

**Flyer image**

## **Asia: Body Mind Spirit**

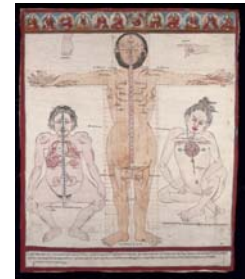
Throughout history, the maintenance of health and the prevention of disease have been of fundamental human concern. In Asia, the wellbeing of humanity has always been interpreted as a balance of body, mind and spirit. This exhibition explores the theories and practices that relate to this harmonious relationship by introducing the great traditions of Asia which focus on balance in all aspects of life.

The exhibits are drawn primarily from the Asian collections in the Wellcome Library of the History and Understanding of Medicine, one of the major resources of manuscripts, printed books and pictorial material relating to Asia. This collection is largely due to the vision and enthusiasm of the American-born pharmacist and philanthropist, Sir Henry Wellcome (1853-1936), whose remarkable legacy forms the cornerstone of the exhibition.

## Body in balance

The exhibition starts with an introduction to the various medical traditions of the Islamic, Hindu and Buddhist cultures. All stress the importance of the body being in balance and treatment is prescribed on that basis. In order to establish the source of imbalance, complex diagnostic systems are employed.

Common to all these traditions is the principle of vitality, called *prana* in India, *qi* in China, *ki* in Japan and *rLung* in Tibet. If this force becomes blocked, help is needed to restore the physical, mental and spiritual balance of the body. This is partly achieved by a wide selection of medical treatments and an extensive range of herbal medicine.



## Arabic Medicine

Along with local medical lore, the Arabs placed great importance on the medical system they inherited from the Greeks. This was based on a balance of the four humours within the body. Largely due to Christian translations of medical and scientific texts from Greek into Syriac and Arabic, Baghdad became a major centre of Islamic science in the ninth century. However, the Arabs not only inherited and preserved the Greek corpus of medicine, they further modified and developed it in the areas of *materia medica* (medical substances) and alchemy, the latter derived from the Arabic word *al-ki miya* referring to the transmutation of metals.

In addition, many physicians in the Islamic world were outstanding medical teachers and practitioners. Avicenna (980–1037 CE) was born near Bokhara in Central Asia. Known as ‘The Prince of Physicians’ his *Canon of Medicine* remained the standard text in both the East and West until the sixteenth century. Although Arabic was not the native tongue of these great physicians, they wrote in Arabic, the language of science and learning in the Islamic world.

### The Canon of Medicine

This famous work, entitled *al-Qanun fi al-tibb*, was composed by ibn Sina (980–1037), known in the West as Avicenna. An encyclopaedia of medical knowledge, it still forms the basis of *Unani* theory and practice today. Divided into five books, this opening shows the start of the third book depicting diseases of the brain.

Arabic; dated 1632. Arabic MS 155, folio 218v, 219r. (Image no.I.21127) © Wellcome Library, London



## Unani Medicine

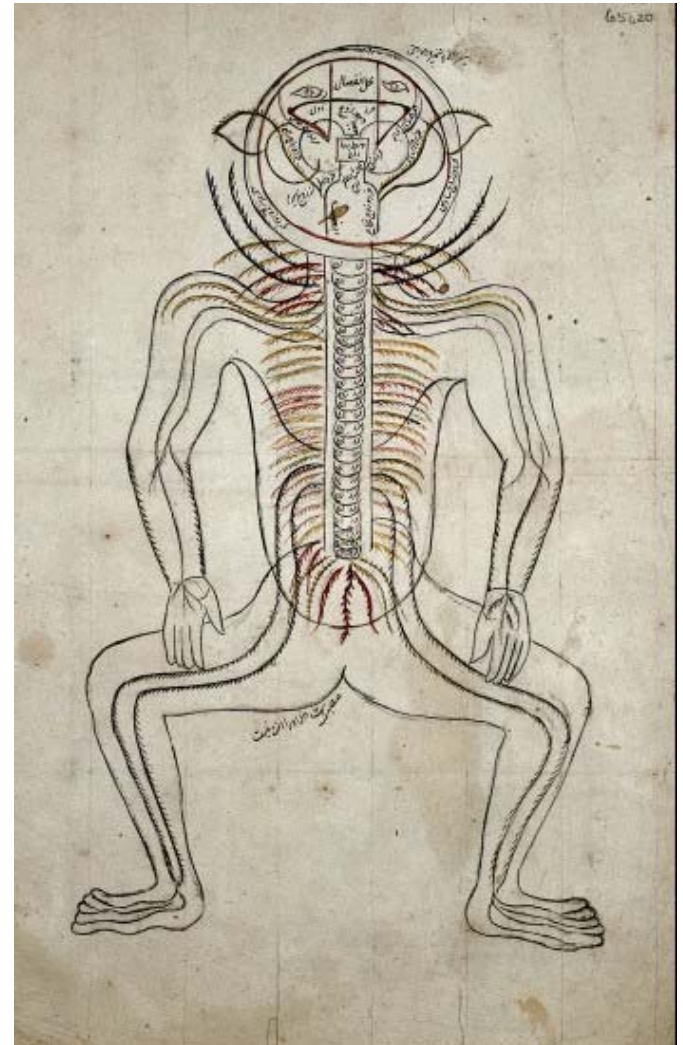
Arabic medicine spread east with the advance of Islam. In India it became known as *Unani tibb* meaning 'Ionian' or 'Greek' medicine. It was based on the Greek tradition of four humours – blood, phlegm, black and yellow bile. Each humour was qualified by natures and elements, the natures being hot, cold, wet and dry and the elements being water, earth, air and fire. According to Hippocrates (c. 460 – 357 BCE), health depended on the balance of the humours, a theory later refined by the famous Graeco-Roman physician, Galen (129 – 199 CE). Knowledge of human anatomy was based on the result of animal studies, as dissection was considered contrary to Islamic law. Mansur ibn Muhammad Ilyas, the fourteenth-century Persian anatomist composed a treatise on anatomy, in which the illustrations appear to derive from earlier works of Galen.

Today *Unani tibb* continues to flourish alongside *Ayurveda*, in both India and Pakistan. However, in general this tradition has remained urban, hospital-based and used predominantly by Muslims, whereas Ayurveda tends to be more widespread and favoured by Hindus.

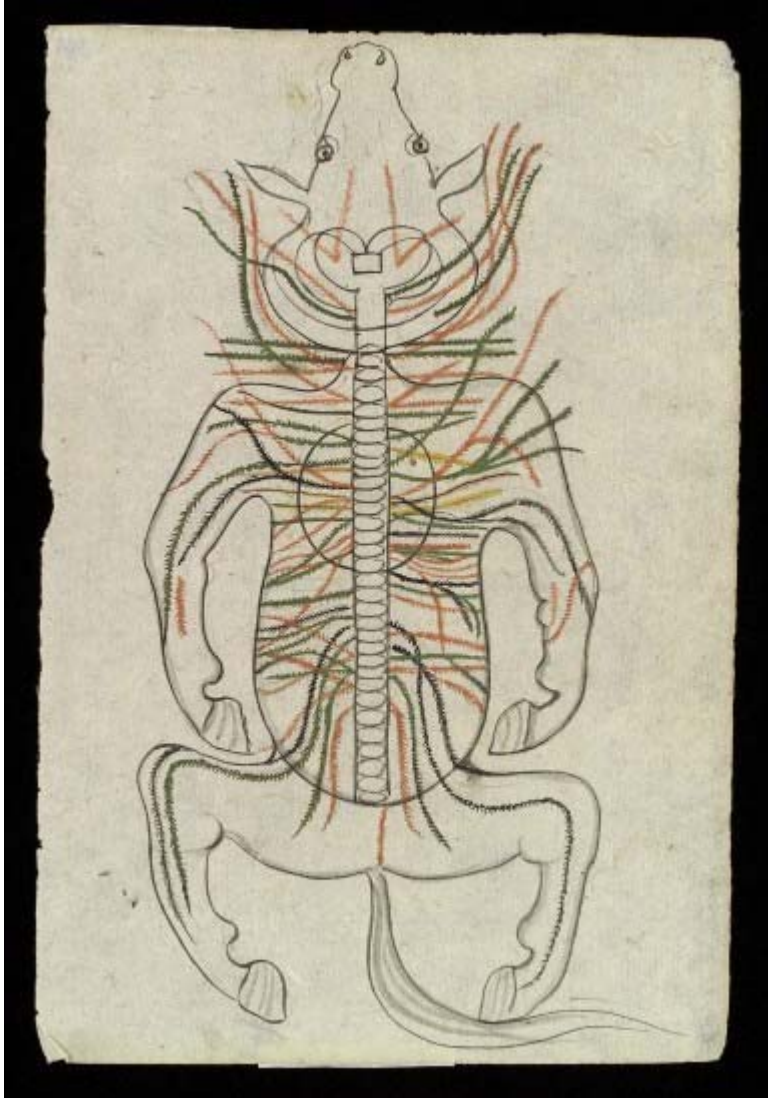
### Anatomy Drawing

This drawing, illustrating the nervous system, is from a series based on the *Tashrib-I Mansuri* of the Persian anatomist Mansur. They were composed in 1396 and usually include five illustrations showing the skeleton, muscles, nerves, blood vessels and intestines respectively.

Watercolour, Persian, 19th C Wellcome Library no.582968i. (Images no. L6435) © Wellcome Library, London



## Unani Medicine



### Anatomy of a horse

Dissection was contrary to Islamic law, so knowledge of human anatomy was based on animal studies. This drawing is from a rare set of drawings, mirroring those of the human body, showing the anatomy of a horse.

Sanskrit MS Delta 76/877.

