

The Eczacıbaşı Clan — Chief Pharmacists of Turkey

A. V. Zheveleva, N. A. Sokolova, A. D. Yagafarova

St. Petersburg State University,
Russian Federation, 199034, St. Petersburg, Universitetskaya nab., 7–9

For citation: Zheveleva A.V., Sokolova N.A., Yagafarova A.D. The Eczacıbaşı Clan — Chief Pharmacists of Turkey. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Asian and African Studies*, 2023, vol. 15, issue 1, pp. 58–72. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu13.2023.104>

From a single pharmacy in Izmir opened by the founder of the dynasty Süleyman Ferit to an industrial corporation whose fields of activity include construction materials, pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, investment and real estate, the story of the entrepreneurial success of the Eczacıbaşı family unfolded against the backdrop of the turbulent political and social life of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey of the 20th century. The presented article examines the life path of the founders of the dynasty, father Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı and son Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı, and the history of the success of their enterprises in its relation to historical events. The Eczacıbaşı family comes from Izmir, thus both the head of the clan, Süleyman Ferit, and his heirs witnessed the historical events of the early 20th century, which shook not only Turkey, but also the entire Middle East region. Not actively participating in the political life of the country, The Eczacıbaşı family had close ties, first with the Young Turk government, then with the heroes of the national liberation struggle Celal Bayar, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and others. The materials used in the preparation of the article are also valuable sources on the history of the young Turkish Republic. Here you can learn valuable information about the Greek occupation of Izmir, about the development of the healthcare system in Izmir in the Ottoman and early Republican period, about the first significant events in the life of Izmir in the 1920s, for example, about the Izmir Economic Congress and the International Exhibition in Izmir. The history of the Eczacıbaşı clan is a vivid example of the origin and development of entrepreneurship among the Turkish population of Turkey and could be helpful to researchers interested in the history of Turkey's economic development.

Keywords: Turkey, economy, entrepreneurs, the Eczacıbaşı Holding, pharmaceuticals.

Introduction

The Eczacıbaşı Holding was founded in 1942 by Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı. It is now a large industrial corporation of 44 companies with a combined net turnover of more than US \$1.20 billion. The holding employs about 11,400 people.

The holding mainly focuses on the production of construction goods, health care products and consumer goods. In addition, it is active in the field of finance and information technology. In Turkey, the holding is the leading producer and seller of pharmaceuticals and building materials. On the international market, the holding is known mainly for its Vitra brand (bathroom tiles). The holding is also one of Turkey's largest exporters

of tissue paper, welding electrodes, electronic smart cards, as well as raw materials such as clay and feldspar.

The Eczacıbaşı Holding has 10 international joint enterprises and numerous cooperation agreements with leading international companies. The Holding's mission is to pioneer the production of modern high-quality products, to take responsibility for the social and economic development of the country, to support cultural and scientific activities, to protect the environment and to preserve natural resources in Turkey [1]. Two members of the clan (Bülent and Faruk Eczacıbaşı) are named among the richest people in Turkey. Their joint equity exceeds \$2 billion [2].

The relevance of the research lies in the fact that the authors managed to introduce into scientific circulation new previously unpublished historical sources, biographical and autobiographical materials of Suleiman Ferit Eczacıbaşı and his heir Nejat Ferit, which provide the reader with valuable information about the history of Izmir at the end of the 19th — first half of the 20th centuries, the development of the healthcare system and the pharmaceutical industry in Izmir and Turkey in general, important historical events of the early 20th century, in particular the Izmir Economic Congress and the International Exhibition in Izmir.

The purpose of this research is to study the life and work of one of the first Turkish entrepreneurs, Suleiman Ferit Eczacıbaşı and his heir, Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı.

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following tasks had to be fulfilled:

1. Study the biographies of Suleiman Ferit Eczacıbaşı and Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı.
2. Study the historical background against which the activities of the first Turkish entrepreneurs unfolded.
3. Study the main problems of the healthcare system and the pharmaceutical industry in the late Ottoman and early Republican periods.

Süleyman Ferit Bey

The Eczacıbaşı family's entrepreneurial success story begins with the life path of Süleyman Ferit Bey. Süleyman Ferit Bey was born in 1885 in Izmir. His father, Haji Hafiz Şakir Efendi, was the chief tax collector in the Izmir municipality. The family lived in the İkiçeşmelik area in a large two-story house. Süleyman Ferit's father was known in Izmir as a respectable and honest Ottoman official. He worked as a chief weigher in the Ottoman Public Debt Administration Office [3, p. 448]. At that time, food and other goods sent for export were first brought to warehouses on the outskirts of Izmir. They were weighed and tax was calculated according to the weight. A huge portion of this tax went to the Administration Office. As a child, Eczacıbaşı, together with his father, inspected caravans with goods waiting to be weighed on the outskirts of Izmir, got acquainted with merchants (mostly non-Muslims).

