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4. VISIONS OF THE FUTURE IN PRE-BALKAN WAR LITERATURE

This part will deal with texts in pre-Balkan War Ottoman Turkish literature which offers a vision of the future. The time period in question can be traced back as far as the middle of the 19th century. In other words, the first texts of this sort were produced during the period of modernization by the Ottoman Turks. Accordingly, it will be useful to keep that context in mind in discussing this subject.

Clearly, this period of modernization represented a systematic, paradigmatic transformation for the Ottoman Empire. This long, painful process, which had begun with military reforms (prompted by concerns about the survival of the Empire) in time also showed its effects in the field of education²³⁰, and eventually in culture. Prior to this period, we do not encounter a tradition of writing about utopia (as defined in the present study), or a proclivity for producing fictions that propose an alternative to existing conditions, in Ottoman Turkish literature. Here I am using the term “utopian thought” in the broadest possible sense, for until the beginning of the 20th century, at the earliest, there are no works which would be considered utopias according to the definition provided in Part Two. One reason for this is that nearly all the Tanzimat-era²³¹ literati were also bureaucrats, as a result of which their utopias have no oppositional stance. Another reason, as pointed out by Uğur Tanyeli, is that as the goal of catching up to the West became an unassailable one, these figures transformed their utopian vision into an ideology – into a “road map” which needed to be followed.²³²

However, as the process of modernization continued, the transformation of the military and administration gradually seeped into the field of culture as well, and culture itself became subject to Western influence. In this climate, utopian thought made its entry into Turkish literature along with other innovations. Seeing a connection between print culture and utopianism, Şerif Mardin links the entry of utopian thought into 19th century Ottoman culture to the successful education reforms of the Tanzimat. According to Mardin, because books were hard to come by in the pre-Tanzimat education system, a teacher who had memorized a book in the manner of a *hafız* [an Islamic scholar who learned the Qur’an by heart] would transmit this knowledge to the

²³⁰ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 41.

²³¹ “Tanzimat Fermanı” or the Edict of Gülhane is an imperial edict issued on 3 November 1839, by which Sultan Abdülmecid a number of political, social and legal reforms. This edict is seen as an important cornerstone in the history of Ottoman modernization, and the period following this edict is known as the “Tanzimat era”.

²³² Tanyeli, “Zihinsel Yapımız” [Our Intellectual Makeup], 24.

students. However, the “textbook” model of modern education did away with such “differing accounts,” allowing everyone access to the same information, making criticism possible, and giving rise to a “world of principles.” These are among the necessary preconditions for utopianism.²³³

Influence of Western Literatures

In this connection, an important piece of data is supplied by the choice of the first book of Western literature to be translated into Turkish. This was the 1699 work *Les aventures de Télémaque* [The Adventures of Telemachus] by François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon. Translated into Turkish by Yusuf Kâmil Paşa in 1859 – under the title *Tercüme-i Telemak* [A Translation of “Telemachus”]²³⁴ – Fénelon’s work is a didactic political novel with utopian characteristics. Defending a constitutional order against a regime of absolute monarchy, the novel deals with subjects which had equivalents in the Ottoman context as well. In his choice of a book to translate, Yusuf Kamil Paşa chose a work which, while not contemporary, nonetheless expressed a longing for a new order through a utopian vision; this can be taken as a bellwether of the Ottoman cultural climate of the period.

Although it is quite hard to get a complete picture of the influence of Western authors on the visions of the future in Ottoman-Turkish literature, it is obvious that Fenelon was not the only inspiration. In addition to Fenelon who presented a utopian scheme for an ideal political and social order, others influenced Ottoman writers with their pictures of ideal future through scientific progress. Literary historian Fatih Andı underlines the fact that in the process of Westernization certain concepts like progress [terakki], renewal [teceddüt], civilization [medeniyet] gained particular popularity, and among them was the term “fen” [pl. “fünun”] meaning “science” or “scientific knowledge”. He points out that many newspapers and magazines of the post-Tanzimat period contains this term, e.g., *Servet-i Fünun* [Wealth of Sciences (or Scientific Knowledge)], *Hazine-i Fünun* [Treasure of Sciences], *Mecmua-i Fünun-ı Askeriye* [Journal of Military Sciences], etc.²³⁵

In this framework, we see other utopian or science fiction writers being read and/or published in the Ottoman cultural sphere and inspiring Ottoman writers in

²³³ Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de Toplum ve Siyaset* [Society and Politics in Turkey], 3rd ed. (Istanbul: İletişim, 1992), 225–227.

²³⁴ François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon, *Tercüme-i Telemak* [A Translation of “Telemachus”], trans. Yusuf Kamil Paşa (Istanbul, 1275 (hijri) [1859]). The book was transliterated into Latin script in the following edition: Yusuf Kamil Paşa, *Tercüme-i Telemak* [A Translation of “Telemachus”], ed. Gonca Gökalp-Alpaslan (Istanbul: Öncü Kitap, 2007). It must be noted that Yusuf Kamil Paşa’s “translation” was very different from the translations as we conceive of them today. For a thesis examining this translation from the standpoint of intellectual history, and dealing with the reception of certain concepts in Turkish, see Arzu Meral, “Western Ideas Percolating into Ottoman Minds: A Survey of Translation Activity and the Famous Case of Télémaque,” PhD dissertation, Leiden University, 2010.

²³⁵ M. Fatih Andı, “Fenni Roman” in *Roman ve Hayat* (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 1999), 97-98.

imagining their own visions of ideal future. An influential figure in this period is Voltaire and his 1752 science fiction short story “Micromégas”.²³⁶ The work has been translated into Turkish four times between 1869 and 1908.²³⁷

Another example would be H.G. Wells. As can be seen in Section 5.4, H.G. Wells’ science-fiction novel *The Time Machine*²³⁸ is quoted in Yahya Kemal’s “Colloquy under the Pines” and inspired that work.

Nevertheless, a special reference must be made to the exceptional influence of the French writer Jules Verne on one or two generations of intellectuals in the 19th century Ottoman Empire. Between 1875 and 1927, more than forty translations were made from Verne’s works (including multiple translations of certain works).²³⁹ Apparently Verne’s works were very popular and they helped the Ottoman intellectuals and writers imagine their ideal future along the lines of scientific advancements.²⁴⁰ In this context, maybe we may not verify it in every single instance but, many of the imaginary adventures, journeys, gadgets, vehicles and scientific inventions that are encountered in the works to be analyzed in Part 5 were, to a certain extent, arguably inspired by Jules Verne’s works.

It must also be underlined that French writers and French works of literature were more accessible to the Ottoman readers and therefore the Western influence was basically through French language. That was mainly because, as Johann Strauss states, French “attained the status of a semi-official language”,²⁴¹ and it

occupied the first place as a source language of translated novels. English played a rather insignificant role—much to the chagrin of the American missionaries. Even the works of English, Italian or German authors were usually translated from their French versions but, in fact, the situation was more complex. (...) The choice made by the translators (who had in view their prospective readers) often seems rather surprising to those accustomed to a well-established canon of classical authors. Most of what was translated into Turkish, Armenian, Greek, Judaeo– Spanish and other languages were the works of French

²³⁶ Voltaire, “Micromégas.” (Berlin: 1852).

²³⁷ For the list of translations and an analysis of the perception of Voltaire in this period, see Secaattin Tural, “19. Yüzyıl Türk Aydınında Voltaire İlgisi,” [19th Century Turkish Intellectuals’ Interest in Voltaire] *Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, vol. 2, no. 4 (November 2013): 147-156. <http://kutaksam.karabuk.edu.tr/index.php/ilk/article/view/292/274> (Accessed 7.12.2014)

²³⁸ H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (London: William Heinemann, 1895).

²³⁹ For a full list of Turkish translations of Verne’s works, see Seda Uyanık, *Osmanlı Bilim Kurgusu: Fenni Edebiyat* [Ottoman Science Fiction: Scientific Literature] (İstanbul: İletişim, 2013), 45-46.

²⁴⁰ For an account of Jules Verne’s influence on Ottoman Turkish Literature, see Uyanık, *Osmanlı Bilim Kurgusu*, 42-50.

²⁴¹ Johann Strauss. “Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire (19th-20th Centuries)?” *Arabic Middle Eastern Literatures* 6, no.1 (2003): 42.

novel writers who are forgotten today, but who were extremely popular in their time.²⁴²

Dream Narratives

Below, I will examine the literary manifestations of the visions of the future in Ottoman culture, in parallel with the process of modernization. In the Young Ottoman period, texts offering visions of the future often took the form of a dream. Before examining these texts, it is essential to point out that the dream narrative is a frequently employed genre in Ottoman Turkish literature of the classical period. In fact, the *habname* [dream book] was a recognized genre in classical Ottoman literature; one of its most famous specimens, which has been a source of inspiration to many dream narratives in Turkish literature, is the *Habname* of Veysi (1561–1628).²⁴³



Illustration 7: The first page of Veysi's *Habname*²⁴⁴

The narrator of the *Habname*, pondering the troubles faced by the state, is beset by feelings of grief, and wishes that he could meet the Sultan. At this point, he falls asleep and begins dreaming. Following this introduction (a common feature of later dream narratives, as will be explained below), we see all the Ottoman sultans down to the author's own era (including the reigning sultan at the time, Sultan Ahmet I) sit and converse with İskender-i Zülkarneyn, a mythical figure in Islamic tradition usually

²⁴² Strauss, "Who Read What," 51-52.

²⁴³ For the critical edition of Veysi's *Habname*, see Veysi, *Habname-i Veysi*, ed. Mustafa Altun (Istanbul: MVT Yayıncılık, 2011). For an in-depth study of the *habname* genre as well as Veysi's *Habname*, see A. Tunç Şen, "The Dream of a 17th Century Intellectual: Veysi and His *Habname*" (MA Thesis, Sabancı University, 2008).

²⁴⁴ Private collection (E.K.)

identified with Alexander the Great. Sultan Ahmet complains of the Celali revolts, expressing his sadness at the fact that his own era is worse than those of all the previous sultans; however, sultans are the heart of this world, he says, and any discomfort in the heart will lead to a malfunction (literally “an uprising”) in the body. By way of answer, Alexander the Great counsels him to hold on tight to the “strong rope” of the *sharia* of the Prophet; the previous Ottoman sultans, Alexander says, made great gains by adhering closely to the *sharia*, and if Sultan Ahmet does likewise, the state will remain free of disorder until Judgment Day.²⁴⁵ Öztürk states that there are two basic messages inherent in the genre of the *nasihatname* [advice letters]²⁴⁶: 1. a return to the Golden Age, and 2. an embrace of *sharia*.²⁴⁷ Veysi’s *Habname* clearly recommends the latter course of action.

While its form and/or function may have changed over time – and while fictional devices like having the King of Macedon recommend a return to the *sharia* are rarely encountered in later dream narratives – the dream genre was always highly prized in Turkish literature. Utopian literature in Turkish began with works in the form of a dream, and this was the preferred choice for a long time. This choice may be associated with some of the appealing features of the dream as a literary form. As it is believed that dreams come from God, they both absolve the dreamer of any responsibility for their contents, and also possess importance and authority due to their divine origin, thus making it possible to say things which normally could not be said.

Dream narratives as found in *Habname* will be the most popular form used by later modern utopian works that will be examined below. The works which will be dealt with first in this study are accordingly short texts in the form of dreams by Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal, the leading members of the Young Ottoman movement, who can be considered as the pioneers of a mindset which made the emergence of utopian works possible.

²⁴⁵ Nurettin Öztürk, “Çağdaş Türk Edebiyatında Ütopya” [Utopia in Contemporary Turkish Literature] (MA thesis, İnönü University, 1992, 14–15).

²⁴⁶ In this framework “nasihatname” can be considered as a broader term that encompasses all kinds of books of advice like *habnames*, *siyasetnames* [books of government] etc. For instance, in her article on nasihatnames, Heather Ferguson considers Veysi’s *Habname* as an example of *nasihatnames* (Heather Ferguson, “Genres of Power: Constructing a Discourse of Decline in Ottoman *Nasihatname*.” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, no xxxv (2010): 81-116.

http://english.isam.org.tr/documents/_dosyalar/_pdfler/osmanli_arastirmalari_dergisi/osmal%C4%B1_sy35/2010_35_FERGUSONH.pdf (Accessed 26.11.2014.)

²⁴⁷ Öztürk, “Çağdaş”, 17-18.

4.1. The Dream of Ziya Paşa as a “Transitional Text”

The Young Ottomans did not leave behind any full-fledged literary utopias or visions of the future. Having said that, they arguably carried out the transformation in mindset which made this sort of vision possible. These intellectuals, critical of any tendency towards “heedlessness about the future”²⁴⁸ (as it was termed by economist and sociologist Sabri Ülgener in connection with pre-Tanzimat Ottoman Turkish culture and literature), shifted the public’s gaze precisely towards the future. The following words of Namık Kemal (referring to a well-known couplet exhorting people to “seize the day”) are testament to this Young Ottoman sentiment: “So you would give credit to the saying, ‘Make merry today, forget tomorrow’s worries / Let this rotten world look after itself’ – ? If you don’t think about tomorrow, then tomorrow who will think of you?”²⁴⁹



Illustration 8: Ziya Paşa²⁵⁰

Ziya Paşa was one of the foremost figures among the Young Ottomans (one of the most important groups to oppose the prevailing interpretation of Westernization in the post-Tanzimat period). In 1869, the newspaper *Hürriyet*, which he and his associates had founded in London, published a piece of his entitled “Abdülaziz Han, Ziya Bey, Âli Paşa.”²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Sabri Ülgener, *İktisadi Çözülmenin Ahlak ve Zihniyet Dünyası* [The Moral and Intellectual World of Economic Disintegration] (Istanbul: Der, 1981), 67, quoted in Öztürk, “Çağdaş”, 6.

²⁴⁹ Quoted in Öztürk, “Çağdaş”, 7: “‘Ays u nuş eyle bugün, anma gam-ı ferdayı / Sana ismarladılar mı bu yalan dünyayı’ kavline itibar eder misin? Ya sen yarımı düşünmezsen yarın seni kim düşünecek?”

²⁵⁰ <http://ziyapasa.kimdir.com/>

²⁵¹ There are many manuscripts and printings of this piece, and the text has different titles in these different versions. Its first printing in book form, for example, bears the title *Edib-i Muhterem Ziya Paşa'nın Rüyası* [Dream of the Honorable Man of Letters, Ziya Paşa] (İstanbul: Kasbar Matbaası, 1910). The following edition has been used in this thesis; here, the editors refer to the text simply as “Rüya”: Ziya Paşa, “Rüya” [Dream] in *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı Antolojisi II: 1865–1876* [Anthology of New Turkish

In this narrative – which is reminiscent of the introduction to the *Habname*²⁵² – the narrator sits in the gardens of Hampton Court Palace, brooding over his own misfortunes and those of his country, only to fall asleep and dream that he finds himself in the presence of Sultan Abdülaziz.

At the heart of this text – which takes the form of a dialogue between Sultan Abdülaziz and Ziya Paşa – is the latter’s main concern of communicating to the Sultan his wish for a transition to a parliamentary system. Ziya Paşa – citing European examples – argues that this would not diminish the Sultan’s authority, but that, in essence, it would serve as a measure to prevent corruption on the part of his ministers.²⁵³ Ziya Paşa alleviates Abdülaziz’s fears that a parliament will lead to separatism, by assuring him that this danger can be prevented through “science and education,” but that freedom must exist first. Moreover, the administration ought to be centralized, discipline ought to be brought to the economy, and the regime ought to act more decisively in its foreign affairs.



