Cemil Topuzlu

THE MASTER OF MODERN SURGERY

by Dr. Sait Naderi

As the cradle of many civilizations Anatolia has been the origin of practices of medicine. Dr. Cemil Topuzlu is one pioneer in modern surgery on these fertile grounds.

The contemporary Republic of Turkey is located in junction of Europe and Asia. Anatolia, the Asian part of Turkey, is one of the oldest parts of the world which mankind either selected as a home or crossed on the way to the west (Europe), the east (Asia), and the South (Middle East and Africa). This led to concentration of influences of a variety of civilizations and cultures. Thus, all the civilizations in and around Anatolia influenced the formation of medicine and surgery in pre-modern era.

The modern era of surgery started in 19th century. The developments in modern anesthesiology and the use of antiseptics and asepsis techniques were among the main factors contributing to this process. Development of modern surgery contributed to the development of spine surgery. Earlier application of neurosurgical techniques started at late 19th century by general surgeons.

Many have left some wisdom behind

Republic of Turkey was established in 1923. It can be accepted as the natural continuation of the previous civilizations in the same geographical area, including Seljuk (1071-1300 AD) and Ottoman Empires (1299-1923 AD). There are many civilizations before Seljuk and after Neo-Lithic, Bronze and Iron ages in Anatolia, including Hatti civilization (2500-2000 BC), Troy-II settlement (2500 - 2000 BC), Hatti and Hitite Principalities period (2000-1750 BC), Great Hitite Kingdom (1750-1200 BC), Hurri civilization, Troy-VI civilization (1800-1275 BC), Aegean migration and invasion from Balkans (1200 BC), the Anatolian Principalities during the Iron age (1200-700 BC), Urartu civilization (900-600 BC), the civilization of Phrygia (750-300 BC), Lydia, Caria and Lycia civilizations (700-300 BC), Ion civilization (1050-300 BC), Persian conquest (545 -333 BC), Hellenistic and Roman age (333 BC-395 AD) and the Byzantine civilization (330 -1453 AD).

The aforementioned historical background has been the main contributing factor connecting the past and today.

Advance in the Ottoman Period

The medicine of Ottoman Empire was a continuation of Seljuk Medicine. It began to be influenced by the western medicine in the 15th century but remained in the limits of Moslem medicine till 19th century, when it completely turned to the west. There was no interval between the medicines of the Seljuk and the Ottomans. During their prosperous period, the Ottomans built many hospitals in many cities.

Except for a few cases of practice of trepanation during the Ottoman period, there is no study regarding the extensive use of this technique in that age. The main aspect of medicine during this age was its Islamic-medieval characteristics. Turkish-Islamic tradition of medicine advanced during the Ottoman period.

In the first half of the 19th century the Ottoman Empire realized the failure of the traditional treatments and it was decided to establish novel medical institutes. In 14 Mart 1927 two separated institutions, Tophane (school of medicine) and Cerrahpasa (School of surgery) were founded in Istanbul. These schools were united in 1939 and re-named as ‘Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şâh-ane’ (Royal College of Medicine).

At the same period, there were exciting developments in surgery in Europe, including development of antiseptics and asepsis, developments in surgical techniques. In the second half of the century many Turkish physicians were sent to Europe for training. Cemil Topuzlu was among the first physicians who went to France. He completed his surgery training in Paris and returned to Turkey.

A man of medicine and state

Cemil Topuzlu (1866-1958) was the pioneer of modern Turkish surgery. Among many surgical procedures he applied in the late 19th century and early 20th century, there were many spinal procedures for spinal trauma and tuberculosis.

Topuzlu was born in Istanbul in 6 March 1866. He graduated from Gülhane Military School in 1886 and in 1887 went to Paris for surgery training, and worked with well known French surgeons. He returned in 1890 to Turkey, and started to work as surgeon in Haydarpaşa Military Hospital. In 1891 he was attended as associate professor of department of surgery of Military School of Medicine, and in 1894 became professor and the chair of this department.

In 1896, he was attended also as admistrator and chief surgeon of Yıldız Hospital, a hospital established for injured soldiers of Turkish-Greek war, and operated more than 2000 injured soldiers with very low (3%) mortality.

In 1909 he became the dean of new school of medicine of Istanbul Durlufu-nun University, and chair of department of surgery. In 1912, and 1919, he became mayor of Istanbul.

Dr. Cemil Topuzlu wrote many surgery related papers in different international journals, including La Presse Medicaule, La Semaine Medicaule, La Gazette Medicaule D’Orient, Archive Provinciales de Chirurgie, and Bulletin de la Societe de Chirurgie.

Spine related applications

The list of operations of Dr. Topuzlu was published in Gazete Medical Orient. In this journal there are two statistics related to applications performed between 1893 and 1897, and between 1900 and 1902.

