

# İstanbul Seririyatı (1919-1952): Medical Periodical Digitalization, Index and Open Access Project

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** İstanbul Seririyatı (1919-1952) was a pioneering and comprehensive medical journal in the field of neuropsychiatry in Türkiye. Published monthly for 33 years, the journal comprises a total of 389 issues and over 10,000 pages. This project aimed to digitize the entire archive of the journal and make it freely accessible. This article provides an overview of the journal “İstanbul Seririyatı” and the website [www.istanbulseririyati.com](http://www.istanbulseririyati.com), where its archive has been recently made available online, also addressing its historical context and significance.

**Methods:** The project, which spanned approximately six years, focused on locating all issues of the journal and compiling a complete collection. The primary goal was to obtain the most difficult-to-find Ottoman Turkish issues published between 1919 and 1929, which were collected from various individuals, institutions, libraries, antiquarian booksellers, auctions, and online marketplaces. Once acquired, they were professionally scanned and converted into PDF format. From 1929 onwards, the journal was published in Latin-script Turkish, and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology was applied to facilitate text searchability whenever possible. The project was structured in four phases: identifying and gathering all journal issues, scanning and digitalizing them, creating a detailed index for each issue, and establishing an online platform for free and open access to the archive. For each issue, the medical section has been indexed with details including the author, title, and page numbers, and a structured keyword system was developed to enhance searchability within the archive.

**Results:** The complete archive of İstanbul Seririyatı ([www.istanbulseririyati.com](http://www.istanbulseririyati.com)) has now been made available online. The website offers advanced search

functionalities based on year, issue, topic, author, concept, and keyword, ensuring ease of use for both researchers and enthusiasts. Users can read journal issues online and also download them. The website's blog section features articles exploring İstanbul Seririyatı's historical legacy, examples from various years, and in-depth discussions of its content. Moreover, selected articles from the 1919-1929 Ottoman Turkish issues have been transliterated into modern Turkish, making them more accessible to contemporary readers. It can be said that a serious historical gap in this field has been filled with online access to İstanbul Seririyatı, which sheds light on the birth and development years of neuropsychiatry in Türkiye.

**Conclusion:** İstanbul Seririyatı serves as a vital resource for tracking discussions and transformations in neuropsychiatry and various other branches of medicine. The journal was organized into two main sections: medical and paramedical. By bringing together physicians from various medical disciplines, particularly neuropsychiatry, İstanbul Seririyatı served as a platform that functioned like a school of thought, allowing young doctors to publish their first works and research, ultimately shaping the future of the profession. The digitalization of such rare collections ensures accessibility to valuable resources while preserving cultural heritage and securely transmitting it to future generations. It is hoped that this initiative will benefit not only today's researchers but also future generations, as İstanbul Seririyatı is now accessible to the neuropsychiatry community and anyone interested in the accumulation and legacy of medical knowledge.

**Keywords:** Neuropsychiatry, Şişli müsamereleleri, Mazhar Osman, history of psychiatry, history of neurology, history of medicine

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## INTRODUCTION

*İstanbul Seririyatı* (Cliniques de Stamboul) is one of the pioneering, long-standing, and most comprehensive journals published in the field of neuropsychiatry in Türkiye. Published regularly and monthly for 33 years between 1919 and 1952, the journal comprises a total of 389 issues and over 10,000 pages, with its final issue serving as a farewell to Dr. Mazhar Osman Uzman. We are delighted and honored to announce that this extensive collection has now been made accessible through a comprehensive project. This article will briefly discuss *İstanbul Seririyatı*, one of the most significant periodicals in the history of Ottoman-Turkish medicine, particularly in the field of neuropsychiatry. Additionally, we will introduce the final product of our project (1) –[www.istanbulseririyati.com](http://www.istanbulseririyati.com)– which includes the digitalization of all journal issues, the creation of a detailed index and keyword system, and the provision of open access to the archive.

### Highlights

- İstanbul Seririyatı was a medical journal published from 1919 to 1952.
- It pioneered neuropsychiatric publishing in Türkiye.
- All issues are now digitally accessible via this project.
- The journal archive is crucial for medical history.
- Researchers can access the archive at [www.istanbulseririyati.com](http://www.istanbulseririyati.com).

## Medical Periodicals

One of the most important sources for modern medical history studies is periodical medical journals published at regular intervals. In addition to enabling the tracking of scientific, cultural, artistic, political, literary, and intellectual history, periodicals also provide contemporary articles and commentaries on current developments of their time (2).

