

UŞAK SUGAR FACTORY AS A SUCCESS OF PRIVATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

Nuri Şeker founded Uşak Sugar Factory in 1926. He targeted to produce Turkish sugar from beet. Thus, he wanted to easily ensure this need of Turkish people. He also planned to provide a regular source of income to poor peasants. He established a company and began to collect capital for the factory. Czechoslovak Skoda firm provide technology to the factory. After inauguration, Uşak Sugar Factory met water supply and agricultural pest problem. Nuri Şeker also had to teach newly sugar beet cultivation to peasants. In contrary to all difficulties, factory started its operations and sugar production was steadily increased. But Nuri Şeker faced with financial difficulties, because experience years in sugar production increased factory's debts. As a result of these debts, government decided to liquidate the factory's company. Nationalization was practiced on 6 August 1931. During the liquidation process, rights of public partners became main argument point. Later, government decided to pay face values of public partners' shares. Eventually, links of private entrepreneurs were totally severed from Uşak Sugar Factory.

Keywords: *Nuri Şeker, Uşak Sugar Factory, beet cultivation, nationalization, rights of public partners.*

Öz

Özel Girişimciliğin Başarısı Olarak Uşak Şeker Fabrikası

Nuri Şeker Uşak Şeker Fabrikasını 1926'da kurdu. Pancardan Türk şekerini üretmeyi hedeflemişti. Böylece Türk halkının bu ihtiyacını kolayca sağlamak istemişti. Kendisi ayrıca fakir köylülere düzenli bir gelir kaynağı sağlamayı planlamıştı. Bir şirket kurdu ve fabrika için sermaye toplamaya başladı. Çekoslovak Skoda firması fabrikaya teknoloji sağladı. Açılıştan sonra, Uşak Şeker Fabrikası su sağlama ve zirai haşere sorunlarıyla karşılaştı. Nuri Şeker ayrıca yeni şeker pancarı ziraatını köylülere öğretmek zorundaydı. Bütün zorluklara karşı, fabrika çalışmaya başladı ve şeker üretimi sürekli artmaktaydı. Fakat Nuri Şeker finansal zorluklarla karşılaştı. Çünkü şeker üretimindeki tecrübe yılları fabrikanın borçlarını arttırdı. Bu borçların sonucunda, hükümet fabrikanın şirketini tasfiye etmeye karar verdi. Kamulaştırma 6 Ağustos 1931'de gerçekleştirildi.

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Tasfiye sürecinde halk hissedarlarının hakları ana tartışma noktası oldu. Sonunda, hükümet halk hissedarlarının hisselerinin tam karşılığını ödemeye karar verdi. Neticede, özel girişimcilerin bağlantıları Uşak Şeker Fabrikasından tamamen kopartıldı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Nuri Şeker, Uşak Şeker Fabrikası, pancar ziraatı, kamulaştırma, halk hissedarlarının hakları.*

Introduction

Although many sugary plants, there are two main sources of sucrose. Sugar cane and sugar beet are only plants that which have sufficient amount of sucrose to successfully produce sugar. For the conditions of Turkey, sugar cane is not very convenient. This plant has plantation area of Tropic and Sub-Tropic regions. In Turkey, only Adana region is suitable to cultivate sugar cane.¹ But peasants of the region have had many profitable alternatives; like fruit, vegetable, olive, rice and cotton instead of sugar cane.² As to sugar beet, it is cultivable nearly everywhere in Turkey. In 1976, there were operating 17 sugar factories that all of them processed sugar beet.³

Beet is cultivated for two purposes that are either for animal husbandry or sugar production. Animal fodder type contains 8 to 10%, whereas sugar beet has ingredient of 16 to 18% sugar. Other than these benefits, beet cultivation has an important place in crop rotation. It improves the productivity of following cultivated grains especially wheat.⁴ As to how it is possible; sugar beet's cultivation requires deeper plowing than other plants, because it has deep roots. Thus, beneficial materials of land from deeper parts are open to other plants. Following planted to beet field grains could easily absorb necessary materials and develop better.⁵

Although some efforts, there were not any successful entrepreneurs in the Ottoman Empire about beet sugar production. But, in this point, Yusuf Bey's venture should be mentioned, because of proximity to Uşak. Yusuf Bey wanted

¹ Although there were some practiced investigations, sugar cane cultivation did not spread very much in Mediterranean region. For this purpose, works of Haşım Alatas should be mentioned. He sent some native and foreign type sugar cane examples which were cultivated in the region to Uşak and Alpulu Sugar Factories and Ankara laboratories for determining their sugar content and profitability. Alatas 1931, p. 56.

² This author was named at the beginning of the article, science committee mechanical engineer İlhami Bey. Pamir 1923, p. 39, 45. İlhami Nafiz Pamir became the member of Sugar Rationalization Committee (Şeker Rasyonelasyon Komitesi) on 20 December 1934. Tekeli and İlkin 1982, p. 129.

³ Together with Uşak, Adapazarı, Alpulu, Amasya, Ankara, Burdur, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, Eskişehir, Kastamonu, Kayseri, Konya, Kütahya, Malatya, Susurluk and Turhal Sugar Factories processed 9,406,150 tons sugar beet in 1976. Velidedeoğlu et al. 1977, p. 52.

⁴ M. Fazıl 1923, p.3.

