

The Trend of Epidemics in Population and Body Regulation in Iran (1850-1920)

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Abstract : Medical issues mark the beginning of a new form of epistemology in nineteenth-century Iran. The emergence of epidemic diseases led to the formation of a medical discourse and conflict over the body which displayed itself in the concept of health progress and development. The discourse attributed to this development in the health system defines the general structure of the given period. This discourse manifested itself in the conflict between the traditional and new medicine. The regulation and classification of body and population reveal the nature of this period. The government attempted to adapt itself to the modern and progressive discourse. This paper seeks to reveal part of this rupture and adaptation around epidemics and modern medical discourse. Also, accepting part of the traditional discourse in the new era, or adapting and integrating parts of it indicate a delegation of part of the power of traditional authorities. The delegation of power arose in the context of the discursive hegemony of Western modernism from which there was no escape. This provided the ground for the acceptance of government and emergence of other discourses. Finally, during the reign of Reza Shah (1922-1942), body and population planning changed into the key issues of government, which created serious tensions in society.

Keywords : epidemic, population, body, cholera, plague

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