

A Perspective To The Developments In The Turkish Dentistry In The Nineteenth Century

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Summary

Surgeons, some persons who applied minor surgery, barbers and midwives made dentistry up to the nineteenth century in Turkey. Old Turkish people gave a great importance to the cleanliness of mouth. They used misvaq (a kind of tooth brush) in order to brush their teeth. Many knowledge about dentistry can be seen in many Turkish medical manuscripts.

Dentistry began to become a scientific discipline in Turkey in the nineteenth century. Because other medical sciences also had a scientific condition at that time. In order to practice dentistry, a special document was necessary in Turkey at the ends of the nineteenth century. Thus, persons who applied dental practice in the hospitals, gave this document (instead of diploma) to personnel. These documents were approved by the Ministry of Medical School (Mekteb-i Tibbiye Bakanlıđı) and then the Directorship of Health after 1878. These persons were called as the dentists with permission. The first school of dentistry was opened in Istanbul (Kadırga) in 1909.

In this paper, we explain the development of the Turkish Dentistry in the nineteenth century and obtain some results.

Key Words: History of Dentistry, Turkish Dentistry, History of Medicine

The Development of The Turkish Dentistry in the Nineteenth Century And Some Documents

Turkish Dentistry began to become a modern discipline in the nineteenth century and it is highly developed in the twentieth century. Turkish Medicine obtained also a western character at that time (1, 2). Political reforms were made in all fields and some famous military and civilian hospitals were founded and many valuable Turkish physicians served in these hospitals. The first modern school of medicine was founded in 1827 (3, 4, 5). Its name was **Tiphane and Cerrahname-i Amire** (School of Medicine and Surgery in English) (6, 7).

Some physicians wrote some medical manuscripts about dentistry (8). **Chief-Physician Mustafa Behchet Efendi** (1774-1834) wrote a book called **Hezar-ı Esrar** together with **Chief-Physician Abdülhak Molla** (1786-1854), his brother. This book that was printed by **Hayrullah Efendi** in 1869 con-

tains simple knowledge about dentistry and some mystical believes are seen in this book also (9).

Moreover, some anonymous prescriptions about dentistry are found in a pamphlet belonging to the nineteenth century. A traditional prescription can be given as an example from this pamphlet called **Tooth Powder** (10):

The charcoal of bark of lime (10 drachms), Peruvian Bark (10 drachms) and magnesium oxide (3 drachms) are pounded and mixed .Peppermint oil (3 drops) is added to this mixture. So, this mixture smells very nice. The teeth are brushed with this powder and then are cleaned with water (folio 1b) (11).

Dentistry was applied by surgeons up to the nineteenth century in Turkey. Surgery was a technical branch and surgeons were trained with the way of master-apprentice. It is written in a document with the date of 1872 that 300 kuruş should be paid to Mehmet Necati, who was the teacher of the surgeons and some surgeons would dentistry in İstanbul (12). The candidates of surgeons were trained by physi-

cians or surgeons. Surgeons served under the order of chief-physician. Moreover, barbers, midwives also practiced on dentistry We see some knowledge of surgery in a code called **Kanunname-i Umumu Askeriyye (Code of Military Affairs)** with the date of 1872. Article 42 of this code mentions the duties of surgeons: Article 42: Surgeons together with physicians apply dental therapies to the patients during their morning visits (9).

Towards to the end of the nineteenth century, some novelties were seen in the field of dentistry. In order to practice dentistry, a special document was necessary in Turkey at the end of the nineteenth century. Thus, document was given to the person who was trained near experienced persons in the hospitals. After 1878, these documents were approved by the **Ministry of School of Medicine (Mektebi Tıbbiye Bakanlıđı in Turkish)** and by the Manager of Health. These persons were called as the dentists with permission.

The person who practiced on dentistry were divided into four:

- The persons who didn't educate on medicine and were trained in the field of nursery. They made small surgical applications and dental practice. Some of them practiced on only dentistry.
- Some persons were trained by a dentist in the foreign countries and a document was given to them after an exam in this field.
- Some persons graduated from the faculty of medicine and then became specialist in the field of surgery. Some of these specialists could make only dental practice.
- The dentists who educated in the field of dentistry in the foreign countries.

After the political reforms in the nineteenth century and at the beginnings of the twentieth century, we see some famous dentists in the military hospitals and in the Palace Hospital. Thus, dentists, physicians, pharmacists and surgeons were under the order of chief-physician. In a health book belonging to the hospital of palace (Topkapı Palace Hospital, Yıldız Palace Hospital etc.), we see the names of 98 physicians, dentists and pharmacists, which is found by **Dr. Dramur** as a result of her research. Dramur determined names, salaries of some dentists. For example,

we understand from these documents that famous **Dentist Halid Shazi Bey** made 4 gold teeth in 1916.

Dentists of palace treated their patients in the pharmacy of palace. Dentists made dental applications such as tooth extraction, porcelain, platinum fillings, bridges and total prosthesis (13). Moreover, modern tooth brushes were also used in the nineteenth century in Turkey.

The school of dentistry was also opened in İstanbul (Kadırğa) in 1909. Moreover, according to the "**Tababet ve Şuabatı Sanatlarının Tarzı İcrasına Dair Kanun**" (Article 32) with the date of 1928 and with the number of 1219, the persons who practiced on dentistry at that time, should get a diploma from the school of dentistry. The first director of the school of dentistry was **Halit Shazi Bey**. Afterwards, **Mustafa Münif Paşa** (up to 1916), **Dr. Mazhar Hüsnü Bey** (1916-1920), **Dr. Server Hilmi Bey** (1922-1930), **Dr. Sait Cemil Bey** (1930-1932) became the director of school of dentistry. The school of dentistry was 3 years up to 1933. The period of this school became 4 years after 1933 and **Ord. Prof. Dr. A. Kantorowicz** became the director of the school of dentistry. 5 professors, 6 associate professors and 14 assistants were present in this school(14,!5). The school of dentistry became the faculty of dentistry in 1964 as a faculty of İstanbul University (16,!7,!8) and today, this faculty is located at Çapa in İstanbul. Moreover, today, many dental faculties are present in Turkey.

Result

As a result, we can say that the Turkish Dentistry began to develop in the nineteenth century and, today, this discipline is applied with modern methods in Turkey.

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