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A WHITE PARADISE, AMERICAN WONDERLAND

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**A WHITE PARADISE, AMERICAN WONDERLAND: AN
OCCIDENTAL JOURNEY OF TURKISH TRAVELERS**

A Master's Thesis

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JOURNEY OF TURKISH TRAVELERS

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By Girhan Kasap

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ABSTRACT

A WHITE PARADISE, AMERICAN WONDERLAND: AN OCCIDENTAL JOURNEY OF TURKISH TRAVELERS

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The goal of this thesis is to examine the journeys of Turkish travelers to the United States in 1940s and 1970s within the framework of Turkish occidentalism.¹ Earlier works about occidentalism and especially Turkish occidentalism will serve to illuminate the accounts of the travelers. The biographical sketches on these travelers and the interactions and relations between the United States and Turkey will be briefly introduced as well. The periodization is deliberate because it was during the advent of Turkish membership in NATO that contributed to perhaps the closest relations between the United States and Turkey, before the escalation of the Cyprus crisis. These Turkish travelers' observations, analyses, notions, and arguments about American Society through materialism and consumerism, religion, and African-Americans, and American development through colleges/universities, skyscrapers and highways, and urban workers will be the focal points.

Keywords: Occidentalism, Turkish Occidentalism, Turkish Image of the United States, Aggrandizement, Turkish Travelers in the 20th century

¹ I translated all the parts from the studies and travelogues that are originally Turkish into English.

ÖZET

BEYAZ BİR CENNET, AMERİKAN HARİKALAR DİYARI: TÜRK GEZGİNLERİN GARBİ BİR YOLCULUĞU

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Bu tezin yazılış amacı, seçilmiş Türk gezginlerin 1940-1970 yılları arasında Amerika Birleşik Devletlerine yaptıkları yolculukları Türk Oksidentalizmi çerçevesinde incelemektir.² Oksidentalizm ve özellikle de Türk Oksidentalizmi ile ilgili daha önceden yapılmış çalışmalar, gezginlerin gezi yazılarını aydınlatmakta önemli bir rol oynayacaktır. Bu gezginlerin hayatı ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile Türkiye arasındaki etkileşimler ve ilişkiler de kısaca tanıtılacaktır. Zaman dilimi bilerek bu şekilde seçilmiştir çünkü Kıbrıs krizinin tırmanmasının öncesinde özellikle Türkiye'nin NATO'ya üyelik süreci sonrası NATO üyesi olduğu bir balayı döneminde, yani belki de Türkiye ve ABD arasındaki en yakın ilişkilerin yaşandığı dönemdedir. Materyalizm ve tüketimcilik, din ve Afrikalı-Amerikalılar üzerinden Amerikan Toplumunu ve kolejler/üniversiteler, gökdelenler ve otoyollar ve şehirli işçiler aracılığıyla da Amerikan Kalkınması hakkında seçilen Türk gezginlerin gözlemleri, analizleri, fikirleri ve argümanları odak noktaları olacaktır.

Anathar Kelimeler: Oksidentalizm, Türk Oksidentalizmi, Türklerin Amerikan İmajı, Yüceltme, 20. Yüzyılda Türk Gezginler

² Çalışmada orijinali Türkçe olan çalışmalar ve gezi yazılarındaki tüm kısımlar yazar tarafından İngilizceye çevrilmiştir.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although Americans were not completely alien people, it was the increasing influence of the United States on the theater of global politics that piqued the curiosity of many Turks in the aftermath of World War II. Furthermore, relations between the United States and Turkey exponentially strengthened after 1946-47 with the global polarization between Soviet Union and the United States with the Truman Doctrine in 1947. With Turkey's entrance to NATO in 1952, the American constant presence became an undeniable phenomenon due to its military bases in Turkey. Nevertheless, this expanded relationship also increased reciprocal interactions between Turks and Americans. For instance, unlike the previous flow of immigrants to the United States from Ottoman minorities such as Armenians and Greeks, the numbers of Turkish immigrants rapidly increased during 1940s and 1950s with political rapprochement of both sides.³ These immigrants generally included doctors, engineers, other technicians,

³ Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society: Selected Articles and Essays*. (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 620–21.

and graduate students within the range of “ten and twenty-five thousand people during 1948-80.”⁴ On the other hand, American educational experts arrived to develop Turkish educational system,⁵ activities of American non-governmental organizations such as Rockefeller Foundation and Ford Foundation⁶ increased rapidly, and the first university that will follow the American tradition of higher education with English as medium of instruction, Middle East Technical University, was founded in 1956.⁷ Moreover, the volunteers of Peace Corps came to Turkey during the 1960s, and their estimated numbers were between 1201-1460.⁸ In short, the period between 1940s-1970s displayed a fruitful and growing relations between the United States and Turkey and increased interactions of Americans and Turks through either migrations, travels, developmental projects in Turkey or volunteering. The environment that the selected Turkish travelers journeyed to the United States was no exception as well. In this promising environment between two countries, Turkish travelers embarked upon their occidental journey to the United States.

Perhaps the division between occident and orient started with the wars between Persians and Greek city-states, or the division between Roman Empires triggered it first. Maybe the rise of Islam caused the existence of this sword of division that cuts deeply for separating occident and orient, or it always lied dormant in the subconscious of species under the inseparable tribalistic influence. Finally, perhaps it is the combination of both tribalism and attempts and efforts to understand the other. The possibilities are always open to debate, but one fact remains steady: Edward

⁴ Karpat, 621.

⁵ İbrahim Yorgun, “Close Encounters between Turkey and the US: American Indirect Influences on Turkey’s Political and Socio-Cultural Life during the 1950s” (Ph.D., Ankara, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, 2017), 143–44.

⁶ Yorgun, 156.

⁷ Yorgun, 159.

⁸ Zafer Parlak, “Kendi Anılarında Türkiye’de Bulunan Amerikan Barış Gönüllülerinin Yaşadıkları Değişim Süreci,” *Kebikeç* 39 (2015): 295.

Said's monumental work, "Orientalism," conceptualized and theorized the framework behind this notion through the studies of western academies and the travelogues of western travelers even though the concept of a unified western civilization recently became a widely-accepted conviction and it is actually relatively new as well. Only after the birth of orientalism as a concept in the Saidian sense was occidentalism born as the reactionary twin of this concept. Nevertheless, unlike its well-established and famous twin, occidentalism is still the cluster of thoughts and studies without a definitive depiction. Within these clusters, though, the existence of occidentalism and its sub-fields remain. This study is another attempt to understand its existence, excavate one of its subfields, and discover new features of their existences through multiple examples. The reason occidentalism is the primary framework to analyze the selected travelogues in the study is that this concept will reflect the generalizations and stereotypes the authors portrayed about the United States better.

In this vein, the upcoming sub-chapters of debates about occidentalism and examples of Turkish occidentalism will provide some illustrations for the upcoming exploration. Then, the selected Turkish travelers who journeyed to the United States will be introduced. There will be two main chapters in the study: Evaluations of American Society and Observations on American Development. The first chapter, Evaluations of American Society, will include consumerism and materialism, religion, and African-Americans. While consumerism and materialism can be considered as one of the subjects of the economy, thus, another example of American development, how the travelers evaluated them through the behaviors of Americans and the key concept of "comfort" rather than thoroughly concentrating on the economic aspect of these concepts was the main reason why it is in the first chapter. The travelers' experiences and evaluations for religion's impact on social life, and African-Americans in

American social structure are also another vital issues to explore. The second chapter, Observations on American Development, will include sub-chapters of colleges/universities, skyscrapers and highways, and urban white workers. Higher education, specific activities of infrastructure, and workers of a dominant race in American cities were primary observations of Turkish travelers in terms of development, thus, they will be the sub-chapters of this chapter. Both chapters will constitute aggrandizing approach of Turkish travelers toward White Americans and the United States rather than presenting the reality of the United States thoroughly, and their approach indicates a different example of Turkish occidentalism.

1.1. Debates about Occidentalism

Before delving into studies about Turkish Occidentalism and the study's view of the concept, it would be beneficial to demonstrate what occidentalism is through several definitions of different works. In this vein, defining the concepts and boundaries of the orient and occident bear significance to understanding occidentalism. Occident represents the notion of a unified, predominantly Christian western civilization comprising Europeans and predominantly European-populated people who dominate the political and social life in their countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Orient is a loose term that signifies different groups, mainly in Asia and North Africa, who are not Europeans. However, both occident and orient are protean definitions that have unstable borders. Contemporary values and political divisions are other significant actors that define who belongs to the occident. The Eastern Roman Empire is a great example for such ambiguity. Initially, England, France, Prussia/Germany, and later, the United States were the prominent examples of the epitome of western civilization, and the peoples of East Asia, Indochina, Indian sub-continent, and Near East provided a unified image of the other civilization for the

westerners. On the other hand, this unified vision is not limited for the occident only, and western industrial and imperial colonial powers from Europe and North America projected the other for the people of the orient. Nevertheless, their bodies of studies remained separate from each other without forming a tangible idea of an eastern civilization.

This division of the occident is deeply related with politics, philosophy of values, technological and scientific development, and late colonialism in the late-18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. These initial countries of the occident played vital roles in certain historical concepts and events such as Industrial Revolution, French Revolution, the Enlightenment, German Romanticism, liberalism, nationalism, secularism, the revival of democracy and imperialist colonial expansions, and they carved the classical image of western civilization in either orient, or even occident in foregoing centuries.

Nevertheless, either as a unified or separate, occident's depiction may change in different times like how Spain, Italian city states, Netherlands, and Portugal can be the paramount countries of occident in early modern period. Consequently, occidentalism is not limited to a unified western imagery since it is a relatively new concept that has been coined in terms of the history of interactions between occidental and oriental countries, and it may include specific analyses about one western country. Therefore, this initial depiction is a limited one that comprises of abovementioned centuries, and constitute the occident of the late modern occidentalism.

Fernando Coronil evaluated occidentalism as a concept that cannot be separated from the western power and hegemony since it manifests a special bond between knowledge and power that expresses the west.⁹ Therefore, occidentalism is "the expression of a

⁹ Fernando Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories," *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (1996): 37.

constitutive relationship between Western representations of cultural difference and worldwide Western dominance.”¹⁰ Coronil’s definition of occidentalism presented western domination as an integral element for occidentalism, and even as an act of expression, it was not free under the chains of westernism.

Alkim Saygın interprets occidentalism as a critical effort to understand western civilization, and occidentalist expressions as the literature of critical views and analyses toward western civilization.¹¹ Saygın bound occidentalism and occidentalist works with the quality of critical understanding of the west.