Illustration 9: The cover of *The Dream of the Esteemed Writer, the Late Ziya Paşa*²⁵⁴

Discussing the Eastern Question, the author asserts that the European states see the Ottoman State as a “lifeless corpse,” that they do not have faith in the current reforms,

Literature, II: 1865-1876], ed. Mehmet Kaplan, İnci Enginün, Birol Emil, 2nd. ed. (Istanbul: M.Ü. Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1993), 109–129.

²⁵² Another sign of the influence of Veysi’s *Habname* on later dream narratives can be seen in the fact that Namık Kemal, while discussing the *Dream* of Ziya Paşa in a letter to Zeynelabidin Reşid, requested that the latter give him a copy of the *Habname*. Excerpted from the *Edebiyat Kumkuması* [The Jug of Literature] in Özgül, *Siyasi Rüyalar*, 24.

²⁵³ Ziya Paşa, “Rüya” [Dream], 111-112.

²⁵⁴ Private collection (E.K.)

and that, if not for their fear that the Russians would occupy Istanbul, they would long ago have sent the Ottomans back to Anatolia. Within the empire, too, the situation is horrific. Bulgaria is seething with rebellion. Anatolia is in ruins. The people are oppressed by state bureaucrats, officials are going hungry, and the artisan class is bankrupt. What lies behind all of this is the corruption of the previous Grand Vizier, Fuat Paşa, and the current one, Ali Paşa. The damage wrought by Ali Paşa is so great that, in Ziya Paşa's phrase, things could hardly be worse "even if a coolie were brought in to fill his post."²⁵⁵ In fact, under a constitutional system, there would be no need for a Grand Vizier. The remainder of the dream sees Ziya Paşa – with the Sultan's approval – going to the waterfront villa of Âli Paşa, informing him (with no small pleasure) that he has overstepped his bounds, and sending him into exile.

The Dream of Ziya Paşa does not contain a detailed formula for salvation, or a depiction of the ideal life. Rather, as Kayahan Özgül has pointed out, it is a text in which animosity towards Âli Paşa, as well as a personal desire for revenge, predominates.²⁵⁶ However, this brief work, which uses the traditional literary forms of the dream narrative and advice letters, and does not possess a religious frame of reference, can be seen as a transitional work, opening the door to later works of its kind by its message of salvation for the state through prioritizing the parliamentary system, science and education.²⁵⁷ In fact, the language used in Ziya Paşa's text shows that European values are now the main reference point of such works: "...seeing that even the Sublime Ottoman State is part of the European family, it is impossible for us to remain in this condition perpetually, in opposition to the entire world."²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ Ziya Paşa, "Rüya", 111: "onun yerine bir sırık hamalı getirilse".

²⁵⁶ Özgül, *Siyasi Rüyalar*, 23

²⁵⁷ Due to this hybrid structure, there exists some confusion about the classification of this text. The famous writer Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar calls it a fantasy, a work of polemic, and the first successful short story in Turkish. According to the literary historian Nihat Sami Banarlı, on the other hand, the *Dream* should be termed an interview. Cited in Özgül, *Siyasi Rüyalar*, 24-25.

²⁵⁸ Ziya Paşa, "Rüya," 111: "...mademki Devlet-i Aliyye dahi Avrupa familyasından madüttür, bütün âleme muhalif olarak bizim bu halde bekamız imkân dâhilinde olamaz"

4.2. Namık Kemal and his *Dream*: a Utopian Figure?

Another modern work which uses the traditional dream narrative is the “Dream” of Namık Kemal, recounting a dream which the author claims to have had on the night of 14 Safer 1289 [April 23rd, 1872].²⁵⁹ Arguably, the *Dream* of Namık Kemal – rather than that of Ziya Paşa – can be termed the first text to display a utopian tendency and present a vision of the future.²⁶⁰



Illustration 10: Namık Kemal²⁶¹

Similar things could be said of the author himself. One of the most important of the Young Ottomans, Namık Kemal presented a vision of the future not only in this seminal work, but in many others as well, combining a political project with an imaginary future, and turning it into something tangible via his literary oeuvre. For instance, in his essay entitled “Terakki” [Progress],²⁶² which has remained largely unknown in comparison to the *Dream*, he also presents a utopian vision. He starts with

²⁵⁹ As with the *Dream* of Ziya Paşa, this text also possesses many manuscripts and printings. In this study, the following edition will be used: Namık Kemal, “Bin iki yüz seksen dokuz senesi saferinin on dördüncü gecesi görülmüş bir rüyadır” [A Dream That Was Had on the Fourteenth Night of the Month of Safer, 1289 [April 23rd, 1872]], Kaplan et al., *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı*, 251–266.

²⁶⁰ The taxonomical confusion surrounding Ziya Paşa’s *Dream* only increased with the *Dream* of Namık Kemal. The writer and translator Şerif Hulusi regards it as a piece of political writing, while the writer Necip Fazıl Kısakürek sees the *Dream* as a novel written in the manner of a fairy tale. Linguist and literary historian İbrahim Necmi Dilmen, by contrast, identifies it as a piece of journalism. According to the writer and historian İbnülemin Mahmut İnal, the *Dream* is a political pamphlet. Nihat Sami Banarlı and Önder Göçgün call this text a “prose pamphlet.” The *Türk ve Dünya Ünlüleri Ansiklopedisi* [Encyclopedia of Famous Turkish and World Figures], unable to resolve this dilemma, puts it in the category of “Various.” Finally, Atilla Özkırımlı, Kenan Akyüz, et al., in listing the works of Namık Kemal, give no space to this work. Quoted in Özgül, *Siyasi Rüyalara*, 33.

²⁶¹ http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nam%C4%B1k_Kemal (Accessed 15.08.2014)

²⁶² Namık Kemal, “Terakki” [Progress], *İbret* [The Example], No: 45, 3 Ramazan 1289 [November 5, 1872]. Kaplan et al., *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı*, 193-202.

the description of London, but after a point the narrative can no longer be termed “description,” but rather fantasy or utopia. We meet sailors who study the laws of gravity during their leisure time, as well as professional scribes who study German philosophers’ views on the philosophy of law. After extravagant descriptions of museums, zoos, observatories, and libraries, the narrative turns to a description of mechanized industry. The machines in factories are the size of mountains. There are printing presses manned by 50,000 workers, and breweries with 15,000 carthorses. Later on, the author discusses mining: towns of 4,000-5,000 people apiece have been founded beneath the ocean for this purpose. There are orderly marketplaces located beneath rivers, and splendid bridges in the sky. What lies behind all this development? The country has advanced, the author writes, thanks to the extraordinary effort it has expended in developing printing presses, freedom, equality, cooperation, money-making, steam power, fast communications, and energy. Namık Kemal states that it will be impossible to reach such a state of civilization in a short period of time; however, given that the nations of Europe have taken this route and have reached this state within two centuries, he hopes that the Ottomans, too, will be able to embark on the same journey and reach the same goal within two centuries, at most. As for the two preconditions for reaching this goal, they read like the Young Ottomans’ ideological slogan: education and work.

In short, Namık Kemal’s decision to portray London (where he himself lived for a time) in “Progress” is an indication that he has taken Europe as his model. His portrait of London as a utopian city is presumably intended to evoke a desire for such a utopia on the part of his readers. His praise of humanity’s mastery over nature, and his view of development as a linear process undergone by European modernity, sheds important light on the writer’s understanding of civilization.

Let us approach the *Dream* in this context. Like Veysi’s *Habname* and Ziya Paşa’s *Dream*, it starts with the narrator once more brooding over the woes of his country and people, and falling asleep. In the dream, the narrator finds himself in a crowded field at sunrise, when suddenly a beautiful young woman descends from among the clouds. The author realizes that this young woman is Liberty. He first salutes Liberty – who is at the center of all political struggle – with the famous couplet which is part of his poem “Hürriyet Kasidesi” [Ode to Liberty]:

How bewitching you are, O Vision of Liberty,
We’re enslaved to your love, though freed from slavery.²⁶³

Liberty reprimands the people for their supineness, abjection, servility, victimhood, negligence, and slavery – and for merely complaining about these evils, rather than seeking remedy through action. She expresses her anger at their being fixated on the

²⁶³ Namık Kemal, “Kaside,” in *Batı Tesirinde Türk Şiiri Antolojisi*, ed. Kenan Akyüz (Ankara: Doğu Matbaası, 1958), 47: “Ne efsunkâr imişsin ah ey didâr-ı hürriyet / Esir-i aşkın olduk gerçi kurtulduk esaretten.”

past, when they ought to turn their eyes to the future, and work.²⁶⁴ They need to think about their children, not their ancestors.

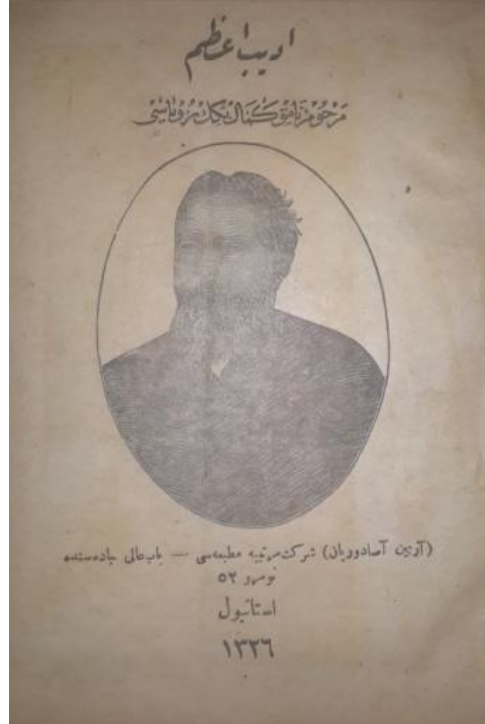


Illustration 11: The cover of the 1908 edition of the *Dream*²⁶⁵

Such a reference to the future rather than the past is the fundamental point of triangulation in this text. This is a work which – perhaps for the first time in Turkish literature – concretely portrays the implications of a specific political viewpoint, and strives to evoke enthusiasm to that end among its readers. This is the reason why it is such an important text, why it was copied out by hand during periods when it was illegal to do so, and why it was later printed time and time again, exerting a profound influence over political cadres in future generations. Moreover, Namık Kemal clearly states the direction this enthusiasm is taking: the old civilization dying, and, in the author’s words, “the sun of knowledge has risen in the west.”

Indeed, after her angry outburst, Liberty goes on to praise this group of progressive, patriotic, liberal citizens who have turned their attention to the “sun of knowledge.”²⁶⁶ Thanks to their efforts to attain a higher state of civilization, the nation will be a “paradise full of felicity” in the future. To demonstrate this, Liberty suddenly begins to tremble, and the cloud in which she is wrapped turns into a red crescent-and-star flag with the following couplet written around its edges: “The flag of Ottoman

²⁶⁴ Kaplan et al., *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı*, 256-258.

²⁶⁵ Private collection (E.K.)

²⁶⁶ Kaplan et al., *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı*, 262-263.

prosperity is the defender of your freedom / Thanks be to God, the Ottoman future era has arrived.” As the flag begins to wave, the crowd begins to see the future of the Ottoman Empire.

This is a nation of rich, prosperous cities, of ornate, sturdy houses. As we will see in many other texts, Namık Kemal’s first priority in terms of development is transportation. The transportation problems endemic to a large country with a small population constitute one of the chief issues which many utopian texts dream of solving. Indeed, in this text we see a system of railways, highways, rivers, and canals as numerous and tangled as the veins and arteries in the body. There are vehicles which can swim at the bottom of the sea, and ones which can fly in the air. In short, humanity has brought liquids and gases – just like solids – under its control.²⁶⁷

Even the least clever student in this work possesses more knowledge than can be found in the most impressive libraries of the time. All the ores of nature, all the secrets of wisdom have been revealed for the benefit of the *ummah* [Muslim community]. Accordingly, even the most wretched pauper lives a more pleasant, opulent life than the most powerful sultan. As will be seen later, this also reflects another common feature of Turkish utopias, namely a desire for wealth.

The political demands of Namık Kemal’s group have materialized in the Ottoman Empire of this future period: the principles of “popular sovereignty” in the administration, and separation of powers, are in force. With the perfect operation of these institutions, society treats each individual like a sultan. The justice system works very well, but there is no longer any need for judicial institutions anyway: thanks to the educational system, principles of law and personal responsibility have been completely internalized.

There is complete freedom of thought, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly. Consequently, new ideas are thought up daily, leading to many discoveries which are beneficial to humanity. Everyone over the age of puberty has a printing press, so that every new idea can reach millions of people within a few days. Thanks to this abundance of ideas, a single person is as knowledgeable as an entire nation. All citizens feel as close to one another as Siamese twins; as a result, millions of people can gather and debate every kind of issue without fear. Moreover, every house has all the facilities a family could need, such as schools, libraries, museums, offices, and recreation areas. Additionally – since there is total freedom of communication – each house has a telegraph office.

At the end of the text, the author, in sum, states that everyone is ready to sacrifice everything he has – to sacrifice his life itself – for his country. However, such a sacrifice is unnecessary. Every citizen is supremely powerful, and every legitimate demand on the part of the citizenry is met by the state. Contemplating this picture with awe and in joy, the author awakes from his dream. The “Ode to Liberty” with which the

²⁶⁷ Kaplan et al., *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı*, 264.

text concludes features two couplets which express the essential theme of this work – “hope for the future”:

O hope for the future, what a dear friend you are,
You are the one who saves mankind from a thousand worries and
troubles.
The age of government belongs to you: rule over the world,
May God preserve your good fortune from every kind of destruction.²⁶⁸

In short, in this text, which once more employs the literary device of the dream, the author creates a fantasy – full of intriguing, exaggerated details – of the positive developments which will accrue if political freedoms are won. He also emphasizes the motifs of wealth, power, and progress. In this respect, his work differs from that of Ziya Paşa, and constitutes a starting point for texts which will be dealt with later. Again, it should be pointed out that the future depicted by Namık Kemal distinctly recalls the London which he had depicted in his article “Progress”, and also that the different elements comprising the *Dream* are largely inspired by, or adapted from, the cultural repertoire of the West. Namık Kemal’s *Dream* became a cult favorite among later generations, and a considerable literature was produced regarding this text. In fact, after the founding of the Republic, it was even said that Atatürk had realized the dream of Namık Kemal.²⁶⁹

When the “dreams” of Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal are read as a group, it becomes apparent that they are representative works as far as showing how the Young Ottomans – and Namık Kemal in particular – reacted to the problems of the Ottoman Empire during that period, and offered a vision of the future. Moreover, they reveal a need for transformation in the political and cultural institutions of the time. Combining old literary forms with new content, these works served as a bridge in Turkish utopian literature, and, in a sense, became foundational texts.

²⁶⁸ Kaplan et al., *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı*, 266: “Ne yar-ı can imişsin âh ey ümmid-i istikbâl / Cihanı sensin azad eyleyen bin ye’s ü mihnetten; // Senindir devr-i devlet hükümünü dünyâya infâz et / Hudâ ikbalini hıfz eylesin her türlü âfetten”

²⁶⁹ For various editions of Namık Kemal’s *Dream* and comments on them, see Öztürk, “Çağdaş”, 25–26, 32–42.

4.3. Utopia in Andalusia: The Muslims of the Land of Comfort

In this chapter we will examine a utopian novel written by a Crimean Tatar writer, İsmail Gaspıralı. Starting at the end of the 19th century, Muslims of the Russian Empire such as Yusuf Akçura, İsmail Gaspıralı (or Gasprinski), Mizancı Mehmet Murat, and Ahmet Ağaoğlu (to name the most prominent examples) left their mark upon the cultural world of the Ottomans, playing a significant role in the formulation and development of various Ottoman currents of thought, especially that of *Türkçülük* [Turkism]. It should be noted that some of these figures also penned works of literature with a utopian vision. The works of İsmail Gaspıralı and Mizancı Murat Bey will be dealt with in this and the following chapters; in addition, Ahmet Ağaoğlu also wrote the utopian work *Serbest İnsanlar Ülkesinde* [In the Country of Free Men] several decades later in 1930.