(Image no. L35203) © Wellcome Library, London

## Indian Medicine

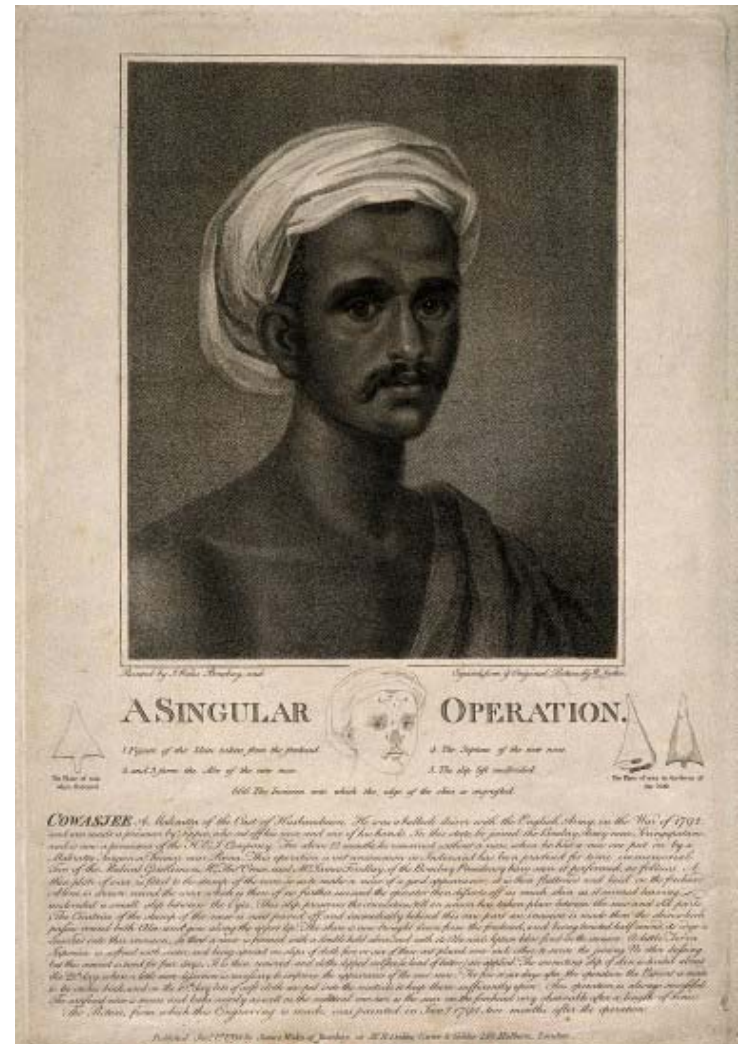
The principal medical tradition of India developed from the ancient Vedic texts, and has been practised in India for over two thousand years. It is known by its Sanskrit name *Ayurveda* meaning ‘the knowledge of life’. Founded on a doctrine of the five elements, which combine to form the three primordial humours – wind (*vata*), bile (*pitta*) and phlegm (*kapha*) and the seven bodily tissues (*dhatu*). Treatments are mainly herbal, but also include purification and massage techniques, with a strong emphasis on a balanced lifestyle.

In the Tamil areas of Southern India, a different type of medicine evolved known as *Siddha*. This shares the same concept of the humours as *Ayurveda*, but relies heavily on tantric rituals, the alchemic use of metals in medicine and intense yoga practice.

## Plastic Surgery

On 9th October 1794, an operation to replace the nose, hitherto unknown in the West, was reported in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Cowasjee, a Mahratta, who had served in the British army as a bullock driver, was captured by Tipu Sultan and mutilated by having his nose and one of his hands cut off. The nose was replaced from a flap of skin brought down from the forehead to cover the mutilated nose, an operation thought to have been practised for centuries in India.

Stipple engraving by W. Nutter, after James Wales; 1795. Wellcome Library no. 23414i. (Image no.V16860) © Wellcome Library, London



# Indian Medicine



## Ayurvedic Man

This is entirely drawn from the *Ayurvedic* understanding of the human anatomy, unlike other Indian images of the human body. The channels and organs drawn on the torso are specified as in *Ayurvedic* literature, with organs named as receptacles for one or other of the organic fluids. However, the organs in *Ayurveda*, are seen in a much wider context than in the West. They are the seats of the humours (wind, bile and phlegm) and do not generally engage in the kind of processing which modern western biomedicine expects of an ‘organ’.

Nepalese; c.18th/early 19th century. Wellcome Library no. 574912i.

(Image no.V36133 or L17592) © Wellcome Library, London

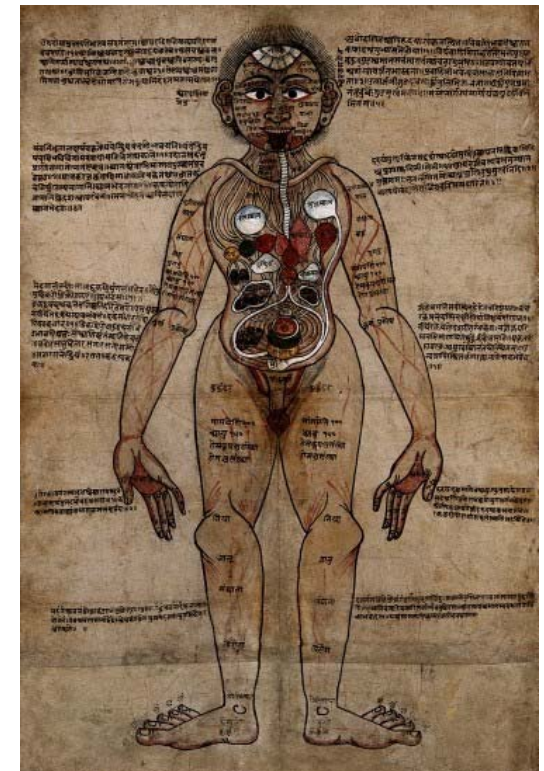
## Indian Anatomical Man

This painting bears a close stylistic resemblance to the anatomical drawings of the mediaeval Persian anatomist Mansur, examples of which are shown above. The text surrounding the image is mixed Sanskrit and Old Gujarati and mainly describes the mystical body of tantric meditation and the flow of the life force (*prana*) throughout the body. The image shows the combination of both *Unani* (based on Greek) and Indian anatomical knowledge.

Sanskrit and Gujarati; c.18th century. Wellcome Indic Sanskrit MS 74.

(Image no.L30226)

© Wellcome Library, London



## Chinese Medicine

The origins of Chinese medicine date back more than two thousand years, as is witnessed by extensive early literature. These texts stress the importance of balance, closely related to Taoist belief. Instead of the humours, the Chinese believe that all things in creation possess the qualities of *yin* and *yang*, the opposing forces of nature. When the balance between these two is lost, disease is manifest. Diagnosis is performed primarily through the pulse and tongue. In the past, female patients made use of diagnostic dolls, to indicate the area of discomfort.

In the ancient Chinese therapy of acupuncture, needles are inserted into the skin at precise points on the body, indicated by charts evolved over the centuries. These acupuncture points lie along invisible energy lines called meridians, which connect to a corresponding internal organ. It is believed that the needles unblock, increase or decrease the vital energy of *qi*, thereby restoring the balance of *yin* and *yang*. Moxibustion is also widely used in China, a process by which dried herbs are placed on the appropriate points of the body and set fire to. The application of heat stimulates the flow of blood and *qi* and relieves pain.

### Acupuncture Figure

The figure is drawn in profile and shows the pressure points and channels. These channels are invisible pathways, that carry *qi* to each organ. Stimulating or releasing *qi* at various pressure points is the basis of acupuncture treatment. Known as *Meido dogin sosushin no zu*, the figure is modelled on the 'bronze man' used at the Imperial Medical College in Peking and at other centres in China for instruction and practice.

Japanese; c. 1750. Wellcome Japanese Coll. 102. (Image no.L28466 or L29233) © Wellcome Library, London



## Japanese Medicine

Ancient Japanese medical practices involved exorcism, ritual bathing and herbal therapy. These co-existed with the Chinese medical tradition which entered Japan from the fifth century onwards. This was brought by Korean physicians invited to practice at the Japanese imperial court. The basic theory of Japanese medicine comes from China, with its emphasis on the correct balance of *yin* and *yang* (called in Japan *in* and *yo*) and the uninterrupted flow of the vital energy force *ki*. However in practice, the Japanese introduced many subtle refinements.

Unique to Japan is *ampuku*, diagnosis and treatment through the abdomen alone. Both moxibustion (the burning of dried herbs on the skin) and acupuncture are widely used, but the moxa pieces are much smaller and the needles finer, making the treatment more painless. The acupuncturist inserts the needle gently to feel the flow of vital energy or *ki* through his own fingers, which means that the patient may feel nothing at all. Herbal medicine, *kanpo*, has also developed in an innovative way, using fewer and smaller quantities of herbs, often ground into granules to be taken in tea. But Chinese influence should not be underestimated, as it was this, in 1804, that led to the use of anaesthesia in Japan decades before it was used in the West.



### Surgery under Anaesthetic

This treatise, *Geka kiba*, made public for the first time, details some of the surgical interventions pioneered by Hanaoka Seishu and practised by one of his leading followers Kamata Keishu who compiled the work. The illustration shows the excision of a cancerous growth from a woman's breast, a procedure carried out by Hanaoka in 1804 on his wife using a general anaesthetic, the first use of anaesthesia in surgery anywhere in the world.

Japanese; dated 1851. Wellcome Japanese Coll. 18. (Image no.L25709) © Wellcome Library, London

# Japanese Medicine

## Treatment for Emergencies

*Kokeisai kyūho*, a block-printed book compiled by Taki Rankei, comprising various treatments for emergencies, including loss of consciousness, drowning, poisoning and gynaecological problems. The opening displayed shows various techniques for dealing with someone rescued from drowning. Note the Chinese figures in Chinese dress although this book was written for Japanese readers.



