



## Letter to the editor regarding the cover editorial: “Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi (1771?–1826), who is the author of the first modern anatomy book *Mir’âtü’l-Ebdân fî Teşrihi Âzâü’l-İnsân* in the Ottoman Empire”

Alpen Ortug<sup>1</sup>

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Dear Editor:

I have read the manuscript titled “Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi (1771?–1826), who is the author of the first modern anatomy book *Mir’âtü’l-Ebdân fî Teşrihi Âzâü’l-İnsân* in the Ottoman Empire” which was recently published in *Child’s Nervous System*, with the first online date of 12 March 2019. I would like to congratulate authors for their intention to present such an important figure of Ottoman-Turkish medicine’s modernization period.

We have recently published a research article titled “*Miratü’l-Ebdan Fi Teşrih-i Azaül-İnsan: first printed illustrated anatomy book in Ottoman-Turkish medicine*” which was published in April 2018 in *Folia Morphologica* [1].

My co-authors and I are very surprised and disappointed to see this published editorial cover without any citation to our recent article which evaluated this subject in great depth and detail and provided with new *additional* knowledge. Instead, this editorial cover includes two self-citations out of five and the other citations are relatively very old to ours. It seems the article published in the journal has some missing and misleading points, such as the origin of the images. We have conducted a very detailed work about the origins of the images and were the first to identify the origin of the remaining images that were used except the ones Şânîzâde cited himself. But the editorial cover article states the origins of these images as “unknown,” which is not correct for now. According to our

research, 46 out of 56 images were received from the book of physician and anatomist Jean Palfin (1650–1730) [1]. The remaining images were cited from author himself as collected from Bernard Siegfried Albinus (1697–1170), Raymond Vieussens (1614–1715), R. Drake (1667–1707), Clopton Havers (1657–1702), Albrecht von Haller (1708–1777), Joseph Guichard Duverney (1648–1730), and Bartolomeo Eustachi (1513?–1574) [2]. The images were drawn exactly the same way with minimal changes [1].

Another very important issue is, Bahsi and Bahsi conclude the article at the end with a statement as “Şânîzâde performed dissection and made comparisons to the knowledge of other scientists” and citing the article of Aciduman et al. [2]. However, this statement is a citation mistake. Aciduman et al. state the following sentences:

*In Turkish “Eserde, sunulan bilgilerin sadece tercüme yoluyla değil kişisel deneyim ve diseksiyon yapılarak da edinilmiş olduğuna dair izler bulunmaktadır, fakat bu durum Şânîzâde’nin andığı hekimlerin eserleri de incelenerek açıklığa kavuşturulmalıdır.” and in English “There is some evidence that the knowledge presented in the works was not only obtained via translation, but also via observation during dissection. This needs more research on the works of the western antecedents of Şanizade”.*

Obviously, Aciduman et al. state in their article that there are some clues that Şânîzâde might have been conducted dissections but this should be enlightened via more research in the abstract of both Turkish and English versions of the sentence in 2009 [2]. However, we already identified the unknown images and discussed this in our research the previous year. Şânîzâde *most*

✉ Alpen Ortug  
alpenortug@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup> School of Medicine, Department of Anatomy, Istanbul Medipol University, Istanbul, Turkey

*likely* did not perform dissections on his own, because this period was the time dissections were forbidden in the Ottoman Empire and the book was mostly a translation from Bertin and Palfin's book [1, 3]. Strict statements about historical figures and cases require strong proves which is now absent.

I sincerely hope that you will consider my request and help correct this error in order to avoid sharing misinformation with the readers of *Child's Nervous System*.

Kind regards,

### Compliance with ethical standards

**Conflict of interest** The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

### References

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3. Palfijn J. Anatomie chirurgicale ou description exacte des parties du corps humain", Paris, La veuve Cavelier et fils, 1753, 2 volumes. Paris. Bibliothèque du Musée de l'Homme

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