Hassan Hanafi considers occidentalism as a “counter-field research which can be developed in the Orient” for studying the occident from the views of non-westerners.¹²

Both orientalism and occidentalism present the other, and this other contains various simplified images. For instance, the orient includes “oriental despotism, underdevelopment, traditionalism, conservatism and dependence,” and occident, which also self-promotes these images through massive control of media, includes “whites, western, democracy, civilization, development, secularism, and progress.”¹³

In addition, while Hanafi evaluates orientalism as a byproduct of an “ethno-racist culture” that promotes self as the occident and other as the orient, he defines the objective of occidentalism as to counterbalance the westernization through promoting self as the orient and other as the occident.¹⁴ In a sense, Hanafi portrayed a symbiotic relationship between orientalism and occidentalism that cannot exist without each

¹⁰ Coronil, 37.

¹¹ Alkim Saygın, “20. Yüzyıl Türk Düşüncesinde Garbiyatçılık (Oksidentalizm) Üzerine Bir İnceleme” (Ph.D., Ankara, Turkey, Gazi University, 2015), 65.

¹² Hassan Hanafi, “From Orientalism to Occidentalism,” *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 40, no. 1 (2004): 228.

¹³ Hanafi, 228–29.

¹⁴ Hanafi, 229–30.

other, and a reactionist occidentalism that challenges the previous orientalist experiences.

Meltem Ahıska introduced two separate occidentalisms: “occidentalism of the west, and occidentalism of the non-west.”¹⁵ Ahıska’s occidentalism of the west shares similarities with Hanafi’s view since westerners have created the image of the west by themselves and self-promoted it to the world through colonialism.¹⁶ On the other hand, occidentalism of the non-west provides two certain views: firstly, occidentalism is a tool to craft western development, but it also helps to resist the waves of colonialism.¹⁷ Secondly, occidentalism of the non-west has animated to constitute a new hegemonic regime through the mobilization of animosity against the colonization as the victims of western imperialism.¹⁸ Ahıska’s interpretation of occidentalism of the non-west provided another symbiotic relationship in a different way: the desire to pursue western development but resist its imposing culture by imposing a victim mentality to form a new power.

Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit conceptualized occidentalism in a specified way: “the dehumanizing picture of the West painted by its enemies.”¹⁹ Furthermore, their portrayal of occidentalism indicates a reverse-orientalism that is as harmful as orientalism since its biased categorizations of the west, such as “a civilization of soulless, decadent, money-grubbing, rootless, faithless, unfeeling parasites,” demonstrates an attack in the “form of intellectual destruction.”²⁰ Therefore, their

¹⁵ Meltem Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting*, Library of Modern Middle East Studies 79 (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 6–7.

¹⁶ Ahıska, 6.

¹⁷ Ahıska, 7.

¹⁸ Ahıska, 7.

¹⁹ Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 5.

²⁰ Buruma and Margalit, 10.

primary purpose is to explore this dehumanization through biases and historical roots.²¹ So, their analyses opened a new dimension for occidentalism by defining specifically for one quirk of non-western analyses on the west.

Although Leen Boer did not define occidentalism, his criticisms toward Buruma and Margalit's work in his review will also aid in the definition of occidentalism. They provided two focal points to institute their criticism: Buruma and Margalit's central arguments for the nascent of occidentalism are that it is a product of Europe where it has been spread to the world, and German romanticism, which constitutes an antithesis of liberalism, is the nucleus of occidental rhetoric.²² Accordingly, they provided an example of this occidentalism: murderous occidentalism with the ferocious acts of Hitler to eradicate the liberal, democratic west.²³ Boer's central criticisms for their arguments about occidentalism are that they create disrespectful rhetoric for the people of orient's historical roots by arguing that they form their occidentalism through German romanticism, and essentially limit their "behavior, thinking, visions, and response to the west" to a complete western basis without including their "cultural creativity."²⁴

Per Bauhn and Fatma Fulya Tepe define occidentalism as an "umbrella term for various stereotyped images of the West." but they also add it is a "gendered views of western moral standards that are often filtered through a certain perception of western women."²⁵ So, their occidentalism starts with a general explanation and then provides

²¹ Buruma and Margalit, 5.

²² Leen Boer, "Struggling with -Isms: Occidentalism, Liberalism, Eurocentrism, Islamism," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 8 (2004): 1541–42; Buruma and Margalit, *Occidentalism*, 6, 90.

²³ Buruma and Margalit, *Occidentalism*, 35.

²⁴ Boer, "Struggling with -Isms," 1542.

²⁵ Per Bauhn and Fatma Fulya Tepe, "Turkish Occidentalism and Representations of Western Women in Turkish Media," *Galatasaray University Journal of Communication*, no. 26 (2017): 65.

another specialized definition through gender, especially the portrayal of western women.

Juan Cole presented another form of occidentalism that was not entirely under the yoke of the influence of westernization: Indo-Persian occidentalism through Iranian-Mughal and Persian works from the 18th century.²⁶ These works constituted three primary positive images of the British: “egalitarianism and parliamentary government, science and technology, and gender,” and Cole considered the positive quality of these works as an element of surprise due to the later impact of 20th century decolonization.²⁷ However, he also emphasized that two of the Indo-Persian authors conveyed these images of the West through British people they had encountered without the opportunity to check their authenticities.²⁸ Therefore, he defines occidentalism as an “extension of the western power to shape images” rather than being a “mirror-image of orientalism.”²⁹ Cole’s occidentalism demonstrated a challenge for Buruma and Margalit’s definition since it did not have to be influenced from the impact of colonization and westernization to be shaped. Nevertheless, his definition also showcased a specialized definition from the limited works of Indo-Persian authors, videlicet, defining a broad term with narrow scope.

From questioning both villagers from Papua New Guinea and his colleagues of anthropologists in the United States, James Carrier implied a definition for occidentalism: characterization of the West in simplistic ways by either westerners or non-westerners alike.³⁰ While Ahiska differentiated occidentalism into two separate

²⁶ Juan R. I. Cole, “Invisible Occidentalism: Eighteenth-Century Indo-Persian Constructions of the West,” *Iranian Studies* 25, no. 3/4 (1992): 6–7.

²⁷ Cole, 6, 15.

²⁸ Cole, 15.

²⁹ Cole, 15.

³⁰ James G. Carrier, ed., *Occidentalism: Images of the West*, 1st ed. (Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1995), viii.

parts of western and non-western forms, Carrier carved them together in his interpretation as a whole, one part.

From the studies of the abovementioned scholars, we face a significant problem: defining occidentalism is not an easy task, and it contains various studies that have been concentrating on specialized, narrow, and limited definitions for the matter. These studies offer essentially contrasting definitions within a specific scope. Nevertheless, this study will also propose a definition for occidentalism by utilizing these resources as well. Unlike the other studies' specified definitions of occidentalism, occidentalism is literally the collection of works, analyses, and observations of the people and countries of the occident in a simplified ontological manner through epistemological experiences of culture, values, travels, and conversations that create particular visions, concepts, and biases like western civilization,³¹ material United States, sentimental Germany or democratic west. For instance, neo-liberalism is among the liberal thought, but liberalism is not limited to neo-liberalism or 19th century American history is part of history, but history offers more fields. Occidentalism is essentially not a concept of limited or specific scope but a general one that has not been formed with German romanticism unlike the argument of Buruma and Margalit but has been around ever since the understanding of the division between the orient and the occident.

³¹ This generalized notion of western civilization is also an occidentalist act. It is perhaps the essential difference between orientalism and occidentalism since occidentalism proposes a widely-regarded idea that a unified western civilization exists. On the other hand, the concept of an eastern civilization as a counter-structure is not a phenomenon. Instead, orient consists of clusters of essentially different entities. Consequently, occident is an ideological concept that suggests an undeniable existence of a unified western civilization, and orient is a geographical concept that includes groups of people in Asia and North Africa not under the banner of eastern civilization. Religious unity and acceptance of racial amalgamation under European or white might have aided the existence of the idea of western civilization.

After this definition, though, one question arises: how should we consider the abovementioned studies that define occidentalism? Basically, they studied and displayed types of occidentalism under the particular qualities of who, how, what, and when. “Who” refers to the subjects who have displayed occidentalist notions, such as the specific subject of Turkish Occidentalism or a general one with non-western occidentalism or western occidentalism. “How” refers to the perception of the objects like occidentalism which tends to form concepts or visions like western values, western civilization or western immorality through materialism in a general manner and occidentalism which establishes simplified concepts to the western countries in a specific way. For instance, these concepts may include cold and calculative British or diplomatic and unbeatable British, romantic and sentimental Germans or unfriendly and robotic Germans, extremely nationalist and prideful French or loving and artistic French, and material, soulless and self-centered Americans, or diligent, developed and liberal Americans. “What” refers to characteristics of these occidentalist works like westernist, critical, reactionist, dehumanizing, positive, exclusive, sexist or hegemony-seeking. “When” refers to the time of these occidentalist works like early modern, late modern or 19th century 20th century. While “who” and “how” will determine the primary and basic qualities of occidentalism with the acts of subjects and their perception of the objects, “what” and “when” will aid to evaluate the specific acts and characteristics of the occidentalist thoughts, visions and concepts.

1.2. Examples of Studies about Turkish Occidentalism

The study will exemplify another significant concept of the study: Turkish occidentalism. It represents the quality of the subject who produced an occidentalist work. Despite the limited number of studies for Turkish occidentalism, selected

studies for this specific type of occidentalism will help us to illuminate its studied qualities through their examples.

In her study, Meltem Ahıska concentrated on Turkish occidentalism through radio broadcastings. While she presented radio as a significant tool for “the construction and reconstruction of an occidentalist fantasy within the hegemonic culture of power in Turkey,” she also argued that Turkey’s national elite constituted a “hegemony through occidentalism.”³² In addition, she also indicated a dichotomy of national elites between desires to join the western civilization, and establish an independent Turkish identity in Turkey.³³ Paraphrasing Ahıska’s abovementioned definition of occidentalism will be helpful us to understand her argument: occidentalism of the west produced and promoted the generalized images of western civilization, and occidentalism of the non-west utilize it by examining the technological development in the west, resisting the imported culture of the west, and forming a new hegemonic regime through occidentalism. Her arguments provided us the confusion of Turkish national elites, and a Hegelian synthesis that formed a new hegemonic power in Turkey by combining yearning to possess western technology, and resistance to western culture.

Although study of Makdisi’s primary subject is orientalism in the Ottoman Empire, it also offers an occidentalist view of the Ottomans toward west: recognition of the west as “the home of progress,” and evaluation of the orient as a backwards region through European development.³⁴ Makdisi’s craft of an Ottoman-generated basic image for the west as the center of progress and development may not be a detailed analysis for

³² Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey*, 184, 194.

³³ Ahıska, 184.

³⁴ Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 768–69.

Turkish occidentalism, but it still provides a valuable example to demonstrate basic Ottoman thoughts about the west.

