



e-ISSN: 2630-631X

Article Type

Research Article

Subject Area

Health Sciences

Vol: 8 Issue: 63

Year: 2022 September

Pp: 1548-1551

Arrival

13 July 2022

Published

30 September 2022

Article ID 64571

Doi Number<http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/smrj.64571>**How to Cite This Article**

Hayırlıdağ, M. (2022).

"Dr. Alexander Zoeros Pasha (1842-1917): One

of The First

Bacteriologists",

International Social

Mentality and Researcher

Thinkers Journal,

(Issn:2630-631X) 8(63):

1548-1551



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Dr. Alexander Zoeros Pasha (1842-1917): One of The First Bacteriologists

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Alexander Zoeros Pasha is a scientist who was trained in a military medical school in the Ottoman State. He rose to the rank of general and participated in many wars. Zoeros Pasha, who is also prominent with his scientist identity, went to meet with Pasteur and returned to the country after receiving education with him. He became a pioneer in rabies vaccine studies by establishing the first bacteriology room in the Ottoman Empire and eastern countries. They are a value with many awards and badges.

Keywords: Alexander Zoeros, Pasteur, Bacteriologist, Rabies vaccine

INTRODUCTION

Alexander Zoeros, also known as "Aleksan Çaliki Efendi" (1842-1917), who lived in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, is one of the famous teachers of the Military Medical School, the administrators of the state health organization, and also the pioneer of bacteriology and rabies vaccine in Turkey. He is the son of a Greek Orthodox family. His father is Pavlaki Efendi, one of the chief principals. Although the family is originally from Rumelia, A. Zoeros was born in Beirut in 1258/1842 while his father was on duty in Syria. According to the story he wrote with his own hand, he first came to Istanbul with his parents when he was only 5 years old, and then immigrated there because they had property in Plovdiv. Following the noble family tradition of his times, A. Zoeros was not sent to school for his primary education, but had private tutors at home. After completing his secondary education at the Greek school on the island of Şıra, he went to Italy and completed his high school education in Pisa, and started his medical education by passing the baccalaureate exam. Alezander Zoeros started medical education in Italy, however since he lost his father in those years, he came to Istanbul and entered the Military Medical School, and in 1863, when he was just 21, he became a doctor with the rank of Kolağası-senior captain. Even though he was later appointed to Edirne by lottery, he won the exam opened a year later with the first place and was appointed to the chair of Internal Medicine. He was appointed as Assistant-Associate Professor with the rank of major on February 4, 1864, next to Antonie Fauvel (1813-1884). After his departure, the chair of the chair, Dr. They work together with S. Mavroyani (1816-1902) (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1974).

Dr. A. Zoeros Pasha presided between 1875-1909 over the internal medicine department of the "Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Adliye-i Şahane" with its new name Istanbul University (Ökten, Karan 2011). When a great cholera epidemic broke out in Turkey in 1865, A. Zoeros, who was in the rank of Major, was assigned to the cholera struggle as the Sanitary Inspector General to carry out the extraordinary health measures taken. Zoeros, who returned to his duty at the Medical School after the epidemic ended that year, gave him the General History and Philosophy course as an additional task after a short time. However, these courses, which were taught by a foreigner named Mr. Gold, were later removed from the program. With the departure of Doctor Baruçi Efendi, Dr. Zoeros also gave General Pathology courses for a while. In time, he gained the attention and favor of Sultan Abdulaziz and became the Sultan's Adjutant, the Physician of the Temple, and even the physician of the Hademe-i Hümayun and the Muzika-i Hümayun. Meanwhile, his military rank was promoted to District



Governor in 1873. In the 1876-1877 Turkish-Russian War, he was temporarily sent to Albania and entered the war personally as the Chief Physician of the Podgorica Division. In the meantime, he even reached the front lines to bring news and was injured in his foot. He was saved by the efforts of his assistant soldier. Due to these sacrifices, Saip Pasha, who was the Commander-in-Chief and later the Minister of War, was promoted to the rank of Colonel and was honored with the badge of honor, as well as the spoils taken from the enemy. He was sent to Istanbul to present it to Sultan II. Abdülhamit and thus he returned to Istanbul in the last days of 1876 (Tunçman, 1972).

