THE IMPORTANCE OF PHARMACY AND THE FREE DISPENSATION OF MEDICINES TO THE PUBLIC WITHIN THE OTTOMAN HEALTH SYSTEM

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...as well as books on the history of pharmacy, concerning pharmacists, drugs and the history of drugstores, the Ottomans also published many scientific editions which deal separately with these topics. This explanatory essay is the first collective study on the meaning of pharmacy, the meaning of chemists, drugs and pharmacies, and their place within the health system with respect to the understanding of social services in the Ottoman Empire.

Historical states that were established in succession in the same lands delivered their cultural knowledge to the state that followed them. Likewise, the cultural heritage of a region like Anatolia, where huge states and great civilizations were established, the borders of which exceeded even Anatolia, which served as a crossroad between the east and west, north and south, have been developing for at least 4,000 years. Indeed, even the Ottoman Empire was the heir to the Turkish-Islamic cultural heritage of the Anatolian Seljuk State, passed to them by means of the former Anatolian Beylik."15

Therefore, the Ottomans continued to employ the large hospitals with pharmacies which had been established by the Anatolian Seljuks (12th and 13th centuries) in Mardin, Kayseri, Sivas, Divriği, Çankırı, Aksaray, Karaman and Tokat. They also made use of the hospitals founded by the Ilhanids in Amasya and established similar hospitals in Bursa and Edirne, but mostly in Istanbul.

THE PHARMACIST

In ancient civilizations, the physician and the pharmacist were one and the same person. In addition to the Anatoian physician, who, for centuries, carried out pharmaceutical duties at the same time, there had always been a pharmacist and a physician in the hospitals of the Anatolian Seljuks and the Ottomans.

Just as the institutions for medical or surgical care were given the names of Durugija, Yildirim, Durukem, Bisurkan, Binbirnane, Yilmaz, Duranbaha, Durucuji, Aremakizistir, Durukem, and alter the reforms of 3 November 1839 "Hospital," the persons who prepared the drugs, that is, the pharmacists and their assistants, working in these Islamic hospitals were known (as can be seen in the deeds of trust of the Islamic foundations) by names like Serbiciyan, Seydialan, Uygur, Tolubah-Espise (cook of syrups), Hafz-Espise (memecell of syrups), Edchegon (seller of remedies), Agah (herbalist), etc.

The word İmamya (apothecary) that was given to pharmacists was found in the Atrakhusan (pharmacopoeia) of the Sultan's chief physician Halepcli Safi Eldeni, who lived in the 17th century. He defines an apothecary as "the one who has herbs and drugs available in his store and prepares laxatives, medicated pastes and pills when ordered by the physician." Moreover, the pharmacists are sometimes called Köpek and Akrar (both meaning herbalist in general), as herbs in fact used to supply the chemical substances for drugs. In the 17th century, the Akrar began to prepare drugs as well, and were given the title of pharmacist. The
THE HERBALISTS (Akbars): We know that outside the hospitals, the herbalists were a type of pharmacists who supplied the public with drugs. We further know that some of them were found collectively in the bazaars of Istanbul, Bursa and Edirne. The herbalists grouped together in Galata in Istanbul and their most important area of business was in the Masq Çarşısı, built in the 17th century. A short while after the opening of this bazaar, the herbalists were given 49 out of the 100 shops.

Other stores preparing drugs: In Istanbul, besides herbalists there are also some other stores where medicaments were sold and the same artists worked. The number of these artists was quite high, for example, in Evliya Çelebi’s Book of Travels, “the number of artists making medicinal parasites is 200, artists who make medicated syrup 500, and the artists of perfumery are 41 in number.”

Private drugstores: The earliest private drugstores in Istanbul were first set up by foreigners at the beginning of the 17th century, by the non-Muslim community. The majority of these drugstores were situated in Beyoğlu (Pera) and Galata.