Per Bauhn and Fatma Fulya Tepe provided an example of sexist Turkish occidentalism through Turkish media that promotes a stereotyped image of western women who are “sexually promiscuous and morally confused, but also possible objects for Turkish male.”³⁵ According to their study, this image of western women was also exclusive because it is white-concentrated without including western people of color and embracing “Turkishness and Islam” are the only positive characteristics for western women³⁶ without being exclusive or sexist. Their study endeavored to display a particular, negative quirk of Turkish occidentalism through specialized analyses with detailed resources from Turkish media. While Bauhn and Tepe’s specific work displayed an occidentalist understanding of the exclusively portrayed western women as a tool to engage in coitus easily, they also remained morally inferior without converting to Islam.

Alkım Saygın’s Ph.D. thesis analyzed Turkish occidentalism and occidentalist expressions through the works of Said Halim Pasha, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Ziya Gökalp, Halide Edip Adıvar, Nurettin Topçu, and Cemil Meriç.³⁷ Saygın divided occidentalism into three parts: economic occidentalism, political occidentalism, and cultural occidentalism.³⁸ Then, his division continued with the six parts of occidentalist expressions: superiority expression, contrastive expression, reciprocal expression, disconnected expression, pragmatic expression, and dominating

³⁵ Bauhn and Tepe, “Turkish Occidentalism and Representations of Western Women in Turkish Media,” 67.

³⁶ Bauhn and Tepe, 80–81.

³⁷ Saygın, “20. Yüzyıl Türk Düşüncesinde Garbiyatçılık (Oksidentalizm) Üzerine Bir İnceleme,” V.

³⁸ Saygın, 66.

expression.³⁹ The dominant notions from these expressions are the moral superiority of Turco-Islamic civilization over the western civilization, struggles between the two civilizations due to having opposite ideals originating from Islam and Christianity, the positive benefits of western science and technology to develop the Ottoman Empire/Turkey even more, the lack of moral development in the western civilization due to the rise of materialism and positivism, a beneficial role of Turco-Islamic civilization to the west to cure their downfall that was caused by materialism and positivism, and the argument that western system of values will dominate the other nations to facilitate the economic, cultural, and political domination of the west.⁴⁰ Thence, these portrayals of western civilization contained a relatively negative outlook for the west since they either depicted it as a soulless tool to develop their country or as a morally inferior and hostile civilization that faces a downfall process due to materialism and positivism. Alternatively, the concept of Turco-Islamic civilization offered a morally better system that could even heal the west from its diseases.

İbrahim Akkuç analyzed Ahmet Mithat Efendi's thoughts and interpretations of his occidentalist approaches and Ottoman modernization processes from his novels in his master's thesis.⁴¹ Ahmet Mithat acknowledged the superiority of European countries in the material field of science and technology, and he suggested a modernization process to educate the masses and reconstruct a modern Ottoman army.⁴² Nevertheless, the Europeans were inferior to the Ottomans in the spiritual domain due to growing influence of materialism and positivism, and they were "immoral, degenerate, and astray."⁴³ Both Akkuç's and Saygın's studies of different

³⁹ Saygın, 67–70.

⁴⁰ Saygın, 68–70.

⁴¹ İbrahim Akkuç, "Ottoman Modernization and Occidentalism in Ahmet Mithat Efendi's Novels" (Master's, Istanbul, Fatih University, 2014), III.

⁴² Akkuç, 101–2.

⁴³ Akkuç, 102–3.

Ottoman/Turkish scholars provided a similar outlook for the westerners: a beneficial tool to utilize for the country's development and a morally decaying civilization through materialism and positivism.

Carter Vaughn Findley also placed Ahmet Mithat in the center of his study, but his study's goal was "to raise awareness of the importance of the late Ottoman Empire for the study of occidentalism and anticolonial nationalism."⁴⁴ Findley confirmed Ahmet Mithat's interpretations of Europe as a morally decaying but materially progressing civilization as well, but rather than considering them as statements of intentional judgment; he argued that those were implied separations of others as materialists, and self as spiritualists for the production of "political conformism under an oppressive regime."⁴⁵ Although Findley crafted a beautiful argument to explain Ahmet Mithat's contrasting points for the Europeans through personal and political understanding, he still affirmed the views of Ahmet Mithat that play a similar tone to the other Turkish occidentalist portrayals.

The studies demonstrated two primary points for westerners and western civilization: the west as a beneficial tool to develop through their advanced technology and the west as a morally inferior civilization with materialism and positivism to avoid. The studies' dichotomic and contrasting understanding formed the basis for previous studies on Turkish occidentalism in a general manner.

1.3. Who are the Turkish Travelers in this Study?

Since the selected Turkish travelers, who journeyed to the United States, are the main focus of this study, this part's aim will be to introduce them. These twelve selected

⁴⁴ Carter Vaughn Findley, "An Ottoman Occidental in Europe: Ahmed Midhat Meets Madame Gülnar, 1889," *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 1 (1998): 17.

⁴⁵ Findley, 48.

travelers offer different backgrounds and occupations with one mutual goal. The study will utilize their travelogues, *Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü* (Dictionary of Names in Turkish Literature), a conducted project by Ahmet Yesevi University and the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism,⁴⁶ and an online newspaper article to introduce them. However, since information is limited for some travelers, their introduction will be shorter than relatively well-known journalist travelers. In addition, since both Bedii Faik and Fuat Gedik published their works under these names rather than their complete names, Bedii Faik Akın, and Ali Fuat Gedik, they will be addressed in this vein. These travelers and their visiting decades of the United States are: Fuat Gedik and Sakibe Soyukut Ögel in 1940s, Bedii Faik, Şevket Rado, Özkul Akın, Afşin Oktay, and Muzaffer Gökman in 1950s, and Tarık Binat, Hüsnü Çınar, Abdullah Uraz, İlhan Selçuk, and Niyazi Köymen in 1960s.

Tarık Binat was born in 1915 as a child of an immigrant family from Caucasia in Erzurum, and he died in 2001.⁴⁷ His life history includes different occupations but he became a captain after finishing the military school at first.⁴⁸ However, he could not continue his job due to his health problems, and then, he worked in different positions: he was a consultant for Turkish Airlines, he served during the establishment of municipal police of Istanbul, published a journal called *Ak'la Kara* (Black and White), wrote columns and lead articles for several newspapers such as *Son Havadis* (Latest News), *Zafer* (Victory), and *Adalet* (Justice), and engaged in commercial activities.⁴⁹ However, when he traveled to the United States as an official guest, he was a board

⁴⁶ "Ahmet Yesevi Üniversitesi," Online Dictionary, *Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü*, accessed July 22, 2022, "T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı," Online Dictionary, *Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü*, accessed July 22, 2022.

⁴⁷ Fatih Memiş, "Tarık Binat," Online Dictionary, *Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü*, accessed July 22, 2022.

⁴⁸ Memiş.

⁴⁹ Memiş.

member of Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations.⁵⁰ In fact, although either traveler did not mention each other precisely in their travelogues, both Hüsni Çınar and Tarık Binat were officially invited guests as the representators of Employer Associations of Turkey, and Hüsni Çınar was the president of Turkish Employer Association of Hotels, Restaurants, and Places of Entertainment.⁵¹

While both Bedii Faik and Şevket Rado were prominent journalists, Faik also mentioned that they were close friends,⁵² and they were together during his journey in the United States.⁵³ Bedii Faik was born in 1921 in Bandırma, and he died in 2015.⁵⁴ His journalism career had ups and downs frequently due to his changing political stances: he began to publish a political newspaper called *Demirkırat*⁵⁵ in 1946, but he was arrested due to his fierce criticism to the Democratic government in 1954 later.⁵⁶ Although he became a supporter of National Unity Committee and Republican People's Party during the 1960 military coup, this journalistic support was a short-lived one, and his approach switched to Justice Party-sided⁵⁷ articles in 1965.⁵⁸ He wrote several columns and articles in newspapers such as *Tasvir* (Depiction), *Hürriyet* (Liberty), *Dünya* (Earth), and *Milliyet* (Nation.)⁵⁹ Faik also published other travelogues: *Bir Garip Ada* (A Peculiar Island), an account of his travels in the United Kingdom, in 1957, and *Rusya'dan* (From Russia) in 1968.⁶⁰

⁵⁰ Hüsni Çınar, *Amerika'da Gördüklerimin Düşündürdükleri* (Istanbul, Turkey: Türkiye Otel Lokanta ve Eğlence Yerleri İşverenleri Sendikası, 1966), 24.

⁵¹ Çınar, 24.

⁵² Bedii Faik, *Sam Amca'nın Evinde* (Istanbul, Turkey: Yenilik Yayınevi, 1954), 46.

⁵³ Faik, 61.

⁵⁴ Necati Tonga, "Bedii Faik Akın," Online Dictionary, Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü, accessed July 22, 2022.

⁵⁵ "Demirkırat" was the common nickname for the Democratic Party in Turkey.

⁵⁶ Tonga, "Bedii Faik Akın."

⁵⁷ Spiritual successor of the former Democratic Party after its former closure with the military coup in 1960.

⁵⁸ Tonga, "Bedii Faik Akın."

⁵⁹ Tonga.

⁶⁰ Tonga.

Şevket Rado was born in the city of Radoviš in modern North Macedonia in 1913, but his family emigrated to Istanbul due to Balkan Wars, and he died in 1988.⁶¹ His career of journalism began as an editor of *Son Posta* (Last Mail) in 1932 during his last year of high school thanks to the help of his French teacher, Nurullah Ataç.⁶² However, he pursued an alternative route at first after finishing the high school, and he became a law student in Ankara University.⁶³ Nevertheless, after graduating from the law school, he started to work in *Akşam* (Evening) newspaper continuously for 25 years.⁶⁴ Similar to Faik, Rado also published a travel account about his journey to the Soviet Union in the same year with Faik's account: *50. Yılında Sovyet Rusya* (Soviet Russia in its 50th year.)⁶⁵

While Sakibe Soyukut Ögel was an undergraduate student starting with September 1940 without mentioning a definitive end, Özkul Akın got his master's degree at the University of Michigan in 1956.⁶⁶

Abdullah Uraz worked as an editor, reporter, columnist, and news editor in various newspapers such as *Son Havadis and Zafer*.⁶⁷ He began his journalism career by publishing a sports magazine, Gençlerbirliği (Union of the Youth, also a sports club in Ankara.)⁶⁸

⁶¹ Muhammed Hüküm, "Şevket Rado," Online Dictionary, Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü, accessed July 22, 2022.

⁶² Hüküm.

⁶³ Hüküm.

⁶⁴ Hüküm.

⁶⁵ Hüküm.

