



# Medical Institutions And Healing Culture In Central Asia During The Timurid Renaissance

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**Abstract:** This article examines the development of medical institutions and healing culture in Central Asia during the Timurid Renaissance. The study focuses on the revival of medical knowledge after the period of political and cultural decline caused by the Mongol invasion. It analyzes the role of Timurid rulers in supporting hospitals, pharmacies, physicians, medical education, public hygiene, and ethical principles in medical practice. Particular attention is paid to the activities of Amir Temur, Mirzo Ulugbek, Husayn Bayqara, and Alisher Navoi in creating a favorable environment for the progress of medicine. The article argues that medicine in the Timurid period was not limited to treatment alone, but functioned as an important component of social welfare, scientific development, urban culture, and moral responsibility.

**Keywords:** Timurid Renaissance, Central Asian medicine, medical institutions, hospitals, physicians, pharmacy, surgery, medical ethics, public health.

## Introduction

The history of medicine in Central Asia is closely connected with the broader development of science, education, culture, and statehood. In different historical periods, medical knowledge developed under the influence of political stability, intellectual traditions, religious values, and social needs. The Timurid period occupies a special place in this process because it marked the revival of many branches of knowledge after a long period of crisis.

The Mongol invasion caused serious damage to the cultural and scientific life of Central Asia. Many cities, villages, libraries, madrasahs, hospitals, and pharmacies were destroyed. The decline of urban life and the weakening of educational institutions negatively affected the transmission of medical knowledge. As a result, medical practice and scientific medicine experienced a period of stagnation.

From the second half of the fourteenth century, the establishment of a centralized state under Amir Temur created new conditions for the restoration of science and public institutions. The Timurid rulers paid attention not only to military and political affairs, but also to urban development, education, architecture, public welfare, and health care. In this context, medicine became an important field that reflected the intellectual and social priorities of the period.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the development of medical institutions and healing culture in Central Asia during the Timurid Renaissance. The article aims to show how hospitals, pharmacies, physicians, medical education, surgical practices, and ethical ideas contributed to the formation of a more organized medical environment.

## Methods

This study is based on historical-analytical and comparative methods. The article uses a source-based approach to examine information about medical institutions, physicians, hospitals, pharmacies, and medical ethics in the Timurid period. The historical material is interpreted in relation to the social and cultural conditions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The analysis is organized around several main directions: the restoration of medicine after the Mongol invasion, the role of state patronage in the development of hospitals and physicians, the contribution of individual rulers and intellectuals, the progress of surgery and pharmacy, and the importance of medical ethics in the writings of Alisher Navoi.

## Results

The study shows that the development of medicine during the Timurid period was closely related to the restoration of urban and cultural life. After the destruction caused by earlier invasions, the Timurid state created conditions for the reconstruction of cities, educational institutions, public buildings, and



health-related facilities. This process allowed medicine to develop again as both a practical and intellectual field.

One of the important features of Timurid medical culture was the role of state support. Amir Temur paid attention to the construction of hospitals and the appointment of qualified physicians. Historical information indicates that in large cities and settlements, special institutions were established for the care of the sick. This shows that health care was understood not only as a private matter, but also as a public responsibility.

In Samarkand, the hospital known as “Dor ush-shifo” became one of the important medical centers of the period. It was associated with the activity of well-known physicians, including Mir Sayyid Sharif Sherozi. Other physicians, such as Hisomiddin Ibrohim Kirmoni, Mavlon Fayzulloh Tabrizi, and Mansur ibn Muhammad, also contributed to medical practice and knowledge. Their work demonstrates that medical culture in the Timurid period was supported by trained specialists and organized institutions.

Military medicine also had practical importance. In the army of Amir Temur, physicians treated wounded and sick soldiers. This indicates that medical service was necessary not only for urban society, but also for military organization. The presence of physicians in military structures shows the practical value of medicine in protecting human life under difficult conditions.

