



Environmental Health from Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's Perspective

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Abstract:

Abu Zayd al-Balkhi was a Persian Muslim polymath who lived in third and fourth Hijri century, and had novel theories and ideas in the fields of environmental protection, prevention, as well as physical and mental health which he introduced in his *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus*. In this paper, we analyze and interpret his ideas about three major elements of a healthy environment, and also his suggested prevention methods. We follow a descriptive-analytic approach based on documentary method, and besides our main reference, *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus*, we also use other relevant references. We find that Balkhi's ideas in the field of environment are in accordance with today's environmental issues, and therefore we can extract many useful solutions to the environmental problems from them. Our study shows that Balkhi supported the privilege of prevention to cure in environmental protection. He emphasizes on the necessity of and appropriate use of climate and geographical differences for building houses. Based on his recommendations for selecting habitat and cities, higher altitudes which are exposed to healthy winds are preferred, because when the temperature is very high or very low the weather will be cleaner and the people can be saved from infectious air, and the side effects and harms of smokes, vapors, and also fine dust particles which come from earth. Balkhi considers the solutions to the air pollution, caused by inversion phenomenon, as the secret benefits of environmental protection.

Keywords: Abu Zayd al-Balkhi, Environment, prevention, Climate differences, Air pollution, solution.

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