

Revival of Islamic Medical Tradition

*Seyyed Hossein Nasr, PhD
Washington D.C.*

It is an honor to give the al-Rāzī Memorial Lecture. Rayy, where al-Rāzī came from, was a great Islamic city in his time, but it is now a small town outside of Tehran. I could not claim any knowledge of medicine, except from what I have read of Islamic Medicine, if it were not for my father, who is buried in Rayy, and grandfather being physicians and because of my love for the subject. Though an amateur speaker on this subject, I do know something about Islamic science, and it is interrelated to Islamic Medicine. It is from this point of view I shall speak.

First of all, I am very glad at least that in this conference and in this institute (the International Institute of Islamic Medicine), the term "Islamic Medicine" has been settled, because Islamic Medicine is Islamic Medicine. It is not Muslim medicine, it is not Arabic medicine, it is not medicine that happened to be cultivated by Muslims. The term "Arabic Medicine," which unfortunately has been promoted now for 40 years by UNESCO and other Arab nations, does a great disservice to Islamic civilization. As an Iranian, I have always spoken as a member of Islam and not as an Iranian. I have never used the words "Iranian Medicine" or "Iranian Philosophy" in the books I have written. The authors of the first four great compendia, which defined Islamic Medicine (i.e., al-Ṭabarī, al-Majūsī, al-Rāzī, and ibn-Sīnā), were all Persians. The great Arab physicians came somewhat later, especially in Egypt and Syria. Then, of course, we have all the later development of Islamic Medicine, which mostly took place in, of all places, the subcontinent of India. Each time the Persians conquered India, they left the best physicians there, especially at the time of Nader

Shah, which made a major revival of Islamic Medicine. It is not accidental that Hakim Mohammed Said, a foremost authority on traditional Islamic Medicine comes from Karachi, in the subcontinent, and not from Khorasan. There is a historical reason for that. Therefore, we must stick to the term "Islamic Medicine" because it covers the whole Islamic world. It was the endeavor of Arabs, Persians, Turks, and others who today are called Pakistanis, Indians, Uzbecks, as well as other people. Also, for a much more profound reason, Islamic Medicine is "Islamic," not because it was cultivated by Muslims, but because it is related to the Islamic world view. In that sense it is Islamic, even if non-Muslims, such as Hunīn ibn' Iṣhāq, a Christian Arab, contributed to it. Thus, if Christians, Sabians, Jews, or others contributed to the rise of Islamic Medicine, that is fine, but in the world view, the structure was something that is related deeply to the ethos of Islam. Not only in practice does it emanate partly from "al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī" (Prophetic medicine) and "al-Ṭibb al-Ja'farī," and other religious sources of medicine, but it is related to the intellectual understanding of what is the human being, what is health, what is the purpose of life, what is the relationship between eating and illness and health and living, what is the relationship between mental health, spiritual health and physical health. All of these issues and the understanding as to what constitutes the human being do not come from either Greek philosophy or from the Arabs or Persians or anybody else, but from the Qur'ān and "Ḥadīth" (Prophet Muḥammad's sayings) and by the great physicians of the later centuries.

Having said this, the question comes up: Why should this be revived, why should we revive Islamic Science and Medicine, why spend effort on it? This will take me too far a field. I have been a kind of pioneer shouting in the wilderness for 40 years, now. Thanks to Allāh, I have been joined by many other voices.

Islamic Science and Islamic Medicine are not only chapters in western history. It is true that without al-Zahrāwī, the Continens, or the Canon of ibn Sīnā there would not have been western philosophy or western science as we know

*From the Department of Islamic Studies
George Washington University
Washington, D.C.*

*Reprint Requests: Seyyed Hossein Nasr, PhD
Department of Islamic Studies
George Washington University
Washington, D.C.*

them. We would be doing a great injustice to Islamic civilization and to the whole of human beings if we continue to think of Islamic Science and Medicine as chapters in western civilization. It is an important political issue also, which you might have not given much thought to. It is also a very important part of the way that the world looks upon itself today. The Islamic World stands out because it does not want to follow what is called the "New World Order," which is really a western order imposed upon the world. If Muslims look at their own great contributions as simply contributions to another civilization, which happens to be all powerful, they are really misunderstanding what Islam can contribute.