Illustration 12: İsmail Gaspıralı²⁷⁰

İsmail Gaspıralı (1851-1914) was a Crimean Tatar thinker who founded the newspaper *Tercüman* [The Interpreter] in circulation between 1883 and 1918. *Tercüman* was very influential in Turkist circles, and served as a vehicle for spreading Gaspıralı's views. Gaspıralı's Turkist-Turanist position can best be summed up by his formulation "Unity in language, thought, and action," a slogan which even today is very popular in Turkist circles.²⁷¹

Gaspıralı's work largely focused on the area of education. In his view, educational methods of little practical value, as well as the predominantly religious nature of education, were the main reason for Muslim ignorance and, therefore,

²⁷⁰ http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f7/Ismail_Gaspirali.jpg (Accessed 15.03.2015)

²⁷¹ "Dilde, fikirde, işte birlik." This expression is also the motto of the still-current journal *Türk Yurdu* [The Turkish Homeland], an important nationalist publication. <http://www.turkyurdu.com.tr/>

backwardness. Therefore, he developed a new educational method, known as the *Usul-i Cedid* [New Way]. This method allowed children to learn to read and write more easily, put a cap on the length of each class taught by a teacher as well as on the number of students, set precise requirements for other administrative and infrastructural matters, and – most important of all – included lessons in secular education in addition to religious instruction. This method became especially popular among the Muslims of the Russian Empire, coming to be known as *Cedidçilik* [the “New Way Philosophy”].²⁷²

It should be added that Gaspıralı was equally concerned with the status of women: he worked to improve female education and women’s standards of living, publishing a journal called *Âlem-i Nisvan* [Women’s World].

Moreover, given that the author was an intellectual born and raised outside the Ottoman Empire, it seems worthwhile to point out one factor favoring the inclusion of his work in this study. Aside from the deep historical ties to the Ottoman State held by the author’s homeland of the Crimea, Gaspıralı always had an Istanbul-centric worldview as well, and produced works within the orbit of Muslim Ottoman Turkish culture. He began working as a journalist and writer in Istanbul,²⁷³ and – in keeping with his principle of “unity in language, thought, and action” – adopted, and tried to promote, a literary style very close to Istanbul Turkish. Gaspıralı also became close to many writers such as Ahmet Mithat Efendi. Moreover, given that Gaspıralı was one of the most prominent figures in Turkist thought, his works found a positive reception in Ottoman territory, and – at least in certain circles – were widely known, appreciated, and read. Consequently, it seems logical to deal with Gaspıralı’s work within this literary tradition.

Gaspıralı’s writings were published serially in his newspaper *Tercüman*, in a period beginning in 1887 and lasting (with some interruptions) until 1908. These texts, with titles like *Frengistan Mektupları* [Letters from the Land of the Franks], *Darürrahat Müslümanları* [The Muslims of the Land of Comfort], *Sudan Mektupları* [Letters from the Sudan], *Kadınlar Ülkesi* [The Country of Women], and *Molla Abbas Fransevi’ye Tesadüf* [Encountering Mullah Abbas Fransevi], all share a hero, Mullah Abbas Fransevi; as a result, they share a certain (admittedly slight) narrative unity.

As Gaspıralı’s *Letters from the Land of the Franks* sets the stage for the story told in *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort* (the main subject of this chapter), it will be useful to give a brief plot-summary of the former. In *Letters from the Land of the Franks*, Mullah Abbas of Tashkent, having decided to travel to Istanbul, falls in love with a French woman he meets on the way; the two get married, and Mullah Abbas goes with her to Paris. One day, he sets out for Poitiers to see the graves of the Forty

²⁷² Hakan Kırımlı, “İsmail Bey Gaspıralı (Gasprinskiy) – 1851-1914,” http://ismailgaspıralı.org/ismailgaspıralı/?page_id=4. For detailed analyses of Gaspıralı’s thought and works, also see Hakan Kırımlı, ed. *İsmail Bey Gaspıralı İçin* [For İsmail Bey Gaspıralı] (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği, 2004).

²⁷³ Yavuz Akpınar, “İsmail Gaspıralı: Hayatı” [İsmail Gaspıralı: His Life] in İsmail Gaspıralı, *Seçilmiş Eserleri 1* [Selected Works 2], ed. Yavuz Akpınar et al. (Istanbul: Ötüken, 2003), 25.

Saints; on the way, he is robbed, and decides to return home. Arriving back at the house, he finds his wife talking and laughing with four male friends of hers; he cannot tolerate this kind of casual behavior, and the two become divorced. Later, he enters into a relationship with another woman, a private student of his. The woman’s father forbids this relationship. Subsequently, Mullah Abbas finds himself accused in a murder investigation. Even though Mullah Abbas was with his female pupil at the time the murder was committed, his desire not to besmirch the woman’s name prevents him from revealing this information. As a result, he risks being put to death. Thanks to the woman – who comes to court wearing a veil, and explains what actually happened – Mullah Abbas is saved in the end, and the work draws to a close.

There is one important point to be made in connection with the preceding work. Mullah Abbas has a great fondness for Europe, one matched only by his fondness for the epithet “French.” However, in order to do eliminate any inappropriateness in a Muslim mullah feeling such partiality towards Europe, he states that the Europeans acquired the seeds of their advanced civilization from the Muslims, and that there is consequently nothing objectionable about the Muslims’ taking back what they themselves once gave. In this way, the author attempts to lay the foundation for a legitimization, so to speak, of Westernization.

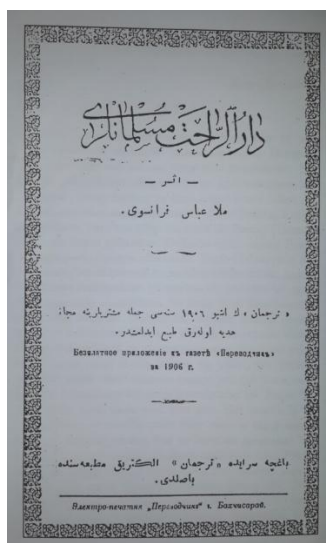


Illustration 13: The cover of a 1906 printing of *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort*²⁷⁴

Indeed, *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort*, which we will deal with in detail now – and which can be seen as a continuation of the author’s *Letters from the Land of the Franks* – has Mullah Abbas travel to Andalusia in Spain, a choice which is also tied to this search for legitimacy. The utopia in this text also has clear parallels with the Golden Age of Muslim tradition, the *Asr-i Saadet* [Age of Felicity]; while *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort* does not contain a literal return to this Age of Felicity, it does

²⁷⁴ Kırımlı, “İsmail Bey Gaspiralı,” 168.

envisage a model of progress which is based on it. It is evident that Gaspıralı chose the Umayyad State of Andalusia as the setting for this narrative because he believed it to be the location of the Age of Felicity which had occurred in the past, and which would light the way for the future.

The text,²⁷⁵ whose introduction presents it as “a report on the state and condition of a hitherto unknown Islamic society” (169), begins with Mullah Abbas’s trip to Spain in order to see Andalusia. After giving his general impressions of France and Spain, along with some information about the history of Andalusia, Mullah Abbas visits the two most important surviving monuments of Andalusian civilization: the Great Mosque of Cordoba, followed by the Alhambra Palace in Granada (173-183). Mullah Abbas greatly admires the Alhambra; having obtained permission to stay there for as long as he likes, he decides to spend the night at the Lion Fountain, located inside the palace. Then, all of a sudden, in the middle of the night, 12 Arab Muslim young women appear. Water starts to spout out of the mouths of the lions, for the first time in centuries. The young women perform their ritual ablutions and go to pray.

Startled, Mullah Abbas recognizes someone standing among the young women: a *şeyh* known as Şeyh Celal, whom he knows from Paris. Şeyh Celal returns the way he and the women came, taking Mullah Abbas with him. Entering into an underground tunnel, via a secret entrance near the Harem Pavilion, they descend to a place used as a treasury during the Caliphate; from there, they go through a second secret passageway called the *Bab-ı Selamet* [Gate of Salvation], and emerge to discover a world entirely unknown to Mullah Abbas. They have arrived at the mystical *Darürrahât*, the Land of Comfort, located among the mountains. Guided by Şeyh Celal, Mullah Abbas learns all about this land, relaying all of the information to the reader.

In utopian literature, in order to give greater plausibility to the land and way of life which are being put forth as an ideal, it is customary to give a rational explanation of how they changed from their original state to reach their current condition. In this text, a woman named Feride Banu – a university graduate and a doctor – recounts the fall of Andalusia and the foundation of the Land of Comfort to Mullah Abbas.

According to her account, the state of Andalusia, which had been ruled for centuries by a glorious sultanate, began to collapse due to depravity, laziness, carelessness, arrogance, animosity, and separatism. Before Ferdinand, the king of Castile, delivered the coup de grâce, a tunnel was dug beneath the Sierra Nevada Mountains all the way to the other side. Over time, everyone, except for an old gardener, forgot that this tunnel even existed. Following the martyrdom of a commander named Musa (who had refused to hand over the city) and the fall of the city itself, 130 friends and relatives, both men and women, gathered in Musa’s house. All of them took as many books as they could carry, as well as personal belongings and whatever tools and implements they might have need of later; in accordance with the

²⁷⁵ The following edition will be used in this study: İsmail Gaspıralı, “Darürrahât Müslümanları” [The Muslims in the Land of Comfort] in *Seçilmiş Eserleri 1* [Selected Works 1], ed. Yavuz Akpınar et al. (Istanbul: Ötüken, 2003), 167-274.

deceased Musa's advice, they left their houses at nighttime and made their way to the Alhambra. They were met by the old gardener, who was aware of what was going on, and passed through the underground tunnel to emerge amidst the mountains, in the Land of Comfort. They then took all other necessary books and other belongings from the palace, and carried them to their new homeland. Neither the inhabitants of the city, nor the Spanish who entered the city later on, received word of any of this (201-202). Moreover, Commander Musa had left a will, which he had stipulated must not be read until the year 1500 (Hijri) [AD 2075]; he also had stipulated that none of the inhabitants of the Land of Comfort depart from their new home until then. This is why the Land of Comfort must remain a secret. (205)

How, then, did they reach such an advanced state of civilization following their initial escape? We learn this part of the story from Feride Banu's father, a professor of history and philosophy named Şeyh Abdullah. According to him, due to the water flowing from the mountains, the field which the Andalusian refugees reached after traveling underground was mostly covered in swamps. The poor refugees could not proceed very far upon emerging from underground, and so set up tent-like dwellings on the foothills of the mountains. Later, they closed off the secret passageway by which they had come, and started to make their new homeland a more pleasant place to live. There were 180 refugees in all, of whom 78 were women. At first, this Muslim community declared Yakub (a relative of Musa) its leader and head of state, and chose a special six-person assembly. Every one of the refugees was knowledgeable and expert about some subject; among them, there were skilled gardeners, doctors, and engineers. All of them, in coming here, brought as many tools and other belongings as they could carry; consequently, they had nearly everything they needed to go on living. At the suggestion of the deceased Commander Musa, the gardener of the Alhambra had also brought 40 sheep, as well as many chickens, through the underground passageway. It brings to mind the story of Noah's Ark. Like the prophet escaping from the flood, Yakub led his people to salvation.

Thus, they established and settled in two villages on the foothills of the mountains. But since the field and pastures were covered in swamps and marshes, the air was noxious, and many of the refugees caught malaria. After much struggle, they managed to drain the swamps and marshes. The air was thus purified and the diseases which had afflicted them disappeared one by one. Within a very short period of time, this strange little community of Muslims started to thrive, to be happy, to be comfortable – and also to advance as a civilization.

The first village founded in the Land of Comfort was named New Granada, in memory of the city of Granada which the refugees had abandoned. Two mosques, a religious school, and a hospital were built in this village. The inhabitants subsequently began to acquire scholarship and scientific knowledge communally, and to learn the arts and crafts, so that there was not a single ignorant or lazy person among them. Their grain-fields, cotton-fields, and rice-fields expanded, their gardens and vineyards grew in number, and their sheep and birds increased as well, procuring a stable livelihood for

the community. Thus, over 30 years, the original community of refugees grew to a population of 400 people, dividing itself into three separate villages. In one of these villages, they constructed a building where they convened their Council of the Learned. Here, the most learned and senior members of the community would gather once a week to hold various meetings and discussions. Special scribes took minutes of these meetings, which were published in book form.

A hundred years after the initial migration, the population had increased so much that the whole country was crammed to capacity with villages. The inhabitants began to build the city known as *Dâr-ı Saadet* [The Abode of Felicity].²⁷⁶ These émigrés, already in possession of all the scholarship, scientific knowledge, and skills of the Andalusian Muslims, now took their accumulated knowledge a few steps further. Since they were all hard-working, industrious, and skilled, they were also highly virtuous, moral, and prosperous.

At the time²⁷⁷ of the narrator's visit to the Land of Comfort, the entire population has reached 300,000; the inhabitants live in 40 villages as well as one big city. Through the directives issued by the descendants of Sayyid Musa (*sayyid* being an honorific for a descendent of the Prophet Muhammad), the land is governed wisely and justly; its inhabitants' devotion to service and scholarship has led them to become examples to all. (241-245)

The Social Order of the Land of Comfort

While conversing with Şeyh Celal, Mullah Abbas asks how the Land of Comfort is run. Şeyh Celal replies that its administration is based upon the *sharia*, common sense, and what he terms "general accord," meaning a general consensus of opinion. (206) Moreover, it is said to be a meritocratic, classless society: "Because the Land of Comfort is truly a Muslim land, its population is not divided into classes or groups; as all its citizens are equal, they are distinguished from one another solely by their natural abilities, i.e. the learning and prestige which they have acquired." (257) Because everything can be accomplished easily – because one person can do the work of ten – there is no need for slaves or servants. (248)

One detail concerning the justice system of this country is very striking: there are no prisons in the Land of Comfort. Once someone's guilt is established, the entire country treats him like a stranger. No one greets him; rather, they shun him as they would the plague. If the offender remains within society, he feels lonelier than if he

²⁷⁶ Interestingly, the name (*Dar-ı Saadet*) the author chooses for this ideal city was also used for Istanbul in the Ottoman era.

²⁷⁷ "Time" is a critical concept in narratological analysis. In his "time analysis", Manfred Jahn indicates that "[t]ime analysis is concerned with three questions: When? How long? and How often? Order refers to the handling of the chronology of the story; duration covers the proportioning of story time and discourse time; and frequency refers to possible ways of presenting single or repetitive action units." For a detailed account of the use of time in narratives, see Jahn, "N5.2. Time Analysis," *Narratology*, <http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/pppn.htm#N5.2>

were in prison. The offender's wife, too, breaks off relations with him until he feels remorse and has been cleansed of sin. In short, until the guilty party has reformed himself, he is cast out of human society. In such situations, he sometimes, if he chooses, withdraws to a special place in a remote corner of the land and improves his character by devoting himself to worship and scholarship. Later, he returns home, and is accepted by society. Henceforth, he no longer practices wickedness, but behaves more ethically, walking on the path of salvation. As a result, aside from one man who received a poor upbringing in his youth, not a single crime has been committed over the past four years. (223)

Respect for privacy is not the main priority in the governance and the overall culture of the Land of Comfort, as is clear from the following example: The postal service in the Land of Comfort is free; but letters are sent without envelopes, on the grounds that "in our community, there are no immoral, illegal words or deeds that would need to be hidden beneath a cover."²⁷⁸ (224, 227)

Similarly, a device (one which recalls similar instruments like Bentham's Panopticon²⁷⁹ or the telescreens of Big Brother in Orwell's *1984*²⁸⁰) also exemplifies the way that "privacy" is understood in this society. The leader of the country, by use of a mechanism made up of binoculars and mirrors, can see all parts of the country at all times:

The length and width of the seat was 7-8 spans. The top portion was all like blown crystal; the legs were made of marble and brass. The seat seemed to be a mirror. I looked at it and was beside myself. In this mirror, you could see all the villages and gardens in the Land of Comfort, as well as all the people walking on the roads or in the countryside. Likewise, all of their comings and goings, all of their daily tasks, were reflected in the mirror.²⁸¹ (251)

Besides, drinking tea, coffee, or alcohol is considered not as a personal choice but as a public health issue, and thus consuming such drinks is prohibited. Mullah Abbas must make do with butter and milk for breakfast, for tea and coffee are unobtainable in the Land of Comfort; likewise, it is impossible to find any kind of alcoholic drink there. (216)

²⁷⁸ "aramızda ahlaka ve kanuna aykırı iş ve fikir olmaz ki kap içinde saklanmaya hacet olsun"

²⁷⁹ Jeremy Bentham, *Panopticon*, <http://cartome.org/panopticon2.htm>

²⁸⁰ George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four. A Novel*. (London: Secker & Warburg, 1949).

