Contributions of Muslim Scientists to Medicine and Related Sciences

Abdi O. Shuriye
Raihan Othman

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Contents

Preface v
Acknowledgment vi
Lists of Contributors vii
Introduction 1

Chapter 1 Al-Majusi Contribution in the Understanding of the Cardiovascular System and Blood Circulation 3
Chapter 2 Al-Majusi: The Pioneer in Obstetrics 7
Chapter 3 Al-Razi Works and Contributions in Neurological Sciences 12
Chapter 4 Ar-Razi on Gout 19
Chapter 5 Ali Bin Isa Al-Kahhal: Pioneer in Ophthalmology 25
Chapter 6 Al-Majusi’s Treatment of Physical Diseases Using Drug Therapy and Surgical Manipulation 30
Chapter 7 Al-Razi’s Understanding and Curing of Smallpox and Measles 35
Chapter 8 Al-Razi’s Contribution to the Study of Nexus between Human Mind and Body 39
Chapter 9 Abu Zayd Ahmed Ibn Sahl Al-Balkhi on Medical Psychology 45
Chapter 10 Contributions of Ashraf Ali Thanwi to Mental Disease Treatment 49
Chapter 11 Ibn Zuhr on Diseases and Treatments 54
Chapter 12 Ibn Al-Jazzar on Fever 59
Chapter 13 Ibn Al-Khatib and his Theory of Contagion 64
Chapter 14 Ibn Al-Nafis Contribution in Urology Progress Practices 67
Chapter 15 Ibn Al-Quff on Preventive Medicine 72
Chapter 16 Ibn Sina on Aromatherapy 76
Chapter 17 Studies in Gynaecology in Zad Al-Musafir Wa Qut Al-Hadir of Abu Jaafar Ibn Al-Jazzar 81
Chapter 18 Contributions of Ibn-Sina in Pharmaceutical Sciences 88
Chapter 19 The Contribution of Ibn Al-Baitar in Medicine 94
Chapter 20 The Contribution of Saghir Akhtar in Pharmaceutical Science 99
Chapter 21 The Glorious Contribution of Ibn Al-Quff on Cardiology and Embryology as Well as Other Surgical Matters 104
Chapter 22 Success Journey of Mehmet Oz in Cardiothoracic Surgery 109
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Abu Al-Qasim Al-Zahrawi’s Contribution to Neurosurgery</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Al-Zahrawi Method on Inflammatory Swellings and Tumours Surgery</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Oculist’s Contributions to Cataract Operation</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Al-Zahrawi Contribution to Medical Instruments</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Al-Zahrawi’s Explanation on Bone Fractures and Its Surgical and Non-Surgical Treatments</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Inhalation and Oral Anesthetics: Views of Selected Muslim Physicians</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ELEVEN

IBN ZUHR ON DISEASES AND TREATMENTS

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11.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates the contributions of Ibn Zuhr on diseases and treatments. The methodology adopted in this chapter is library based and data is collected from reliable sources. The main focus of the chapter is to provide answers on the causes and effects of disease and the treatments involved. The research explores the famous work of Ibn Zuhr namely Kitab Al-Taysir which is a medical encyclopedia.

11.2 CONTRIBUTIONS ON DISEASES AND TREATMENTS

11.2.1 Tracheotomy

Abu-Marwan Abdel-Malik Zuhr Al-Eyadi Al-Eshbeely lived Eshbeelia, now Spain. His Kitab al-Taysir is one of the important early works on medicine. He discussed diverse diseases and attempted to provide treatments.

Tracheotomy is the surgical incision into the trachea usually performed when the upper air passage has been blocked. In a research article conducted by Abdel-Halim (2005), he reported the original Arabic edition of the book Al-Taisir Fil-Mudawat Wal-Tadbeer (Book of Simplification Concerning Therapeutics and Diet) written by Ibn Zuhr (Avenzoar, 1093-1162 AD) aimed at evaluating his contributions to the progress of surgery and providing English translations of relevant excerpts. Abdel-Halim mentioned that Ibn Zuhr's unique experiment performing a tracheotomy on a goat, proved the safety of this operation in humans and represented a further step in the development of the experimental school started by Al-Razi (Rhazes) of Baghdad in the ninth century who is known to have given monkeys doses of mercury to test it as a drug for human use.

Furthermore, Ibn Zuhr also performed post mortems on sheep in the course of his clinical research on treatment of ulcerating diseases of the lungs. Moreover, he invented the surgical procedure of tracheotomy (Makki, 2006). He was the first to give a correct description of the tracheotomy operation for suffocating patients. The following translation (Al-Khoori, 1983, p.129) from Al-Taysir of Ibn Zuhr shows how he used experimentation on animals in his search for evidence in the course of looking for a treatment for lung ulceration:

"....Thus remedies for lung ulcerations are there around in the universe but are yet unknown to us. That is because sheep when caught with a lung disease do leave