). There seems to be no reason to think that Theyâzuk quoted from Hippocrates. As a matter of fact, although the recommendations are incompatible with Hippocrates' teachings, the works of Hippocrates and Galen had not yet been translated into Arabic at the time of Theyâzuk (14).

Avicenna's book named *Oorjoozeh* (A treatise on medicine) includes a chapter titled "The saying of the wise Theyâzuk from Abu Ali regarding the preservation of health" and includes the same recommendations in a different order, which strengthens this claim (See the Arabic version in Appendix A) (19). But the recommendations is not found in all Urjuzah works (20).

Consistent with the others, our fourth source is Ibri (full name Burhân al-Dîn 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. Ghânim al-Fergânî al-Tabrîzî), (743/1342), whose advice at the end of his treatise *Havâsh ala'l-Adwîdiyyah al-Murakkabah min al-Mûjaz* seems to be consistent with the advice we think belongs to Theyâzuk.

The recommendations in Ibri's treatise, which is registered in Köprülü Library Fazıl Ahmad Paşa Collection, number 00985-004, are as follows.

1. To the Chief Sheikh, may God bless him
2. Stop If you want to add food after food before digestion.

3. And any food that makes it difficult to chew with your teeth, do not approach it; it is the worst of foods
4. Do not hold onto the waste when it ripens, even if you are among the sharp and effective ones.
5. Especially at the time of sleep, to expel them when you want to sleep is the most necessary
6. And beware, beware of medicine and drinking it for a lifetime except during great ailments
7. Preserve the blood in the body, for it is the strongest support for the health of bodies
8. And do not be excessive in the company of young women; for excess is the strongest destroyer of life.
9. And beware, beware of the old woman and her embrace; it is nothing but like the poison of serpents
10. And every week you should vomit; in it is safety from the evils of choking
11. And bathe once every two days; maintain these traits and be consistent
12. For with this, the wise Teyazuk advised Anushirvan, the brother of justice, the king of the Persians (The text was translated by the author from the original manuscript. A transcript of the original manuscript can be found in the appendix B).

However, Ibri's claim that Theyâzuk told this advice to Anushirvan (531-579) complicates the matter. This is because Anushirvan lived in the 6th century, while Theyâzuk is claimed to have died at the beginning of the 8th century. If we accept this as true, we must also accept that Theyâzuk lived for 130 years and perhaps more, as mentioned earlier. If we are not to accept this as an unreasonable assertion, we need to answer the question whether Anushirvan or Teyazuk could be someone else or we have to assume that Ibri made a mistake. Although it is highly unlikely that he lived in the same period as Husrev I, called Anushirvan, Teyazuq may have lived and advised later Sassanid rulers. It is very difficult to prove this as we have very limited information about Teyazuq's life. More precisely, it is very difficult to prove all the claims in the light of the available data. Therefore, this makes us

think that Ibn Şerif made a mistake in quoting. While inaccuracy is very common, it can also be a conscious choice to prove authority. As Totelin points out, especially in antiquity, medical writers tried to legitimize themselves or justify their theories and practices by referring to Hippocrates even in their own writings. (21,22). Of course, citing authority does not eliminate criticism (23). Although *Yadigar* was written in Ottoman Turkish, the fact that these recommendations were written in Arabic increases the possibility that they were Theyâzuk's recommendations. There are many manuscript copies of Ibn Şerif's *Yadigâr*. 91 copies were identified by me. According to the catalog information, only 30 of these manuscripts have a date of composition and/or composition. In a study conducted by Aciduman, it was found that there are serious differences between the early and late copies of *Yadigar* (24). For this reason, Aciduman concluded that there may be two types of *Yadigâr* books; one may be the Turkish translation of *Yâdigâr-i Ibn Şerif* written in Persian by Zayn-al-Din Abu'l-Ĥasan 'ali B. Moĥammad B. 'ali al-Hosayni al-Jorjâni (Gorgani), (d. 531/1136) and recorded in catalog no. 60 Hk 24/2, and the other may be a more voluminous annotated work consisting of later editions. Although this interpretation is in need of proof, I believe that it is not compatible with the nature of translation and authorship tradition. According to Long's definition, to be an author in the antic period, it is enough to put together a few works (25). When Greek medicine was translated into the Arab world, the Alexandrian school of exegesis was used (26). According to this tradition, tafsirs were made to translate books. What is understood by the Ottoman copyright-translation tradition is not the literal translation of a book. Every manuscript is an independent work. In this respect, different copies are expected to be different. This situation is normal. What is meant by translation is not plagiarism in today's terms. The translation is done to convey the meaning of the truth to the addressee (2). As it is also stated in the preface of the books, they were written and translated into Turkish so that Turks would not be deprived and would benefit from them. The fact that such an aim was also present in the copyrights and translations confirms the information that the aim was only to convey the meaning. However, we do not think that there

is plagiarism here. In such a case, we would expect no citation to be given. As a matter of fact, there is a case of conscious or unconscious miscitation here. As stated above, it is normal to have differences between copies. However, I have detected some copies of *Yadigar* do not contain 5 chapters as stated above, but 3 chapters, or the chapters are classified in different ways. The 10 recommendations, which are the subject of the article, are included in the 5th chapter. This is only found in the Topkapı copy (see Appendix C). Therefore, the fact that the ten recommendations appear in only one copy among the copies I examined weakens our belief that this information was transmitted by Ibn Şerif.

