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Medical representations, therapeutic and surgical instruments in pre-Islamic poetry

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Abstract:
The pre-Islamic poetic system represented more than just a linguistic vessel or a tool for documenting facts and events. Within its metaphorical structure, it carried intellectual and psychological patterns that embodied the ancient man's awareness of his body, his relationships, and his internal and external conflicts. Among these prominent patterns, the scientific and medical features are manifested, as images of disease and medicine are intertwined within it.His survival instinct helped him in this, asMan's attachment to life and the abundance of conflicts have led him to love life and defend his existence in it, not only through wars and confronting tyrants, but also through fighting diseases and searching for their causes and treatments.
Keywords: Medicine, pre-Islamic poetry, splint, cupping, iron, surgical instruments.

Introduction

In the midst of his discussion about medicine in ancient times, Ahmed Al-Shatti pointed out that he sees the instinct for survival as the greatest motive that ancient man sought, and thus it drove him to maintain his health, to search for the causes of diseases and avoid them, and to search for their treatment. Thus, his medical knowledge became developed over time. He begins with inspiration and chance, then he experiments, then he generalizes. He does not know the properties of diseases and medicines at first, but through experience the horizon of that science has expanded.[1] The idea that illness meant death and treatment meant hope made people strive for life, and the more life developed, the more people loved the idea of survival and preserving their strength.,On the other hand, the sophistication of the Arab cultural heritage indicates development in all areas of life, including medicine, which is based on preserving human existence. Medicine among the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era was not limited to medicines alone, but was associated with specific tools that carried the function of treatment on the one hand, and symbolic and semantic dimensions on the other. The poet in the pre-Islamic era did not merely depict diseases and illnesses, but rather excelled at evoking what could be used to repel them. He mentioned cauterization and its pain and healing, cupping with its images of blood being shed to renew life, and the scalpel with its sharpness, like the sharpness of war. Thus, medical tools were transformed from mere therapeutic means into vivid poetic images that reveal primitive man's awareness of his body and the depth of his understanding of the means of treating his wounds. Hence, the presence of medical tools in poetry was not fleeting, but rather a presence that indicates an early human awareness of the role of the means in saving the body, and confirms that when the poet mentioned them, he made them a bridge between medicine and imagination, and between reality and symbolic meaning. Through this, we can discern in the poetic texts the initial features of a poetic medicine that records the tools as evidence of real practices, and at the same time employs them to enrich the poetic image and give semantic depth to the human experience.

The splint: between medicine and symbolism in pre-Islamic poetry.

The splint is considered one of the most prominent medical tools known to the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era. It served as an essential means of treating fractures and straightening broken or injured bones. Poetic references indicate a precise knowledge of its function and methods of use, reflecting a practical medical awareness among pre-Islamic Arabs. The splint was not merely a physical tool for treatment; it also carried a symbolic dimension connected to the idea of repair and restoration. Just as the splint repairs a broken bone, in the poetic imagination it repairs what is broken in the soul or society, embodying the simultaneous intertwining of medical, social, and human meanings. Alqama al-Fahl says:
And a master like the master of Al-Zibriqan, I healed him as a leg is healed when it is burdened with a load.
If she is injured and the splints are on top of her, a year will pass with no healing, neither splint nor fracture.
You see him as if God were cutting off his nose and eyes if his master were to return to him and grant him abundance.
You see evil has destroyed the circles of his face, like a lizard in a hill whose fingertips have been destroyed by digging.[2]

In these verses, Alqama delivers a powerful satire, employing vivid imagery and complex similes, particularly in comparing his worthless cousin the "Mawlawi" to a wound that not only fails to heal but worsens despite treatment. In the first verse, he evokes a quasi-clinical medical image, saying, "I bandaged it as I bandaged a leg burdened with a heavy load." He likens the corrupt Mawlawi to a leg broken by a heavy load, which was treated bandaged but to no avail. The construction continues in the second verse, which carries a vivid image of a wound that remained unhealed for a whole year, despite the use of splints, a medical method known to the Arabs in ancient times. The third and fourth verses represent an escalation of satire that transcends the medical simile to a descriptive disfigurement-like one, as he imagines God punishing him by "cutting off his nose and eyes," and his face ravaged by evils like the claws of a gazelle digging into rocky ground to prevent it from collapsing. This image embodies the erosion of his facial features. His appearance, as a result of the effect of evil, i.e., the effect of bad morals on the creation, while the scientific and medical features in the house cannot be overlooked, as the poet spoke of fractures and splints by referring to the fracture of the leg and its binding with splints, which indicates the Arabs' knowledge of concepts of orthopedic treatment, such as fixing and splinting the fracture, which are documented practices in ancient Arab medicine, where the Arabs used wooden boards, linen and resinous materials to fix bones, as well as cases of non-union if the fractures were compound [3] This means that if a fracture is intertwined with wounds and sores, or if it is not treated directly, it leads to an aggravation of the condition, thus making healing difficult. This is what the poet alluded to in his saying, "A year has passed, with no healing, neither splint nor fracture," indicating chronic suffering and medical relapse despite treatment. This demonstrates a keen observation of cases of incomplete healing or failure of splinting, a phenomenon recognized in both ancient and modern medicine in cases of infections or compound fractures. The verses also allude to deformities resulting from illness or divine punishment, represented by the image of mutilation cutting off the nose and loss of sight. This reflects a popular awareness of the significance of physical disfigurement as a symbol of punishment or fate, a common theme in pre-Islamic literature. It may also refer to skin diseases, war injuries, or congenital defects. Furthermore, the verses allude to the erosion of the face by evil, a metaphorical expression based on an innate perception of the impact of psychological illnesses or hatred on disfiguring features. This is where pre-Islamic culture intersects