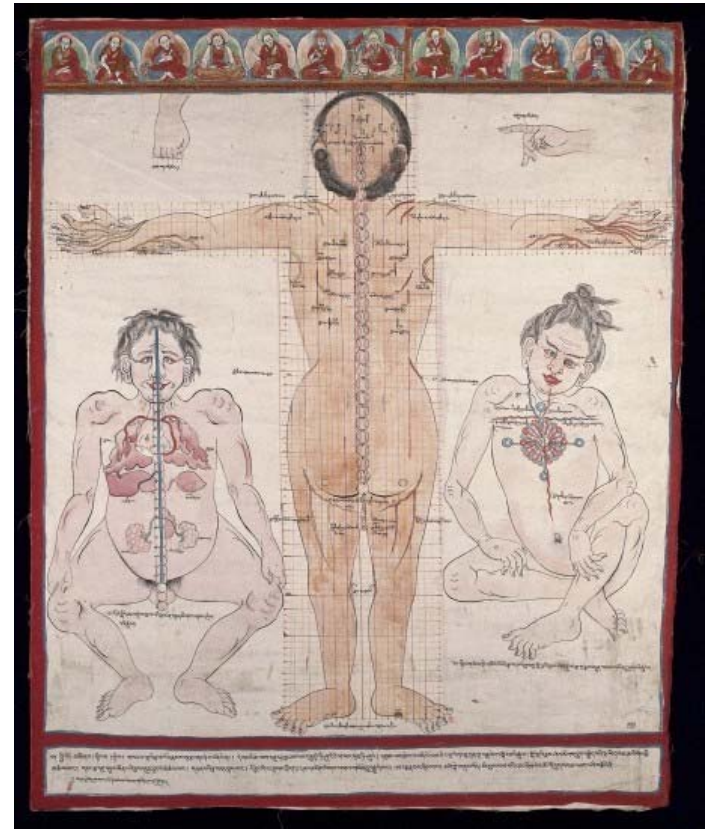
Japanese; dated 1790. Wellcome  
Japanese Coll. 67. (Image no.L31459)  
© Wellcome Library, London

## Tibetan Medicine

The Tibetan medical system has evolved over the last two thousand years, absorbing influences from Greece, India, Persia and China as well as from Tibetan Buddhism and the earlier Bon religion. With the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet in the seventh century, the tradition of *sorig* or the 'science of healing' became fully established. Based on the Buddhist concept that all life involves suffering, the aim of Tibetan medicine is to liberate the individual not just from physical disease, but also from mental ignorance. Therefore spiritual practise is paramount, as is devotion to the Medicine Buddha (*Bhaisajyaguru*).

The most important text in Tibetan Medicine is the *rGyud bzhi* or 'Four Tantras', attributed to the Buddha himself but thought to derive from the eighth century. The fundamental principle of this is that health is dependent on a balance of the three humours – wind, bile and phlegm and the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and space. Disease is further classified into the properties of hot and cold. Pulse, urine, tongue, astrological and dream analysis are used to determine the imbalance.

Medication is largely herbal, although animal and mineral substances are also used. External therapies include massage, moxibustion, cupping and blood-letting. Another prominent feature of Tibetan medicine is the acknowledgement that demons and spirits may cause disease.



**Anatomical Chart**

The chart displays three figures with the organs of the body illustrated. The vertebral column, solar plexus and system of channels connected with the five senses and with the consciousness are also shown. The twelve great teachers of Tibetan medicine are displayed above the figures.

Watercolour and black ink on linen, Tibet; c. late 18th century.  
Wellcome Library no. 574914i.  
(Image no.V36134) © Wellcome Library, London

# Tibetan Medicine



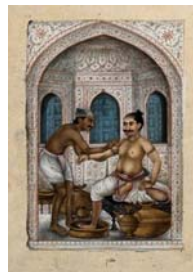
## The Medicine Buddha

*Thangka* (scroll painting) of the Medicine Buddha, Bhaishajyaguru, with his right hand in the earth-touching position. His left hand in a meditation gesture holds a lapis lazuli bowl containing three pieces of myrobalan fruit (a species of plum), considered to have medicinal properties. To his right a miniature form of the deity, Green Tara, is depicted in a roundel. Below is Padmasambhava, who formally introduced Buddhism from India to Tibet. His two female consorts, Mandarava and Yeshe Tsogyal, flank him on either side. The Medicine Buddha sutras emphasise the value of visualising the Medicine Buddha and chanting the appropriate text, to promote the healing of body, speech and mind.

Painting on sized linen mounted on brocade, Tibet; c. late 18th century  
Wellcome Iconographic Coll. 47081i. (Image no. L15305)  
© Wellcome Library, London

## Living in balance

The second gallery looks at the various factors which can have a positive or negative effect on health: occupations, recreational pursuits, cultural activities, behaviour, diet and exercise. To ensure good health and to prevent disease from developing, it is important to lead a balanced lifestyle. Exercise is of paramount importance, especially those systems which control the breath and harmonise the physical and spiritual aspects of the self.



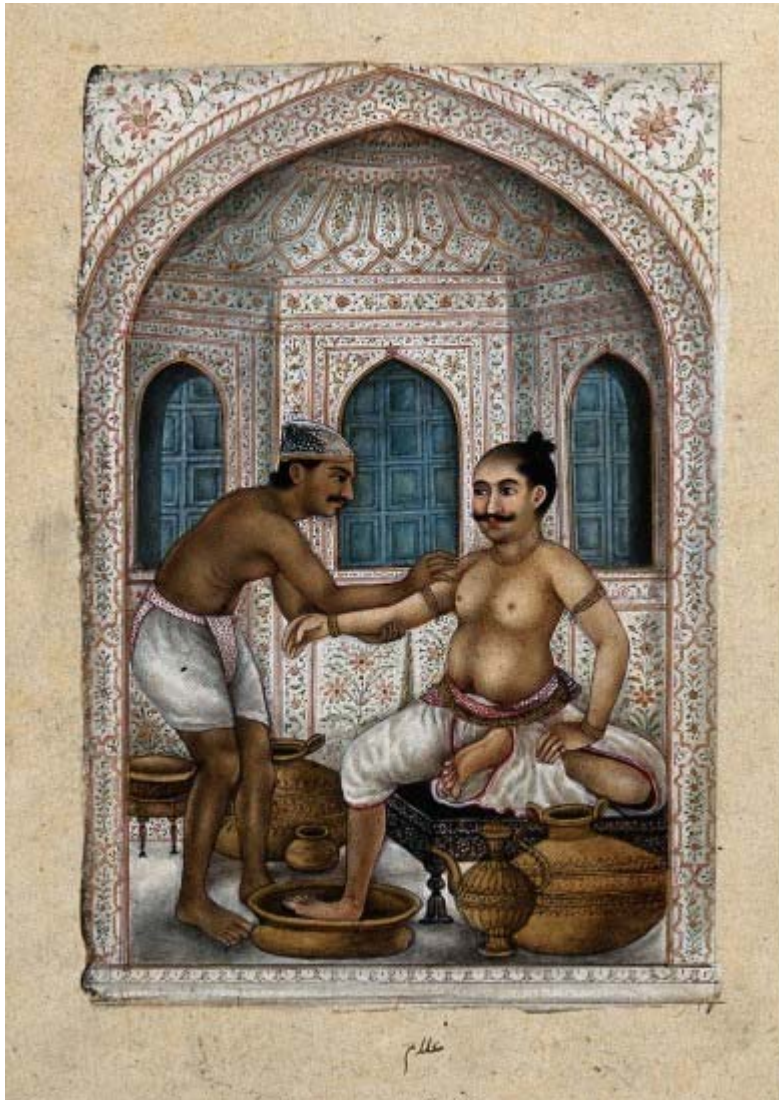
## Recreation



### A Shamisen Teacher playing to Pupils

A remarkable combination of actions of the body, mind and spirit assembled by the artist Utagawa Yoshitora (c.1850-1870). The female teacher plays the *shamisen* (a three-stringed plucked instrument), whilst a maid pours a cup of tea for her. On the left, the men listening are seated around a box of sand containing glowing pieces of charcoal to keep them warm. Lettering in Japanese includes the comments of the individuals depicted.

## Healthcare



### Masseur Massaging the Arm of a Man

A *ghulam* or bath attendant of the *Shudra* caste. To a customer in a Mughal-inspired bath-house he is providing *snehana* and *svedana*: these are two *Ayurvedic* procedures, of which the former includes external oil massage to nourish the ‘nervous system’, while the latter applies hot steam to flush out the ‘toxins.’

Gouache, Delhi, India, c.1825. Wellcome Library no. 582032i. (Image no.V45683) © Wellcome Library, London

## Chiropractic



This image is from a set of *emakimono*s, or horizontal scrolls, comprise a series of studies executed in ink and watercolour showing a chiropractor treating and bandaging his patients in various positions of discomfort. Chiropractic relieves pain by manipulation and is used to correct disorders of the joints, muscles and spine. The delicacy of the pigments is typical of the *Shijo* style, which often represents scenes from every-day Japanese life.

Japan; c. late 19th century. Wellcome Japanese Coll. 109 A & B.  
(Image no. L34590 etc) © Wellcome Library, London

## Work



### ♦ A Washer Man in Delhi

A washer man (*dhobi wallah*) performing one of the backbreaking occupations of non-industrialised societies, essential to hygiene.

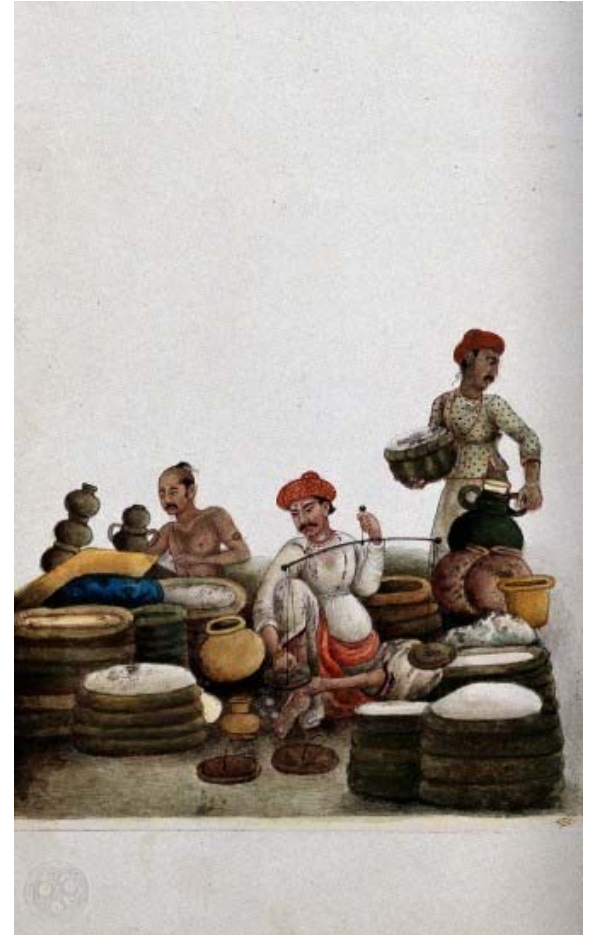
Watercolour, India, c.19th century. Wellcome Library no. 575942i. (Image no.V45535)  
© Wellcome Library, London

### A Rice Seller in the Delhi Bazaar ♦

A tradesman weighs out rice in an outdoor market place. Rice is the staple food of India and symbolises prosperity, wealth and fertility. It is sprinkled during *pujas* (acts of worship) and ritual diagrams are made of coloured rice.

