



Faculty of Health Sciences



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Health Sciences

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They say a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, but it isn't.
A little knowledge is nowhere near as bad as a great deal of ignorance.

Terry Pratchett - Equal Rites

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6 July: World Zoonoses Day

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Faculty of
Health Sciences



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HAPPY
DEMOCRACY
AND NATIONAL
UNITY DAY!

YKS Results Announced: The Preference Marathon Begins! A Future-Shaping Guide for Prospective Students from Istanbul Gelisim University

With the announcement of the Higher Education Institutions Examination (YKS) results, the university preference period has officially begun for millions of prospective students. Following a long and demanding preparation process, candidates now face one of the most critical stages in shaping their future. During this period, focusing solely on success rankings is not considered sufficient; universities' academic opportunities, international prospects, and career support services are also among the key factors influencing candidates' decisions. In this context, Istanbul Gelisim University provides comprehensive support to help prospective students make informed choices through its free preference counselling service, internationally accredited programmes, Blue Diploma advantage, and strong academic infrastructure.

The First Step in the Preference Process: Analysing the Results Accurately

One of the most important stages of the university preference process is the accurate evaluation of exam results. During this process, candidates should prepare their preference lists by considering their success rankings rather than focusing solely on their scores.

When preparing a preference list, candidates should review the success rankings from previous years while bearing in mind that results may vary each year due to changes in quotas and the number of applicants. Creating a balanced list that includes aspirational, borderline, and safer programme choices contributes to more effective preference planning.

Choosing a university isn't just about selecting a major

One of the most common mistakes candidates make during the university selection process is focusing solely on the department name. However, the same department can offer many different opportunities in different universities, from academic staff and laboratory infrastructure to international exchange programs and industry collaborations. Therefore, when choosing a university, it is of great importance to evaluate the following criteria together:

- Academic staff,
- Practical and laboratory facilities,
- International accreditations,
- Erasmus+ and exchange programs,
- Double major and minor opportunities,
- Internship opportunities,
- Career center activities,
- Campus life and social facilities.

Career goals and interests guide choices

While ranking high enough allows for placement in many departments, not every department is the right choice for every candidate. Therefore, it is important for candidates to make their choices considering their interests, strengths, and the profession they want to pursue in the future. In today's world, where fields such as artificial intelligence, digitalization, health technologies, sustainability, and data analytics continue to rise, planning university choices that consider not only today's professions but also those of the future is becoming increasingly important.

Istanbul Gelisim University Stands Out with its Strong Academic Infrastructure

Istanbul Gelisim University, one of the leading universities during the university selection period, offers prospective students a wide range of educational opportunities with its international standard education approach, strong academic staff, and research-oriented structure.

The university, which provides education in 7 faculties, 1 college, and 2 vocational schools, has a wide academic diversity with 87 undergraduate, 68 associate degree, 83 postgraduate, and 11 doctoral programs.

With over 37,000 students, more than 72,000 graduates, and over 12,000 international students from more than 150 countries, IGU offers a multicultural educational environment; it strengthens its research and application infrastructure with over 160 laboratories, 22 research centers, 930 patents, over 12,000 scientific publications, and 1,564 research projects. The university also provides its students with an international education experience through more than 450 Erasmus+ agreements.

International Accreditations and Blue Diploma: Global Career Opportunities

When choosing a university, the international validity of the diploma is among the top priorities for candidates, as much as the quality of education. Istanbul Gelisim University, which holds the record for the most accredited universities in Türkiye, offers its students education at European quality standards thanks to its internationally accredited programs. Graduates of these programs receive the Blue Diploma, which documents international quality assurance, giving them a significant competitive advantage in postgraduate education and career plans abroad. The Blue Diploma contributes to the easier international recognition of graduates' diplomas and provides significant support in achieving their global career goals.

IGU offers free university application counseling support to prospective university students

Istanbul Gelisim University offers free university counseling services during the application period, providing prospective students with the opportunity to meet one-on-one with academics and expert advisors. Within the scope of this counseling, candidates can receive detailed information about major selection, career planning, scholarship opportunities, the education model, campus life, and career options. Campus visits allow candidates to get to know the laboratories, educational areas, and social life firsthand, enabling them to make more informed choices. Furthermore, the "IGU Be Your Coach" program supports candidates in discovering their talents and interests, while the university's extensive network of over 107 student clubs, five libraries, and information infrastructure with 15 million resources offers students a multifaceted university experience.