(1) See: History of Medicineand its etiquetteAnd its publications, by Ahmad Shawkat Shatti, Damascus University Press, 1st edition, 1960 AD - 1379 AH. :1-2
(2) The word "al-mawla" refers to a cousin, and "damlatah" means to treat him kindly and gently. "Tahāḍ" means to break something if you mend it, and "al-waqr" means breaking. "Aḥālat" means a year has passed over it, referring here to the broken leg mentioned in the previous verse, which has been under treatment for a full year. As for "al-jabā'ir," these are the sticks used to treat a broken bone, where it is bound with those sticks.dTo avoid its movement until it heals See: Explanation of the DiwanAlqamah al-Sahl47-48. See also:Al-Ain: 6/115.. and Lisan al-Arab: 5/185.. and Al-Mukhasas: 5/100
(3)The law considers medicine, where Ibn Sina elaborated extensively: 245 And what comes after.

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with what is known today as the impact of psychological state on physical appearance. The poet's comparison of his satirist to the person he satirized is significant. Rather, the comparison is like that of a broken leg, beyond repair or setting. This stems from the Arabs' knowledge of medical treatments and the widespread use of such methods and this important medical tool, which prompted him to use this simile to illustrate his opponent's condition. It's as if he wants to say that he has lost hope of reforming him, despite his long and fruitless patience. This understanding arises only from the sender and receiver sharing a common understanding of the object being compared. Similarly, Aws ibn Hajar uses the same medical tool in his simile, but in a completely opposite way. While Alqama's verse is satirical, Aws's is praiseworthy, as he says in describing his patron:

Al-Hafa, on the good character of the one who strengthens the great and the warrior [4]

In this verse, the poet laments a man known for his good character and strong actions, combining high human values with a physical function that has a symbolic dimension: the bone mender. The bone mender is the one who repairs the broken bone by means of a splint, which is one of the most important medical means known to the Arabs before Islam, as it was associated with treating fractures and straightening limbs. From here it becomes clear that when the poet describes his patron as the bone mender, he is comparing him to the treating physician who undertakes to repair the body and restore its health. However, the image goes beyond its sensory significance to a social and symbolic dimension. Just as a physician sets and straightens a broken bone, the praised one repairs what is broken in his society and strengthens its structure. As for describing him as "the warrior," which is derived from war, it indicates strength and the ability to confront. Thus, the poet combines therapeutic mercy and preventative rigor in the character of the praised one. From here, the picture is completed as an embodiment of the concept of the physician in pre-Islamic consciousness, not merely a healer of bodies, but also a reformer of souls and a mender of society's fractures. Thus, the poet's skill is revealed in invoking the medical tool of setting to be a grand metaphor that symbolizes physical, psychological, and social reform all at once. Also from this is a verse by Amer bin Al-Tufayl in the same vein, which says:

They are the ones who mend the broken bones when other broken bones are not mended.[5]

The poet addresses his speech to one of the men, warning him of the strength of the Banu Numair, because the poet's people Bani Amir are ready to defend them. He describes to him the spears of the Banu Amir dripping with blood from the large number of dead; however, he returns to draw another picture that they mend the broken, to show that their first characteristic is not due to the hardness and cruelty of their hearts, but rather to their courage. They are the medicine, even if it is difficult for the healer, and they help those whom time has wronged and who have been broken and have not found anyone to mend their brokenness.[6] In this verse, Amer bin Al-Tufayl uses a meaningful duality based on therapeutic metaphor and moral symbolism. Those he praises are not merely men of generosity or strength, but rather bone menders. This is an artistic image that is repeated in pre-Islamic poetry to indicate virtue, chivalry, and reform, as was mentioned in the poetry of Aws bin Hajar. However, what distinguishes this verse is its explicit medical formulation. The words “broken” and “broken” directly refer to the surgical medical terms that were known to the Arabs, especially in the science of bone setting and orthopedics. This gives the verse a double semantic value: literary in terms of rhetoric, and medical in terms of content.