The Turkish and Muslim community on the other hand, set up their drugstores at a later date. The first of these drugstores was the one established in 1697 in Işılkesi by Hamdi Bey, a graduate of the Pharmacists Class at the Civil Medical School in Istanbul, and was called the Hamdi Boy Drugstore.

CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES, DRUGS, SINGLE REMEDIES AND MEDICINES, AND COMPOUND REMEDIES.

Most of the substances employed in conventional medical treatment were composted from botanical sources, and less frequently from animal or mineral sources. The method of treatment for the patient differed in accordance with whether the drug was to be used internally or externally. Drugs used internally were in general prepared through infusion or cooking, but there were also poisons and pastilles, syrups, pills, tablets and powders available. The drugs to be used externally were mainlyointments, oil-saungs and suppositories. We will briefly mention the famous traditional chemical substances and medicaments used by the Ottomans, and will cite their contemporary equivalents.

TRADITIONAL CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES, THE DRUGS AND SINGLE REMEDIES.

The herbalists were the main suppliers of drugs, whereas the Masq Çarşısı in Istanbul was the location where they were situated. The herbalists used to conduct the export and import of the substances of their trade. According to the customs records of 1817, the drugs sold in the Masq Çarşısı were as follows:

Quassia, bitter almonds, garden sage, sea onion, quipim, citrus medicina, frankincense, asse, ambegriss shell, ecemris, arrowroot, sunflower, couch grass, wormwood, farva bean blossoms, spermaceti, isinglass, okra blossoms, lobreus oyle (new spices), mace, lousewort, downy thorn-apple, madgeek root, fenugreek seeds, jalap, adhatodhi, yellow weed, marshmallow, nutmeg, mace, ammoniac, Christ’s-thorn, pine resin, tea, garden strawberry stem, sulphoxide, soapwort, China-root, black cumin, mountain peppermint, wall-pepper (Sochum ace), cinnamon blossom, lung pepper, bay leaf, de fueksıa kökbi, caltery, backlookers, chistle, truffle, mallow leaf, colocyrum, orris root, sour pomengrate peel, ferdiklu, poppy blossom, sarsaparilla gum, ganggang, copper sulphate, dried root, fruits of Euphorbia varifolia, crinum rizigum seeds, muskard, poppy seeds, marshmallow blossom, alkanet, cucumber, coconut oil, casis, lady woodruff, jubaile (beige) flowers, linden, strenging nettle seeds, onester blossom, drifts root, fig leaf, Eupatorium sals, pumpkin seed, chichory, cardamom, cocoa burtur, ceynni blossom, maidenhair, pepper, black mulberry leaf, liquid storax, black myrobalan, comfly, curragon, black nux vomica oil, eggplant seeds, galbanum, cubeb, valerian, garden thyme, hemp seed, celery seed, flax seed, henous, cinchona, Creon of Tarsar, horsetail, lermets, red pepper, red sandwilow, wall germander, dried coriander cumin, coriander, tragacanth (its leaf and gum), arbutus, tobacco root, manna, canna, dogrose, baglis, ash tree, sulfi, Labor wood, lavender (flower), lemon peel, European cherry (Punus malshue), mastic, lesser celandine, parsley seed, arbor vine, lemon balm leaf, oris root, myrtle leaf, sweet marjoram, root of licorice plant, meswak, corn tassel, musk, Sohman’s seal, axtracu, pomegranate blossom, Austrian cumin, lemon balm (Melissa officinalis), eucalyptus, agaricaul (Indian aloe tree), valonia oak, valonia oak seed, daisy, wormwood (Artemisia absinthium), pilirok, linburn, resin, sweet basil seed, common fennel, ragiui (nummer, nux vomica oil), saffron, saccharin, gum, salep, grape blossoms, sandalwood, cupol, saarapilla, fruits of Terminia citrina, finest aloe, saussatus rose, roo, salmon, cypress, Ceylon cinnamon, oregano (great mulbrii), senna, rohan, ibbplantain, siyelik, sucur, sesame, senna kikli, red leek, leche, lamphise mercerica chloride, surnalis, tiv, flock, common fumitory, alun, pose kerdi, beeswax, common hup, cinnamon blossoms, tabib, tabib, crude duran, trebanti, xinobunia, melan anticks, orange peel, ziv, adakale, dried common service tree, barmal seeds, wild cucumber, common pistol reed, ghee, ginger (black, white), cinnamon, turmeric, orge, sedo, ACSB, CENAK, Dioscorea, and some other plants used in traditional medicine in Turkey. The principal ones are as follows:

1. AKBAR:

The principal ones are as follows:

1. AKBAR:

2. CENAK:

They totally correspond to diseases and particularly to compound diseases. The part of compound medicines which are unavailable in single medicines and probably can cure some compound diseases may sometimes need additional substances. Therefore, we may have to add one more substance to it, so that the first part, which is peculiar to the additional substance, might assist it. To illustrate, the usual withholds against diarrhea and constipation. It stops diarrhea, and is less constipating. If we use five daisies, we will have to strengthen the constipation by applying constipation medicine to it.
SOME SAMPLES OF FAMOUS MEDICINES

Ambergis: A drug made of the intestines of the sperm whale (Physeter macrocephalus L.) found in the Pacific Ocean. These were made into a tablet, which was then directly added to pastes or to coffee after being ground. It was used as a heart stimulant, a stimulant for appetite and an aphrodisiac. T. Baytop published an informative pamphlet about ambergis tablets that is found in his private collection and inscribed with prayers.13

Ivorea Water: This was obtained by leaving some odorous drugs in rose water, and annually, in Ramazan, was presented to the Sultan. This water used to be then delivered to the members of the court in crystal bottles and accepted as an invitation to the event of the Hizâ-i Şerîf (Maulâ of the Prophet) (11th).

Compressed Tables: These were types of pastilles or medicines in the form of tablets which were obtained by compressing mixtures denser than pastes into pastille moulds. The moulds were inscribed.

The Manzit Paste (Mohfadidanzin): An aniseed improved by Emperor Muradus VI, later prepared in Manisa under the name Manzit (exunction). The tradition of Manzit pastes still continues today with the Manzit festival, where the paste prepared in spring is served to the public at the mosques.

Navaezit: This was a fragment, nerve stimulating paste prepared in the palace and presented in special caskets to the Sultan, the palace nobles, ministers and high officials on the occasion of Navaez. Being a symbol of spring it was an important medicine.

Tin-i Muhish (Sunâd Clay, Tura Lomona, Tura Sigitlar): After the Middle Ages, this was internally used against poisoning, as a kind of absolution and blood-starch. This medicine was prepared from the soil of Lahor, Tin-i Ramu (Greek Clay) and Tin-i Ernew (Armenian Clay), or the same could be obtained from the regions of Konya and Kayseri.

Therias: This was an improved type of Mohfadidanzin, obtained by adding further substances. Different kinds of therias were widely employed, both in Europe and by the Ottomans during the Middle Ages.

Avcıreni tells of cures that are related to the compound therias and states that it has many uses, for example, it can be used against snake and scorpion bites, to prevent the effects of poisonous drinks, against illness caused by phlegm and spleen, against syphilitic and spleen fevers, malignant rheumatic discomposure, paralysis, apoplexy, epilepsy, facial paralysis, tremor, melancholy anxieties, insanity, leprosy and pleurisy. According to him, therias stimulates the heart, facilitates respiration, prevents palpitation and the expectation of blood, purifies kidney and urinary bladder diseases, breaks kidney stones, is good for intestinal wounds and strengthens the liver and spleen. To conclude, therias had the power to defeat any kind of disease.