⁵ *Şeker Pancarı Ziraatı Toprağı Zayıf Düşürürmü* 1941, p.9.

to open a sugar factory in Afyonkarahisar. He demanded 30 years long privilege in his petition. The Porte confirmed the petition in principle, because of two reasons. Firstly important amount of beet was cultivated in Afyonkarahisar. If this factory was established, beet cultivation would be considerably increased. Secondly factory would also make enormous contribution to the expansion of sugar trade.⁶ Despite being unsuccessful of this venture, it shows the historical background of beet cultivation in the region.⁷

Uşak Sugar Factory was founded by Nuri Şeker. When he intended this venture, he had two purposes. At first Nuri Şeker thought that why sugar was not produce in Turkey. Turkey had every material needs to found and maintain a sugar factory. In order to prove his claim, he started some investigations in his farm for beet cultivation and processing during the 2nd Constitutional Era.⁸ As to his second purpose, Nuri Şeker felt that he had some responsibilities to his country. Turkish people experienced a long period of warfare from Balkan to Independence War. Wars impoverished the Turkish nation. Turkish villagers, who were the main part of the nation, had maintained their livelihood from a few grains. If the prices would decrease in the market, villagers could not afford their expenditures.⁹ A new source of income must be found to Turkish villagers.¹⁰

In this article, activities of Nuri Şeker will be traced as a private entrepreneurship. His efforts for sugar production and government's treatments to his activities will be mentioned in three parts. Firstly, preliminary works for factory establishment will be researched; company foundation, capital accumulation, feasibility report and machinery. Secondly, inauguration of Uşak Sugar Factory and some problems for production process will be mentioned like water supplying, sugar beet cultivation and agricultural pests. Thirdly, financial difficulties of the factory and liquidation of private company will be investigated. In this third part, rights of public partners will be specifically

⁶ "...Karahisar-ı Sahib sancağının münasib mahallinde bir şeker fabrikası inşası zımında otuz sene müddetle imtiyaz itası Yusuf Bey tarafından istida olunmuş olduğına ve liva-yı mezkûrda pek çok pancar yetişmekte olduğu cihetle böyle bir fabrikanın küşadı mahsulat-ı mebhuse ile şeker ticaretinin tevsi ve terakkisine mucib olacağına binaen..." Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi) hereafter BOA İ.TNF 6/52. 20 Şaban 1315, 1 Kânunusani 1313, 13 January 1898.

⁷ BOA ŞD 3006/55. 24 Zilhicce 1318, 1 Nisan 1317, 14 April 1901.

⁸ Karayaman 2010, p.8.

⁹ Wheat and barley prices of 1928-1931 periods proved the concern of Nuri Şeker. Wheat prices dropped from 13.86 piasters in 1928 to 4.77 piasters in 1931, whereas barley prices decreased from 9.86 piasters to 3.87 piasters for the same years. *Tarım İstatistikleri* 1928-36, 1937, p. 194-195.

¹⁰ This book mainly consisted of interview which was made with Nuri Şeker. Ötügen 1955, p.29.

mentioned. At the end of the article, some details will be given about the benefits of sugar industry both for Uşak and Turkey during 1930's. In whole article, some comparisons will be made with contemporary Alpullu Sugar Factory, whenever possible.

Foundation of the Company

Nuri Şeker began his action with founding a company. Uşak Development of Agriculture of Turkish Joint Stock Company "Uşak Terakkii Ziraat Türk Anonim Şirketi"¹¹ was founded with 50 members of some prominent villagers. He came to Ankara to register company's internal regulations. He made some meetings with statesmen, to show the importance of his attempt. Although Nuri Şeker met some objections, he could take the consent of them by demonstrating his knowledge about beet agriculture. In addition, the structure of partnership of company was accepted as a proof of local peasants' support to newly planned factory.¹² At the end of his meetings, company was officially confirmed by TBMM on 19 April 1923. Uşak would be the center of company. Company would operate in sugar factory establishment and sugar production and commerce. Company would also have 300,000 liras as capital and 50 years as privilege period.¹³

Nuri Şeker's efforts were found some support among deputies, during the meeting of Law of Granting Privileges and Exemptions to Sugar Factories.¹⁴ Aksaray deputy Besim Atalay appreciated the activities of Nuri Şeker within the path of economic independence. Sugar was an important consuming commodity. For its importation bill, Turkey paid important amount of money. In that point, Besim Atalay considered changing public demand. At the old times, honey and grape molasses were used for sweet need. But grape yards were began to abandon, because of very cheap import sugar. Under the new market conditions, sugar must be provided to Turkish people with either importation or newly establishing production. Besim Atalay pointed out the

¹¹ Nuri Şeker converted previously founded "Uşak Necm-i Ticaret Osmanlı Anonim Şirketi" to this company. Karayaman misread Ottoman word "Necim" as "Tecim". Karayaman 2010, p. 10. Foundation of this trade company was confirmed by Ottoman government on 11 April 1917. BOA MV 247/26. 19 Cemaziyelahir 1335, 11 Nisan 1333, 11 April 1917.

¹² Ötügen 1955, p.43-44, 46-47, 49.

¹³ "Merkezi Uşak'da olarak şeker fabrikaları tesis etmek ve şeker imal ve ticaretine aid her türlü muamelatla iştigal eylemek ve emrinde üç yüz bin lira sermaye ve elli sene müddetle (Uşak Terakkii Ziraat Türk Anonim Şirketi) namı altında teşkil idilecek olan şirket..." Prime Ministry Republican Archive (Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi) hereafter BCA 30-18-1-1-7-16-16.

¹⁴ For encouraging new entrepreneurs to sugar production sector, this law was enacted nine days later. "Law of Granting Privileges and Exemptions to Sugar Factories" (Şeker Fabrikalarına Bahşolunan İmtiyazat ve Muafiyat Hakkında Kanun), Resmi Gazete, 14 April 1925.

preparations of Nuri Şeker. At the end of his sentences, he declared that Nuri Şeker deserved the governmental support.¹⁵

As to difference with contemporary Alpullu Sugar Factory, Uşak Sugar Factory had peasant partners from the region. But Alpullu Factory possessed more powerful partners. Member list included five deputies that were Edirne Deputies Faik Kaltakkıran and Hüseyin Rıfkı Arduman, Tekirdağ Deputy Faik Öztrak, Bilecik Deputy İbrahim Çolak and Çatalca Deputy Mehmet Şakir Kesebir.¹⁶ But the most important advantage of Alpullu Factory derived from Mehmet Şakir Kesebir. He was appointed to the presidency of sugar monopoly administration on 9 February 1926.¹⁷ This type monopolistic power was not granted to Uşak Sugar Factory.

