



Opium addiction treatment and various approaches in “Afyunieh” treatise

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Background: According to historical evidence, the opium abuse has been reported all over the globe –specifically throughout Eastern nations—since the sixteenth century. Before that, opium usage has not been in an addiction manner: it has mostly been applied as medication. Reference has been made in Traditional Persian Medicine literature to the method of cultivation, properties, side effects thereof, toxicity etc ... In the sixteenth century Iran, during the Reign of the Safavids, opium abuse was initiated. It was from then that prominent Persian scholars started to think of solutions to this societal problem. One of the most famous of the said scholars was Imad al-Din Mahmud ibn Mas'ud Shirazi who fathered a book concerning addiction. He recommends varieties of opium dose decrease in addition to its substitution with medication with a narrower range of side effects in order to eradicate dependency upon opium(-derived) materials. This is most likely the first written account of drug rehabilitation methodology in Traditional Persian Medicine literature. In this historical review, we have managed to introduce the book “Afyunieh” on the treating methods of addiction relinquishing as vied by the book’s author.

Method: Review- library research

Conclusion: Despite the old history of opium, its abuse and addiction seem to have not such an old history. The earliest clear description of the use of opium as a recreational drug is from



China by Xu Boling who wrote in 1483 that opium "mainly used to aid masculinity, strengthen sperm and regain vigor". Apparently, such a use is transferred through India to Safavid Iran in a matter of about 100 years.

The mentioned history of treatment of opium addiction is yet so younger; the medical science was more focused on opioids treatment clinics in western countries in late 19th and early 20th centuries, when they came to the problem addiction for the first time. It was just after the Civil War, when addiction emerged as a serious problem in the West, due to wide prescription of opioids as an analgesic that smaller pattern of nonmedical opioid use had continued among Chinese immigrants, as well. Some of these early clinics provided detoxification treatment and others adopted replacement and maintenance policy. Nonetheless, as discussed in this article, the first manuscript on treatment of opium addiction in the East dates back to about 3 centuries earlier, in 16th century, when Persians confronted the problem of addiction for the first time. Imad al-Din has introduced both detoxification and replacement methods, with more than 20 subtypes, in his manuscript. It could be concluded that in spite of the earlier history of opium abuse in China, Persians were the first to discuss various ways of opium addiction treatments.