Persian Chemist and Discoverer of Alcohol

Razi, Zakariya (Rhazes), chemist and physicist, discoverer of Alcohol.

Zakariya Rāzi (Persian: زکریای رازی Zakaria ye Razi, Latin: Rhazes or Rasis), born in Ray, Iran in the year 865 AD (251 AH), and died there in 925 AD (313 AH).

Razi was a versatile Persian physician, philosopher, and scholar who made fundamental and enduring contributions to the fields of medicine, alchemy, and philosophy, recorded in over 184 books and articles in various fields of science. He was well versed in Greek medical knowledge and added substantially to it from his own observations. As an alchemist, Razi is credited with the discovery of sulfuric acid, the "work horse" of modern chemistry and chemical engineering. He also discovered ethanol and its refinement and use in medicine. He was unquestionably one of the greatest Iranian thinkers of the Medicine World, and had an enormous influence on European science and medicine.

Razi was a pure rationalist, extremely confident of the power of reason; he was widely regarded by his contemporaries and biographers as liberal and free from any kind of prejudice, very bold and daring in expressing his ideas without a qualm. He believed in man, progress and in "God the Wise".

He traveled in many lands and rendered service to several princes and rulers in Persia where he had his lab. As a teacher in Medicine he attracted a great amount of students of all disciplines and was said to be compassionate, kind, upright, and devoted to the service of his patients, whether rich or poor.

The modern-day Razi Institute in Tehran, and Razi University in Kermanshah were named after him, and 'Razi Day' ('Pharmacy Day') is commemorated in Iran every August 27.