Avicenna (Ibn-Sina) - The Medieval Genius. Born 980 in Karmarten, Uzbekistan, died June 1037 in Hamadan, Iran.

Sir,

Avicenna (Abu Ali al’Hussein Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sina) was the most influential of all medical philosopher-scientists in medieval times. He studied logic, metaphysics, history and medicine in particular. His role as a physician proved to be of great value as he was able to cure the long ailing Samanid Prince, and, as a reward he was allowed to use the Royal Library of Samanids which greatly helped in his studies.

The Essence of the Scientist. Many would believe that history is a witness of the successful contributions of Avicenna (Ibn Sina). He dealt in all aspects of the art of medicine, astronomy, poetry and psychiatry. He contributed encyclopedic knowledge in all the scientific branches or praxis with competence. Among Avicenna’s well known works are the books of Healing art and the canon of medicine (El-Kanun). The former is a scientific encyclopedia covering geometry, psychology, astronomy, bio-ethics and music. The later is the most famous single book in the history of medicine (El-Kanun); a text of 5 volumes which covered extensively all aspects of medicine, e.g. neurology, anesthesiology and psychology. In his neurology, Avicenna evaluates the presentation and treatment of conditions such as coma, lethargy, dementia, epilepsy, nightmares and melancholy. El-Kanun mentioned the importance of surgical operation and the technique of anesthesia required for such procedures, e.g. above knee amputation. Avicenna evaluated the anesthetic properties of 40 plants which included the methods of application and extraction of the drug substances.

Avicenna was well conversant in the subject Risael Aghlak (specialized Faculty on the behavior of mankind), that ethical perspective of Qur’an, and rational science is based on. This is the part of metaphysical and anthropological dimension of the Holy Text.

The magnitude of his scientific achievement has set a pace of progress of observation, and experiments which is now the foundation of modern science. He, like other medieval scientists such as Ibn Zuhr, El-Kind, El-Birun and Ibn Hafen understood the guidelines of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), saying that seeking for knowledge have had to be the most important task for people, and that ink more saint than the blood of saints. Ibn Sina defined medicine as the skill that dealt in maintaining good health, coping with illness and recovering. The Public Health system had developed 800 years in the Islamic Medieval Medical Era before the establishment of Sanitary Inspection Systems in Europe. The Islamic Medical Science emphasizes fundamental hygiene in all aspect of human life which is still significant and accurate in historical past and modern technical development.

Figure 1 - Hakim Ibn-E-Sina

Sources