Süleyman Ferit already as a child was interested in learning, reading, instead of ordinary boyish games. He received a good education — at the age of 11, he entered the Galatasaray High School, one of the most prestigious educational institutions of that time. At that time, the deputy of parliament Ahmet Müfit Bey was the school principal. Many well-known politicians and artists, such as Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Baha Tevfik, Şükrü Saraçoğlu etc., attended the school. According to Eczacıbaşı himself, apart from his mother and father, his grandmother had the strongest influence on him. She was very success-

ful in manufacturing folk remedies from herbs. It was the incident with his grandmother that prompted Süleyman Ferit to start making medicines in Izmir. “My grandmother was seriously ill. We took her to the famous Greek doctor Italianos Effendi. He wrote a prescription and my father sent me to the pharmacy owned by the Greek Lazaridis. When I came to the pharmacy, I saw a sign ‘Closed due to vacation’ I ran to the pharmacy owned by the Armenian Shahinyan, and there, after a long wait, I managed to get the necessary medicine. That evening I returned home with tear-stained eyes and a heavy heart. When my beloved grandmother fell ill, I realized that all the doctors and pharmacists we could turn to were either non-Muslims or foreigners. It was then, at my ill grandmother’s bed, I decided that I would become a doctor or pharmacist” [4, pp. 60–61].

After graduating from high school, Süleyman Ferit, with the help of his mother’s relative went to Istanbul. There he joined the Medical Faculty of the High School of Civil Medicine. The education was carried out at quite a high level, French, German, Italian teachers prevailed, there were some Turks among them as well. Süleyman Ferit received his pharmacist diploma ahead of time — at the age of 18. It is noteworthy that the diploma was awarded to him and his fellow students by a prominent politician and cultural figure of the time Ahmet Mithat Efendi. On August 27, 1903, Süleyman Ferit Bey returned to Izmir to open his own pharmacy there. However, in reality, such an enterprise at that time was a fruitless dream for a Turk, since due to capitulations and strict state control over the local pharmaceutical production, almost the entire industry was in the hands of the empire’s foreign minorities and foreigners. Three people influenced Eczacıbaşı’s decision to start his own business. These were two of his teachers Della Suda Faik Paşa and P. Apery (both foreigners) and one of the first Turkish pharmacists who opened his own pharmacy in Istanbul — Hamdi Bey. Süleyman Ferit and some of his Turk classmates worked as assistants in Hamdi Bey’s pharmacy while studying.

“In my childhood, all hospitals in Izmir were owned by foreigners. The first Turkish hospital in Izmir was called the Hospital for Poor Muslims. Its name fully describes the position of the Turks in the empire. We couldn’t even say ‘Turk’, we had to say ‘Muslim’. The truth was that a Muslim was supposed to be poor and destitute” [4, p. 72]. Of the 13 doctors at the hospital, only three were Turks (chief physician Mustafa Enver Bey and two of his deputies).

Through the mediation of a prominent politician Kamil Bey (former Sadrazam), who patronized the Young Turks, Süleyman Ferit was hired by the pharmacy at the Hospital for Poor Muslims as an assistant pharmacist. He became the only Turk working there. At the same time, Eczacıbaşı began working as a manager in a pharmacy owned by the Greek Ilyadis (he worked there on Saturdays and Sundays). It was there that a peculiar accident took place: “Once an elderly Turkish woman timidly approached the pharmacy. She hesitated to enter. I went out myself to ask what she needed and quickly brought the medicine. The stunned woman could not believe that she saw a young Turk in the pharmacy. She asked: ‘Are you really a Turk, dear?’ As I said yes, her eyes shed tears” [4, pp. 78–79].

In 1905, the chief pharmacist of the hospital, Moiz Santo, left for Germany and was replaced by Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı. By that time, he had already acquired some fame among the Turkish population. Quite soon, more Turkish staff started appearing at the hospital’s pharmacy.

At that time, almost all hospitals were self-sufficient. The hospital’s income came from donations and hospital pharmacies’ profit. An interesting fact is that the book of income

and expenses of the Hospital for Poor Muslims was kept by Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı. This desire to engage in the account management helped him a lot in his future business.

Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı decided to open his own pharmacy in 1909. At that time there were 22 private pharmacies in Izmir, two of which (Mehmet Esat Bey's Kemeraltı Pharmacy of and Hüseyin Rifat Bey's Şifa Pharmacy) belonged to the Turks. In addition, there was also a Public pharmacy owned by eight doctors, two of whom were Turks. In 1909, the pharmacy was put up for sale and Eczacıbaşı bought it for 215 gold (altın). Having become the owner of the pharmacy, Süleyman Ferit began producing ready-made drugs (neither Turks nor non-Muslims of the empire had yet started widespread production of ready-made drugs at the time). Eczacıbaşı, while still working at the Hospital for Poor Muslims, was subscribed to European pharmaceutical journals. In his spare time, he was engaged in the manufacture of drugs at the hospital laboratory. In 1909, the Izmir vilayet parliament awarded Süleyman Ferit the title of Eczacıbaşı (lit. "chief pharmacist"). In the republican period, he was very proud to take this title as his surname.

In 1911, Eczacıbaşı married Saffet Hanım, the daughter of a well-known Izmir merchant and businessman Caferizade Kemal Bey. That same year he bought the Şifa pharmacy located in the Kemeraltı district from a Greek Moraiti for 250 altın. In the same year, the newspaper "Ahenk" published a detailed advertisement for Eczacıbaşı's second pharmacy, which itself was an innovation for the Ottoman Empire. Eczacıbaşı's second pharmacy had characteristics that set it apart from all other pharmacies in Izmir. Firstly, respected doctors of that time worked at the pharmacy on a permanent basis. Secondly, the pharmacy was ready to send its products to the provinces so that the farmers did not have to go to Izmir for medicine. In addition, if a person from the province still wanted to come himself, the employees of the pharmacy were ready to find him a cheap hotel or a room at an inn. Thirdly, the Şifa pharmacy was open during the night. Poor citizens were offered to buy drugs in instalments. Perhaps, thanks to this pharmacy, people began to call Süleyman Ferit "the person who grants healing" (the word "şifa" itself means "healing" in Turkish).

