

Pioneers of The Mind: The Islamic Legacy of the field of Psychiatry

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During an era when mental health ailments were vastly misunderstood and feared by much of the world with accusations of demonic possessions to vilification of mental health patients, Muslim physicians and scholars approached the human mind with compassion and scientific principles. The Islamic Golden Age (8th – 13th Century) shaped critical foundations in the treatment of mental health, from Baghdad to Andalusia. The introduction of the earliest psychiatric wards was founded in Islamic hospitals, where some of the primary concepts of modern psychotherapy were born to treat disorders of the mind as medical ailments, a pioneering concept at such a time. This poster revisits the legacy of those like Al-Razi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Balkhi, who not only recognised mental disorders but developed treatment strategies centuries ahead of their time. Their holistic approach—balancing mind, body, and soul—offers timeless learning points for the field of modern psychiatric medicine and draws some interesting parallels to the Quranic approach to mental health.

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