Review of Medical History and Ethics Education at the Istanbul University*

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Introduction

Being established in the 7th century B. C., Istanbul, a metropolis uniting Europe and Asia, has been the capital city of three grand, ecumenical civilizations, namely East-Roman Empire, Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire.[1] It has embraced a great many universities since 321 A.D.; the Roman Legal Codification (*Corpus juris civilis*) was also booked by an *ad hoc* committee of scholars gathered together in that city during the reign of Emperor Justinianus (527-565 A.D.).

Just after the Ottoman conquest (1453) of Istanbul, Sultan Mehmed I, (1430-1481) who greatly endeared science, laid the foundation of the Istanbul University by assigning his lecturer Molla Husrev in seminars ajacent to Hagia Sophia, another lecturer Molla Zeyrek in seminars at Pantocrator, a Byzantine school and monastery. After that, mathematics, theology, literature, law education started at eight high schools of the Fatih Complex within which a medical school (*Fatih Darüşşifası*) served as a clinic and also kept on raising physicians.[2] This indicates that Istanbul University is one of the oldest universities in the world.

The Medical Faculty of Istanbul University which has been activating since 1827, under various names though, was divided into two in 1967 giving birth to the Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Medicine.

Start of Medical History Teaching

The archival sources we have been able to reach, prove that the history of medicine used to be taught at the Imperial Medical School in Istanbul in 1856-1857 academical year by Dr. Charles Edwards. A memorandum of the Grand Vizier to the Ministry of

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[1] *N. Yıldırım.* "Istanbul'daki Kozmopolit Dokunun Saglık AlanındaYansımaları: Saglık Kurumları ve Meslekleri", Istanbul Dergisi Istanbul, Tarih Vakfi yay. 1996; 20: 83-91.

[2] *K. I. Gürkan.* Istanbul Üniversitesi'nin Başlangıcı: Les Debuts de l'Université d'Istanbul. Istanbul: Fakülteler Matbaası, 1953: 4, 8-9.

the Medical School on November 22nd, 1856 shows that Dr. Charles Edwards was the private physician of Princess Fatma (1840-1884)[3], daughter of the Ottoman Sultan Abdulmedjid. By a decree to the Grand Vizier, Princess Fatma demands Dr. Charles Edwards to be assigned at the Imperial Medical School as professor. Upon this order, the Grand Vizierate writes a letter qualifying Dr. Edwards as capable and efficient to this post and sends it to the Ministry of the School together with Dr. Edwards' petition.[4] By another decree from the Grand Vizierate, the Ministry of the Imperial Medical School is informed that Dr. Charles Edwards has been charged in teaching 'Medical History' at the School, salaried with 2.500 piastres.[5] The Military Yearbook of 1856 confirms this by stating that he was in official duty at the Imperial Medical School in December 1856-January 1857.[6]

According to the register of Société Impériale de Médecine in Istanbul, Dr. Charles Edwards was enrolled as the resident member to the Society on April 26th, 1856 by 'No: 60'; and died on January 18th, 1894.

He was registered at the *State Yearbooks* as a member of the Medical School Council between 1861-1864 and; at the Military Yearbook of 1865 as the instructor of medical subjects ('matierès médicales'*, müfredat-ı tıb*).[7] He was most probaby the same Dr. Edwards included in the list of English physicians under the Ottoman Army's service during the Crimean War (1853-1856).[8]

Started in 1857, medical history teaching was accompanied later on with "medical deontology"* and they have continued to be taught at both medical schools until today.

The Progress of Medical History Curriculum at Istanbul University:

The content of Dr. Charles Edwards' lectures is unknown. We do not have any sufficient data to tell that Dr. Roussignan and Dr. Nouridjan (1827-1898) also taught

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[3] See: *A. Akyıldız.* Refia Sultan Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi yay. 1998: 7,10; Journal de Constantinople, Echo de l'Orient*.* Constantinople 1851; 326: 2.

[4] BOA (Ottoman State Archival Document).A. MKT. NZD. 201/50 (24 RA, 1273/22 November 1856).

[5] BOA A. AMD. 73/67 (1273/1856-1857)

[6] Salname-i Askeri (the Military Yearbook), Istanbul: Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Sahane Matbaası 1865:368. 1856 Military Yearbook states that he mentions his appointment in (Kanun-ı sani 1272) January–February 1857 which means that Dr. Edwards was employed in the December 1856-January 1857 academical term.

