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Temperament-mere psychology or more

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Abstract

Purpose: In this paper we shall try to explore the dimensions of temperament, whether it is limited to the psychological aspect only or it is something more than that.

Background: *Tibb* is not mere science rather it is a way of healing and healthy living. A very distinct feature of *Tibb* is individualization; individualization of not only individuals but of diseases and treatment also. And individualization can only be achieved on the basis of temperament – which is an inseparable concept of Unani Medicine. Any theory or advancement in Unani Medicine is incomplete without the consideration of temperament. In modern science, temperament is defined as a state of mind where a person makes decisions (both, big and small) and acts according to a rational belief system, which can be tested and validated as and when required by mathematical modeling and/or experimentation, which suggests that in modern science, temperament only deals with psychological modalities. But in *Tibb*, it has much broader aspect.

Method: Temperament is dealt with different meanings in different branches of science. The literature related to human temperament in different scientific fields is discussed in brief with the fundamental meaning of temperament. In *Tibb*, temperament deals with psychological, physiological, and morphological folds of human being, while in modern system of medicine and sciences, temperament accounts only for psychological behavior. Some says personality is the outcome of temperament, while others says temperament is inborn and personality develops with the time. All these aspects are being discussed here briefly.

Conclusion: The concept of temperament was originally proposed 350 BC. And after more than two thousand years of intervening medical and psychological advancement, the concept of temperament is still referenced by present-day psychologists, educators, and spiritual writers. The concept of temperament addresses the problem that why anything that looks similar still possess morphological differences and animate things which are morphologically similar are still distinct functionally. The relationship between the structures and functions can be understood in terms of the everlasting concept – temperament. It is the temperament that imparts Surat Nauiya to a specific thing through which it acquires its specific shape and structure and hence distinct functions and therefore, leads to structural and functional individualization.

Keywords: Temperament, Psychology, Ţibb, Ṭabī'at, Akhlāţ

Introduction

The word "temperament" is derived from the Latin word "tempero" which means "to mix". This word temperament is used in the English language as a synonym of the Arabic word *Mizāj*. The Greek used to call the mixture of humors as "krasis" which is derived from "Kerannyni" meaning "to mix". The word Kerasis is usually translated as temperament.

There is another word constitution which is used as an equivalent of $Miz\bar{a}j$. This word means the natural condition of the body and mind and when it is used in chemistry, it denotes not only kinds and number of atoms but also the way they are linked. This meaning is fully in accordance with the elemental concept of temperament [1].

In modern medicine the terms "constitution" and "temperament" are often used synonymously but according to *Unani Ţibb* constitution is $Tab\bar{\iota}'at$ comprised of seven physical factors, $Um\bar{u}r\ Tab\bar{\iota}'yya$, of which temperament is one [2].

The Arab physicians described the concept of $Miz\bar{a}j$ in a universal manner as compared to the modern concept of temperament that is limited to the psycho – somatic behaviour only. Therefore, the word temperament does not hold the same meaning as $Miz\bar{a}j$ meant in Greco-Arabic medicine rather $Miz\bar{a}j$ has a broader meaning.

Literal meaning of temperament: The literal meaning of the word "temperament" as given in few authentic dictionaries is as follows.

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Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus: A person's or animal's nature, especially as it permanently affects their behaviour [3].

Chamber dictionary: A person's natural way of thinking, behaving etc. ^[4].

New concise medical dictionary: An inherent, constitutional predisposition to react to stimuli in a certain way; the term is often used synonymously with personality [5].

Taber's encyclopedia medical dictionary: The combination of intellectual, emotional, ethical and physical characteristics of an individual ^[6].

Newman: The peculiar physical character and mental cast of an individual ^[7].

Cambridge Advance Learner Dictionary: Temperament as noun means the part of our character that affects your moods and the way we behave [8].

Stedman: The physical organization peculiar to the individual, which influences one's metabolic process, manner of thought and action and the general view of life [7].

