

Message from the Editor

Assalaamu alaykum

Dear IMANA members and JIMA readers:

This is the first issue of year 2008. With it we debut “Pioneers of Islamic Medicine”, a series of articles regarding the contributions of physicians in the early Islamic period. An introduction to this series is written by Dr. Husain Nagamia, an associate editor of JIMA and chairman of the International Institute of Islamic Medicine (IIIM).

Dr. Nagamia and an Iranian scholar, Mr. Nasir Pūyān, will author the series. The first article, which appears in this issue, is about Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, a great scholar known for his many authoritative translations of Greek medical literature.

Also in this issue we publish the IMANA position paper regarding the forced feeding of detainees in U.S. custody. The Ethics Committee authored this in response to a request from the U.S. Department of Defense. All of us should raise concerns about the treatment of these detainees, specifically those in Guantanamo Bay. There are unknown numbers of current hunger strikers and little is known about how the detainees are treated and how they are cared for. One that is known to be on hunger strike for over one year is Mr. Sami al-Haj, a photographer for al-Jazeera satellite television network.¹

In this issue we publish the Ibn Sina Memorial Lecture Dr. Faroque A. Khan gave at IMANA’s conference in Beijing, China, in 2006. In addition to reviewing briefly the accomplishments of this great Muslim scholar, it purports to show what he might say concerning our contemporary status, accomplishments, and shortcomings, as Muslims generally and physicians specifically. At the same time he “gives his opinions” on some current challenges we face because of technological advances.

Dr. Omar Alfi discusses the quest for longevity. It is not futuristic science fiction anymore. There are significant attempts to use telomerase to achieve this goal. Dr. Alfi discusses the pros and cons of these endeavors, especially their ethical and religious implications.

Dr. Santibañez discusses the pandemic of avian influenza and asserts that it will happen, although the timeframe is not known. He outlines the role of community organizations, specifically faith-based organizations, in helping to contain this pandemic.

We have two case reports, hydatid disease of the breast and radiation-associated synovial sarcoma in the digestive tract. Both are very rare conditions and well presented. It is worthwhile to keep these entities in mind and include them in the differential diagnosis when appropriate.

In our regular departments, we profile Dr. Ghaus Malik, a well-known neurosurgeon, and review the book *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin. This book demonstrates how sincere human relations and kind interactions can transcend differences in ethnicity, culture, religion, and nationality. We need to learn from this experience and implement it in our own lives so that we can fill our world with the peace and prosperity that Allah ﷻ wants us to enjoy.

I hope that you enjoy this issue, and I await your comments.

References

1. “Brother of Jailed Cameraman Sami Al-Haj Says Continued Gitmo Imprisonment Part of U.S. ‘Political Operation Against Al Jazeera’.” Democracy Now. 2008 Jan 15. Available from: http://www.democracynow.org/2008/1/15/exclusivebrother_of_jailed_cameraman_sami_al.

Wassalaam,

Hossam E. Fadel, MD, FACOG
Editor-in-Chief, JIMA
Maternal Fetal Medicine
University Hospital
Clinical Professor, Medical College of Georgia
Augusta, Georgia