It is extremely important to understand that the way we extol western science and western medicine as the criteria of excellence through which we judge our own excellence, is the undoing of our own self-confidence. A civilization must look upon itself from its own point of view. If it ever looks upon itself from another point of view, it dies. The great "sclerosis," which has taken over the Islamic World for a century and during which we have been shouting about science, science, science and we are not doing anything, is precisely because we made ourselves an appendix to western thought. Therefore we cannot function as an independent civilization.

I am, first of all, not at all belittling the contribution of Islamic Science to the West. Some of you may have read some of my humble books; I am a pioneer in this field. I have written 10 books on the subject and spent years and years on this. I said I would be the last person who would want to belittle this. I do not call Islamic Science, and especially Islamic Medicine, simple chapters in the history of medicine in the West, which is very glorious from one point of view, but extremely unglorious from another, in which on the one hand, you will have the great success that you see before you every day, on the other hand, the health of the society as a whole is going down. Pretty soon, the Rockefellers will be the only ones who can afford going to the doctor. It is modern medicine's commercialization, its refusal to take upon the totality of the human being, its compartmentalization of man's body into parts and all of the other things, which, in fact, have caused a large number of people in America, which has the most advanced modern medical science and technology, to look for alternative medicine. Why is it that so many Americans are going elsewhere, and where is Islam in this? Why is it that you have now alternative Chinese medicine and schools of acupuncture in every city in the United States? We have two new schools of Ayurvedic medicine in Washington. After Dr. Chopra's books, in the city where I live (Washington, D.C.), you can actually go to a place where they are training clinicians to practice Ayurvedic medicine. Where is Islamic Medicine? Islamic Medicine for a long time has been claimed to be simply a little baby of western medicine. It does not offer itself as an "alternative," and there will never

be the practice of "Islamic Medicine" in this country unless it is given as an alternative; that is if it is given as another way, a holistic way of looking at the whole human body, soul, and mind within the context of faith in relationship to diet, what we think, what we do, how we act, and the totality of human life.

I am very sorry if I speak so categorically, but somewhat angrily, about why in everything, even the propagation of non-Western medicine in the United States, we are at the tail end. Tibet has only 4 million people. How many centers of Tibetan medicine are there in the United States and how many centers of Islamic Medicine? I will say nothing more. The reason for that is precisely a kind of matrix, a kind of world view, which we adopted in the late 19th century, forced down upon our throats by a certain colonial way of thinking, which is still very much around. Colonialism did not only come with a flag on top of a fort in Delhi with British soldiers inside, but it came from what is inside the mind of humans and has prevented us from being able to realize the remarkable achievements of Islamic Medicine on its own level. Also, for the sake of God, we should stop glorifying the European Renaissance, which was the beginning of the rebellion of Western man against God. All these things that we are happy about – secularism and atheistic humanism – where do they come from? They come from the Renaissance. The people in the West really laugh at us when we say how glorious Islam is because it contributed to the Renaissance. This is an absolute contradiction. It is like saying how wonderful Islamic Medicine is because it helped the propagation of AIDS in America. Intellectually, it is totally absurd. We were trained by British and French teachers in the 19th century that the Renaissance was a glorious period for man. It was not. It was a period in which the West turned away from all other civilizations of the world, a period in which it decimated larger parts of Africa, a period in which it killed millions of people where you and I are standing right now. This land belonged to the Seminole Nation of Indians who were forced to march from here to Kansas. Four-fifths of all of their people died. Right here in Orlando, where we have these Mickey Mouses and things like that around, one cannot overlook the truth, one cannot overlook human history. We Muslims should never take pride that we contributed to the rebellion of man against God. What we contributed to is Renaissance science and especially 17th century science, which then took Islamic Science out of its context and put it somewhere else. You can believe two and two is four and become an atheistic modern physicist, but you can also say two and two is four and become a 'Umar al-Khayyām, who did not miss a prayer all his life. Therefore, the purpose of the revival of Islamic Medicine in America today and also of Islamic Science, which is much more difficult, is precisely in order to fill a vacuum. Why do we not have Unani, Sina's, or Islamic herbal collections here in the United States? It has very little to do with FDA. Every American city is full of Chi-

nese shops, full of Chinese herbs. Now, in big cities like New York, you can get Ayurvedic herbs and Tibetan medicinal herbs, but you cannot get the products of Hamdard Foundation from Karachi or Delhi. It is my goal to try at least to bring this to the attention of these eminent doctors in this room today who have, "al-Ḥamdu-lillāh," not only faith in Islam, but a desire to revive their own medical tradition, the Islamic Medical tradition.

