



Illustration of treatment for "Mâl-I Hulyâ (Hypochondria)" or cauterization for certain neurotic disorders in *Cerrahiyetü'l Haniyye* (Imperial Surgery) by Şeraffedin Sabuncuoğlu (circa 15th century).

Spring 2024

Bacteria, Bodies, and Empires: Medicine and Healing in the Eastern Mediterranean (15th-21st c.)

Instructor: Seçil Yılmaz

Schedule: MW 1:45-3:15

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact: yilmazse@upenn.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Bacteria, Bodies, and Empires is a survey course about the history of medicine in the Eastern Mediterranean from early modern period to the present. It addresses the major issues and questions concerning bodies, diseases, and medical institutions within the context of major historical developments in the world and region's history. The course looks at how medicine, knowledge, and practices about diseases and bodies changed political and social conditions, as well as how socio-political changes defined and transformed people's perceptions of health, life, and the environment. Scholars have frequently examined the history of medicine in Eastern Mediterranean societies, either in relation to Islamic culture in the early modern period or, more recently, in relation to Westernization and modernization. By situating the history of medical knowledge and practices in the Eastern Mediterranean within global history, this course seeks to challenge these fixed paradigms and shed light on questions and research agendas that will unearth the encounters, connections, and mobility of bacteria, bodies, and medical methods among various communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of key themes related to history of body, medicine, disease, and public health in the history of pre-modern and modern Middle East.
- ✓ Acquire basic knowledge and develop analytical skills about the current literature on history of science and medicine in the predominantly Muslim Mediterranean

- ✓ Comprehend different historical methodologies using science and medicine as an analytical tool to understand historical contexts informing empire, colonialism, racial segregation, patriarchy, etc.
- ✓ Develop analytical skills through discussion, research, and various writing assignments.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance, Participation	20%
Discussion Board	25 %
Short Paper #1	15 %
Short Paper #2	20%
Final Paper	20%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction

The key concepts in the History of Science and Medicine, Islam, and the Middle East

Week 2: Making of the Modern World

Week 3: Black Death in the Mediterranean

Week 4: Marginal Bodies and Disability in Islam and Early Modern Ottoman

Week 5: Of Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution

Week 6: Modern Times: Medicine, Public Health, and Colonialism

Week 7: Epidemics and Empire

Week 8: Colonial Encounters I: Psyche-sciences, Insanity, and Colonialism

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10: Colonial Encounters II: Medical Missions, Religious or Otherwise

Week 11: Sex, Medicine, and Colonialism

Week 12: Nation, Nationalism, and Medicine

Week 13: After the Empire: Race and the Nation

Week 14: The Invention of the Global Health in the Age of Cold War

Week 15: Statecraft and Medicine at the turn of the 20th Century

Week 16: Wrap up!