⁶⁶ Özkul Akın, *Amerika'yı Tanımak İstedim* (Istanbul, Turkey: Kağıt ve Basım İşleri A.Ş., 1957), chap. preface; Sakibe Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde* (Istanbul, Turkey: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1947), 5, 95.

⁶⁷ Abdullah Uraz, *Amerika Gezi Notları* (Istanbul, Turkey: Son Havadis Gazetecilik ve Matbaacılık A.Ş., Çay Matbaası, 1969), pt. Cover.

⁶⁸ Uraz, pt. Cover.

İlhan Selçuk was born in Aydın in 1925, and he died in 2010.⁶⁹ Just as Şevket Rado, he also graduated from a Law School but his university was Istanbul University.⁷⁰ After his graduation, he worked as a lawyer and printer at first, and then began to work in humor magazines with his big brother, Turhan Selçuk.⁷¹ His humorous articles attracted attention, and he found the opportunity to work as a columnist and chief editor in several newspapers such as *Akşam*, *Tanin* (Resonance), *Vatan* (Homeland), and *Akbaba* (Vulture.)⁷² However, he became the spearhead of *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) newspaper as an editor-in-chief until his death in 2010.⁷³ He also published other travelogues such as *Uzak Komşu Rusya'dan Gezi Notları* (The Notes of Travel from Distant Neighbor Russia) in 1967, and *Sovyetler, Amerika ve İran İzlenimleri* (Impressions of Soviets, America, and Iran) in 1976.⁷⁴

Muzaffer Gökman was born in Istanbul in 1915, and he died in 1996.⁷⁵ His educational journey was a half-finished one at first after he quit Kabataş Boy's High School due to his father's death, but he was able to complete his high school education later in Istanbul Boy's High School, and he graduated from the history department of Istanbul University in 1947.⁷⁶ However, he worked as a librarian during his career, he even became the director of Beyazıt State Library until his retirement in 1977, and he found opportunities to visit libraries in Rome, London, Germany, and the United States.⁷⁷ In addition to his travel account, he also published another book about the

⁶⁹ Mehmet Bakır Şengül, "İlhan Selçuk," Online Dictionary, Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü, accessed July 23, 2022.

⁷⁰ Şengül.

⁷¹ Şengül.

⁷² Şengül.

⁷³ Şengül.

⁷⁴ Şengül.

⁷⁵ Hülya Tepedelen, "Muzaffer Gökman," Online Dictionary, Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü, accessed July 23, 2022.

⁷⁶ Tepedelen.

⁷⁷ Tepedelen.

United States: *Amerika'da Kütüphane Sevgisi* (Love of Libraries in the United States.)⁷⁸

Afşin Oktay was born in 1926, and he died in a car accident in Karachi in 1964 when he was working as a press attaché.⁷⁹ He was another law graduate at Ankara University who pursued a career in journalism, and he worked as a reporter and columnist in newspapers such as *Vatan*, *Tasvir*, *Son Posta*, *Kıbrıs Halkın Sesi* (People's Voice of Cyprus), and *Dikkat* (Attention.)⁸⁰ Later, he became a reporter for Dawn Pakistan newspaper in Ankara and the United States, deputy press attaché for Washington Post Newspaper during 1949-52, and an author of radio programs for Voice of America during 1952-54.⁸¹

Fuat Gedik was born in 1913, and he died in 1987.⁸² After completing his high school education at American Collegiate Institute in Izmir, he graduated from the Law School at Ankara University, but unlike the abovementioned previous law graduates, Gedik continued his career in law as well, and he worked as a judge, deputy prosecuting attorney, and first instance judge.⁸³ He also published articles and analyses of authors in western literature in various journals like *Türk Düşüncesi* (Turkish Thought.)⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Tepedelen.

⁷⁹ Erdiñ Şahin, "MERHUM GAZETECİ, AFŞİN OKTAY'I HATIRLAYALIM..," News, *Kuzeygehaber* (blog), August 5, 2020.

⁸⁰ Şahin.

⁸¹ Şahin.

⁸² Fatma Sönmez, "Ali Fuat Gedik," Online Dictionary, *Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü*, accessed July 23, 2022.

⁸³ Sönmez.

⁸⁴ Sönmez.

Niyazi Köymen was a pediatrician from Izmir⁸⁵, and apart from his travelogue, he also published another work, *Değişmeyen Gerçekler* (Unchanging Realities), about social problems, politics, and politicians in Turkey.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Niyazi Köymen, *İki Dev - İki Sistem, Rusya-Amerika: Gezilerden İzlenimler-Kıyaslamalar* (Izmir, Turkey: Karınca Matbaacılık, 1968), 215.

⁸⁶ Köymen, 212.

CHAPTER II

EVALUATIONS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY

This chapter will concentrate on certain themes that the travelers observed in American society: consumerism and materialism, religion's role, and African-Americans. While the travelers in this chapter were eager to evaluate and portray their experiences in the United States, they either provided time and space separate from their evaluations and portrayals except for certain occasions, or they scattered clues that will lead to the information about time and space. Thus, the beginning of this chapter will explore these historical details before delving into specific analyses. Although Tarık Binat did not mention the exact year he traveled to the United States, as mentioned before, both he and Hüsnu Çınar was official guests as the representators of Employer Associations of Turkey. In his travelogue, Hüsnu Çınar mentioned that they were in the United States in 1964.⁸⁷ In addition, Washington D.C., New York City, Hartford, Boston, Detroit, Cincinnati, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and San

⁸⁷ Çınar, *Amerika'da Gördüklerimin Düşündürdükleri*, 24.

Francisco were the cities that he traveled during his two-month journey.⁸⁸ Fuat Gedik provided precise date for his journey, 1947, and he visited New York City, Washington D.C., Boston, New Haven, and Florida.⁸⁹ Özkul Akın also did not share any clear dates for his travels in the United States, but he went to the United States as a master's student in University of Michigan, he especially emphasized how he was curious about the United States two years before his journey in preface chapter of his travelogue, and he concluded preface chapter with an exact date and location: "*Ayvalık 1956.*"⁹⁰ From these clues, we can deduce a time period between 1954-56 for his journey. He only mentioned New York City and Ann Arbor definitely as his visits.⁹¹ While Sakibe Soyukut Ögel palpably wrote her first entrance to New York Harbor as September 22, 1940, she only revealed that the military officers were also departing to go to the African front when they were leaving the United States.⁹² Early 1940s would be the most guaranteed deduction to calculate Ögel's time from her last clue. During her journey, she visited Pasadena, New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, Ann Arbor, and Arizona.⁹³ Perhaps the most obscure traveler about the time of his stay in the United States was Afşin Oktay. However, he referred to Harry Truman as the president, and both Senator of Ohio, Robert A. Taft, and Governor of California, Earl Warren as presidential primaries for the upcoming election in 1952.⁹⁴ Hence, thanks to these hints and the date of his travelogue's publication, 1952, it is possible to speculate that he traveled to the United States in 1951 or early 1952. He visited New York City, and Washington D.C. during his stay.⁹⁵ Niyazi Köymen visited the United States in

⁸⁸ Tarık Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar* (Istanbul, Turkey: Baha Matbaası, 1966), 10.

⁸⁹ Fuat Gedik, *Amerika* (Istanbul, Turkey: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1948), VII-IX.

⁹⁰ Akın, *Amerika'yı Tanımak İstedim*, chap. preface.

⁹¹ Akın, 11, 25.

⁹² Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde*, 5, 163.

⁹³ Soyukut Ögel, 16-17, 38, 78-79.

⁹⁴ Afşin Oktay, *Amerika* (Ankara, Turkey: Sezgin Basımevi, 1952), 51-52.

⁹⁵ Oktay, 119.

1968, and he traveled to New York City, Boston, Washington D.C., Buffalo, and Pittsburgh.⁹⁶ Abdullah Uraz visited the United States in 1966 and stayed eleven days.⁹⁷ During his journey, he saw Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York City, Arlington, and Washington D.C.⁹⁸ İlhan Selçuk came to United States in 1964 for two months⁹⁹ and he visited Arlington, Washington D.C., New York City, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake City.¹⁰⁰ Muzaffer Gökman traveled the United States in 1958-59, and he found the opportunity to visit several cities such as, Washington D.C., New York City, Boston, Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Kentucky.¹⁰¹ The last traveler in this chapter is Şevket Rado. Ironically, he named his book *Amerikan Masalı* (American Fairy Tale), but he only visited New York City for 10 days in 1950.¹⁰²

2.1. Well-Known Infamous Biases: Consumerism and Materialism

American habits of massive consumption and the so-called less spiritual-more material spirit of Americans are relatively common themes for travelers in general, and Turkish travelers are no exception for this matter. However, Turkish portrayals will introduce certain stark differences for these prejudices about the United States through their observations and analyses along their journey.

The reason Americans spend much is that they have no concerns about hunger, poverty, unemployment, or eviction because they have solid and unquestionable trust in their social and economic order. In addition, they trust that unemployment insurance will be enough to cover their expenses when unemployed. Further, when they are ill, the community will aid them, and the federal government has already guaranteed the security of the pension

⁹⁶ Köymen, *İki Dev - İki Sistem, Rusya-Amerika: Gezilerden İzlenimler-Kıyaslamalar*, 146–47, 177, 180, 200.

⁹⁷ Uraz, *Amerika Gezi Notları*, 6, 58.

⁹⁸ Uraz, 8–9, 13, 36.

⁹⁹ İlhan Selçuk, *Güzel Amerikalı: Çağdışı Bir İmparatorluktan Gözlemler ve Düşünceler*, First (Istanbul, Turkey: Fahir Onger Yayınları, 1965), 7.

¹⁰⁰ Selçuk, 19, 23, 28, 34, 43, 59, 80.

¹⁰¹ Muzaffer Gökman, *Amerika Notları* (Istanbul, Turkey: Varlık Yayınları, 1961), 7–9.

¹⁰² Şevket Rado, *Amerikan Masalı* (Istanbul, Turkey: Doğan Kardeş Yayınları A.Ş. Basımevi, 1950), 5, 29.

payments and educational costs for their children. This mutual feeling of trust leads Americans to spend their money freely.¹⁰³

From his observations, Tarık Binat portrayed an environment built upon mutual trust and confidence toward the American habits of consuming. Tarık Binat's perspective demonstrated that consumers are not just tools for the system, but they are the trusted partners with guaranteed rights and protection from their respective local communities and federal government. This reciprocal and solid relationship bolsters more confidence in people to spend their money freely to increase their life qualities rather than concentrating solely on their survival in a harsh environment. In fact, this perspective indicates an ideal system with liberties since people may spend their money however they desire without exhausting themselves with efforts to persevere in society.

