

A Visit To Gevher Nesibe Medical Museum In Kayseri In Anatolia, Turkey

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It was a glorious afternoon in Kayseri I had arrived from Istanbul by air. The International Society for the History of Medicine 2002 Conference was held from 1-6 September in Istanbul Turkey, where I had presented a paper on **Abul Qasim al-Zahrawi** and his al-Tasrif translation in Anatolian Turkish language by **Serafuddin Sabuncuogulo** in the 14th century in Amasia.

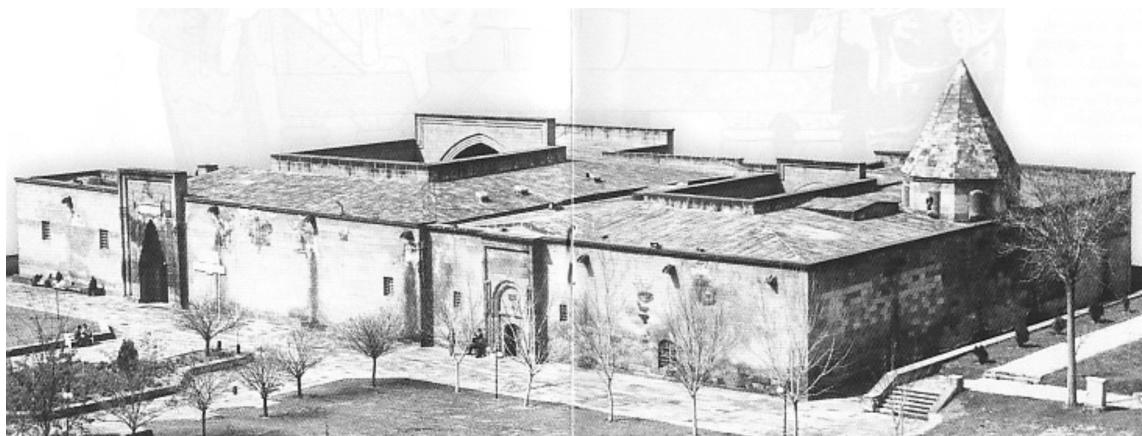
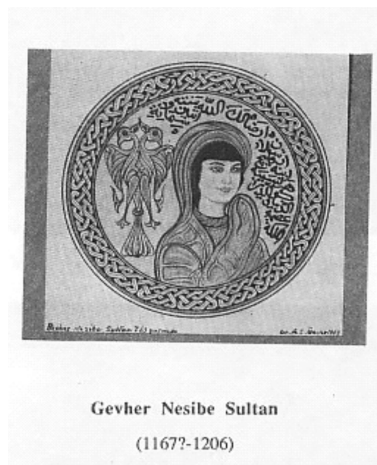
After the conference I decided to see the Anatolian Hospitals. The first hospital of Anatolia and Europe was my first port of entry. Twin Madrasa, built up as a medical madrasa and a hospital (shifakhana), is known as the oldest medical center in Anatolia.

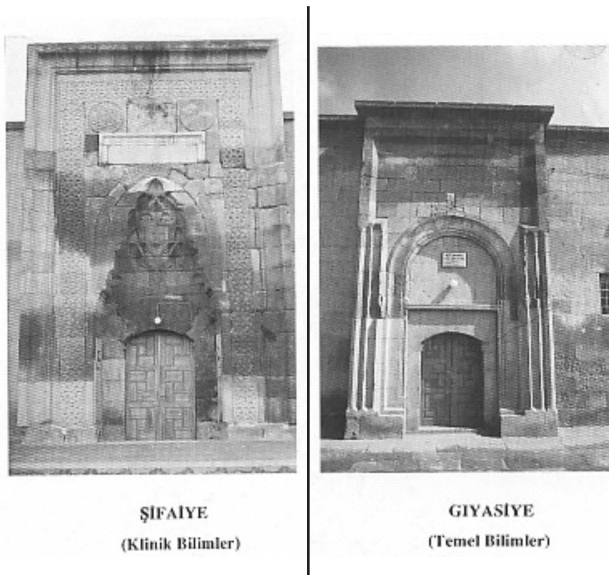
Twin Madrasa was built up by Giyaseddin Keykhusrev I in the year 1206. A. and it was dedicated to the daughter of Kilicharslan II, **Gevher Nesibeh Sultan**. This Madrasa is called by different names such as;