Watercolour India, c.19th century.

Wellcome Library no. 575935i. (Image no.V45528) © Wellcome Library, London



## Good Governance

Individual wellbeing is also dependent on the wellbeing of the community. These albums illustrate the way in which the Chinese government recorded information on the numerous minorities that existed within their Empire. It was considered important for the smooth running of the country, to have an understanding and empathy with all those who lived within its borders.

### Tribute Album

The *Miao-tzu* albums, take their name from one of the major southern minorities in China and give details and illustrations of the different tribes due to bring tribute to the Emperor. The illustration shows four men of the Black Mia) playing the mouth organ (sheng).

Chinese; c. late 17th century. Wellcome Chinese MS 100, folio 4. (Image no. L31301) © Wellcome Library, London



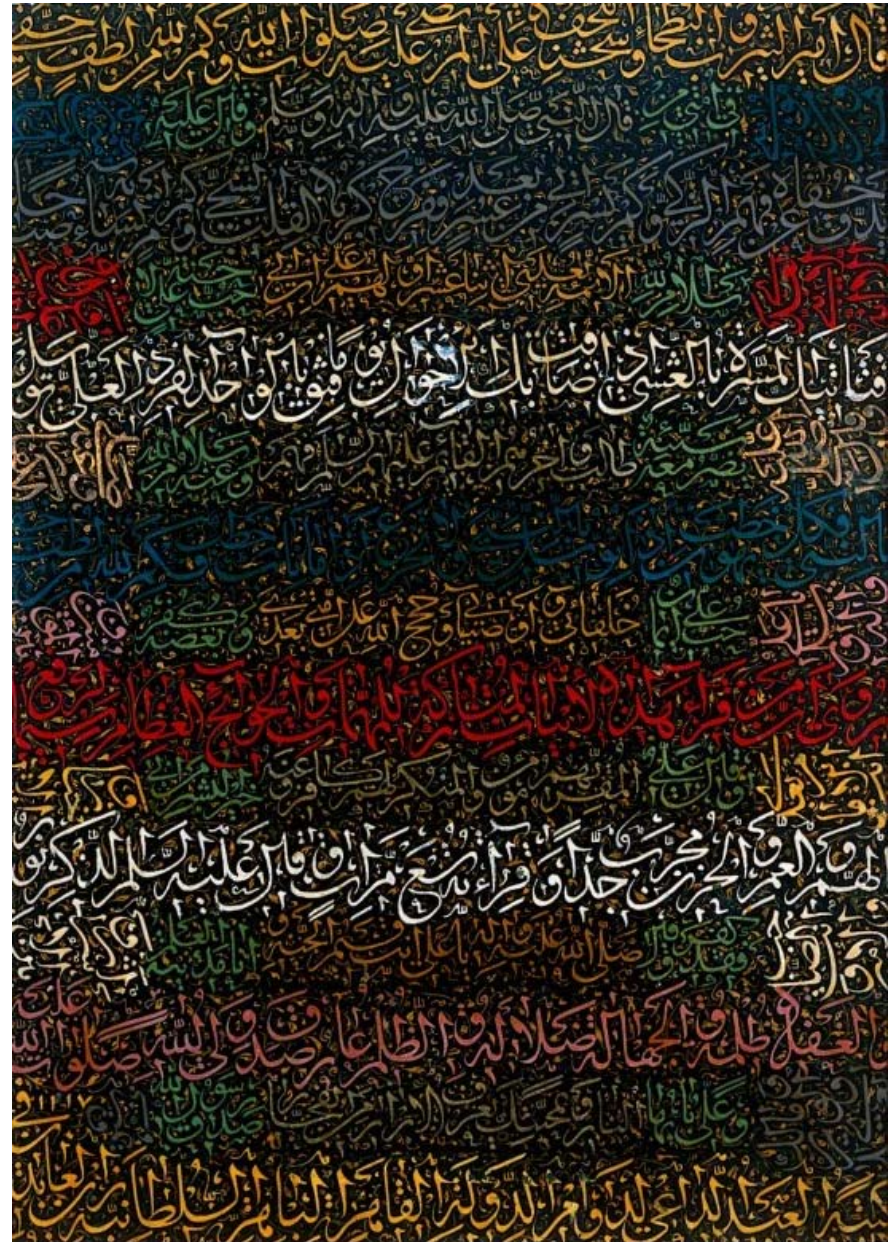
# Calligraphy

There are a wide variety of languages and scripts used to convey information in writing throughout Asia. Most scripts developed styles for different purposes such as letter writing, the transcription of legal documents or matters relating to administration. In many cultures, especially in the Islamic world, writing performed the dual purpose of conveying a message and providing a work of art. This type of writing is not read in the conventional way, instead it is an optical recognition of forms. The word is recognised by the group or shape of the ordered consonants, similar in a way to today's text messages.

## Riqa' Script

A multi-coloured text transcribed on a black background with gold flecks. This complicated text illustrates sayings in Arabic of the Amir of Yatib, Batha and Nahhaf, which relate to the words of the Prophet Mohammad. It should be read following the sequence of the colours.

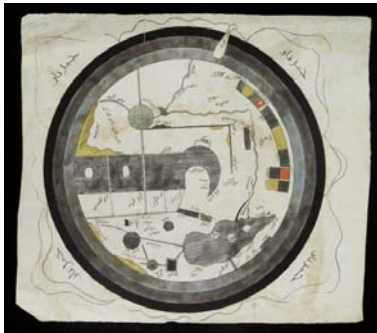
Arabic; dated 1707/8; transcribed in Cairo. Wellcome Islamic calligraphy 80. (Image no.L31261 or L18576) © Wellcome Library, London



## Harmony with the Environment

In Asia, shrines and temples are sited in places where the flow of energy is most beneficial. Such energies are thought to pervade the landscape. Architecture is viewed as a divine science and the construction of buildings conforms to sacred geometric principles.

Pilgrimages are made to these places of spiritual power, to generate merit and to ensure wellbeing. Another way to promote good health is through the ancient Chinese science of *feng shui*, which deals specifically with creating a positive flow of *qi* by balancing the elements within the environment.



# Cosmology

Cosmology explains the origin and structure of the world and where human beings fit into this structure. The universe (cosmos) is divided into a series of heavens and hells, often occupied by fantastic creatures. Human beings on earth are located within this ordered system. These ideas influence the balance of the humours within the body, the elements within the environment and the cosmic forces within the universe. The ideal state is a balance between the internal human system (miniature cosmos) and the external universe (major cosmos).

## Islamic Map of the World

Unlike conventional maps of today, the North is placed at the bottom of this map with the West to the right. The circular earth is shown surrounded by unknown seas depicted by coloured rings. The Indian Ocean with the Red Sea is on the left (East), whilst the Mediterranean is on the right (West). Below is a black square indicating Rome and a circle for Constantinople. The Nile flows into the Mediterranean from the South, turns a right angle to the East and then heads to the large blue circle indicating its source in Africa.

Arabic; c.18th century. Wellcome Arabic MS 300.  
(Image no. L35009) © Wellcome Library, London



## Astrology and Astronomy

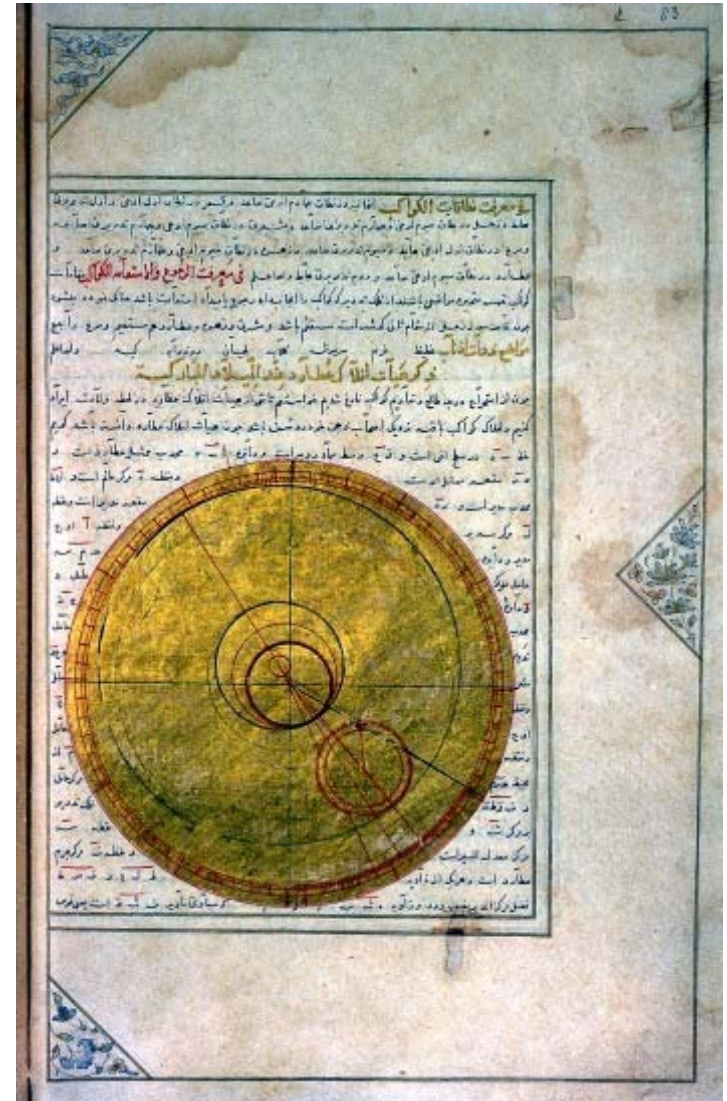
Astrology is the study of the influence of the positions and movements of the stars and planets on human activity, including health and wellbeing. Closely related to astrology, astronomy is the scientific study of the stars, planets and all other celestial bodies. It was from these astronomical studies that calendars were drawn up. The studies of the Greek astronomer, Ptolemy, during the 2nd century, were held in high regard in the Islamic world. Subsequently, in Baghdad, the astrolabe was developed into an instrument of high precision.

From the knowledge of these two sciences, physicians would prescribe appropriate remedies to be taken at times regarded as propitious. Both sciences continue to play an important role today.