The university application period is one of the most important steps that will shape your future

The university selection process, which begins with the announcement of YKS (University Entrance Examination) results, represents a critical period for candidates, not only in securing a university place but also in laying the foundation for their future educational and career journeys. Choosing the right university during this process stands out as one of the most important investments in the future, offering quality education, international opportunities, and strong career prospects. Istanbul Gelisim University, with its free university selection counseling, internationally accredited programs, Blue Diploma advantage, applied education approach, and strong research infrastructure, is among the universities where candidates can confidently shape their future. Candidates, guided by IGU's academics, determine the most suitable program for themselves while also benefiting from internationally standardized education and access to global career opportunities after graduation. For candidates who want to make a solid start to their future, Istanbul Gelisim University continues

IGU FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES ENGAGED WITH PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AT THE EKET ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY PREFERENCE FAIR



EKET



The Faculty of Health Sciences at Istanbul Gelisim University (IGU FHS) was represented at the fair by academics from various departments, including Assoc. Prof. Mahruk GÜNEYLİ, Research Assistant Hatice Zela BİNGÖL, Research Assistant Fatma Türkan ÖZIRMAK, and Research Assistant Büşra KURTCU, who held one-on-one meetings with prospective students and their families.

Throughout the fair, the academics of the Istanbul Gelisim University Faculty of Health Sciences met with prospective students and their parents to provide comprehensive information about the faculty's educational philosophy, practice-oriented teaching model, and career opportunities. During individual consultations at the Faculty of Health Sciences stand, prospective students received personalized guidance based on their interests, career aspirations, and academic achievements, while being informed about current career prospects and practical training opportunities in the healthcare sector.

Visitors also had the opportunity to explore the faculty's laboratories, practice centers, and campus facilities through the VR Experience Area, allowing them to gain a virtual insight into the university's educational environment. Throughout the three-day EKET Istanbul University Preference Fair, the Istanbul Gelisim University Faculty of Health Sciences supported prospective students in making informed and well-founded university choices by offering direct interaction with academic staff, personalized preference counseling, presentations of its practice-based educational infrastructure, immersive virtual campus experiences, and information on scholarship opportunities.

ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES CELEBRATES THE GRADUATION OF THE CLASS OF 2025-2026



The Istanbul Gelisim University 2025-2026 Academic Year Graduation Ceremony was held with great enthusiasm and a strong turnout on 21 July 2026 at Sinan Erdem Sports Hall. Students graduating from all faculties and graduate programs gathered to celebrate this significant milestone. Graduates of the Faculty of Health Sciences shared the joy and pride of completing years of dedicated study together with their families, academic staff, and friends.

The ceremony commenced with an opening address by Abdülkadir Gayretli, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Istanbul Gelisim University. Congratulating the graduates, Mr. GAYRETLİ expressed his confidence that they would use the knowledge, skills, and experience they had acquired throughout their education to serve society and contribute to their professions. He was followed by the Rector of Istanbul Gelisim University, **Prof. Dr. Şükran Güzin ILICAK AYDINALP**, who emphasized that graduation marks not an end, but the beginning of a new chapter, and wished all graduates continued success in their professional and personal lives.

As part of the program, certificates of achievement were presented to the top-performing students, while graduates proudly received their diplomas. Professional oath ceremonies held by several departments of the Faculty symbolized the graduates' commitment to ethical values and professional responsibility. The ceremony concluded with the traditional cap-toss celebration and commemorative photographs, creating unforgettable memories for all participants. During the 2025–2026 academic year, students graduating from the Departments of Nutrition and Dietetics, Child Development, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Nursing, Audiology, Perfusion, Health Management, and Social Work completed their education equipped with the knowledge, competencies, and professional skills required to serve in diverse fields of healthcare. Through the Faculty's practice-oriented educational approach, distinguished academic staff, and strong collaborations with industry partners, our graduates are well prepared to contribute to the protection and promotion of individual and public health as ethical, scientifically driven, and socially responsible healthcare professionals.





As the Faculty of Health Sciences at Istanbul Gelisim University, we sincerely congratulate all graduates of the Departments of Nutrition and Dietetics, Child Development, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Nursing, Audiology, Perfusion, Health Management, and Social Work. We are confident that they will make meaningful contributions to healthcare and society through their knowledge, dedication, and professional competence. We wish all our graduates a future filled with health, happiness, and continued success in their professional careers.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025-2026. We wish you every success in your future endeavors.