Colonel A. Zoeros Bey, who was promoted to Internal Medicine Instructor in 1876 after Mavroyani Pasha left the chair, became "Brigadier General" in 1885 and "Major General" on September 3, 1901. On September 15, 1908, he was given the duties of Deputy Minister of Military Medical School and additional course overseer. Thus, Zoeros Pasha, who worked as an internal medicine teacher and administrator in the Military Medical School until 1909, was retired at that time. Celal İsmail Pasha, one of the valuable teachers of medicine, is his assistant. At that time, the Military Medical School was in the old barracks in Demirkapı in Sirkeci, and the Internal Medicine Service was a 25-bed, dilapidated wooden building in the garden to the left of the road to the school. Zoeros Bey, wearing a red shirt on his back, would go on a personal visit 3 days a week and give his lessons at the bedside. According to Tefik Salim Sağlam, a 1903 graduate who was a student in those days, Zoeros Pasha was a good person, a good teacher. He was very compassionate to patients and had a great understanding of human physiognomy and pathology. He treated students like his sons. In short, he was kind and respectful to everyone. Although he was originally from the Greek minority, his Turkish pronunciation was excellent. His language was never faltering. Although he is multicultural and knows French and Arabic very well, if students and assistants write unnecessary foreign terms on their observation papers, he will immediately block them and ask for Turkish. They're called "Langage Macaroniques", like ashura, he used to say. Laboratory examinations were scarce in that dilapidated ward. The autopsy was done maybe once a year. Despite this, he was able to instill clinical taste in his students. Since the foreign service of Müşir Cemil Pasha, who was the son-in-law of the sheikh al-Islam at that time, was much more well-groomed, Zoeros Pasha would not hesitate to hang out with him from time to time and said, "Do you guys know, I'm marrying the Patriarch's daughter too. This will not work out any other way", he used to make his students laugh (Akalin, 1904).

Also at this time, upon a reasoned letter he submitted to the sultan, the duties of the chief physician, that is, the Ministry of Health, which had been carried out by the Ministry of Medicine since 1858, were removed from this office and the Majlis-i Umur-u Tıbbiye-i Mülkiye ve Sıhhiye-i Umumiye was re-established in 1867. given to his custody. Zoeros Pasha has been a permanent member of this assembly, its chairman for 2 years, and its vice chairman many times. Due to his outstanding achievements in this scientific talent, he was sent to Europe 8 times by the Empire on behalf of the state. Thus, at the International Congress of Medical Sciences in Vienna in 1884, in Copenhagen in 1884, at the Conference Internationale in Rome in 1885, in Madrid in 1894, in London in 1894. He has always represented the state in the Congres International d'Hygiene et de Demographie, in Budapest, in the Tuberculosis Congress in Rome. He was even promoted to Brigadier General in 1885 while in Rome (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1974).

Especially his trip to Paris in 1886 is very important. Because on July 6, 1885, Pasteur successfully applied the rabies vaccine to humans for the first time, and scientists from all over the world started to run to this city. Before the Ottoman delegation's visit to Paris, Louis Pasteur, who administered the rabies vaccine to humans for the first time on 6 July 1885, was invited to Turkey. A team was sent to France after no positive response was received (Unat, 1970).

In the meantime, three valuable people from Istanbul, Military Medical Faculty Internal Medicine Teacher Zoeros Pasha and Military Medicine Animal Teacher Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Hüseyin Remzi Bey (1839-1894) and Veterinary Lieutenant Colonel Hüseyin Hüsnü Bey, one of the Istanbul Sanitary Inspectors, were also sent to Pasteur in Paris to learn about this vaccine. The delegation was also honored by Sultan II. Abdülhamit. He was also in charge of presenting 10000 French Francs to Pasteur, which was sent to help the Pasteur Institute to be established with a Mecidi Order of the 1st Rank, which sent to Pasteur. Zoeros Pasha and his friends arrived in Paris on 8 June 1886. Our Ambassador Esat Pasha personally made an appointment with Pasteur and our delegation was received by Pasteur in his laboratory. The gifts were greatly appreciated by both Pasteur and the French Government. Because this money was the biggest aid made by foreigners. Our delegation, among others, was given special attention, and thus, during the 6-month stay in Paris, he made extensive studies on bacteriology, as well as the rabies vaccine, and returned home in December the same year (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1967).

Having completed their training, the team returned to Turkey with two rabbits vaccinated with rabies virus. Dr. Alexander Zoeros Pasha started the application of the rabies vaccine in the laboratory prepared for them (Unat, 1970).

Zoeros Pasha explains these details in his private notes as follows: “Because I was acquainted with Monsieur Pasteur, I met with him without wasting time and delivered the engagement. Two days later, I gave the ten thousand francs sent to the Pasteur Institute to the commission and received the receipt. Monsieur Pasteur received us with the utmost special respect and expressed his thanks verbally. I took a special complaint prepared by them to be presented to the Sultan and sent it to Istanbul by mail” (Yıldırım, 1995).