THE FREE DISPENSATION OF MEDICINES TO THE PUBLIC: A SOCIAL SERVICE TRADITION

Free Dispensation through the Hospitals: The Anatolian Seljuk tradition of dispensing free medicines, prepared in the hospital pharmacies, both to inpatients and outpatients, continued in the Ottoman hospitals which functioned as charitable foundations for service to the public. As the deeds of trust indicated, these institutions, which were working without aid from the state, but were supported by the revenues of pious foundations, were assigned daily medicine and kitchen expenses appropriate to the revenues.5

More citizes the following passage of the deed of trust of the Fatih Hospital, declaring the free dispensation of medicines to outpatients.32,33

And by further assigning a daily payment of 100 silver coins for victuals, medicines and the dead, those who yet are not at the hospice, but need medicines will be granted them, but with extreme care and under doctor and clerk surveillance.

B. Şehrantçülü, on the other hand, gives related information by referring to the pharmacy at the Bayezid II Hospital in Edirne, mentioned in the "Book of Travels" by Eviya Câlebi (1898 ed., vol II, p. 470 (14a):

The pharmacy is opened twice a week; any patient present in Edirne can come to the hospital and receive all types of medicines. All sorts of herbs are exempt from payment. God knows how much garment, cebel, cardamom, ginger, medical implements and confectioneries are dispensed to the people who want them. But at the door of the hospital, there is inscribed a maldecition issued by the Imperial court: "If a healthy man should take even a case of these medicines, he shall become sick, and the curse of the Pharaoh and of Canaan shall be upon him."

The following explanation is written in the deed of trust referring to the Silüymanie Hospital, where the same tradition continued:9,14

The hospital is large and spacious. Besides hospitalized patients, there are also outpatients whose medicines are provided by the hospital.

The deed of trust belonging to the Topkapı Nusreti Valide Sultan Hospital also tells of the conditions concerning the preparation and dispensing of medicines:32

Valide Sultan, the owner of a shop, has laid down the conditions for spending from the adsf revenue 200 dirhams for medicines, syrups, pastes and comestibles, and does not grudge these, inasmuch as the patients in the mentioned hospital are in need of them; to exterminally deliver the remaining syrups and pastes; and to give the aspirins syrups and pastes, provided that other than on Fridays, two aforementioned physicians have come to the conclusion that those who want the medicines water them because they need them.

Through the Palace: S. Kümbaraçalari’s essay informs us that even the public could make use of the medicines prepared in the palace:32

In 1799, Sultan Mustafa III became poisoned by a medicine which the chief enuch had ordered from a physician outside the palace. Upon this event, the medicine production in the palace, which was already under strict control, became regulated by a stricter law. The public swore to obtain the medicines prepared in the palace, because such precautions were not taken outside the palace.

The most famous and esteemed medicines of the palace were the medicated pastes, in particular the red paste: The preparation of this red paste began in spring and was under the inspection of a specialist. Ordinary people could obtain medicine only by applying to the members of the palace.

The Treasury Oil was another medicine prepared in the palace and in great demand by the public (1.e). This oil was made of 46 substances, including even marshmallow and olive oil. At the same time this was called the Nigisi Esmâil Oil, and generally it was employed to cure aches and injuries.

N. Baytar gives further information on the Yıldız Palace (13): The residents of the Yıldız Palace, and the officers used to get the medicines prescribed by the palace physicians at the palace pharmacies.

Through the School of Medicine and Pharmacy: The instructors of the Galatasaray Medical School, which was established in 1839, and those of its Pharmacy class were also responsible for the preparation and distribution of the medicines in the central pharmacy, which was located in the school and opened five days a week. That this centre provided poor patients with medicines and vaccinated children for free is mentioned in the report of the school director, Dr. Bernard, presented to the Sultan in 1843.

Upon the recommendation of the physician, the Galatasaray Central Pharmacy has provided both Muslim and non-Muslim patients with plenty of medicines.

Within this year, 953 Turkish, 613 Armenian, 782 Greek, 130 Jewish, 217 European Catholic children have been successfully vaccinated in the free vaccination bureau.