The Hospital of Gevher nesibeh, Kayseri Maristan, Madrasa of Darushifa, Twin Madrasa, Giyasiye and Kayseri Tibbiyia (The Medical School of Kayseri).

The legend of Twin Madrasa is narrated as follows; Gevher Nesibeh Sultan fell in love with the

chief of the cavalry soldier of the palace. The brother of Gevher Nesibeh; Giyaseddin Keykhusrev I, who was a Seljuk ruler at that time, objected to this marriage. He ordered Gevher's lover to join a battle where he died and became a martyr. Afterwards, feeling very sorry, Gevher Nesibeh Sultan became very ill and developed Tuberculosis. When Giyaseddin Keykhusrev I was informed of his sisters illness he visited her and apologised to her and made a request if she has a desire of making a will, upon this **Gevher** said





until 1820. Then on 14th March 1982 it was handed over to History of Medical Science Institute of Erciyes University and put into service as a Museum of History of Medical Science.

I was looking at the two portals, **Sifaiye** and **Giyasiya** two halves of the complex, constructed in granite stone typical beautiful of Seljuk architecture.

The entrance on **Giyasia** portal lead to inside a quadrangle with an open court yard around four ivans in between rooms that contained information exhibits of historical subjects. Starting anticlockwise the second room in two sections devoted to Islamic Medicine, in Arabic quotations from **al-Quran** and **Hadith Sayings of the Prophet** (Peace be upon him) and Turkish translation on the wide range of subjects; Fasting, health matters, rule regulation governing and guiding the faithful in practical life. Prayer benefits etc. the next room was interesting as Prophetic Medicine included specimen twig **Siwak** or (**Miswak**) and also herbal medicine Kuna recommended by Prophet (PBUH). I was quite impressed with a wide range of topics covered.

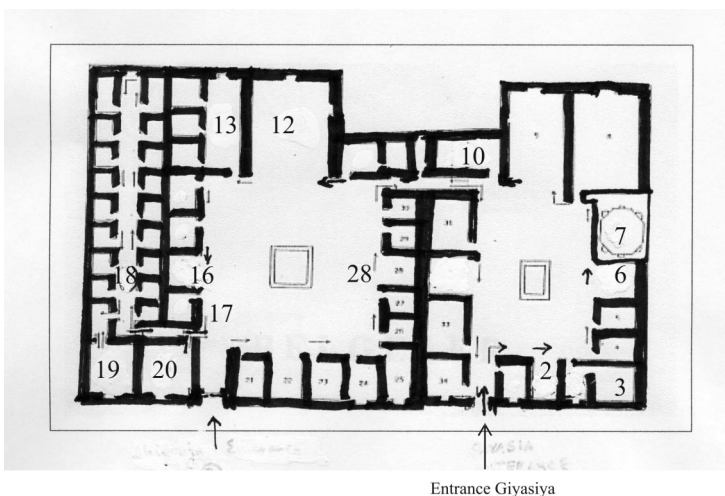
“I am very ill there is no way to recover, none of the doctors can help me and this way I will pass away so I wish you would use my property to build a hospital which will be devoted to me in my name in this hospital, the sick people are to be treated free of charge and at the same time untreatable patient illness should be cared for. This foundation will bear my name.”

Giyasseddin Keykhusrev “I felt very sorry” about being the cause of his sister’s illness. He carried out her last wish and began to build this hospital in 1204. The building was finished within two years and put into service in 1206. Later, at the east of the Dar al-shifa (hospital) the medical madrasa was built in between 1210-1214 by Izzeddin Keykaus another brother of **Gevher Nesibeh Sultan**.