One of the prominent images of Americans is that they are material, rude, ruthless, and merciless businessmen who are just dollar bankers. However, American dependency of dollar was not about greed but rather, they want to utilize money for assuring their comfort.¹⁰⁴ What the Europeans found material and soulless in the United States was dynamism full of life. This dynamism is parallel with the old Roman Empire, and the United States is like the republican Rome of modern age. The difference between Romans and 20th century Americans is only apparent. However, one thing is a superior quality of Americans: transition to democracy without conceiving aristocracy.¹⁰⁵

While Binat pictured a reciprocal relation benefitting all sides, Fuat Gedik decided to criticize the cliché imagery of Americans by the Europeans. He argued that the Americans are not greedy, soulless people who solely sold their souls to the dollar entity to earn more and more money. Instead, the people want to earn more money because they want to guarantee their luxury and well-being. Furthermore, Gedik even argued that this created an active circle of life similar to ancient Rome, and the United States represented the new Rome with the republican and democratic ideals without

¹⁰³ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 114–15.

¹⁰⁴ Gedik, *Amerika*, 103.

¹⁰⁵ Gedik, 111-12.

any affiliation to aristocracy, a better quality of Americans. Romans were the powerhouse of the ancient Mediterranean where their culture affected and influenced various nations, and they were the primary example of a functioning society that the others desired to reach that point. In other words, for Gedik, the dynamic and rapid life conditions of the United States were similar to the Roman Empire with a better order thanks to without having an aristocratic order, and just like the Romans, Americans' impact will be undeniable for the upcoming age thanks to their vigorous and vibrant environment.

Unfortunately, when we think about the Americans, most of us imagine the picture of rumbustious and spoiled rich brats who only cares about none other than dollars. Indeed, Americans tire themselves to earn even one dime more and do not avoid taking various risks to achieve that goal. However, their great care for money vanishes as soon as they have earned it, and they will surprisingly spend their money handsomely without any hesitation.¹⁰⁶

In his analysis, Akın criticized what he referred to as typical behavior of Turkish visualization for imagining Americans like how they are mollycoddled people with a compulsive obsession with earning dollars. Although he acknowledged Americans' extensive efforts to make a buck, he presented this as a means to spend without doubts rather than making it a life purpose. In other words, while he criticized the bias of the materialist image of Americans through their working habits for earning money, he presented American habit of consumerism by portraying Americans as handsome spenders without offering negative judgments about the issue.

While the American working life was like a dollar minting machine, their times of relaxation and entertainment were a dollar grinding mill. Because while Americans work with their full energy to raise their dollars, they will also spend them perfectly for their pleasure, comfort, and health without any hesitation.¹⁰⁷ This mobility of money has increased the life standards of people, and comfort in the houses. Even the most ordinary homes in the United States had radios and fridges.¹⁰⁸ Money was not the purpose for the Americans, but it

¹⁰⁶ Akın, *Amerika'yı Tanımak İstedim*, 99–101.

¹⁰⁷ Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde*, 62, 69.

¹⁰⁸ Soyukut Ögel, 71.

was just a means. In fact, the habits of Americans were not only working and earning tremendously but also spending. One of these spending habits is buying gifts for other people.¹⁰⁹

Sakibe Soyukut Ögel initiated her stance with a metaphor about the dollar itself.

However, while this perspective portrayed a hardworking society to increase their gain more and more, later, it also provided another image: a satisfying life with luxury.

Although this stance might seem materialistic at first, the keyword from this passage should be "*pleasure*" to understand her real position. In other words, Americans did not zealously work just for the sake of increasing their dollars to spend for material gains, but they desired to have pleasure in their lives as well. Further, this mobility of dollars also created better living conditions for the people to spend their free time with quality, videlicet, with more pleasure. So, although Americans desired to have material goods, this was to improve their comfort and pleasure in their lives rather than for the sake of surviving the harsh, consumerist, and material cycle, thereby the mobile circle of dollars in American society. In addition to Ögel's points, Binat also pictured a similar portrait of the relationship between money and the Americans.

However, he also added that money was just a tool to achieve other endeavors rather than being the ultimate target to reach. Further, he confirmed the high spending tendencies of Americans, but he also added another behavior: purchasing presents for other people. So, the culture of consumption and spending does not necessarily display pure individualistic materialism for the American society for Binat.

Male children who sold newspapers and earned their allowance even during middle school are common scenes in the American community. This tradition causes some criticisms toward the United States that Americans raise their children as materialistic as possible. Personally, I am not convinced about the existence of such drawback. These children will realize their responsibility at an early age, and this will only aid to prepare them for the real life. American

¹⁰⁹ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 111–12.

men are far away from being materialists. Rather, they are only realists who grasped the necessities of our century.¹¹⁰

Oktay directed the materialism issue into another aspect, children, and pointed out that Americans began to earn their money at a young age. However, Oktay also argued that this brought criticism to American society since their children spent early ages of their lives struggling to earn money as laborers so they would adapt to the American material world. On the other hand, Oktay disagreed with the accusations of the others he pinpointed and refuted them with his argument: working at an early age will grow the responsibility within the children so that they can prepare for the future life with labor endeavors. Further, he concluded with this counterpoint that Americans are just realists who realized the essential parts 20th century rather than being materialists. Hence, this part of the American community will not raise their children to become materialists but help them understand the new century's society and conditions rather than spending their days hollow.

American people are like from a different realm. From what I have gathered, emotions take a backseat to these people. All their efforts have been gathered to search more comfortable life conditions by working hard and earning more money. However, the reality is that Americans reached their awe-inspiring conditions by systematical, calculated, planned and meticulous work, a joint effort of both males and females. This side of the United States is quite admirable, and it is valuable to analyze it for implementing.¹¹¹

Unlike the other travelers, Niyazi Köymen considered Americans emotionless and different. However, he also confirmed that their ultimate and utmost goal is to reach comfort rather than money being the most significant target. Then, he took a mesmerizing path for this pattern of Americans: The United States reached its peak life standards with this challenging and solid mentality of working with male and female collective efforts. So, this part of American life is fascinating, and analyses to

¹¹⁰ Oktay, *Amerika*, 116.

¹¹¹ Köymen, *İki Dev - İki Sistem, Rusya-Amerika: Gezilerden İzlenimler-Kıyaslamalar*, 148.

comprehend it would be beneficial to implement a similar structure. In other words, Köymen even desired to see a similar structure of this meticulous and systematic working conditions for implementation. At first, his portrayal seemed similar to classic criticisms of the American system. However, later, the so-called vicious circle of Americans became a desirable pattern and even possibly deemed suitable and applicable.

The Turkish travelers painted a dissimilar picture of materialism and consuming culture from the familiar and well-known negative connotations. Binat defended the American system, where he saw a mutual agreement between the ordinary people and the economic system for consumption, and he also added that money is not the primary motivation, but a means to increase their life qualities. Akın mentioned a possible Turkish visualization of materialist Americans who worship dollars that he may have seen, and he challenged this image by demonstrating their intensive spending without any negative references and connotations. Then, the other travelers use the keyword to justify or uphold American consumption habits; thus, possible materialist tendencies stemmed from these habits, “comfort.” The paramount impetus for the hard-working society was to achieve comfort in their lives rather than money being the ultimate target. In fact, Gedik even criticized the material imagery of Americans, instead, he argued that it was the dynamism of life similar to ancient Rome. Oktay also indicated that the Americans were not materialists but realists for understanding the conditions of the 20th century better. In addition, although Köymen agreed that their search for comfort lacked emotions, he praised the functioning and meticulous society of Americans and even found it desirable to implement as well. Moreover, this research on comfort with the so-called materialism, hard-working conditions, and consuming culture also led to improving the living standards of

Americans, so this was a beneficially reciprocal relationship for the ordinary people as well. In other words, the travelers portrayed a functioning, active, industrious, and prosperous society with one dedicated passion: to increase their living standards, pleasure, and comfort. Therefore, American society was far from a flawed, emotionless, material society, with money being the ultimate target. Rather, this was a healthy and wealthy society with hope for the future, thanks to their increasing quality of life in the eyes of these travelers.

2.2. Religion's Role in American Society

Religion is another major aspect that Turkish travelers had the opportunity to experience firsthand. However, even though the United States provide bountiful of religions in the country such as Mormonism or various sects of Protestantism, the travelers did not specify the religion they were writing about it except on certain occasions such as Akım's mention of Methodist Protestants. Their analyses and observations will cover separate qualities of religion's influential role in American social life. These qualities may include comparisons, history, ideals, the structure of religious societies, and democracy.

Religiously, Americans are completely free and nobody interferes with the people when they go to either church, mosque or synagogue. Americans respect all the religious beliefs greatly. In fact, in D.C., a mosque had been built with the aids of 15 Islamic Nations, and even Turkey sent its mosque tiles. Almost everyone went to abroad would have definitely used American dollars but I assume they did not heed carefully for the writing upon them: "In God We Trust". I especially want to convey this writing because I want to assert that our battle of progressive (Kemalist) vs. retro-progressive (Muslim conservatives) ideals occurred for completely trivial reasons, while Americans have "In God We Trust" phrase on their money.¹¹²

Abdullah Uraz's portrayal indicates a liberal and respectful country for all religious beliefs. The people also did not experience problems visiting their respected choices of

¹¹² Uraz, *Amerika Gezi Notları*, 40–43.

a temple for their religions. In addition, Uraz mentioned that Americans built a mosque in their capital with the aid of other Islamic nations, including Turkey and its mosque tiles. Moreover, Uraz decided to direct the issue to the writing on the dollar. From only one phrase, In God We Trust¹¹³, he criticized the Turkish political climate about how religion became a battlefield of two political thoughts. At the same time, Americans freely used this phrase on their money. So, this comparison brought criticism to Turkey's approach toward religion and praise for Americans' liberal and respectful tenet for religion. In other words, American positioning for religion is ideally and practically better than Turkey's for Uraz or his hope for the future about religion.

How Americans feel about the God is one of the subjects I have been curious about during my trip. This country accomplished miracles for the civilization but how was the spiritual front? Indeed, there are plentiful amounts of remarkable clues in the United States in this vein. A writing in the presidential dais of Boston senate building attracted me, the writing on the wall is: "God Bless America." Even in every kind of their money, "In God We Trust" is written. They have just conveyed what they always repeat into their money: their belief in God. In Turkey, on the other hand, zealots and fanatics just degenerate religion. What is the fault of religions? It is enough to check the darkness of medieval ages through superstitious beliefs in the West and the enlightenment of today to understand. Only changing matter is the mentality, religion is the same religion. In the United States, after lower secondary education, religious schools teach positive sciences such as law and medicine for their priests. In Turkey, however, even the newly-opened schools to raise enlightened imams get criticisms today. As long as duality of education divide people, democracy will not survive because it will not be progressive but reactionary.¹¹⁴

Köymen affirmed Uraz's observation about the writing on the money and even added a phrase from the Boston senate, "God Bless America," to assure that Americans have been using religious motives in a political building and their currency so that they can demonstrate their adherence to God. However, his position also concentrated on

¹¹³ Ironically, the motto of In God We Trust was relatively new, since 1956, on printed money when Uraz visited the country during 1960s.