The iron: between pain and healing

Another medical tool mentioned in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry is the iron. Cauterization with an iron is considered one of the most prominent medical methods known to the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era, and it was linked to their therapeutic awareness as a last resort when other medicines failed, to the point that it was said: "The last resort is cauterization."[7] Cauterization was not merely a physical process of burning the site of the disease and cutting off its substance, but rather it carried in their perceptions a dual symbolic dimension combining pain and purification; it was an ache that leads to healing, and a burning that paves the way for a new life. Pre-Islamic poetry demonstrated this perception by portraying the iron as a medical tool that inherently carries the meaning of prevention and treatment, reflecting the intertwining of medicine with symbolic imagination, where fire is seen as a purifying force, capable of expelling ailments from the body. Hence, cauterization constitutes an authentic feature in ancient medical practices, and reveals the early Arab awareness of the relationship between pain and healing, and treatment and prevention. Amr ibn Humail al-Lihyani says:

So you have the right to say, and that is the truth, I sought the cauterization, and I have been cauterized.[8]

In his verse, the poet alludes to a highly significant image, as he makes the iron – the tool for branding with fire – a symbol of the strength of the response and the power of the argument, as if the echo of his words had fallen upon his opponent like fire upon a sick body. In medical culture, cauterization represented the last and harshest of medicines, resorted to when other means failed to heal wounds. It was used to burn the site of the disease so that the corruption would die and healing would be hoped for. Hence came the extremely accurate simile, as the poet made his crushing response like cauterization , leaving the opponent no room for movement or denial. However, the dimension in the image goes beyond the direct medical aspect to a psychological-moral dimension; for cauterization is not only a physical treatment, but it is an experience of penetrating pain that generates submission and confession, just as the opponent is forced to concede the truth under the weight of the argument. Thus, the act of cauterization transforms from a physical treatment into a symbol of moral discipline, where pride is melted away by fire just as disease is melted from the body. The verse also highlights the pre-Islamic cultural awareness of the relationship between pain and healing; just as they used to say, "The last resort is cauterization," the poet meant to say that the final, decisive response must be a thunderous, definitive one, ending the debate just as cauterization ends the life of the disease. The verse thus documents the presence of cauterization in poetic memory as a realistic therapeutic method, and re-employs it as a rhetorical image with intense symbolic power, combining folk knowledge and poetic imagination, medical experience and human experience, in a single moment. Similarly, Al-Aswad ibn Ya'fur described it, saying:

I branded him when he exceeded his limits, on the head, like the branding of a dog.[9]

This verse represents a precise example of the medical and therapeutic aspect of pre-Islamic poetry, particularly concerning the treatment of mental and psychological disorders through folk surgical methods, foremost among them cauterization. The phrase "cauterization of the dog" reveals the local folk term for these treatments, enriching research in pre-Islamic medical anthropology. Cauterization of the head was used in cases of mental disturbance or nervous convulsions, and it was mentioned by Arab physicians. Here, the poet employs a direct medical image to express control over excess and transgression, whether pathological or social. The verse implies the power of fire "cauterization by fire"

([4]) The verse is part of an elegy, about which the author of the collection says that all its verses are in the form of condolences and elegies... Al-Harib: the warrior or the one who plunders people's wealth in raids, and the Arabs used to boast about that..Diwan: 10.
([5])Diwan: 66
([6])See: The Diwan: 66-67
([7])The investigator in Proverbs Arabs, Abu al-Qasim Mahmud ibn Amr ibn Ahmad, al-Zamakhshari Jar Allah (d. 538 AH)(,Scientific Book House,Beirut- Lebanon, 2nd ed., 1987: 5.
([8]) I sought someone to satirize me, and I found him. Abu Amr: He who is branded with satire. He says: I sought someone to fight me, and I found him..Explanation of the poems of the Hudhayl tribe: 823.
([9]) The word "maklab" comes from "kalb," meaning the loss of reason.Diwan of Al-Aswad ibn Ya'fur: 22And from this comes the poet's saying in satire

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used for deterrence and treatment, and that treatment by cauterization is not intended as mercy, but rather as decisive and root cause. This reflects a popular Arab awareness that pain is a cure, and fire is a therapeutic means. His statement, "I cauterized him," means I treated him with cauterization—the infliction of pain on the affected area with fire for therapeutic purposes. This method is resorted to "when he exceeded his limits," meaning when he transgressed his bounds, whether in illness or behavior. The word "limits" here is likely metaphorical. For madness or morbid or behavioral agitation, which is the last thing medicine reaches at that time; that is, after the doctor is unable to cure the patient by the usual methods, he resorts to cauterization, so it is either life or death. The cauterization of the madman is a reference to a type of cauterization in a specific place on the head, used for the afflicted with something like loss of mind, and it is one of the known cauterization places in ancient Arab medicine, and it is sometimes called the cauterization of the madmen. Here we can say that the poet came with this analogy to bring closer the idea that he wants to draw to the recipient about a method of treatment known in pre-Islamic society. The truth is that this type of treatment is still resorted to by the Arabs when they are unable to find a cure for some diseases, as it is one of the well-known folk treatments.

