YUSUFĪ AS A TABĪB:

This bitter fact, however, is to be swallowed that medicine more or less remained static after the 15th Century A.D. in Persia and Central Asia. In late 15th Century A.D., with the advent of Safavids, the rigid compass of religious discriminations had converged the sphere of varied learnings in Persia. The last great work produced in Arabic was 'Qānūn' of Avicenna and in Persian was 'Zakhīra' of al-Jurjānī. The in-between period of havoc and transfer of powers remained content with the medical knowledge summed up till that time by the great masters.

In sixteenth century A.D., the centre of learning shifted to India from Persia, where Mughals had established a magnificent Empire. Here the Greco-Arabian and Indian medicines were influenced and benefitted by each other and scores of medical works were produced. Yusufī was one of those physicians who flourished in India and compiled medical books. While evaluating Yusufī as a physician, we shall have/ review the scope of any original contribution to the medical science of that age. We have observed that medicine was adopted by Arabs in its well developed form from the Greeks. But as we know, it was based on analogical findings. The contribution of Arabs was the introduction of observation and experimentation. Thus the medicine was set on the scientific path by the great original thinkers among the Arabs.

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and Persians and masters like ʿAlī bin Rabban al-Ṭabarī, Ẓakariya al-Ḥāzī, al-Majūsī, Avicenna and al-Jurjānī had systematically arranged their encyclopaedic medical works based on the laid down fundamentals and their own clinical observations. Among the above mentioned works, Qānūn of Avicenna had become most popular and was faithfully followed in India during the Moghal period. Yusufī should have not been an exception to that.

As we have noted in our previous discussions, the physicians who lived during the period between 8th to 10th Century A.H. and also the sultans who ruled during this period in India, showed their active interests and efforts in the utilization of vedic medicine. They translated and interpreted the vedic medical books. From the tenth Century Hijri the fresh talent came with Moghals and the Persian medicine was brought into lime light. During the first two moghal monarchs — Babur and Humāyūn, so far history furnishes us, Yusufī is the only physician who compiled books on medicine. Owing to the absence of microscopical studies and advanced biological sciences, any development on the fundamental humoral theories and pathology was out of question. The only individual contribution, a physician of that axem era could do was in the field of therapeutics and physical findings, based on his personal observations. Ḥakīm Yusufī's basic contribution seems to be this that he thoroughly contd....Page. 225/
studied the Arabian medicine with special reference to Qānūn, of
Avicenna and its commentaries without being influenced by the
Ayurveda of India. He wrote several treatises summing up the
knowledge on materia medica, Hygiene, Kulliāt, diagnosis and
treatment. In doing this, he simplified the obscure and tedious
descriptions of Qānūn and other Arabic medical works and com­
piled his books in Persian language. Thus his compilations
provide an easy and graspable reading for the beginners and
handy booklets for the practitioners.

Another distinct feature of Yusufi as a physician-
writer is that he had composed most of his works in the form of
verse. Poetry is not meant for science and no doubt it is diffi­
cult to compose problem odesms on material sciences. But Yusufi
has done it with utmost success and this also leads to the con­
cclusion that he had developed a clear and masterly conception of
medicine and its allied branches. There are other examples of
versified medical works produced in India and also in Persia.

