International Memory of the World Register

Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi
(Iran)

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

‘Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi’ is the first and most important Iranian medical encyclopedia, prepared in Persian by ‘Esmaeil Jorjani,’ in 504 AH/1110 AD. Zakhireh focuses on Anatomy, Dissection, Physiology, reasons of illnesses, different treatments, Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Surgery, diseases of the skin, Pharmacology and herbal pharmaceuticals. The book offers instructions on the use of group, music, story-telling and work therapy programmes in early 12th century.

For centuries Zakhireh has been used as an authentic source in medical education and served as the basis of many books on Medicine. The encyclopedia, translated into Arabic by its author, has been of great use in Iran, Central Asia, India and the Ottoman empire. The book has also been translated into Urdu, Turkish and Hebrew-an indication of the Book’s significance for other nations.

Zakhireh was introduced to the European community in the 17th century by Angeles de Saint Jospeh and Chardin, and later in the 19th and 20th centuries by Edward Brown, Schleimer and Cyril Elgood.

Various manuscripts of Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi are available in Iranian and world libraries. However, many of these copies are incomplete. The manuscript hereby-introduced is a complete, authentic, illustrated and decorated version of the Book.

2.0 Nomination and contact details

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Iranian National Committee for the Memory of the World of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi was introduced (for nomination) to the Iranian National Committee for the Memory of the World in 2007. Subsequent to an extensive investigation of existing copies, a complete and authentic manuscript of the book was found in Sepahsalar Library (Shahid Mottahari School). This version was then nominated for inscription on the MoW Register by the relevant expert group, upon confirmation by the Iranian National Committee for the Memory of the World of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO.

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Fariba Farzam (Ms)
Dr Sousan Asili (Ms)

2.4 Contact details

Name          Address
Fariba Farzam  National Library and Archives of the IR of Iran
              National Library Blvd., Haghani Expressway, Tehran, Iran
3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

Title: Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi

Keeper Institute: Sepahsalar Library (Shahid Mottahari School)

Description: Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi includes 9 chapters and 2 annexes. Each chapter consists of various sections and each section includes diverse sub-sections. This book is the first medical encyclopedia in Persian (Farsi) by ‘Zaynoddin Esmaeil Bin Hassan Jorjani’ (1042-1136), who wrote it in 504 AH/1110 AD. Esmail Jorjani had this encyclopedia written in Kharazm in the name of ‘Qutbeddin Mohammad’, the Kharazmi king (ruled from 1097 to 1127). The present file nominates a complete version of the subject book in ‘Naskh’ script in the handwriting of Nikrouz Bin Khezr Shah, known as Qutb-i Kermani.

The book is prepared in 378 pages- there are 37 lines on each page. Margins in this book are drawn in black and gold. Pages are of the size: 35 × 25 centimeters. Paper used in the preparation of this book is of the ‘Samarkandi’ type. The outer side of the cover is made of black goatskin leather and decorated in gilded paintings of toranj, sar-toranj and lachaki (medallion and four half medallions). The inside of the cover is made of brown ewe skin with inlays, decorative paintings and gilded margins with a border of black goatskin leather. This manuscript illustrates four images of the human bones, muscles, nerves, arteries and blood-vessels. The initial/first page bears Toranj (medallion) paintings and an illuminated frontispiece, adding to the beauty of the work. Titles and section headings are mainly written in vermilion. Some are in vermilion mixed with black. Titles in the preface are in gold.

This manuscript, which was prepared for the ‘library of ‘Shiran Shah,’ a Timurid ruler, was finalised on Friday 25 Sha’ban of the year 870 AH/21 April 1466.

3.2 Catalogue or registration details

The nominated manuscript is currently kept at ‘Sepahsalar Library’ (Shahid Mottahari School), by the registration number of 796. This book is introduced on page 551 of the fourth volume of the library’s list of manuscripts.