²⁸¹ "[Kürsünün] boyu ve eni yedi sekiz karış ölçüsünde idi. Bu kürsünün üstü bütün dökme billur gibi olup ayakları mermer ve sarı tunç idi. Şu kürsü meğer ayna imiş. Bir göz atıp alımı kaybetmiş oldum. Darürrahat'ın bütün köyleri, bahçeleri ve yolda, kırdı yürüyen halkları aynada görünüyorlar idi. İnsanların yürüdüğü ve işledikleri aynen yansıyor idi."

Education

Utopian texts, while lauding the ideal life of the society they depict, at the same time serve to directly or indirectly criticize the conditions, way of life, political system, traditions, and other aspects of the age in which they are composed. Likewise, while Gaspıralı's text praises the Land of Comfort, it routinely contrasts its high level of development with the comparative backwardness of Islamic nations. Education, according to this text, is one of the main reasons for the backwardness of the Islamic world. This is not very surprising, given the central role accorded to education in İsmail Gaspıralı's "New Way Turkism."

In this work, Mullah Abbas converses with a village imam. The imam asks Mullah Abbas about the status of education in his own homeland. On learning that education in Mullah Abbas's homeland is primarily religious, the imam is shocked, and offers a harsh criticism in response:

Do you not need doctors, chemists, architects, and engineers there? Do not your heads of state and government offices require public management? Does not the state have need of administrative regulations, fiscal expertise, competent officials, and laws? To judge from what you say, nothing is learnt in your schools apart from religious knowledge, and – apart from religious functionaries – public officials and experts are not being trained...is this so?²⁸² (209-210)

When Mullah Abbas replies that secular knowledge is not taught because it is believed it will lead to a corruption of morals, the imam sees this as a grave form of negligence. Religious education is also necessary, he says, but it will not direct troops, produce medicine, or run a nation. These things require a knowledge of other sciences. (210-211) Later, the *qadi* [Islamic judge] is also surprised to hear that in 12 years of education in a religious school, Mullah Abbas only received instruction in languages, literature, and religion, without any lessons in arithmetic, geometry, physics, history, medicine, engineering, chemistry, architecture, the fine arts, and so forth (219).

Reading a newspaper, Mullah Abbas learns some ominous news about Zanzibar and Egypt. These countries have reached such a desperate state that they will obviously be enslaved by the Europeans within 15-20 years. There is only one reason for this: ignorance. (229-230) Indeed, the reason why Mullah Abbas's own homeland of Turkistan has fallen behind and become a prey to the Russians is nothing other than its neglect of non-religious branches of knowledge. Ignorance can never give rise to victory and heroism. (228)

²⁸² "Sizin orada tabip, kimyager, mimar ve mühendis gerek olmuyor mu? Sizin hanlar ve hükümetler idare-i mülk ve devlet için umur-ı idareye, fûnun-ı maliyeye, mahir memurlara ve törelere hacet görmüyorlar mı? Senin sözüne göre medreselerde ulum-ı diniyeden maada bir fen tahsil olunmayıp, ehl-i ruhaniden maada erkân-ı mülk ve millet yetişmiyor, böyle mi?"

By contrast, the education system in the Land of Comfort is highly advanced. All children between the ages of eight and 12 go to school. There is no unisex education: boys and girls study separately. Primary education lasts four years, during which children learn reading and writing, arithmetic, and religion. Later, they learn agriculture (as well as the related subject of chemistry), and philosophy. They also learn the arts and crafts necessary to village life. As for the girls, after learning how to read and write they learn household tasks, sewing and embroidery, and lessons in medicine and health education to prepare them for motherhood. (212) Everyone in the Land of Comfort knows how to read and write, and university education there is highly advanced.

Women

It is known that another topic of great importance to İsmail Gaspıralı – in addition to the question of education in general – was women’s education, as well as the improvement of women’s living standards. Indeed, this is one of the subjects which are treated exhaustively in *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort*. The women in the Land of Comfort do not flee from men: they are equal to them, and possess the same right to an education as they do. The leader of the Land of Comfort has a single spouse, the Honorable Hatice Banu, who takes part in the administration of the country. She is, so to speak, the sultan of the women, overseeing women’s rights, upbringing, and education. (256)

There are just as many girls’ schools as boys’ schools. However, the lessons taught in girls’ schools are specific to women. Women perform as well as men in their studies of pedagogy, medicine, and law. Women can even serve on courts: female *kadis* preside over suits between one woman and another.

Because the legal rights of men and women have been maintained in this way, the Muslim women in the Land of Comfort are neither the “talking animals” they are in Turkistan, nor the instruments of shamelessness they are in the West. They neither resemble the concubines of Asia and the East, nor the courtesans of the West. (256-257)

The institution which Mullah Abbas most marvels at is that of the marriage contract. (257) According to this contract, from the start of the marriage onwards, the woman has a right to whatever money the husband earns. Before getting married, both parties need to provide documentation regarding their age and any health problems they may have. Additionally, old men are not allowed to marry young women. In the event that the man and his wife do not get on, divorce is permitted. The institution of marriage is so firmly established that the pederasty found in Bukhara and the prostitution found in London are equally unheard of. (259)

The Advanced Civilization of the Land of Comfort

Utopias typically aim to make their readers envious of what they depict, and to evoke a desire on their part for such a way of life. Accordingly, the ideal, carefree life portrayed in such texts, and the advanced level of civilization reached by their societies, is also described in detail in the “Land of Comfort.” Mullah Abbas is first startled at seeing electric torches in the hands of young women (191). Later, he boards electric trains, and learns that there are telephone lines between each village and city. The roads are paved with a substance resembling cement or asphalt, and are completely smooth (212-213). Cities are lit up at night with electricity (214). Some other examples that give an idea of the level of development here include intercoms (215), motion sensor lamps (216), artificial incubators (225), air-powered machines which can draw water 75 meters out of the ground (230), a salt made from a mixture of minerals and bone broth, invented to increase the yield of the soil (230), and advanced surgical operations. (231)

In relation to these advancements, another conspicuous theme in the text is the comparison between the civilization of Europe and that of the Land of Comfort. Şeyh Celal’s son states that, in past ages, the Europeans were ignorant, while progress was the preserve of his own ancestors; in time, however, the Europeans overtook the Muslims. At present, the civilization of the West – which rules over the world – is full of defects, and its possessions are not as secure as people imagine. (233) Looking at the extraordinary improvements he reads about in the newspaper – in particular, the brilliant successes achieved in the areas of machine technology, chemistry, agriculture, and medicine – Mullah Abbas concludes that life here is more advanced than life both in Muslim countries and in the West. Making a direct appeal to his readers, he encourages them to think along the same lines. This point is crucial, for, in a sense, it contains the basic argument of the text: there is no need to emulate Europe in order to make progress and live happily. If they make certain improvements to their own culture, it will be a fairly simple matter for the Muslims to reach a standard of living superior to that of Europe. In the process, Gaspıralı offers an interesting argument based on “historical determinism.” Şeyh Celal says that once one possesses sufficient data about a nation, it is possible to know how that nation will fare in the future. When Mullah Abbas, in response, objects that it is “destiny” and “God’s will,” Şeyh Celal attempts to prove, from a rationalist perspective, that there is no contradiction between the workings of nature and God’s will. (235-237)

The Muslims in the Land of Comfort presents its readers with a relatively comprehensive vision, one that adheres more closely to the typical conventions of literary utopias. The narrative occurs in a place²⁸³ unlike any known to humanity; the narrator is also accompanied by a guide. There is an attempt to provide a rational explanation of how this ideal society arrived at the level of development portrayed in, and promoted by, the text. The text also contains a criticism of the existing order, and

²⁸³ The terms place, setting of fictional space must be clarified. Manfred Jahn defines “literary space” as follows: “The environment which situates objects and characters; more specifically, the environment in which characters move or live in.” (Jahn, *Narratology*)

aims at creating a desire for an ideal life. Its criticisms fundamentally lie in the area of education; as for the ideal life, Gaspıralı's work attempts to provide concrete evidence for the claim that it is possible to exceed the level of development found in Europe without abandoning Muslim cultural and religious traditions, by giving priority to education, work, and unity. To an extent, *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort* can be described as a lively attempt to illustrate, via literature, the likely outcome of the "New Way" approach which Gaspıralı promoted all his life. In contrast to the "dreams" of Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal, the work of Gaspıralı provides us with a full-fledged picture of an imaginary future which is shaped on the basis of an idealized Islamic society.

4.4. Transition to the Young Turks: *Is It New or Is It Nonsense?*

Like İsmail Gasprinski, Mehmet Murat (also known as Mizancı Murat) (1854-1917) was born within the Russian Empire, hailing from the region of Dagestan; he was also one of the more influential thinkers during the last period of the Ottoman Empire. A powerful force within the Young Turk movement, and for a while the leader of the movement itself, Mizancı Murat is known as a controversial figure by virtue of his seesawing relationship both with the regime of Abdülhamid II and with the Young Turks who opposed the sultan. Also famous as a history teacher, Mizancı Murat took part in the ideological debates of his day through the newspaper *Mizan* [The Balance] which he published (with some interruptions) between 1886 and 1909. Mizancı Murat was involved in politics of an Ottoman and Islamist stripe; due to his writings on such critical topics as freedom and constitutional government, he was subjected on occasion to censorship or even exile. Mizancı Murat can be seen as one of the links in the chain connecting the Young Ottomans to the Young Turks.



Illustration 14: Mizancı Mehmet Murat²⁸⁴

After providing some essential information about the author's one and only novel, *Turfanda mı Yoksa Turfa mı?* [Is It New or Is It Nonsense?]²⁸⁵ (1891), I will address his criticism of the existing order and his proposed solution.

²⁸⁴ <http://www.turkeyswar.com/cup.html> (Accessed 01.08.2014)

²⁸⁵ [Mizancı] Mehmet Murat, *Turfanda mı Yoksa Turfa mı?* [Is it New or is it Nonsense?] (Istanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1891[1308]). There have been many editions of this novel. This study will employ the following edition: Mizancı Mehmet Murat, *Turfanda mı Turfa mı?* (Ankara: Elips, 2006).

Is It New or Is It Nonsense? is the author's sole novel, one which clearly possesses autobiographical aspects. And while love stories full of conspiracy and intrigue may comprise the bulk of the novel, it is evident that Mizancı Murat's true aim was to flesh out, in a work of literature, the scheme for social and political emancipation which he had advocated in his other writings.



Illustration 15: The first edition of *Is It New or Is It Nonsense?*²⁸⁶

Mansur, the novel's hero as well as its ideal human type, is of Turkish descent, but comes from Algeria, outside the borders of the empire. (His mother was born in the mountains of Circassia, and grew up in Istanbul.) After Mansur's father is killed in an attack by the French, his elder uncle looks after him. Zehra, the daughter of his younger uncle, shares the same fate as Mansur. Zehra also represents the author's notion of the ideal woman in this novel.

Mansur receives his secondary schooling and university education in France; he is a very well-read, cultured, sincere, idealistic, and ambitious young man, with a keen sense of honor. After completing his medical training, Mansur comes to Istanbul. Here, he agrees to stay at the residence of his uncle Şeyh Salih, on condition that he serves as the family doctor. Şeyh Salih's daughter Zehra is also living there.

After acquiring Ottoman citizenship, Mansur begins to work as a doctor in the College of Medicine, and as an official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the latter being his true ambition. Along the way, he turns down any offer from his uncle to intervene on his behalf, pull strings for him, or help him along.

²⁸⁶ Ekrem Işın, 75.

A Crumbling Empire

The first thing that strikes Mansur about the Ministry is that all the tasks are carried out by just three of the 30 officials employed there, while the other 27 do no work at all. This makes him extremely uncomfortable; when he learns that the same is true in other governmental departments, he leaves the state service. But the impressions he forms during this period of state service are nonetheless invaluable: the defects in the society of his day are much more numerous than he thought, and the solutions are much fewer.

Many of these issues can be encountered at the beginning of the novel. Though Mansur has dreamed all his life of coming to Istanbul – the seat of the Caliphate, the capital of the empire – as soon as he arrives there by ferry, he meets one disappointment after another. On seeing the missionary school of Robert College perched on the same hill as the sacred Rumeli Hisarı (Rumeli Fortress), that relic of Mehmet the Conqueror, Mansur becomes distraught. Disembarking from the ferry, he becomes angry on being told that the price of a hotel room is five francs. (It is not the price that angers him, but the fact that francs are being used instead of *kuruş*.) Right from his first day in the city, Mansur is incensed by various little annoyances: the fact that the customs official trusts him enough not to search his luggage (i.e., fails to perform his duty) and addresses him with the informal pronoun *sen*; the filthiness of the roads; the presence of numerous non-Muslims in the city; the fact that the hotel has a French name; and much more. Added to all these are the social and cultural problems encountered as the novel unfolds: laziness, favoritism, bribery, hypocrisy, and, most important of all, lack of education. These, we learn, are the fundamental criticisms which Mizancı Murat is leveling against his own age.

A Solution

Needless to say, a character²⁸⁷ as driven as Mansur could hardly be expected to remain indifferent to these problems. The Ottoman Empire is collapsing in every sense, beginning with the bureaucracy in which it has become temporarily entangled. Its national culture – which rewards supplication, nepotism, and submission rather than expertise, talent, and self-confidence – is at fault, and must be changed. Education lies at the heart of it all, and countless passages in the novel testify to the author's insistence on this fact. Germany, Russia, and Italy²⁸⁸ – which put a high priority on education – are developing swiftly. By such means, the Ottoman State, too, can develop, and a

²⁸⁷ For Manfred Jahn, “[a] character is not a real-life person but only a ‘paper being’ (Barthes 1975 [1966]), a being created by an author and existing only within a fictional text, either on the level of action or on the level of fictional mediation.” He states that although the terms “character” and “person” are sometimes used indiscriminately, they should not be confused, for a “person” means “a real-life person; anyone occupying a place on the level of nonfictional communication. Hence, authors and readers are persons.” (Jahn, *Narratology*)

²⁸⁸ It should be noted that the countries which the author cites as examples all began the process of modernization later than Britain and France.

population of 300 million can be governed properly through the Caliphate. (127-131) Additionally, a discussion which Mansur has with his uncle shows that he shares the latter's irredentist ideals. However, unlike his uncle, Mansur does not believe this irredentism will be achieved through revolt and war. Such things will only bring more repression, cruelty, and death, he believes. The way to win back the lost territories is to educate Muslims who are living under subjugation and occupation, train more imams, teachers, farmers, doctors, and engineers, and increase prosperity and awareness. (134-137) Not the sword, but education will bring about the founding of the Islamic Union. (144)

Moreover, among Muslims, and especially in the Turkish nation, qualities such as loyalty, capability, faith, conviction, heroism, and patriotism are much in evidence. The only thing missing is education. (145, 207)

Mansur's uncle dies, leaving his fortune to his nephew, and stating in his will that he wishes him to marry Zehra. The two become married, and Mansur puts all his energies into the service of education. The university which he attempts to set up in Tunisia closes as a result of pressure by the French. Mansur tries to open a school in Beirut in order to thwart the activities of missionaries, but this venture, too, is unsuccessful.