1. Perhaps Khalid bin Yazid was the first to write the scienti­
fic treatises in verse and the example set by him was follo­
wed by many. Shaik Bu 'Ali Sinā had compiled a book on 'Kulliāt'
entitled as 'Arjuza' in the form of verses. In India a versi­
fied medicine entitled as 'Shifa-ul-Marz' is traced back to
period of Firozshah Tughlaq. During the period of Aurangzeb,
Ahmad Aannauji had composed medicine in the form of Masnawi
entitled as 'Tuhfat-ul-Atibba'.
Medicine in the form of verse, no doubt makes it a pleasant reading, while we must confess that Qānūn and other similar works in prose except Hawī of Zakariyā Rāzī in which the descriptions are supported with clinical records, are dull reading. Further, there must be two aspects of a physician. He might be a very good writer of medical books or he may be only a physician of high public utility and mature experience. Both talents are seldom found together in the same person. To become a court Physician was not a matter of recommendation during the days of monarchy. The Emperors themselves used to test the abilities of the scholars and professionals and there was an immediate access of the person to them for the display of his talents. A personal physician to Bābur and Humāyūn, as Maulānā Yusufī-ṭabīb was, should however be ranked among the men of skill and repute. Abul Fazl’s remarks with respect to Yusufī’s position at the court of Babur is worthy of note. Similarly Sām Wizrā2 and Khwāndmir3 also furnish most favourable remarks.

Today we could be unjust while evaluating the efficiency and works of a Physician of 16th Century A.D., because we are conscious of medical advancements of our era. Fr. Angelus,

2. Tuhfa-i-Sāmi, P. 156 - (Calcutta).
3. Several references are given from ‘Qānūn-i-Humāyuni’ in the chapter II of this thesis.

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a French of 17th Century A.D., who had studied Persian medicine in Isfahan, states that the medical works most commonly read in his days were the Zakhîrâ of Isma'il-al-Jurjâni, the Tibb-i-
Yusufî and the Kifâya-i-Mansûrî. This Tibb-i-Yusufî is actually his 'Jamâi-ul-Fawâid'. It is interesting to note that this work of Yusufî gained popularity in the English-speaking world also. A part of this had been translated into English by Dr. Lichtwardt of American Medical Mission to Persia. Murad 'Ali Halâpar has most often referred to Yusufî's works in his 'Tibb-i-Murâd', especially his rhymed treatise on 'Foods and Drinks'. A pharmacopoeia the author of which is not known has referred to Yusufî and speaks highly of him. The content of the manuscript reveals that it was composed in the period of Aurangzeb.

So far the fundamentals are concerned, Yusufî has not deviated from the master works of Arab and Persian physicians. He has rather followed the pattern of Avicenna in almost all his compilations. But he has also mentioned numerous recipes and drugs of his choice and experience.

1. Quoted from 'Gazophylacium Linguae Persarum' (a dictionary of Persian words translated into Italian, Latin and French, Amsterdam, 1684) by Dr. Cyril Elgood in 'A medical history of Persia' page 367, (Cambridge, 1951).
4. Qarâbadîn: manuscript in Asiatic Society of Bengal–Ivanov.
Syphilis is not recognized clinically in the classical medical books. Avicenna and others have described the lesion called Nār-i-Fārsī which was more or less linked with the infection acquired by sexual intercourse. The earliest account of syphilis is perhaps found in the Khulāsat-ul-Tajārib of Bahā-ul-Daula (1501 A.D.). He has used the word 'Ā'blāi Firang' and also 'Ātishak' and has given the true account of the clinical symptoms. Yusufī who was a contemporary to Bahā-ul-Daula wrote his Jāmi-ul-Fawāid in 1511 A.D. and devoted several verses to the treatment of syphilis which he calls 'Firangia' and Ābla-i-Firang. Yusufī concentrates on the use of mercury, both by mouth in the form of tablets and powder and also as an ointment for local application. Mercury was the drug of choice for syphilis even in early 19th Century A.D. Apparently it seems that Yusufī was inspired by Bahā-ul-Daula, but still he remains the next man to realize the true feature of the disease and its specific treatment. The works of Yusufī particularly those which cover, physiological, bygienic and therapeautical descriptions, seem to be the gist of a medical practitioner's personal experiences. The works combine the clinical acumen and personal touches of Ḥawī with the orderly presentation of 'Hānūn'. There are suggestions of practical importance and utility, but also there are observation which a physician of today can neither accept nor deny.
If all requires thorough clinical tests. For example, hanging of gold with the neck of infants for epileptic fits, putting ground 'funduq' with olive oil on the vertex of the infant in order to change the blue colour of iris to black and putting the incised mouse over the flesh where thorn is pricked in order to get it out etc.

