



RESEARCH SEMINAR
SRII, Tuesday,
December 8, 2020,
14:00-16:00

Nalan Azak (Oslo)

“Bleeding antibiotics”: negotiating care and trust in Turkish healthcare infrastructures

Antibiotic prescriptions make up a quarter of all prescriptions in Turkey. These locally ‘ordinary’ pharmaceutical commodities are navigating in the everyday healthcare infrastructure as tokens of care, enablers of treatment and legitimisers of illness. Individual treatment practices and medical histories reveal embodied antibiotic experiences. Yet access to antibiotics is becoming increasingly regulated, which is necessitating negotiations of care and trust amongst patient, doctors and pharmacists. Antibiotics, which for a long time have been reliable and easily accessible means of treatment, are now showing more resistance to treatment. With the growing concern of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the over-the-counter sales of antibiotics have stopped in Turkey since 2015. Which means that antibiotics are only legally available through a doctor’s prescription. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has recently limited doctor consultations, further restricting access to prescription medication. In this presentation I discuss the implications of the recent regulations, AMR and the current pandemic on prescription practices, patient experiences and patient-doctor relationships within antibiotic infrastructures. The research draws on my ongoing ethnographic fieldwork in Istanbul, Turkey, to understand negotiations of care and trust in processes of prescribing and acquiring antibiotics during the COVID-19 pandemic. The theoretical framework of the research is rooted in medical anthropology. Drawing on qualitative interviews with healthcare workers and patients, as well as participant observation in an unfolding pandemic, this research shows that antibiotic prescription process are becoming embedded in negotiations between patients, doctors and pharmacists. Moreover, despair amidst tension and uncertainty is increasing the contingency of navigating care and trust in the healthcare system in the prescription, use of and access to medications.

Irina Brändén (Uppsala)

The ABC in map reading and cartographical imagination.

At this seminar I would like to share some thoughts connected to the understanding of early modern maps. The point of departure is a cartographical image of Athos peninsula from the beginning of 18th century, now in the Library Collection at the Uppsala university. Being most obviously the work of a Venetian engraver during the times when the peninsula was a part of the Ottoman Empire, it represents an old orthodox monastic community. The previous study of primarily printed maps of the Western European origin has showed that it could be fruitful to look closer on the cartographical images produced in the Ottoman Empire in order to understand how far or close the cartographical imagination of these worlds was, not least in relation to the images of Athos peninsula. My initiate questions were of rather basic character: How does the Ottoman topographical conventions look like; how the pictorial language of cartographical images does function and how we can understand the map images looking also at other, rather different, pictorial contexts. With some examples and categorise for analysing the material I try to propose possible ways of viewing and understanding of these images, still made through the eyes of a stranger who even not able to read the inscriptions.