### The Position of the Planet Mercury

A folio from the astronomical work, *Kitab-i viladat-i Iskandar*, the personal horoscope of Iskandar Sultan, grandson of Timur, who ruled the province of Fars in Iran from 1409 to 1414 and is best known for his patronage of the arts and sciences. The folio displayed shows the position of the planet Mercury in the sixth house at the moment of the Prince's birth. Mercury in this house often signifies a highly organised mind.

Persian; dated 1411. Wellcome Persian MS 474, folio 30r.  
(Image no.L15243) © Wellcome Library, London



# Astrology and Astronomy

## Degrees of the zodiac

Each zodiacal sign is divided into thirty degrees. The opening from this Persian manuscript shows degrees one to twelve (right) and thirteen to twenty-four (left) within the zodiacal sign of Taurus. Each degree is depicted by a small miniature, with an explanatory note above stating the number of the degree and a brief description. For example, degree fifteen seen at the top left of the left page depicts a man holding a sprig of basil, a herb used in healing.



Persian; c. late 17th/early 18th century.  
Wellcome Persian MS 373, folio 35v, 36r.  
(Image no. L29150 full opening, L30668/9  
r & v) © Wellcome Library, London

# Astrology and Astronomy

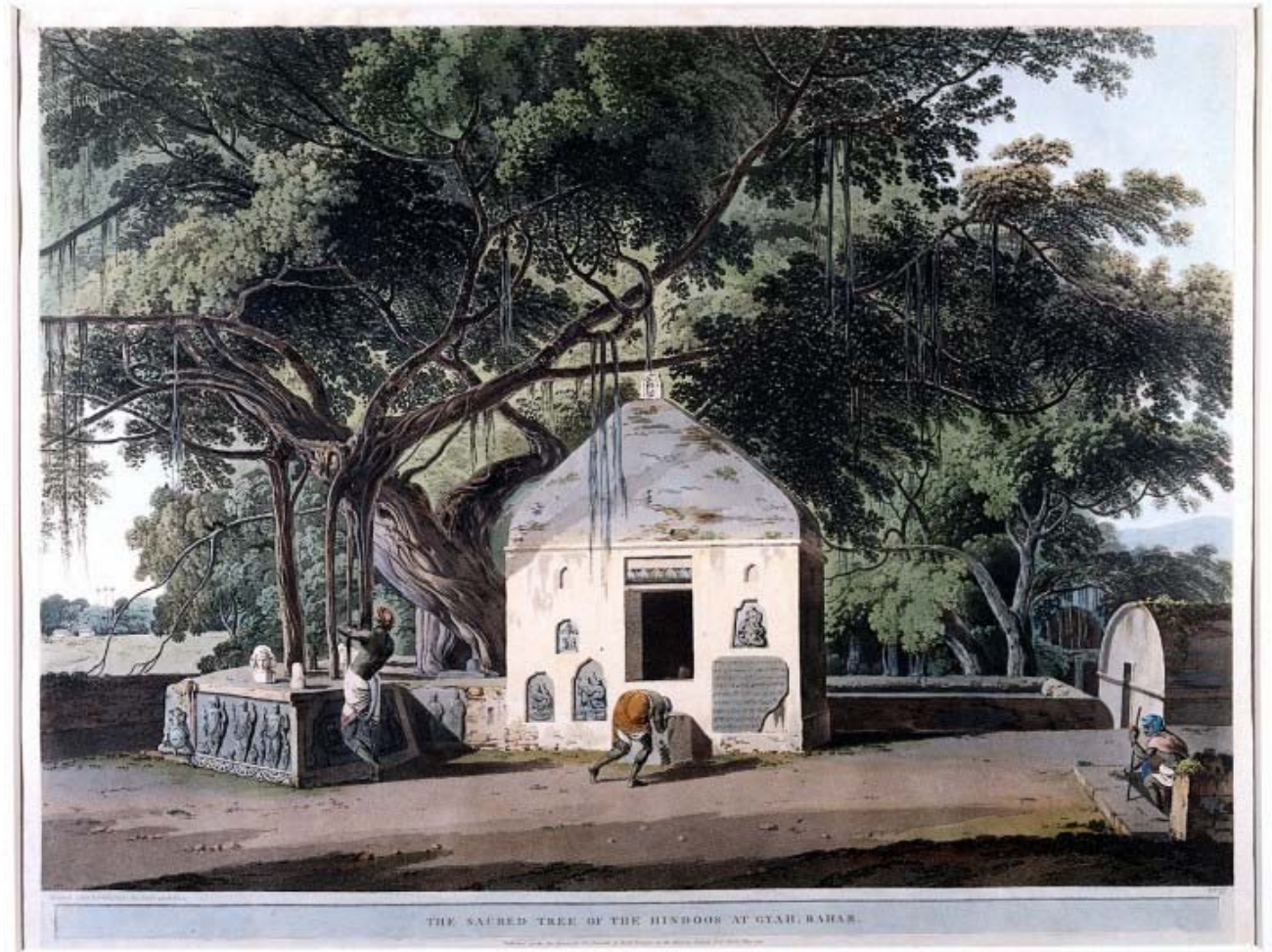
## Fortune telling from celestial bodies

An astronomical manuscript on fortune telling from observation of celestial bodies. Here various observed features of the sun are shown, with their interpretations. The penultimate observation, the sun surrounded with a green band, indicates the death of the ruler within the year.



## A Banyan Tree with Hindu Shrine at Gaya, Bihar

The tree is a symbol of life and is considered sacred in many Asian cultures. Villages throughout India have a sacred tree, where a shrine is established to honour the presiding deity. This banyan or Indian fig tree has devotional bas-reliefs of Hindu deities around the base. Gaya is an ancient centre of Hindu pilgrimage. South of the city is Bodhgaya, site of Buddha's enlightenment. This scene depicted by Thomas Daniell sums up the intertwining of humanity, the physical environment and the non-material world beyond.



Coloured aquatint, Pall Mall,  
London, 1796, after drawings  
made in Bihar.  
Wellcome Library no. 27581i.  
(Image no.V50474 or L22028)  
© Wellcome Library, London

## The Wheel of Life

Living a life of balance in harmony with the world is central to Asian philosophy, as is right behaviour to ensure eventual spiritual liberation. The Wheel of Life or Existence illustrates how right behaviour can influence rebirth. It depicts the Buddhist teachings on suffering, the nature of *samsara* or cyclic existence and the doctrine of *karma* or cause and effect. In the centre of the wheel are three animals; a pig, a cockerel and a snake, respectively symbolising the three poisons of ignorance, desire and hatred. Until these poisons are eradicated, they give rise to a meaningless cycle of death and rebirth into any of the six realms of cyclic existence.

The circle surrounding the animals shows people going up to a higher realm because of their good *karma* and going down to the lower realms because of their bad actions. Around this are the six realms of cyclic existence into which one can be reborn – heavenly realm, jealous god realm, human realm, animal realm, hungry ghost realm and the hell realm. In the outer rim are twelve illustrations that symbolise the conditioning that leads from ignorance (depicted as a blind man) to death (depicted as a corpse). Thus one continues to revolve and transmigrate through these different realms of existence until one has eradicated the three poisons. These three poisons are also the primary cause of disease.

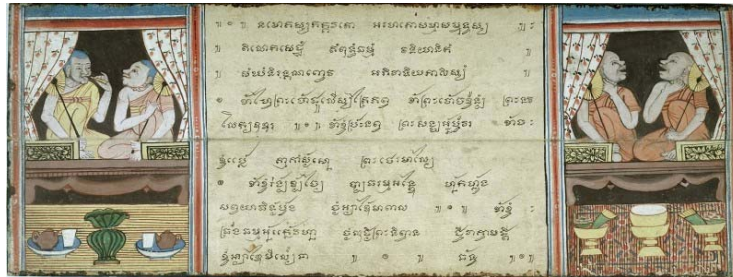
Gouache, Tibet, 1904. Wellcome Library no. 45161i.  
(Image no.V17709) © Wellcome Library, London



## Harmony with the World Beyond

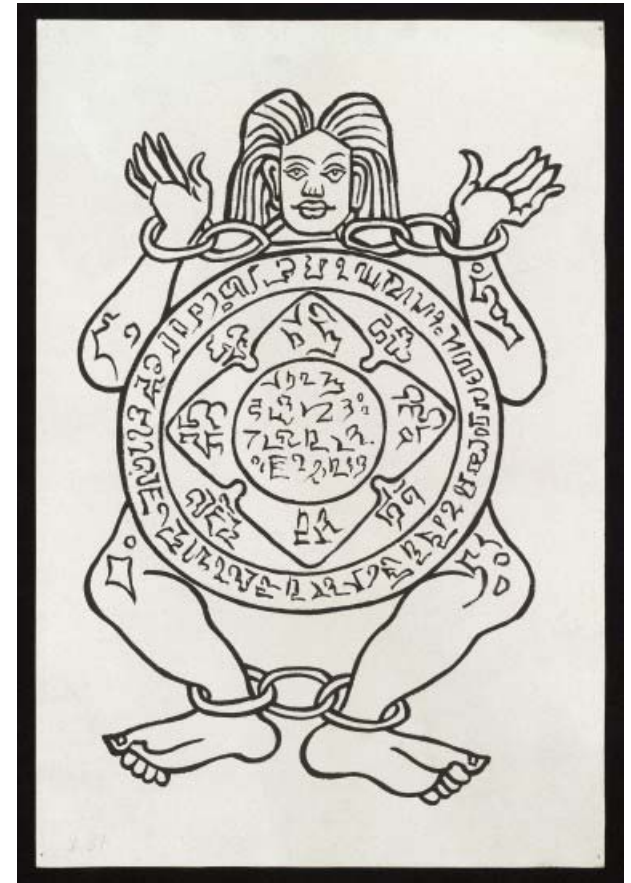
This section is devoted to how the wellbeing of the body is affected by the cosmic forces of the universe. Astrology, astronomy and cosmology all contribute to an understanding of these forces. The balance between the world of the living and the world beyond is maintained through correct medical treatment, the use of amulets and spiritual practice.

All the great Asian medical traditions are intimately linked to religious beliefs. These faiths are explored through manuscripts and paintings, illustrating the importance of meditation, prayer and ritual to invoke divine protection and promote healing. It is only when body, mind and spirit are balanced together in perfect harmony, that true wellbeing is achieved.