The first Turkish-language medical journal published in Türkiye was Vakayi-i Tıbbiye, which was launched in 1849. Issued in 15 editions between 1849 and 1850 by the Imperial School of Medicine (Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane), Vakayi-i Tıbbiye aimed to explain medical cases, translate and convey medical events from abroad, educate the public on health issues, and introduce certain medical materials and drug compositions to doctors (3–5).

From the publication of this first Turkish medical journal until the Alphabet Reform in 1928, numerous Turkish-language (Ottoman script) medical newspapers and journals were published (6). Three main challenges concerning old-script medical periodicals can be identified: the difficulty of accessing scattered journals in different institutions, incomplete collections, and language barriers. Due to these obstacles, systematic and critical evaluations of medical periodicals have remained limited. Deepening research often required years of effort to collect scattered volumes.

Besides their medical literature value, old-script medical periodicals are crucial sources for examining and interpreting topics such as medical education, the transformation of health institutions, the evolution of medical terminology, medical statistics, public health measures, health policies, and the socio-political aspects of medicine in Türkiye, as well as scientific developments of the 19th and 20th centuries (7). To fully grasp the historical context and significance of *İstanbul Seririyatı*, which distinguishes itself from other periodicals with both its long publication period and content, it is essential to briefly discuss the journals published before and after it. This will highlight the journal's foundational objectives, authors, content, institutional and historical background, and its unique role and significance.

### Şişli Müsamereleri (1916–1918)

The emergence of discussions and the first publications in the field of neuropsychiatry in Türkiye became possible only after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Era in 1908. During this period, two significant medical journals, Tababet-i Hazira (Modern Medicine, 1909–1912) (8) and Tababet-i Seririye (Clinical Medicine, 1914), began publishing the first articles on neuropsychiatry. In 1909, Dr. Mazhar Osman Uzman published the first Turkish-language psychiatry book, Tababet-i Ruhiye (Psychiatry), with the assistance of Şükrü Kâmil Talimcioğlu, the owner of Tababet-i Hazira. The first journal dedicated entirely to this field was Şişli Müsamereleri (1916–1918) (9).

With the onset of World War I, Dr. Mazhar Osman Uzman was appointed chief physician at the French La Paix Hospital in Şişli, which had been seized by the Ottoman government. Between 1916 and 1918, he organized monthly scientific meetings at the hospital, and the cases presented at these meetings were published in the journal Şişli Müessesesinde Emraz-ı Akliye ve Asabiye Müsamereleri (10). Şişli Müsamereleri is also recognized as the first neuropsychiatry journal published in Turkish. The journal was published in a total of 11 volumes, and its content was based on speeches and presentations made during the scientific meetings. The authors included some of Mazhar Osman's colleagues and assistants from La Paix, as well as specialists and physicians from other institutions (9,11).

Following the end of the war and the armistice, La Paix Hospital was returned to its original owners, the Filles de la Charité congregation. As

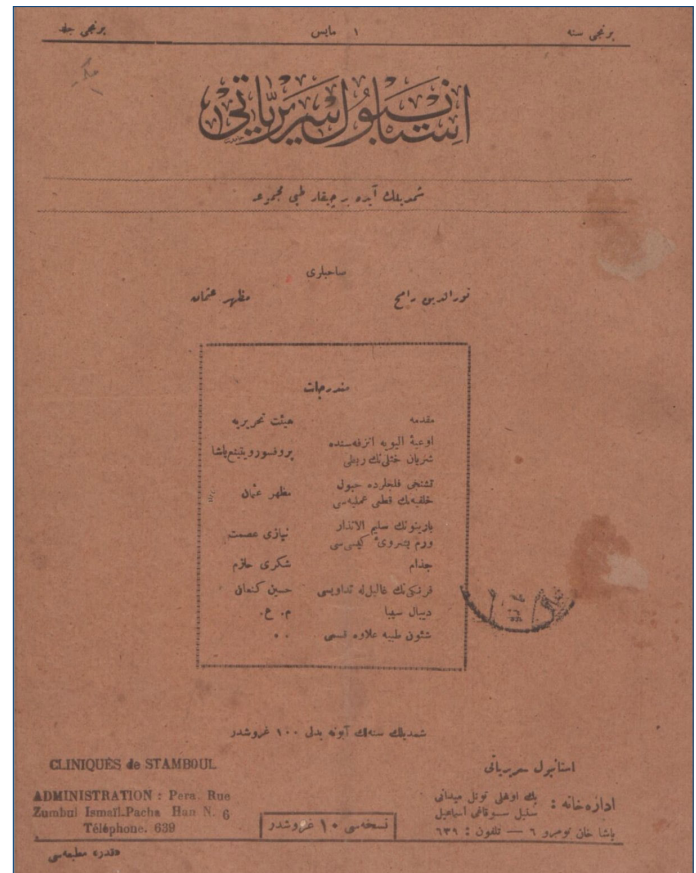


Figure 1. Cover of the first issue of İstanbul Seririyatı, May 1, 1919.

a result, the publication of Şişli Müessesesinde Emraz-ı Akliye ve Asabiye Müsamereleri ceased in October 1918. However, just a few months later, on May 1, 1919, Mazhar Osman launched *İstanbul Seririyatı*. Some of the presentations that were delivered at Şişli Müsamereleri but remained unpublished in the journal were later included in the first issues of *İstanbul Seririyatı* (12) (Fig. 1).

