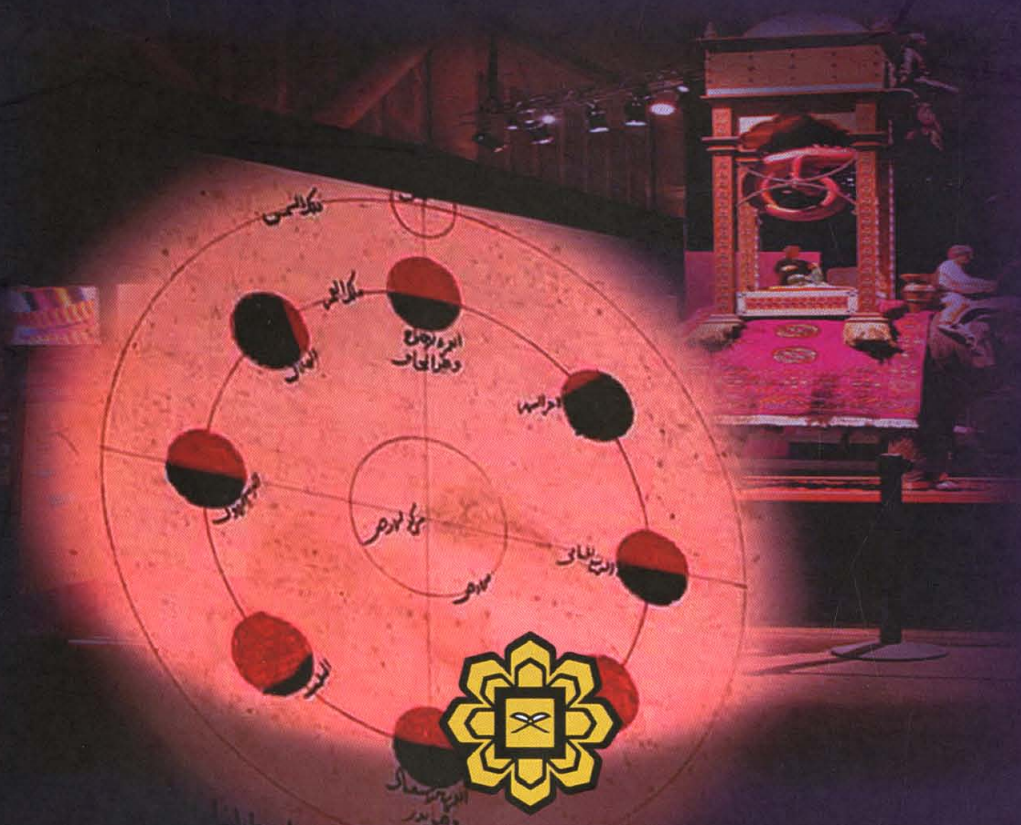


Contributions of Muslim Scientists to Medicine and Related Sciences

Abdi O. Shuriye
Raihan Othman



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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE CONTRIBUTION OF IBN AL-BAITAR IN MEDICINE

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19.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to review the contributions of Ibn Al-Baitar on the subject of medicine. The importance of this study is intended for the people to appreciate the value of many discoveries and works done by Muslim's scientists during the historical age for instance the exploration of Ibn Al-Baitar on discovering various plants and medicines. The methodology adopted in this chapter is a web based study by searching through several books and articles discussing on ancient Islamic medicine and learn about the contributions of early Muslim's scientists on medicine. The research framework for this chapter is mainly by examine the basic features of Ibn Al-Baitar's works and contributions in the course of medicine and presents it in this chapter.

19.2 IBN AL-BAITAR THROUGH HISTORY

One of the history most famous pharmacists, Ibn Al-Baitar was born in Malaga which situated in southern coastal city of Spain (Fadhel, n.d., pp. 88-89). Ibn Al-Baitar spent most of his time traveling between Spain cities for several reasons such as learning from various scholars, studying on the existence plants and sometimes for safety reason due to the political instability in Spain during the time. At the early age of 20s, Ibn Al-Baitar travels abroad to continue searching and learning on plants in different region. His long scientific journey was initiated in year 1219 starting from North Africa through Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Barce in Libya. Around the years 1223 to 1224 and from Barce port, throughout the Mediterranean Sea he continues to travel to Minor Asia (Today called Armenia), Greek, and Eastern Roman. After spending seven years in these countries, Ibn Al-Baitar finally ended his journey in Iraq and Asshams. (Ibrahim, 1991)

The news about Ibn Al-Baitar successes were spread over all the regions in Ayyubid dynasty which drawn attention to their leader king Al- Malik Al-Kamil Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr Ibn Ayyüb. Ibn Al-Baitar was appointed in Egypt as the chief of physicians and apothecaries and considered to be an authority on simple drugs andshrubs. After the death of Al-Malik Al-Kamil, Ibn Al-Baitar was then honored by his son Al-Malik Al-Salih Najm Al-Din Ayyub and remained in his service until his death in Damascus in the year 1048. Ibn Al-Baitar is the author of many works on simple drugs and other subjects. One of the book is *Kitab al-Jami' fi'l-Adwiyyah al-Mufradah* on which he conducted a deep study on earlier and later books on medicinal plants and discuss it in his book. He also quoted other scholars opinions on mineral, animal and plant drugs in his books. This book was considered to be the best Arabic work on this subject and was written for Al-Malik Al-Salih Najm Al-Din Ayyub Ibn Al-Malik Al-Kamil (Isa, 1944, p.38). Ibn Al-Baitar had also being the one that discovered "Hindiba", (*chicorium intybus*) an herbal compound drug which Ibn Al-Baitar later identified as having anticancer