

Development Of The Foundations Of Quarantine In Turkey In The Nineteenth Century And Its Place In The Public Health

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Summary

Infectious diseases such as leprosy, cholera, typhus etc were seen in Turkey in the nineteenth century, Moreover, the concept of contagion was known in the nineteenth century.. Physicians treated their patients in the separate departments of the hospitals in that century. Patients with leprosy were also hospitalized in the hospitals of leprosy. These hospitals are called as *darüşşifa* in the Ottomans' Period. It means the house of healing. The first leprosy hospitals were seen in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Anatolia. Thus, the first leprosy hospital was also established in Edirne in Turkey in the fifteenth century. Another hospital was Karacaahmet Leprosy Hospital. It was established in 1514. The nineteenth century is the period of the first modern quarantine foundations in Turkey. Thus, the first modern quarantine foundation was also founded in İstanbul in the nineteenth century. Mustafa Behçet who was a Turkish physician wrote a book called *Cholera Pamphlet* in the nineteenth century For the first time, the ships which came to İstanbul from the Black Sea were quarantined. In the nineteenth century. This was the first modern quarantine application in Turkey. During Cholera epidemic, the first quarantine foundation was established in Canakkale in 1835. Moreover, another Quarantine Management was also founded in İstanbul in 1837. This Management consisted of two boards. One of them was High Quarantine Assembly. Another Board was Quarantine Bureau. Moreover, the centers of Quarantine were also established in some cities of Turkey. Some knowledge about these centers are recorded in the Ottoman Archives' Documents. Quarantine Regulation with the date of 1851 contained some knowledge about quarantine personnel, the duties of quarantine doctors etc. The general directory of health of coast was founded instead of the management of quarantine in the Turkish Republic Period. Today, the centers of health of coast are under the order of this general directory.

In this paper, Ottoman Archives' documents about quarantine foundations are used as a material and are studied.

Introduction

Infectious diseases have been seen since ancient ages. Some foundations of quarantine were established for these diseases in many countries Patients with infectious diseases were separated in these foundations for **40 days** (1). This application has been made both in Turkey and in other countries for years. We know that quarantine word in English means 40, *quarante* in French. This word also means *quarantane* in Italian and *curantena* in Spanish. In Turkish, it is used as *karantina*. **Ahmet Mithat Efendi** who was a famous author used quarantine word (*karantina* in Turkish) as a separation of 40 days in the nineteenth century (2). *Quarantaine* (*karantina*) word is also written in a dictionary of **Sherafeddin Magmumi** called **Kamus-Tıbbi** with the date of 1910 (3). The

same descriptions are also found in **Dictionnaire Medical Français-Turc** (4).

Muslim physicians studied on contagious diseases in the Middle Ages and some Islamic physicians like **Ibn Sina**, **Razi** etc wrote some books on this topic (5). Thus, leprosy hospitals were found in these countries in the Middle Ages. Many European countries were also interested in epidemic diseases in the Middle Ages. For example, a Leprosy Hospital was founded in Lyon in 1472. The first quarantine foundation was established in Sainte Marie, Venice in the fourteenth century. Moreover, quarantine was also applied in Genoa in 1467 and then in Milano. In United Kingdom, some applications on quarantine were accepted in 1498 and in 1499. In Europe, we see many quarantine foundations and applications in the

fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (6,7)

The first leprosy hospitals of Anatolia were also established in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.. Infectious diseases such as leprosy cholera, typhus etc were seen in the Ottoman Period in Turkey. The concept of contagion was known at that time. Physicians treated their patients in the separate departments of the hospitals. For example, patients with leprosy were also hospitalized in the hospitals of leprosy. These hospitals are called as darussifa in the Ottoman Period. **Darussifa** means **the house of healing**. In Turkey, the first leprosy hospital of Europe was also established in Edirne in Turkey in the fifteenth century. Another hospital was **Karacaahmet Leprosy Hospital** (8,9). It was established in 1514. In these hospitals, the patients with leprosy were separated from healthy persons (10). Namely, they are accepted as a quarantine foundation (11).

Development of the Foundations of Quarantine in Turkey in the Nineteenth Century and its Importance from the Point of View of the Public Health

In Turkey, the first modern quarantine foundations were established in the nineteenth century. The first modern medical school was opened in 1827 in İstanbul in Turkey Moreover, the first studies on cadavers were made in 1842. We see that many modern military and civilian hospitals were also established in the nineteenth century. As a parallel to these developments, we see many foundations such as vaccination institutions, quarantine foundations. So, the nineteenth century is a century of the developments in the field of public health in Turkey.

The first cholera pandemy came to İstanbul in 1831 and **Mustafa Behchet** who was a Turkish physician wrote a book called **Cholera Pamphlet**.. At that time, for the first time, the ships which came to İstanbul from Black Sea were quarantined. This is the first modern quarantine application. During cholera epidemic, the quarantine foundation was established in Canakkale in 1835. This foundation which was in tents was transitory and was closed after epidemy. Moreover, another quarantine management was also established in İstanbul in 1837. This management



Figure 1- A Document About Quarantine

consisted of two boards. One of them was High Quarantine Assembly. Another board was High Quarantine Bureau.. The director of High Quarantine Assembly was the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

We see some fanatic persons who didn't accept quarantine precautions in the nineteenth century in Turkey.. According to a document with the date of 1839, at that time, these fanatics were punished with exile (13) From time to time, the centers of quarantine were also. established in some cities of Turkey A center of quarantine was founded in Tekirdag in 1839 (14). Other centers followed this.. In these centers, guardians, physicians and clerks were present (15,16). Some knowledge about these centers are recorded in the Otoman Archives. Moreover, **Quarantine Regulation** with the date of 1851 contained some knowledge about quarantine personnel, the duties of quarantine doctors etc. According to this

regulation, travelers with contagious disease were quarantined in the rooms and the guardians watched over the patients. In this regulation, the salaries of the guardians and physicians were written (17).

The general directory of health of coast was founded instead of management of quarantine in the Turkish Republic Period and this foundation carried to Ankara in 1927.

This is modern quarantine foundation of today and coast health centers, bacteriology foundations, contagious diseases hospitals, air stations etc are under the order of this general directory. Moreover, the Code of General Preventive Medicine with the date of 1930 is the main code of Turkey in the preventive medicine and it contains some knowledge in the field of quarantine.

Result

We can say that concept of microbe was known in Turkey in the nineteenth century and the patients with epidemic disease were separated in the hospitals. Today, epidemic diseases are seen very little because of the applications of preventive medicine and quarantine foundations in Turkey.

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