3.4 History/provenance

This manuscript has been finished in 1466. In the initial page of the book (the part decorated in Toranj-e Mozahab(illuminated medallion)), it is stated that the book has been prepared by the order of a Timurid ruler. This explanation is written in vermilion on an azure background. According to the notes and stamps in the initial page next to and around the medallion, this book belonged to ‘Ahmad Bin Mohammad Taher Tehrani’ in 1795. The book is taken to the private library of ‘Ali Gholi Mirza Etezado-saltaneh,’ a Qajar prince, in 1856. Finally, in 1880, it is endowed to ‘Sepahsalar Library.’ Thus, the manuscript’s history and provenance is clearly indicated by and in the manuscript itself.
4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

Name: Sepahsalar Library
Address: Sepahsalar School, Baharestan Sq., Tehran, Iran
Telephone: +98-21 33 5661 66
Facsimile: +98-21 33 124472

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

Name: -------
Address: -----------
Telephone: -------
Facsimile: --------
Email: ------------

4.3 Legal status

The institute that is legally and administratively in charge of preserving the nominated work is ‘Sepahsalar Library (Shahid Mottahari School).

4.4 Accessibility

Accessing the original copy is only possible under certain circumstances. However, the digitized copy of the book is available for all researchers to access their required information.

4.5 Copyright status

The copyright owner of the Book is Sepahsalar Library (Shahid Mottahari School).

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity.

The nominated manuscript bears the name of its writer and the exact date of inscription of the book. The features put on display by the manuscript are in full accordance with its date of inscription. Hence, verifying the date referred to in the manuscript. The note on the book’s ownership by Shiran Shah, the Timurid ruler, and the notes and stamps of different periods, altogether reveal the historical trend of the manuscript from formation to this day. Since 1880, when endowed to Sepahsalar Library, the book has been preserved by this institution.

5.2 World significance

Being comprehensive in its areas of focus, Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi has served, from the 12th to the 19th century, as a reference book for physicians and ordinary people not only in its country of origin, but also in the Indian sub-continent, Asia Minor and Anatoly, Central Asia and Transcaucasia through to the Arabian lands.
Preparation of the book in Persian and having it translated into Arabic by the author himself, also its translation into Urdu, Turkish (1574) and Hebrew, altogether verify its significance and wide use. International research studies based on this book and its use by physicians in the present century also indicate the world significance of and the importance attached to the nominated work.

5.3 Comparative criteria:

Does the heritage meet any of the following tests? (It must meet at least one of them.)
1 Time
Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi was written in 504 AH/1110 AD, at a time when Iranian and even Christian and Jewish scientists wrote down and documented their research findings in Arabic. As stated by the author, Jorjani, in his preface to the Book, this book was written in Persian for a better understanding of its audiences, i.e. specialists and the general public. Years later Jorjani translates his book into Arabic himself, following which it is soon translated into other languages as well. In countries where Zakhireh has been translated into their languages, the significant influence of the book, both at the time of its coming into being and through the centuries until the emergence of modern Medicine, is quite obvious in treating diseases. Today also the attention paid by international researchers to Iranian traditional medicine has led to numerous research studies on this encyclopedia as well as many scientific papers.

2 Place
Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi was written at a time when Jorjani was a resident of Kharazm- a state of the then Iran. In his introduction to Zakhireh, Jorjani has referred to the peace, security, justice and blessings provided by the then ruler, Qutebddin Mohammad Kharazm-shah, naming this as the reason why he took to write his research findings in the name of the Kharazmi ruler, wishing for his book to become famous in the world under the good name of Qutebddin Mohammad Kharazm-shah. Jorjanieh, a city built alongside the river Jayhoon, was at that time the Capital of Kharazmshahi and the Capital of the Kharazm-shahian Dynasty and the biggest city on the way of the Silk Road, thus a cultural hub and a gathering place for scientists in different areas of sciences. Yaqut al-Hamawi, the renowned geographer and historian, who had travelled many a land on earth, including Kharazm in 616 AH/1219 AD, almost a century after Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi was written and prior to the Mongolian attack on and invasion of the City, describes it as such, “I have never seen a city as important, rich and good as Jorjanieh.” In the Mongolian invasion of Kharazm, Jorjanieh was razed and the treasury of knowledge and literature that the Kharazmshahian Dynasty had gathered for centuries was totally destroyed. Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi, a unique Iranian book in the Persian language on Medicine, owes its production to the natural, cultural and scientific environment of Kharazm in that specific period of history.