If we try to find this type of treatment in modern medicine, ethnomedical studies indicate that the traditional practice of cauterization, known among Arabs as cauterization, has been used since ancient Persian and Greek times, and was widely transmitted in Arab cultures before Islam. The continuation of this practice has been documented to this day in parts of the Arab world.[10] Furthermore, cauterization was a complementary therapeutic method in difficult cases that other treatments could not handle. From here, we can understand the poet's image more accurately when he compares his reaction to what the iron leaves behind as a tool for treatment. He does not formulate a passing metaphor; rather, he invokes his collective awareness of the harsh treatment represented by the last resort. That is, he uses cauterization as a symbol of the harshest forms of response, which leave no room for the opponent to deny, just as the disease is left no room to spread after cauterization. Thus, the poet combines the portrayal of folk medicine – as the last weapon before surrender – with the rhetorical ability to transform it into a symbol of victory with a decisive argument. The poetic image pulsates with a folk medical awareness that he invests poetically to make the tool a treatment with words that encapsulates the situation with a penetrating symbolism.

Al-Nabigha Al-Dhubyani says:

Did you not see the best of people, his coffin carried by young men who came to the neighborhood walking?[11]

It is mentioned that the poet composed a poem about Al-Nu'man when he was ill, and he meant by Al-Nu'man the best of people. He had become very ill and was carried by men and paraded through the neighborhoods so that he might rest and his illness might lessen, and so that people might know of his illness and pray for his recovery.[12] As for the verse we mentioned, the poet begins with a rhetorical question of veneration: “Have you not seen the best of people?” This question is not for seeking knowledge, but rather to confirm a known fact. It carries a tone of reverence for the person being spoken of. This expression elevates the figure's status and indicates his high standing among his people and society. It also suggests that he was not yet dead, but rather in the throes of death or severe illness. The poet describes a sudden and unexpected situation, one that contrasts sharply with this greatness: he was on a sickbed, being carried for treatment, with people praying for his recovery: “His bier was carried by young men who had passed through the neighborhood.” The word “bier” here does not refer to the litter in which the deceased is placed for burial, but rather, according to ancient medical dictionaries, a litter used to carry a patient in cases of terminal illness. A patient is placed on it when unable to move due to a brain or heart condition, and may require complete stillness, remaining in his bier. Kings were transported on biers when… Their weakness, like a portable bed, to soften the movement, and this reinforces that the poet is referring to a scene of a sick person in the throes of death, not completely dead, which opens up a new dimension in reading scenes of illness in pre-Islamic poetry.

The word “became” implies a transformation into this state, as if the greatness of this “goodness” has culminated in him being carried. “He has passed the tribe” means he has gone beyond or passed by. This expression depicts the solemn scene of departure, where this litter, bearing the best of people, passes by the tribe or clan while on its way. The scene carries the connotation of farewell, or a final departure in a procession. The irony lies in the fact that the litter, which once led and prevailed, is now being carried and passed by, highlighting the vicissitudes of time. The verse embodies a transitional moment, whether it be the final journey of life or the beginning of a momentous event. It evokes melancholy and reflection on the fate of great figures, and how power and status do not prevent one from succumbing to circumstances beyond their control, be they illness or death.

The verse offers an important medical insight, demonstrating the poet's awareness of the concepts of transport and care in cases of weakness or illness. The poet's use of the word "coffin" or "bath" to refer to the litter or palanquin upon which the sick or infirm are carried indicates the existence of specialized means of transport for the sick or elderly who cannot ride directly on an animal. This reflects an understanding of the necessity of providing comfort and physical support to people in vulnerable situations, a practice that was part of primitive medicine or primary healthcare in ancient societies. It suggests an interest in transporting the injured or sick in a way that ensured their safety and comfort as much as possible. The scene of walking "He has entered the neighborhood on foot" depicts the movement of transport itself. This indicates that transport was an essential part of caring for the sick or handling the deceased in an environment that required constant movement, and it suggests that this process was carried out regularly.

Here we can say that this verse by Al-Nabigha Al-Dhubyani is a unique example of how literary aspects intertwine with social and medical features in pre-Islamic poetry. Besides the poet's skill in evoking reverence and sorrow over the fate of "the best of people," the verse provides evidence of the existence of specialized means of transport for caring for the sick the bier/canopy . This imbues the term with a scientific significance that the critical reader cannot overlook. This reinforces the idea that pre-Islamic poetry was not merely a record of heroism and genealogy, but rather a mirror reflecting social and physical awareness, including aspects of medicine and care in that era, making it a valuable source for studying the history of science during that period.

Surgical instruments: between medical function and poetic symbolism.

