

Contribution of the Muslim scholars to the field of Medicine (With particular reference to Ibn Sina and Al- Razi during the Islamic golden age)

By

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Abstract

- Science is a part of the systematic knowledge of nature which is undoubtedly acquired through a methodology based on observation, hypothesis and experiment.
- In the Qur'an science is an essential activity for any Islamic community for it increases the understanding of the signs of God and hence brings the *ummah* closer to the Creator.

- Based on this fact, the scientific spirit of Muslim scientists and scholars flows from their consciousness of Tawhid (Unity of God), this tawhidic worldview has played a very vital role in exploring the physical world and discovers its secret (*sunnatullah*).
- Hence the famous Muslim scientists like al-Razi, Ibn Sina, al-Biruni, Ibn al-Haitham, al-Zahrawi just to mention a few, were all noted for their observational power and experimental tendencies as displayed in their wide ranging studies of the natural sciences.

- As such, these great scholars have produced a lot of books which then being the important references to the later researchers notably the westerners toward the end of the dark age of Europe.
- Therefore, this humble paper aims to explore the biographies and the immense contributions vis-a- vis the two gigantic Muslim Scholars(Ibn Sina and al Razi) to the field of Natural sciences with particular reference to their unique contributions in the aspect of medicine.
- Finally, the paper will provide a brief conclusion followed by some suggestions and recommendations

Ibn Sina and His Contribution to Medicine

Biography of Ibnu Sina:

Ibn Sina famously known as Avicenna in Europe. His real name is Abu Ali al- Husayn bin Abdullah bin al- Hasan bin Ali Ibn Sina.

- He was born in Persia province of Balk which is now in Afghanistan in 981AD. During his childhood, he moved to Bukhara which is now known as Uzbekistan (M. Basheer Ahmad, 2008).
- By the age of ten he had become well versed in the study of the holy Quran and basic sciences.
- He died in the year 1037 A.D

Contribution of Ibn Sina in Medical field:

- Ibn Sina's most enduring legacy was in the field of medicine, His most famous book(kanun fi al tibb) (The Canon of Medicine) is still one of the most important medical books ever written, and served as the medical authority throughout Europe for 600 years.



The book of Canon of medicine contains over a million words in five books titled:

- General Principles of Medical practice.
- Simple Drugs
- Local disease,
- General Diseases and
- Compound Medicine . (Smith , 1980)

- Ibn Sina was also the first physician to contributed to advancements in anatomy, gynecology and pediatrics.

**Al Razi and his major
contribution to the field of
Medicine**

His Biography

- He is known in the west as Rhazes . He was also interested in music at the beginning, and later on he learnt medicine, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry pharmacy and philosophy.
- He began to have interest in medicine when he visited the famous Azudi Hospital in Baghdad at the age of 30. Then, he became a physician who was in charge of the hospital at the age of 52.
- He was blinded by cataracts and refused an operation twice in several years before his death on 932 A.D. at the age of 73 at Rayy or Baghdad.

- Al- Razi was also famous on the scientific method and promoting experimentation and observation.
- He was the first person responsible in charge the first Royal Hospital and moved to Baghdad to become the head of Muqtadari Hospital for a long time.

His Contributions to the field of Medicine

Treatise on smallpox versus Measles

- Al-Razi was the first physician in history who described and distinguished in details the symptoms and signs of smallpox based on clinical examination by putting differential diagnosis.

His major Books

- ***Kitab al-Mansuri***: This book was translated into Latin in the 15th century A.D., comprised ten volumes and dealt exhaustively with Greco-Muslim medicine.

- ***Kitab al-Judari wa al-haâlabah***: It was the first treatise on smallpox and chicken-pox, and is largely based on Razi's original contribution.

- ***Kitab al-Hasa fi al-kula wa al-mathanah:*** Which means (Stones in the kidney and bladder) is one of the most famous of his medical writings.
- ***Al-Hawi:*** It was the largest medical encyclopaedia of al-Razi.

- Razi was a pioneer in many areas of medicine particularly in the fields of pediatrics and infectious diseases. As such, both Eastern and Western writers in history described Rhazes' works as medical encyclopedias and called him Rhazes, the encyclopedias.

Conclusion

- The contribution of the early Muslim scholars to the various fields of knowledge is highly remarkable in the history. For instance, Ibn Sina who is well known in the West as Avenna has immensely contributed to the field of natural sciences with particular reference to the aspect of medicine. His medical inventions and researches have played a great role on contemporary medicine, especially his book of al-Canon fi al-Tibb which means canon in medicine. This book is also considered as an authentic reference for not only Muslim medical practitioners, but for the entire globe.

- Likewise, al Razi who is also famous in the west as Rhazes has beautifully contributed to the field of medicine; he was the first Muslim medical scientists to differentiate between smallpox and chicken pox, his unique experiment and discoveries in this field had played a very significant role in the treatment of small pox. Al- Razi had left some important legacies for the humanities, such as Kitab al Mansuri, Kitab al-Judari wa al- Hasbah and Kitab al- Hawi. These books are the best reliable references for medical specialists.

- To conclude this humble paper, it is worthwhile to mention that the energetic contribution of the Muslim Scholars to many aspects of knowledge can be attributed to their love for knowledge, their strong spirit for research, and their deep understanding of the message of the Qur'an and Sunnah. These factors have seriously contributed to their success and achievement.

Solutions and Recommendations

- The history has recorded the unique achievement made by some early Muslim Scholars(such as Ibn Sina, al Razi, etc..) to the many fields of Knowledge, and the West peculiarly have paid a special tribute to these gigantic Muslim Scholars whose unique contributions to the field of Medicine and other branches of knowledge have played a positive impact on humanity at large.

However, out of blue, the civilization that reached the pinnacle of achievement in various aspects of human life is suddenly sick if not vanished. Therefore, what can be done to rescue such a civilization that experienced and déjà vu the success in the past? In another word what are the possible solutions that can help to rescue Islamic civilization in order to regain its glory.

- There is a strong need for the Muslim *Ummah* to return to the true teaching of Islam Based on the Qur'an and Sunnah and which are the main fundamental principle of success in this life and hereafter.

- The spirit of seeking knowledge for the sake of knowledge should be revived. I mean Muslims nowadays are lack behind, simply because of the loss of the spirit of seeking knowledge. Therefore, to regain our loss glory, the resurgence of the spirit of seeking knowledge is urgent. It is because of this spirit, the early Muslim *Ummah*, such as Jabir Hayyan, Ibn Sina and Razi and etc. have excelled in all sorts of knowledge

- The application of integrative methodology in research is also urgent. That means the revelation which is the first source of knowledge in Islam, needs to be applied in our empirical world. It also means human acquired knowledge and revelation are no doubt compatible, and they can work together hand in hand.
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- A strong Unity and solidarity among the contemporary Muslim *Ummah* is highly needed. It is beyond reasonable doubt that, unity is a sign of power of any civilization, and division in contrast is a sign of its weakness.

This unity was obvious during the Islamic golden age, where the Muslim scholars used to observe the importance of unity that urge by the holy Qur'an and sunnah.

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Thank You