ACADEMIC STUDIES



Faculty of
Health Sciences

Research, Development

Scopus
Q1

SSCIQ1

frontiers
in Psychology

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Front. Psychol. 17:1799220.
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The link between emotional health and organizational performance in the healthcare sector: a policy- and management-oriented perspective on psychological risks, organizational behavior, and service quality

Murat Başal^{1*}, Ömer Faruk Şarkbay² and Aslı Kaya³

¹Istanbul Gelisim University, Vocational School, Istanbul, Turkey; ²Faculty of Health Sciences, Istanbul Gelisim University, Istanbul, Turkey; ³Health Management, Faculty of Health Sciences, Istanbul Gelisim University, Istanbul, Turkey

This perspective article examines the complex and increasingly consequential relationship between emotional health and organizational performance in the healthcare sector. Healthcare organizations' emotional health is not an individual trait.

ARTICLE

Faculty members of the Department of Health Management, Asst. Prof. Aslı KAYA and Asst. Prof. Ömer Faruk ŞARKBAY, together with Asst. Prof. Murat BAŞAL from the Gelişim Vocational School, have published their scientific article entitled "The Link Between Emotional Health and Organizational Performance in the Healthcare Sector: A Policy- and Management-Oriented Perspective on Psychological Risks, Organizational Behavior, and Service Quality" in *Frontiers in Psychology*, an international peer-reviewed journal indexed in SSCI (Q1) and Scopus (Q1).

[Click here to access the article.](#)

Scopus
Q1

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Safeguarding consumers in Web3-driven digital marketing: legal, governance, and financial policy challenges in the metaverse economy

Murat Başal^{1*} and Ömer Faruk Şarkbay²

¹Istanbul Gelisim University, Vocational School, Istanbul, Turkey; ²Faculty of Health Sciences, Istanbul Gelisim University, Istanbul, Turkey

The rapid rise of Web3 technologies, representing the third phase of the internet, is creating a decentralized ecosystem that grants users ownership and control. Concurrently, metaverse platforms supported by virtual and augmented reality technologies signify the emergence of persistent, shared digital universes where users interact through digital avatars. These developments necessitate significant changes in consumer rights and protections within digital marketing practices. While decentralized structures and blockchain-based systems enhance user data sovereignty, they also require the development of novel governance and financial frameworks. In this context, existing regulatory frameworks—particularly the European Union's Digital Services Act, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission guidelines, and the OECD Principles on Digital Governance—are insufficient to address the technological complexity and dynamic nature of Web3 ecosystems. Notable regulatory gaps persist in key areas, including data security, informed consent, algorithmic transparency, and digital identity governance. Moreover, the marketing of blockchain-based financial instruments such as Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs) and Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) introduces new sectors of consumer risk and legal ambiguity, necessitating robust regulatory frameworks. The capacity of algorithm-driven marketing and the potential for user manipulation in AI-powered personalization further exacerbate consumer

ARTICLE

Faculty members of the Department of Health Management, Asst. Prof. Ömer Faruk ŞARKBAY, together with Asst. Prof. Murat BAŞAL from the Gelişim Vocational School, have published their scientific article entitled "Safeguarding Consumers in Web3-Driven Digital Marketing: Legal, Governance, and Financial Policy Challenges in the Metaverse Economy" in *Frontiers in Blockchain*, an international peer-reviewed journal indexed in Scopus Q1.

[Click here to access the article.](#)

Q1

Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-024-01412-2

Shared Wounds, Same Suffering: Childhood Trauma Experiences, Empathy, Decision-Making and Case Management Among Turkish Child Protection Social Workers

Taner Artan^{1,2*}, Mehmet Zafer Daniş³, İsmet Galip Yolcuoğlu⁴, Ahmed Taha Arifoğlu⁵, Fatih Cebeci⁶, Merve Karaman⁷, Rumeysa Dinçer⁸

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Abstract
This study examined how empathy (ME) and rational decision-making (MD) sequentially mediate the relationship between childhood trauma experiences (CTE) and case management ability (CMA) among Turkish child protection social workers (CSWs). Data were collected via online surveys including the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ-71), Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ), Rational and Irrational Decision Scales (RIDS), and the Practice Skills Inventory (PSI). PLS-SEM Model 6 with 100,000 bootstrap samples, the analysis revealed a statistically significant but small serial indirect effect (B = -0.009, SE = 0.005, 95% CI [-0.009, -0.001]). This association should be interpreted with caution given the exploratory nature of the study. Due to the cross-sectional design, the findings reflect correlational associations rather than causal relationships. These findings highlight the negative emotional consequences facing early adverse experiences in professional functioning in social work. Institutional efforts to implement structural trauma-informed supervision—such as reflective practice groups and regular case review sessions—alongside targeted rational decision-making training, may enhance workers' resilience in child protection systems.

