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The role of Persian bath in public health based on Persian medicine

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Baths in Iran has a long history and thousands years background. Bathing and cleanliness were as the main concerns among Iranian societies during history since ancient pre-Islamic times to Islamic era. Baths were as the main urban components and were built in the cities according to their populations. These baths, as one of the public buildings not only play the role of bathing, but also had other roles like Persian Massage (Dalk and Ghamz), medical activities like phlebotomy and cupping, the place for some make up activities, the place for public and social meetings and also ceremonies, etc. Although, there were baths in some other civilizations like ancient Greek and Roman societies, their structures and functions were different and therefore Persian Baths has own historical and national identity. Persian Baths is mainly composed of four compartments: dressing room (Bineh), vestibule (Mian dar), hot-house (Garmkhaneh) and cold and hot water pools (Khazineh). The way of dividing these spaces and temperatures were based on the principles of Persian medicine (humoral medicine) on the keeping of health. Also, there are several therapeutic methods like Abzan (Traditional Persian sauna) which were mentioned by medieval Persian physicians like Avicenna, Rhazes, Akhawayni, Jorjani, etc. to treat and manage diseases. Therefore, Persian bath is an ancient memorial to Iranian culture and civilization; many of its medical functions today can be revived and used.

Biography

Zahra Hatami has completed her MBA and is a Research Fellow in Department of History of Medicine, TUMS. She has 15 years of experience in the field of managing of sport clubs, Persian baths and swimming pools.

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