Along with the ready-made drugs, Eczacıbaşı also started perfume production, a new industry for Turkey. Süleyman Ferit himself reports that at the beginning of the 20th century Turkish women used traditional oils (rose oil, musk oil, lavender) as perfume. Foreign fragrances were brought from abroad, but they cost a lot of money. There were several producers of the so-called "lemon water" of very low quality in Istanbul. Eczacıbaşı's goal was not only to create a good fragrance, but also to achieve the highest quality perfume.

The names for the perfumes Süleyman Ferit produced were invented by his acquaintances, the famous writers Reşat Nuri Güntekin, Orhan Seyfi, Ahmet Haşim. This is how the first Turkish perfumes "Spring", "Magnolia", "Five Flowers", "Summer Rain" appeared. Süleyman Ferit himself came up with the name for his most famous fragrance, the "Golden Drop". Soon the "Golden Drop" became famous not only in Izmir, but throughout the Empire. People who came to Izmir bought this perfume as a memento. Expanding the production of perfumes, Eczacıbaşı engaged in the production of lotions, powders, creams and quickly came to the fore in the production of perfumery and cosmetic products. Süleyman Ferit always tried to consider the needs of society. For example, it is known that in France the fashion for fragrances changes each year. Eczacıbaşı tried to create a similar fashion in Turkey. However, the Turks turned out to be very conservative in this field, once they had chosen the "Golden Drop", they did not want to give it up. Even in the 1980s, it remained the best-selling fragrance in the Aegean region [5, p. 162].

In the early 1910s, Süleyman Ferit received his first large orders. One — from the “Red Crescent” organization the other from an Italian pharmacist, who had pharmacies on the Rhodes Island. These were the first major successes of the young entrepreneur. The “Handbook on the Activities of Muslim Traders and Craftsmen” published in Izmir in 1914, described the activities of Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı as follows: “The Şifa Pharmacy and the Public Pharmacy have gained fame through the sale of the highest quality and purest medicines. The best doctors of our country work in these pharmacies on a permanent basis. Medicines are available at a more moderate price than in other pharmacies. Süleyman Ferit Bey is the owner of both pharmacies. <...> Here, customers are always welcome. We consider both these Muslim institutions worthy of recommendation” [4, p. 112].

In 1908, Süleyman Ferit became one of the founders of the Izmir branch of the “Red Crescent” organization. In 1912, he took part in the construction of the National Library in Izmir. During the same period, he met two influential politicians of that time — Rahmi Bey (Arslan) and Mahmud Celal Bey (the future president of the Republic — Celal Bayar). Both were members of the Union and Progress Party. Celal Bey was the executive secretary of the party. He was sent to Izmir by a special decree of Talaat Paşa (Minister of the Interior during the reign of the Young Turks). It is noteworthy that Celal Bey, who secretly joined the Union and Progress Party, since 1905 worked at the branch of the German Deutschebank in Bursa. Rahmi Bey was appointed Vali (governor) of the Aydin vilayet in 1913. Both Celal Bey and Rahmi Bey had a special mission in Izmir. Their main goal was “to organize the economic life of Izmir in favour of the Turkish population” [4, p. 124]. They wanted to create a system of Turkish national economy in the Aydin vilayet and thwart the attempts of the Greeks to secede from the Ottoman Empire. Celal Bey himself described the situation in the Aydin vilayet: “Among us [the Turks], apart from father Muammer Uşakizade, there was not a single merchant engaged in export. Entrepreneurship was in the hands of the Greeks, as well as the money” [4, p. 125]. For the first time in history, it became possible to find Turkish names in the lists of members of the Izmir Chamber of Commerce and the Izmir Stock Exchange. This fact proves Celal Bayar’s and Rahmi Bey’s success.

During World War I, Süleyman Ferit was active in the Izmir branch of the Red Crescent organization and in the Civil Defence Society, for which in 1917 he received the War Hero Medal.

With the beginning of the Turkish War of Independence, Süleyman Ferit joined the Association for the Defence of Rights in Izmir, participated in secret nationalist organizations, continued to work in the “Red Crescent” and the military hospital in Izmir. His pharmacy continued to operate during all this time, despite the fact that in 1919 he had to leave Izmir for Istanbul (the reason was the robbery of his pharmacy by the Greeks). However, already in 1920 he returned to Izmir.

