Representing the medicine of the Sasanian Persia: A critique of "*An introduction to medicine in the Sasanid era*"

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Abstract:

There is a paucity of research on the history of medicine in pre-Islamic Persia. There is, therefore, no in-depth and clear understanding of the medical tradition of that era. Some entries in encyclopedias and papers in journals, conference proceedings, and panels on the history of medicine in the Ancient Persia contain brief descriptions of medicine in the Sasanian era. Moreover, books on the history of medicine in the Muslim civilization or history of GondēŠāpur present some general knowledge about the subject. Thus, any inquiry of the subject may prove useful. One such inquiry is "*An introduction to medicine in the Sasanid Era*" (*Moqhaddame-i bar Pezeshki dar doran-e Sasania*n), by Arman Zargaran, which deals with Sassanid era's medical tradition. This paper is a critique and evaluation of the book.

The book contains seven descriptive and analytical chapters. Despite suffering from some methodological weaknesses, it may serve as an illuminating experience in our research into the history of medicine in the Sassanid era. The book is a descriptive and analytical account of historical sources, coupled with the author's insightful analyses and interpretations. It aims to portray a picture of medical tradition, and the status of medical practice and of practitioners in the Persian society of Sassanid era – an objective that the book has successfully accomplished.

Keywords: Sasanians, Medicine, Medical History

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