At last, he finds success in Manisa. In fact, this small-scale experiment in social progress which we encounter at the end of the novel – this little vision of utopia – is the reason for including *Is It New or Is It Nonsense?* in the present study. Therefore, it will be necessary at this point to give some details regarding this part of the novel.

From the very start of the novel, we can observe Mansur's utopian leanings. More significant is the fact that the author himself is aware that he is taking part in a utopian intellectual project. At the start of the novel, Mansur's friends jokingly suggest that they call Mansur's forehead the "Place de l'Utopie." Mansur is pleased with this joke, and from then on, he has another nickname: "Utopiste" [The Utopian]. (38-39) In all likelihood, this is the first use of the term "utopia" in a Turkish novel. Mizancı Murat is aware that he is inventing a utopia via the figure of Mansur.

References to the "future," which crop up so frequently in the novel, give further credence to this impression. Right at the start of the novel, Mansur recalls the glorious Ottoman past full of sultans like Osman and Orhan Gazi, Mehmet the Conqueror, and Selim I, as well as prominent families like the Sokollus and Köprülüs; expressing his belief in the future, he exclaims, "There is no doubt in my mind: our future will be a source of envy even to our past." (20) Moreover, in another passage, it is said that the time is not ripe for Mansur's talents and labors to give fruit, but that he is the "man of the future." (124) Conversing with his idealistic friend Ahmet Şunudi, Mansur also exclaims that "the future is ours!" (146) These repeated references to the future also reinforce the novel's vision of utopia.

This vision turns to reality at the Veliler Farm in Manisa, where Mansur goes to live after he realizes that none of his efforts in Istanbul will be successful. Mansur immediately wins over the villagers living on this 14 million square meter plot of land

left to him by his uncle. On Fridays, he goes into town for Friday prayer; afterwards, he provides a free medical examination to anyone who requests it, giving the patient medicines as well. Mansur helps the poor and needy, gives loans without interest to those who have fallen on hard times, and finds work for those who are unemployed. (250)

Later on, he founds two schools, and has two teachers invited from Manisa; he has these teachers use his own novel educational methods in the classroom. The villagers now have complete confidence in Mansur, and they send their own children to his schools. When the number of students reaches 150, Mansur has two more teachers invited to the schools. He becomes more enthusiastic as he sees that the children are talented and willing to make progress. In a letter to his friend Mehmet, he writes the following lines: "They say, 'Reform must begin from below.' It is true. In Europe, the first steps towards development were taken in provincial cities, before they reached the capital." (251) The amount of progress that is made within three years is truly impressive. Besides reading and writing, the village children learn mathematics, geography, and history.

In addition, Mansur turns the school into a "School of Agriculture," and sets up a model farm next to it. He has the overseer of a farm in Holland invited to this model farm. (265)

Needless to say, Mansur's activities are not limited to education. In order to free the villagers from the tax officials who are always pestering them, he pays the taxes himself in a single lump sum; the villagers then pay him back whenever it is convenient for them. In this way, the taxes are paid in full, and the villagers need not worry about interest or fees; moreover, the officials' strategy of robbing the villagers through oppressive taxation has been thwarted. The tax officials, and even the district governor, become uneasy about this; the state bureaucracy in rural areas has become like a gang of robbers, so to speak. (266-268)

In the next stage, we see Mansur opening a yarn factory, thus putting a stop to the exploitation that occurs when the villagers sell cotton to Europe, and then buy yarn from Europe at inflated prices. Mansur also takes a villager as his business partner, even though he is capable of opening the factory by himself. (269)

We might have expected these efforts to go even further and produce even more brilliant results, but unfortunately we have no way of knowing the fate of the Veliler Farm. In 1877-78, the Russo-Turkish War breaks out. Mansur goes to the front as a volunteer. But even there, he cannot suppress his honesty and his habit of speaking the truth at all times; there are complaints about him, and he is sent to Damascus, where he falls ill and dies.

In short, as of 1891, the three ideologies of pan-Ottomanism, pan-Turkism, and pan-Islamism were fused together in Mizancı Murat's mind in set proportions, and were put forth by the author as an ideology of national salvation. Mizancı Murat believed that this statist ideology ought to be accompanied by a policy of development based on the nation's own resources, and that a meritocratic bureaucracy ought to put it into

practice. But most important of all was the need to carry out a comprehensive education campaign. Besides, reading about what Mansur accomplished on his Manisa farm, it is clear that the author intended them to convey the following message: the success which has been obtained on a small scale, on one farm, can be obtained on a national scale as well, if the necessary improvements are made. In this way, salvation is possible for the entire country. We will encounter this approach later, in other utopian texts as well. For example, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir's 1963 novel *Toprak Uyanırsa: Ekmeksizköy Öğretmeninin Hatıraları* [If the Earth Awakens: Memoirs of a Teacher in Ekmeksizköy]²⁸⁹ also tells the story of a teacher who brings about a similarly miraculous process of development in an Anatolian village called Ekmeksizköy. There, too, the development of a single village is presented as a model for the development of a nation.

We should not forget that Mizancı Murat's childhood and youth were spent in Tsarist Russia, and that he received his education there. During those same years – the 1860s and 1870s – a form of populism known as the “Narodnik” movement was spreading throughout Russia. The basic principles of this movement were addressing the problems of the peasantry, seeking to solve these problems through a universal education campaign, and trying to achieve progress through the establishment of village communes. When all of this is taken into account, it becomes clear where Mizancı Murat's source of inspiration lay.²⁹⁰

Mizancı Murat's vision of the future which incorporates the three ideological tendencies of his generation, namely Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism, also aims to offer a solution for national progress. As in Gaspıralı's utopian work, he depicts the society of the future as a “developed” one largely after the successful example of the West. Optimistic projections about the future of the Ottoman “nation” in these works serve as critiques of the existing state of affairs.

²⁸⁹ Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Toprak Uyanırsa: Ekmeksizköy Öğretmeninin Hatıraları* [If the Earth Awakens: Memoirs of a Teacher in Ekmeksizköy] (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi 1963).

²⁹⁰ Ekrem Işın, “Jöntürk İdeolojisinin Türk Romanına Etkileri: Mizancı Murat Bey ve Toplumsal Ütopyası” [The Effects of Young Turk Ideology on the Turkish Novel: Mizancı Murat Bey and Societal Utopia], *Sanat Olayı* [The Event of Art] no. 5 (1981): 75.

4.5. A Young Turk's Nightmare: What Lies in Store

Optimistic projections about the future of the Ottomans also serve as critiques of the existing state of affairs. There is, however, another way of critiquing the existing regime by projecting a negative image of the future, i.e. a dystopia. This chapter will focus on a dystopic work which reflects the concerns of the Young Turk generation.

Neler Olacak!... [What Lies in Store]²⁹¹ is a 24-page work of unknown authorship, published at the Cairo office of the Committee of Union and Progress. The first person to draw attention to this work was Kayahan Özgül, who states that it gave him the impression of having been written in a moment of despondency.²⁹² Dedicated to the memory of Mithat Paşa, who promulgated the first Ottoman constitution, this text has decidedly dystopian characteristics. Basing its visions of the future on fear rather than desire, this work imagines the bleak future towards which it believes Abdülhamid's tyranny is steering the country.



Illustration 16: The inner cover of *What Lies in Store*²⁹³

The book envisions a future in which Istanbul has been conquered by the Russians – in fact, the name of the city has even been changed to “Tsargrad.” As in many other depictions of the future in Ottoman literature, this story also features a suspension bridge over the Bosphorus, the Nicholas Suspension Bridge (presumably named in honor of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia). This magnificent bridge, which can be crossed by train, by car, or on foot, has recently been completed, and receives much attention. (2)

²⁹¹ *Neler Olacak!...*[What Lies in Store] (Cairo: n.p., 1314 [1897]).

²⁹² Özgül, *Siyasi Rüyalar*, 90.

²⁹³ Private collection (E.K.)

Moreover, promenades have been built from Sarayburnu to Yedikule, and from Üsküdar to Kadıköy. (3)

The story begins with large festivities held to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the fall of the Ottoman Empire at an unknown future date. These celebrations take place in what was once Beyazıt Square, now called “Politics Square,” referring to the nearly 40-50 thousand political prisoners who have been executed there since the capture of Istanbul. (3) Beyazıt Mosque has become a church, as well. (7) On the day of the festivities, a huge statue will be inaugurated in the square; this statue, which will be described in detail below, is a symbolic expression of the book’s basic message.

The book also provides us with information about the social structure of this bleak Istanbul of the future. Fifty years ago, before the occupation of the city, 700 thousand Muslim Turks lived in Istanbul; now their numbers have shrunk to five or six thousand (7), and they too will soon disappear through exile or execution. Islam and Turkishness are being systematically eliminated. In order to give a sense of how poorly the Russians treat the Turks, the author writes “They respect the Gypsies more than us.” (7) The prevailing slogan of the era is “Become Russian, or get lost!”²⁹⁴ (7) Education in Turkish has been outlawed, and Islamic institutions have been dissolved.

Historical Background

The narrator recounting these events then meets a shoe-shiner, who offers us a chance to learn what brought about this radical departure from the history with which we are familiar. Sitting in a corner with a porter, a day-laborer, and other Muslims, the shoe-shiner describes the present state of his country as a curse, as a calamity sent from God. He believes that previous generations – his and his compatriots’ “fathers” – are the ones to blame.

According to the shoe-shiner, Abdülhamid decided to take revenge upon his people, who were not pleased with him as a ruler, and went about stirring up conflict between his Muslim and Christian subjects. Meanwhile, Russia was backing a coup d’état, to set the stage for their occupation of the country. Entering into an agreement with Sultan Abdülhamid, the Russians sent their fleet to Istanbul; they then wiped out the entire resistance in one stroke, and occupied the city. This was followed by an invasion of the entire country. (8-12)

Criticism of the existing order

As we know, utopian or dystopian works take a critical stance towards the social, political, and/or economic order of the era in which they are written. This text, as well, uses a nightmarish, imaginary future to send a message to the readers of its day.

For instance, the narrator is arrested during a commotion, and has a chance to see the inside of a prison, which is filled mainly with Turks as well as Ottoman

²⁹⁴ “Ya Rus olunuz, yahut defolunuz!”

Armenians and Greeks. The officer in charge believes that the prisoners have been punished through the wrath of God. He heaps abuse upon them, saying that although they believe the last sultan was solely at fault for the fall of the Ottoman state, they are the ones who are truly responsible. (17) They were in possession of the most beautiful, most bountiful country in the world, he says, and yet did not oppose their tyrannical sultan, or execute him. (18) This can be seen as an open invitation to the readers to get rid of Abdülhamid, in order not to have to live through such a future.²⁹⁵

A similar critique occurs concerning corruption and moral decline. Describing this historical process of decline to the narrator, the shoe-shiner asserts that everyone in his own time behaves dishonorably. His own father, he says, took the attitude of “since the state’s days are numbered anyway, I should make a fortune and save my family,” destroying many families by slanderous accusations; as a result, he was inducted into the palace service, and made a minister. With all the presents and privileges he received, before five years were up he possessed luxurious mansions as well as funds totaling 400-500 thousand lira. Nonetheless, the person telling this story is a shoe-shiner; his father’s attempts to secure a future for his family by dishonest means fell flat in the end. Indeed, the shoe-shiner himself comments that “Even if we had a fortune today, it would be of no use, because we are enslaved. If only there had been loving fathers who were ready to shed blood for the nation, instead of amassing a fortune.” (13-14) In other words, the text is criticizing those elements in society who turned a blind eye to the repressive regime of Abdülhamid, or even served it, for the sake of personal gain. Freedom is more valuable than anything else; if freedom does not exist, then even wealth cannot provide individual security.

I stated earlier that the most striking element at the center of this short text was a statue which was about to be inaugurated. In Beyazıt Square, electric lights shine onto the statue from the Tower of Victory (as Beyazıt Tower is now called) and its covering is removed. It is a statue of the Tsar, standing fully upright. The supplicant down on his knees, holding a petition in his hand, is Abdülhamid. Sultan Abdülhamid, “who relinquished the security which the Ottoman rulers had won from their enemies in combat for six hundred years, who led the Ottoman Empire to destruction and led the Islamic world down the path of decline,” was the last of the Ottoman sultans.²⁹⁶ (8)

Above, I referred to the fact that the first works of Turkish literature to offer a vision of the future relied on the tradition of the dream narrative in classical Ottoman literature, transforming it in the process. At the end of this work, we learn that it, too, has been in the form of a dream. Amid the sound of fireworks and cannonballs fired for the Tsar (who has gone to Hagia Sophia to make his evening prayers), the narrator

²⁹⁵ It must be underscored that a book containing such a harsh critique of Abdülhamid’s administration would never escape the rigorous censorship of the Hamidian regime if it were published within the Ottoman Empire. However, the book was published in Egypt which was then under the British Rule.

²⁹⁶ “Diz çökerek istirham eden, elinde bir arzuhal tutan, Osmanlı hükümdarlarının altı yüz seneden beri muharebelerde düşmanlardan aldıkları emanatı takdim eden, Osmanlılığı mahv ve İslamiyeti vadi-i inkıraza götüren son Osmanlı padişahı Abdülhamid’dir.”

awakes from his sleep. All that he has seen was a dream. But he still hears the sound of cannonballs, accompanied by voices crying “Long live...” There has been a revolution. Twenty years of tyranny have ended, and the rule of the “cruel, treacherous, loathsome” Sultan Abdülhamid has come to a close.²⁹⁷ (23) The narrator expresses his happiness and his optimism for the future by recalling a line from Namık Kemal’s famous “Ode to Liberty”: “Let that hope for the future which we desire so much echo everywhere.” (22-23)

In contrast to the bulk of the text, which aims at instilling a sense of fear, a passage at the end attempts to give hope to the readers:

The Ottoman nation is immortal. A body which asks “What is happening to us?”, which is conscious of impending danger, will not perish. The nation which asserts its claim to live, will live. The labors and efforts of the men of this nation – wherever and whenever they are found – will not lack results. The fruits of this labor will eventually be seen, however belated and taxing they may be.
Long live the Ottomans! Long live freedom! Justice! Equal rights for all!
May the age of darkness be annihilated! (24)²⁹⁸

What Lies in Store is a work which attempts to convey the likely consequences of the repressive regime of Abdülhamid – who had been on the throne for twenty years – by means of a horrific scenario. To trigger this fear in its readers, it employs the motif of the capture and abolishment of the Ottoman state by the Russians. The author’s choice of the Russians is probably due to the fact that the Ottomans had lost nearly all their wars against the Russians over the preceding centuries, and that memories of the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War – one of the greatest calamities to befall the nation – were still fresh.

The main emphasis in the text is on the concepts of freedom and constitutional government. In this respect, we can see that – in line with the political program of the Committee of Union and Progress, which was active during this period – the concepts of Islamism, Turkism, and Ottomanism have been employed without making much of a distinction among them or trying to define their differences. Thus, these concepts are not used in an exclusionary, xenophobic manner: Armenians and Greeks are seen as integral parts of a unified whole, being treated in the same way as other victims of the events in question. This is one of the most important elements distinguishing this and

²⁹⁷ “Zalim, hain, müstekreh padişah Abdülhamid’in kuvva-yi mesaib-nüması üzerimizden kalktı.”

