



PROF.DR.BEDİ.N.SEHSUVAROĞLU (1914-1977) , A FAMOUS TURKISH HISTORIAN OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY AND ECZACILIK TARİHİ DERSLERİ (LECTURES ON THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY) , HIS BOOK

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Summary

Reason for this study is to study an important book of Sehsuvaroğlu , a famous Turkish historian of medicine and pharmacy from the point of history of medicine and pharmacy.As method , Sehsuvaroğlu's biography is given as chronological and his book's parts are commented .Here, the main aim is to comment on this book.

Prof.Dr.Bedi.N.Sehsuvaroglu who was born in İstanbul in 1914 completed his primary and high school education in Kabatas and Kadiköy in İstanbul and graduated from İstanbul Faculty of Medicine in 1939. He served as a physician in various places of Turkey . Afterwards , he also became professor of history of medicine in 1962. Sehsuvaroğlu who died in 1977 was the director of the department of deontology , İstanbul Faculty of Medicine.

Eczacılık Tarihi Dersleri (Lectures on History of Pharmacy) is one of the most important books of Sehsuvaroğlu.It is in Turkish and with the date of 1970.This book which is 423 pages gives the development of the pharmacy from the ancient ages to today .In this book ,both Western pharmacy and Turkish pharmacy are present .Moreover, many knowledge on Turkish medical manuscripts are present .In this book , this famous author specifies uses and effects of drugs in these manuscripts.

As a result, **Prof.Dr.Bedi. N Sehsuvaroğlu** is an important Turkish author and his books mention many important topics on history of medicine and pharmacy . One of these books is Eczacılık Tarihi Dersleri(Lectures on History of Pharmacy) .

Prof.Dr.Bedi.N.Sehsuvaroglu who was born in İstanbul in 1914 completed his primary and high school education in Kabatas and Kadiköy in İstanbul and graduated from İstanbul Faculty of Medicine in 1939. He served as a physician in various places of Turkey . Afterwards , he also became professor of history of medicine in 1962. **Sehsuvaroğlu** who died in 1977 was the director of the department of deontology , İstanbul Faculty of Medicine.

Sehsuvaroglu's Book with the name of **Eczacılık Tarihi Dersleri** in Turkish (**Lectures on History of Pharmacy**) is 423 pages and it is a very important book. It was published in 1970 in İstanbul in Turkey. In this book,both western pharmacy and Turkish pharmnacy are present.According to **Sehsuvaroglu**, history of medicine and history of pharmacy is detailed sciences . To follow the medical developments from the prehistorical and primitive ages to nowadays is very important from the point of view of the history of pharmacy.

We see **Sehsuvarolu's** thoughts in the introduction of this book on hstory of medicine and pharmacy. According to **Sehsuvaroglu** , to study history of civilization and history of medicine and pharmacy is very valuable. Historical periods are also found in medicine and pharmacy as in every science. We know that history is a science to get a more trustworthy

position for today by examining yesterday, in order to prepare a better future than both past and today by avoiding from mistakes for tomorrow. But, the history is as useful as the historian can be objective and can appraise the events in the conditions of that time. We know that the history searches for the migrating results of the past civilization, directs the civilizations of tomorrow. It teaches the generations of today who are the architect of tomorrow to give the decrees of value not in space but in time. It defenses us from deciding according to limited experiments and observations.

The history that is written for educated (cultured) man is rather than chronology and biography is a science which searches for the results of events which rotates in environments in where, past personages were trained to be valuable in history. That is, it doesn't remain on the surface, it goes in depth. The histories that are written for the communities of people, mostly state a lot of events and heroic men. But, history couldn't reach for positivism of mathematics, because it is social science such as sociology, law and philosophy . The first fruit of the thought of man also became theology. Moreover, the first fruit of the thought of man also became theology. In fact, the first man who opened his eyes an unknown world for himself, wherever he looked, met with fear and surprise and he looked for a support. Thus, he materialized and symbolized every one of powers of physics which was imagined and at the end idols arose. The philosophy is the first branch of thought that is separated from theology.

Medicine is at the same age as the first man and even, with all living creatures. Primitive men, even the first living creatures used their instincts in natural effects such as the changes of climate, winds, the floods, earthquakes and in the cases of diseases or injuries. These instincts of animals continuously remained in the same form. But, instincts of men developed by passing from various metaphysical, mystical, religious and empirical stages and they reached for modern medicine of today. For example, the snake which awakes from winter sleep doesn't see well. For this reason, it eats fennel at once.

The history of medicine also began with objective and scientific works and findings in the meaning of today. At first, medicine was separated from philosophy and then, many sciences such as alchemy which is the mother of modern chemistry, astrology, physics and mathematics became independent by separating from philosophy. Medicine has reached today by passing of some periods. **Sehsuvaroğlu** specified these periods as following in this book.