In 1923, shortly after the end of the war, Izmir hosted the Izmir Economic Congress, where Turkish economic policy was articulated. Alongside the Congress an exhibition of commercial products named “Domestic Goods Exhibitions” was also held, the organization of this very first fair was entrusted to Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı by the new government. Local produce, such as oil, soap, pasta, raisins, figs, cotton fabrics, along with Süleyman Ferit’s medicine and eight varieties of his perfume were exhibited inside the building where the congress was held and in the nearby streets as well. A noteworthy

occurrence involving Eczacıbaşı's perfume took place at the congress. The hall, where the congress was held, was continuously used as a warehouse for storing tobacco, figs, raisins, and olive oil so the walls absorbed the heavy smell of these products. Süleyman Ferit suggested pouring a few gallons of his perfume over the walls of the hall. Thus, the Izmir Economic Congress "had the scent" of Eczacıbaşı's perfume. Süleyman Ferit followed the work of the Congress with great excitement and was deeply impressed by the Atatürk's speeches. During one of the balls held in honour of Atatürk, Süleyman Ferit, pointing to the president of the Republic, uttered a memorable phrase "He should have come 30 years ago!" [4, pp. 198–199].

In 1925 Süleyman Ferit made his first trip abroad. The trip was due to the illness of his wife Saffet Hanım, who needed urgent treatment. The couple went to France, the birthplace of the perfume industry, the city of Grasse. Taking the opportunity, Süleyman Ferit visited the famous pharmaceutical and perfume factory "Roure Bertrand", where he first got acquainted with modern technology in the production of medicines and cosmetics.

Eczacıbaşı's products became so famous that a whole page was devoted to Süleyman Ferit and his products in Raif Nezihi's book "The History of Izmir", published in 1926. The name of Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı could be found in the lists of members of the Izmir Chamber of Commerce among the names of other Turkish businessmen in Izmir, from 1926 to 1933 he served as the head of the Chamber's board of directors. The Izmir Chamber of Commerce began publishing two magazines in Turkish and French during that time. The magazine articles focused mainly on Turkish export products. The publications were sent to trade organizations of European cities.

September 4, 1927, the first "Exhibition of September 9" (the forerunner of the Izmir International Fair) opened its doors in the building of the Izmir Art School. The exhibition was attended by 195 Turkish firms, chambers of commerce and industry and stock exchanges, 72 foreign firms (16 Soviet, 5 American, 4 English, 3 Italian, 3 French and 2 Swedish). About 80,000 people visited the exhibition during 20 days. The second "Exhibition of September 9" was opened in 1928 in the same building. This time 302 Turkish and 15 foreign organizations participated. The number of visitors has grown to eighty-six thousand people. The third exhibition was held only in 1933. In 1936, the exhibition continued as the Izmir International Fair and was housed on an area of 430 m² in Kültürpark (culture and recreation park in the centre of Izmir). The fair was opened by Prime Minister İsmet İnönü. Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı took part in three exhibitions and a fair, and in the first two exhibitions he received participant's gold medals. A whole pavilion was allocated to Eczacıbaşı on the International Fair. According to the reports of his contemporaries, the pavilion attracted special attention of the visitors with its beauty and orderly fashion. Particular interest was also caused by the advertisement widespread before the start of the exhibition, describing the goods Eczacıbaşı had to offer and informing the visitors of the exhibition of the discounts they could get.

In 1936 Süleyman Ferit made his second journey abroad. This time he travelled to Germany where his eldest son Nejat was about to finish his post graduate program. One of the purposes of his travel was to visit the largest pharmaceutical factory of the time, Bayer. Süleyman Ferit was inspired by the history of the enterprise's establishment (the Bayer factory grew out of a small pharmacy). A plan began to take shape in his mind, according to which such an enterprise was to be founded in Turkey.

It seems appropriate to talk briefly of Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı's personality and lifestyle. Süleyman Ferit led a quiet family life. He went to sleep at 10 o'clock, woke up at 6, worked 12–14 hours a day. He was always neatly dressed, appreciated elegant expensive clothing. He smoked to the age of fifty, but he would never drink alcohol even on official receptions where it was deemed necessary according to etiquette. He was fond of gardening. His biographical book contains some advice he gave to the future generations of the Republic of Turkey:

“Your first priority is to serve the Motherland. If necessary, try to get the best education abroad, however, right after graduating from university, immediately return to your home country. <...> Whatever you do, if you work conscientiously, you will achieve success. Turkey is a backward and poor country. The most important creators in the country are entrepreneurs. Turkey must gradually conquer a new place in the world through advances in science, technology, culture, art and even sports. <...> You may not be involved in politics, but never underestimate its importance. <...> Love people and try to understand them regardless of their religion, nationality, language they speak” [4, pp. 311–312]. There was a documented case during the Turkish War of Independence when Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı helped the non-Muslim population of Izmir shortly before the Turkish advance. He did not try to buy up the property of non-Muslims leaving Izmir for next to nothing. Ferit Bey often said: “I will never try to capitalize on the misfortune of others”.

There was another occurrence in 1919 that also confirms Eczacıbaşı's close ties with non-Muslims. During the occupation of Izmir by the Greeks, the Jews saved Süleyman Ferit's life. On the morning of May 15 (the first day of the occupation), he went outside and headed for the pharmacy. On the way, he met several Jewish acquaintances who told him: “Everything is in turmoil in Izmir, don't leave your house”. Eczacıbaşı returned home and thus was saved from certain death [4, p. 164].

Eczacıbaşı was always considered a supporter and protector of everything new and modern. He advised his descendants to learn foreign languages, travel the world, study and apply the latest technologies.