The Mohfadidanzin Festival and Mohfadidanzin: It was Mohfadidanzin Eunuch (132-65 B.C.), the King of Pontus, who for the very first time prepared the self-preserving antidote against poisons, known as mohfadidanzin, which included 48 drugs. As his father had been murdered, he was also afraid of being killed by his mother, and fled to the Pontic Mountains (northeast Black Sea), where he nourished himself for seven years on wild plants, and learned about the properties of plants. However, when Rome seized Pontus, the Roman physicians made some changes in the composition of the mohfadidanzin. One kind of mohfadidanzin became well known as Therias and
was imported from Venice under the name of Thoraica Veneta. Thoraica was widespread in our country also, and even become the subject of a proverb: “One may be poisoned in Egypt by a snake unless Venice supplies the Thoraica.” (4.4.)

The first Ottoman to have employed "insuldrasta" in 1359 was Merkez Efendi, the first chief physician of the Magusa Hafiz Sultan Hospital. The medicated pastes, called "mair", was made of 41 different drugs, and elegantly assembled and distributed to the public every year on 21 March, either from the hospital walls or the projecting balconies of the minarets. This tradition still continues. Those who are able to catch and consume the pastes believe that they are kept safe from scorpion bites and illnesses for the duration of one year.

In Europe: As a measure against cases of epidemics, the state always took care to provide people with certain drugs, provided either for free or at a charge. The document (Prime Ministry Archive, İadei Defteri no. 10308, year 1814) presented by Hekimbâb Isak Efendi to the Sultan during the cholera epidemic of 1848, suggests for the treatment of cholera the use of French lavender (Lavandula stoechas), found on Mount Uludag, and suggests that this plant be sold in all the pharmacies.

DEPENDABILITY OF THE MEDICINES AND LEGAL REGULATIONS

The first steps towards ensuring the dependability of medicines distributed to the public were made during the Ottoman period in the field of pharmacy with several different pieces of legislation. The order of these regulations is given chronologically with their names, titles and a short summary of the contents as follows:

1. The regulation on the establishment of municipal pharmacies, February 2, 1861.1
2. Section one, regarding pharmacists - 3 articles
3. Section two, regarding druggists - 8 articles
4. Section three, some regulations regarding those dealing with pharmacies - 14 articles
5. Section four, regarding the supervision and imposition of druggists - 4 articles
6. Section five, regarding apprentices in pharmacies - 10 articles

Section six, declaring lives imposed on pharmacists by the Imperial Medical School - 4 articles

Section seven, declaring penalties - 7 articles

Section eight, addendum of regulations - 3 articles

2. Regulation concerning herbals - validity date: May 7, 1885.1,3

3. Consisting of five articles, the regulation also has an addendum that lists extremely poisonous substances, the sale of which is prohibited at the herbals.

3. Regulation concerning drug traders - validity date: May 7, 1885.5

4. Regulation concerning local physicians and pharmacists - validity date: April 16, 1885.3

5. Book of Instructions for common pharmacies - date of publication: 1916.1

The Book of Instructions includes the following sections:

Pharmacy type - Who is eligible to set up a drugstore - Production permit or Order - Composite drugs, i.e., the production of pharmacological drugs in conformity with the code - Recipes which chemists may prepare - The prohibition against the chemist compounding or changing the content of any recipe - Copybook - The prohibition of the prescription of abbreviated recipes between physicians and chemists - The registration of recipes in the copybook - The submission of medicines prepared by recipes to their owners - Labels to be marked on medical cards - Pharmacy nails and shields to be attached to the stores - The conservation of poisons drugs - The responsibilities of the pharmacy owner - The appointment of an executive director to the pharmacies - The production and sale of specific medical drugs and their production permit - The prohibition against physicians owning a pharmacy - The number and division of pharmacies - The conservation of medical drugs - Cleanliness and purity - Medical drugs and other things to be present at the pharmacies - Information about drugs and medicines - Inflammables and explosive substances - Inspections - Night shifts - Appendix - Instruments, devices and other equipment necessary in pharmacies.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study has for the first time showed that pharmacies, a major part of the Ottoman health system, were among the pioneers in some fields within the period of the Ottoman Empire.