Every system of medicine is related to cosmology. That is, philosophy as to what constitutes the cosmos. Do not let anyone fool you. There is no science without a philosophy of science. Anyone who says that science is science is talking absolute nonsense. No science is science. Every science makes an assumption as to the nature of reality, an assumption as to the nature as how we know, an assumption as to the nature of what is known. Medicine even more so because it deals with a particular subject, which also is living. It has elements of life and has elements of consciousness. These things are more complicated than a piece of cobalt or quartz crystal that was analyzed in a crystallography laboratory. Cosmology is always involved.

The revival of Islamic Medicine or Islamic Science will always involve or revolve around Islamic cosmology. Is the universe created by God? If created by God, does He have control over the universe? Does the universe have meaning? Do its functions point to a particular purpose and plan? We simply cannot be ambiguous and say, well we will not answer these questions. This is great science. Science is based on particular assumptions as to the nature of reality.

Western science, of which I know just a little, has a philosophy based upon certain assumptions made in the 17th century, which penetrated deeply into medicine, and, in a sense, looked upon the human body as a complicated machine. The books of Decath and Dale, the famous French philosophers, who first wrote the book, "Man, the Machine, La Machine," have still, though not read by the contemporary world, left a mark upon mainstream medicine in which the human body is taken to be a sum of physical and chemical processes. The sum is never greater than its parts. That is a philosophical assumption. In our everyday lives, you always know that the sum is greater than its parts. How would you like it if, God forbid, one of your family members were presented to you in two halves. It is a very different thing when two halves are not equal to a whole. Certainly in medicine, which deals with life, functions, interrelatedness, and organic relations, where unbelievable and remarkable things occur and predictions are made that do not always come out right, someone was supposed to have lived only 6 more months and he is still alive 10 years down the road; whereas, another person who is healthy drops dead. Nevertheless, this philosophy behind it is that of mechanism, an atomism, and is still around as a kind of atomistic conception of the world.

The revival of Islamic Science and Islamic Medicine means ultimately the replacement of that world view. Not

replacement completely, but the destruction of this cultural totalitarianism. That is, modern science not only claims that it is a science of nature, but also that it is the science of nature. Western civilization, which now is falling apart in so many ways, and even the modern physicists are looking in mystical books for new views of the physical world. In this situation, it does not allow anything other than modern science to present a view of nature. As soon as it does, it becomes poetry, imagination, philosophy, and theology. The monopoly of the word science is strictly preserved. It is the only place in the whole of modern civilization where we have a complete monopoly, an absolute dictatorship. That is why those who are looking for other ways of becoming alternative are going out of the mainstream of western civilization. It is precisely here that the opportunity arises for us. I said medicine is easier to revive than Islamic science because the subject of medicine is so close to us. It is us. It is the human being with all the values, all of the ethical implications, which touch very deeply and close by. Medicine is part and parcel of every one. You cannot evade it. The manifestations of the Spirit, "al-Rūḥ" as we believe in Islam, are immediate in us. God breathed the Spirit into us, that is unto us in Adam. While the cosmos seems to be a bit farther away, the same questions are pertinent. The question for the philosophers and theologians to understand is how God through al-Rūḥ or "al-Kalimah" created the cosmos and said "Be" and "It was." The body is much more tangible and real. It is the one part of the universe that you know from within. We know al-Rūḥ, we know "al-Nafs," we know the body. Therefore, paradoxically enough, although from a metaphysical point of view, medicine always is involved in a philosophy of the world, call of nature, and cosmology. From a practical point of view, it is easier to revive Islamic Medicine than it is, let us say, to revive Islamic astronomy.

