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**CONCEPT OF *TANQIYA* (READ HERE AS DETOXIFICATION OR  
DETOXICATION) IN *UNANI* SYSTEM OF MEDICINE WITH ITS  
SCIENTIFIC INTERPRETATION AND CORRELATION: SCIENTIFIC  
REVIEW – PART-I**

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**Abstract**

While going through *Unani* Medical Classical Literatures, it was found that the term, *Tanqiya* used to clean the body of a patient from disease by way of evacuation of morbid materials in the *Unani* (read here as free radicals in Modern Medical Scientific), carries the same responsibility and function what the Modern Biochemical Scientific term, Detoxification or Detoxication does so, in order to free the body of free radicals responsible for a particular disease. An attempt has been made to revisit the concept of *tanqiya* in *Unani* Medical Classical Literatures in term of detoxification or detoxication and to scientifically interpret and correlate the mechanism of *tanqiya* with that of detoxification or detoxication.

The interesting details have been presented in this scientific review paper

**Keywords:** concept; *tanqiya*; detoxification; detoxication; *unani*; scientific; literary; review.

## INTRODUCTION:

### 1. Definition of *Tanqiya*

*Tanqiya* is a complex process in the body by which the morbid and diseased materials are taken out of the body by way of evacuation, a complex phenomenon under certain environmental conditions under vigil of a physician with the help of eight different methods employed for, under a very specific set of *unani* guidelines (*unani* principles for this process) for a certain period of time depending upon the chronicity, nature of the disease and type of *khilt/s* (humor/s) involved therein<sup>1</sup>.

### 2. Definition of Concept of *Tanqiya*

The concept of *tanqiya* in *Unani* system of medicine is as old as the system itself. The literatures have various details on different aspects of *tanqiya*. *Ab Qarat* (357BC), *Jalinoos* (131-210 AD), *Al Razi* (860-925 AD), *Abu Sehal Masihi* (972-1010 AD), *Ibne Sinna* (980-1037 AD) and *Ali Bin Baghdadi* (1127-1213 AD) were the strong propagandists and protagonists of this theory and *Ibne Sinna* was the leader among them in this regards. *Ibne Sinna* suggests this intervention in the patients of arthritis and many diseases<sup>2,3</sup>.

*Tanqiya* is nothing but a sort of evacuation (a process) or detoxification or detoxication process to free the body of morbid materials (read- free radicals), a now new concept of 20th century in biochemical science. During detoxification, all the noxious substances are rendered less harmful and more easily excreted in the urine and faeces. The detoxification covers all those biochemical changes proceeding in the body, which convert foreign molecules generally toxics, but not always so, to generally non-toxic or less toxic but not always so and more soluble so that they can be easily excreted<sup>4</sup>.

### 3. Effects after *Tanqiya*

The disease whether due to morbid humor /s or due to distemperament causes deposition or accumulation of toxic materials in the body and the physique tries to eliminate it out by any way, which in turn provides the body freedom from the disease, a condition when body gets free from morbid materials, a stage known as *tanqiya*. This condition is attained in the body by two ways.

i. *Tabai Tanqiya* (Natural Evacuation)

ii. *Sonai Tanqiya* (Medicated Evacuation)

### **3.i. *Tabai Tanqiya* (Natural Evacuation)**

It is a process of evacuation of morbid materials out of the body through natural manipulations within the body like diarrhea of sudden onset, vomiting, sweating, menstruation, nocturnal emissions, increased urinary output and epistaxis.

### **3.ii. *Sanai Tanqiya* (Medicated Evacuation)**

This is a process which is undertaken with the help of specific medications meant for the purpose under supervision of a physician to set in diarrhea, vomiting, increased urinary output, menstruation, epistaxis, venesection, release of pus from abscess, etc as per the needs and conditions of the diseases. In any way, the evacuation of morbid materials out of the body, whether, natural or medicated evacuation, to free the body of disease/s, is referred as *tanqiya* or detoxification.