Surgery was known in ancient Arab medical tradition as one of the most delicate and dangerous forms of treatment, requiring specialized tools that complemented the practitioner's experience and expertise. Pre-Islamic poetry was not detached from this reality; rather, it captured images of surgical instruments and their effects on the body, transforming them into vivid scenes imbued with both medical and symbolic meaning. The surgical instrument, with its precision and power, was not merely mentioned in poetry as a means of treatment, but became a symbol revealing the poet's vision of the body, illness, and healing, and his profound understanding of the limits of pain and human endurance. Thus, studying surgical instruments in poetry reveals an early awareness of medical practice and highlights how practical function blended with

([10]) An Ethnomedical Perspective of Arabic Traditional Cauterization; Al-Kaiy. Abushanab T., AlSanad S. Advanced Journal of Social Sciences. AIJR Publisher. 2018; 4(1):18–23

([11]) Diwan of Al-Nabigha Al-Dhubyani: 68.

([12]) See: The Diwan: 67-68.

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poetic imagery, making the medical instrument a testament to the intertwining of medicine and poetry, science and imagination. Among the surgical instruments that pre-Islamic poets masterfully described, by comparing the movement of loads on a camel to them, is the "maharif," a probe used for probing wounds. Aws ibn Hajar says of this:

The saddle's reins slip from their sides, just as the sharp edges slip from the head of the wounded man. [13]

The verse reveals the poet's ability to create a vivid, dynamic image, employing simile to clarify meaning and deepen impact. This is clearly evident in the intense kinetic image, as the poet opens his verse by describing the movement of the saddle's wooden parts: "The saddle's strings slip from its vertebrae." The strings are the wooden parts of the saddle, the saddle is what is placed on the camel's back for riding or carrying loads, and the vertebrae are the bones of the spine between the shoulders. The verb "slip" suggests rapid movement and smooth gliding, as if the saddle doesn't stay in place on the camel's back due to its swift movement or the fullness and symmetry of its vertebrae, which leaves no room for stability. This description conveys the camel's exceptional strength and agility, moving with such flexibility and vigor that the loads sway and almost fall off. Here, we can say that the poet presents a precise poetic image reflecting a deep understanding of the animal and human body, using a medical simile to illustrate the movement of the saddle's wooden parts on the camel's back. The poet describes the movement of the saddle's wooden parts. The poet likens the movement of surgical instruments on a wounded person's head to the smooth, flowing saddle straps, creating a highly detailed and profound metaphor. This complex simile highlights the loosening and wobbly nature of the wooden straps securing the saddle to the camel's back. These straps slip from the delicate points on the camel's back, suggesting the camel's flexibility and agility. The poet then draws a precise medical analogy for this movement, described as shifting and sliding, to what happens when someone suffers a deep head wound. In this analogy, the surgeon's probes slip as they probe the wound to determine its depth and location. Through this accurate comparison, the poet conveys a keen understanding of the process of examining wounds that may be difficult to bandage. He also reflects a familiarity with traditional medical tools used to examine deep wounds and head injuries, where the probe was used to penetrate the wound to determine its path and depth. This is precisely the function of the surgical probes used today. In operating rooms for examining surgical depths [14] This reflects an image of the depth of the wound or its slippery nature, which is not easily bandaged. These are rhetorical visual metaphors that support a realistic, empirical understanding of surgical medicine.

This verse is not merely a rhetorical image; it also demonstrates an early insight into surgical techniques. It connects metaphorical imagery with procedural medical awareness, indicating the breadth of the poet's knowledge. This simile links the smooth movement of a saddle strap with the fluid motion of a probe measuring instrument on the head of a wounded person. The poet describes how easily the probes glide over the wound, demonstrating the smooth movement of the medical instrument used to examine it. This simile reveals an awareness of the mechanisms of wound examination and the precision of these instruments. It also offers important insights into the understanding of primitive surgery and the use of precise medical instruments in the pre-Islamic era. The mention of probes as instruments for probing wounds indicates that the Arabs possessed medical tools specifically for surgical diagnosis and for measuring the depth or extent of a wound to determine the severity of the injury and choose the appropriate treatment. This points to a rudimentary practice of diagnostic surgery. Probes were simple instruments, often consisting of a skewer or rod used to probe wounds. Their function was primarily diagnostic, to estimate the depth and course of the wound. These instruments relied on In contrast to the sensory observation of the physician or therapist, modern surgical instruments have evolved significantly and radically to include highly precise techniques used not only for diagnosis but also for treatment. Today, the surgical probe is a medical instrument used in surgical operations to guide surgeons in exploring and modifying tissues, exploring wounds, fistulas, and other cavities. It is made of rigid or flexible materials and has a sharp tip to facilitate exploration and modification. It has several uses, including determining the location and boundaries of different tissues during surgery, determining the depth and size of wounds and fistulas, as well as exploring different cavities. It is characterized by its precision, allowing for accurate tissue modifications. The probe also gives the surgeon complete control over the movement of the instrument.[15] However, it represents a natural extension of ancient tools, allowing us to see an integrated view of the past and present. The verse by Aws ibn Hajar demonstrates an early awareness of the importance of precision and speed in using medical instruments. Despite the simplicity of the tools at the time, they represented a fundamental step towards instrument-based diagnostic medicine, a principle that evolved into the basis of modern surgery. This inclusion of medical concepts within a poetic context highlights that pre-Islamic poetry was not merely a linguistic art, but a mirror reflecting social and intellectual awareness, including aspects related to health and disease, making it a valuable source for studying the history of science in that era.