What does this imply? First, during the last century, the Islamic world, that is the powers that rule the Islamic world, tried everything possible to destroy Islamic Medicine, except in the subculture of India where, thanks to the large population and the British policy of not absorbing. Here, Islamic Medicine was kept as it was. This is not a total accident. The two major centers of Islamic Medicine after the second world war, when most Islamic countries became independent, became Karachi and Delhi. The two brothers, who are al-Ḥamdu-lillāh still alive, one of whom is with us, Hakim Mohammed Said, and his brother, who is in Delhi, established the first important institute. It took about 20 years. When I was in Iran and had the power academically, I organized the first conference of traditional medicine in the Islamic world, which was attended by Hakim Mohammed Said and many other scholars from the Indian subcontinent. I had a great deal of trouble getting Arab, Persian, Turkish, and other practicing Muslim physicians, whether they were scholars or pharmacists, to attend. The reason for that is very important. It had to do a lot with making money. It also has to do with a kind of not-love for-Western-knowl-

edge, but a kind of modernism that tried to belittle all other kinds of knowledge.

The transfer from traditional to modern medicine occurred at different places in different parts of the Islamic world. In Syria, it appeared to have been gradual, whereas in Persia, which was always one of the greatest centers of Islamic Medicine, the land of ibn Sīnā and al-Rāzī, the transfer was rapid. My grandfather was a Royal physician and was a traditional physician. My father knew about traditional, as well as modern medicine. When someone walked in off the street out there, he would look at him and say he has "typhoid" and take him to the hospital. He would also look at your Nafs, that is the pulse for one second and have unbelievable knowledge from it. At the same time he knew modern medicine. Then, after my father, "traditional medicine" came to an end. All the members of my family are practitioners of modern medicine. I am sure that you know from your own family history that rapid transition from traditional to modern medicine took place.

Of course, many great doctors (of modern medicine) have achieved a great deal and still go on achieving in countries like Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and Iran, but at the expense of the loss of something very precious that did not have to be lost. In fact, the medical situation in the Islamic world today is worse than it was 300 years ago. When in every Muslim village, you had a Hakim (local doctor), who, if you got a stomach ache, would give you an herb or something to eat. Now, most of the physicians want to go to the big cities and all of the countryside has become depleted. As a result, medical knowledge in the villages is not as common. There was always somebody who knew Avicennal (ibn-Sīnā's) medicine, who knew al-Rāzī, who knew the Canon, or who had a living practice that we destroyed in the Islamic world, minus the subcontinent, without fully replacing it with something else. That is why the medical situation in much of the Islamic world is in such great trouble.

Many people are now trying to follow the model of China. After trying to have every physician in the country be an envoy from Johns Hopkins, now they talk about the barefoot doctors and have levels of training for "doctors." I am very glad, although I am not in Iran now, that the program I gave 20 years ago to the Iranian government now is being implemented and there is a sense that not everyone is going to become a great (specialist) doctor. Traditional Islamic Medicine in the villages and small towns also is being encouraged.

In this century, Islamic Medicine in the Islamic World, except for the subcontinent, was opposed strongly by the modernists, who it was against progress. I do not understand that. Why, if one kind of medicine can cure your earache, the other one your lumbago, what is wrong with having both? Even today, modern western medicine is very unsuccessful in dealing with joint pains, rheumatism, and similar ailments. Many people go to acupuncturists and they get the right treatment. So, both systems can live side-by-side. The coexistence of the two systems in the Islamic world

was annulled first by the modernists, whose view was not only the love of science, but was the imposition of another world view on the Islamic world. They tried to extol the West. They could not extol the British armies killing the Muslims, so they extolled western medicine.

The second reason, which is also very unfortunate, came from our own "Ulamā" and "Fuqahā" (scholars and jurists) knowing the traditional period in the Islamic World when the Islamic medical system was very strong. There were medical schools, that even up to the 17th and 18th centuries, were active in the Islamic World. Only 250 years ago, outside of Istanbul, there were major medical schools in Iran and Damascus. The medical school in Damascus was still a growing concern up to about 1750, into the 11th and 12th Islamic centuries (Hijri). These gradually ceased, and the "Madrasas" (schools) became training only for the Fuqahā'. If you go to al-Azhar University, you could learn "Tafsīr" (exegesis), Fiqh (jurisprudence), Qur'ān, Arabic, and "Kafam" (philosophy), and so forth, but where could you study medicine? Where in Egypt, the great center of Arabic/Islamic culture, could you go to an Islamic medical school? It was not there, and the Fuqahā' did not help thus at all, so a vacuum was created. With these two situations, a great catastrophe took place: the eclipse, fortunately not the death, of one of the most important medical traditions in the history of the world, Islamic Medicine. Islamic Medicine, like the other Islamic Sciences, was able to integrate unto itself, not one or two forms of knowledge of the civilizations before it, but all the great civilizations before it, minus the Meso-America. Islamic Science was heir to the Grecco-Alexandrian Roman traditions, to the ancient Iranian tradition that introduced the Pharmacopoeia much more extensively than Dioscorides, to the Indian medicine, to ancient Egyptian medicine, and to many medical practices that came later on from China.