## Warding off illness

In many parts of the world, ritual specialists known as 'shamans' have an important role to play in warding off illness and curing disease. The shaman is believed to have the ability to expel evil and heal the sick, through his or her communication with the world of the spirits. The curing techniques used in early medical traditions, also involve the manipulation of substances and ritual objects in ways that are often called 'magical'. Likewise, from ancient times and in all cultures, amulets have been used as a form of magical protection. This is no less true of Asia, where charms, spells, amulets and talismans play a significant role in maintaining health and dispelling negative forces. Protective charms against disease, demons, bad weather and all other conceivable threats are widespread, as are amulets to encourage long life and prosperity. Written on paper and other materials, these contained figures, symbols, magical formulae, incantations, inscriptions, anagrams and cryptic phrases. The efficacy of amulets is believed to be dependent on the power of the spells inscribed on them. Often prescribed by a physician or by a religious practitioner, amulets were placed in the house or worn on the body to control and placate pertinent deities and spirits.

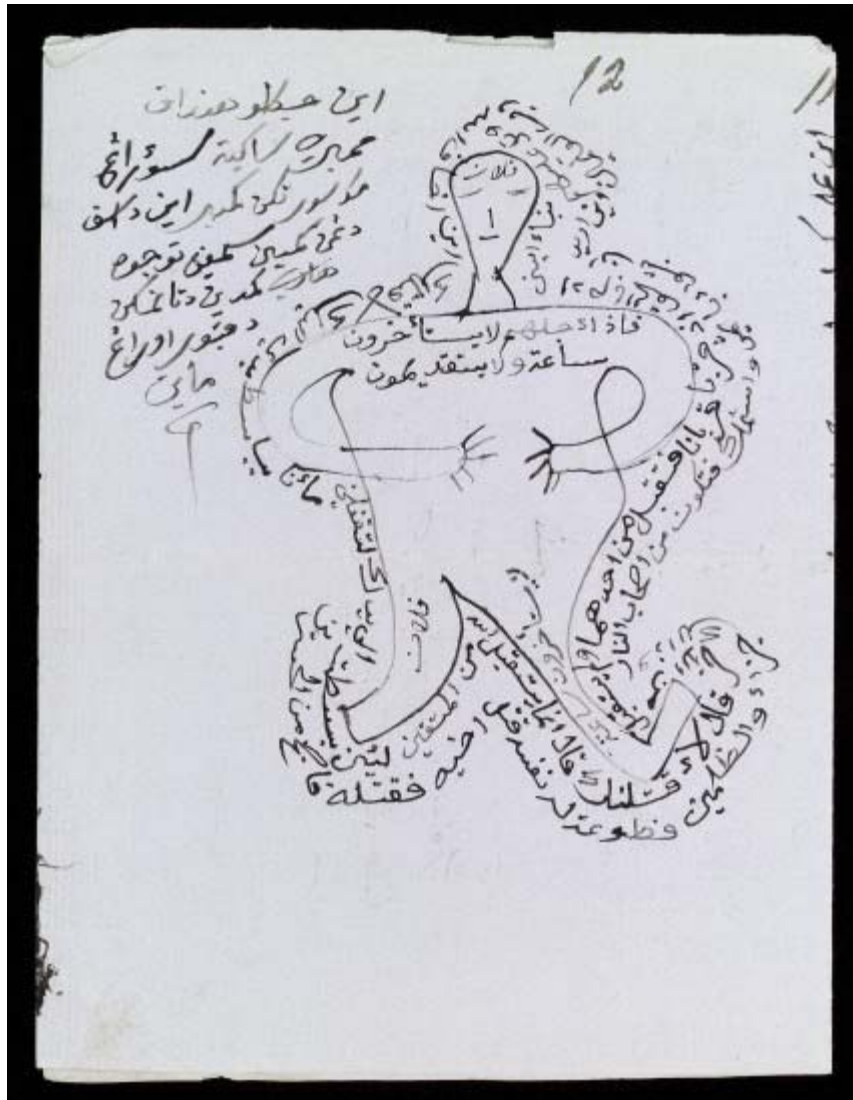


### Protective Amulets

This woodblock depicts a popular Buddhist charm to bind and inactivate various demons of sickness, in particular the demons known as *gyalpo* and *drimo*. These are shown here chained together containing a circular disc enclosing a four-petaled lotus, the whole inscribed with protective mantras and formulae. It was used to make block prints and drawings and pasted up in houses for protection against disease.

Tibet; c.19th century. Wellcome Library no. 570974i. Wellcome Tibetan xylograph 127. (Image no: L35083) © Wellcome Library, London

## Warding off illness



### Black Magic Charm

Malay black magic (*Ilmu Sibir*) is still practised and feared in modern Malay society. With its origins deeply rooted in the obscure animistic past of the Malay archipelago, *Ilmu Sibir* is inflicted in various shapes and forms by its practitioners. The diagram exhibited is an example of a black magic charm intended to curse its recipient with fatal illness. The Arabic letters surrounding the human figure are incantations and spells written in the language of *djinns* and *shaitan* (demonic spirits).

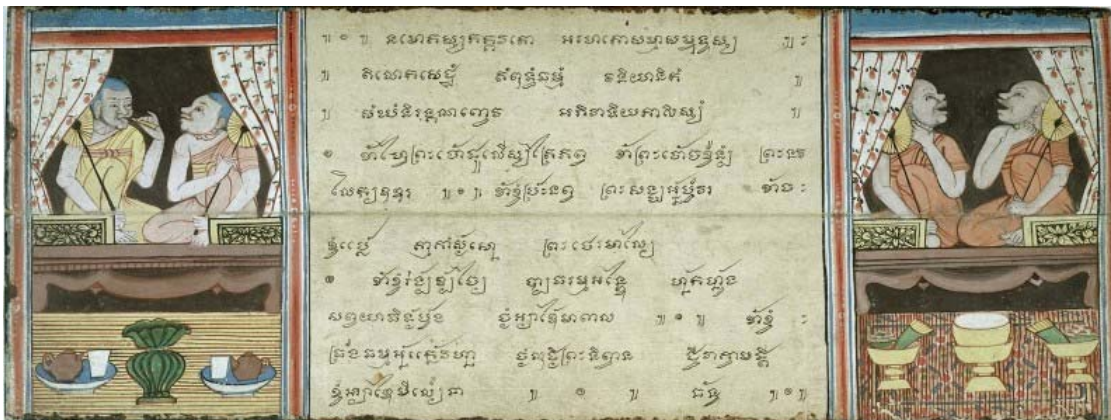
## Buddhism

Buddhism was founded in the sixth century BCE by the north Indian prince, Siddhartha Gautama, who renounced his palatial background in search of enlightenment. After years of intense meditation he realised that suffering is caused by desire and that an end to suffering would only come about when the cycle of rebirth was broken. After his enlightenment he became known as a *Buddha* or 'Awakened One'. His doctrine is embodied in the Four Noble Truths, the goal being to eliminate suffering and attain nirvana, a blissful enlightened state of non-being.

The Buddha's teachings or dharma gradually spread and took root throughout the majority of Asia. Three distinct traditions evolved – *Hinayana*, *Mahayana* and *Vajrayana* – which means the 'lesser', the 'great' and the 'diamond' vehicles to enlightenment.

The *Hinayana*, today called *Theravada*, stresses personal enlightenment through monastic discipline; the *Mahayana* encourages enlightenment for all through the cultivation of compassion; its offshoot the *Vajrayana*, is a powerful esoteric path based on the Buddhist tantras.

Buddhism both changed and was changed by the cultures it encountered, as is reflected in the rich variety of manuscripts and paintings seen in this exhibition. Its success lay in its ability to adapt to the belief systems of other cultures, without displacing them. For example in China, *Mahayana* Buddhism adapted to Taoism and Confucianism; in Japan it co-existed with Shinto; in Tibet it absorbed the indigenous deities of the Bon tradition.



Buddhist monks sit with tea and sweets laid out in front of them. One monk on the left has a cheroot in his mouth. The monks on the right are holding their throats, a reference to vocal fatigue from long periods of chanting or recitation.

Watercolour. Siamese. Thai MS 3  
(Image no.L28404) © Wellcome Library, London

# Tibetan Buddhism



## Protector deity banner

Banner depicting the apparel and accoutrements of the protector deity Pehar. This is one of a series of banners acquired by the Wellcome Library that would originally have been displayed on the walls of protector chapels within buddhist monasteries.

At the top of the banner are flayed hides and suspended viscera, along with the six skull bowls holding the six sacramental substances, and outside these are the outfits of the tantric practitioner and warrior, suggestive of Pehar's retainers.

The banner shows Pehar as the 'king of buddha-activities', represented by the ritual dagger surmounted by a wide-brimmed rattan hat in the centre of the main image. His three right hands hold an iron hook, sword and arrow; his three left hand hold a knife, bow and club. Also shown are Pehar's four companions: Sakra, Monbuptra, Shingjachen and Dralha. The white snow-lion, elephant, lioness, horse and mule are the mounts of Pehar and his companions. The camel, ram, goat and so on are their familiars. The skulls at the bottom of the banner are skull-cups of nectar and blood offerings.

# Hinduism

Hinduism is one of the oldest and most complex religious systems in the world, which developed over several thousand years. Although based on the ancient Vedas, it does not trace its origins to a historical founder or follow a particular creed. Instead it emphasises the right way of living and embraces a wide variety of religious beliefs. Throughout India, there are differences in the deities worshipped, the texts used and the festivals observed.

Hindu deities have numerous manifestations, but all represent different aspects of the one Infinite Being. The three principle deities today are Vishnu, preserver of the universe; Shiva, described as both creator and destroyer; and Mahadevi, or the Great Goddess, who personifies the energy of the gods. Another major component of Hinduism is Tantrism, a form of esoteric mystical ritual in which female symbolism predominates.

Fundamental to all Hindus is the belief in an eternal, allembracing principle of ultimate reality conceived as the 'self' or *atman* of all forms of life. Closely connected with this doctrine is the transmigration of the soul and its complementary principle of *karma*, the law by which deeds produce good or evil results in the future.

