

Unit 1

Pre-reading Activity

A. Discuss the following questions with your friends.

1. Define Islamic Medicine.
2. What was the effect of European Renaissance on Islamic Medicine?
3. How was medicine practiced in Jundishapour?

Islamic Medicine

Considerable confusion exists in literature regarding the definition of 'Islamic Medicine'. This is mainly because each author that writes about 'Islamic Medicine' is actually writing about an aspect of Islamic Medicine. Thus the definition can vary depending upon the perspective. The context can be historical, cultural, scientific, pharmacological, therapeutic, religious or even geo-political. In this monograph, we shall be examining this body of knowledge mainly from its historical, scientific, therapeutic and application viewpoints.

Definition

Islamic Medicine in its true context can thus be defined as a body of knowledge of Medicine that was inherited by the Muslims in the early phase of Islamic History (40-247 AH/661 -861 AD) from mostly Greek sources, but to which became added medical knowledge from Persia, Syria, India and Byzantine. This knowledge was not only to become translated into Arabic, the literary and scientific lingua franca of the time, but was to be expounded, assimilated, exhaustively added to and subsequently codified, and 'islamicized'. The physicians of the time, both Muslim and non-Muslim, were then to add to this their own observations and experimentation and convert it into a flourishing and practical science, thus helping not only to cure the ailments of the masses, but to increase their standards of health. The effects of its domineering influence extended not only in the vast stretches of the Islamic lands, but also in all adjoining nations including Europe, Asia, China, and the Far East. The span was measurable not only for a few centuries, but also perhaps for an entire millennium, 610 to 1610 AD, during which time, Europe and rest of the extant civilized nations of the world were in grip of the 'dark ages'. It was also to set the standards of hygiene, and preventative medicine and thus was responsible for the improvement of the general health of the masses. It was to hold sway until decadence finally set in, concomitant with the political decline of the Islamic nation. With the advent of Renaissance in Europe, at the

beginning of the 17th century AD, it was finally challenged by the new and emerging science of modern medicine, which was to finally replace it in most of the countries, including the countries of its birth!

^{در سال اول} **The early era of Islamic Medicine and the School of Medicine at Jundishapur**

^{اسکان دادن} Jundishapur or 'Gondeshapur' was a city in Khuzistan founded by a Sasanid emperor Shapur I (241-272 AD) before the advent of Islam. It was to settle Greek prisoners; ^{از این رو} hence, it was named 'Wandew Shapur' or 'acquired by Shapur.' In the present day Western Persia, the site is marked by the ruins of Shahabad near the city of Ahwaz. The town was taken by Muslims during the caliphate of Umar, by Abu Musa Al-Ashari in 17 AH/738 AD. At this time, it already had a well-established Hospital and Medical school. ^{به خوبی تأسیس شده معتبر}

Many Syrians ^{مردمن بلخندگی} took refuge in the city when Antioch was captured by Shapur I. In fact the latter nicknamed the city 'Vehaz-Andevi Shapur' or 'Shapur is better than Antioch.' The closing of the Nestorian School of Edessa by Emperor Zeno in 489 AD led to the Nestorians fleeing from there and seeking refuge in Jundishapur under patronage ^{حمایت - پشتیبانی} of Shapur II, which got an academic boost as a result. The Greek ^{نغز} influence was already predominant ^{غالب} in Jundishapur when the closing of the Athenian school in 529 AD by order of the Byzantine emperor Justinian drove many learned Greek physicians to this town. A University with a medical school and a hospital were established by Khusraw Anushirwan the wise ^{عادل - خردمند} (531-579 AD), where the Greco-Syriac medicine blossomed ^{شکریا شغل}. To this was added medical knowledge from India brought by the physician vizier of Anushirwan called 'Burzuyah.' On his return, the latter brought back from India the famous 'Fables of Bidpai' ^{افسانه ها}, several Indian Physicians, details of Indian Medical Texts and a Pahlavi translation of the 'Kalila and Dimna.' Khusraw even presented a translation of Aristotelean Logic and Philosophy. Thus at the time of the Islamic invasion ^{تجاوز} the school of Jundishapur was well established and had become renowned as a medical center of Greek, Syriac and Indian learning. This knowledge had intermingled to create a highly acclaimed ^{تکلیف شده} and state-of-the-art Medical school and hospital. After the advent of Islamic rule, the University continued to thrive ^{develop}. In fact the first recorded Muslim Physician Harith bin Kalada, who was a contemporary ^{هم زمان} of the Prophet, acquired his medical knowledge at medical school and hospital at Jundishapur.