Difficulties in Capital Accumulation

After official foundation, Nuri Şeker accelerated his attempts to sell bonds for acquiring sufficient capital. Many villagers bought company's bonds to support Uşak Sugar Factory. Most of them did not have money. They brought every kind of goods from barley to carpet, to be partner of newly founding factory. All invested goods were stored in Hacı Gedik Khan. They were sold piece by piece in order to turn cash. Capital collecting lasted quite a long time.¹⁸ But these long and concentrated efforts became successful. Capital of the company increased 600,000 liras. Company's committee of directors decided to increase capital to 1,200,000 liras on 30 April 1925. This capital expenditure was confirmed by government on 1 November 1925.¹⁹ Factory's capital position proceeded according to this number up to 1930. As to comparison with Alpullu Sugar Factory, it had an again advantageous position for capital accumulation. The biggest shareholder of the company was İş Bankası that it had 68% of the capital. Other than this bank, 10% of capital was belonged to Ziraat Bankası and Thrace Provinces Special Administrations (Trakya İlleri Özel İdareleri).²⁰ Thus, required capital to Alpullu Sugar Factory was obtained with very much speed and ease according to Uşak Sugar Factory.

¹⁵ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, 5 April 1925, p. 98-99.

¹⁶ *İstanbul ve Trakya*, p. 4.

¹⁷ “Şeker inhisarı hakkındaki... kanunun dokuzuncu maddesi mucibince, teşkili icab iden inhisar idaresi meclis idare riyasetine Çatalca mebusı Şakir... Efendilerin tayini... icra vekilleri heyetinin 9 Şubat 1926 tarihli ictimanda tasvip ve kabul olunmuştur.” BCA 30-18-1-1-17-92-5.

¹⁸ Mazanoğlu 1967, p. 19, 32.

¹⁹ Karayaman 2010, p. 14-15.

²⁰ Akıncı 1934, p.43, 64.

Feasibility Report

Before the establishment of Uşak Sugar Factory, a detailed feasibility report was prepared. According to this report, daily operating procedure and five main topics of sugar production were investigated. Firstly, soil analysis of the region was practiced for sugar beet cultivation in Halkalı Agriculture School. According to this report, soil was within homogenous condition up to 50 cm depth. In addition, under soil waters were very close to surface. Region had proper agricultural conditions for deep rooted sugar beet cultivation. Secondly, cheap labor was very abundant in the region. It was important, because sugar beet cultivation required labor intensive farming. Daily wages in Uşak and Afyonkarahisar were very low. Most of workers from these regions went to Aydın and İzmir for job seeking. Furthermore, most of company's shares were bought by active peasants. They were eager to sugar beet cultivation. Finally, labor shortage was not expected in there.²¹

Thirdly, trials of sugar beet cultivation and some analysis' examples for measurements of sugar ingredient were shown to prove the quality of local sugar beet harvest. Fourthly, establishment capital was calculated as 1,200,000 liras. It divided into four parts that machinery 600,000 liras, building construction 200,000 liras, transportation and montage costs 50,000 liras and operating capital 350,000 liras. Fifthly, raw material needs were considered. Although there were a lignite mine in 35 kilometers away, Zonguldak coals were used at the beginning, because of insufficient and broken roads. There was a limekiln in 5 kilometers away to factory. Lime needs could be easily met. If a tram line would be constructed to this limekiln, it could be also used for sugar beet transportation.²²

Machinery and Equipment of Uşak Sugar Factory

When attempts of Nuri Şeker continue to accumulate capital, he also searched for factory's machine park. After long investigations and negotiations, he settled with Czechoslovak²³ Skoda Company for the establishment of the factory with amount of \$404,000. Company and Nuri Şeker also agreed for the payment plan that 20% of them was paid as down payment and 33% when machinery reached Uşak. For the remaining part, two installments were decided. 17% would be paid when the sugar production had begun and the last 30% within six years.²⁴

²¹ *Uşakda Tesisi*, p. 5-8.

²² *Uşakda Tesisi*, p. 9-13.

²³ Czechoslovakia was an important sugar producing country during 1920's. Turkey imported 15,428 tons sugar from Czechoslovakia via Trieste port in 1927. Nüzhet Haşım 1929, p. 116.

²⁴ Ötüken 1955, p.50, 58.

Inauguration of Uşak Sugar Factory

For the establishment of a factory, determining a construction place is an important matter. Closeness to transportation facilities and labor force could be seen as important advantages. The company similarly thought for the construction. It was started within the company's own field that it had one kilometer extension. The field was on railway route and three kilometers away from Uşak city. This field constituted the center of 10,000 hectares width fertile and wetland plain.²⁵ Factory construction started during winter of 1925 and lasted up to the December of 1926. Factory was inaugurated²⁶ on 17 December 1926. First sugar production was also achieved in this day. According to contract rules, nine masters of Skoda Company would remain in Uşak to operate the factory. Unless Turkish workers would learn sugar making, they could not leave Uşak. As a foundation capacity, Uşak Sugar Factory could process 500 tons beet. But with spare parts capacity could be increased up to 1000 tons or even 1500 tons. The factory established with lesser cost than both Eskişehir and Turhal Factories. When for these factories 5-6 million liras were spent, opening of Uşak Factory costed only 1,840,000 liras.²⁷

After the inauguration of the factory, water supply became an important problem, due to beets were cleaned and carried with abundant amount of water in sugar factories. For one kilogram beet, eight to ten liters water needed in transport channels.²⁸ In front of the criticism of this need, Nuri Şeker mentioned that Skoda's men had already specified some details. At the beginning, he thought that a fountain would meet all necessary requirements. But at the end, he understood the scale of water necessity within measure of rivers, like Gediz and Menderes. To provide water need, artesian well was dug in 1927 with spending 95,134.80 liras. But required result was not achieved. The following year, some drainage activities practiced to collect under soil waters. Some other infrastructure also added these works. But factory's water need could barely meet. ²⁹ Nuri Şeker tried to completely solve this problem. He planned to bring Çokrağan Stream to Uşak Sugar Factory, but this project was not achieved during his control period, due to some technical and financial problems.³⁰ But

²⁵ *Uşakda Tesisi*, p. 3.

