

# FRONT COVER PICTURE

## Medical Poetry

**Urjūzah fi al-ṭibb - (Poem on Medicine)** ارجوزة في الطب; by Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Sīnā, known to Europeans as [Avicenna](#) (d. 1037/428 H) ابو علي الحسين ابن عبد الله ابن سينا

The poem, written in *rajaz* verse, became the most popular of all medieval Arabic medical poems. It is in two parts (*juz'*), one on general medical principles and the other on regimen and therapeutics. In many copies the preface (16 lines) is missing. The poem was popular in Europe in the Middle Ages through Latin translations made by [Gerard of Cremona](#) in the mid-12th century and, a century later, by Armengaud de Blaise of Montpellier. The poem was published in several 16th-century printings, sometimes accompanied by a Latin translation of the commentary by Ibn Rushd ([Averroes](#)). It continued to be printed and read through the 17th century.

The poem also formed the subject of a number of commentaries, three of which are in the NLM collection. These include the popular one written in Spain by Ibn Rushd ([Averroes](#)), a rather rare one written in the 15th century by [Musá ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baghdādī](#), and a unique copy of a hitherto unknown commentary written in

the same century by [‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Haydūr](#).

Ibn Sina's poem itself has been edited by M. al-Baba in his *Min mu'alafat Ibn Sina al-tibbiyat* (Aleppo: Ma‘had al-turath al-‘ilmi al-‘arabi, 1984), pp. 90-194. Three copies were employed in this edition; the NLM copy was not one of them. An earlier Arabic-Latin-French edition and translation was published by Henri Jahier and Abdelkader Nouredine, *Avicenne, Poème de la médecine, Urguza fi 't-tibb, Cantica Avicennae* (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres", 1956); this edition also used three copies, two in Paris and one in Algiers. See also, Jules L. Janssens, *An Annotated Bibliography on Ibn Sina (1970-1989), including Arabic and Persian Publications and Turkish and Russian References* [Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, De Wulf-Mansion Centre, ser. 1, vol. XIII] (Leuven: University Press, 1991), pp. 37-38.

An English translation was made by Haven C. Krueger, *Avicenna's Poem on Medicine* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1963), based upon the French translation of Jahier and Nouredine. A German translation was published by K. Optiz, "Avicenna: Das Lehrgedicht über die Heilkunde", *Quellen Gesch. Naturwiss. Med.*, vol. 7 (1939), pp. 304-374.