## **4. Forms of *Tanqiya***

Followings are two types of *tanqiya* usually employed in the patients as per their mode of actions.

### **4.i. *Qawi Tanqiya* (Strong Evacuation)**

### **4.ii. *Zaeef Tanqiya* (Mild Evacuation)**

#### **4.i. *Qawi Tanqiya***

There are certain situations where strong evacuation is induced by strong purgatives like *Jamal gota* to set in strong diarrhea numbering 5-10 in a day, or big venesection is done to let heavy blood out upto 500 ml or more depending upon the nature and chronicity of the disease.

#### **4.ii. *Zaeef Tanqiya***

Sometimes a situation arises when there is need to set a few loose motions to clear the intestine from waste materials, to induce a few vomiting, to induce diuresis, menstruations or sweating by mild drugs as per the disease and condition of the patient

## **5. Stages of Therapy**

### **5.i. Types of *Tanqiya* (read as Evacuation)**

Following are the different forms of evacuations employed in the patients as per the needs and conditions of the disease/s <sup>6</sup>.

### **5.i.i. *Nuzj and Is'hal* (Concoction and Purgation)**

This is a process of evacuation of morbid and diseased materials out of the body through intestinal routes by induction of diarrhea by drugs having purgative effects. There is a specific method for giving of purgative and it is very effective and beneficial in the chronic and incurable diseases of intestine, stomach, liver and joints.

### **5.i.ii. *Qai* (Emesis)**

This is a process of evacuation of morbid and undigested toxic food materials through alimentary canal out of mouth by inducing vomiting. It is very effective in chronic diseases of kidneys, urinary bladder/tract, stomach, chest and respiratory system.

### **5.i.iii. *T'areeq* (Diaphoresis or Sweating)**

This is a complex process of evacuation of diseased materials out of the body by way of induction of perspiration with the help of drugs and this is very effective and beneficial in different types of fevers, ascites, obesity, overweight and different types of diseases of joints.

### **5.i.iv. *Idrar* (Diuresis)**

This is a process of evacuation of morbid materials from the body through kidneys in the form of increased urination with the help of drugs having diuretic effects. This is very effective in the diseases of kidneys, urinary bladder, urinary tract, liver, joints and paralysis. The drugs having this effect are called diuretics. Emmenogogues, lactogogues, and spermatogogues are included in this category. Emmenogogues are very useful in diseases of uterus and blood disorders and lactogogues are very effective in mastitis and decreased lactations.

### **5.i.v. *Tanfees* (Expectoration)**

This is a process of elimination of morbid materials by spitting out sputum through mouth with the help of certain specific drugs having mucolytic properties. This is effective in the diseases of respiratory system.

### **5.i.vi. *Fasd* (Venesection)**

This is one of the regimenal therapies where impure and morbid humor/s is let out of the body through blood by making a prick with needle on certain specific veins especially mentioned in Unani classics specific for the types and sites of the diseases. This

is very effective method of treatment for the diseases of joints and diseases caused due to sanguine distemperament <sup>6</sup>.

In a clinical study carried at *Jamia Hamdard*, New Delhi, it was found that the venesection is very effective in patients of osteoarthritis <sup>7</sup>. In another clinical study conducted on the patients of osteo-arthritis at *Jamia Hamdard*, New Delhi, it has been found to be very effective in providing relief in all the symptoms of disease <sup>8</sup>.

#### **5.i.vii. Hijama (Cupping)**

This is yet another regimenal therapy meant for providing relief to the patients. The cupping is of two types, namely, dry cupping and wet cupping. It is very effective in joint and blood disorders (Kamaluddin, 2004). In a clinical study carried out at *Jamia Hamdard*, New Delhi in patients of arthritis, dry cupping was found to be effective in all forms of arthritis <sup>9</sup>.