### İstanbul Seririyatı

*İstanbul Seririyatı* is one of the most significant periodicals for tracking the transition, continuity, and transformation between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Türkiye in the field of healthcare. The term “Seririyat” refers to inpatient treatment clinics, and the journal not only followed Istanbul’s medical agenda but also provided insight into Türkiye’s broader healthcare developments. The journal was divided into two sections: medical and paramedical.

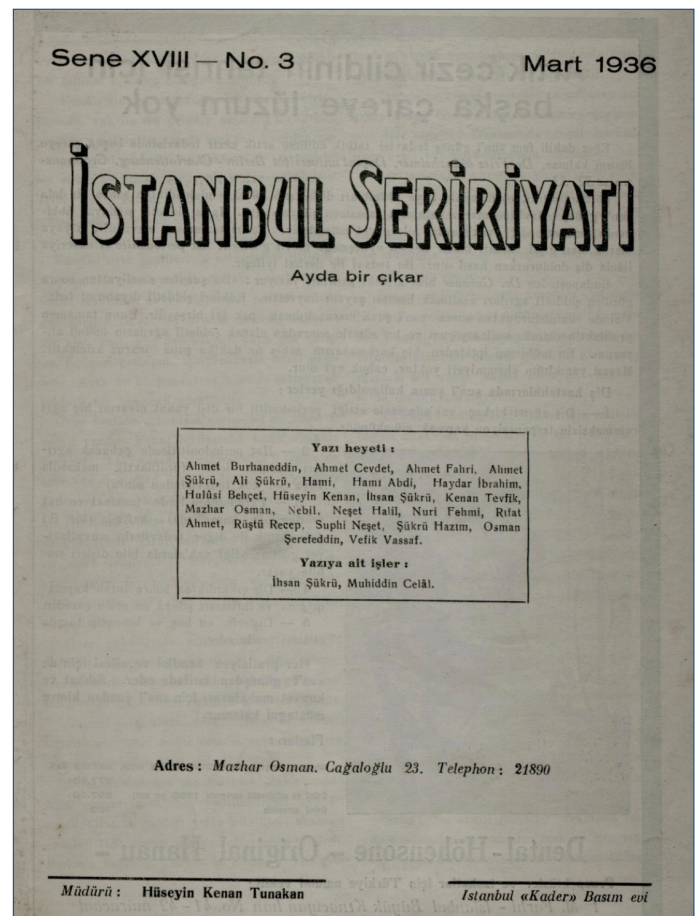
The medical or clinical section covers advancements in the field of medicine, original articles, case reports, discussions on contemporary medical debates in both Türkiye and the world, translations, and commentaries. The paramedical section, titled Supplement (İlave), featured a variety of content, particularly under the Reflections of the Month (Ayn Akisleri) heading, including updates on medical developments, conference and book announcements, letters to the editor, critiques, travel notes, advertisements, and public notices. Additionally, this section contains news from medical institutions in İstanbul and Türkiye, popular articles, necrologies of physicians, cartoons, literary pieces, and poems.

Founded under the leadership of Mazhar Osman, *İstanbul Seririyatı* evolved over its 33-year publication span, with its author pool continuously expanding and renewing itself (Fig. 2, 3). The journal published articles





**Figure 2.** Cover of İstanbul Seririyatı, November 1926 (Year 8, Issue 7), a thematic issue dedicated to Dr. Emil Kraepelin's passing.



**Figure 3.** Cover of İstanbul Seririyatı (Year 18, Issue 3, March 1936).

from some of the most prominent physicians of the time, as well as from young doctors who later became leading figures in their fields. Notable contributors included Mazhar Osman Uzman, İhsan Şükrü Aksel, Ahmet Şükrü Emed, Fahrettin Kerim Gökay, Şükrü Hazım Tiner, Hüseyin Kenan Tunakan, Hulusi Behçet, Musa Kazım, Nazım Şakir Şakar, Ahmet Burhanettin Toker, Ali Şükrü Şavlı, Süheyl Ünver, Kazım İsmail Gürkan, İhsan Sami Garan, Osman Şerefettin Çelik, Ahmet Asım Onur, Ahmet Fahri Arel, Kazım Dağyolu, and Rıdvan Cebiroğlu. By bringing together physicians from various medical disciplines, particularly neuropsychiatry, *İstanbul Seririyatı* served as a platform that functioned like a school of thought, allowing young doctors to publish their first works and research, ultimately shaping the future of the profession.