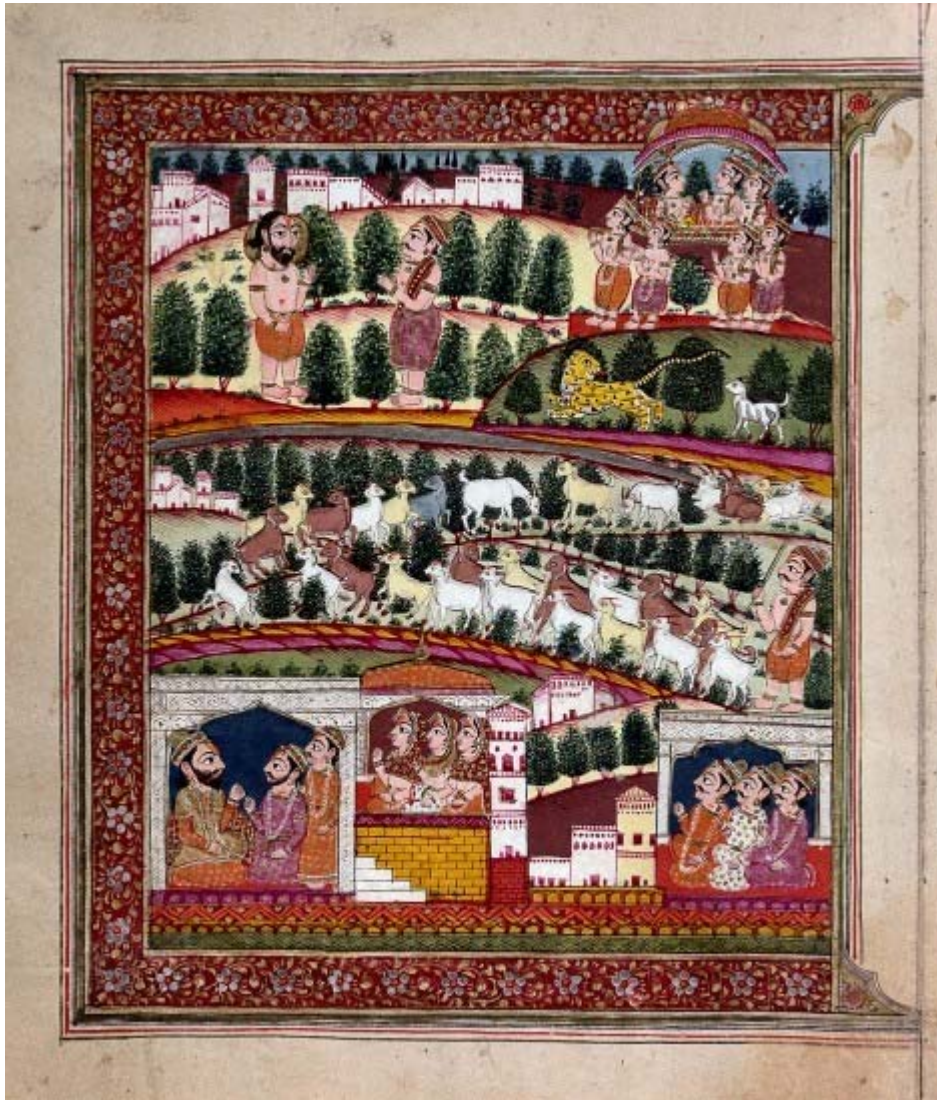


## Krishna and Radha

The god Krishna's love for the milkmaid Radha became a popular subject in both religious and secular painting and verse, and was sublimated as an allegory of the soul's relation to God.

Watercolour, Kalighat, West Bengal, India; c.19th century. Wellcome Library no. 26126i. (Image no.V44993) © Wellcome Library, London

# Hinduism



## Divine Hymn of the Hindus

The miniature displayed shows the deity Vishnu explaining a section from the *Bhagavadgita* to Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity. The format is one of continuous illustration, typical of many Indian manuscripts of this period. The artist concentrates on one episode at a time, with the sequence of events running from bottom to top in a zigzag direction. The miniatures contained in this manuscript are Kashmiri in style.

Punjabi; c.1820-40. Wellcome Panjabi MS 255; folio 55v.

(Image no.L25384) © Wellcome Library, London

# Sikhism

## Homage to Guru Nanak, Founder of the Sikh Religion

Guru Nanak (1469-1538), a Hindu raised under Muslim rule and influence, combined Hindu and Islamic beliefs to achieve religious and social harmony. Sikhism believes in the unity of the Godhead and preaches a gospel of universal toleration. Here kings and devotees pay homage to the Guru.



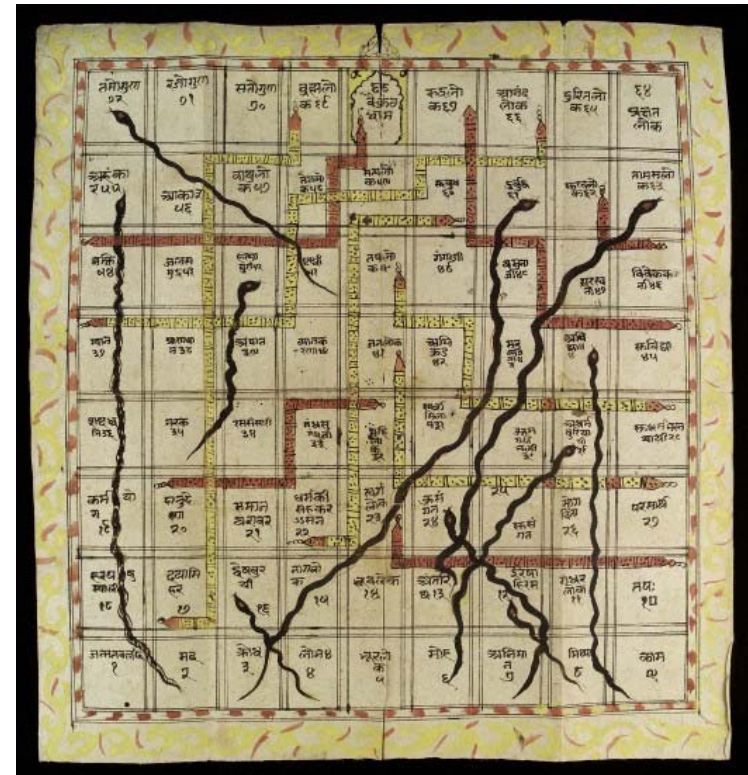
Gouache painting, India; c.18th century. Wellcome Library no. 578876i. (Image no.V45987)  
© Wellcome Library, London

## Jainism

Jainism evolved from the spiritual ferment that took place in India during the sixth century BCE. Mahavira, 'the Great Hero', a contemporary of the Buddha was born in c.599 BCE. Like the Buddha, he renounced a privileged lifestyle to become an ascetic. After twelve years, he is reputed to have attained enlightenment and became a *jina* or conqueror, from which his followers took the name, the religion of the conquerors.

Jainism maintains the universe is eternal, governed by a universal law and inhabited by a multitude of souls or *jivas*. Like the Hindus and the Buddhists, Jains believe in *karma* and rebirth. Every action produces *karma* and can have a positive or negative effect on rebirth. The practice of non-violence, *ahimsa*, is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of Jainism and every act of violence, even unintentional, causes bad *karma*. The Jains were indeed one of the major influences on Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.

Besides developing their own philosophy and leading an ascetic life, the Jains took an active interest in secular literature. They both preserved and commented on many scientific and medical works of importance.



### Game of heaven and hell

This old Indian game known to us as 'snakes and ladders' (*Jnana Baji*) was originally a vehicle for teaching ethics. Each square has not only a number but also a legend, which comprises the names of various virtues and vices. The longest ladder is from square 17, 'compassionate love', to 69 'the world of the absolute'. If the player's ivory counter should land on square 61 'weak-minded', this would lead to the greatest fall to square 3, 'fury'.

Sanskrit, c.18th century. Wellcome Indic Sanskrit MS 276.  
(Image no.L35004) © Wellcome Library, London

# Jainism

## Canonical text of the Jain religion

The *Kalpa sutra*, a religious Jain text deals primarily with the lives of the 24 *Jinas* the founders of Jainism, and ends with the birth and life of the historical Mahavira. This is one of the most popular Jain texts to be illustrated and is still read aloud to the laity every year during the rainy season.

Each of the 24 *Jinas* was first conceived in the womb of a Brahmin lady and then miraculously transferred to that of a *Ksatriya* or warrior lady. This was the only caste that a *Jina*, a perfected religious leader could be born into. Here, Harinaigamesi replaces the foetus conceived by Queen Triśala with the foetus of Mahavira removed from the Brahmin woman.

Wellcome Indic Sanskrit 3, Folio 42v, dated 1503. (Image no. L34114) © Wellcome Library, London



## Judaism and Christianity

Judaism, the religion of the Jews believed in one God as the creator of the universe. Dating back at least three thousand years, it is one of the oldest monotheistic religions in the world originating in the Near East. The *Torah*, meaning ‘the Law’ is the root of Judaic teachings. This initially comprised the first five books of the Old Testament, ascribed to the prophet, Moses, which was later developed and expounded over the centuries by rabbis and codified in the Mishnah and Talmud. Following the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish state by the Romans in 70 CE, it was the Hebrew scriptures that unified the dispersed Hebrew people often referred to as ‘the People of the Book’.

Christianity, the second great monotheistic faith, was based on the teachings and healing ministry of a Jew, Jesus of Nazareth. His teachings focused on love, forgiveness and the redemption of sins. Revered as the Messiah, ‘the anointed one’ and declared to be the Son of God, he attracted a strong following. However, both the Jewish hierarchy and the Roman authorities perceived him as a political threat and he was crucified. After his Resurrection, the faith of his disciples strengthened and Christianity spread throughout the Roman world and far beyond. Christian teachings were greatly influenced by the Greek philosophy and culture in which they developed and by the Hebrew scriptures of the Jewish Bible.