²⁶ İzmir governor Kazım Dirik sent a congratulation telegraph to government, for the inauguration of Uşak Sugar Factory. BCA 30-10-197-350-6.

²⁷ Ötüken 1955, p. 65-66.

²⁸ Dumlu 1978, p. 35.

²⁹ Due to temporary solutions to water problem, transportation of Uşak Sugar Factory was planned to another place in 1929. But concern of probable damaged to machinery during the transportation was cancelled this plan. Polatoğlu 2017, p. 94.

³⁰ Karayaman 2010, p. 67-68.

later five kilometer length and eleven meters depth three drainages were built to provide sufficient amount of water to the factory, with the expenditure of 350,000 liras.³¹

Auxiliary Facilities

After the foundation of Uşak Sugar Factory, some auxiliary facilities were also needed. For this purpose, Employees Association of Uşak Sugar Factory was established on 20 November 1927, with 5000 liras capital and five years period. Association would work within the factory and would sell to its members every required food and clothes either cash or installment. Association would also found restaurant, beerhouse, pub, hotel, cinema, teahouse, coffee shop, grocery and greengrocery to provide all necessities of a modern life; both for foreign experts and its members' families. Thus, factory management could easily focus its production activities.³²

Beet Cultivation for Raw Material Needs

Although the inauguration of the factory, Nuri Şeker's problems did not finish. Every factory needs to be supplied continuous raw material and Uşak Sugar Factory was not an exception to this rule. Nuri Şeker supported beet cultivation and persuaded many villagers for this. But in that time, a rumor began to spread in Uşak. According to this claim, Nuri Şeker and government agreed a support plan to the factory. Beet cultivators exempt from land tax for a period of ten years. But every beet fields registered with the name of the factory. At the end, every beet cultivator would lose his field. But in reality, newly enacted sugar industry support law did not include this type condition.³³ In front of this false news, Nuri Şeker began to visit villages. If villagers believed this rumor, factory would be remained inactive. But these visits became successful and many villagers did not give up beet cultivation.³⁴ From Table.1, effects of this rumor could be seen. More than half of beet cultivated

³¹ Mikusch 1934, p. 32.

³² “Kendi ortakları için her nevi melbusat mekulat ve emsalini mümkün mertebe halis ve ucuz mubayaa ve azasına peşin veya vade ile satmak ve lokanta, birahane, gazino, otel, sinema, çayhane, kahvehane bakkal ve sebze dükkânları tesis ve yerli ecnebi mütehasşislar ihtiyacatını ve misafiretlerini temin ve medeni ihtiyaçlarının temini için fabrika idaresinin vezaifini teshil ve ortakların aileleri ihtiyaçları için de muavenet itmek maksadıyla merkezi Uşak Şeker Fabrikası dâhilinde olmak üzere beş sene müddet ve beş bin lira olmak üzere... sermayesiyle teşkiline teşebbüs olunan (Uşak Şeker Fabrikasında Çalışanlar Ortaklığının)... tasdiki kabul edilmiştir.” BCA 30-18-1-1-26-63-4.

³³ Karayaman 2012, p. 57-58.

³⁴ Ötügen 1955, p.84.

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lands were abandoned to other agricultural products. But efforts of Nuri Şeker became successful in efficiency. Although there were enormous decrease in cultivation area, beet yield increased 240% in one year.

Table.1. Sugar Beet cultivation in Kütahya Province in 1926-1927

Places	Decares	Kilogram
Uşak	2804	783,171
Kütahya Center	262	72,144
Gediz	305	64,940
Other Districts	60	14,738
Total of 1927	3431	934,993
Total of 1926	8000	390,000

Sources: Ziraat Vekaleti İstatistik Müdüriyeti, *1926 Senesi Ziraat İstatistikleri*, Sanayi-i Nefise Matbaası, İstanbul 1926, p.10, Merkez İstatistik Müdüriyeti Umumiyesi, *1927 Senesi Zirai Tahriri Neticeleri*, İstanbul Cumhuriyet Matbaası, Ankara 1928, p. 74, 76.

Table.2. Cultivated Area and Processed Sugar Beet for Uşak Sugar Factory

Year	Hectare	Ton	Year	Hectare	Ton
1928	3119	9293	1931	5382	55,292
1929	2493	23,173	1932	5272	69,702
1930	4903	31,180	1933	6067	98,000

Source: Başvekâlet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, *Tarım İstatistikleri 1928-36*, Mehmet İhsan Matbaası, Ankara 1937, p. 151.

During the efforts of Nuri Şeker, İstanbul Halkalı Agriculture School had made some researches and trials in its facilities about sugar beet cultivation. The school targeted to determine most convenient type to Turkey's conditions, because sugar beet was not very well known among peasants. For determining the most productive type, some samples from Germany, France, Ukraine and Czechoslovakia were cultivated. In these researches, German Dippes E type was seen as the most sugar gathering type. But Halkalı Agriculture School thought that similar researches must be repeated at least five and six years. As to Uşak Sugar Factory, its seed type was excluded from this research, because of its inconvenient conditions.³⁵

Agricultural Pest and Some Other Problems

During 1920's beet cultivation experienced three type harmful insects. These were earth worms (agrotis), tortoise beetles (cassida) and beet armyworm (caradrina). Earth worms drill many holes in beetroots. As to other two insects,

³⁵ Hacızade Mirza 1928, p.7-8, 16.

they eat leaves of beet and weaken the plant. For struggle against them, crop rotation, repeated hoeing and pesticide were recommended.³⁶

Uşak Sugar Factory met this agricultural pests' problem, after the rumor of confiscation. Every beet contained nearly 100 to 150 earth worms. Because of these insect pests, factory's efficiency in sugar production dropped nearly 5 to 10%. All necessary scientific measurements were taken to overcome this problem. At the last during the fourth year, success was achieved. Factory could be able to operate in full capacity. During one beet season factory processed approximately 50,000 tons.³⁷ For better fighting to these insects, specialist Monsieur Steiner was hired for Uşak Sugar Factory on 4 June 1933.³⁸ Success of this struggle could be easily seen from the numbers of İlhami Nafiz Pamir's report in 1930 Industry Congress. Processed beet increased 292% and sugar efficiency increased 4.09% within three years.

