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Arab-Islamic scientific heritage, an early episode in the history of volcanology.

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Many historians of science specify that volcanology is a pure Western science, which grew up and was established in the modern era, after its long negligence by scientists and researchers. Basalt (the most spreading volcanic rock) remained considered by the western scientists, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, as one of the sedimentary rocks.

However questions related to this issue imposed themselves: Was this inattention to describe volcanoes and this indifference to study them during all these centuries a global behavior? And how have Arab-Muslim scientists interacted to the phenomenon of volcanism, in their golden scientific era?

In this paper, we have tried to answer these questions through research and investigation into the Arab-Islamic scientific heritage at three levels:

- At a language level, in order to know the presence of the volcanic phenomenon in the Arabic lexicon, since Arabic was the basic vehicle language of the Islamic scientific heritage;
- At a historical level, in order to determine some of major volcanic events recorded by Muslim historians;
- At a geographical sources level, in order to identify the attention given to volcanoes by Muslim geographers and travelers, through their descriptions and locations and their attempts to interpret volcanoes' genesis.

This study has led us to important data about the contribution of Arab-Islamic scientific heritage in studying volcanoes. The most prominent features can be summarized as follows:

- The richness of Arabic lexicon, by words and vocabulary and terms related to the volcanic phenomenon and those related to their geomorphic impacts;

- The large attention of Muslim historians, given to important volcanic events occurring in the vicinity of large cities of the Islamic world in general, and the Arabian Peninsula in particular;

- The intensive care of Muslim geographers and travelers, when dealing with famous and dangerous volcanoes in various regions of the world in that period. They accurately described phenomena that preceded or went with or followed many volcanic eruptions.

The Scientific Heritage, referred to the golden age of Arab-Islamic civilization, had then taken a large briefing knowledge that could have been collected in that era, to the extent that much of information, data, descriptions and even some interpretations, given by Arab-Muslim scientists, closely correspond to what is established in modern volcanology.

So we can conclude that the contribution of the Arab-Islamic scientific heritage represents a real basis and foundation for studying volcanoes.

We can also highlight that what was produced by Western civilization later (from the Renaissance to the present day), represents an important and significant jump in Earth Sciences that is an unprecedented development of volcanology.