Keywords: Childhood trauma experiences, Empathy, Decision-making, Case management, Child protection

ARTICLE

The scientific article entitled "Shared Wounds, Same Suffering: Childhood Trauma Experiences, Empathy, Decision-Making and Case Management Among Turkish Child Protection Social Workers," authored by Prof. Dr. İsmet Galip YOLCUOĞLU, Head of the Department of Social Work, together with Taner ARTAN, Mehmet Zafer DANIŞ, Ahmed Taha ARİFOĞLU, Fatih CEBECİ, Merve KARAMAN, and Rumeysa DİNÇER, has been published in the Q1-indexed *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*.

[Click here to access the article.](#)



ARTICLE

The study entitled "Dietary Inflammatory Index: Is It Really Associated with Postmenopausal Symptoms?", conducted by Assoc. Prof. Hatice Merve BAYRAM, a faculty member of our department, and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Murat GÜRBÜZ, a faculty member in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University, has been published in the journal Climacteric.

[Click](#) here to access the article.



ARTICLE

The collaborative study by Asst. Prof. Emrah TÜNCER and Asst. Prof. Yonca Güneş YÜCEL, faculty members of the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, entitled "Rethinking Franz Kafka's Legacy: Testament, Identity, and the Ethics of Literary Survival in Burhan Sönmez's Lovers of Franz K.", has been published in the journal Middle Eastern Literatures.

[Click](#) here to access the article.



ARTICLE



Faculty members of the Department of Audiology, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa ÇELİK and Asst. Prof. Burak OLGUN, from our Faculty are among the authors of the scientific article entitled "Evaluation of the Relationship between Video Head Impulse Test Findings and Vestibular Nerve Anatomical Measurements in Patients with Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo." The study has been published in The Turkish Journal of Ear Nose and Throat, an international peer-reviewed journal indexed in Scopus (Q4) and TR Dizin.

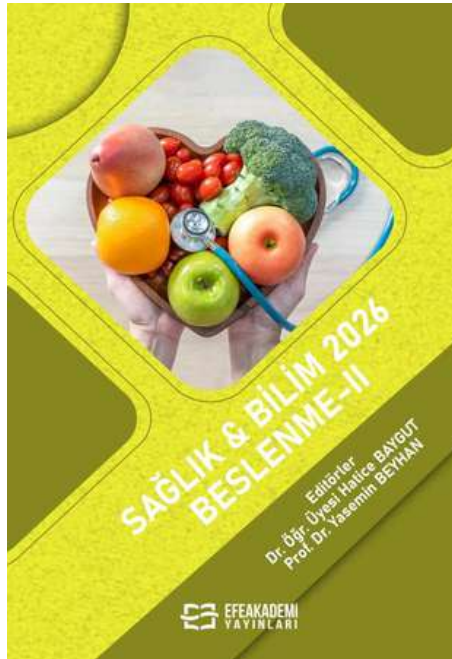
[Click](#) here to access the article.



ARTICLE

The study entitled "The Effects of Exposure to Imagery Created with Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen-AI) on Young Women's Body Image: Do Image Type and Disclosure Matter?", co-authored by Asst. Prof. Tuğba TÜRKCAN, a faculty member of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at Istanbul Gelişim University, has been published in the journal Computers in Human Behavior: Artificial Humans.

[Click here to access the article.](#)



BOOK CHAPTER

A book chapter entitled "Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Their Effects on Synaptic Plasticity," to which Asst. Prof. Hande Nur ONUR ÖZTÜRK contributed, has been published in the comprehensive volume SAĞLIK & BİLİM 2026: Nutrition-II, edited by Asst. Prof. Dr. Hatice BAYGUT and Prof. Dr. Yasemin BEYHAN.