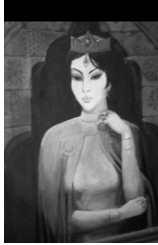
Colleagues at Erciyes University Gevher Nesibe Tip Tarihi Faculty deserve commendation on their contribution on Islamic Medicine a unique excellent museum indeed.

The Hospital continued to serve the poor free of charge, and the medical education also side by side

Ivan Giyasuddin Keykhusreu Hall displayed painting of the King who carried on the will of his sister. The chronological chart of Ard-Rum Seljuks Arrival of **Kalich Arsalan** to Anatolia and setting up an empire for the first time in this part of the region..



- 2 Giyasuddin Keykhusru Ivan
- 3 Islamic Medicine Section
- 6 Ivan Gevehar Nisibe
- 7 Tomb & Mosque Gevehar Nisibe
- 10 Library
- 12 Ivan Ibn Sina
- 13 Operation Theatre
- 16 Ivan E Razi
- 17 Veterinery Medicine
- 18 Akil Hastanesi or Mental Hospital
- 19 Hammam
- 20 Chief Physician Room
- 28 Ivan Serefeddin Sabuncuoglu

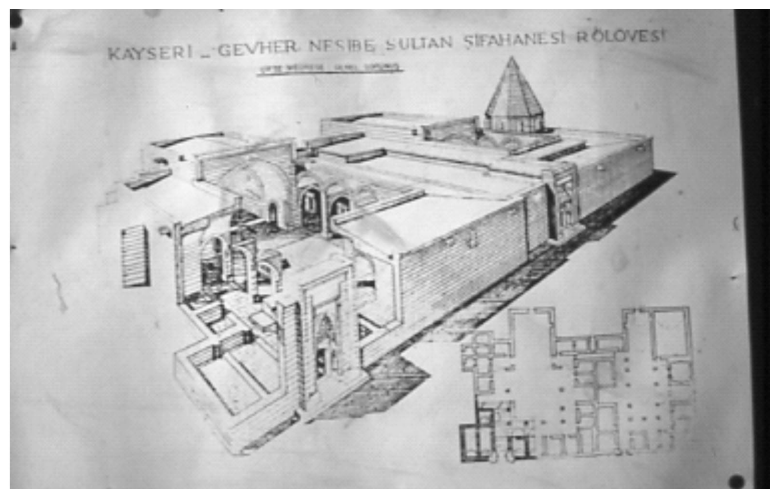


Ivan Gevher Nesibeh is devoted to the founder of this medical complex consisting of two Painting and a portrait. and Gevher Nesinbeh (wearing crown over her plaited hair commemorative clay bust on a pedestal) written below name and her short span of life

GEVHER NESIBE SULTAN (1165–1204)



There is also a line drawn sketch architectural plan of the complex, and three men one king and holy men to whom Gevher is shown making Wassiya (will).



Continuing along the eastern side in north east corner there is a two storied building stairs leading to **Masjid** on top floor (Prayer- room), above which is a dome around this Arabic calligraphic inscription she institutes Madrasa Administrators to accept Medical students and patients free, below this in a basement lies in a Qabre the mortal remains of a lady who deserves a prayer for her departed soul as I stood next to **Gevher Nesibe** grave and offered to **Allah** to forgive her and award her a place in paradise (Aameen).

The two large winter and adjoining summer room for residence in the northern side of the building. start from here and continuing in anticlock wise I came to a library which was closed, on the wooden door written Kutubhane (Library)

Infront of this a poster in Turkish gave 12 pictures of the building showing various sections consultation of patients students examining under chief physician, preparing medicine, but all details were written in Turkish.

I had come to a corridor which lead to the next building complex “**Shifaiye**” i. e. Hospital complex.

The Seljuks not only contributed fine distinct architecture but have contributed in Medical Sciences as well.