[7] Salname-i Devlet (State Yearbooks). Istanbul: Takvimhane-amire 1861: 130; Istanbul: Darut'tıbaatu'l-Amire 1861: 130; Istanbul: Takvimhane-i Amire 1862: 123; Istanbul: Takvimhane-i Amire 1863: 96 mentioned as "Muallim Mösyö Sarli"; Istanbul: Takvimhane-i Amire 1864: 94 as "Mösyö Edvars". He was also stated at Salname-i Askeri (the Military Yearbook). Istanbul: Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Sahane Matbaası 1865:368 as "Edvars Effendi", a professor of medical curriculum.

[8] *J. Shepherd.* The Crimean Doctors: A History of the British Medical Services in the Crimean War Liverpool. Liverpool University Press, 1991; 2: 560.

* Deontology: The theory or study of moral obligation. The term 'medical deontology' has been used in place of "medical ethics" in Europe and in Turkey since the 19th century. Today it comprises the legislative texts concerned with the medical ethics.

medical deontology together with medical history. But it is quite significant that Dr. Nouridjan's book, called *Aperçu historique sur la Médecine arabe* (Constantinople, 1876) has got passages on Islamic medicine.

As far as we know, the oldest medical history curriculum belonged to Zoeros Pasa (1841/44-1917). Starting with the oldest, emprical traditions, he lectured on the development of medicine progressively from the antiquity, on Hippocrates and his era, post-Hippocratical medicine, Alexandrian School, Romans and Byzantium, Arabs, Medieval Age (Spanish Arabs, Italy, France, Germany), Modern Ages (Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, England) and ends with some contemporary medical researches, then.[9]

Like Zoeros Pasha, Dr. Galip Ata Ataç (1879-1947) dealt at his lectures with Eastern medicine (Keldani, Egypt, Assyria, Babil, Israelites, India, Tibet, Iran, China), ancient Greece and Rome, Hippocrates, Alexandria, Byzantium, Islam, Europe (Medieval Age, hospitals), 17th, 18th centuries, modern age. But he also initiated a chapter on Turkish medicine where he shortly introduced the first Turkish medical books, and famous Turkish physicians.[10] Ataç also published his lectures of medical history in 1925.[11]

The fall of the Ottoman Empire was officially declared and the Republic of Turkey was established on October 29th 1923. Ten years succeeding that, a reform was launched at the Istanbul University. By this University Reform in 1933, a department was produced for medical history and deontology and A. Süheyl Ünver was charged as chairman. His coursebook on medical history was designed in a classical plan dealing civilizations chronologically.[12] Owing to Süheyl Ünver's pioneering and encouraging studies, the subjects of Turkish history medicine were taken up much more than ever in the course of time.

The Medical School was divided into two as Istanbul and Cerrahpaşa Medical Faculties in 1967. The medical history and deontology departments were led by Prof. Şehsuvaroğlu at the former, and Prof. Ünver at the latter.

The textbooks of the professors give idea of the content of lecture. One of Ünver's followers, Bedi N. Şehsuvaroğlu (1914-1977) whose book was published posthumously[13] deals with Turkish medicine in pre-Islamic period and in the Ottoman-era. Health institutions, famous physicians and prominent medical developments have been related on centennial basis beginning with the 14th century. The book ends with the historical background of the Ministery of Health, quarantine organization, pharmaceutics and

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[9] *N. Yıldırım, Y. I. Ülman.* "Zoeros Paşa and Deontoloji", Tarih ve Toplum Istanbul: Iletişim yay. 1994:129:14-29.

[10] He stated that this part has been cited from Uludağ OS's Beşbuçuk Asırlık Türk Tababeti Tarihi, Istanbul: Amire Matbaası, 1925.

[11] *Ataç, G.* Tib Tarihi. Istanbul: 1341/1925

[12] *A. S. Süheyl Ünver.* Tib Tarihi I-II Istanbul: Istanbul Üniversitesi yay., 2nd ed. 1943, 308 pages.

[13] *B. N. Şehsuvaroğlu, A. D. Demirhan, G. G. Güreşsever.* Türk Tip Tarihi Bursa: Taş Kitapçılık, 1984, 222 pages.

pharmacies, surgery, dentistry, veterinary medicine, health care, nursing, medical education, normal and pathological anatomy teaching in Turkey.