Very few people know that a treatise in acupuncture was written in Persian in Tabriz around 1200. I have seen it. It was written in Persian by Chinese doctors about 700 years ago. We have, therefore, a tradition that has universal roots in many great civilizations and contained within itself the experience of tens of thousands of years. Medicine is essentially an experience. It is an art and science, and therefore is contained within itself, besides its religious and spiritual significance, a long tradition of experience with herbs, crystals, even nonvegetable types of chemical treatments, and all kinds of surgical instruments and procedures that represent not only 1,000 years of remarkable development in the Islamic civilization, but the works that go even thousands of years before.

The modern world does not have access to many herbs that were known 5,000 years ago, except through Arabic and Persian texts. This is a subject that very few people really know about. Sooner or later I am sure it will happen that western companies are going to come and take these over by buying it for three cents from Africa and selling it for

\$300 to the same African nation. It, no doubt, is going to happen very quickly. We should do something rather than talk about it. It is my duty to help, but I am not a physician.

Now, what other steps will be taken if you are going to revive Islamic Medicine? Here I have my eyes both within the Islamic World and in America, especially here. When I lecture in the Islamic World I talk about specific problems there. Whatever the small Islamic community does here has a great deal more repercussion in the Islamic World than you think. The revival of Islamic Medicine in the United States is not important for only the six million Muslims in the U.S., but also for the rest of the Islamic World.

Bear in mind that the first and foremost task is to revive the Islamic philosophy of medicine. What is medicine, what is the human body, what is health, what is illness, where are we going, what is the role of the doctor? Can a doctor at the same time be called a "Hakim" and be loved by the community and respected while having five Rolls Royces in front of his house. Is that a possibility? What about the commercialization of medicine that we have seen going on in America for the last 30 years?

We are living in a time when everything about modern medicine is being questioned: excessive commercialization, the dehumanization of the patient, etc. All these questions need to be defined. I think in this domain, Islam has a tremendous significance. I am a Muslim and extremely ashamed that we are always at the tail end of all of these discussions. Where in the world is the Muslim input in all of the debate that is going on right now on any new medicine? We should not be ashamed and hide ourselves behind Louis Pasteur or another great physician in the West.

We should ask ourselves, "what is the body?" This seems to be a very easy question, but it is not. Besides all of the charlatanism that is going on in the United States – the holistic care, holistic medicine, holistic this, holistic that – there is also very important search. Today, the West is trying to rediscover the human body. You as doctors might say, "How is that possible, the body was always there." It was not there. In 17th century philosophy, by the cutting of the mind from the body, carried out by Descartes, dualism was created in which the body lost all of its spiritual significance. At death, even those who believed in God, thought that there was a soul somehow attached by God to the body and the body was a machine working by itself. That philosophy is coming to an end. We have a whole philosophy on what is the human body. This body cannot simply be a few screws and levers or, on a smaller scale, just atoms banging around. This is a body that is going to be resurrected before God one day, the belief of devout Muslims.