Temperament - What Recent Philosophers Perceive: Allport (1920's) The distinctive phenomena of an individual's nature, including his/her customary strength and speed of response, susceptibility to emotional stimulation, the quality of his prevailing mood, and all the peculiarities of fluctuation and intensity of mood, these being the phenomena regarded as dependent on constitutional make-up and therefore largely hereditary in origin Eysenck (1940's) [9]. Temperament is more or less a stable enduring system of affective behavior [10]. Buss and Plomin (1984) Temperament is inherited personality traits that are present in early childhood. The three personality traits include: emotionality, activity, and sociability as being the foundation for personality [11]. Goldsmith and Campos Temperament is individual differences emotionality including individual differences in anger, fear, interest, sadness, pleasure, etc. [11]. Kagan and Snidman (2004) Temperament is a reflection of features that are inherent in the individual at birth, or an inherited biology Rothbart (2007) [11]. Temperament is defined as individual differences in emotional, motor, and attentional reactivity measured by intensity, latency, recovery of response, and

self-regulation processes such as effortful control that modulate reactivity Strelau (1998) [12]. Temperament is relatively stable across time as compared with other phenomena and is characterized by cross-situational consistency. Temperament has a biological basis and refers mainly to behavioral reactions such as energy, intensity, fluctuation, mobility, strength, speed, and tempo [13]. Thomas and Chess (1977) Thomas and Chess stated one of the most popular definitions of temperament. They are known as the founders of contemporary temperament research in children and consider temperament as a behavioral style. They thought that temperament was best viewed as the 'how' of behavior. They believed it differed from ability, which is concerned with the 'what' and 'how well' of behaving, and from motivation, which accounts for why a person does what he/she is doing. They believed that temperament concerned the way in which a person behaves

Temperament in Modern Perspective: In psychology, temperament broadly refers to consistent individual differences in behavior that are biologically based and are relatively independent of learning, system of values and attitudes. Temperament is associated with formal dynamical features of behavior, such as energetic aspects, plasticity, sensitivity and emotionality [15].

Personality and Character - People's personalities show in their individual differences. It is what helps to make people different in their ideas, beliefs, education and upbringing and so on. Our character, on the other hand, helps us when we look for habitual behavior. There is an Irish saying that everyone is the same, only different. This difference is mainly due to the fact that every individual has a different temperament [16]. Some says, temperament is the innate aspect of an individual's personality, such as introversion and extroversion, while the others say, temperament is defined as that part of the personality, which is genetically based. Along with character and those aspects that are acquired through learning, the two together are said to constitute personality [17].

The characteristics which are typical of human behavior fall into four main groups, and these are represented by the four temperaments. Modern psychology places great emphasis on the differences in individual behavior, whilst in categorizing of people by reference to the notion of the temperaments, stress is placed on their similarities. There are basic similarities and polarities among the four temperaments [16].

MELANCHOLIC

Attention not easily aroused,

Strongly persevering

PHLEGMATIC

Attention least easily aroused, Strongly persevering

CHOLERIC

Attention most easily aroused, most strongly persevering

SANGUINE

Attention easily aroused, Little strength of perseverance

The choleric

"Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win" Enthusiasm, energy, intelligence, and a strong will combine to make the choleric temperament a classic go-getter. The choleric takes charge and get many things accomplished in a short time. The choleric reacts quickly and intensely: decisiveness is his hallmark. In addition, he is extraverted and self-confident, comfortable taking charge of people as well as situations. Opposition is never a stumbling block, but rather, a further incentive to action. Dynamic and direct. the choleric has a keen mind and thinks independently. There is, of course, a downside to this driven and intense personality. The choleric is quick to judge, to form an opinion, and to charge ahead stubbornly - often without proper reflection and at times without compassion for people in his way. He can be domineering, obstinate, dictatorial, overly ambitious, and hard-hearted. He is prone to pride and anger [18].