1. The Period of Instinct

In this period, men treated their diseases with their instincts

2. The Period of Religious Medicine

The knowledge of health with regard to instincts of men transferred to the famous persons of the community such as leaders of tribe, the heroic men, the priests and magicians

and so, the period of religious medicine arose. In this period, religious men treated the diseases and religious causes such as the angers of the God were accepted as the reasons for the diseases.

3. Mystical Period

Mystical period also developed from religious thoughts. The first man was unable to understand the reasons of diseases except for exceptional illnesses. Thus, the stars, natural events such as the change of climate, eclipse, storms, lightning, and thunder were accepted as the reasons for diseases during many centuries. Moreover, the first man thought that the causes of the diseases were the anger of the demons. That is, the hate of the demons and natural events were accepted as the causes of the diseases. These were caused of many sinful actions. For example, the smell of pitch took out demons and so, the patient was cured in this way. Moreover, some mineral and vegetal drugs such as henna, salt, aloe were burnt to take out the demons from the body. Furthermore, to read religious prayers, to sacrifice were the methods that were applied for religious purpose. Demons can be the first explanation of microbe concept of today. Because, according to primitive men, the results of acute diseases, convulsions, rheumatism, paralysis and neurotic pains, insanity convulsions, cholera and smallpox, epidemic diseases, all of them are the entrance of demons into the body.

4. Empirical Period

In this period, the diseases were treated with drugs. That is, men made use of various plants for their diseases. This period was also present in the primitive medicine. empirical applications are also seen in the primitive tribes of today.

Afterwards, medicine reached the scientific period in the period of **Hippocrates** (in the fifth century BC) in the ancient Greece.

As it is seen that the development of medicine, that is, the history of medicine is a very broad branch and it has a great emphasis. Moreover, medical ethics is also a science that the scientific men have emphasized since **Hippocrates**, the founder of scientific medicine in the fifth century BC.

Sehsuvaroglu mentioned the importance of history of medicine and pharmacy. According to **Sehsuvaroglu** medical history is an important science from the point of various causes:

1) This branch is seen as the only cultural scientific branch. Moreover, this branch is often accused of dealing with old theories. But, modern medicine depends upon certain basic

philosophical assumptions and scientific theories. It is true that modern medical theories of today will be the old theories of tomorrow and they will be the subjects of medical history.

2) To study and to teach the history of medicine and pharmacy to medical students is very necessary for the faculties of medicine and pharmacy, today. Medical history is full of interesting events and valuable lessons. For this reason, to study the medical history is useful for students and scholars.

3) Many scientific methods are found to investigate this science. But, perhaps the most usual reason for studying medical history, is the desire to understand medicine itself and to grasp its techniques, its organization and its underlying ideas. Thus, the medical systems of earlier times are instructive both in their similarities and in their dissimilarities to medicine of today. On the other hand, in spite of all the unfamiliar theories and techniques, the medicine of former periods has many important similarities to our own system. Most of the problems were the same, the study of how solutions were approached, obtained or missed in the past, helps in findings or at least understanding the solutions of our own time. Answers given to problems today become more intelligible when they are seen as the continuation of answers given in former times.

4) One of the great obstacles to an understanding of modern medicine is its complexity, its incredible wealth of seemingly unrelated details. To solve this complexity is necessary to investigate medical history. Because, the historical details are written in the chronological form in the medical history.

5) Furthermore, to study the medical history supplies the possibility of comparison with modern medicine of today. Moreover, the study of universal medicine of every nation is very important from the point of learning knowledge of the nations about medicine and so, to learn medical history is very necessary.

6) History of Medicine and Pharmacy is more than mental gymnastics. The history of clinical observation and therapeutics, and particularly of diseases, furnished data which will still yield new insights. A person who learns the medical history, understands how the truth of today will be the mistake of tomorrow and he accepts the new realities.

7) Medical history also emphasized social factors of disease and health. Powerful social factors determine whether people fall sick or not, and how and with what results they are treated.

8) Moreover, medical history emphasizes folkloric medicine. We know that folklore is

a science of daily life and culture of people. Folkloric medicine also has some primitive treatments and false beliefs as in other professions. A scientist must investigate the scientific characteristic of the method of a treatment among people and its source. There are two different kinds of folkloric treatments of various disorders among people in Turkey. One of them is the organic treatments and in these therapies, various drugs are used in the form of primitive prescriptions. Pharmacological effects of some drugs are also accepted in modern medicine. Thus, the scientific validity of some primitive information that has been applied since ancient ages, is proved by scientific investigations. But, some primitive methods haven't pharmacological effects. So these kinds of therapies are harmful to the patients. Today, some formulas with respect to drugs are given to people by Herbalists in some cities of Turkey and these primitive formulas are prepared in the form of some pharmaceutical preparations such as pill, infusion, powder, suppository, fumigation and ointment.