²⁹⁸ “Osmanlı milleti ölmez. “Ne oluyoruz?” diye düşünen, vehameti idrak eden bir heyet mahvolmaz. Yaşamak iddiasında bulunan millet yaşar. Her nerede olursa olsun, herhangi zamanda bulunursa bulunsun efrad-ı milletin say ü gayreti neticesiz kalmaz. Semeresi geç olsa da güç olsa da görülür.

“Yaşasın Osmanlılar! Yaşasın hürriyet! Adalet! Müsavat-ı hukuk.
“Mahvolsun zulmet!”

similar texts from ones produced after the Balkan War. *What Lies in Store* does not contain any rancor or desire for revenge against non-Muslim, non-Turkish individuals. On the contrary, it is characterized by a sense of unity which serves to build a coalition against a common enemy. The development which the authors believed would put an end to this nightmare and cause future hopes to flourish was without a doubt the re-proclamation of the Constitution, as well as the freedom, justice, and equality which it would usher in. (24) This would bring about the salvation of the “Ottoman nation” from the calamities and destruction described in this work.

4.6. Bourgeois Fantasies: “The Green Hearth”

In this chapter, I will consider a vision of an alternative life which differs from other such visions, the main difference being that this work is not individual in nature, but is a collective effort. This fantasy of an idyllic society and an ideal utopian life, developed by certain members of the school of Turkish literature known as the *Servet-i Fünun* [Wealth of Knowledge] or the *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* [New Literature], found its niche in literary history as an intriguing thought experiment, one of the many literary innovations introduced by the aforementioned school. This fantasy was reflected in a short story, a few poems, and a few memoirs, thus leaving its trace upon Turkish literature. Though this project may not have offered a comprehensive vision of the future, it is nonetheless worthy of mention by virtue of being the first attempt to establish a utopian colony.²⁹⁹

The underlying motivation for this colony was a desire to escape the repressive regime of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909). In fact, Abdülhamid’s sultanate had a significant impact on the development of modern Turkish literature. During his reign, those who attempted to promote ideas such as freedom and equality provoked a hostile response, receiving punishments like imprisonment and exile. As the intellectual historian Niyazi Berkes has pointed out, under this repressive regime intellectuals kept their distance from politics, focusing, of necessity, on cultural matters which had previously seemed of little importance: “By severing the cultural questions from the political-religious questions, the Hamidian regime unknowingly encouraged focusing upon cultural matters as such. The focusing was sharpened by factors stemming from the Western impact that the Hamidian suppression failed to prevent.”³⁰⁰

Such, therefore, were the conditions under which the *Servet-i Fünun* school, which was active between 1896 and 1901, would emerge. Coming in the wake of the first few generations of Modern Turkish literature, which had produced works in the third and fourth quarters of the nineteenth century, this school displayed an approach which was highly distinct from previous understandings of literature. The representatives of the *Servet-i Fünun* school had also had upbringings quite different from those of their predecessors. Most were members of the middle and upper classes. They received a European-style – usually a French-style – education, were fluent in at least one Western language, and their pastimes, ways of life, and ideas were European as well. Whereas previous generations had delivered a social and political message in a simple language, the members of the *Servet-i Fünun* school aimed at producing masterpieces like those of the European authors they read and sought to emulate; they did not feel they had a duty to be understood by the masses, or to educate society. They

²⁹⁹ Nurettin Öztürk, “Bir Düşyaşam: Servet-i Fünun Ütopyaları ve Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın’ın *Hayat-ı Muhayyeli*” [An Imaginary Life: the Utopias of the *Servet-i Fünun* and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın’s *Hayat-ı Muhayyeli*], *Bilim ve Ütopya* [Science and Utopia] 16, no.187 (January 2010): 20.

³⁰⁰ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 289.

employed an “elaborate” literary language, and were focused on individual rather than societal issues.

Nonetheless, although they did not lack financial resources, they were unable to take part in the liberal bourgeois way of life which they saw, and envied, in Europe; consequently, an overall sense of pessimism is prevalent in their works.³⁰¹ While they may have had difficulty in expressing it in their works, they were also highly dissatisfied with the repressive regime of Abdülhamid. The fantasy of “The Green Hearth,” which will be dealt with in this chapter, is a product of this pessimism and dissatisfaction. Below, I will touch on the developments that led to the emergence of this fantasy, after which I will analyze related works in order to perform a general evaluation. The main information concerning this project has been obtained from four memoirs: Mehmet Rauf’s “Edebi Hatıralar: ‘Yeşil Yurt’ Hikâyesi” [Literary Memoirs: The Story of “The Green Hearth”];³⁰² Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın’s *Edebi Hatıralar* [Literary Memoirs];³⁰³ Hüseyin Kâzım Kadri’s *Meşrutiyet’ten Cumhuriyet’e Hatıralarım* [My Memoirs, from the Constitutional Era to the Republic];³⁰⁴ and Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil’s *Kırk Yıl* [Forty Years].³⁰⁵ Of these four individuals, Halit Ziya did not take part himself in this project, but was content to recount his observations of it. Moreover, in addition to the above figures, one should also mention Tevfik Fikret, perhaps the main actor in this project. Indeed, this fantasy found its literary echo in a story of Hüseyin Cahit as well as several poems of Tevfik Fikret.

As regards the question of how the project came about, it should first be reiterated that the main impetus leading the members of the *Servet-i Fünun* school to conceive such a vision was Abdülhamid’s repressive regime. In his memoirs, Mehmet Rauf arrives at the following conclusion:

What the members of the *Servet-i Fünun* school had in common was a fierce, violent hostility towards autocratic government. This hostility, which had first been targeted towards the sultan, slowly began to encompass the national culture which submitted to this government, put up with it, nourished it, and kept it in power. The infamies of the sultan, of which we witnessed the most loathsome instances every day,

³⁰¹ For a detailed study of the effects of liberalism on the intellectual worlds of the intellectuals of this period, see Aykut Kansu, “20. Yüzyıl Başı Türk Düşünce Hayatında Liberalizm” [Liberalism in Turkish Intellectual Life at the Beginning of the 20th Century], in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet’in Birikimi* [Political Thought in Modern Turkey 1: the Legacy of the Tanzimat and the Constitution], ed. Mehmet Ö. Alkan (Istanbul: İletişim, 2001), 277-295.

³⁰² Mehmet Rauf, “Edebi Hatıralar: ‘Yeşil Yurt’ Hikâyesi,” [Literary Memoirs: The Story of “The Green Hearth”], *Güneş* [Sun], no: 9 (May 1, 1927), 6.

³⁰³ Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Edebi Hatıralar* [Literary Memoirs] (Istanbul: Akşam Kitaphanesi, 1935).

³⁰⁴ Hüseyin Kâzım Kadri, *Meşrutiyet’ten Cumhuriyet’e Hatıralarım* [My Memoirs, from the Constitutional Era to the Republic] (Istanbul: İletişim, 1991).

³⁰⁵ Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Kırk Yıl* [Forty Years] (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Gazete ve Matbaası, 1936).

were poisoning us, and making our life here into an unbearable torture.³⁰⁶

Likewise, in his memoirs, Hüseyin Kazım Kadri recalls the hopelessness he and his associates felt due to Abdülhamid's despotism, and explains how he had the idea of going abroad: "We were yearning for a change, but we did not know what to do. In the end, it was Fikret, once more, who found a solution: to emigrate from the country." Halit Ziya also confirms that the idea of emigration was Tevfik Fikret's.³⁰⁷ One Friday, Fikret, along with Hüseyin Cahit, went to the house of Dr. Esat Paşa (Dr. Mehmet Esat Işık) in Çengelköy. There, together with other guests, they complained of the tyranny of the corrupt regime. In the course of their complaining, they had the idea of emigrating all together, an idea which garnered much support. Esat Paşa would meet the costs by selling his farm in Ankara. Mehmet Rauf, a naval captain, consulted an English officer who earnestly suggested New Zealand; thus, the question of where to go was settled.

But this voyage was not to take place. The chief reason was that Esat Paşa's trip to Ankara to sell his farm proved unsuccessful. Additionally, after the plan took shape, they were discouraged by various practical matters needing to be dealt with, as well as by certain disagreements of principle.³⁰⁸

Still, the literati of the *Servet-i Fünun* were undeterred. This time, an idea for an alternative project came from Hüseyin Kazım. He had large plots of land in the village of Sarıçam in Manisa, and proposed carrying out the same scheme there.³⁰⁹ This suggestion reawakened the group's enthusiasm. Tevfik Fikret even drew the plans for a villa which they would build in Sarıçam, which they would call "The Green Hearth." They decided to have Hüseyin Cahit go there and survey the location. But he was unable to get permission to leave. After a sequence of apparently quite suspenseful events (to judge from their "thriller-esque" treatment in Hüseyin Cahit's memoirs) he at last made an unofficial trip to the village, which he greatly admired. He returned with positive impressions of the place, as well as photographs he had taken. However, for unknown reasons, Fikret's enthusiasm dwindled, and so this project too fell by the wayside.

³⁰⁶ Quoted in Rahim Tarım, "Servet-i Fünun Edebi Topluluğunun 'Yeşil Yurt' Özlemi" [The Longing for the "Green Hearth" in the Literary Community of the *Servet-i Fünun*], *kitap-lık* [book-shelf], no. 93 (April 2006): 78: "Servet-i Fünuncuların müşterek vasıfları istibdat idaresine karşı kanlı, yırtıcı bir husumetti. Bu husumet Saray'a karşı başlamışken yavaş yavaş bu idareye tevekkül ve tahammül ve onu tağdiye ve idame eden memleket hayatına da sirayet etmişti. Her gün menfur tecelliyatına şahit olduğumuz Saray şenatleri bizi zehirliyorlar, artık burada yaşamayı tahammül edilemeyecek bir işkence haline getiriyordu."

³⁰⁷ "Yanıp tutuşuyorduk. Fakat ne yapacağımızı da bilmiyorduk. Nihayet, yine Fikret bir çare buldu: Bu memleketten hicret etmek." Tarım, "Servet-i Fünun," 78.

³⁰⁸ For instance, whereas Tevfik Fikret supported the idea of settling on an island and living the rest of their lives there, Hüseyin Cahit disagreed, advocating a return to their own country if Abdülhamid died and a constitutional regime were reestablished. Quoted in Tarım, "Servet-i Fünun," 80.

³⁰⁹ In Mizancı Mehmet Murat's novel *Is It New or Is It Nonsense?*, discussed earlier, the hero Mansur also realized his utopian dream in Manisa. The fact that Manisa once more serves as a utopian setting is an interesting coincidence.



Illustration 17: Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın³¹⁰

Aside from these memoirs, the chief literary work to give expression to the dream of the Green Hearth was Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın's short story "Hayat-ı Muhayyel" [The Imaginary Life], the first piece in the author's short story collection of the same name, published in April 1898.³¹¹ A second edition came out in 1910; since then, it has not been reprinted, and is thus unavailable in a Romanized version.

This 15-page story, with a date of 16 Teşrinievvel 1314 [October 28th, 1898], apparently takes place "in a faraway land, at a future time" (3). The only concrete detail concerning the setting is that it is an island (4);³¹² the presence of an alternative way of life there can be understood from the following phrase: "Everything there had a feeling of novelty, freshness, purity, and naturalness." (3) At the same time, this ideal alternative way of life is never fully fleshed out, being conveyed by a vague expression like "a longing to live freely, to live like human beings."

The underlying principle in this way of life is "simplicity." The villas intended for habitation are not large or luxurious; they are only as sizeable, sturdy, elegant, and pleasant as people's needs require.³¹³ (5) Everyone's villa has a large study, a small living room, a children's room, and a bedroom. In any case, because they have come here fleeing from the opulent salons of civilized society, their needs have become fewer, and they have only allowed themselves the most necessary belongings. There is no luxury on the island.

³¹⁰ http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%BCseyin_Cahit_Yal%C3%A7%C4%B1n

³¹¹ Hüseyin Cahit [Yalçın], *Hayat-ı Muhayyel* [The Imaginary Life] (İstanbul: Âlem Matbaası, 1315 [1898]).

³¹² Islands – which by their nature provide a definite severing of ties with the rest of the world – have been the imaginary location of many utopias. For more on the relationship between islands and utopias, see Akşit Göktürk, *Ada: İngiliz Yazınında Ada Kavramı* [Island: The Concept of the Island in English Literature] (İstanbul: Adam, 1982).

³¹³ Given their simplicity, it is striking that the houses to be inhabited by the members of this community are called "villas." One should not forget that the literati of the *Servet-i Fünun* school were members of the upper-income stratum.

We also get some information, limited though it may be, about the plan of the village where these houses are located. In the middle of the village, there is a building which is used communally. Inside, there is a canteen spacious enough to seat everyone, a large salon, and a library. All the families assemble round the table in the canteen each morning and evening. (6)

There are no servants on the island, a big sacrifice on the part of the members of the *Servet-i Fünun* school. Each evening, it is a different family's turn to serve the others; they all take pleasure in serving their friends. (6) Similar pleasures can be encountered at every stage. After eating, they retire to the salon, where they drink coffee and jest with one another, play the piano, and read poems. They also discuss and deal with village matters.

One important detail regarding life in the village concerns the division of labor. Everyone has some useful task to perform, and the division of labor arises naturally. Everyone has experience plowing the fields. Milking the sheep and goats, tending the chickens, and incubating chicks, on the other hand, are enjoyable tasks which incidentally are performed by women. Those who cannot endure hard labor instead pasture the cows, catch fish, bake bread, and make yogurt, cheese, and butter. Thus, the needs of the village are more than adequately met. (8) There is one day of rest every week. Generally, people go on outings on such days. In order to reach different points on the island, each family shows up with its one-horse cart; they then meet up with other families and set off together. (10)

In such a way of life, things like making money are unimportant. Money is not used in the village, aside from a fund used for purchases from outside, which is overseen by one of the villagers. As no one is concerned with making money, people do not need to wear themselves out with work. The writer portrays this side of the villagers' life with idyllic, pastoral details. For instance, while plowing the fields, they find time to let the oxen rest in the shade of a tree, and then stretch out themselves on the grass, reading philosophy, poetry, and novels. While the cows are in pasture, the herdsman sets up an easel, and paints their picture in oils. Hunters hang up their rifles and read poetry. (8-9)

In any case, a physically active life is no obstacle to the enrichment of the mind. Even if they have put the ambitions of civilized life behind them, they have not forsaken the spiritual pleasures of that life, the pleasures which fortify the soul: these arrive regularly with each delivery of the mail. Therefore, the nights when the mail is delivered are very important. On such nights, the normal routine is dispensed with: there is no piano-playing, singing, or games. Everyone gathers in the main hall of the library. The women sew and knit, the children read picture books, and the men read the newspapers and books which arrive with the mail. (9)

Towards the end of the text, we see the excitement created when a woman becomes pregnant. Everyone wants the child to be a boy – and it is. In an obvious bit of symbolism, the boy is given the name “Adam”: he is the first member of this new race of humanity. He is followed by other Adams and Eves. All of them are large, beautiful,

and flawless in appearance (12-13). With the children that are born, the village becomes more and more beautiful. Roads are built, and every part of the village is improved. Flower-gardens are planted all around the villas. The surrounding orchards are planted with fruit trees. The young get married, and new villas are added to the village, which increases in size. (14)

In short, it would not be incorrect to term this story an instance of “escapist literature.” Its primary motivation, as stated above, is an escape from tyranny. Though this story claims to offer an alternative way of life, it could nonetheless be concluded that, after being freed from tyranny, the inhabitants of the island do not want to change much else. For, aside from some details which seem neither convincing nor based upon actual village life, there is little visible change in the lives of the inhabitants here, especially the men.