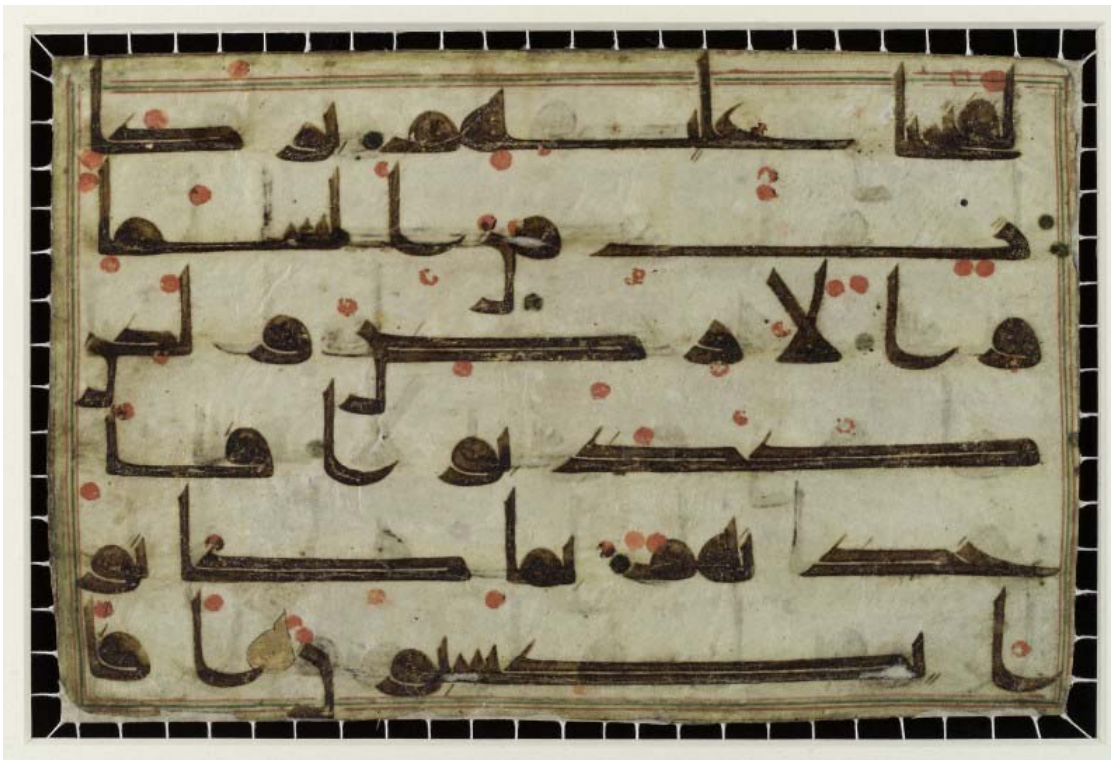
### Four Gospels

Transcribed by Shmawon, the scribe, and illuminated by Abraham, for the sponsor Lady Nenay, who commissioned the Gospels in memory of her parents. The opening above shows a miniature of St Luke, the patron saint of medicine and the beginning of the third Gospel.

Armenia; dated 1495. Wellcome Armenian MS 1 folio 110v, 111r.  
(Image no.L22853) © Wellcome Library, London

# Islam

Islam, another of the world's great monotheistic faiths, was founded in Arabia by Muhammad. Born in Mecca (c.550 CE), he received the *Qur'an*, meaning 'recitation' or 'reading' in Arabic, from the archangel Gabriel during a vision. He believed this to be the uncreated word of God or Allah, embodying the earlier teachings of both Jews and Christians. Muhammad regarded himself as the last in a series of prophets whom God had sent to both communicate the *Qur'an* and restore purity of religion. Achieving only modest success in Mecca, he fled to Medina in 622 CE from when Moslems date their era, known in Arabic as *hijrah*. By the time of his death in 632 CE, his adherents were a powerful and dominant force, who subsequently conquered much of Asia and Africa. The Arabic word Islam means 'submission' to the will of the one creator God, Allah. The faith embraces every aspect of life and Moslems adhere to the Five Pillars of Islam (witness, prayer, fasting, alms and pilgrimage).



## Calligraphy from the Qur'an

A passage from the Qur'an, in the *kufic* style of calligraphy, in which the inhabitants of Mecca are warned of punishment. In translation it says : 'We [Allah] would certainly have opened for them [the people of Mecca] blessings from heaven and earth, but they rejected it so we rewarded them according to what they have merited'. (Sura 7.96.)

Arabic; c.9th century. Wellcome Islamic Calligraphy 86. (Image no.L35003) © Wellcome Library, London

# Islam

## The Mosque of Omar from Mount Moriah, Jerusalem

This Mosque of Omar, more usually known as the Dome of the Rock, was built by Caliph Abd-el-Malik (687-705) on the site of the Temple of Solomon. The latter was destroyed against the Emperor's orders, during the Roman sack of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Revered by Moslems as the site from which the prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven, and by Jews and Christians as the place where Isaac was sacrificed.

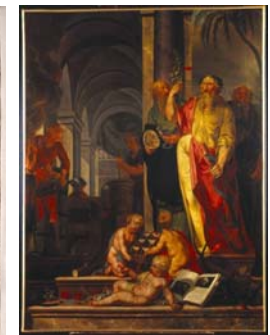


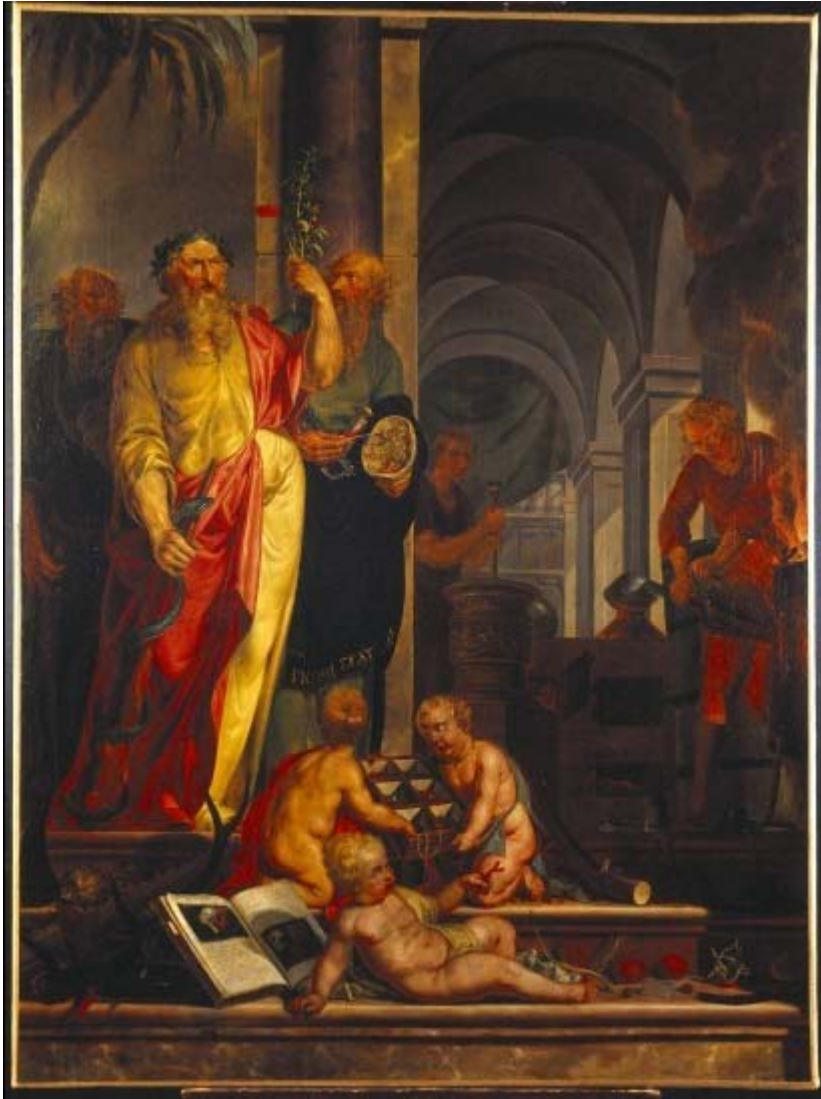
Coloured lithograph by  
Louis Haghe, London 1846,  
after David Roberts.  
Wellcome Library no.  
31806i. (Image no.V49308 /  
L21551)  
© Wellcome Library,  
London

## Migrating Medicine

This section looks at the exchange of medical ideas between East and West over the centuries. Exhibits show how the Greek medical tradition was developed and preserved in the Islamic world; how immunisation against smallpox was brought to the West and, following Jenner's development of using cowpox, returned to the East as a safer method of inoculation; and how European missionaries and traders introduced Western medical theories to the Far East and returned home with knowledge of the ancient healing practices of Asia.

This interchange of ideas has contributed greatly to medical science in both hemispheres. It is hoped that this positive dialogue will continue, breaking down global and cultural barriers in order to improve the wellbeing of humanity around the world.





### Aesculapius with Exotic Materia Medica from the East

Aesculapius, the Greek god of medicine, is shown flanked by Apollo and Hippocrates. They receive a box of exotic medicinal substances, similar to those brought back from Asia by agents of the Dutch East-India Company. To the right, the *materia medica* is turned into medicines in a Western pharmaceutical laboratory. This reflects the interest shown in Eastern medicine during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which has continued developing to this day.

Oil painting, Johannes Prey (1744-1823) Rotterdam; 16 July 1791. Wellcome Library no. 466059i. (Image no.L30884) © Wellcome Library, London



## The Organs of the Body compared to the Structure of a House

*Ma'aseh Tobiyah* was composed by Tobias Cohn (1652-1729) who came from Cracow, studied at the celebrated medical school in Padua, and subsequently moved to Adrianople where he became physician to five successive Ottoman sultans. It compares the human body to the structure of a house, for example the hair is likened to the roof, the eyes to the windows and the mouth to the door. The analogy was not new but a development of a similar analogy used by William Harvey (1578-1657) who discovered the circulation of the blood. Harvey referred to the thorax as a 'parlour', the stomach as the 'kitchen' or 'shop' and spoke of 'furnaces to draw away phlegm, raise the spirit'.

Hebrew, printed at the Bragadin Press, Venice; dated 1708. Wellcome EPB 18258/B folio 105v, 106r; Allan 26. (Image no.L24382)

© Wellcome Library, London

## Acupuncture recorded by a Western Physician

Willem ten Rhijne (1649-1700), the distinguished Dutch physician was sent by the Dutch East India Company to the tiny island of Deshima off the Japanese coast at Nagasaki. Here he published the earliest Western descriptions of acupuncture in his book *Dissertatio de arthritide: Mantissa schematica: de Acupunctura*. He made detailed descriptions of Japanese and Chinese medical practice and described how acupuncture alleviated various disorders. The chart shows a Japanese figure with channels and points for the application of acupuncture and *moxa*, viewed from the front of the body.