Table.3. 1927-29 Production Numbers of Uşak Sugar Factory.

Year	Beet (ton)	Sugar (ton)	Crystal Sugar/ Beet (%)
1927	7946	815	10.6
1928	9293	1290	14.3
1929	23,173	3242	14.69

Source: Pamir, 2008, p. 229.

Other than agricultural pest problem, Uşak Sugar Factory had to deal with heavy transportation expenditures and peasants' more profitable alternative. Uşak Sugar Factory was relatively founded within the edge of beet cultivation region. This situation caused great expenditures for sugar beet transportation.³⁹ Although Uşak's plains were very convenient to beet cultivation, peasants' preference deepened the problem. At the beginning, peasants mostly planted double or three times profitable opium instead of sugar beet. As a result of this preference, Uşak Sugar Factory had to demand sugar beet from longer distances. Other than beet, coal transportation also increased production costs.⁴⁰

Increasing Losses and Nuri Şeker's Answer

1926-1930 periods became the experience years for Turkish sugar industry. Factories' personnel learnt details of sugar manufacturing and

³⁶ M. Fazıl 1923, p.35-37.

³⁷ Ötüken 1955, p.87.

³⁸ BCA 30-18-1-2-37-42-16.

³⁹ Avcı 1991, p. 222.

⁴⁰ Karayaman 2010, p. 112-113.

obtained mastery. Turkish peasants gained habit of sugar beet cultivation, because of its higher prices against grains. From the beginning of 1930's, Uşak Sugar Factory, as well as Alpullu Factory, worked with better conditions.⁴¹ But these experience years caused financial difficulties. Uşak Sugar Factory declared continuous losses; 7000 liras in 1925, 137,000 liras in 1926, 529,000 liras in 1927, 934,000 liras in 1928, 1,016,000 liras in 1929 and 1,137,000 liras in 1930. At the end, amount of loss totaled 3,760,000 liras. According to trade law; if a company's deficit reached more than three times of its capital, this company must be liquidated.⁴²

Uşak Sugar Factory's balance sheet demonstrated loss in every activity year, under some financial and managerial conditions. Ministry of Finance offered some precautions to improve country's sugar industry. Cabinet accepted this offer on 16 January 1929.⁴³ This situation was noticed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He visited Uşak Sugar Factory to consider circumstance at the first hand, in 1930. In this visiting Atatürk held responsible that Nuri Şeker caused great losses in factory's financial situation. In this meeting Nuri Şeker explained that this huge debt resulted from wrong calculation. Accounts of factory must be held differently. According to Nuri Şeker, the factory had approximately 150,000 liras as financial obligation. As to the mistake of account, factory's all machines and tools were begun to count for amortization. Whereas sugar factories for every ton of processed beet kept apart five piasters, in general. Amortization should not be made with ignoring the production numbers. In addition gained money from sugar sales did not accepted as a return to factory's debt. Because all money was allocated to amortization, deficit of the factory reached a peak level. To detail his argument, Nuri Şeker gave an example from second season of the factory. In this beet processing season, factory produced sugar that it worth 450,000 liras. This amount was completely assigned to agricultural tools and machine parts. Nothing was separated to profit. This resulted to increase deficit of the factory in paper.⁴⁴

Liquidation of Uşak Sugar Factory's Company

Despite Nuri Şeker's explanations, cabinet decided liquidation of the company on 21 May 1930. According to this plan, a new company would be founded with paid in capital of 6,500,000 liras. Ministry of Finance would also

⁴¹ Türkoğlu 1951, p. 112

⁴² Akıncı 1934, p.43, 46.

⁴³ BCA 30-18-1-2-1-13-21.

⁴⁴ Veldet 1958, p.155-156.

allocate 1,500,000 liras to this new company as advance payment.⁴⁵ Minister of Economics Şakir Kesebir opened to discussion liquidation plan in TBMM on 10 June 1930. During this meeting, deputies thoroughly evaluated the position of Uşak Sugar Factory, either it had any chance to live or it should close to stop increasing loss. Kütahya deputy Ragıp Soysal mentioned the position of public partners' shares. He defended that these poor people rights must be protected. He also claimed that Uşak Sugar Factory could be successful in the near future, due to increasing beet harvest. Şakir Kesebir declared that Uşak Sugar Factory had to be liquidated, because of trade law. But he thought that something must be done to compensate the losses of public partners. As to increasing beet cultivation, it would not produce any chance to the factory, because yearly debt payments were too high to provide any success. Eskişehir deputy Emin Sazak demanded moving of Uşak Sugar Factory to somewhere else, because extreme transportation expenditures weakened the financial position of factory. Aksaray deputy Besim Atalay opposed this proposal. He explained the reasons of Uşak Sugar Factory's losses in three headlines. There were experienced drought, negligence in factory's operations and splurge in the payments of salaries and other areas. Şakir Kesebir said that government encouraged the creditor bank to decrease of interest rates in the factory's debt. He also found important to support newly founding Turkish sugar industry. He gave example of newly establishing British beet sugar industry. But he insisted over the plan that Industry and Mining Bank (Sanayi ve Maadin Bankası) and Bank of Agriculture (Ziraat Bankası) would found a new company to operate sugar factories with equal shares.⁴⁶

Although this approved plan, beet yield of Uşak Sugar Factory's region took place considerably high in 1930. This high amount harvest would cause longer sugar production season. To compensate the necessary equipment and spare parts, cabinet granted permission to spent 104,700 liras on 5 July 1930.⁴⁷ This development caused to postpone first decision. For the establishment of planned company, it required that two factories of the time Uşak and Alpullu would have managed together. But Turkish Joint Stock Company of İstanbul and Thrace Sugar Factories (İstanbul ve Trakya Şeker Fabrikaları Türk Anonim Şirketi) did not permit to be sold Alpullu Sugar Factory. This rejection put an obstacle to the establishment of proposed company. On the other hand, increasing beet yield of Uşak region would encourage the expectations from next sugar production season. Following probable successful season could

⁴⁵ BCA 30-18-1-2-11-33-18.