¹¹⁴ Köymen, *İki Dev - İki Sistem, Rusya-Amerika: Gezilerden İzlenimler-Kıyaslamalar*, 196-97.

criticisms of the religious perception of Turkey, just like Uraz. This time, though, unlike Uraz, Köymen concentrated on his opprobrium toward the religious fanatics rather than the so-called progressive side. He argued that the West cleansed itself from the gloomy days of medieval mentality and even reached an enlightened position in the United States thanks to the education of positive sciences in addition to the sole religious studies. On the other hand, he portrayed a dim picture on the religious understanding in Turkey: similar attempts to apply a quasi-American system for religious education attracted criticisms from people, and this dichotomy of education will ignite a reactionary fire that will devour the pure light of progressive democracy. In the end, both Uraz and Köymen only observed a glimpse of American religious life. However, from this coup d'œil, their portrayal indicated a sharp turn for their concerns over religious stance and problems in Turkey, and it became an interwoven analysis that includes both their observations on what they saw as American religion, and their experiences with religious affairs in Turkey. Finally, both praised the United States for different reasons, one for religious freedom and one for a progressive stance on religion. However, in their minds, the United States demonstrated an ideal environment for religion to green peacefully, unlike Turkey.

The story of the passengers of the Mayflower is a valuable historical event that presents the meaning and essence of religious freedom in the United States. While Americans as a nation had not even emerged on earth, the indwellers of the new world accepted several principles and thus, laid the foundation of today's liberal United States solidly. Several nations ensured religious freedom only through various bloody battles, but religious freedom had never been a national issue for the Americans from the beginning. As in yesterday, Americans pray however they want nowadays, and they do not encounter any material or spiritual pressure because of their beliefs.¹¹⁵

Unlike the other two travelers, Oktay did not mention about Turkish political and social climate of religion. Instead, his stance has another focal point to demonstrate for

¹¹⁵ Oktay, *Amerika*, 79.

American religious conditions: history. From the rough, misty, and precarious days of a heavy sea journey, the passengers of the Mayflower carved an ideal into the backbone of American society: religious freedom. So, the passengers had already established a liberal understanding of the religion in this new world even before settling. Later on, their descendants inherited the ideals of these pilgrim passengers for crafting the notion and creed to cherish all the religions courteously. Thus, these descendants became the Americans and created this paradise for religion following the will of their ancestors. However, Oktay's fairy tale analyses and depiction of religion in the United States was far from the truth since the religious freedom they spoke was only for themselves rather than other groups. For Oktay, however, this fairy tale enabled his notion that the other nations had to engage in massive battles to achieve what Americans already had, and it even never became a grand problem for the society. Then, he confirmed Uraz's observations with different words: absolute freedom for every American to choose and follow their religion. In other words, he aggrandized Americans' homage to the religion to the point that they had never encountered any major issues or problems from religious affairs since the sailing of the Mayflower unlike the other nations of the world who struggled to reach the point that Americans had already reached.

Americans who can relate their past from religion are naturally religious men. This emotion stemmed from religion constitutes all their social movements' core. They respect every form of religion. Religion is the ultimate entity that can bind people together and solve every boundless conflict between humans for the American people.¹¹⁶

Gedik's assertions erected a bridge between Oktay and Akin, including his unique observation about an ideal of Americans for religion. He did not mention the Mayflower story like Oktay, but he also connected the devotion of Americans with

¹¹⁶ Gedik, *Amerika*, 78.

their emotional bonds to their history from religion, and how religion plays a crucial role in American social life. However, although he did not elaborate on his observation in detail, the nucleus of this devotion has been the social life in the United States for Gedik rather than a total belief stemming from the first citizens. While he repeated the utmost respect of Americans toward religion, he also shared an ideal from their perspective of religion. This ideal presented religion as a nonpareil mediator that provides solutions for any struggles and then connects people as a whole. So, religion's role is related to peace for crises, and the formation of a society, videlicet, an undeniable and unchained identity of Americans. Gedik's observation also provided a supplementary point for his argument about consumerism. If consumerism is the dynamic force of American life, religion is the everlasting fuel for this society to function, a society with material comfort and ethereal satisfaction.

In American society, religious institutions are not only effective on the spiritual front but also maintain their positions as a center for social and cultural activities. People will not visit this center in the United States at certain times just because they are written in the bible or begging for forgiveness of their sins and doing good deeds. Churches also comprise various communal and individual activities such as eating, drinking, doing sports, gathering for conferences and discussions about them, listening to music, and organizing dancing parties. Therefore, churches' role as cultural nests for their members is significant in every aspect of their lives.¹¹⁷ People do not have to share absolutely the same religious sect or belief to participate in these religious activities. Their doors are open for everyone with a desire for active participation. As a matter of fact, I enjoyed participating in these programs when I was in the United States, and I gave a conference at the Methodist Church of Ann Arbor, Minnesota, about Islam as well.¹¹⁸ You should not picture American priests as cloaked, bearded, and disconnected men from society in your heads. American priests are married, have children, and live their life like everyone else. While they minister praying services, they will also play with little children, dance with young adults, go to the picnic, and eat lunches with businessmen at clubhouses.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Akin, *Amerika'yı Tanımak İstedim*, 123.

¹¹⁸ Akin, 126.

¹¹⁹ Akin, 130.

Unlike the other portrayals, Akın concentrated on a specific issue rather than a general perception about religion in the United States. This issue is the role of churches in American society. Although Gedik briefly mentioned the social role of churches without elaboration, Akın provided details about the services of churches in the social life of Americans. He presented the churches as more than a sacred, holy monastery for the people to worship and pray but rather, they also have earthly qualities that breed social activities such as sports, conferences, drinking and eating meetings, dancing, and discussion for them to engage easily. So, American society was more than respectful and firm believers but active participants in both religious and secular pursuits with the church at the center. Moreover, churches even welcomed other believers of faith for their programs, and Akın is one of the visitors who presented Islam in a Methodist church. Finally, he introduced the imams of the Protestant faith for his possible readers: a family man who lives a relatively secular life in a religious job rather than being a monastic.¹²⁰ Akın's portrayal indicated a socializing society in both religious and secular endeavors through churches with reverends as typical as one can imagine. So, both churches and priests are the perfect combinations of two separate worlds in an inter-connected and liberal way for Akın.

In the United States, no one asks the other citizens their religion or sect. Schools start with praying every morning. Religion is a considerable force in American society. The cash of the wealthy nurture the churches on the one hand and increase the welfare of laborers on the other. Churches have made substantial efforts to adapt to the new age with omnigenous initiatives such as foundations of liberal schools and health centers, and social aids...¹²¹ During our stay in Salt Lake City, a man approached us in the hotel lobby, and he said "hello" with an Antep accent. We learned that his name is Albert Uzunyan, an Anatolian Armenian whose family migrated to the United States from Aleppo. According to Uzunyan, he is a devout Mormon. He does not smoke cigarettes

¹²⁰ One may speculate about the Turkish conception of priests in the 1950s since Akın especially decided to inform about the priests in this manner. (Does this mean priests are supposed to be monks or clergy members in the Turkish mind? Alternatively, were imams of Turkey similar to Akın's depiction?)

¹²¹ Selçuk, *Güzel Amerikalı: Çağdışı Bir İmparatorluktan Gözlemler ve Düşünceler*, 47–49.

and does not consume alcohol. We decided to ask Uzunyan who is he going to vote? He said, “Goldwater.” Then, we asked, how about the president of your church? He said, “Johnson.” We said, “but will not your president know better than you?” He replied: “Now look, this is a free country. Our president told us to vote but never ordered us to vote for Johnson.”¹²²

Selçuk introduced another considerable role of religion and how the church operates.

While schools have commenced the day with praying in a ubiquitous manner, affluent people feed the churches for their operations, and the recent church operations shift their focus into adapting to the new conditions, thereby opening secular schools and health centers and starting aid initiatives. Thus, Selçuk conveyed the social role of churches in daily life in a different manner than Akın, and he implied a fruitful relationship between the wealthy and the church that benefits ordinary citizens with facilities as well. However, his personal conversations with a countryman from an erstwhile empire were the watershed for shifting his attention to religion in a different direction. At first, he portrayed Uzunyan as a firm believer of Mormonism and then asked whom he would vote for in the upcoming election. While Uzunyan would vote for Barry Goldwater, the president of the Mormon church would vote for Lyndon B. Johnson. Accordingly, from the lenses of Uzunyan, Selçuk presented this free structure of the Mormon church for personal decisions even if people will go separate ways in politics. At the same time, the president of this church also suggested its members for voting in the election. This duality demonstrates both collective actions under the president’s leading and a personal liberty with the president’s preference not to interfere with the decision of others. Hence, churches and the wealthy yield a beneficial relationship, and the Mormon church is a paragon religious organization for championing the American democracy in a liberal and cooperative way.

As in every civilized country with real democratic implementations, people in the United States are deeply connected with their religious beliefs. American

¹²² Selçuk, 59–61.

people firmly adhere to their religion and will neither arrogantly display their adherence nor brush it under the carpet secretly. They have just accepted the belief that civilized people have honest and transparent responsibilities for the Lord in addition to their social obligations.¹²³ Nobody can monitor, vilify or castigate others for their devotions. Citizens can choose whatever religion they want in a completely free environment and can worship however they want.¹²⁴ Various saplings such as freedom, equality, diligence, and civic duties in the democracy gardens firmly grow from the waters of a vivid and unstained wellspring of religion.¹²⁵

Binat's view of religion in American society has a deep association with democracy.

While the history of modern democracies may be young, he places adherence to religion as one of the essential components in these blossoming regimes of the so-called civilized world. The United States is no exception from the other democratic nations of this civilization, and the American people are perfectly aware of their earthly responsibilities as much as the spiritual ones. In fact, his portrayal indicated that even the democratic values of freedom, equality, diligence, and civic duties would not grow decently without religion's helping hand. In other words, religion is a critical element of achieving democratic values, and democracy and religion have a healthy symbiotic relationship to produce an industrious, respectful and liberal society for Binat. The negligence of one would lack the harmony they compose together.

The travelers' observations in this sub-chapter emphasized a liberal culture of respect for religious affairs in people's personal lives. Nobody interferes with others' adherence to any religion, everyone is respectful of other beliefs, and people do not experience backlash at all due to their faith in this holy land of liberal values for religion. They presented this liberal culture as the basic omnipresence of religious understanding in American society. Then, they provided more details about the religion's role from their separate perspectives. Köymen and Uraz pictured the

¹²³ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 128.