The melancholic

Blessed are they who have hunger and thirst for righteousness

The melancholic, more than any other temperament, tends to value the ideal - whether it be truth, beauty, or justice, and all that is noble. He can be thoughtful, pious, and compassionate, given to solitude and reflection. Sensitive and idealistic, he is deeply concerned about injustice and vice. His idealism combined with compassion for humanity and passion for justice may lead him to a humanitarian vocation. Great writers, poets, artists, and composers have been of this temperament. The melancholic is principled, consistent, faithful, and persevering. He is orderly, diligent, and attentive to detail. He appreciates the mystery and depth of life. The melancholic temperament is characterized by a weak or dull initial reaction to stimuli, followed by an increase in intensity over time; the reaction then tends to last a long time. Because of their introversion and their tendency to pessimism, melancholic can become excessively selfabsorbed [18].

The Sanguine

"God loves a cheerful giver"

The creative, fun-loving, high-spirited sanguine's natural tendency to look on the bright side, to enjoy people, and to seek out adventure sometimes results in a label of superficiality and frivolity. A strength of the sanguine is his ability to "live in the present moment"; because he does not dwell on the past, nor spend time worrying about the future, he has a very optimistic, joyful attitude towards life. The sanguine is often adventuresome, enterprising, and creative and is a source of inspiration to others. Although quickly and easily aroused to emotion or reaction, the sanguine does not retain the reaction for any length of time. Weaknesses of the sanguine temperament include the tendency towards superficiality (due to the immediacy of their reactions and their creative imaginations), inconstancy (due to the short duration of their impressions), and sensuality (lacking the perseverance to withstand temptation once their passions are aroused). Because he places such a high value on relationships and pleasing others, a sanguine is often tempted to forsake what he knows is right in order to fit in with the crowd [18].

The Phlegmatic

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God

Phlegmatic is reserved, prudent, sensible, reflective, respectful, and dependable. They are not easily insulted or provoked to anger, nor are they given to exuberance or exaggeration in speech. They are loyal and committed, tolerant and supportive. They possess a hidden will of iron that is often overlooked, because they are such agreeable people. They have a knack for diffusing tense situations. They excel in professions where being calm under pressure is key. They are known for their easy-going nature. They possess a great deal of common sense and mental balance. They tend to be clear, concise, and thoughtful in speech and writing. They are excellent listeners and have great empathy for others. They are supportive friends, patient with difficult people and situations, and considerate at all times. They are accepting of traditions and rules, and will not "buck the system". They do not, however, like conflict or confrontation. Phlegmatic is dependable, punctual, and orderly; they can bring harmony to almost any group. Their introversion, combined with the importance they place on relationships, attracts them to abstract goals such as love, patriotism, religion, and loyalty. They are, however, "reluctant" leaders [18].

The table below represents the findings so far

Personality {melancholic - unstable introverts Difficulties {phlegmatic - stable introverts Behavioral {choleric - unstable extroverts Difficulties {sanguine - stable extroverts}

Temperament (Mizāj) - Unani Perspective: When different qualities of elements act and react by their powers. then previous qualities become diminished and a new moderate quality is developed which is known as Mizāj. Every organ, plant and animal have almost different structure and functions according to the quality and quantity of their building material. According to Unani medicine, everything is made up of Arkān and present science suggest protein, fat and carbohydrate as building blocks. Both Modern science and Unani medicine accept that building material is same for all animate objects but their quantity vary from organism to organism. Now this formation can be defined physically and chemically at molecular level in which elements bind together by different types of chemical bonding. Medical science deals with human body that is why temperament formed in human being is the result of intermixture of different elements biochemically [19].

Temperament is a wide term in itself which encompasses all distinctive traits of an individual. Accordingly every individual having a distinctive temperament should also possess distinctive characters as well. The sum total of temperamental specifities emerges out as personality and individuality.