⁴⁶ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi 10 June 1930, p.162-164, 167-168, 170-171.

⁴⁷ BCA 30-18-1-2-12-47-17.

provide sufficient income to Uşak Sugar Factory to be managed it alone. Under these hopeful conditions, liquidation decision of the company was cancelled on 22 October 1930.⁴⁸

Nuri Şeker's administration lasted nearly four years in the factory. The board of the factory consisted of 11 people with Nuri Şeker. The board also had one inspector from Industry and Mining Bank (Sanayi ve Maadin Bankası). After 1930's season factory was took over by the bank and Nuri Şeker removed from administration.⁴⁹

After Nuri Şeker's removal from the administration, he wrote a detailed report against liquidation procedure on 6 August 1931. His main argument was the position of Industry and Mining Bank. The bank caused serious problems for the finance of Uşak Sugar Factory's company. The bank was both shareholder and big creditor of the company. Industry and Mining Bank practiced the every works and purchases without the consent of administration committee and other partners. Bank administration took decisions in its center and holds responsible the company from great amount of money. Nuri Şeker also opposed liquidation, because of forthcoming campaign. One month later, new production season would begin. Without calculating these profits, practicing liquidation procedure was totally unlawful and harmful to public partners.⁵⁰

Although all oppositions of Nuri Şeker and his friends, Uşak Development of Agriculture of Turkish Joint Stock Company was liquidated on 6 August 1931. In response to its debts, factory's control was transferred to Industry and Mining Bank. To announce the mistakes of the process and their objections, one partner wrote an article in Yeni Asır Newspaper on 12 August 1931. He declared seven reasons for the liquidation situation. Firstly, an agricultural department was unnecessarily founded, under the reality of company's losses. Secondly, a German expert was hired with very high salary and travel expenses, although previous Turkish expert practiced his activities with great success and lower salary. Thirdly, for the bureaucratic works of company, one civil servant had been working for 100 liras. But additional person was hired with adjective of chef. For the usage of chef and his family, a house and automobile were allocated. This automobile was used a few times every day. Thus, expenditures of the company rapidly increased. Fourthly, many needless orders were given with the name of factory. Fifthly, despite of obvious losses, many civil servants, workers and factory's trucks worked for

⁴⁸ BCA 30-18-1-2-14-70-13.

⁴⁹ Ötügen 1955, p. 90-91.

⁵⁰ Şeker 2015, p. 69, 71-72.

tennis courts, gardens and entertainment places. Sixthly, a spirit factory⁵¹ was planned without correcting company's capital position. This facility only became beneficial to new owners of the company. Lastly, Industry and Mining Bank spent great amount of money for the name of travel expenses and some other, without the consent of general committee of company. Despite its title of big partner, bank's expenditures caused enormous harms over the capital of company. The bank informed about expenditures to general committee, only after it spent money. These uncontrolled expenditures must be compensated.⁵²

Payments of Public Partners' Shares

Liquidation procedure of Uşak Sugar Factory was come to end in 1932. Ministry of Economics thought that public partners of the company should be considered in this procedure. During liquidation, company's debts would be cleared off. But public partners could not be satisfied in that way. In order not to totally harm these people, something must be done. Minister of Economics mentioned that present situation of the factory had been steadily improved. To decrease the loss of public partners, he offered a three year payment plan. It would start from 1933 year sales and completed within three years. First year 40%, second year 30% and third year 30% of factory profit would be paid as installments to shareholders. After these payments, remaining income would be transferred to new establishment. This payment plan would be beneficial both for rights of public partners and financial structure of the factory. Minister of Economics wanted to announce this plan to public. But before it, liquidation committee and new owner of the company who was Industry and Mining Bank must be informed. For this purpose, Minister of Economics demanded the consent of Ministry of Finance on 13 November 1932.⁵³

In principle, Ministry of Finance positively responded this demand on 25 December 1932. But the Ministry founded some jurisdictional problems in this offer. 11th article of foundation law of Industry and Mining Bank regulated the spread of dividend. But according to mentioned offer, some part of dividend was accepted as donation. There were some ambiguities in this point. Firstly, payment boundaries to public partners were not clear in Ministry of Economics' offer. If payments would be made according to shares, this offer could be easily seen as acceptable. But any more demand might deserve objection. Ministry of

⁵¹ According to 1930 TBMM economic report, Alpullu Sugar Factory had already have a spirit factory of 400,000 liters production. This facility met one third of Turkey's need. If another spirit factory would be made in Uşak Sugar Factory, it would provide another one third need of Turkey. Tekeli and İlkin 1983, p. 341.

⁵² Karayaman 2010, p. 111-112.

⁵³ BCA 30-10-181-248-5.

Finance second disapproval derived from 13th article of same law which was regulated yearly control of bank's budget and balance sheet. This control was practiced in TBMM by budget and economics councils. Without consent of these councils, any obligatory cabinet decision could be accepted as wish and desired payments could not be practiced. After these negotiations, Prime Ministry found appropriate the decision of Ministry of Economics. But he decided to wait for the final decision of general committee of budget and economics councils on 16 January 1933.⁵⁴

General committee gathered to consider liquidation process of the company on 27 March 1933. Positions of public partners were considered within the statement of Ministry of Economics. After the meeting, the committee evaluated that company's all assets would barely afford its financial obligations. Under these circumstances, capital of the company was naturally under total bankruptcy. But the committee considered that these people founded Uşak Sugar Factory with their small capitals. They also did not take any profit share within this period. Consequently, the committee thought similarly like Ministry of Economics. All public partners' shares would be paid according to face value of their stocks. But general committee shortened the payment period. If possible, all payments should be made within one year. But payments must not delay to third year. In this meeting one more decision was taken to honor Nuri Şeker. According to offer of İstanbul deputy Hasan Vasıf Bey, 3000 liras would be paid to him for his efforts to establishment of Uşak Sugar Factory.⁵⁵