Most of the prescriptions he has mentioned for sexual potency, are cheap and easy to prepare and also beneficial. His original observations are frequently found in his works. He seems to have found cow's ghee useful in cough, intestinal pains and snake bite. Cow's ghee is actually the favourite therapeutic agent of Indian vaids. There are few remarkable clinical observations and experiences. For example he is conscious of the development of ascitis in chronic cases of quartan fever, confidently recommends thymol for asthma and advises to take always fresh meat, stale bread and stored water of three days. Yusufi is very near to the present day pathology, when he says that the cause of paralysis is hypertension. For ozaena, which is, according to modern theory, developed on account of maggots, he so wisely recommends the nasal wash with wine, which is strong antiseptic. He seems to be thoroughly conscious of the necessity of high nourishment in the cases of tuberculosis.

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He, rather cuts short the drugs, quite contrary to classical writers, and concentrates on diet like flesh of cock etc.

Most of the writers, while dealing with the treatment, have not paid attention to the climatic variations. Yusufi recommends drugs and diet to the patient of small-pox, keeping in view the various states of climate and season.

It is nothing but his acute clinical observation that he warns the patients of asthma against the dust, smoke and smell.

Thus Yusufi holds a distinct position among the physician who flourished during the first two moghal monarchs in India and his works are still read with interest.
Yūṣufī as an Epistolographer:

The abilities of Yūṣufī as an epistolographer are well depicted in his Badāʾī-ul-Inshā. Epistolary is that branch of literature which involves the knowledge of several learnings. There is hardly any branch of Persian literature which reflects the social character of the society and its set up during a certain period, so poignantly as the epistolography. Besides a great diplomatic insight, the epistolary should be conscious enough of the relationship between individuals and the distinctions maintained in the society. The art of epistolary had gained impetus from the feudalism of middle ages, and was considered the most important branch of learning during the moghal period. Not only from the diplomatic and social point of view, but also purely from the literary point of view, this branch of learning was considered essential for the students of literature. In India the person who marks the beginning of the art of epistolography during the moghal period is no doubt Yūṣufī. Though there was another noteworthy work 'Nāmai Nāmī' produced during the same period, Badāʾī-ul-Inshā, still holds a distinguished position owing to its contents which are purely for the sake of art and scholarship. Because the Inshā of moghal period was produced in two forms:

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a) Addressed to the general reader, observing the basic rules of Khitāb and Jawāb with respect to the gradations, without mentioning the names and the specific events. These, in other words are model epistles, bearing no historical value.
b) Addressed to the specific person, referring to the actual happenings and events. Such letters hold great historical importance. Yusufī had adhered to the composition of model epistles for the benefit of his own son and other students of Inshā. Not only the language, style and the essential of Inshā-Pardāzī are required for an epistolographer, but also he should be well informed of the status of the addressee and addressee, and other official formalities. Thus judged from the view of the so-called formalities, subject matter and literary draftsmanship, Yusufī deserves to be included in the list of super class epistolars. His command over synonyms, his ponderous phrases, adequate choice of words, lavish use of Arabic adjectives and infinitives and fluent rhymed syntax, furnish sufficient proof of his mature learning and skill as an Inshā-pardāz. Yusufī is no doubt highly erudite, verbose and figurative, so much that some anonymous author managed to compile the glossary of Badāi-ul-Inshā. But these factors were however the


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essentials of classical prose of early Moghal period and we have to give due credit to Yusufi instead of frowning at him. Yusufi was boldly followed by the later epistolars. To quote a few the following may be cited:

Mir Abul Qasim Khan Namakin who flourished during the period of Akbar and Jehangir has mainly based his chapters V, VI & VII of his 'Munsha'at' on the corresponding letters of Bada'i-ul-Insha. Similarly the author of Insha-i-Tarab al-Subyân, Nuruddin Muhammad Abdullah who flourished during the reign of Jahangir, has followed the pattern of Bada'i-ul-Insha of Hakim Yusufi in the classification of the model letters.