#### **5.i.viii. Irsale Alaq (Leeching)**

It is done by making a prick by needle over the affected areas to let out a few drops of blood and leeches are applied over pricked areas to make them suck as much blood as they desire to. After sucking of sufficient amount of blood, they swell up and then they are detached from the sites of sucking. Sometimes, leeches are applied without making any cut or prick and they are left over to suck the blood for 10-15 minutes till they swell up to detached themselves or mechanically detached. This is very effective of removal of morbid humor/s from the body. This can be especially recommended in the children who may not go for venesection for fear of cut or injury <sup>6</sup>.

### **6. Aims of Tanqiya (Evacuation)**

For every evacuation, following points are taken into consideration.

1. Only morbid or toxic materials should be evacuated out of the body.
2. Only that much quantity of morbid materials should be evacuated to which the patient can sustain.
3. Morbid materials should be evacuated through their natural course or route. For example when the patient feels nausea, then only vomiting should be allowed to be induced.
4. If the patient has spasmodic pain, then purgation should be followed.

5. Always morbid materials should be evacuated through their natural routes because it is easy for the body to follow. In case of some blockage or injury in the pathway, alternate route may be adopted.

### 7. Rules of *Tanqiya* (Evacuation)

The evacuation of morbid materials should be made gradually and also in weak patients not in one go. This should be done in cases of ascites and pyogenic pneumonia where the morbid materials are gradually evacuated out. It is also done in gradual manners in case when materials are mucilaginous or mixed in blood or sometimes, when materials are deep inside the tissues like sciatica, arthritis, cancer, chronic epistaxis or chronic erysipelas. There is danger in evacuation of morbid materials at once rather than leaving some materials inside the body un-evacuated. In strong and forceful evacuation, there is every apprehension of getting the functions weak and affected. Sometimes body takes its own course and evacuates the materials naturally. Morbid materials present in the vessels are easily evacuated but it is very difficult in cases of joints, etc <sup>6</sup>.

### 8. Indications of *Tanqiya* (Evacuation)

Followings are the some of the indications where different methods of *tanqiya* can be employed.

- \* - *Amraaz -e- safravi* (yellow bilious diseases), e.g., *Shira* (urticaria)
- \* - *Amraz-e-balghami* (phlegmic diseases), e.g., *warm-e-tajaweef* (sinusitis)
- \* - *Amraz-e-saudavi* (black bilious/melancholic diseases), e.g., *Malakhjolia* (melancholic)

Other disease

- \* - Skin diseases - *Nar-e-farsi* (eczema), *Bosur* (boils), *Bahaq-e-aswad* (melanoderma), *Daus sadaf* (psoriasis), *Bars* (vitiligo), *Saaleel* (warts)
- \* - *Yarqan* (non-obstructive and non-hemolytic pathology)
- \* - *Wajul mafasil (balghami, safravi, damvi)* ----- Inflammatory and metabolic
- \* - *Warmi amraaz* (Inflammatory diseases)
- \* - *Humma* (Fever)
- \* - *Qabz* (Constipation/severe constipation)
- \* - *Qulanj* (colitis)

- \* - *Istisqa* (Ascites)
- \* - *Qawi zightud-dam* (Hypertension)
- \* - *Shaqiqa* (migraine)
- \* - *Falij-e-nisfi* (hemiplegia)<sup>10</sup>.

## 8. Materials Released From *Tanqiya* (Evacuation)

The following waste products are released from out of the body during evacuation from different methods employed for *tanqiya*.

- 8.1. Digested and undigested food particles from intestine are released out.
- 8.2. Toxic materials from the gut.
- 8.3. Secretion of *phlegm* (epithelial cells of intestine/gut).
- 8.4. *Madda-e-baulia* (urea) and *hamiz-e-baulia* (uric acid) is released after purgation.
- 8.5. Many wanted and unwanted and harmful products and byproducts are also released out from the body during evacuation <sup>1</sup>.
- 8.6. A number of gut induced toxins including endo-toxins (cell wall compounds of bacteria, byproducts of bacteria, candida albicans, yeast compounds) are also evacuated <sup>2</sup>.