Conclusion

In sum, even if they are primary sources, medical history texts should be approached with caution. In the Topkapı copy, Ibn Şerif has written these recommendations as Hippocrates said. The palace copies are usually the most complete. This may be the reason why it is found in the Topkapı copy and not in other copies I examined. However, it is interesting that the words are not mentioned in Hippocrates' works and are incompatible in terms of content, as shown in the examples. As far as I have been able to determine at the end of my research, my hypothesis is that these words belong to Theyâzuk. Although I have come across it in different copies as I have mentioned, this is a difficult claim to prove, and the fact that it is mentioned in one copy as an advice to Anushirvan makes my assumption difficult. It seems that the physician Ibn Şerif or the annotators made a conscious or unconscious mistake in transmitting these words. As in the case of this incident, incorrect attributions may have been made for reasons we cannot predict today. Our understanding of attribution and terms associated with it were different back then than they are today, and the system we call attribution was not as effective as it is today. This situation necessitates today's researchers to approach the sources cited in manuscripts with caution. In conclusion, in light of the available sources, this study hypothesizes that the ten recommendations in the palace copy of Ibn Sharif's *Yadigâr* belong to Theyâzuk, not Hippocrates. However, further studies in the field and

perhaps the discovery of new documents are required to prove this hypothesis. It is generally believed that Ottoman medicine was based on Greek medicine, Islamic medicine and folk medicine influenced by Central Asian shamanism. However, it has not been investigated which medicine was more influential. As the results of my research show, we need to think and research that the influence of Islamic medicine on Ottoman medicine was greater than previously known.

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Appendix

Table 1.

A

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ترجمة قول الحكيم تياذق من ابي علي في حفظ الصحة

في ابي اوصى الحكيم تياذق من اخا العدل نوسروان ملك الاعاجم	توق اذا استطعت ادخال مطعم و كل طعام تعجز السن مضغه و اياك اياك العجوز و وطبها و لا تك في وطى الكواعب مسرفا و في كل أسبوع عليك بقية و لا تحبس الفضلات عند اقتضاها و لا سيما عند المنام فنفضها و كن مستحما كل يومين مرة و لا تتعرض للدواء و شربها و وفر على الجسم الدواء فانها	على مطعم من قبل فعل الهواضم فلا تبتلعه فهو شر المطاعم فما هي الا مثل سم الارقم فاسرافه في العمر اقوى الهواضم ففيها امان من شرور البلاغم ولو كنت بين المرهقات الصوارم اذا ما اردت النوم الزم لازم و حافظ على هذا العلاج و داوم مدى الدهر لا عند احدى العظام لقوة ابدان اشد الدائم
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B

للشيخ الرئيس قدس نفسه

توق إذا استطعت إدخال مطعم على مطعم من قبل فعل الهواضم
 و كل طعام يعجز السن مضغه فلا تقر به فهو شر المطاعم
 و لا تحبس الفضلات عند نضاجها ولو كنت من المرضعات الصوارم
 و لا سيما عند المنام فنفضها إذا ما أردت النوم الزم لازم
 و اياك اياك الدواء و شربه مدى الدهر إلا عند احدى العظام
 و فر على الجسم الدماء فانها لصحة ابدان اشد الدائم
 و لا تك في وطى الكواعب مسرفاً فإكثاره للغمر اقوى الهواضم
 و اياك اياك العجوز و وطبها فما هو الا مثل سم الارقم
 و في كل أسبوع عليك بقية ففيها امان من شرور البلاغم
 و كن مستحماً كل يومين مرة و حافظ على تلك الخصال و داوم
 فإن بها اوصى الحكيم تياذق اخا العدل نوسروان ملك الاعاجم

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بالايارج والسوداء بالافتيمون قال بقراط
من استعمل عشرة اشياء لا يدخل العليل في بدنه الا وقت

الاجل الاول لا تاكل طعاما وفي معدتك طعاما آخرا
الثاني لا تمضغ شيئا تضعف اسنانك عن مضغه
تضعف معدتك بهضمه الثالث عليك ان تدخل الحمام
بكل اسبوع مرتين فانه يخرج الداء من جسدك الرابع لا تخرج
اكثر الدم من بدنك حتى تجرد من نفسك داعيه الخامس
عليك في كل اسبوع فيء التارس لا تجلس البول اذا
ما حصرك ولو كنت على سنجك السابع اعرض نفسك على
الخلاء قبل نومك الثامن لا تقرب من الدواء ما لم
يكن لك اليه حاجة التاسع لا تقرب من الجوع فانه يقبس
نور الحيات العاشر لا تجامع الهوزة فانه يورث الموت
فهذا اجل الطب وآمله قال افلاطون الحكيم