Umayya ibn Abi al-Salt comes close to this, as he mentioned the probe in the last of a famous poem about wisdom, monotheism, and the description of nature and existence, where that verse included references to the medical function, the healing ability, and the inability to face some divine blows, saying:

And God's blow to the enemies is penetrating, baffling physicians, and no probe can sway it.[16]

These verses embody a profound philosophy of existence and human helplessness. The poet presents a deep pre-Islamic philosophical vision centered on God's all-encompassing power, which transcends the limits of human medicine. The poet's statement, "God's stab in the enemy is penetrating," symbolizes decisive divine punishment that cannot be averted. It is a metaphor for an inevitable fate from which there is no escape. The second line reinforces this meaning: "It baffles physicians; no probing can sway it." This means that this stab renders physicians powerless and their methods of treatment ineffective. Even surgical instruments probing are unable to address it. The poetic image is based on a precise comparison between the Creator's power and the creature's helplessness. Divine punishment is likened to a penetrating stab that no worldly treatment can cure. Medicine, however advanced, becomes powerless before fate. This illustrates the duality of divine power and the limits of human knowledge. The verse also contains two scientific aspects: first, the explicit mention of physicians, which is evidence of their existence and status in pre-Islamic society, and an acknowledgment that they played a role in attempting to treat illnesses and injuries, even if that was It relies on folk medicine and practical experience, and the second: the reference to the instrument probing , which is a surgical instrument used to test the depth of the wound and clean it, which reveals accurate knowledge of primitive diagnostic means, and its mention in poetry proves that the Arabs did not stop at the limits of rhetorical imagery, but also conveyed their experience with medical practices. Thus, the verse combines the scientific feature represented by the poet's awareness of the medical profession and its tools, and the philosophical-

([13]) The saddle is called *qatud*, the plural of *qatd*, which is the wooden frame of the saddle. *Dayat* refers to the vertebrae of the withers, the area between the shoulders of a camel. *Shajij* means wounded. *Maharif* is the plural of *mihraf*, which is the probe used to examine wounds. The word *harf* is also used. *Maharif* is the plural of *mihraf*, which is the probe used to examine wounds. The phrase "the probe reached the bone" is used to describe the process of moving the probe. (Diwan: 66. See: Al-Ayn 3/211. Sirr al-Fasaha - Volume 1 - Page 24 - Jami' al-Kutub al-Islamiyya).

([14]) https://n9.cl/jeg8rr.

([15]) See:https://n9.cl/jeg8rr.

([16]) The Diwan of Umayya ibn Abi al-Salt:221-222. andThe wick: a plug placed in the wound,It was said: that which he used to probe and measure the depth of the woundsSee:Al Ain 7/251See also:Al-Mukhasas 5/93, and Lisan al-Arab 6/3 Sabr. andDiwanUmayya ibn Abi al-Salt222

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religious feature represented by the acknowledgment that all these human means are limited before divine decree, which reflects the Arabs' understanding of medicine as a material science that has its effect, but remains powerless before the power of destiny.

Here we can say that the verses of Umayya ibn Abi al-Salt present a unique blend of existential philosophy and religious contemplation, with the inclusion of scientific and medical features of high scientific value. They reflect an awareness of the cognitive limits of physicians at that time in the face of divine power, which contributes to enriching our understanding of scientific and technical awareness in the pre-Islamic environment, and reveals a profound view of the universe and man by a poet who is considered one of the wise men of the pre-Islamic era.

The cupping in ancient medical consciousness

The cupping device is considered one of the prominent medical tools in pre-Islamic Arab therapeutic practice. It is a small, cone-shaped instrument placed on the skin after it has been incised with a razor. The air is drawn from the other, thin end to extract the stagnant or desired blood to relieve pressure. It leaves a round mark on the skin, which the poet likens to the hoofprint on a donkey's chest when it is kicked.anna.[17] Its use was associated with cupping and its related practices of removing stagnant blood or relieving pain and congestion. Its presence in pre-Islamic poetry constitutes evidence of an early awareness of this method, not only from the perspective of its physical function, but also for its symbolic significance related to purification and healing. In the pre-Islamic medical imagination, the cupper was not merely a surgical instrument, but a window into understanding the body and treating its ailments according to available experience and knowledge. Through the poets' depictions of this instrument, the features of a primitive yet conscious medical knowledge become clear, revealing the pre-Islamic man's attempt to reconcile physical healing tools with his cultural and symbolic concepts of illness and treatment. An example of this is the saying of Zuhair ibn Abi Sulma:

Wounds are forgiven by the hundreds, so that even those who are not guilty of them are now considered to have committed them.
Some people impose fines on others, but they do not shed even a drop of blood between them.[18]

The poem came in praise of Al-Harith bin Awf bin Abi Haritha, and Haram bin Sinan when they sought to make peace between Abs and Dhubyan [19] In these two verses, the poet translates an important practice that was prevalent in pre-Islamic Arab society and was later endorsed by Islam: the acceptance of blood money diya in exchange for murder, severe assault resulting in injury, or any other form of aggression. These practices remain prevalent to this day, and often serve as a substitute for legal rulings, as if they have become more powerful than the law since then. The poet seeks to describe these practices, saying: " The wounds are forgiven ," meaning that the blood is removed or erased through blood money, which he specifies as "hundreds" plural of "hundred," meaning blood money is usually one hundred camels . This was paid at a specific time. The poet then points to an important matter: that the one who pays the fine has not committed a crime, meaning he was neither the perpetrator nor the instigator. Rather, he bears it out of generosity, kinship ties, and the community's assistance to the individual. Then, in the second verse, he moves on to explain that those who intervened from the authorities had no hand in the killing, but rather acted to avert strife. The fine was paid by someone who did not even shed a drop of blood.[20] Although the killing or wounding was not intentional and no amount of blood was shed a cupping glass , meaning no much blood was spilled, and a cupping glass is the bottle or cup that represents the tool used in cupping, where it is filled with blood, which is a small amount of blood.

The two verses observe another type of treatment that is not medical but social. When wounds or stabs are treated medically, their effect remains in the hearts, stirring up grudges, which leads to the continuation of bloodshed. The verse refers to a quasi-medical-social process, which is financial compensation for physical damage similar to insurance or modern legal compensation . This indicates that in pre-Islamic society, a wound was not viewed casually, but rather was valued both materially and morally, requiring medical treatment and perhaps tribal arbitration. The poet's statement, "They did not spill even a cupping glass between them," accurately depicts the amount of blood. This metaphorical use of the cupping glass reveals a poetic-scientific understanding of the concept of bleeding and its control using the glass. It served as a scale for measuring damage in minute locations, quantifying it by the amount of blood drawn. The poet's mention of "a cupping glass" specifies a negligible amount of blood compared to the blood money paid. This demonstrates a precise understanding of the small quantity of blood that the cupping instrument could draw. This highlights that cupping was not merely a haphazard practice, but rather an understanding of the volume of fluids handled in this medical procedure. Furthermore, the use of the cupping glass as a standard for a very small amount of blood suggests that the instrument's effectiveness in bloodletting was well-known, characterized by its precision and ability to extract limited, measured quantities. People were also aware of the mechanism of cupping and its volume. The blood expected from it, which places it within the important scientific knowledge in society at that time and confirms their accurate medical knowledge regarding cupping and the amount of blood expected, which prompted the poet to use this measure to show through it the amount of blood spilled.

Here we can say that these two verses of pre-Islamic poetry present a profound and vibrant literary image, in which social and legal connotations intertwine with implicit medical and scientific allusions. They reveal a deep-rooted understanding of the prevailing medical concepts of that era, as the mention of "wounds and cupping" is not merely a passing poetic phrase, but rather an indication of practical knowledge of wounds and cupping practices. This enriches our understanding of the pre-Islamic individual's awareness of the human body and its treatment methods, even if those practices were primitive and reliant on experience and practice. The cupping device becomes a precise symbol indicating a small amount of blood, and the poet uses it to express the resolution of a bloody conflict without resorting to fighting or even shedding a single drop of blood. Instead, fines and blood money are paid in installments. This image reveals an early awareness of the tools of traditional medicine and their functions in the Arab environment, and the ability of poetry to represent and symbolically employ medical language. The phrase also suggests an implicit contrast between war as a cause of bloodshed and cupping as a practice. Therapeutic in which small amounts of blood are shed for healing purposes, indicating the peaceful nature of the solutions proposed in that environment.

As for Al-A'sha, he used the mark left by cupping as an example of the effect of a blow, saying:

He grazed Al-Rawd and Al-Wasmi until it was as if Bibis Al-Daw saw the immar of Alqam
He followed a dark, doubtful path; whenever he deviated from the intended course, he would be punished.
If he approached her, she met him with a hoof, as if it had the effect of a cupping glass on his chest.[21]

The word "rawd" and "wasmi" refer to a mare or camel that grazed in the place where water gathered in the valleys, where there was dense, tender vegetation resulting from the autumn rain, until its body became plump and swollen, so the taste of the desert vegetation became like the taste of colocynth, indicating a bitterness that suggests hatred of something due to its harm, because it was accustomed to a life of luxury.

