Constantine the African Encyclopedia Article

Constantine the African

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Constantine the African

c. 1020-1087

Moorish or Arab Italian scholar who pioneered in the translation of medical works from Arabic into Latin. Born either in Carthage (now in Tunisia) or in Sicily, then an Arab possession, Constantine spent most of his life in Italy. He studied at the University of Salerno, the first organized medical school in Europe, before entering Monte Cassino, the oldest and most important Western monastic center. Among the medical writers he translated were the Greek physicians Hippocrates (460-377 B.C.) and Galen (130-200); the Persian Ali ibn al-Abbas (Haly Abbas); and the Jewish physician Isaac Israeli.