Dr Topuzlu has operated 758 cases between 13 March 1893 and 31 December 1897. He reported improvement in 730 cases, and mortality in 27 cases. He performed surgery for Pott disease in three cases.

He reported 621 cases he operated between 1 January 1900 and 31 December 1902. He reported improvement in 621 cases, and mortality in 16 cases. He performed laminectomy during this period in three cases (two tuberculosis and one trauma cases). He published details of laminectomy in a case of Pott disease in 1905.

Dr. Topuzlu has operated many cases with different pathologies. Although spine related cases are not so much, his techniques and results revealed his masterpiece in this regard. Among 1385 operated cases, he reported 10 (0.72%) cases of spinal disorder. He performed laminectomy and drainage in cases with Pott disease. In some cases he applied Calot or Meudr procedures.

Aside from his medical studies, Cemil Topuzlu served as a mayor in Istanbul.

Şişli Hamidiye Etfal Hospital in Istanbul is one example to Ottoman era hospitals. (1899-1901)
“This congress is a great success”

SSE President Michael Mayer is quite content with this year’s meeting. Suggesting having more parallel sessions in the next congress, Mr. Mayer answered our questions for Spine Daily readers before going back home.

Mr. Mayer, are you happy with the congress?

I am very happy with the congress because in the successful history of Eurospine this is the most successful congress with the most participants, most abstracts admitted before the congress. As there were so many participants we were able to choose the best abstracts ever and the scientific program of the congress is very high quality.

What about the workshops?

Workshops have always been an important part of the program considering the scientific program on one hand and the space for new technologies sponsored by the industry on the other hand. Besides, workshops are useful for young professionals as they meet new technologies which may not be scientifically based for the time being but could be of much importance in the future. Workshops are also important for the industry to discuss the ideas with the participants.

Who constitutes the backbone of Eurospine community?

Historically surgeons have founded the society but in time other professionals became involved and our aim is to combine the works of researchers and scientists who dedicated their studies to conservative therapy as well and we want to involve them in our society in the following years. As being both a neurosurgeon and an orthopedic surgeon, I am one of those who would like to combine both sides.

Is there any issue to add next year’s congress that lacks this year?

To be honest nothing lacks in this congress, this is a perfect congress with a perfect location and we are all very happy. However we might modify the scientific program of the congress in the following years because when you have several applications, you can only choose 10 to 15 percent of the papers, there is no space for the others. If we change the format of the congress a little bit by adding parallel smaller sessions to the main sessions, participants with varying specialty and expertise will have the chance to meet their colleagues and exchange ideas. We might even have small workshops with case presentations.

During your term of office what developments have been made?

The executive committee is getting more and more dynamic; along with the changes in European healthcare system. We have to adapt to those changes in different countries in our field. We have to be more politically active towards healthcare policies, medical insurance companies and other healthcare providers because the above mentioned changes have severe influence on our society and we are to make our voice heard. We also have to attach importance to education not only for surgeons but also for the patients who are seeking for help on the internet and other sources they can reach. Due to the rapid and varied technology in our field there is hardly a thorough control which could be assessed as unbiased. In this token I believe our society should act as a referee.

I also have to add that our society works within different conditions from American Spine society that new technologies and developments can be displayed in our congress while our American colleagues are facing bureaucratic difficulties and restrictions concerning this issue. This also makes our congress and society much more popular among the companies and scientists; we have so many participants from all over the world.

What are your impressions on Istanbul?

Unfortunately it is my first visit to Istanbul and I can not find enough time to see the best of it during the day. I just have to content myself with evening excursions and second hand impressions of my wife who enjoys the city to the most. I feel that I have to come back here as I am already fascinated by what I have seen so far.

Workshops well attended

Yesterday “The Aging Spine/ Deformity In The Elderly” was one of the workshops to obtain a great audience. Some of the participants brought their own chairs for a comfortable surveillance but a few of them were still on foot due to the limited space. The first article was about “Spinal Stenosis In The Elderly”. R. Gunzburg acknowledged the participants about two treatment types. He told that the conservative treatment which the patients are not satisfied with causes physical therapy and epidural steroids of which efficacy are not proved yet. For the surgical treatment type, he emphasised the importance of patient’s satisfaction as well as the desire for decompression level. He reminded that these two types of treatment should be performed together for a successful result. Making a presentation on “Adult Scoliosis”, T. Lund signified the adult and elder scolioses as different cases like apples and oranges. In the third presentation on “Fragility Fractures In The Elderly” O. Schwarzenbach compared vertebraloplasty and kyphoplasty; two treatment types for fragility fracture occurrence. He pointed out that there is no golden strategy but the surgeon must choose a different strategy for each patient.

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Spine Daily interviewed with André Kaelin, local organizer of SpineWeek in 2008 on May 26-31 in Geneva. The meeting will be followed by European Football Championship.