There must be something much more. It must be related also to our soul. Why is it that whenever this body does something, it will affect me entirely? The Qur'an keeps coming back to the significance of the body. Why do we make ablutions? There must be a relationship between the body and the soul. All of you who make ablutions, you

know that you have a kind of "Inshirāh" (inner pleasure) inwardly. You have a kind of "Faraḥ," a joy that takes place within the soul when you make your ablution. What does that have to do with us? Islam has a philosophy of the body. This philosophy of the body must be part of the present-day discourse that is going on very vociferously. A few months ago, I gave a series of lectures at the University of Birmingham on religion and order of nature. A book, which will Inshā'illāh be published by the University of Oxford and called "Religion and Order of Nature" has a chapter by me on the wisdom of the body. I was very ashamed because everybody asked, where do you read about this from Islamic sources? Except for Arabic and Persian, and other sources, I had nothing to give them. Where is our Islamic response to what is the meaning of the body? What is the relationship of the body to soul when it was discussed all the way from al-Rāzī and Ibn Sīnā to the highest levels by the sufis, like al-Ghazālī and others? Why is it that the Prophet said that the health of the body is so important? Why is cleanliness half of the religion? The body is just going into the earth. If it is something more than that, what is it that it is more of?

We need to develop the Islamic Philosophy of the body upon which medicine must always place itself. The respect of the person, the respect for the individual as a unique locus of Divine creative power. That is why the Muslims, like the Christians, were against the dissection of the body precisely because they felt the body represented itself, a unique Divine creation. All of these issues have to be worked out.

We have to rewrite the history of Islamic Medicine from the Islamic point of view, which is what I have always also said about Islamic Science in general. Fortunately, we have been doing some work in that respect in the last decade or two. Islamic Medicine does not stop with the Mongol invasion. It is still going on. Baha-ullah, the great Safavid physician, discovered whooping cough in the 17th century. Many Indian doctors have had several discoveries in the last two centuries. There are thousands of unbelievably large Islamic medical manuscripts in the Indian medical libraries. Most are in Persian; others are in Urdu and Arabic. We never studied them. We do not know anything about them. Anyone who claims he knows the history of Islamic Medicine does not know what he is talking about. We rely a great deal on the work of great western historians of science. They rendered a great service, especially in the late 19th and 20th centuries, and include Max Meyerhoff, George Sarton, Sudof, and those great historians like Widerrinn. They were only interested in Western medicine and so left the last 700 years untold. We must be able to write our own history of medicine. This history is not only interesting from an historical point of view, it is interesting from a medical point of view. You see yourself how western medicine clings to its own history. Why is it that we do not have an exhibition of Islamic Medicine as part of Western medi-

cine? We do not have, as yet, one single serious book in any Islamic language on the history of Islamic Medicine. Of course, there are books on al-Rāzī and ibn-Sīnā. That is too easy because there are more than 1,000 articles on ibn-Sīnā in English, French, and German. All we have to do is to regurgitate that into Arabic or Persian, and there it is. We may have some research of our own, but the matrix has been wrong. What you have to do is attach the present revival of Islamic Medicine, and even the practice of western medicine in Islamic countries, to the Islamic Medical tradition and try to create a kind of organic bond in between. I have seen physicians in the Islamic world—in Turkey, Egypt, and Iran—who are extremely westernized. They are very fine doctors, but culturally they are totally German, French, or English. They have no problem in drinking, they never pray, but they also treat patients very well, and they are excellent surgeons. They are not attached in social and human way to the rest of the tradition of Islamic Medicine.

Next, we need to make available the manuscripts written by Muslims over the centuries. I have been working with Shaikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, in Saudi Arabia who founded "al-Furqān" Foundation, which produced a four-volume survey of Islamic manuscripts. We worked 7 years on this and now we finally know where all the important collections of Islamic manuscripts are. Not those that are under my grandfather's pillow, which he does not want us to see, but at least the known collections all the way from Mali to Vaildivastok. We believe there are about 2 million titles written by Muslims. Not manuscripts, but 2 million titles, which is fairly incredible. No civilization has produced so many books. Among those there are, of course, probably about 50,000 to 100,000 manuscripts that deal with some aspect of science. How many of them are of medicine in particular, I do not know yet. We do know that these are actual titles of books, not the number of manuscripts. Tens of thousands of works, of which only a couple thousand are now read. So, we have a very long way to go.