1. As a result of continuing the Anatolian Seljuk tradition, the “Hospital Pharmacy” of the Ottomans has no older background in comparison to such pharmacies in Europe.

2. The free treatment of poor patients, and free medicines provided even for orphans at these hospitals, which were financed by their own revenues, owing to the need to support the wealth of the social system, built up the ground work of the social system within the health system.

HISTORIOGRAPHY


3. Although the pharmacy "Durdu İlanlar" in the Suleymanie Hospital was recognized as a "central storeroom for drugs" (1815), the Durdu İlanlar was in fact a "Pharmacy Central" as already stated in our declaration presented at the 3rd International Congress on the History of Pharmacy (Paris) in 1939. The medicines prepared at this centre were at the same time delivered to some other hospitals in Istanbul. If we consider that the establishment of a "Pharmacy Central" in France only happened in 1795, we can conclude that the pharmacy Durdu İlanlar was a pioneering central pharmacy.
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PROOF READING
ÖZLEM DİLMEN / HALİL ÜNSAL / MERİÇ ÖNDER
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HASAN MUTLU / SEMİH NART

GRAPHIC DESIGN
GÖKÇEN TEKNİK / SEMİH OFFSET

PRINTED AT
SEMİH OFFSET

RONDING HOUSE
BALKAN ÇİLTEVİ

ISBN 975-6782-17-X (TKNO)
975-6782-20-X (VOL. 3)

ANKARA 2000

UNIV.
LEIDEN
BIBL.
The incredible fact that the Ottoman frontier beylik became an Empire over such a short period of time has attracted many Western researchers and scholars to delve into the history of the Ottoman State. It could be argued that there are miscellaneous determinants and dimensions that actually created the possibility for such an incredible feat to be accomplished. This volume has been edited with the aim of focussing on the main factors that gave rise to such a great civilisation. In the first place, the institutional character of the Ottoman State is of utmost importance. In order to understand the basis of Ottoman civilisation, the different patterns of its institutions should be studied, as the comprehensive analysis of the institutional structure of the Ottoman Empire might enable us to conceive how a small beylik was able to turn into one of the greatest Empires in the world. In this volume, the administrative, judiciary and military institutions of the Empire are set out as the main subject titles. In addition, there are various subjects which have been analysed, under such subrubes as bureaucracy, religion and law, shedding light on the main characteristics of Ottoman institutions.

In appreciation of the highly developed institutional structure of the Ottoman Empire, the idealontical and philosophical sources cannot be underrated. Unless these sources are taken into consideration, it is impossible to grasp the various dynamics of Ottoman institutions. Therefore, this volume is entitled “Philosophy, Science and Institutions”, due to the close correlation and importance of these subjects to one another.

Contrary to conventional Euro-centric and Orientalist assumptions, which hold “science” as the peculiar praxis of the Renaissance and Enlightenment in
In this volume, it is generally argued that the Ottomans had a number of successes in scientific activities (İhsan ve Fen). The Ottoman State not only promoted the development of science within the borders of the Empire, but also facilitated several interactions with scientific activities outside of its territories. During this interaction, it both benefited from and contributed to the scientific improvements made in Europe.

Additionally, this volume dedicates an important place to the development of philosophy and thought in the Ottoman Empire; although in the Ottoman Empire such major philosophical essences as developed in Europe were not formed, rather the Ottomans focused mainly on Islamic philosophy. Yet this situation does not arise from the fact that the Ottomans lagged behind in speculative matters. On the contrary, they were not interested in philosophical issues that were outside the realm of Islamic tradition. From their point of view, Islam encompassed all ontological and epistemological matters, making any other philosophical concern dysfunctional.

Yeni Türkiye

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