What is the difference between European and SpineWeek?
SpineWeek is not a one society meeting but a "multi-society" meeting. At least six societies are registered for our meeting. For five days there will be presentations along with the annual meeting conferences and there will be combined sessions. There will be three European societies along with societies from the USA and South American and Brazilian societies.

What is the purpose of the SpineWeek?
The purpose is to synchronize the annual meetings of these leading scientific societies concerned with disorders of the spine on one location. By this way, participants have the opportunity to meet colleagues sharing the same interests and exchange ideas. Each society keeps their own scientific program selection.

How often are SpineWeek meetings organized?
Meetings are organized every four years. We can say that SpineWeek could be accepted as the Olympics of spine surgeons and researchers. Most of the doctors, exhibitors and other people involved are overwhelmed with annual meetings and considering the doctors' being the members of two or three different societies you can imagine how often they have to travel for those meetings. Once in four years they can all gather together on the same spot and it makes them save time by being more efficient.

Another interesting point about SpineWeek is that it is held in the city where the European Football championship is held. Our last meeting was in Porto and in 2008, along with SpineWeek, there will be European Football championship in Geneva. The championship and the meeting are organized consequently so spine and football fans can match both of their interests.

For further information about SpineWeek you can visit the website: www.spineweek.com

by Ayşe Özték

Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi, simply known as Mevlana, is an Islam mystic and philosopher in the Sufi tradition, a poet and the founder of the Mevlevi Order that has offered spiritual training for the last seven centuries. His doctrine advocates unlimited tolerance, positive thinking, goodness, and purity of heart, charity, indiscriminating love and understanding for all humanity, whatever their religion may be. This positive attitude towards different beliefs has attracted men of all sects and creeds. Mevlana's appeal to mankind is best expressed in this poem:

Come, come, whoever you are
Wanderer, worshipper of Fire or Idols
Come even though you have broken
your vows a thousand times,
Come, and come back again and again
Ours is not a caravan of despair.

Mevlana was born in 1207 in Balkh (present day Afghanistan), then he and his father and teacher Bahattin settled in Konya till his death in 1273. His second teacher was Sayyid Burhaneddin and his last spiritual guide was Shams of Tabriz. Mevlana composed numerous odes that were collected in a large volume titled 'Divan-i Kabir' and in his fifties he began to dictate his monumental work Mesnevi (Mathnawi), a guide book for his followers. It is considered a great spiritual masterpiece of the world heritage.

The teachings of Sufi mysticism is based on the transformation of the individual from the unenlightened state of 'faithlessness' where one lives in slavery to the 'false self', by leaving the desires of the material world to work towards a deeper perception of one's true humanity and by searching for understanding and universal love for all living creatures and by cultivating respect for others, humility, generosity and tolerance.

The whirling dance of the dervishes known as 'Sama' is part of the Mevlevi tradition, representing the mystical journey of men's spiritual ascent through mind and love towards the 'Perfect' or the eternal truth of God. The dervish holds his right hand palm turned up to the sky and left hand turned to the earth, symbolizing the transfer from the worldly to the spiritual. Similar to the solar system, where the planets turn around the sun, the dervishes turn both around themselves and follow an orbit around the center or 'God'. The Sama continues for a quite long time, accompanied by the rhythmic Mevlevi music of reed flute and drums till the dervishes arrive at 'Perfect' and then return from this journey as a man who have reached maturity, filled with love of God, ready to be of service to the whole creation, to all creatures without discrimination of race, belief, class or nationality.
DANCING BY THE BOSPHORUS

Gala goers danced to the Turkish traditional musics after having enjoyed their dinner. All seemed to be having marvelous time with the folk dances.

A lecture and a lecturer not to be missed

On the third day of the congress, a distinguished Turkish historian, Professor İlber Ortaylı gave an enriching speech on the history of Istanbul beginning from prehistoric times to the present day. This informative and interesting lecture included linguistic details of the city’s former names, its religious background and three big empires existed on the city. Ortaylı also pointed out some differences between western approach and his own approach in regards of history. He mentioned that Western World’s the calling the Orthodox Church as “Greek” was a complete mistake and that it should be called “Roman” Orthodox Church. Giving a brief overview on the architecture of Ottoman Empire, he said that Ottoman architects had a wide world vision and architectural taste as a result of being in different parts of the world and this vision showed itself in many masterpieces. He also mentioned the cosmopolitan character Istanbul has kept for centuries and that traces of her rich cultural heritage could be observed both in the language spoken here now (many words borrowed from Greek, Persian, Arabic, Slavic languages, French and Armenian) and in the varying ways of living.

Mr. Ortaylı, who is the current director of Topkapı Palace Museum, said the tourists have a lot to see in Istanbul. Upon our request for a tour recipe, he suggested a tour to city walls and then to the palaces and museums and then to Pera.