3 People
In addition to his own knowledge and experiences acquired, Jorjani is inspired greatly by the works and knowledge of former physicians or practicing physicians of his time, when writing Zakhireh-i Kharazamsh. Being a student of ‘Ibn Abi Sadegh,’ Jorjani is considered a student of Avicenna. He has practiced medicine in most famous and large hospitals of his time, taught it or learnt it. In his preface to Zakhireh, he explains about peoples’ life- and eating-styles with a view to the area’s climate, soil structure, flora and fauna and introduces diarrhoea, flu and tuberculosis as epidemics in Kharazm. He further adds, “Once having seen the need of the inhabitants of Kharazm to medical knowledge and sciences, I wrote this book in Persian, in the language of the people, for all to use. I gathered all that is necessary for physicians to know, whether in practice or theory, in this book, to leave them needless of any other reference.” As comprehensive as it is, Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi has served as a valid reference and useful book for physicians and contributed to the promotion of Medicine for centuries.

4 Subject and theme
Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi is the first, most complete and most significant Iranian medical encyclopedia in the Persian language, written in early 12th century. Jorjani has written his medical encyclopedia in 9 chapters. Some time later he adds pharmaceutical information in two annexes to his book (adding the chapters of his book to 11). Each chapter of the Book consists of different sections and each section of different sub-sections. The subject and theme of each of the
Chapter I: General Medicine (6 sections): this chapter focuses on general medicine, the knowledge of temperaments and humours, anatomy, physiology, nerves and muscles.

Chapter II: Conditions of the Body (9 sections): this chapter focuses on symptoms of absolute health and symptoms of diseases, different types of pulse and the impact of body-water on diseases.

Chapter III: Hygiene and Health (7 sections): on keeping healthy, knowledge of climate and housing, knowledge of waters and know-how on handling them, mental conditions (sadness and happiness), bringing up children and treating travellers and the elderly.

Chapter IV: Disease Diagnosis (4 sections): this chapter focuses on the diagnosis and recognition of different illnesses and their intensity.

Chapter V: Fever and its treatment (6 sections): this chapter focuses on the reasons of fever, its symptoms, types and treatments.

Chapter VI: Treatment of diseases (21 sections): on the treatment of diseases from head to toe.

Chapter VII: Surgery (7 sections): on treating of wounds, fractures and inflammations/swellings.

Chapter VIII: Hygiene and diseases of the skin and hair (3 sections): on being clean and ways to adorn appearance (body and face).

Chapter IX: Poisons/toxins and bites (5 sections): on different poisons/toxins and antitoxins.

Chapter X: Uses of animal organs and pharmaceuticals of animal origins.

Chapter XI: Pharmacology (2 sections)

5 Form and style
To begin with Jorjani speaks about the comprehensiveness of his book. Although history has seen many books on Medicine up to this date, neither one of them are produced in the style and format of Zakhireh. Scientists, who would compare this book to others in this area, will certainly confirm this claim. The aim pursued by the author, Jorjani, in creating a collection containing all required information for a physician is mainly to facilitate learning and teaching in Medicine. Jorjani selects Persian for writing Zakhireh. However, he states that wherever necessary and where the Arabic term is easier to understand and most widely used, he has included the Arabic as well to avoid any misunderstandings and not to miss out a single point. He also refers, with utmost care, to the difference in using certain terminology, especially medicinal names, the names of herbs, fauna and flora in various cities and regions of Iran. Jorjani brings citations from various other physicians with reference to its sources. In other words, he sets the basis for writing medical encyclopedia in Iran, in the early 12th century.
6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance:
In addition to Zakhireh, Jorjani authors some other books in Medical sciences in the Persian language (Farsi), which can altogether be considered as a shortened version of Zakhireh-i Kharazmshahi. As such he contributes to the flourishing of Medical Sciences in Persian. Zakhireh becomes a credible source for practicing doctors even after Jorjani. Jorjani’s masterpiece not only has scientific value, but also provides readers with a treasury of Persian (medical) terminology.

6.0 Contextual information
6.1 Rarity and Integrity
Many handwritten copies of the nominated work have been prepared through the centuries, all of which are kept in Iranian and world libraries or museums. Up to this moment more than 300 manuscripts of Zakhireh have been identified. However, due to the many chapters of the original book, most of the existing copies are incomplete and contain only some parts of the original text. The nominated manuscript however is a complete and authentic copy, which bears dates and signatures.