Every human being is born with a congenital temperament and encounters environmental assaults while interacting with changed atmosphere in the second phase of life i.e. post-natal. The resultant of this inevitable interaction is acquired temperament and this very temperament is responsible for myriads of functions of the body, a prerequisite for normal health. Since concept of temperament is as applicable to organs as to the whole body, every organ

possesses its own temperament and, thus distinctively. Functionally organs of all human beings are similar yet their capacities are not identical. This functional variability results in physiological span of variations [20, 21]. Temperament theory has its roots in the ancient four humors theory. It was the Greek physician Hippocrates (460-370 BC) who systemized and developed it into a medical theory. He believed certain human moods, emotions and behaviors were caused by body fluids (called "humors"): Dam, Balgham, Safra and Sawdā. Then, Galen (AD 131-200) developed the first typology of temperament in his dissertation De temperamentis, and searched physiological reasons for different behaviors in humans [2]. Arabs were the first to locate relationship between diseases. various humors and the disturbance of temperaments [22]. "The word temperament is not satisfactory for the Arabic word Mizāj which contains the idea of mixture so the medieval translators used the word "commixtio" or "complexio" which carries the idea of mixing or blending and weaving. But neither words fit in with modern usage. The word constitution is more meaningful as it is referring to the makeup of physical body temperament as applies to the mental makeup. The word constitution carries the idea of something stationary and unchanging. One has therefore to use the word temperament in a psychological sense and in the medical sense; it should imply a blend of humors, since all four are present in every individual [23]. Every person has a unique temperament, which includes his physical characteristics, physiological profile, psychological and emotional status.

Ibn Sīnā defined temperament as

"The temperament is a quality resulting from the interaction of opposite qualities present in elements consisting of minute particles so that most of the particles of each of the elements may touch most of the others. Thus when these particles act and react on one another with their properties, there emerges from their total properties, a uniform quality which is present in all of them. This is the temperament ($Miz\bar{a}j$)". He further writes that "Since the primary properties in the aforesaid elements are four namely hotness, coldness, moistness and dryness, it is obvious that the temperaments of the integrating bodies are the products of these properties" [24].

The Temperament of Human Being

The human body is an aggregate of about 100 trillion cells organized into different functional structures that work together as a single unit. Each cell, tissue, organ and the entire body is bestowed upon with an innate power called Tabī'at. This Tabī'at maintains the Aitadal Mizāi (homeostasis) through thousands of mechanisms for the preservation of the individual as well his species. Many of these mechanisms operate in the individual cells and organs while they operate on entire body to control the interrelationship among different organs. Thus each functional structure under the guidance of *Ṭabī'at* provides its share in the homeostasis in the internal environment of the body. As long as this equilibrium in quantity and quality of the constituents is maintained, the cell of the body will continue to live and function properly. Each cell is kept in homeostasis and in turn contributes its share in the maintenance of homeostasis. This harmonious relationship is controlled by the Tabī'at until one or more functional

system loses their ability ^[25]. Brock quoting the views of Hippocrates regarding the causes of disease asserts "Health exists when these humors are present in the body in proper mixture or crasis of the body fluids. When one or other happens to be in excess a dyscrasia or abnormal mixture results" ^[26].

Classification of temperament according to Humours (Akhlāt): The human body, as Greco-Arab system of Medicine quote, comprises four body fluids namely –Dam (blood), Balgham (phlegm), Ṣafrā (yellow bile) and Sawdā (black bile), constituted by initiation of different proportion of all four Arkān. Dam is hot and wet in temperament, Balgham is cold and wet, Ṣafrā is hot and dry and Sawdā is cold and dry. The temperament of a man is characterized both by the fluid element and its physiological and physiognomic effects, and it is expressed by the preponderance of a particular Khilt present in his body. Thus a man may be Damwi (sanguineous), Balghami (phlegmatic), Ṣafrāwi (bilious) or Sawdāwi (melancholic) in nature according to the preponderance of Dam, Balgham, Ṣafrā or Sawdā respectively.