Another peculiar habit of the Eczacıbaşı family were the annual receptions for their employees as well as their family members. The purpose of these receptions was “to demonstrate to employees the lifestyle of employers”. For such receptions, tables with the best dishes were set, and the hosts of the festivity Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı and his wife Saffet Hanım left their home as “not to impose on their employees and to let them, at least once a year, to play the role of ‘beys’ (masters)”.

A close friend of the family, President of the Republic of Turkey Celal Bayar in 1977, during Süleyman Ferit's funeral, called him “an exceptional person” who “had a habit of not wasting a single minute of his life” [4, p. 320]. The Eczacıbaşı former Minister of Commerce and Health, the Mayor of İzmir, as well as a close friend of Süleyman Ferit, Behçet Uz called him “one of the rare advocates of civilization in Turkey” [4, pp. 320–321].

Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı

During World War II, a generational change took place in the Eczacıbaşı family. Süleyman Ferit gradually retired and started to engage in charity more while his son Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı took over. Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı was very well-educated. From his childhood a German governess was assigned to him.

He studied first in Izmir, then at the American College in Istanbul, graduated from a university in Germany, where he also earned a Ph.D. degree in chemistry. Nejat Ferit Bey himself was skeptical about his scientific career, saying that the only advantage of his degree was the respect that the Turkey's ruling elites had for him [6, p. 89]. The attention of the ruling elites to the educated representatives of the people was indeed quite common at the time. It was thanks to their education that some entrepreneurs managed to enlist the support of the government. After completing his studies in Germany, Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı was to return to Izmir to become the head of his father's pharmacies. That was what Süleyman Ferit Bey had planned. The plan however was drastically different from what the young Eczacıbaşı himself had in mind. Nejat Ferit decided to go to Istanbul to start a business on his own. This is how he later explains his decision in his memoirs: "At that time, the families' savings in Turkey had not yet been handed down from generation to generation. A business started by an entrepreneur, when passed into the hands of his descendants, either scattered among the heirs, or — and this is the worst case — generated squabbles in the family". Nejat Ferit had five younger brothers. Having given up his claims to his father's business Nejat Ferit went to Istanbul. When talking of his move to Istanbul, Nejat Ferit describes in detail the apartments that he had to rent and also mentions the rental prices. At first, he stayed in an apartment in the Laleli district, which he rented for 27.5 lira per month, but soon he had to move to another apartment, which cost 50 Turkish lira per month. One should be surprised not only by the amazing memory of the entrepreneur, but also by the great importance he paid to the money spent. A whole paragraph in his autobiographical book is devoted to the description of apartments and their prices.

Süleyman Ferit Bey in his memoirs speaks of one of the problems that Turkey faced during World War II: "The war years in Turkey is a period when the population faced an acute shortage of medicines. This problem became one of the most discussed at the Medical Care Supreme Council, which was convened in September 1941. It was necessary to create a national pharmaceutical industry!" This major dream Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı had in the 1940s will ultimately be realized by his eldest son Nejat Ferit [4].

Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı's first concern was to provide the people with products, which were in short supply due to the outbreak of the war. The first of these products was fish oil. Before the war, it was imported mainly from Norway, but in the 1940s, it almost completely disappeared from the Turkish market. Nejat Ferit developed a medicinal product, which was in fact "concentrated fish oil", consisting of vitamins A and D, and named it D-Vital. One package of D-Vital vitamins cost 105 kuruş. Soon the drug gained great popularity among the people.

Another product that completely disappeared from the Turkish market with the outbreak of the war was baby food. Following his friend's advice, Nejat Ferit started the production of baby food within the Vital brand together with his partner and friend Kemal Baran. They started production with virtually zero start-up capital, which was facilitated by two factors. A small "factory" was set up in the basement of a house that belonged to Kemal Baran's mother. The starch needed for the production of baby formula was provided by their friend Hayrettin Bey on an instalment plan.

During the same period, Nejat Ferit served in the army as a doctor at the Gülhane Military Hospital. In the hospital laboratory, he was engaged in the production of insulin, in which from the very beginning of the war the army was in dire need of. So the young chemist started filling government orders. Nejat Ferit was successful in this matter, his

merits were even covered by the press. Word of his achievements reached the ears of the armament inspector Rasim Aktoğu Paşa, who assigned the young chemist the production of electrolytic copper for the needs of the army. According to Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı, the plan of the military officials implied that he himself had to raise funds for the construction of the factory and the acquisition of a plot of land, which only after a while the state was to reimburse to him.

Nejat Ferit's father Süleyman Ferit allocated 45 thousand liras to his son. This was enough to purchase a plot of land in the Kartal region, the equipment necessary for production and to start building a factory. However, it quickly became obvious that the state would not be able to cover the young entrepreneur's expenses, moreover, Nejat Ferit's project was suspended, and he himself was again called up to serve in the Gülhane hospital.

At first, Nejat Ferit tried to use the unfinished factory for the production of black paint, but this venture was unsuccessful. He then decided to become the companion of a man named Pastellas. Pastellas was the owner of two shops in the Beyoğlu district. As soon as World War II began, he started the production of coffee cups, which became a large deficit in the capital. According to Nejat Ferit's plan, he invested the funds and the factory he had, while Pastellas had to put in his experience and business skills. The successful Eczacıbaşı-Pastellas alliance existed until 1951, when relations between Greece and the Turkish Republic became complicated. "Eczacıbaşı from Izmir gradually turned into Eczacıbaşı from Turkey".