The second kind of folkloric treatment is applied for psychological diseases. This method is called moral therapies and in this method, the power of suggestion is used. The therapies with suggestion (Psychotherapy) have also been used since ancient ages. Psychotherapy was a way of therapy in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Rome. Thus, priest-physicians of Mesopotamia collected drugs in the moon-light, because the moon was the God of health. The priest-physicians of Egypt usually used drugs together with prayers.

Primitive therapeutical forms gathered from people are useful examples from the point of telling the truths people. Moreover, the primitive characteristics or true sides of this knowledge are compared with modern medicine and so, some results are obtained.

Today, the investigations with respect to history of medicine and pharmacy have generally possessed a classical appearance. That is, a medical historian must not only classify the events in the past, but also he must compare modern medical knowledge of today with the studies with regard to the past and then he must comment about the future.

As it is seen that history of pharmacy and medicine is a very broad field and it has a great emphasis from the point of various causes.

Sehsuvaroglu gave some knowledge on Turkish Medical Manuscripts in this book. Moreover, he studied many drugs in these manuscripts. This famous Turkish author also studied the development of pharmacy in the ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, ancient India, ancient China, ancient Israel, ancient Iran, ancient Greece, ancient Rome.

Moreover, he wrote the therapies with drugs in these civilizations. Sehsuvaroglu gave some knowledge about the causes and therapies of some diseases and mentioned ancient codices.

Şehsuvaroğlu's book contains 5 chapters. These chapters are as follows..

- 1) Development of Medicine and Pharmacy in the Ancient Ages
- 2) Medicine and Pharmacy in the Middle Ages.
- 3) Medicine and Pharmacy in the Turkish Islamic States
- 4) Medicine and Pharmacy in Europe.
- 5) Medicine and Pharmacy in the Anatolian Turks.

In the first chapter, some diseases' therapies, the causes of the diseases, therapeutical methods, some drugs and codices are pointed out in the ancient ages. In the second chapter, we see the developments in the pharmacy in the middle ages. In this chapter, some knowledge on the pharmacy in the Western World and in the Islamic periods in the East are given.

The third chapter of this book gives medicine and pharmacy in the Turkish Islamic States. Some drugs, therapeutical methods, the causes of diseases and hospitals are given in Turks in the preislamic period and in the Turkish Islamic States. The fourth chapter specifies the developments on the pharmacy in Europe. In the last chapter, we see medicine and pharmacy in the Anatolian Turks. The developments in the Ottoman Period and in the Turkish Republic Period are also specified. Şehsuvaroğlu gives some knowledge about Famous Turkish Physicians and specifies their medical manuscripts. In these manuscripts diseases and their therapies with many drugs are present.

In this book, **Şehsuvaroğlu** specified famous Turkish physicians and their manuscripts along centuries. We can give an example from them. **Salih bin Nasrullah** lived in the seventeenth century. He is a well-known Turkish physician. This author mentioned some drugs in his manuscript with the name of **Gayet al-Beyan fi Tedbir-i Beden al-İnsan**. For example, for tooth-ache, henbane, the seeds of poppy, camomile, roses are boiled with vinegar and water and this mixture is given to patients in the form of gargle. **Şehsuvaroğlu** gave many samples about Turkish physicians and their treatments with drugs.

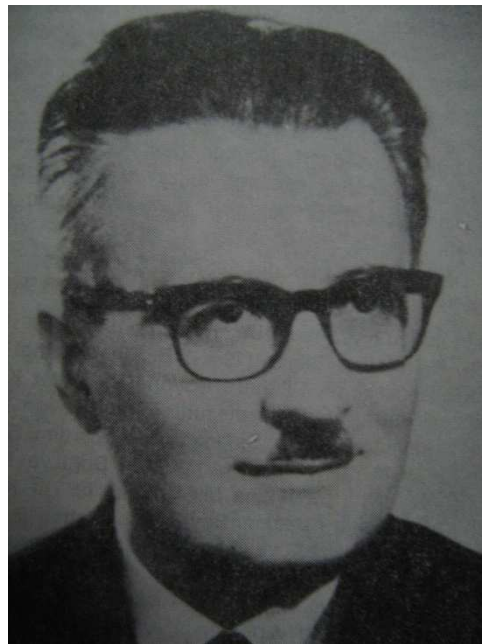
As a result, **Prof. Dr. Bedi. N Şehsuvaroğlu** is an important Turkish author and his books mention many important topics on history of medicine and pharmacy. One of these books is *Eczacılık Tarihi Dersleri* (Lectures on History of Pharmacy).

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ECZACILIK TARİHİ DERSLERİ

Prof. Dr.
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ve
Mısırlı bir Rahip - Hekim - Eczacı**