Moreover, the text makes no claim of extending this perspective to society as a whole, and thus producing a vision of social liberation or development; rather, it stands as an individual fantasy. Accordingly, the issue of the desire it evokes among its readers is a problematic one. For instance, one could ask just how attractive this utopian vision would be to women, given that it does not seek to change gender roles in society, but even augments them to some extent.

Indeed, a noteworthy aspect of this text is its promotion of what is fundamentally a conservative idea. A family-based way of life prevails in this village; there is no place for those who are unmarried. Nor is there any attempt to question patriarchal values.³¹⁴



Illustration 18: Tevfik Fikret³¹⁵

³¹⁴ Literary historian Rahim Tarım states that Hüseyin Cahit wrote his short story “Uykusuz Kalırken” [Sleepless] due to his sorrow at the fact that this shared dream did not become reality. Tarım, “Servet-i Fünun”, 85.

³¹⁵ http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tevfik_Fikret

Finally, let us turn to some poems of Tevfik Fikret – the key player in this project – on the subject of “The Green Hearth.” As the individual who first came up with this idea, pulled the plug on it, gave it a name, drew up concrete proposals for it, and led the project throughout, Tevfik Fikret more than deserves to be described as the key player in this venture. The utopian vision of “The Green Hearth” is expressed in several of Fikret’s poems. Among these are “Ömr-i Muhayyel” [An Imaginary Life], “Berîd-i Ümmîd” [A Messenger of Hope], “Bir Mersiye” [An Elegy], “Bir Ân-ı Huzur” [A Moment of Peace], and last but not least, “Yeşil Yurt” [The Green Hearth], after which the project was named.

This last-mentioned poem does not contain a detailed depiction of the life which was desired by Tevfik Fikret and his circle. All that we see is a peaceful village by the side of a stream, among greenery:

It is a felicity as green as springtime
In the smiling meadow’s dust-filled slope
The village, as though asleep, sinks into tranquility
All its life is lived by the banks of a tiny stream³¹⁶

Fikret says that he goes to this village every evening, in pursuit of his vision. Only in this way can he endure the sorrow and despair of his surroundings. An inability to accept reality, as well as a desire to flee from it, is the poem’s basic motif.

“A Moment of Peace” also expresses the poet’s longing for village life. This poem dreams of the villager’s life which Fikret will lead in a smoky little hut in a snow-clad village.

“An Imaginary Life” is another of the poems which the “Green Hearth” project inspired Fikret to write. In the magazine in which it appeared, there is a dedication to “the writer of the ‘Hayat-ı Muhayyel’ [The Imaginary Life]” following the poem’s title, clear evidence of this poem’s relationship to the story discussed above, and thus to the New Zealand scheme.³¹⁷ In this poem, Fikret, too, tries to impart a sense of the life he is longing for, without providing concrete details. The life for which he yearns is a leisurely, wholesome, reverie-filled life, spent in the company of his beloved:

Now I am living a villager’s life
Here in this village, alone with my reveries.
White smoke seeps out of the stove across from me;
The darkness of this night we call life slowly departs³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Tevfik Fikret, “Yeşil Yurt,” [The Green Hearth], *kitap-lık* [book-shelf], no. 93 (April 2006): 91: “Bahara benzetilir bir yeşil saadettir / Gülümseyen ovanın vech-i-pür gubârında / Köyün uyur gibi müstagrak-i- sükûnettir / Bütün hayâtı ufak bir çayın kenarında.”

³¹⁷ “Tevfik Fikret’in ‘Yeşil Yurt’ Şiirleri” [Tevfik Fikret’s “Green Hearth” Poems], *kitap-lık* [book-shelf], no. 93 (April 2006): 90, fn: 1.

³¹⁸ Tevfik Fikret, “Bir An-ı Huzur,” [A Moment of Peace], *kitap-lık* [book-shelf], no. 93 (April 2006): 91: “Ben sürmedeyim şimdi hayâlîmle bu köyde / Bir köylü hayatı; / Karşımda ocaktan süzülen dud-ı sefide / Kaybolmada hep leyl-i hayatın zulemâtı.”

As was mentioned earlier, during the second stage of the project, Hüseyin Cahit traveled to Manisa (which was then under consideration as the site of their new home) in order to assess the local conditions. During this period, Fikret wrote the poem “Berîd-i Ümmîd” [A Messenger of Hope], which expresses the magnitude of Fikret’s hopes for this project, as well as his impatience for it to be realized:

Come, O beloved portent, with your song;
Today will decide between my tedium and pleasure;
Your heavenly arrival will decide, without a doubt,
Between the hope of my good fortune, the hopelessness of my tears.³¹⁹

Again, despite the hopeful news brought by Hüseyin Cahit, the “messenger of hope,” Fikret decided not to go through with the project, for uncertain reasons. His poem, “An Elegy,” reflects both the great hopes which the poet had entertained, as well as his disappointment at their failure to be realized. The poem effectively serves as a farewell to the project:

What a free and easy, simple life it was,
A life to be spent in the shade of the pine trees.
It was up to you, my heart’s last hope,
The last hope of my weary, broken, anguished heart.³²⁰

In the end, while the “Green Hearth” project of the *Servet-i Fünun* school led to animated discussions and certain limited ventures, and was reflected in the works mentioned above, it was never realized in the end. When considered within the theoretical framework of this study, this project cannot be said to have put forth a meaningful vision of the future. Rather than expressing ideals about the future, “The Green Hearth” was predominantly about an aversion to, and a desire to escape, existing conditions. Its perspective was one of individual salvation, and it did not display a propensity towards socialization; nor did it represent a radical transformation in terms of living standards. All the same, it can be regarded as an interesting experiment marked by certain utopian tendencies. And yet, as far as this proposed alternative way of life is concerned, it is the details which are left out – rather than the ones which are mentioned – that are truly significant. The poets and writers in question were libertarian, liberal intellectuals with a clearly-defined political position. The starting point for the project, as well, was an entirely political one, namely a desire to offer an alternative to the despotism of Abdülhamid. The fact that the resulting project was

³¹⁹ Tevfik Fikret, “Berîd-i Ümmîd” [A Messenger of Hope], *kitap-lık* [book-shelf], no. 93 (April 2006): 93: “Gel ey berîd-i perestîde, bir sürûdunla / Bugün melâl ü neşatım takarrür eyleyecek; / Takarrür eyleyecek refref-i vürudunla / Ümid-i mes’adetim, ye’s-i mâtemim bî-şek.”

³²⁰ Tevfik Fikret, “Bir Mersiye” [An Elegy], *kitap-lık* [book-shelf], no. 93 (April 2006): 92: “Ne ser-âzâde ömr-i sâfiydi / Geçecek gölgesinde çamlarının / Sende kalmıştı münfail, kırgın / Muztarib gönlümün son ümidi.”

nonetheless so highly apolitical, and was almost entirely based on individual conformism, is telling. The “Green Hearth” project contains no details about social classes, religious sects, gender roles, etc., or any suggestions about ways to change such phenomena. In this sense, in line with the Servet-i Fünun policy, this project stands in clear contrast not only to the politically motivated works about the future that we examined above, but also to those works which would be written following the Balkan War.

4.7. The Ideal Youth: *Fetret*

The last text which I will deal with in Part 4 is an interesting work of literature, whether by virtue of its writer's identity, or by that of the vision of the future it offers. At the same time, it is one of the least-known works analyzed in the present study. The work in question, *Fetret*, was written by the politician, journalist, and writer Ali Kemal (1869-1922) in 1911 and published in 1913.³²¹



Illustration 19: The cover of the first book of *Fetret*³²²

The book was not subsequently reprinted, and as its first edition was in the Arabic alphabet, it was completely forgotten until 90 years later in 2003, when it was published in an edition using the Latin alphabet.³²³ A striking illustration of the book's almost total obscurity can be seen in the following remarks in the introduction to the 2003 Latin-alphabet edition of *Fetret*:

From expressions at the beginning of the work and at the end (where it refers to “the end of the first book”) we can infer that *Fetret* has not yet reached its conclusion, but that there is a continuation which has not yet been printed or indeed written.³²⁴ (8)

³²¹ Ali Kemal, *Fetret: Birinci Kitap* [Fetret: Book One] (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekâsı, 1329 [1913]).

³²² Private collection (E.K.)

³²³ Ali Kemal, *Fetret*, ed. M. Kayahan Özgül (Ankara: Hece, 2003).

³²⁴ M. Kayahan Özgül, “Fetret yahut Distopik Osmanlı'nın Utopik Düşü,” [Fetret or the Utopian Dream of the Dystopian Ottoman] in Ali Kemal, *Fetret*, ed. M. Kayahan Özgül (Ankara: Hece, 2003), 8-13: “Eserin başında ve bitiminde “Birinci kitabın sonu” olduğunun belirtilmesinden de Fetret'in burada nihayete ermediğini, hâlâ basılmamış veya hiç yazılmamış bir devamı olduğunu öğreniyoruz. (...) Anlaşılan odur ki, eserin ikinci cildi neşredilse idi, muhtemelen, Fetret'in üniversite tahsilini tamamlayarak İstanbul'a döndüğü ve Seher'le evlendiği, aynı şekilde, Selman'ın da Güzide ile birleştiği okunacaktı.”

However, a second book was in fact published.³²⁵

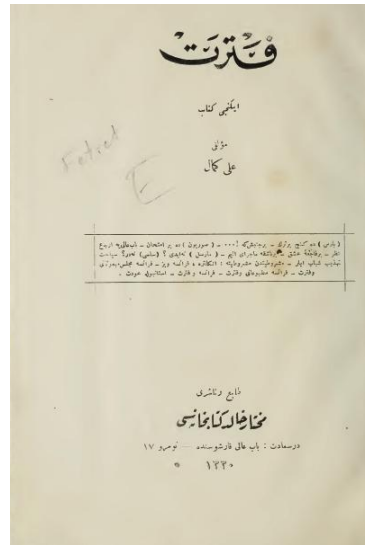


Illustration 20: The cover of the second book of *Fetret*³²⁶

The lack of awareness towards Ali Kemal's works can partially be explained by his particular circumstances. During the National Struggle, Ali Kemal served as Minister of Education and Minister of Internal Affairs in the cabinet of Damat Ferit Paşa, in Istanbul. The members of the Committee of Union and Progress accused him of trying to subvert peace efforts. He dismissed Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk], who was on his way to Anatolia, from duty;³²⁷ he also took part in the founding of the *İngiliz Muhipler Cemiyeti* [the Society of the Friends of England]. Moreover, in his newspaper *Peyam* [The News] he wrote pieces harshly criticizing the National Struggle.

When one considers the Kemalist historiography concerning this period, it is understandable to what extent these actions turned Ali Kemal into a symbol of hatred on the part of the regime. The matter was not merely symbolic in any case. Immediately following the victory in the National Struggle, Ali Kemal was caught, sent to Ankara to be interrogated, and, en route, was killed in İzmit by a lynch mob on November 6th, 1922. Despite this horrific punishment, the regime's anger was not quelled, and throughout Republic history the name "Ali Kemal" came to be used as a synonym for "treachery."³²⁸

³²⁵ Ali Kemal, *Fetret: İkinci Kitap* [Fetret: Book Two] (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekâsı, 1329 [1913]).

³²⁶ Private collection (E.K.)

³²⁷ Ali Kemal, *Ömrüm* [My Life], ed. Zeki Kunalalp (Istanbul: İsis, 1985), 183-184.

³²⁸ Recent years have seen a softening of attitudes towards Ali Kemal, as well as the publication of his own books, and of studies evaluating him from a different standpoint. See Orhan Karaveli, *Ali Kemal: Belki de Bir Günah Keçisi* [Ali Kemal: A Possible Scapegoat] (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2009).



Illustration 21: Ali Kemal³²⁹

As with many of the works featured in this study, there is an ambiguity about the genre of *Fetret*, as the author himself agrees:

Fetret is not a story, it is a history; or rather, it is a short history. (...) It shows the truth, even if it does so by means of a dream; for if some of Fetret's behaviors, actions, and inclinations seem somewhat fantastic today, tomorrow they will be completely real.

The poets of a social committee are also its thinkers; accordingly, they should not only depict the present as it is, but should also inquire about their future. In my opinion, *Fetret* is a picture of our present age, a poem about our future age. (43)

Despite this ambiguity about its genre, *Fetret* – as both paragraphs of this excerpt attest – is clearly a narrative depicting the future. As a novel, it possesses autobiographical characteristics; its story takes place 20 years after the date of its composition. Prior to the re-proclamation of the Constitution, Ali Kemal had married a woman named Winifred Brun in London, with whom he had had a daughter, Selma. Later, the family settled in Istanbul, and Ali Kemal became the lead writer of the newspaper *İkdam* [Progress]. It was claimed that his writings had been one of the factors behind the March 31st Incident; as a result, he once more fled abroad, settling in Bournemouth. There, his son Osman Wilfred was born, immediately followed by the death of his wife. Thus, arguably, Ali Kemal wrote *Fetret* during this period, when he was living alone in England with his two children, in order to sustain his hopes for the future amidst his

³²⁹ http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali_Kemal (Accessed 15.08.2014)

own emotional devastation.³³⁰ The book's eponymous hero Fetret could be said to represent the sort of figure Ali Kemal wished his newborn son Wilfred to become one day. Indeed, the name "Fetret" was presumably chosen due to its sound-resemblance to "Wilfred," in addition to being a comment upon the condition of the Ottoman State at the time (*fetret* means "interregnum.") In other words, as implied in the above excerpt, the text contains both recollections of Ali Kemal's life and visions of his son's future.³³¹



Illustration 22: Osman Wilfred, age four³³²

The work narrates Wilfred's life at the age of about 20. (49) The character standing in for Ali Kemal himself is named Selman; he, too, is 20 years older than the author. It is therefore clear that the events in this work take place 20 years in the future, i.e., around 1930. However, this does not mean that *Fetret* contains futuristic depictions per se. On the contrary, nowhere in the text do we encounter objects, phenomena, or developments which did not exist at the time of its composition, or which the author imagined would exist 20 years later. Projecting his own beliefs, hopes, and visions of the future onto his own child, Ali Kemal chose to recount them through the perfection of his son's character.

The events in this book can be summarized as follows. At the start of the novel, Fetret visits the poet Hayret Bey, and later goes with his father to Tepebaşı Public

³³⁰ M. Kayahan Özgül, "Fetret yahut Distopik Osmanlı'nın Ütopik Düşü" [Fetret, or the Utopian Vision of the Dystopian Ottoman Empire], in Ali Kemal, *Fetret*, 8.

³³¹ Ali Kemal's son Zeki Kunalalp, in preparing his father's autobiography, *My Life*, for publication, uses excerpts from *Fetret* numerous times, as evidence of details concerning his father's life. Ali Kemal, *Ömrüm*, 174-180.

³³² Ali Kemal, *Fetret*, ed., Kayahan Özgül, album.

Garden³³³ to have dinner and to talk about Turkish language and literature. In another chapter of the book, he meets the youths living in the neighboring mansion (including the two girls living there, Güzide and Seher). This scene is followed by a dialogue with the Arabic teacher Şeyh Nübhan Kamil Efendi. Next, he meets his father's old friend, the boatman Kumkapılı Mehmet. We are then privy to a historiographical polemic at a conference by the historian Baydur Bey. Later, Fetret becomes engaged to Seher, and at the end of the text, he goes to France. In the Second Book, we witness his life as a student at the Sorbonne, in the faculty of History and Geography. The book features Fetret's amorous adventures with a girl named Marsel [Marcelle], who falls in love with him; comparisons between England, France, and Turkey; Fetret's observations of the French Parliament and the French press; and his eventual return to Istanbul.