## 9. Post-*Tanqiya* (Evacuation) Status of Patient

The patient, consequent upon evacuation feels the following changes in him/her.

- 9.1. The diseased organs and systems are cleared of the symptoms.
- 9.2. The patient gets freedom from the disease.
- 9.3. The patient feels a fresh sense of wellbeing.
- 9.4. The patient feels energetic and activated.
- 9.5. The vitals functions are activated.
- 9.6. The patient also feels a complete sense of new wellbeing.
- 9.7. The quality of life (QOL) also improves after *tanqiya* <sup>2</sup>.

## 10. *Tanqiya* verses Detoxification

The *tanqiya* is a process by which the morbid and diseased materials are taken out of the body of the patients by way of evacuation, a complex phenomenon under

certain environmental conditions under strict vigil if a physician with the help of various simple *unani* drugs having *munzij* and *mus'hil* (read-concoctive and purgative) effects under a specific set of *unani* guidelines for a certain period of time depending upon the chronicity, nature of disease and type of humor/s involved therein.

### **11. Scientific Interpretation *Tanqiya* in Term of Detoxification or Detoxication and Release of Free Radicals**

*Tanqiya* that is advised to the patients is nothing but detoxification or detoxication process to free the body of morbid materials as we call in Unani text (or read here as - free radicals in present Medical Scientific term), a now new concept of 20<sup>th</sup> century in biochemical science. During detoxification, all the noxious substances are rendered less harmful and more easily excreted in the urine and faces. The detoxification covers all those biochemical changes proceeding in the body, which convert foreign molecules generally toxics, but not always so, to generally non-toxic or less toxic but not always so and more soluble so that they can be easily excreted.

As per *Unani Medicine*, the main organs of *tanqiya* are intestines and kidneys and during the course of concoction and purgation, the mode of action is that it accelerates the functions of these organs thus enabling them to intensify the expulsive and excretory functions to evacuate the morbid and diseased materials out of the body thus making it disease free. These morbid and diseased materials are nothing but digested or undigested food particles, endotoxins and exotoxins and many other toxic substances that harm the body from inside causing various diseases<sup>2</sup>.

### **12. Scientific Correlation of *Tanqiya* with Detoxification or Detoxication**

Keeping the concept and genesis of *tanqiya* in *Unani Classis* and the new approach of biochemical science on detoxification which coincides and equally qualifies for each other in view, it can be interpreted that the new concept of detoxification or detoxication was already in vogue since *Hippocratic* period in the form of *tanqiya* for achieving the same goal of freedom from disease as of today. It can also be interpreted that how far scientific were those *unani* physicians in those so-called unscientific or less scientific periods and their approaches were so scientific that they would use that intervention for evacuation of morbid materials what we call today as detoxification of the body to free the body of free radicals which are responsible for the development of



diseases in biochemical science. So, *tanqiya* and detoxification or detoxication are both co-related with each other in scientific term.

### 13. CONCLUSION

Keeping the concept and genesis of *tanqiya* in *Unani Classis* and the new approach of Biochemical Science on detoxification or detoxication which coincides with the concept and genesis of *tanqiya* in *Unani Classis* in view, it can be concluded that the new concept of detoxification was already in vogue since Hippocratic period in the form of *tanqiya* for achieving the same goal of freedom from disease as of today. It can also be interpreted that how far scientific were those *unani* physicians in those so-called unscientific or less scientific periods and their approaches were so scientific that they would use this intervention (read here: *tanqiya*) for evacuation of morbid materials what we call today as detoxification of the body to free the body of free radicals which are responsible for the development of different diseases in the body.

The bottom line and vastness of their knowledge and richness of their experiences compel us to exploit these texts for furthering the researches and insight for their clinical validity to be able to present them in more scientific ways before the world for their greater recognition, acceptability and practical utility.

This will help us to research out in more concerted and targeted manner on molecular level in the light of above assertion.

### 14. Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was involved in the study.

### 15. Financial Support

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