([17]) Diwan of Al-A'sha:

([18])Explanation of Zuhair's Diwan by Al-Shantari17.The cupping vessel: This is the container used in cupping therapy to collect the blood of the patient after it is drawn from the area where the cupping device is applied. See:Al Ain 3/87.Al-Sahah 5/1894LSan Arab: Volume 1:577.

([19]) See: Commentary on the Diwan of Zuhair by al-Shantari: 8.

([20]) See: Explanation of Zuhair's Diwan by Al-Shantari: 17.

([21])Diwan Al-A'sha: 119.The meadow is a grassy place where water is plentiful, and the first rain is called "al-wasmi" in the autumn season.,The desert; dry grass; colocynth, which is very bitter; the donkey; the submissive, docile one; thin; the back; biting.See: Diwan Al-A'sha: 118-121.

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A docile, docile, and emaciated female donkey attracted him, so he followed her, and whenever she rejected him, he attacked her and bit her. Whenever he approached her, she kicked him with her leg out of fear of him, which left a mark on his chest from her hoof. This mark is similar to the mark of cupping on the body.[22] The scientific and medical features are evident in the third verse, where he met her with a hoof, to describe the horse's strength and the intensity of her reaction. If he approaches her, she meets him with a hoof Imagine the ferocity and force of her kick, as if she lies in wait for anyone who approaches her in a way she disapproves of. Then comes the exquisite simile that connects physical force with scientific features, a simile of profound depth. The poet likens the pain or wound in the chest to the effect of cupping. Comparing the hoof's impact on the body to the cupping's effect on the chest reflects a precise understanding of the painful physical action of cupping, including the puncture, pressure, pain, and bloody mark that leaves a circular red mark on the skin after blood is drawn. This mark is accompanied by localized pain. The simile here illustrates the force of the hoof's kick, which causes sharp, localized pain like the pain of bloodletting with cupping. This expression combines the connotations of pain and force, highlighting the powerful sensory aspect of the description. The simile not only indicates his knowledge of cupping as a medical procedure but also his awareness of its effect on the body: the localized pain and the circular mark. This means that both the poet and the listener were aware of this. The effect of cupping is sufficient for them to understand this analogy directly, and it reflects a general understanding of the body's reaction to pricking and bloodletting, knowledge classified within ancient empirical medicine. The poet's knowledge of a medical instrument used as a cupping glass, through his analogy of the resulting pain as an accurate metaphorical measure, and the poet's internalization of the organic effect of a therapeutic tool used for healing, not harm, but whose painful effect he depicts to aid in the physical description, revealing the presence of the medical instrument in the consciousness of the pre-Islamic poet, and its transformation into a metaphorical standard for embodying physical pain, confirms their internalization of the methods of folk and clinical medicine in that era. It is clear that pre-Islamic poets were not merely artists of words, but rather keen observers of the world around them, including the medical and folk practices that formed part of the fabric of their daily lives, which reinforces the idea that pre-Islamic poetry is not merely a record of events, but a repository of information from which features of an early scientific awareness can be extracted.

A close examination of the physical methods of treatment employed by pre-Islamic Arabs reveals a deep-rooted awareness of the body's nature and limitations, and an innate drive to manage pain and overcome illness through diverse tools ranging from herbs to cauterization, bloodletting, and bone setting. However, the value of these methods lies not only in their physicality but also in their symbolic presence within the pre-Islamic poetic imagination. When a poet mentions cauterization, cupping, or a probe, he is not merely invoking a surgical instrument, but also evoking connotations of patience, resilience, and the human experience of confronting pain. Thus, these medical methods, despite their simplicity, became rhetorical markers bearing witness to the interplay between the physical and the symbolic, between the body and language, between pain and poetry. This underscores that pre-Islamic poetry was not simply a reflection of beauty, but a document pulsating with a comprehensive health, medical, and social consciousness.

This chapter makes it clear that pre-Islamic poetry was not merely an emotional expression or a depiction of Bedouin life, but rather represented a cognitive record that preserved much of the Arabs' experiences and knowledge in dealing with the body and its ailments. The verses revealed diverse knowledge of treatment methods, healing tools, and preventative measures, making this poetry a testament to an early medical awareness predating the stage of scientific documentation. We can conclude that pre-Islamic poetry is simultaneously a medical, cultural, and social document that deserves attention and study as a source that demonstrates the breadth of human experience among the Arabs in formulating their knowledge according to their environment and circumstances. Hence, a critical scientific rereading of this poetry opens new horizons for researchers to understand the relationship between literature and knowledge, and confirms that interest in pre-Islamic poetry is not a literary luxury but a necessary entry point for understanding the history of the Arab mind and its early scientific features.

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