Finally, we must extract the knowledge based upon these Islamic principles that underlie Islamic Medicine. From the point of view of not positivism and some kind of cross-scientism, but from the Islamic World point of view. There should be no fear if you are going to revive Islamic Medicine to acknowledge that yes, the body is a mysterious thing, it does obey the laws of chemistry and physics and biology, but sometimes it does not. There are interrelations between body and other substances. I have called the Nafs a substance and not simply an accident in a philosophical sense of a thing or an object. The Nafs is a being created by God and the Ruh, also. These interact with each other in ways that are not very well known, but nevertheless you must try to know them. We must not repudiate any positive discovery that is made in other schools of medicine, but we must repudiate the positivism that it is based upon it, which are very different things. We have a new gadget called mag-

netic resonance imaging (MRI). Everybody goes through and you can discover many tissues that might be cancerous or any other problem of the body that we could not do before. Even then, the patient is not simply those images on the wall. A single human being can never be reduced to any parts, as I said before. To avoid that, we are always bringing out the view of wholeness, which in fact, everybody talks about today. This brings me around to the last point by which I shall conclude, and that is the possibility of practicing Islamic Medicine in America today, in contrast to Egypt, Syria, Iran, or Pakistan.

First, this possibility exists because the monopoly of the mainstream western medicine may collapse, despite its tremendous political power, the Congress and lobbies, and the whole way the American political system works. There are simply too many people who are not satisfied with the segmented view, extremely successful from one point of view and extremely unsuccessful from another. They are looking for a way of being treated as humans. That is, they do not want to be cured at the expense of being dehumanization. Therefore, other types of medicine are coming in. Western medicine is trying to change a great deal. It is fighting an uphill fight. It is possible now to practice Islamic Medicine no less than acupuncture or Ayurvedic or Tibetan or other forms of medicine that are catching on like wildfire. I am not only talking about the extreme wing of California, a new-age culture. You go to any American city now. The main establishment is forced to accept that, even insurance companies now pay for acupuncture. There is no way out of it. I think Islamic Medicine has a very good opportunity that was not here 20 years ago and is not going to be here 20 or 30 years from now. Now is the right moment to try to actually put this into practice and perhaps try to establish one place in America where people would actually be teaching Islamic Medicine. There are now several schools of Ayurvedic, Tibetan, and Chinese Medicine, as well as 500 schools of acupuncture. This would be an important step that this august body could take.

Another important element in the practice of Islamic Medicine in America today is the question of ethics. Let us not fool ourselves. It only took 35 years for American medicine, which had continued to present many of the old values of traditional medicine going back to Hippocrates; i.e. respect for the patient, selflessness, and so forth, to lose most of it. I know some of the most famous American medical school deans. I was having dinner with one of them and he said the main reason for the loss in ethics is that up until the 1950s, we got students through medical schools who primarily wanted to serve others. That was their main motive in life. From the 1960s on, we got students who want to become rich. We have to change the type of students who apply to medical school. The result, of course, you know. When I was a student at Harvard University, the best medical doctor, say a famous surgeon, would make about twice as much as the winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics or Chem-

istry. Everybody talks about ethics and commercialization, which are going to have a deep and profound effect. In fact, if they go on, the whole society will collapse. You cannot spend one seventh of all your income on health matters. What if you do not live to be 180 years old. You have to stop somewhere and we all know that. The Clinton plan failed because it was ideological. Other plans are going to come. Sooner or later we know that we have to reintroduce ethics into medicine. Islam can play a very important role because you all know, Islamic Medicine was never divorced from ethics. A Muslim physician was always the Hakim. The word "Hakim" is a very respected term that means a person with a divine name in the Islamic World. We have to be able to bring back medical ethics through Islamic Medicine.

Finally, this is going to have the most important effect upon the image of Islam in the West. Islamic Medicine is a very important instrument for the reintroduction of the true

face of Islam in the West if you have a body and people who will not succumb to the temptations of making money like some of these Chinese doctors who come from Peking and make \$10,000 a day practicing acupuncture. I asked one, "What are you doing?" He said, "I am supporting a whole hospital in Peking." I think it will also have a very important political effect on the Islamic World. For the next decade or two, one of the best fields to introduce Islam into America and Europe is Islamic Medicine. We have a tradition of some 1,300 years behind us, which Inshā'illāh will allow us to revive one of the most rich Islamic traditions, one that is related to Islam, the religion, to the "Sharī'ah" (jurisprudence), and of course, to the most important of all, the word of God and the Prophet.

This lecture was not submitted to JIMA as a manuscript. It was transcribed and then edited for publishing.