Therefore, as there is little to be said about the story itself, we may discuss some noteworthy aspects of Ali Kemal's ideal world, by way of a few concrete examples.

Turkey's Problems

Let us first address the problems foregrounded by the text as the reasons for the deterioration of the Ottoman Empire. First and foremost, of course, are educational problems. Deficient infrastructure, a lack of teachers, and administrative problems have caused a great decline in the quality of education. (61) A lack of women's education, in particular, is unacceptable. (71) Moreover, obstacles to sending students abroad need to be dealt with, so that this practice can become more widespread. (146-148, 153).

Moreover, Ali Kemal also focuses on the issues of language and literature.³³⁴ Turkish poetry, he believes, lags far behind its Western counterpart. (21) Turkish literature also attempts to imitate the West in a highly superficial manner. (21) The underlying cause of these problems is that Turkish has not developed sufficiently as a language, and has not been able to become a rival of the West. (25-26)

We do not encounter a comprehensive evaluation or criticism of Turkey's political, social, or economic makeup in this text; rather, a general criticism of Turkey's backwardness is accompanied by praise of the West. Below, I will address the issue of Ali Kemal's approach to the latter.

The Indisputable Superiority of the West

The most striking note in this text is its strong admiration for the West, and its unconditional acceptance of Western superiority in every field. Other texts in this thesis

³³³ Tepebaşı Public Garden was one of the first public gardens built in Istanbul in 1870s as a symbol of European lifestyle. Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 246-247.

³³⁴ Yahya Kemal devotes a section of his book *Siyasi ve Edebi Portreler* [Political and Literary Portraits] (Istanbul: Yahya Kemal Enstitüsü, 1968) to Ali Kemal, painting an extremely negative picture of the latter, whether in terms of his personality or in terms of his political stances. Of the characteristics of Ali Kemal which he singles out for praise, first and foremost is his command of Turkish. (71)

attempt to balance the superiority of the West against the values of the Ottomans, the Turks, and the Muslims – all of whom possess a glorious past – and thus produce a sort of synthesis of Western and local values. By contrast, Ali Kemal’s position on this subject is very clear: generally speaking, there is nothing of outstanding value in the East, and, therefore, in the Ottoman Empire. In Ali Kemal’s view, the superiority of the West in general, and especially of England, is clear and obvious:

My son, do not refrain from closely scrutinizing this land – that is to say, your nation – and your fellow citizens, so as to grasp an important truth through a lesson learned in advance. This country cannot be compared with the countries of Europe, just as, from a broader perspective, the East cannot be compared with the West. In literature, in politics, in industry, in science and learning – wherever you look, when compared to the Westerners, we Easterners are truly lagging behind. We are just starting out. (...) The greatest proof of this obvious fact is that, however poor the Eastern world remains compared to the West, in terms of civilization and prosperity, by so much does it remain the West’s slave. Until we have reached their level in civilization and in learning, we can never be redeemed from this poverty, this slavery.

....

In short, let me reiterate my belief that what we, the Ottomans, most need is to be freed from the cul-de-sac of Eastern civilization – from this stumbling block, this fanaticism – and so be able to acquire a Western culture. Until now, what has stood in the way of our bounty and good fortune on all sides is this fault of ours, one which has become deeply rooted in us.

....

Thus, if most of our youth choose a profession and attain this individual perfection, then the Ottomans, and the Ottoman Empire, will be delivered from the ignominy of destruction, and will find salvation. We will then become one of the principal nations of the civilized world.³³⁵ (58-62)

³³⁵ “Oğlum, bu memleketi, yani vatanını, vatandaşlarını nazar-ı tetkikten geçirirken bir hakikati piş-i ibretten uzak tutma. Bu mülk Avrupa memaliki ile, daha vâsi bir nokta-i nazardan, Şark Garp ile kıyas edilemez. Edebiyatta olsun, siyasyatta olsun, sanayide, fûnunda, ulûmda, nede olursa olsun, biz şarklılar garplılara nispeten hakikatte çok, pek çok geriyiz, iptidaiyiz. (...) Bu bedahetin en büyük delili şudur ki, bütün cihan-ı Şark medeniyetçe, refahiyetçe nispeten ne kadar fakirdir, öyle olmakla beraber Garb’ın esiridir. Medeniyette, marifette o mertebeyi bulmadıkça asla bu fakırdan, bu esaretten kurtulamaz. (...) Hasılı, itikadımca tekrar ederim, biz Osmanlıların en ziyade muhtaç olduğumuz girive-i Şark’tan, o engelden, o taassuptan kurtularak bir terbiye-i garbiyeye mazhar olabilmektir. Şimdiye kadar her cihetçe feyizimize, ikbalimize hail kesilen bu nakisamızdır; bu nakisamız ki içimizde ne kadar kökleşmiştir. (...) İşte gençlerimiz ekseriyetle böyle bir meslek tutarlar, bu kemal-i hâssa ererlerse, Osmanlılar da, Osmanlılık da şaibe-i izmihlalden kurtulur, necat bulur, fakat biz de o zaman cihan-ı medeniyetin belli başlı bir kavmi oluruz.”

Similar views are expressed by Şeyh Nubhan Efendi, an Arab who is friends with Selman Bey as well as being Fetret's Arabic teacher. Despite being a religious scholar, he is not bigoted, but is a proponent of free thought. He, too, acknowledges the superiority of the West:

To regard Arab civilization as currently being ahead of Western civilization – in terms of its literature, its learning, and its science – is like claiming (let us say) that the 7th, 8th, and 9th centuries of our era were more progressive, more civilized, more perfect than our own; which is, if you will, a self-evidently untrue bit of folly.³³⁶ (91)

The Şeyh is one of the main characters who are portrayed positively by the author; furthermore, along with characters like Selman Efendi, he has clearly been created as a conduit for the author's views. It is striking to hear him voice the belief – on behalf of the author – that no other Eastern civilization (e.g., a Turkish civilization) emerged after the Arabs; such a view is not often found in other texts, especially ones written after the rise of Turkish nationalism.

The Şeyh goes even further: if we Easterners, he says, have any chance of salvation, then this lies in forgetting our past and adopting Western civilization. Otherwise, he says, according to the law of nature discovered by an English philosopher, just as more evolved animals devour less evolved ones, the developed countries of the West will likewise be able to destroy us Easterners. (93) Even if it strains the bounds of credibility to have a religious scholar adopt the principles of Darwin's Theory of Evolution, it is nonetheless clear that even the Şeyh has not been spared from the Social Darwinist tendencies which were prevalent at the time.

English Childrearing

We previously encountered Selman Bey's assertion that it was necessary to adopt Western methods of childrearing. In its treatment of this subject, the book does not use a term as vague as "the West": what the author specifically has in mind is English childrearing. Fetret and his elder sister Selma, who are brought up in England by their grandmother, are good evidence of this. Both children seem two or three years older than their actual ages, and have a robust constitution. They have not been swaddled, but have grown up freely. They eat and sleep at fixed times; every day, they take a bath, and go for a walk to get some fresh air.

³³⁶ "Edebiyatıyla, ulumiyle, fünuniyle medeniyet-i Arabiyeyi hâlen medeniyet-i garbiyenin fevkinde addetmek bi'l-farz yedinci, sekizinci, dokuzuncu asr-ı miladinin asrımızdan daha müterakki, daha mütemeddin, daha mükemmel olduğunu iddia eylemektir ki adeta bedahete karşıdır, adeta belahettir."

Marriage

In the author's opinion, if a suitable mate is not available and if conditions are not suitable, then marriage should not be required. For instance, Seher's elder sister Güzide, though already 30 years old, finds contentment in painting, playing the piano, and the company of her friends; she does not regard marriage as a necessity. (30-32, 126-127)

As for the union of Seher and Fetret, it represents the ideal form of marriage. The two youths flirt and kiss in the presence of their fathers. (121-122, 138); Seher's father describes this state of affairs as "perfection." (123) Even living together – instead of getting married – can and should be a legitimate option. (150-151).

Education

Since the author believes that childrearing and education – as stated above – are at the heart of every problem in Ottoman society, they will also supply the remedy, namely Westernizing all educational institutions and practices. In this context, the most innovative suggestion offered by *Fetret* is its proposal for a new university. This institution is different from the old university known as the *Darülfünun-ı Osmanî*. It is housed in a splendid building, constructed in Western fashion, on a vacant plot of land between Çemberlitaş and Nuruosmaniye, and looks like a small-scale imitation of the Sorbonne in Paris. The big lecture hall opposite the entrance can easily seat 1000 students. The dazzling tapestries on the walls depict Baghdad and Andalusia in the time of Haroun al-Rashid, as well as Paris, London, Berlin, and Washington. Some of these pictures are the handiwork of a Frenchman, and some that of an Ottoman Armenian; they have won even the Europeans' admiration.

A special section has been set aside for female students in the big lecture hall, in order that they may listen to the lectures. Although some narrow-minded people opposed this arrangement at first, after a fierce struggle the plan won out in the end. (108-109)

Evidently, Ali Kemal's standard of perfection is defined solely in Western terms. His dream of a perfect university is realized in concrete form as "a little would-be Sorbonne," desirable only to the extent that it reflects what Westerners themselves do and admire.

The Press

The author gives an equal amount of attention to the institution of the press. The newspaper *Selam* [Hello] is represented to us as an ideal media institution. It puts a premium on honesty, first and foremost; in addition, it is respectful of the law, is open to progressive ideas, features pieces written in a new, modern style, takes a dim view of antiquated rhetoric, exalts science, and values freedom of thought. (125-130)

Above, I stated that other writers had also imagined their own children as ideal youths. Interestingly, it so happens that all of these children led lives very unlike the

ones their fathers had imagined for them, and most met unhappy ends.³³⁷ Fetret, a.k.a. Osman Wilfred Kemal, a.k.a. Wilfred Johnson, fought for his country – England – and lived and died as an Englishman; it is unclear whether this would have been the case if Ali Kemal had been alive, or whether Ali Kemal would have been pleased with such a state of affairs.

Thus, Fetret – the son of an English mother and a Turkish father, brought up in England, and educated in England and France – is presented by Ali Kemal as a model human being. Just as Fetret – a product, so to speak, of the West – has been successful, so Turkey, too, can be saved from destruction at the hands of the West. In order to do so, however, it must emulate the West as accurately and thoroughly as possible in all of its material and intellectual institutions and practices. *Fetret* merits a place in this study thanks to its radical position on Turkey’s two hundred year-old East-West debate, and on its search for an ideal future.

As in earlier projections of Ottoman future, *Fetret* offers an alternative to the existing society without pointing at enemies within or denigrating some groups as archenemies of the Ottomans. Such tendencies imbued with xenophobic hate discourse will begin to be expressed in the utopian works written after the defeat of the Balkan War. These are the works that will construct the trauma narrative, the constitutive element of Turkish nationalism.

³³⁷ Emin, the oldest son of Islamist poet Mehmet Akif, became a homeless drug addict and died in misery (Beşir Ayvazoğlu, “Emin Ersoy’un Trajik Hayatı,” http://www.zaman.com.tr/besir-ayvazoglu/emin-ersoyun-trajik-hayati_1030991.html (Accessed 15.08.2014)). Haluk, the darling boy of the poet Tevfik Fikret (known for his anti-religious poems), was the pastor of the Park Lake Presbyterian Church in Orlando at the time of his death in 1965 (A. Osman Dönmez, “Haluk’un Son Vedai,” <http://www.sizinti.com.tr/konular/ayrinti/halukun-son-vedai.html> (Accessed 15.08.2014)).

4.8. Evaluation

Before proceeding to an analysis of utopian texts produced during and after the Balkan War, it will be useful, for purposes of comparison, to perform a brief evaluation of the texts which we dealt with in Part 4. The table below provides a graphic representation of the points I will discuss:

	Ziya Paşa's <i>Dream</i>	Namık Kemal's <i>Dream</i>	<i>Muslims of the Land of Comfort</i>	<i>Is It New or Is It Nonsense?</i>	<i>What Lies in Store</i>	"The Green Hearth"	<i>Fetret</i>
Dream Form	+	+	-	-	+	-	-
Micro-scale utopian experiment	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Reflecting a political project	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Desire for a strong state	+	+	+	+	+	-	+
Western Europe as a model	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Visions limited to homeland	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Emphasis on education	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Ottomanism	+	+	-	+	+	-	+

As can be seen in the table, all of these works share a number of common features. First, in terms of their form, "dream" seems to be a popular choice. As a continuation of the old literary conventions, some of these works use the dream form to depict their future visions. It is important to stress here how Ottoman modernization was also a process of adaptation of old forms to new ideas. The traditional dream narrative served as a means for conveying modern projections of the future.

Secondly, in accordance with the codes of the general utopian tradition, all of their visions of the future reflect their political projects. And at the heart of these projects, for the most of the works, lies the constitutional, parliamentary regime. In the Young Ottoman texts as well as the subsequent ones, we see complaints about autocracy of despotism and a desire for a constitutional monarchy. In other words, utopian works of this period are critiques of the present social and political order.

On the other hand, all these works reflect an aspiration for a strong, central state. A strong state as well as a well-functioning, uncorrupted bureaucracy is seen as an indispensable precondition for the survival of the country. They also desire the state to be respectable, wealthy and powerful in the international arena. In that sense, Ottoman utopian works can be defined as "statist"/state-centered narratives which reflect the elite's will to power caused by the lost sense of self-confidence due to the Ottoman state's diminishing economic and military power.

Another common feature is that all these utopian works take Western Europe as a point of reference for their ideal social order. None of these works questions the superiority and excellence of the Western civilization and even the more conservative ones like *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort* take Europe as a model for progress.

Another result of the priority given to the authors' political project is that their visions of the future, in nearly every case, are limited to the homeland; there is no thought of including the entire world and all of humanity.

Furthermore, most of these works also try to explain the ways to reach the ideal order, and, all of them, without exception, underscore one element to achieve this goal: education. Apparently they all see the lack of a working system of public education as the main source of the backwardness of the country; therefore they all put forward education as the key to development.

With respect to the social structure, what unites these works (and what separates them from the works written after the Balkan War) is that they do not pay attention to the ethnic or religious differences. A discriminatory approach with respect to ethnicity or religion is not seen yet. "Ottomanness" is still a dominant category of identity. Accordingly, we see the traces of ideologies of Turkism, Westernism or Islamism; however, such ideologies had not yet crystallized during this period, it is possible to see several of them – with differing levels of emphasis – in the same work. And none of them appears as a rival to Ottomanism yet. Therefore, a milder, more optimistic spirit prevails in the works of this period, a spirit upon which violence and hatred have not yet left their stamp. This common characteristic is striking especially when these works are compared with the utopian works which were written after the Balkan War. The claim of this thesis is that the tragic defeat of the Balkan War had a major impact on the new projections of the future, in such a way that, as we will see in the following part, optimism was replaced by a narrative of violence and hatred directed at the former subjects and the new enemies of the Empire.

On the other hand, there are of course several aspects by which these works differ from each other. As the earliest examples, Ziya Paşa's and Namık Kemal's works present less detailed, less elaborate future projections. *The Muslims of the Land of Comfort* gives us probably the most encompassing utopian vision. Unlike the others, its story is set in an imaginary place among imaginary people, and it is about the Muslim world rather than the Ottomans. *Is it New or is It Nonsense* gives us a micro-scale utopian vision that would be a model for the development of the whole country. *What Lies in Store* differs from the others in terms of genre. This dystopian narrative shows us the dark picture unless freedom prevails. "The Green Hearth" project is not a single work, and it appears as an escapist, conformist fantasy rather than a full-fledged ideal social order. And lastly, *Fetret* is by far the most "Westernist" one of them all.