*İstanbul Seririyatı* is the only journal that began publication before the establishment of the Republic and continued afterward without being affiliated with any institution; in terms of scientific content, it has been one of the highest-quality medical journals. Additionally, it can be regarded as the foremost predecessor of all specialty medical journals (such as those in general surgery and obstetrics) that began publication after 1928. Beyond its medical section, the journal's paramedical segment provided a panoramic view of Turkish medical history as seen through the eyes of medical professionals.

### Digitalization, Indexing, and Open Access

A complete and comprehensive collection of *İstanbul Seririyatı*, as discussed in terms of its historical background, significance, and content, was not available in any institution or library. When we embarked on this project approximately six years ago, our primary goal was to locate

all issues of the journal and compile a complete collection. To achieve this, we first focused on obtaining the most difficult-to-find Ottoman Turkish issues published between 1919 and 1929. These issues were collected from various individuals, institutions, libraries, antiquarian booksellers, auctions, and online marketplaces. Once acquired, they were professionally scanned and converted into PDF format. From 1929 onwards, the journal was published in Latin-script Turkish, and whenever possible, Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology was applied to facilitate text searchability.

The project was structured in four phases: the first involved identifying and gathering all journal issues, the second focused on scanning and digitalizing them, the third entailed creating a detailed index for each issue, and the final phase established an online platform for free and open access to the archive. After years of dedicated effort, the *İstanbul Seririyatı* Archive ([www.istanbulseririyati.com](http://www.istanbulseririyati.com)) has now been made available online.

For each issue, the medical section has been indexed with details including the author, title, and page numbers. Additionally, unique tags were assigned to each issue, and a structured keyword system was developed to enhance searchability within the archive. These keywords encompass names, diseases, concepts, locations, institutions, and more. The website offers advanced search functionalities based on year, issue, topic, author, concept, and keyword, ensuring ease of use for both researchers and enthusiasts.

Besides reading journal issues online, users can also download them. The website's blog section features articles exploring *İstanbul Seririyatı*'s

historical legacy, examples from various years, and in-depth discussions of its content. Moreover, selected articles from the 1919–1929 Ottoman Turkish issues have been transliterated into modern Turkish, making them more accessible to contemporary readers.

### The Legacy of İstanbul Seririyatı

*İstanbul Seririyatı* was published until Dr. Mazhar Osman's passing in August 1951 and was officially concluded the following year (1952) with a commemorative issue published by his students and colleagues. In the same year, the Turkish Neuropsychiatric Association launched a new journal, *Acta Nöro-Psychiatrica*, as its official publication. This journal featured research, studies, and case reports in the fields of neurology and psychiatry (13). Edited by İhsan Şükrü Aksel and Kazım Dağyolu, it continued publication intermittently until 1962. In 1964, a new journal titled *Archives of Neuropsychiatry (Nöropsikiyatri Arşivi)* was introduced. Marking its 60th anniversary as the official journal of the Turkish Neuropsychiatric Association, *Archives of Neuropsychiatry* has long been indexed in international databases and, in recent years, has made all of its issues openly accessible, significantly contributing to the preservation of neuropsychiatric heritage.

Although *Acta Nöro-Psychiatrica* and *Archives of Neuropsychiatry* are specialized academic and scientific periodicals, both were built upon the legacy of *İstanbul Seririyatı* and have indirectly carried forward its tradition.

As a result the digitalization of rare books/collections/works of art serves the dual purpose of ensuring accessibility to valuable resources while preserving cultural heritage and securely transmitting it to future generations. Within this framework, one of the most significant outcomes of the *İstanbul Seririyatı (1919–1952): Medical Periodical Digitalization, Index, and Open Access Project* is the creation of a centralized, digital archive that makes the entire collection available online. We could say that a serious historical gap in this field has been filled with online access to *İstanbul Seririyatı*, which sheds light on the birth and development years of neuropsychiatry in Türkiye.

We are pleased to announce that *İstanbul Seririyatı*, one of Türkiye's longest-running medical periodicals, is now accessible to the neuropsychiatry community and anyone interested in the accumulation and legacy of medical knowledge. We hope that this initiative will benefit not only today's researchers but also future generations.

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