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PRESENTATION

The study entitled "Evaluation of the Relationship Between University Students' General Attitudes Toward Artificial Intelligence and Their Acceptance of Generative Artificial Intelligence, AI Literacy, and Digital Nutrition Behaviors," conducted by Hilal KIRAN and Nuran YİĞİT, students of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Hatice Merve BAYRAM and Prof. Dr. Arda ÖZTÜRKCAN, was carried out within the scope of the TÜBİTAK 2209-A University Students Research Projects Support Program and was presented as a paper at the 9th International Congress on Health Sciences and Life.

July 22 – World Brain Day: A Guide to Protecting Brain Health

Asst. Prof. Tansu KUŞ

Brain health is a fundamental issue that affects all stages of life, from childhood to advanced ages. Crucial functions such as learning, attention, memory, mood, and movement are directly governed by the brain. Therefore, preserving brain health is not just a concern for the elderly, but a vital matter for individuals of all ages. Today, modern life challenges like excessive screen time, irregular sleep, a sedentary lifestyle, and chronic stress negatively impact brain health. For this reason, World Brain Day, celebrated every year on July 22nd, aims to raise awareness about brain health. So, what can be done to prevent cognitive decline and support optimal brain health? Here are the key recommendations from the World Federation of Neurology (WFN) to protect your brain health:

- **Exercise Regularly:** Physical activity increases cerebral blood flow, supports the growth of new brain cells, and enhances cognitive function. Aim for at least 150 minutes of regular exercise per week.
- **Prioritize Quality Sleep:** Sleep enhances learning, strengthens memory, and facilitates the clearance of toxins from the brain. Make sure you get 7 to 9 hours of sleep every night.
- **Eat a Balanced Diet and Stay Hydrated:** For optimal cognitive performance, nourish your brain with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats, and drink about 2 to 2.5 liters of water daily.
- **Keep Mentally Active:** Mental activities stimulate synaptic connections and boost cognitive resilience. Keep your mind active by reading, solving puzzles, playing board games, or learning new skills.
- **Manage Stress:** Chronic stress can damage neuronal structures and memory centers. Reduce stress through relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises, meditation, or yoga.
- **Build Strong Social Connections:** Maintain close relationships with family and friends, as active social interaction supports healthy cognitive function.
- **Protect Your Head:** Wear a helmet playing sports, use a seatbelt in vehicles, and take necessary precautions against fall hazards to prevent traumatic brain injuries.
- **Avoid Smoking and Limit Alcohol:** Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption damage brain cells and reduce cognitive performance. Avoid tobacco and limit alcohol consumption.

Remember, our brain is our greatest treasure, enabling us to experience life to the fullest, learn, and create. Take a step forward today and take care of your brain!



IGU CENTER FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY RESEARCH AND PRACTICE (SSUAM), DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, AND DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK SUBMIT PROJECT PROPOSAL TO THE SWEDISH CONSULATE GENERAL IN ISTANBUL GRANT CALL

A project team consisting of academics from the Istanbul Gelişim University Center for Social Responsibility Research and Practice (IGU SSUAM), the Department of Sociology, and the Department of Social Work has submitted a proposal under the 2027 Project Grants Call for Civil Society Organizations announced by the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul.

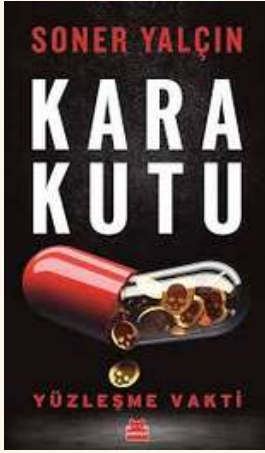
The grant program aims to strengthen cooperation between Sweden and Türkiye while supporting the development of civil society across the country. It focuses on priority areas such as democratic development, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, and gender equality. Within this framework, projects addressing issues such as combating disinformation, promoting youth participation in democratic processes, improving access to human rights and justice, and fighting discrimination are eligible for support.

The project proposal reflects Istanbul Gelisim University's commitment to social responsibility, interdisciplinary academic collaboration, and engagement with civil society through international partnerships. Developed jointly by IGU SSUAM, the Department of Sociology, and the Department of Social Work, the initiative seeks to contribute to the University's growing portfolio of national and international projects that promote social impact and sustainable development.





CULTURE-ART-LITERATURE



DEVELOPMENT READINGS

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Asst. Prof. Turgay KARALINÇ

Department of Health Management

Black Box – Time to Face the Truth (Soner Yalçın)

"An eye-opening exploration that unlocks the 'black box' of the healthcare system and the global pharmaceutical industry."