Public hygiene was another important aspect of health policy. The maintenance of clean cities, the protection of drinking water, and the construction of water facilities such as sardobas were connected with the prevention of diseases. These measures may be interpreted as early forms of public health activity because they aimed to reduce the spread of illness and improve living conditions.

During the reign of Mirzo Ulugbek, medical knowledge continued to develop. He invited the famous physician Burhonuddin Nafis ibn Avaz Hakim al-Kirmani from Kirman and supported medical activity in Samarkand. Al-Kirmani served as a chief physician and wrote works related to medicine and the preparation of medicines. This reflects the development of pharmacy and the growing importance of written medical knowledge.

Surgery also reached a noticeable level during the Timurid period. Historical information about the surgeon Tojiddin Hakim shows that complex surgical procedures were practiced. His use of heated surgical instruments and antiseptic substances demonstrates that some practical methods of sterilization and infection prevention were known through experience. Although these practices were not based on modern microbiology, they reveal an empirical understanding of cleanliness and surgical safety.

In the period of Husayn Bayqara, the development of medicine was closely linked with the intellectual activity of Alisher Navoi. Although Navoi was not a physician, he deeply respected medical knowledge and studied the works of earlier scholars such as Ibn Sina and Abu Bakr al-Razi. In his writings, especially in “Mahbub ul-qulub”, Navoi discussed the moral qualities of physicians and emphasized responsibility, knowledge, compassion, and professional competence.

The activity of hospitals in Herat also shows the connection between medical practice and education. Physicians such as Darvesh Ali treated patients and taught students. This means that hospitals functioned not only as places of treatment, but also as centers of medical learning.

### **Discussion**

The results suggest that medicine in the Timurid period should be understood as a complex social and cultural phenomenon. It was not limited to individual treatment or traditional healing. Instead, it was connected with state administration, urban planning, education, pharmacy, surgery, and ethical thought.

The role of political patronage was especially important. Timurid rulers understood that the strength of society depended not only on military power, but also on the health and welfare of the population. Therefore, hospitals, physicians, pharmacies, and public hygiene measures became part of the broader policy of social organization.

The development of medical institutions also shows that Timurid medicine had an organized character. Hospitals provided treatment, pharmacies prepared medicines, physicians wrote medical works, and



some specialists taught students. This combination of practice, education, and written knowledge created a strong basis for the continuation of medical traditions.

The example of surgical practice is particularly significant. The use of heated instruments and natural antiseptic substances shows that Timurid physicians relied on observation and experience. Even though these methods were different from modern scientific medicine, they reflected a practical effort to reduce harm and improve treatment outcomes.

Medical ethics was another important dimension of Timurid healing culture. Alisher Navoi's views on physicians demonstrate that professional knowledge was not considered sufficient without moral responsibility. A physician was expected to be skillful, compassionate, careful, and honest. This idea remains relevant for modern medicine, where ethical behavior is one of the main requirements of professional practice.

The Timurid experience also shows the close relationship between medicine and culture. Medical knowledge developed in the same intellectual environment as literature, philosophy, history, and education. Therefore, the study of Timurid medicine helps us understand not only the history of health care, but also the moral and cultural values of the society.

### Conclusion

The Timurid period was an important stage in the development of medicine in Central Asia. After the destruction and decline caused by earlier invasions, medical knowledge, hospitals, pharmacies, and medical education were gradually restored. The support of Amir Temur and later Timurid rulers created favorable conditions for the development of health care institutions and professional medical activity. The medical culture of this period included practical treatment, surgery, pharmacy, public hygiene, medical education, and ethical reflection. The activities of physicians in Samarkand and Herat, the construction of hospitals, the preparation of medicines, and the moral ideas expressed by Alisher Navoi all demonstrate the richness of Timurid medical heritage.

In conclusion, medicine during the Timurid Renaissance was not only a field of healing, but also an expression of social responsibility and intellectual progress. The historical experience of this period remains significant for understanding the development of medical institutions, public health culture, and professional ethics in Central Asia.

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