In June 1950, the Industrial Development Bank of Turkey was established. The main purpose of the bank was to provide entrepreneurs with long-term investment loans. Immediately after the official opening of the bank, Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı requested a loan in the amount of 820 thousand liras for the construction of the first pharmaceutical factory in Turkey.

Apart from Eczacıbaşı, similar requests were sent by the world-famous company Squibb and the already famous Turkish businessman Ibrahim Ethem. Eczacıbaşı's name was not widely known in Istanbul at that time. Nejat Ferit Bey owned a pharmaceutical laboratory, which consisted of five rooms, where ten people worked. According to N. F. Eczacıbaşı himself, he practically had no hope that the bank would grant his request when his teacher, Professor Hazım Atif Kuyucak (member of the bank's board of directors) intervened in the matter.

He persuaded the board to arrange an exam for the young entrepreneur. At first, the board of directors could not believe in the success of such an endeavour in a conservative country, where the population shared a widespread belief in the magical properties of European medicines, which flooded Turkish markets at the time. However, somehow (Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı in his memoirs calls one of his main arguments the confidence that the people will support the new Turkish brands of medicines) he managed to get his request granted, and having received 820 thousand liras from the bank, Eczacıbaşı started the construction of the first pharmaceutical factory in Turkey.

We believe that the main reason for Eczacıbaşı's success in the enterprise was the fact that by June 1950 the Democratic Party, namely its leaders Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes (close friends of the Eczacıbaşı family) were already in power.

Eczacıbaşı's memories about the construction of the factory could also be of interest. First, he started looking for a plot of land suitable for construction. The first site he chose was near the cemetery in the Zincirlikuyu quarter. They asked for only one lira per square

meter of land. However, Eczacıbaşı refused the site believing that the close proximity of the cemetery was not suitable for the future pharmaceutical factory. He soon acquired a piece of land in the same quarter, but for 2.65 liras per square meter, having thus stricken a less profitable deal for the sake of the future advantages of the enterprise.

During the construction of the factory, Nejat Ferit Bey paid great attention to the entrance. In his opinion, it should have been a spacious room that would instil in the visitor a sense of reliability and confidence. Eczacıbaşı must have been aware of the Turks' common inclination to pay great attention to entrance and lobby wherever they went be it shop, hotel or theatre.

The laying of the foundations of the factory turned into a national festivity. This can be attributed to the fact that at the time any investment in production was perceived as a service for the good of the homeland and an invaluable contribution to the country's economy.

The factory was built in 11 months. On November 23, 1952, the President of the Republic Celal Bayar, Süleyman Ferit Eczacıbaşı, the Governor of Istanbul Professor Fahrettin Kerim Gökay, ministers and deputies were present at the grand opening. The close friends, the president of the republic Celal Bey and the first Turkish pharmacist Süleyman Ferit Bey, were especially happy on the joyous occasion. From the very beginning of the 20th century, they dreamed of commerce, industry and banking being in the hands of Turkish entrepreneurs. The dream was coming true right before their eyes.

In the mid-50s, shortly after the factory's grand opening, the country experienced a growing shortage of foreign currency. In such conditions, the import of pharmaceutical products from foreign firms was greatly obstructed. Foreign manufacturers had two options: either to build their own factories in Turkey or to give out licenses for the production of their medicines to an already existing factory. Many well-known foreign pharmaceutical companies (for example, German Schering and Bayer, Farmitalia, American Squibb and Pfizer) started constructing their own factories in Turkey. Other well-known companies were looking for the already built Turkish factory. According to Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı in the middle of the 20th century, there was only one factory in Turkey that could satisfy all the demands of foreign manufacturers. This was his pharmaceutical factory in the Levent district. Within 10 years after the official opening of the Eczacıbaşı pharmaceutical factory, they concluded licensing agreement for medicine production with such well-known companies as Bristol, Bristol-Myers, Parke-Davis, Upjon, Schering, Beiersdorf and others. Eczacıbaşı in his memoirs focuses not on his personal success, but on the benefits of such agreements and the undoubted advantages of expanding the production for the country.

At the same time Eczacıbaşı decided to expand ceramic production in the Kartal district. Having studied the market, he realized that building materials are in great demand in the rapidly growing city. Nejat Ferit Bey decided that the production of sanitary ware can be considered the industry that would link ceramic production with the production of building materials. The factory in Kartal was expanded and already in 1966, the annual output reached 16 tons.

Thus by the mid-50s N. F. Eczacıbaşı owned the Eczacıbaşı Pharmaceutical Plant in the Levent district and the Eczacıbaşı Ceramic Factory in the Kartal district.

In 1960, Cemal Gürsel offered N. F. Eczacıbaşı the post of Minister of Industry in the new government. Nejat Ferit Bey refused, arguing that an entrepreneur should not hold

a high public office, as this would give him the opportunity to manipulate political decisions in favour of his own enterprises.

Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı related that throughout his life he was guided by the ten golden rules of Paul Getty, a famous American oil tycoon who was once the wealthiest man in the USA. While most of the rules focus on how to become rich, expand your enterprise and make the most of the business potentials at hand, a few of them focus on a greater cause: one of them suggests that the central aim of any business should be producing more and better goods for people at lower cost, and another rule is a reminder that acquired capital should be ultimately used for the good of the world [7, p. 220].