At some point in our lives, we all visit doctors, take prescribed medications, and place our trust in the advances of modern medicine without hesitation. But how much of the system we rely on is truly dedicated to human health, and how much serves the interests of a vast global market?

In *Black Box: Time to Face the Truth*, investigative journalist Soner Yalçın examines the hidden dynamics of modern medicine and the global pharmaceutical industry (Big Pharma), offering readers a thought-provoking perspective on the forces shaping contemporary healthcare.

Key Topics Explored in the Book

- The Rise of Big Pharma and the Pharmaceutical Industry

The book traces how modern medicine was shaped in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through the financial backing of major capital groups in the United States. It also discusses how natural and herbal treatments gradually gave way to synthetic pharmaceuticals as the dominant standard of care.

- The Transformation of Medical Education (The Flexner Report)

Drawing on historical documents, the author examines how the 1910 Flexner Report fundamentally reshaped medical education worldwide, placing pharmaceutical-based medicine at the center of healthcare practice.

- The Commercialization of Health (Medicalization)

The book argues that natural aspects of human life—such as aging, stress, and sadness—have increasingly been redefined as medical conditions, contributing to lifelong dependence on pharmaceutical treatments.

- Global Health Policies

It also explores the financial and political dynamics behind international health organizations, as well as vaccine and patent policies, encouraging readers to reflect critically on the governance of global healthcare.

Why Read This Book?

Supported by hundreds of documents, references, and historical sources, *Black Box* has generated considerable debate. While some critics have dismissed its arguments as speculative, others regard it as a bold and important contribution to discussions on medical ethics and the political economy of healthcare.

Rather than rejecting modern medicine, the book encourages readers to think critically about healthcare systems and to become more informed and conscious participants in decisions concerning their own health. It is a compelling read for anyone interested in examining modern medicine, the pharmaceutical industry, and healthcare from a broader social and ethical perspective.

Discussion Question

In your opinion, how can a balance be maintained between the profit-driven nature of pharmaceutical companies and the ethical principles that guide the medical profession? Share your thoughts with us!

A SEA IN STOCKHOLM, A VASA IN THE SEA, AND A HUBRIS WITHIN THE VASA: **THE LAST TWENTY MINUTES OF ARROGANCE**

Asst. Prof. Emrah TÜNCER

Ibn Tufayl's immortal protagonist, Hayy ibn Yaqzan, grew up alone on a deserted island and, through nothing but reason and careful observation of nature, came to understand the silent, unerring, and harmonious order of the universe. In nature, everything possesses its proper measure; every weight has its balance. Truth exists without spectacle—simple, restrained, and perfectly proportioned. Yet once human beings gather into societies, erect palaces, avenues, and cities, they begin to surrender their reason not to truth, but, strangely enough, to grandeur and pride. They forget their own limits and imagine they can overturn nature's infallible balance merely to display power. Few monuments bear witness to the catastrophes born of such gilded arrogance more vividly than the one awaiting us today in Stockholm, on the shores of the cold waters of the Baltic Sea.

Crossing the city's windswept bridges and stepping into the dimly lit, vaulted building on the island of Djurgården, one is immediately enveloped by the heavy scent of tar and salt. Before you stands the colossal wooden body of a ship, raised from the darkness of the sea like a ghost, its timbers blackened by centuries of mud and time. This is not merely a museum; it is, in many ways, a magnificent mausoleum. And resting at its heart is Vasa, the legendary warship built to proclaim the invincibility of the Swedish Empire to the world.

Looking at this silent hull beneath the museum's subdued lights today, it is difficult to imagine the moment it first embraced the sea on that August morning in 1628. For on that day, Vasa was anything but dark and mournful. It blazed with crimson, shimmering gold, sky blue, tar black, and vivid pink—a floating monument to spectacle. More than seven hundred hand-carved sculptures and figures adorned its hull like climbing vines, intended not merely to cut through the waves but to overwhelm the minds of its enemies. Through the Roman imperial busts decorating its sides, King Gustavus Adolphus II of Sweden symbolically elevated himself to the company of emperors and gods, proclaiming his unassailable power to his greatest rival, Poland, and to the whole of Europe. Yet that immense artistic burden, that astonishing excess of ornament and colour, transformed beauty into weight. It would become the first knot that choked the ship's very breath.