Emine Atabek's (1914-2000) lectures on medical history attract attention by her dynamic narrative style and rational critical approach. She stresses on the contributions of every universal culture to medicine and medical thought in parallel with the crucial turning points of civilization. E. Atabek and Şefik Görkey – the professor and chair of Medical History and Ethics Department of Marmara University, İstanbul – revised and published the book with additions and evaluations of primitive and prehistorical medical cultures, in 1998.[14]

Starting with paleopathological and primitive medicine, Arslan Terzioğlu lectures on general, pre-Islamic, Islamic, Seljuk, Ottoman medical history.

The main theme of Nil Sari's and her assistants lectures on medical history has been concentrated on giving a viewpoint to the students for understanding the medical progress throughout the centuries.

When Istanbul Medical Faculty shifted to the credited teaching system by 1999-2000 academical year, the lessons were 'Turkish History of Medicine' for the 1st term (one lecture a week), **'**Medical History and Deontology-Ethics' in the 5th term (two lectures a week).

Thus Turkish medical history has been designed as an independant lesson to be taught more extensively. Its main topics are medicine in pre-Islamic, Islamic period, Seljuk and Ottoman periods (14-17th centuries), Ottoman hospitals and pharmacies, the effects of Turkish variolation method in Europe, westernization of Turkish medicine, famous Turkish physicians (Esad Feyzi, Akil Muhtar, Hulusi Behçet etc.), the 1933 university reform and its contributions to Turkish medicine.[15]

The Progress of Medical Deontology – Ethics Teaching

On the cover of Dr. Nahabed Roussignan's (1819-1876) *Coursebook on Philosophy* (published posthumously also in Armenian in Istanbul in 1879), it is written that the author was the teacher of philosophy and medical morality at Imperial Medical School. Therefore the book has been claimed to include medical deontology topics. With regard to its content, this work was composed mainly of three chapters that are on "Philosophy", "Soul" and "Good". The definition, meaning, principles and aim of philosophy are related at the first chapter. Second chapter deals with psychology and logic. Topics of morality constitute the third chapter which is 'on Good'. This chapter begins with general information on morality and continues with discrimination of good and evil; reward and punishment; man's duties to his own self, to others, to God;

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[14] *E. Atabek.* Ortaçag Tababeti, Istanbul: I.U. Cerrahpasa Tıp Fakultesi yay. 1977, 80 pages; *E. Atabek and Şefik Görkey*. Baslanııcindan Ronesansa kadar Tip Tarihi, Istanbul: I. U. Cerrahpaşa Tip Fakültesi yayınları 1998: 249 pages.

[15] Istanbul Üniversitesi Istanbul Tip Fakültesi Temel Tip Bilimleri Önlisans Dönemi Birinci Yıl 1999-2000 Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliği, Arslan Terzioğlu, Osmanlılarda Hastaneler, Eczacılık, Tababet ve Bunların Dünya Çapındaki Etkileri, Istanbul, 1999.

individual and social morality; liabilities to family and to the State; morals and religious morality. There is no mention of medical deontology and ethics in the book. It is apparent that this book has been edited by the example of French philosopher Victor Cousin's (1792-1867) work: *Du vrai du beau et du bien* issued in 1853. This work may be the coursebook of Roussignan's lectures on philosophy at the Imperial Medical School between 1874-1876. Apparently philosophical character of his lectures prevailed deontology.[16]

Just after Roussignan's sudden death, Joseph Nouridjan took up his lessons and had his lectures issued by installment at *Revue de Médecine et de Pharmacie de l'Empire Ottoman* J. Nouridjan's coursebook was published as *Précis de Déontologie Médicale, Cours Elémentaire Professé à l'École Impérial de Médecine* (Constantinople 1877). This work has been the third book on medical deontology ever written in Europe.

In view of Nouridjan, who addressed the students as "Gentlemen!", gathering a diploma is not sufficient to be a physician at full sense and; this profession requires distinguished talents. He tells that he would be happy if he rooted love for science and duty in the hearts of those elite Ottoman youth.

After Hippocratical oath, he relates Littré's comments on the oath of Hippocrates, tells Emmerich de Vattel's thoughts about duty morality. To him, leading power of human attitudes is utility, an individual is expected to be useful to the society he lives in. Professionals should aim at utalitarianism both for their ownselves and for the society. The range of rights is not necessarily as wide as the duties.

