

HISTORICAL NOTES

The JIMA believes not only in the revivalism of the tenets of the Islamic faith but also in restoration, review, research and compilation of the knowledge of the brilliant past of Islamic Medicine. We have proposed to several Islamic countries to open a department of Islamic Medicine in their medical schools as well as to establish an Institute of Islamic Medicine for gathering extent works of great Hakims of the past, to do clinical and laboratory research on their empirical findings and their vast pharmacopoeia.

To this end, we are obtaining permission first to publish in parts the translation by Martin Levey of Adab al-Tabib of Al-Ruhawi's "Practical ethics of the physicians" which was printed by the American Philosophical Society as the Transactions of APS, vol. 57, part 3, 1967, Philadelphia.

Who was Ruhawi?

Ishaq Ibn Ali Al-Ruhawi must have written his deontological treatise, Adab al-tabib in the 9th century. After al-Ruhawi, to complete the picture, one should mention two of the greatest physician-philosophers of the Islamic World, al-Farabi (d. 950 A.D.) and Ibn Sina (b. 980 A.D.). Al-Ruhawi was probably from Ruha, a city of northwest Iraq. Earlier, it had been called Edessa, a well known center of Nestorian learning at one time. He was a Christian who embraced Islam and had written two works on Galen.

Al-Ruhawi's Adab al-tabib is found as a unique copy in the Suleymaniye Kitabhane #1658. It comprises 112 folios, seventeen lines per page, and is written in a good Nashki hand. The dedication is to the Sultan Bayezid.

One hour's teaching is better than a whole night of prayer. (sayings of the Prophet)