Mevlana, centuries ago in the *Masnavi*, captured precisely this blindness through the story of a lion so consumed by its own strength and invincibility that it could no longer distinguish reality from illusion. Chasing a clever rabbit, the lion peers into a deep well and mistakes its own reflection for a rival threatening its throne and kingdom. The flaw it sees is nothing more than the image of its own pride. Enraged, it leaps into the water, only to drown—not in the well, but in the depths of its own arrogance. On that August morning in Stockholm, *Vasa* was that very lion. As it entered the waters of the Baltic, it imagined itself destined to crush its enemies. Instead, what it encountered was only the immense reflection of its own hollow hubris.

Collapse rarely begins with a storm from without; more often, it is born in the silent corridors of power, where fear quietly replaces judgment. Amid the blood-soaked landscape of the Thirty Years' War, King Gustavus Adolphus II relentlessly pursued absolute supremacy, forcing the limits of timber, engineering, and physics alike. While the ship was still under construction, its design was repeatedly altered. The shipwrights were ordered to lengthen the hull and erect an enormous superstructure resembling a floating palace—far beyond what the vessel had ever been designed to carry. When the chief naval architect, Henrik Hybertsson, fell ill and died during construction, it was perhaps nature's first gentle warning of the disaster to come. His successor, however, found himself unable to challenge royal authority. Shortly before the launch, during the now-famous stability test, thirty sailors were instructed to run from one side of the deck to the other. The vessel rolled so violently that the trial had to be abandoned in alarm. From apprentices to master shipbuilders, everyone in the shipyard understood that the magnificent warship was, in reality, little more than a gilded coffin. Yet expertise and reason had already fallen silent before absolute power. Nowhere in the empire could anyone summon the courage to tell an impatient king, "Your Majesty, this ship will sink." Fear had tied truth into silence.

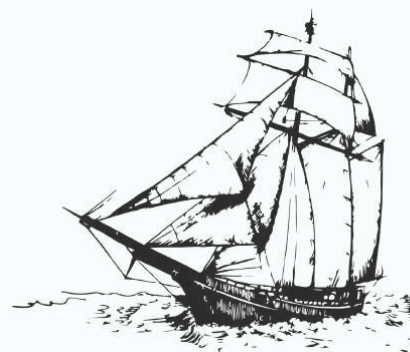
What ultimately drew *Vasa* beneath the dark waters was not gravity alone, but an insatiable appetite for power and an unchecked obsession with military supremacy. The original plans called for a single gun deck. At the king's last-minute command, however, the ship was redesigned to carry two massive gun decks loaded with sixty-four bronze cannons. It was an extraordinary display of military ambition that far exceeded the engineering knowledge of the age—a triumph of illusion over reality. Those tons of bronze weaponry raised the ship's center of gravity dangerously high above the waterline. No amount of ballast stone packed into the hull could compensate for a vessel whose ambition had already lifted its feet from the ground.





When 10 August 1628 finally arrived, Vasa departed Stockholm harbour in all its splendour, adorned with gilded sculptures and rows of gleaming cannon barrels. Humanity's triumphant march—believing it had mastered nature—lasted no more than twenty minutes. The sea, after all, is indifferent to titles, crowns, and empires; water obeys only its own immutable laws. As the ship cleared the harbour, an ordinary gust of wind—so gentle that an old fisherman might not even have noticed it—filled its oversized sails and caused the vessel to heel ever so slightly. That single movement proved fatal. Through the open gunports on the lower gun deck, left wide open to display the ship's overwhelming firepower, the Baltic Sea quietly and relentlessly poured inside. Within moments, Europe's greatest symbol of intimidation, together with its magnificent craftsmanship and its helpless crew, disappeared beneath the water. The timbers splintered. Lives were lost.

Standing today before that immense wooden hull, rescued from centuries of mud and darkness, one cannot help but reflect on the deep pits humanity digs with its own hands. Vasa is far more than an engineering failure or an unfortunate maritime accident. It is the tragedy of a civilisation that abandoned the natural equilibrium once discovered by Hayy ibn Yaqzan, and, like Rumi's lion staring into the well, was destroyed by the reflection of its own magnificence. It is the story of an empire that forgot its limits, sacrificed expertise to fear, and imagined that gilded timber could command the wind and the sea. Nature's reply required neither armies nor cannons—only twenty silent minutes, a lesson delivered with quiet certainty, yet powerful enough to echo across the centuries.





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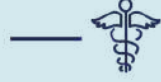
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