When analysing the entrepreneurial qualities of N. F. Eczacıbaşı one might find the speech he delivered at a TÜSİAD meeting (Turkish Industry and Business Association) to be of great interest (see Appendix).

The first enterprises of Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı were closely related to the area of his father's business activity (fish oil production, baby food, medicines, pharmaceutical factory). Later, he turned to completely different areas: ceramics, paper, tiles, sanitary ware. And although at a glance all these products have little but nothing to do with pharmaceuticals, Eczacıbaşı's choice was never accidental.

Firstly, he had a very good sense of the market and its needs, and secondly, all these areas were somehow connected with the concepts of hygiene and cleanliness. What other manufacturer people could trust while purchasing sanitary ware, paper, and bathroom tiles if not a pharmacist. Thanks to the positive image and Eczacıbaşı name, Nejat Ferit Bey was able to easily achieve success in new areas of enterprise.

While speaking of Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı we must also mention that he was an art connoisseur and spent huge sums on charitable cultural events, as well as on children's and youth sports.

Interestingly, Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı took a firm stance on Property Tax. Unlike other entrepreneurs (Hacı Ömer Sabancı for one) Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı speaks negatively about the tax, the introduction of which "crossed out the basic principles of civil society and statehood, namely, equality and justice". One can feel certain hint of resentment in the words of the entrepreneur, although it is not entirely clear for whom (for friends, acquaintances, or his own family).

Conclusion

While analysing the lives and entrepreneurial activities of the Eczacıbaşı father and son a special place should be given to the origin of the family. As we have already mentioned, Süleyman Ferit's father Hacı Hafız Şakır Effendi was an Ottoman official. Süleyman Ferit and Nejat Eczacıbaşı repeatedly mention their close friends in their autobiographies — famous İzmir Dönme — the families of Evliyazade, Giridizade, Kapanizade, Uşakizade.

Another characteristic fact of the Eczacıbaşı family biography is its close relation with the government circles of Turkey. Although they did not actively participate in the political life of the country, both Eczacıbaşı father and son had close ties first with the Young Turk government, then with the heroes of the Turkish War of Independence Celal Bayar, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, with the top of the local Turkish administration (Kamil Paşa, Behçet Uz, Kâzım Karabekir), finally, with the leaders of the Democratic Party (abovementioned Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes).

Particularly close friendship tied the one of the younger sons of Süleyman Ferit, Vedat Eczacıbaşı and Adnan Menderes. The suicide of the former after the coup and the execution of the ex-Prime Minister in 1961 can serve as a tragic proof of the particularly warm relations between the Eczacıbaşı family and Adnan Menderes.

Apart from that Eczacıbaşı family's outstanding success can also be attributed to such entrepreneurial qualities as flexibility (Nejat Ferit Bey realized during the war that the country needed cups and began to produce them, after the war he realized that cups were no longer needed and began to produce sanitary ware which was in great demand) and aspiration to use the latest technology, learn from the West.

References

1. *The Eczacıbaşı Group*. Available at: http://www.eczacibasi.com.tr/images/channels/raporlar_2008/Holding2008.pdf (accessed: 05.04.2021).
2. In Pictures: The 40 Richest Turks. *Forbes*. Available at: http://www.forbes.com/2007/04/13/turkey-40-richest-cz_fs_0413richturks_slide_2.html (accessed: 05.04.2021).
3. *History of the Ottoman state, society and civilization*. Vol.1, 2, ed. E.İkhsanoglu. Moscow, Vostochnaia literatura Publ., 2006. 602 p. (In Russian)
4. Aksoy Y. Bir Kent, Bir İnsan, The Last Century of Izmir. *S. Ferit Eczacıbaşı'nın Yaşamı ve Anıları*. İstanbul, Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı Vakfı Yayınları, 1986. 360 p.
5. Dr. Nejat F. Written for Eczacıbaşı. *Basındaki Yorum ve Değerlendirmelerden Seçmeler*. İstanbul, Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı Vakfı Yayınları, 1999. 471 p.
6. *Those Who Turned the Wheels in 75 Years*. İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1999. 327 p. (In Turkish)
7. Eczacıbaşı N.F. *From generation to generation*. İstanbul, Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı Vakfı Yayınları, 1982. 267 p.
8. Alpay Y. *Historical Social Change and Turkish Entrepreneurship*. İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1978. 150 p.

Received: June 12, 2021
Accepted: January 16, 2023

Authors' information:

Aleksandra V. Zheveleva — PhD in History; a.zheveleva@spbu.ru

Natalia A. Sokolova — PhD in Philology; natalya.sokolova@spbu.ru

Aleksandra D. Yagafarova — PhD in Philology; a.yagafarova@spbu.ru

Клан Эджзаджибаши — главные фармацевты Турции

А. В. Жевелева, Н. А. Соколова, А. Д. Ягафарова

Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет,
Российская Федерация, 199034, Санкт-Петербург, Университетская наб., 7–9

Для цитирования: Zheveleva A. V., Sokolova N. A., Yagafarova A. D. The Eczacıbaşı Clan — Chief Pharmacists of Turkey // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Востоковедение и африканистика. 2023. Т. 15. Вып. 1. С. 58–72. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu13.2023.104>