Seljuk physicians called tabibs and surgeons known as Jerrah treated mental illness and psychiatric condition either spiritual or with music therapy. For the treatment for eye diseases they had separate department, as I stood facing eye hospital, surgical instruments were displayed on posters.

Adjoining to this room was an Ivan which was devoted to great physician Ibn Sina named as Ivan



Şifahanedeki Küçük Eyvan
The small Eyvan of the Hospital (Şifahane)

Ibn Sina, here too poster displayed information about his life and work.

Operation Theater called **Ameliathane** in Turkish as it was known with this name in old days.

The important large room had three smaller rooms, and a larger rectangular hall used as operating theater.

The roof had perforation in the ceiling which acted as spot light on the patients during operation.

The next two rooms included work of Turkish physicians and of Turkish medical history.

IVAN –e- RAZI

Continuing anti clock wise there was an Ivan, devoted to another great physician named Ivan Razi, here too biographic and his books information poster and portrait of al-Razi was on display.

The very next room was devoted to Animal Medicine appropriately called “**Veteriner Hekimligi**”.

I had reached to near portal entrance of Sifahiye, took a right turn here I was facing a long corridor on either side of where small cells in all 18 this was the Akıl Hastanesi or Mental Hospital.

In those tiny cells for mental patients who were kept one to a cell if violent, an unbelievable four to a cell.

At the very end there was **Hamam** and evidence discovered in archaeology digs of copper pipes hot water Central heating seem to operate.

Another discovery was made that the roof covered with earth was used to keep warm from cold harsh Anatolian weather and in this way heat was conserved; both from hammam and insulated roof top with earth. For the in patient food consumption vegetables and fruit and flowers were grown on roof tops For repairs several centuries later when the earth was removed from roof top, leaking drainage water penetrated and caused plaster to flakes upon this some one remark Seljuks knew more about conservation than we do. Chief Physician Room was adjacent to hamam. Returning and continued anti clock wise I passed through several section on Disease of Skin. **Abubakerr Saderuddin Room**, and The Pharmacy, History of Turkish Dentistry, The Doctors list History of Medical Sciences of Gevher Nesibehe Faculty list of imminent researchers and physicians.



EYVANI SEREFEDDIN SABUNCUOGLU

The last Ivan was of particular interest to me. It was named as Serefeddin Sabuncuoğlu Eyvanı.

My chosen Anatolian surgeon of Amasia, who had translated al-Tasrif of Abul-Qasim into Turkish language, about whom I presented a paper in Istanbul ISHM 2002 Conference held from September 1-6 in Swiss Hotel in Istanbul.

In this huge Ivan a framed in color a portrait of famous surgeon was on display against upon the stony wall Immediately below in another frame was written information about the surgeon in Turkish language.

The two side wall there were on stands displaying posters in all 6 illustrations each showing surgical instruments and surgeons in operation of various operations like cauterization, gynaecological procedures Showing female Obstetrician called by him as “Tabibe ”, while the Midwife called “**Qabila**”

Incidentally **Serefeddin Sabuncuoğlu** separated midwifery profession as Qabila, and the Obsteric physician surgeon as Tabiba, all were females an unique in the annals of medical history as illustration

Show in his famous book called Jerahiat al-Haniye written in Amasia in 14th century.

Having enjoyed the tour and digitally recorded on camocorder and colour slides of this historical medical museum called Gevher Nesibe Medical Museum of Kayseri in Anatolia Turkey I came out of the building complex headed to a nearby bookshop in another building, here I bought the only booklet in English on museum entitled “ History of Gevher Nesibe Medical Museum” Publication of Erciyes University Medical Faculty, Kayseri

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I have completed the part one out of four on THE HISTORICAL HOSPITALS IN ANATOLIA TURKEY In part two THE HISTORICAL HOSPITALS IN ANATOLIA will cover DARUSSHIFA OF SIVAS

Insha Allah