Smoothly it is not all worthy of appreciation. Yusufi has gone beyond the essential classification of epistles. A sense of boredom creeps into the reader's mind while coming across with the frequent models unnecessarily designed for the same class of addressee.

It is, however, really unfortunate that history has not preserved any real letters or documents drafted by Yusufi as a secretary to Humayun. His capability as an epistolographer reflected in his only traceable work on the subject, exits contd... Page. 234/
temptation for reading the letters or tarmāns drafted by him on behalf of his patron Humayūn. The same skill of Inshā Parāzī had made Abul Fazl such an immortal and dominating personality as to cause some historians observe that Akbar could become great because he had Abul Fazl at his disposal. It is surprising how the historians have neglected the person like Yusufī. Khwāna'mīr who frequently refers in his āmūn-i-Humayūnī to Yusufī's qasā'id presented to Humayūn, refrains from giving any account of his secretary-ship. And thus we are left only with Badā'ī-ul-Inshā in order to draw conclusion regarding the skill of Yusufī as an epistolographer.
YUSUF I AS A POET:

As it was more or less essential for a Physician of classical era to study and cultivate the knowledge of other subjects and languages, besides the Tib, it was also true that almost all the Hākimān used to be poets also. It was perhaps, if acquisition of poetic talent is not contradicted, a natural outcome of the study of prosody and Arabic - Persian classical literature. As for the versification of medical treatises, there were many others also. But Yusufī was also a court poet and has left us with a Diwān of Qasāid and other forms of poems.

It could be said, without any fear of contradiction, that contrary to poems composed owing to inner derive of the poet, it is difficult to versify the scientific literature under compulsion of technical terms. Moreover, if one could add the poetic nerve and musical tone to such compositions, it is an exclusive credit on the part of the poet.

In case of Yusufī, it seems as if he had no problem of saying something in prose or poetry. His command over poetic art is quite evident from his varied type of poems.

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Besides several medical verses, Yusufi had also, as mentioned above, composed a number of Qasaid in praise of Babur, Humayun, Kamran, Hindal and Askari. He had equal/taste for Ghazal, Nasnavi, and Qita. Probably the unique Diwan, I have come across in Government Oriental manuscript library, Madras, is the only source in order to establish the Yusufi's position as a court poet. But there must have been more Qasaid than we have found, for in one of his Qasaid, Yusufi himself express that he used to compose two Qasidas per month.

Perhaps Yusufi's multifarious scholarship did not let him come in the front line in the field of poetry. Otherwise his standard of poems is no less that the other Persian poets. His Diwan reveals the calibre of his poetic talent and the verdicts of contemporary scholars of repute add to our knowledge regarding the position and respect of the poet in the period he lived.

We have inherited a legacy of Persian classical poetry and there we find laborious weaving of fabrics of obscure language adorned with imagery and fantasy. And this all comes from the famous poets who are the makers of the history of Persian poetical literature. But as a matter of fact, the classics achieve contd....Page. 237/
greatness by restraint and simplicity. Yusufī had, however, to face the same problems as his predecessors and contemporaries that is, imperialism and feudalism and its inevitable demands, the usual and traditional trend of inconceivable assertions in the poems to be presented to the monarchs and patrons. But Yusufī is much simpler in his poetic diction and eulogical assertions. He could have been very figurative, ornate and obscure as he had displayed his skill in his Badāi-ul-Insha, but he is not so in his poems. Perhaps this might have been another cause that Yusufī could not secure a distinct and independent position as a poet. The verses, Yusufī has quoted in his model epistles in Badāi-ul-Insha are fine specimens of poetry. I tried to find out whether the verses cited in between the letters were the compositions of other famous poets but I could not reach any definite conclusion except this that probably a poet of Yusufī's scholarship should not have copied the verses of others so profusely.