The friendship and correspondence of Zoeros Pasha with Pasteur continued until his death. Documents found on this subject Ord. Prof. Dr. published with a joint signature by A. Süheyl Ünver. These correspondences are still in the Istanbul University Chair of the History of Medicine Museum. With this document, which was prepared on behalf of Zoeros Pasha and his friends by the Turkish Embassy in Paris on 17 December 1886, all friends and allies of the Ottoman Empire are asked to assist this delegation when necessary. Returning home after these examinations, Zoeros Pasha established the first Dâülkelp and Bacteriology Operating Room in our country, that is, Rabies Treatment Institution, and delivered the first Pasteur-style vaccination to the Society of Medicine on 3 June 1887 (Ünver, 1956).

“Dâül-kelb” is a term used for rabies or dog disease by combining the words “dâ’ and kelb”. This institution became the place where those who suffered from rabies in the Ottoman state took shelter, namely “ca-yi penah”. In the opening of this institution, II. Veterinarians Hüseyin Remzi Bey and Hüsnü Bey, headed by Zoeros Pasha, who were sent to Paris to learn the details of the rabies vaccine introduced to the scientific world by Abdülhamit and Pasteur in 1885 and to ensure its implementation in the country, made great contributions (Özgün, 2017).

Very detailed information has been written in the minutes of the Dâülkelp Treatment Center, from the nationality of the patients to their nationality and where they were bitten by an animal. Thus, a lot of information could be obtained from these minutes, from the annual number of patients to the success rate of the treatment. According to the statistics prepared by Zoeros Pasha, the number of patients who applied to the hospital from 1887 (from the establishment of Dâülkelp Treatment Center) to the end of 1898 was over 3500 (Çavuş, 2017).

Zoeros Pasha continued this service for 12 years (1887-1899) in addition to his teaching duties. With his departure, this duty was first brought from Paris by Mr. Marie, Dr. Remlinger and then Zoeros Pasha's assistants, Dr. Sadi and Arif Rıza Beys conducted it. It is on this success of the Rabies Treatment Institution in Istanbul that similar ones were established in other provinces. For example, the following lines we read in the 109th issue of Asır Newspaper published in Thessaloniki in 1896 are proof of this. “A license was requested from the governor of Ioannina to go to Paris and send 2 people from the municipality to Paris in order to establish a workshop in Ioannina after the production of serum in Pasteur's workshop (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1967).”

As a result of these studies, separate bacteriology courses were started to be given in the Military Medical School as of 1892 and a private bacteriology room was established in 1893. This first Microbiology Laboratory, which was established in the Military Medical School, was opened in a small wooden shed in the garden. But Zoeros Pasha and then Dr. It has developed a lot with the efforts of Celal Muhtar (Özden). Zoeros Pasha was the head of the examination committee sent to the American Medical School in Beirut in 1902 and 1904. Thus, he had the opportunity to see the city he was born in once again. In 1909, during the merging of the Civil and Military Medical Schools with the name of the Faculty of Medicine, Zoeros Pasha, who was left out in the staffing arrangement and was sent to retirement, was the faculty director of that time. He was assigned by Mr. A. Adnan (Adivar) to teach the History of Medicine and Deontology course, which is free of charge, upon request and gratitude (Unat, 1970).

Despite this superior knowledge and culture, Zoeros Pasha gave himself completely to his chair and to science. Like his other friends, he did not look at patients outside. Therefore, he lived a modest life with his salary. For this reason, he was not well known in his time, except in medicine. However, due to all these efforts and achievements, he was the first Rank Osmani, II. He was awarded the Order of Rank, Gold Merit, Silver Privilege, Golden Honor and Greek insignia, as well as the Commandor rank of the Danish Danneborg Order and the Officier rank of the French Legion d'Honneur. He was also an honorary member of many medical and literary associations in our country such as “Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane”, as well as the Roman Medical Academy, the London Sanitary Institute and the Belgian Hygiene Association (Akalin, 1904).

Zoeros Pasha died on July 4, 1917 in Istanbul after spending a painful life for 4 years as a result of an accident he had on 23.8.1913 and was buried here. He was tall and large built. He was leaning a little forward. He was a very serious, dignified and authoritative man with a gray beard and black glasses. He wore a molded, narrow top, wide and flat bottom, almost black-colored fez and a broadcloth-lined cloak. He had a son and four daughters who studied architecture in Munich. The last words he said to his children at the time of his death were: "I leave you poor, but with a spotless name. Be brave and worthy to bear my name. Do not deviate from any of the principles I have taught. My name will open many doors for you. You will find each of my beloved students a sibling as well as my own sons (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1974)."

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