¹²⁴ Binat, 129.

¹²⁵ Binat, 131.

symbols of religion in an omnipresent way in secular dimensions and preferable religious conditions in comparison with Turkey. Oktay portrayed a vigorous, reverent, untroubled story of religion emanated from an epic and historical tale of freedom. Gedik connected the former and upcoming branches with an ideal of religion that encompassed the role of a middleman during conflicts and a founding father for cementing the American society. Akın illustrated the social and earthly roles of churches with a liberal and open understanding of all and their ordinary apostles. Selçuk displayed the routine prayers of starting the day at schools, a robust relationship between the wealthy and the church that profits the citizens with facilities and aids, and a liberal, concerted and democratic Mormon church. Finally, Binat interconnected religion and democracy as inseparable parts of a civilized society. Succinctly, their observations presented an ideal climate with separate ways to green the tree of excellence upon the country, providing a fertile environment for religion to grow in a peaceful, contributive, respectful, and thriving way.

2.3. Encounters with African-Americans

This sub-chapter will concentrate on the encounters and analyses of Turkish travelers for the African-Americans. However, as mentioned before, our travelers mention the African-origin citizens of the United States as separate from the European-origin citizens when they refer to Americans in general. So, considering this portrayal, this study will also open a separate sub-chapter despite the fact that African-origin citizens of the United States are inseparable from European-origin citizens in American society. However, the title of this sub-chapter will indicate that they actually refer to African-Americans despite their tendency to call them blacks in order to differentiate a massively general term of blacks and specific identification of African-Americans to avoid misunderstandings. In addition, this sub-chapter may present the most

aggrandized, overly-embellished and unrealistic parts of the study for the White American politicians and the reality of African-Americans' lives in the United States, along with the upcoming urban workers sub-chapter. While some travelers concentrated on depicting a progressive image of the United States in terms of racism, others presented the African-American issue as a problem for White Americans, even with some chauvinistically racial remarks toward African-Americans.

Progressive American politicians have bravely supported and engaged in annihilating the unfreedom of black citizens. There is no essential difference between the mentality that killed Abraham Lincoln in a theater lodge and the mentality that shot resolute, young, dynamic, universally liked, and admired Kennedy, who was trying to cleanse the national disgrace of the United States thoroughly. Intelligent and perceptive American politicians, however, still walk the same path. Dean Rusk, a supporter of equality and secretary of state, has not considered his daughter's marriage to a black man a menacing act. He has even announced that he is ready to resign if this is not a pleasant condition for the White House. Johnson's government did not do anything to remove him from his position. The black cause progresses positively in the United States.¹²⁶

Köymen demonstrated an image of the improving United States, which he considers a positive progression toward the racism of African-Americans thanks to the progressive politicians on the issue. While he presented both Lincoln and Kennedy as the martyrs of a holy cause to strip this "national disgrace" away from the United States, contemporary politicians of his time, such as Dean Rusk and Lyndon B. Johnson, were continuing to achieve this vision for Köymen.

Black people in the United States gained equal rights at the cost of Abraham Lincoln's life. It is possible to encounter these people in every work field. Whether north or south, blacks get every possible aid for their health, children, and development. The efforts to raise the cultural levels of blacks in the north have produced positive results. The pioneer black librarians visit houses from their villages and neighborhoods to invite them to libraries. They are trying to explain the benefits of libraries and how these libraries belong to them as well. South regards this issue significantly as well. Southern libraries fulfill all the requests of middle-aged and elderly black people. When the elderly ask for books with big letters, they fulfill it immediately. Black people with outstanding abilities in music and sports gain every possible help. Great Man

¹²⁶ Köymen, *İki Dev - İki Sistem, Rusya-Amerika: Gezilerden İzlenimler-Kıyaslamalar*, 166-67.

Abraham Lincoln pioneered equality, and now that equality progresses smoothly and positively in the United States.¹²⁷

Muzaffer Gökman portrayed Abraham Lincoln's role as a martyr of progress and the status of the African-Americans in the United States in a similar manner to Köymen's. However, his primary focus is on libraries' efforts to increase blacks' cultural levels for this issue after emphasizing total equality between whites and blacks. His portrayal certainly indicates incredibly positive developments of equality with tremendous aid to talented black individuals.

Harlem is like a country for black people. Although the segregation of blacks and whites is abolished, these people with white teeth and black faces do not want to live in white neighborhoods. This tendency is similar to how Istanbulites do not want to live on the Anatolian side of the city. Otherwise, there is no issue of segregation between blacks and whites in the United States nowadays. Blacks have all the rights that white people have. In fact, it is always possible for talented black individuals to pursue high-ranking positions. Dr. Ralph Bunche is the most beautiful example of this situation. Present conditions of blacks and whites as a result of the bloody conflicts between both sides are praiseworthy. Tenacious and valiant statesmen of the United States succeeded in this issue just like they did in many different fields, and they ended this black and white conflict.¹²⁸

Oktay's remarks are difficult to examine properly because obviously what he shared with his readers is nothing more than outright lies, except for Ralph Bunche's success despite his main aim of presenting it as a proof of total equality without segregation between whites and blacks. He even forms an analogy of Istanbul and Harlem to provide an easy understanding for Turkish readers with a general fact. However, the underlying act of such ennoblement for the conditions of African-Americans illuminates itself with his last sentence: glorifying the American high officials and politicians for solving a huge racial crisis between two prominent groups of the country.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Gökman, *Amerika Notları*, 28–29.

¹²⁸ Oktay, *Amerika*, 11–13.

¹²⁹ Some might argue that this may have been related with the Cold War atmosphere, and it is a political propaganda to boost the American image in Turkey. Although such an argument will not be absurd but

Nowadays, the United States, where technical development and living standards are at a high-water mark, has a big problem: the problem of blacks and whites. This problem is a troublesome one like cancer without any available treatment. American citizens cannot travel easily in countless places of the country. Particularly, they are afraid of being beaten, robbed, and even injured or killed at night. Blacks have become extremely ignorant that they cannot adapt to the new world. The places where black people live are dirty, and they besmirch wherever they enter. Therefore, whites avoid blacks in many places.¹³⁰

Uraz's analysis concentrated on the victimization of the whites with a contradictory beginning: top-notch living standards of the United States. His metaphor of untreatable cancer for the issue of blacks and whites demonstrates despair for the future of the United States without solving this racism problem. Furthermore, while his portrayal victimizes whites, the so-called sole American citizens, by depicting conditions of a horror movie where these citizens cannot even be free to travel because of tremendous and constant fear, it vilifies blacks by presenting them as the nescient and besmirched folk who will bring nothing but calamity to the whites.

Blacks in the United States do not live their old lives. They especially have every right that white people have in the north. Despite all of this development, their living standards are pretty low. They work in jobs like a bellboy, shoe shiner, dishwasher, cleaning jobs, hotel doorman, night watchman, taxi drivers, and apprentices, even in Washington, D.C. Not only their colors but also their limited abilities are also a hindrance for them to work in higher-level jobs. Even in New York, they cannot enter everywhere where white people enter, and if you give your seat to a black passenger in the subway, they will find this odd first. They have their own neighborhoods, places of entertainment, and restaurants. However, will it be fair to criticize Americans for these conditions? Eventually, blacks have every political and civil right in the United States. They have voting rights and have never been like Jews in Nazi Germany. Despite their pleasant and sweet sides, Africans live a lazy life, acting only with instincts and reflexes, and most of them are still under the yoke of biological laws. I do not know whether Germans or purportedly humanitarian French can tolerate such masses in their countries.¹³¹

valid in its own senses, the main concentration of the study is not to cover American propaganda on Turkey, and the attempt of glorification reveals itself as well.

¹³⁰ Uraz, *Amerika Gezi Notları*, 51–52.

¹³¹ Gedik, *Amerika*, 53–55.

Even though Gedik presented equal rights between two races, his portrayal also indicates the qualities of a caste-system mentality with massive and crystal clear racism where blacks are inferior to the whites. Certainly, how he mentions the African-Americans as people with “limited abilities” or people who lives “lazy life” and acts with “only instincts” are clear indications of a racist understanding. Furthermore, while he implicitly depreciates the so-called jobs blacks can only work, he explicitly considers blacks as subservient people with narrow capacity to aim further. Despite Oktay’s previous indications, Gedik clearly paints the picture of active segregation. Then, he questions the fairness of criticizing white-dominant citizens for this matter of transparent racism. His previous arguments about the blacks with different wording lay the foundation for this answer with comparisons to two European nations: he implies it would not be fair, and he does not know whether Germans or supposed humanist French would have tolerated ostensibly indolent folk unlike the implied, so-called tolerant White Americans.

There are two million black people in New York. You can encounter the blacks frequently in busses, subways, restaurants, beaches, and places of entertainment as jazz musicians. Most of them work in restaurants, and since they consider themselves more American than the Americans, they do not feel any unfamiliar feelings of a foreigner. I presume this is the real source of the struggles between blacks and whites. I have asked Mr. Jones why they have struggles with the blacks. Mr. Jones is one of the best men in the world, and when he is changing the car’s gear: “We have no struggles with the blacks, they have. Blacks are extremely vindictive, and they will never forget how their ancestors served us before. Most of them feel an inferiority complex. They bear grudges, and they wait for opportunities to harm us. They complain about how they cannot reach high-ranking positions. However, most of them are successful in the service industry and jobs that require physical power, and they naturally stay in those positions. However, since they cannot control their grudges, they cannot restrain themselves from stealing, murdering, and assaulting. Since black people pontificate that because the whites come from a different continent to this continent, they should return wherever they come from; whites also think that blacks should return to Africa.” I have asked about this issue to several Americans and some Turks in New York; they give me

similar answers. Nevertheless, New York is the most tolerated city in the United States for blacks.¹³²

Şevket Rado's perception of African-Americans is based on two assumptions: one that presents them as a foreigner and evaluates their train of thought of being more American than whites, and his friend, who Rado considers "*one of the best men in the world,*" Mr. Jones's rationalization of whites without mentioning the historical reality. The first assumption presents a rather peculiar thought since blacks are as American as whites, and they are not foreigners of the United States; the country is their homeland. Even though he considers it the nucleus of the problem between two groups, such a nucleus will be nothing but an unproductive aggrandization of whites for this issue of racism. The second assumption from Mr. Jones' hearsay is a ridicule image of begrudgingly revenge-seeking and ignorant blacks with troublesome tendencies of crime against successful, innocent white victims without any act of a struggle with blacks. Even though Rado did not share the so-called similar answers to Mr. Jones's that had been told to him, he implies Mr. Jones' reaction to his question as a genuine answer to the struggle between blacks and whites. Finally, he refers to New York as "the most tolerated city in the United States for blacks," in other words, he probably shares a similar mentality with Gedik in a micro way that at least New Yorker White Americans tolerate blacks as if they should be tolerated like a guest in their own home.