Although this payment decision, many shareholders did not receive their money, because they lost their share certificates. Liquidation committee took a decision on 20 January 1935 that every loser should apply to themselves. If they did so, shareholders would receive new documents. Additionally in order to inform public partners, Cumhuriyet Newspaper published lists several times in 1937 and 1938. But due to low level literacy, most of the public partners might not inform about these developments.⁵⁶

Benefits of Uşak Sugar Factory to the Region and People

Beet cultivation is an important way to produce sugar both in the past and at the present. But other than sugar, beet and Uşak Sugar Factory also provided many benefits to peasants of the region. Thousands of farmer families from

⁵⁴ BCA 30-10-181-248-5.

⁵⁵ BCA 30-10-138-985-7.

⁵⁶ Şeker published a long list of partners who did not receive their money for their shares. This list was prepared according to village names. Şeker also added partners from out of Uşak. Şeker 2015, p. 99-115.

Uşak, Kütahya, Afyonkarahisar, Konya and Eskişehir learned intensive agriculture. Peasants' income started to increase. They changed their way of farming. Many agricultural tools and machinery began to use. Beet and molasses were used for animal husbandry. Fertilization of fields were not neglected. Region's both agriculture and livestock breeding advanced. Addition to these developments, societal infrastructure of the region was also improved. Better houses and new roads were built.⁵⁷

Table.4.1932 Year Activities of Uşak Sugar Factory According to Industrial Statistics (Values in Lira)

Value of Machinery and Equipment	Value of Factories Own Buildings	Number of Machines	Total Horse Power
900,000	945,000	60	2921
Number of Workers in Most Active Period	Yearly Paid Workers' Wages	Value of Production	
750	84,713	2,988,055	

Source: Başvekalet İstatistik U. M., *Sanayi İstatistikleri, Teşviki Sanayi Kanunundan İstifade Eden Müesseselerin 1932 Senesi Faaliyeti*, Devlet Matbaası, İstanbul 1933, p.21-23.

According to 1930 TBMM economic report, development of sugar industry would provide five benefits to whole country and economy. Primarily, one of the essential necessities of people would be produced locally. Secondly, sugar beet cultivation would revive the agricultural production. Thirdly, abundant amount of raw material would be prepared for spirit production. Fourthly, animal husbandry would develop with beet pulp nutrition. Finally, approximately 85,000 people would find new and stable jobs from factory workers to peasants.⁵⁸

Conclusion

Nuri Şeker was a hardworking and dedicated man to his country. He had a plan to achieve. He targeted to produce sugar locally, due to sugar was an import commodity during the Ottoman Empire. Although he started his activity earlier, long lasting wars prevented him. But, after the Independence War, he immediately began researches. He tried to increase his knowledge about beet sugar production, because this new industry had many complicated parts. For these works, he chose Czechoslovak technology.

⁵⁷ Kerim Ömer 1933, p. 5-6.

⁵⁸ Tekeli and İlkin 1983, p. 338.

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But sugar production did not consist of just industrial activity. For the success, continuous sugar beet cultivation must be achieved. In that point, Nuri Şeker's second aim became clear. He targeted to provide a regular source of income to poor peasants. For this aim, he founded sugar production company with peasant partners from the region. Nuri Şeker tried to attain their support. But his works did not finish with foundation of this company. He focused problems of sugar beet cultivation. He traveled many villages and tried to teach this relatively new agriculture to peasants. For this agricultural education process, he faced many difficulties. But he overcame these obstacles with his great determination.

Although all efforts of Nuri Şeker and his partners, financial structure of Uşak Sugar Factory began to weaken. Beet sugar industry was relatively new establishment for the 1920's Turkey. There were some mistakes happened, because of inexperience. On the other hand, Uşak Sugar Factory did not receive the similar support of Alpullu Sugar Factory. This deepened the financial problems of Uşak Sugar Factory. But attitude of Industry and Mining Bank prepared the end of private entrepreneurship in Uşak Sugar Factory. The bank acted like both creditor and partner. At the end, Nuri Şeker and his partners lost the control of Uşak Sugar Factory. But they left enormously important investment to Uşak city.