With regard to physician's duties to patients, a professional should never distinguish people, always consider their financial situation and, practice honourably without making any sexual discrimination. He advices not to do unpredicable experiments endangering patients' lives, but states that this does not mean to prohibit scientific experience. According to Dr. Nouridjan emphatical approach, it is unethical to do experimentation that a physician does not want it to be done on himself. While counting physicians' duties to colleagues, he mentions the necessity to know the allied legislations very well, and to be respectful to their predecessors and elder professionals.

He deals with medical consultation, relates regulations and duties to be obeyed by physicians in daily practice. A physician should always be ready to give professional information. He should carry out duties on food control, sewage system, ventilation and; take precautions against epidemics. He narrates how physicians sacrificed their lives during the plague epidemic devastating Montpellier and Venice in the 14th century.

Last chapter of his coursebook is on duties of patients and society towards physicians. To him, society is indebted to feel gratitute for physicians who spend their youth for long and hazardous researches and even sacrifice their lives struggling with contagious diseases. To him, this self-sacrificing can not be compensated by clients'

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[16] *N. Yıldırım.* "Mekteb-i Tibbiye-i Şâhâne'nin Ilk Deontoloji Hocası Rusinyan Efendi" Yeni Tıp Tarihi Araştırmaları. N Sari (ed.) Istanbul: Lito matbaa, 1996; 1:148-161.

sums. Society is not bound to give privileges to physicians but it should protect sciences, encourage facilities for medical education. Men are expected to be interested in medicine of which they took advantage. Patients should recourse to physicians educated in modern medicine. They must not credit the ambiguous rules of magnetism, spiritualism, homeopathy, occultism etc.[17]

Zoeros Pasha starts his lectures with the definition of medical deontology. After emphasizing the necessity of medical deontology for practitioners, he counts the physical, virtual and intellectual features requisite to physicians. In coincidence with the social background of the time when never ending wars and battles battered the people at the turn of the century, he needs to explain doctors' duties and attitudes towards the wounded and the sick at war. He also stresses the necessity of informing patient himself about diagnosis and prognosis, instead of his relatives. Furthermore he deals with medical secret, informing officials about contagious diseases, consultation, legislative matters and autopsy.[18]

Starting lectures after the Istanbul University Reform in 1933, Suheyl Unver (1898-1986) deals first with historical background, importance and aim of medical deontology; talks extensively on physicians' duties to themselves, patients and colleagues; ends with chapters on physician and psychology, physician's social status.[19]

After beginning with an introduction on medical history and deontology-ethics teaching, Bedi N. Şehsuvaroğlu takes up classical topics such as physicians' duties, liabilities, surgical responsibility, medical secret, consultation, war crimes in view of medical practitioners, medical oath, medical report and charlatanism. What attracts attention with his book is his introduction into the curriculum of some contemporary issues related to the developing medical technology such as organ and tissue transplantation, population planning, birth control, artificial insemination, euthanasie and the allied ethical problems. He also inserted in his work the regulations for medical abortus, hibernation, the health problems of Turkey, the socialization in Turkey, famous Turkish physicians in order to provide a background for young practitioners. His successor Arslan Terzioğlu employs Şehsuvaroğlu's book supplementing it with some legislative texts.[20]

In her medical deontology coursebook, Emine Atabek starts with the introduction of medical profession and deontology and; treats medical oath, medicine and psychology, physicians' features, duties and liabilities, medical secret, consultation, abortus; charlatanism, birth control, artificial insemination, biomedical researches on medicaments and on men, euthanasie. The distinctive character of her book is the emphasis on the

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[17] *N. Yıldırım.* "Nurican Efendi'nin yeni bulunan Deontoloji Kitabı I, II, III", Tarih ve Toplum. Istanbul: İletisim yayınları. 1993; 116: 16-21; 117:33-38:118:52-56.

[18] *N. Yıldırım, Y. I. Ülman.* Op. cit., 14-29.

[19] *A. S. Ünver.* Tıbbi Deontoloji Derslerinden Kısa Bahisler. Istanbul: Istanbul Üniversitesi yayınları, 1945, 23 pages.