The characteristic features of four types of temperaments are as follows

1. Mizāj Damwi (Sanguine Temperament): These people have hot and moist temperament, tall, strong and muscular body, broad chest, large and strong bones and well-formed joints, reddish complexion, thick, black and straight hair which shows rapid growth, mildly prominent veins, full and strong pulse. According to *Ibn Sīnā* they have slight feeling of heaviness in their body especially at the base of the eyes, head and temple. They get troubled with hot environment and food. They feel comfortable in cold weather and likedry things [24, 27]. Their digestive power is wonderfully good; they have good appetite, sound sleep, excreted urine is concentrated and in moderate quantity, physical activity and speech are average, psychological aggressiveness and psychic condition comes on easily and easily lost, mental condition is good, in dream red object are seen frequently and the general health is remarkably sound [28].

- **2.** *Mizāj Ṣafrāwi* (Bilious/Choleric Temperament): These peoples have hot and dry temperament, a medium stature, thin and hairy body, moderate musculature, deficient fat, well-formed and prominent joints, yellowish complexion, thick, curly, black, rough and abundant hairs, prominent Veins, strong and rapid pulse. They pass fiery and yellow urine. Sometimes, they feel sensation of pain and pricks over the body ^[24, 28]. They feel comfortable with cold things and get troubled with hot things. Their most suitable weather is winter. The bilious (*safrawi*) temperament manifested a short response delay, but the response is sustained for a relatively longer time. Their digestive organs are active, appetite is good, and sleep is light and often disturbed. They are also energetic and intelligent individuals with a strong inclination to indulge in sexual pleasure ^[25].
- **3.** *Mizāj Balghami* (Phlegmatic Temperament): They have cold and moist temperament, flaccid and obese body built with soft and flabby muscles, flat chest, large and not well formed joints, and whitish complexion. They have thin, straight, brownish or whitish hairs which shows slow growth, not prominent blood vessels and slow and

infrequent pulse. Their urine is colorless and more in quantity. They experience excessive heaviness of the body. Their movements and activities are sluggish. Their functions like digestion, appetite and thirst are poor, sleep is excessive, memory is bad and irretentive and their power of imagination and perception is slow and feeble. These people feel comfortable with the use of hot and dry things and in hot weather. They are sexually frigid and also do not get angry easily [29, 13].

4. *Mizāj Sawdāwi* (Melancholic Temperament): They have cold and dry temperament. They are characterized by lean and thin built with narrow chest, coarse and rough skin. Body hairs are profuse and the complexion is dark. Hairs are black, thin but have slow growth. According to *Ahmad*, the blood vessels are narrow and pulse is slow. Their digestion is weak and have irregular appetite. They have interrupted sleep and often suffer from insomnia. Their sense is acute and excellent memory. They show sluggish inclination towards sexual activity [25, 20] they experience excess of evil thought and anxieties.

Discussion

Temperament (Mizāj) is a fundamental concept of Unani medicine in context of diagnosis and treatment. Adherence to this concept is inevitable for the survival and advancement of Unani medicine. Before discussion the role of temperament in health, diseases and treatment, first we should try to perceive the soul of this concept. The way in which it is described in mostly Unani text needs clarification. In simple words temperament (*Mizāi*) imparts shape to a compound, which is made from different primary components $(Ark\bar{a}n)$ and it is the end point of interaction in between these primary components. Different temperament (Mizāj) result from quantitative differences of primary building components as they are same in all compounds. The required functions of temperament ($Miz\bar{a}i$) are achieved by different organs as tools, which are also provided with a specific temperament to perform specific functions. Because of dominance of one or other primary building blocks, temperament is described in terms of dominant qualities as Hār, Raṭab, Bārid, Yābis, Ḥār Raṭab, Ḥār Yābis, Bārid Ratab, and Bārid Yābis. Therefore, this concept should be perceived in this context. It should not only be associated with static things. Besides no single entity can completely explain temperament such as psychology. Though genetic, hormonal, enzymatic, psychological, biochemical and biotechnological approaches may be adopted to explain Mizāj satisfactorily.

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