История предпринимательского успеха семьи Эджзаджибаши, проделавшей длинный путь от аптеки в Измире, открытой основателем династии Сулейманом Феритом, до промышленной корпорации, чья сфера деятельности включает строительные матери-

алы, фармацевтику, потребительские товары, инвестирование и недвижимость, разворачивалась на фоне бурной политической и общественной жизни Османской Империи и Турции XX в. В представленной статье рассматривается жизненный путь основателей династии, отца — Сулеймана Ферита Эджзаджибаши и сына — Неджата Ферита Эджзаджибаши, и история успеха их предприятий через призму ее взаимосвязи с историческими событиями. Семья Эджзаджибаши родом из Измира, таким образом и глава клана, Сулейман Ферит, и его наследники стали свидетелями исторических событий начала XX в., потрясших не только Турцию, но и весь ближневосточный регион. Активно не участвуя в политической жизни страны, отец и сын Эджзаджибаши имели тесные связи сперва с младотурецким правительством, затем с героями национально-освободительной борьбы Джемалем Баяром, Мустафой Кемалем Ататюрком и др. Материалы, использованные при подготовке статьи, являются также ценными источниками по истории молодой Турецкой Республики. Здесь можно почерпнуть ценные сведения о греческой оккупации Измира, о развитии системы здравоохранения в Измире в османский и раннереспубликанский периоды, о первых значимых событиях из жизни Измира в 1920-е гг., например об Измирском экономическом конгрессе и Международной выставке в Измире. История клана Эджзаджибаши является ярким примером зарождения и развития предпринимательства в среде турецкого населения Турции и представляет интерес для исследователей, занимающихся историей экономического развития Турции.

Ключевые слова: Турция, экономика, предприниматели, холдинг Эджзаджибаши, фармацевтика.

Статья поступила в редакцию 12 июня 2021 г.,
рекомендована к печати 16 января 2023 г.

Контактная информация:

Жевелева Александра Владимировна — канд. ист. наук; a.zheveleva@spbu.ru

Соколова Наталья Александровна — канд. филол. наук; natalya.sokolova@spbu.ru

Ягафарова Александра Дмитриевна — канд. филол. наук; a.yagafarova@spbu.ru

Appendix

Speech delivered at the general meeting of the TÜSİAD Society on December 21, 1978 [8, pp. 94–97]

Nejat Ferit Eczacıbaşı:

Recently, we have witnessed a few election campaigns following one after another. Our politicians compete in criticizing those people who, while remaining in the minority, serve the economic progress of society. Words such as “capitalism”, “exploitation”, expressions like “dark state ties not in favour of the people” became the main theme of their campaign speeches. Some of them, pretending to have no idea of the global experience, are proposing new models of economic development instead of private entrepreneurship, considering it to be a flawed system, which cannot yet be dispensed with.

I am not going to talk of those people and institutions who, having enjoyed the democracy, at every opportunity want to turn the country into the military camp they miss so much. The parties I am talking about believe in real democracy, they have included it in their political programs and have proved their faith in word and deed.

In today's Turkey, customs duty evasion has become a profession. We see markets all over the place filled with smuggled goods. Buying and selling without a check has become a trade law. Government institutions, engaging in the wrong personnel policy, cannot be credible, do not work properly. Let us try to meet the expectations of the people. We need to take advantage of the experience of those countries whose public order we have adopted, to bring into life their laws in such a way that it does not contradict the norms of our state. Trying to hide the aforementioned shortcomings, divert the attention of the people from them and thus turn them against our organization will not benefit either us or the economy of our country.

The basis of the economic development of our country is not exploitation, as it was in developed countries. We have no colonial past. We are on the path of progress respecting human rights and social justice. The development that started from scratch after the proclamation of the Republic took place in a short period spanning the lives of one or two generations. Let us turn here and now to the names of the representatives of Turkish private business. They took their first steps in entrepreneurship behind a small counter, in a small shop or in a modest atelier on the ground floor of an apartment building. They were able to accumulate capital thanks to “entrepreneurial strength” (entrepreneurial spirit), a penchant for accumulation and inhuman performance. Here is the useful side of private entrepreneurship for society.

Now in Turkey, private savings have already reached a certain level. Gradually, this accumulation must reach the limit. Experienced entrepreneurs must channel small savings into profitable and reliable investments. Business people should be involved in conserving our energy sources and using them profitably. Let's not wait for the state to solve the problem of the environment. We must help the authorities in the fight against any illegal activity. Let's be more active in social welfare businesses. It is obvious that an entrepreneur with a sense of responsibility is always seen as trustworthy.

Let's not label anyone who criticizes us as a “communist”. Let us stand at the forefront of the fight against illegal business and be proud of our contribution to the economy.

We must protect the rights of consumers before the state. Private entrepreneurship is a creative, constructive, productive force of society. When this force works effectively, the economy thrives. It is impossible, according to the current mood, to use it as a temporary support. Our task is to take the necessary measures to make it work effectively.

The decisions made by the state authorities together with experienced and educated entrepreneurs will be true and effective. Success in modernizing society does not happen on paper, but with experience and knowledge. In order to develop our common homeland, we need to act smart, consult and capitalize on every opportunity. Under the leadership of state power, provided that all laws are respected, when small, medium and large enterprises succeed one by one, there will no longer be an economic problem that our country would not be able to overcome.