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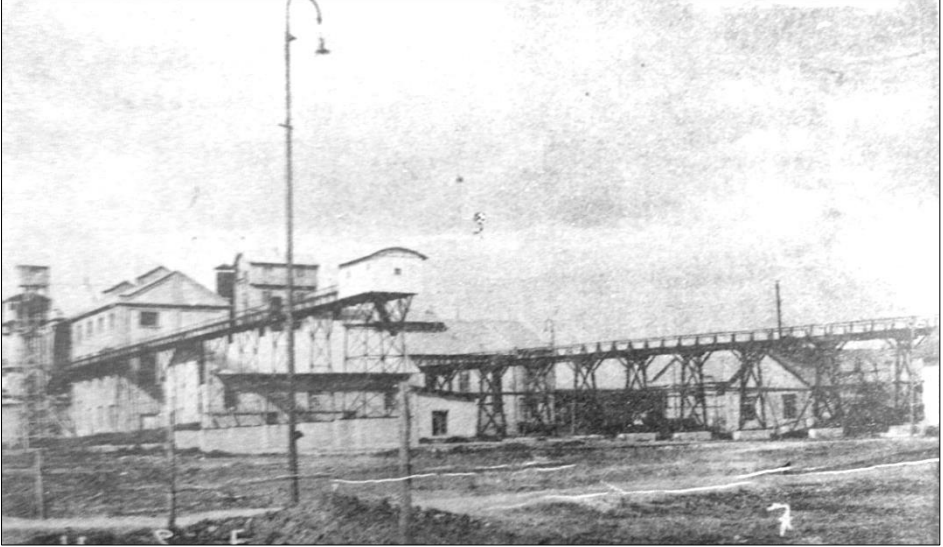
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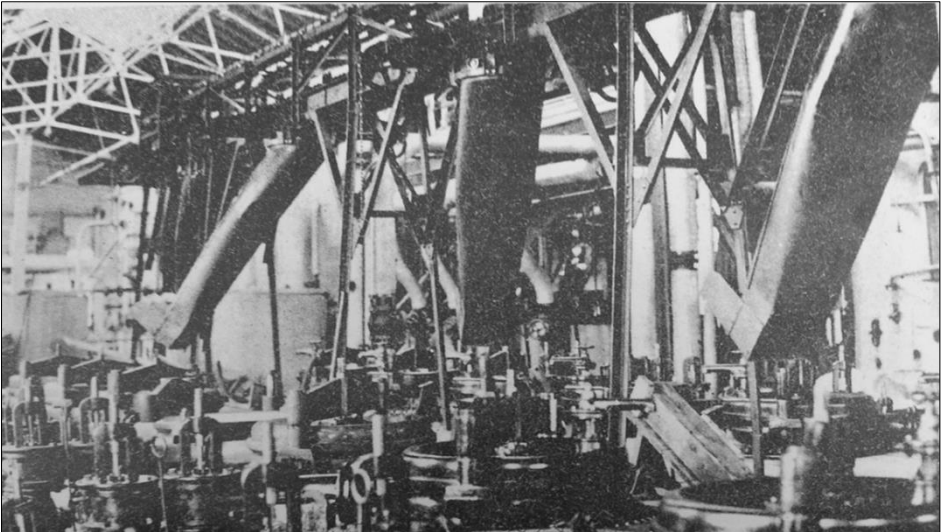
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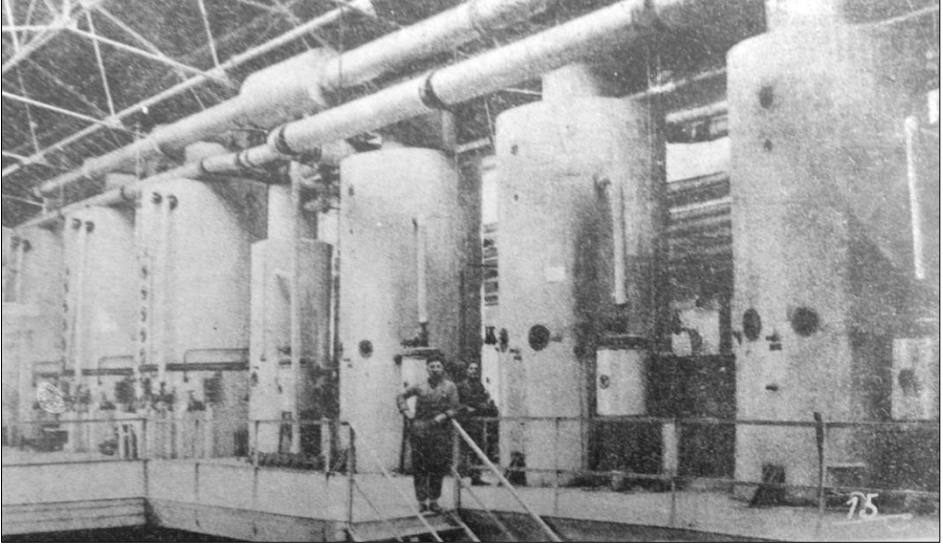
Supplement.1. Photographs from Uşak Sugar Factory in 1930
Photograph.1. Outer View of Uşak Sugar Factory



Photograph.2. Inner Details from Uşak Sugar Factory



Photograph.3. Diffusion Boilers of Uşak Sugar Factory



Source: Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti, *Milli Sanayi Kataloğu*, Hâkimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, Ankara 1930.

Supplement.2. 1936-41 Years Activities of Uşak Sugar Factory According to Industrial Statistics (Values in Lira)

Years	Work day numbers	Total of yearly paid wages	Value of sugar beet	Value of other operational materials	Value of production
1936	37,182	159,616	321,141	41,673	1,301,772
1937	142,973	265,107	549,400	96,463	1,724,573
1938	119,244	275,459	274,070	28,943	1,581,632
1939	198,707	222,088	765,545	147,561	3,393,546
1940	193,871	325,228	1,410,807	174,603	3,827,609
1941	194,619	393,463	1,506,676	195,313	3,786,124

Source: Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, *Sanayi İstatistikleri, Teşviki Sanayi Kanunundan İstifade Eden Müesseselerin 1936-1941 Yılları Faaliyeti*, Hüsnütabiat Basımevi, İstanbul, 1945, p. 91.

Supplement.3. Magazine News about Uşak Sugar Factory in October 1936.

ENDÜSTRİ MEMLEKETTE HAREKETLERİ

Uşak Şeker fabrikası



Geçen yıl için faaliyetini tatil eden Uşak şeker fabrikası, bu yıl faaliyete geçerek şeker istihsaline başlamıştır. Fotografımız, fabrikanın «Mela» denilen posadan ikinci ameliyat ile şeker çıkaran dairesini göstermektedir.

hararetili müzakereler, her ay işçilerin istihkaklarından tevkif edilen yüzde yarımın yüzde bire çıkarılması etrafında cereyan etmiştir. Daimi encümen heyetinin bu teklifine, birçok işçi arkadaşlar şiddetli itirazlarda bulunmuşlar, istenilen yüzde yarım nisbetindeki fazlayı kazançlarının azlığından dolayı veremeyeceklerini söylemişlerdir.

Müzakerenin sonuna doğru kürsiye çıkan Halkapınar şeker fabrikası işçilerinden arkadaş, hastalık ve buna bağlı olarak felâketli zamanlarda birlikteliklerine yaptığı yardım ve destekleri uzun boylu sayarak, işçilerin için bir kat daha kuvvetli olduğunu söylemişlerdir.

Source: ..., “Memlekette Endüstri Hareketleri”, *Endüstri*, Year 22, Issue. 2, October 1936.