It is ^{possibly} likely that the medical teaching at Jundishapur was modeled after the teaching at Alexandria with some influence from Antioch but it is important to note that 'the treatment was based entirely on

scientific analysis, in true Hippocratic tradition', rather than a mix-up with superstition and rituals as was the case in Greek 'asclepieia' and Byzantine 'nosocomia'. This hospital and Medical Center was to become the model on which all later Islamic Medical Schools and Hospitals were to be built. The School nonetheless thrived during the Ummayyid caliphate and Sergius of Rasul'ayn translated medical and philosophical works of both Hippocrates and Galen into Syriac. These were later to be translated into Arabic casting an everlasting imprint onto all the future of Islamic Medicine.

A. Read the following sentences and decide if based on the information provided in the text they are true or false. Then show your choice by writing T (for true) or F (for false) in the blank space next to each sentence.

---T--- 1. There exists no single and comprehensive definition of Islamic medicine.

---T--- 2. Each definition of Islamic Medicine focuses on one aspect, so there is no holistic perspective as to it.

---F--- 3. Syrian and Indians initiated Islamic Medicine.

---T--- 4. In fact, the Islamic Medicine was initiated by a body of knowledge inherited from Greeks.

---T--- 5. Knowledge of medicine taken from Greeks was both translated into the lingua franca of the time and Islamicized.

---F--- 6. Developed Islamic medicine was restricted to Arab and the Muslim world.

---T--- 7. Renaissance in Europe was the starting point of challenges with Islamic Medicine which had developed for a millennium.

---T--- 8. Islamic Medicine focuses not only on curative but also preventive medicine.

---F--- 9. "Countries of its birth" in the last sentence of paragraph 2 refers to Europe, Asia and China.

---F--- 10. "It" in the last sentence of the 2nd paragraph refers to modern medicine.

B. Read the following sentences carefully and decide which one of the four options (a, b, c, or d) best completes each item.

1. It is difficult to provide a comprehensive definition for Islamic Medicine since-----.

- a. there are different outlooks on the issue
- b. scholars have failed to reach a ^{متفق المثل - جميع رأي} unanimous definition
- c. some aspects are more important than the other ones to researchers
- d. Islamic Medicine has failed to ^{مترتب مردن} incorporate some important aspects of health

2. According to the text, Islamic Medicine was-----.

- a. mostly derived from Greek sources
- b. inherited from Syrians and Indians
- c. inherited in 1610 AD
- d. originally in the Arabic language

3. Which in line 4 (paragraph 2) refers to -----.

- a. true context
- b. sources
- c. ^{سرهم دانش} body of knowledge
- d. early phase of Islamic history

4. The physicians contributing to early Islamic Medicine -----

- a. were mostly concerned with treatment of diseases
- b. were all Muslims who were traditional healers
- c. ^{مسببه است به} adhered to traditional medicine
- d. treated the patient and also considered increases in standards of health

5. Islamic Medicine ----- during 610-1610 AD.

- a. was restricted to Islamic lands
- b. ^{مسببه است به} had a great influence and power while Europeans were in the dark ages
- c. started to be challenged by European Renaissance
- d. was approved by European's modern medicine

6. Jundishapur medical school academically progressed mainly due to the -----.

- a. contributions of Nestorians and Greek physicians
- b. Syrian refugees
- c. Byzantine Emperor in 529 AD
- d. Antioch's contributions

7. This in line 12 paragraph 4 refers to the -----.

- a. newly founded university
- b. Greek and Syrian medicine
- c. hospital established by Khusraw
- d. Athenians' school

8. As to Islamic Jundishapur medical physicians and Greek 'asclepieia' doctors, -----.

- a. the latter practiced medicine based on scientific analysis
- b. the former practiced using superstition and rituals
- c. neither treated the patients based on scientific analysis
- ☒ d. the former practiced scientifically but the latter did not

C. Read the following sentences carefully and decide which one of the four options (a, b, c, or d) best completes each item.

1. The report given by the authorities looks at the education system from the -----of the educators of deaf people; their viewpoints were clearly presented.

- ☒ a. perspective → point of view
- b. literacy → سواد
- c. lingua franca → زبان سیاهی
- d. assimilation → جذب

2. Since the issue was so complicated, the audience asked him to ----- his views on the subject at great length.

- a. inherit → ارث بردن
- ☒ b. expound → توضیح دهی
- c. codify → کده داری
- d. observe → مشاهده کردن

3. The committee will need time to ----- this report to make it fully understood by the members so that they are able to use it.

- a. experiment → آزمون
- b. adjoin → الحاق کردن
- c. civilize → متحضر سازی
- ☒ d. assimilate → جذب کردن

4. The attitudes focusing on pleasure and enjoyment rather than more serious issues among the youth should be changed; this is typical of the ----- of modern society.