[20] *B. N. Şehsuvaroğlu.* Tibbi Deontoloji. Istanbul: 1975; 2nd revised edition by A. Terzioğlu, Istanbul: Bayda yay., 1986. See also *A. Terzioğlu, A.* Tıbbi Deontoloji ve Biyomedikal Etik'in Ana Hatları, Klinik Etik'e Giriş. Istanbul 1998.

psychological basis of physician-patient relationship. The topics have also been integrated with the regulations of medical deontology.[21]

The main character of Nil Sari's lectures is her emphasis on medical ethics more than deontology (regulations, laws and so on). She explains fundamental rules and principles of modern medical ethics in examples of clinical cases through interactive way of lecturing.

Cerrahpaşa School of Medicine created a section for education in English at 1987-1988 academical year. Main curriculum of this section consists of the fundamentals of medical history and the actual topics of medical ethics. Prof. Dr. Mebrure Deger, at that department, published her lectures on medical ethics as a coursebook in 1999.[22] From the 2000-2003 academical year the medical history lessons have been concentrated on the evolutionary phases of this branch instead of classical subjects.

The dazzling scientific researches at the 1990's have emphasized the main topics of discussions in the field of biomedical ethics. Today academical staff of both departments have updated the main themes of the curriculum and have been giving lectures interactively about ethical principles and rules, physician-patient relationship, research ethics, informed consent, competency, patient rights, ethics councils; biomedical ethical subjects such as artificial insemination, organ transplantation, cloning, biomedical researches; medical ethical concepts on starting and ending life and so on.

'Medical Ethics' started at the 2001-2002 academical year for the 6th term as one lecture a week at Istanbul Medical Faculty. The same lesson will start at Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty at 2004-2005 academical term as "Clinical Ethics" basing mainly on the debates of clinical ethical cases for the interns.

Teaching staffs at both faculties lecture also at the Medical Biology, Medical Laboratory, Nursing, Dentistry, Medical Secretariat schools. They also carry out academic researches on both branches. The lesson was admitted to be compulsory in 1981. Post-graduate studies have continued since 1933 at master and doctoral levels. Biannuals congresses and symposiums have been accustomed for decades. The 38th International Congress on the History of Medicine was hosted by the Turkish Association of Medical History, together with the Cerrahpasa Medical History and Ethics department gathering more than four hundred medical historians and ethicists in September 2002. Both departments publish periodicals, yearbooks dealing with medical history and ethics topics; and they own specific libraries containing archival referential sources, manuscripts, printed books, and also medical history museums.

Conclusion

At Istanbul University, the Medical History course started in 1856 and it was followed by Medical Deontology in 1876. Dr. Nouridjan published the third book on

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[21] *E. M. Atabek.* Tıbbi Deontoloji Konuları. İstanbul: Yenilik basımevi, 1983, 216 pages; 2nd edition with *M. Değer*, Istanbul: Cerrahpaşa Tıp Fak. Yay. 2000, 262 pages.

[22] *M. Değer.* A Coursebook on Medical Ethics. Istanbul: Kurtis matbaacılık, 1999, 111 pages.

medical deontology of continental Europe in 1877. The fourth book (Dr. Pagel's work) could only be issued 20 years after him. Since 1900's the two courses were united, and all the medical history and ethics departments established in Turkey are responsible of both courses.

Once medical history was dominant over the medical deontology-ethics which override the former in the course of time. Today the official name of the course at both departments of Istanbul University is "Medical Ethics (Deontology) and History". In parallel with the international trend, medical ethical matters prevailed the debates of classical medical morality and deontology matters, medical ethics freed itself from medical morality concepts out of which it evolved. The lectures on medical ethics start to be treated in exemplification with clinical cases supported with the medical historical background of the topic and medical deontological aspects. Interactive character of the physician-patient relationship was much more emphasized than ever.

Medical history courses were carried out following the classical curriculum. By the establishment of the department in 1933, researches on the Turkish medical history have been enriched a great deal and this fact reflected on and tinged the lectures. Besides the classical classification, both schools teach also Ottoman-Turkish medicine too. As a matter of fact Turkish medical history became an independant course at Istanbul Medical School in 1999. But at recent years, the chronological style of lecturing has replaced with giving the evolutionary progress of mankind in view of medical history to procure a basis for the medical ethical disputes.

Specifically during the last decades, the increasing importance of medical ethical matters towards bioethics[23] has effected contemporaneously the content of the lectures at the medical schools of Istanbul University and the curriculum has been updated and reformized in coordination with the modern trends and approaches in medical ethics in the world.

[23] *A. R. Jonsen.* A Short History of Medical Ethics. New York Oxford University Press, 2000: 115-118.