- ☒ a. decadence → زوال
- b. challenge → چالش
- c. emergence → خروج - ظهور
- d. literacy → سواد

5. Their country is in the ----- of recession; the authorities should take measures to prevent it.

- a. mass → group of people
- b. improvement
- ☒ c. grip → درآستانه
- d. refugee → پناهنده

6. The ----- of technology has revolutionized the people's lives.

- a. capture → فتح کردن
- ☒ b. advent → ظهور
- c. fable → افسانه
- d. superstition → خرافات

7. A huge number of refugees -----the civil strife headed toward European countries.

- a. interested in → علاقه مند بودن
- b. blossomed in → developed by
- ☒ c. fleeing from → در حال فرار از
- d. presented by → ارائه شده توسط

8. These lab animals rarely ----- lab conditions; they should be set free to live in nature.

- ☒ a. thrive in → demanding developing grow
- b. fight for → جنگیدن برای
- c. bring about → ای دین
- d. carry out → do perform

9. Friday prayer is a religious ----- performed all over the Muslim world on all Fridays.

- a. perspective _{= point of view} b. fable _{افسانه} c. imprint _{effect} **d. ritual** _{ترازم}

10. Herbs have many ----- properties, entering in modern medicine in treating patients.

- a. contextual _{= sth be in a situation - متنی-زنجای} b. literal _{= exact - واقعی}
c. therapeutic _{cure - درمانی} d. deleterious _{changing - harmful - زیان آور}

D. Discuss the following questions with your friends.

1. Why does confusion exist in literature as to the definition of Islamic Medicine?
2. Did physicians in the early phase of Islamic Medicine only care the patients?
3. Who was the first recorded Muslim physician?

E. Word Families: Fill in the blanks using the correct form of the words given in the list.

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
define _{تعریف کردن}	definition _{تعریف}	defined _{مشخص و معین}	definingly _{به طور قطعی}
contextualize _{زنجینه سازی کردن}	context _{زنجینه} contextualization _{زنجینه سازی}	contextual _{زنجینه ای - متنی}	contextually _{به صورت متنی}
hygienise _{بهرانی کردن}	hygiene/hygienist _{بهرانیست}	hygienic _{بهرانی}	hygienically _{به طور بهرانی}
emerge _{ظاهر کردن}	emergence _{ظهور} emergency _{اورژانس}	emergent _{اورژانی} emerging _{در حال ظهور}	emergently _{به صورت اضطراری}
predominate _{غالب شود}	predominance _{غلبه}	Predominant _{غالب}	predominantly _{عمدتاً}

context = _{زنجینه}

- a. There were so many contextual _{keys} clues to the meaning of words in that book.
- b. His speech can only be understood in context.
- c. Some Christians fail to contextualize the words of Jesus.
- d. ----- of some historical events now seems difficult.

contextualization = the state of ~

definition

- a. The term "mental illness" is difficult to define.

because it allowed the ---10--- from others. It did have on staff salaried doctors to attend the sick.

G. Match the words in column I with their equivalents in column II.

I	II
1. concomitant همزمان H	a. catch somebody and keep as prisoner
2. emerge ظهور کردن E	b. the act of an army entering another country
3. capture به اسارت گرفتن A	c. respected and famous
4. patronage حمایت - پشتیبانی J	d. mix people, ideas, etc. together
5. blossom گل افروختن - شکوفا شدن G	e. appear
6. invasion تهاجم B	f. develop well
7. intermingle هم آمیختن D	g. become more successful
8. renowned مشهور C	h. happening at the same time
9. mix-up ترکیب I	i. a combination of different things
10. thrive پیشرفت کردن - شکوفا شدن F	j. the support given to a person or organization by a patron حامی پشتیبانی

bless

Further Reading

The great physicians of Islamic Medicine

The era of Islamic Medicine produced some very famous and notable physicians. These physicians were not only responsible to get all the existing information on Medicine of the time together but add to this knowledge by their own astute observations, experimentation and skills. Many of them were skilled in medical writing and produced encyclopedic works which became standard texts and reference works for centuries. With the coming of European Renaissance they formed the basis on which the European authors gained insight into the medicine of the 'ancients' or early Greek authors whose works were only preserved in Arabic. In addition many re-discoveries took place which had already been recorded by the Islamic physicians but hitherto had been unknown until recently uncovered. The classical example of the discovery of pulmonary circulation originally given to Servetus was found to have been succinctly described by Ibn Nafis, an Islamic Physician who lived centuries earlier. Ibn Nafis repudiated the earlier concepts held by Galen and described the