Nowadays, there are no segregations on lines of work and working places. Even the military does not allow segregation and has ended the unfair and different treatment of blacks. Black people can find all kinds of jobs that whites can. Instead of rough and servile jobs, blacks can also work as skilled laborers in factories just like whites. We also see the genuine friendship of blacks and whites, especially in big companies, and interracial marriages, which were taboo before. The literacy rates of blacks increased in the last fifty years as well, and the poll tax was annulled. Today, 19 million black people live in the United States, and the reproduction of blacks is higher than whites. In fact, one American who has observed this condition has estimated: "In this vein, black people will be able to elect a black president in 50 years." Regardless of what

¹³² Rado, *Amerikan Masalı*, 71–73.

will happen, the most productive factor for this issue is time. When black people come to metropolitan cities, live in industrial areas, and their knowledge, manners, and civilization levels will increase, this dichotomy will be forgotten, and this issue will become the property of past and history. When discussing this issue with an American, I said, “Your dinner tables have two prominent drinks: milk and coffee. I have paid attention to your drinking habits, and it seems that while some of you prefer to drink milk only, some drink coffee only. When you will drink both or mix them, this black and white cause will be back on the right track.”¹³³

While Binat’s observations lean toward similar positions of other Turkish travelers for no segregation between whites and blacks, and positive developments for the treatment of African-American citizens, he also adds other specific details such as the end of segregation in the military, increasing tendency of literacy rates of African-Americans, the friendship between whites and blacks in companies, and interracial marriages.¹³⁴ Additionally, he demonstrated a future from an American person’s argument that African-Americans can elect a black president with their growing population. Whoever that American was, they were either a clairvoyant or a good analyst. However, the crucial factor for paving the way for this future was the time for Binat, and he presented a requirement of adaptation and so-called “*civilization levels*” for African-Americans. Still, Binat’s demonstration exhibits a belief that the problems between blacks and whites could become a relic of the past with time. Finally, his metaphor of mixing coffee and milk offers a solution for eradicating these problems with a mixture of both people to possibly form a new and unified American identity. Travelers of this sub-chapter are divided into two wings: one with hope for a better future with portrayals of progressive United States for African-Americans, and another with a despairful presentation for the progression of racial problems and African-Americans as a problematic group of people with backward tendencies for White

¹³³ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 55–60.

¹³⁴ Even though Niyazi Köymen mentioned Dean Rusk’s daughter’s marriage to an African-American male, this was a singular example, and Tarık Binat refers to the normalization of interracial marriages, a historical taboo.

Americans. In other words, an exaggeration of a black and white phenomenon.

However, even the wing of hope, except Binat, emphasized the role of whites more than blacks for their narration of a success story of progress on racism. So, despite the aim to convey the situation of African-Americans, whites, either through politicians or institutions, stole the spotlight on their analyses for this progress. On the other hand, the other wing concentrated on either victimizing or sympathizing with whites and either vilifying or pitying blacks in a racist manner. However, Tarik Binat's observations and remarks expressed a more distinctive ground of hope for progress than the others, even if he demonstrated some similar elements to the others. He introduced some vital aspects of normalization between two groups, such as interracial marriages, friendships, and a possible black president in the future. While time can heal the wounds was his position with the conditions of adaptation and development for blacks, he also suggested a potential mixture between two groups as a solution.

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS ON AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT

The themes of this chapter are based on educational, technological, and economic development of particular concepts that the selected Turkish travelers enthusiastically analyzed through their observations in the United States. These are colleges/universities, skyscrapers and highways, and urban white workers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the travelers specified their time and space in the United States separate from their analyses most of the time. Hence, this chapter will also remind the years they came and the cities they traveled respectively. As mentioned before, Hüsni Çınar visited the United States in 1964, and he visited Washington D.C., New York, Hartford, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.¹³⁵ Muzaffer Gökman visited Washington D.C., New York City, Boston, Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Kentucky in 1958-59. In 1964, Tarık Binat traveled to Washington D.C., New York City, Hartford, Boston, Detroit, Cincinnati, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los

¹³⁵ Çınar, *Amerika'da Gördüklerimin Düşündürdükleri*, 12.

Angeles, and San Francisco. While Afşin Oktay possibly visited the United States in either 1951 or early 1952, New York City and Washington D.C. were his main destinations in his journey. Fuat Gedik's journey of the United States in 1947 included places like New York City, Washington D.C., Boston, New Haven, and Florida. Bedii Faik also did not mention when he came to the United States, but he mentioned that Harry Truman left the presidency, and he shared a date of a construction site, October 29, 1953.¹³⁶ Accordingly, these pieces indicate that he journeyed to the United States in 1953. He visited New York and Philadelphia.¹³⁷ Sakibe Soyukut Ögel visited the United States in early 1940s, and she saw Pasadena, New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, Ann Arbor, and Arizona. Şevket Rado only visited New York City in 1950. Niyazi Köymen traveled to New York City, Boston, Washington D.C., Buffalo, and Pittsburgh in 1968. Abdullah Uraz visited Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York City, Arlington, and Washington D.C. in 1966. Finally, Özkul Akın only demonstrated New York City and Ann Arbor as his visits possibly in 1954-56.

3.1. Colleges/Universities

As they had traveled across the young country, travelers also observed the conditions of the higher education. The colleges and universities of the United States are relatively younger than those in Europe. However, they had a lot to offer for insight and analyses as the institutions of ever-growing world power for the people of a country with an inheritance of a dichotomy with madrasah culture and western reforms to modernize the higher education.

We have traveled across the famous American universities, such as Harvard, UCLA in California, and Stanford. These universities have big sites, and it is

¹³⁶ Faik, *Sam Amca'nın Evinde*, 8, 47.

¹³⁷ Faik, 24.

easier to grasp the benefits of being on the outskirts of urban areas. They also have facilities that can meet every need of the students, trees, swimming pools, sports facilities, libraries, parks, auditoriums, study halls, and sanctuaries for all religions. In short, they have created an atmosphere for students who would never need to leave the university site for requirements. Since students can distance themselves from the daily concerns of cities in a desirable environment, we have understood why Americans founded their universities on the outskirts and why their students are successful. Moreover, professors are humbler and closer to their discipline and students.¹³⁸

Hüsnü Çınar concentrated on portraying the benefits of a campus life in American universities. These big complexes provide all the necessities and facilities that students may seek from urban cities so that they do not require leaving the campus for such deeds. Moreover, American universities formed an environment on the outskirts without the disturbance of the rumbles and concerns from daily life in the urban areas for the students and professors. This environment that Çınar has deemed desirable is the primary impetus for their students' success and the professors' humble and close characteristics.

First, we must accept that the public libraries are not study halls. What our young students want is study halls rather than public libraries too. Even if we build ten more public libraries in Istanbul, where two big universities operate, university students will still complain about these halls' negligence during exam times. Do the public libraries face similar problems in the United States, where hundreds of schools and universities exist? American universities were founded within the boundaries of enormous gardens and coppice forests. Bibliophile wealthy graduates aided in building various beautiful library buildings, and these complexes bear their names. Universities also expand the libraries in consideration of the necessities of students for libraries and books. It is not even a matter of discussion for students not to find a place to study in faculty libraries. Although university administrators are preoccupied with university libraries' enormous expenses, they cannot either offer or contemplate a possible deduction from the library budget.¹³⁹

Gökman's focal point for the universities may be a continuation from Çınar's analysis on American campuses, but it is relatively a micro concentration; libraries. Firstly, he presented the problematic conditions of public libraries in Turkey as a demandable

¹³⁸ Çınar, *Amerika'da Gördüklerimin Düşündürdükleri*, 16.

¹³⁹ Gökman, *Amerika Notları*, 23–25.

place of study halls for university students rather than their actual quality. However, his primary aim in introducing this problem is to demonstrate the conditions of the United States for this issue. American campus universities have gorgeous libraries thanks to the wealthy graduates of these universities for their previous schools. Dissimilar to the issues of public libraries in Istanbul, American universities have already provided study halls in their libraries for their students with a continuous functioning system to meet further needs in the future with their library budgets. In other words, what Gökman implies is that American public libraries are free from the torrent of university students during exam periods thanks to the study halls of the campus universities. Certainly, this is a more functioning system without any problems for Gökman than what public libraries in Istanbul face.

American universities analyze the global art and cultural movements with great attention. In addition, these institutions also have higher education institutes for various arts. Universities watch all the issues of our modern age with heed and constantly criticize miscellaneous social matters. These institutions are the primary source of American culture, and their doors are open for everyone to increase their knowledge in every possible topic. Today, perhaps the United States has an unprecedented number of foreign students worldwide.¹⁴⁰ Universities in the United States are not solely educational institutions that provide their students with knowledge and occupation. They research novelties and positive and beneficial methods for progress. Their researches on medicine, economics, space, and technical fields, and even their studies on commerce, industry, and social fields are principal factors for American development. Foreigners can also utilize American universities' expansive resources and opportunities as much as possible.¹⁴¹

What Binat saw and demonstrated is the qualities of universities and their impact on American culture. While these universities are keen to analyze the global movements of art and culture, they are eager to understand and criticize the modern age problems as well. However, this was just a mirror's reflection in Binat's eyes because American universities are American culture's central depot. Moreover, they are the epitome of

¹⁴⁰ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 82.

¹⁴¹ Binat, 91.

the story of American success with great developments for the country. In addition, the doors of these well-embellished institutions are open to everyone, from an ordinary person who want to educate themselves with the wellspring of their knowledge to total foreigners who either want to become a student or a researcher. Indeed, these splendid institutions are a fair of opportunities for everyone, whether foreigners or Americans, on Binat's analysis.

Higher education is not a limited privilege to an exclusive group in the United States, and any high school graduate can apply to colleges. However, students need to pay tuition for most of the higher education institutions. Nevertheless, this matter should not form an opinion that only people with money can enroll in colleges. Even though colleges require students to pay tuition, they can earn enough money to pay it by working a few hours a day. Some people may consider working along with studying in colleges a disadvantage for students. However, I personally view such a system as beneficial for them. American students gain more life experience by working and studying simultaneously than the others who only have studied during college without working in an extra job. Most young Americans, whether rich or poor, earn money without relying on their parents. I think the young Americans who drive the car their family gave as a gift to go their shifts and wear their white coat to work represents the American mentality.¹⁴²

Oktay's portrayal shifted the camera from the characteristics of American universities with campuses and qualities to the entrance process. Indeed, everyone may enter them; otherwise, the American dream would have been nothing but a lie without such opportunities for people to develop themselves in higher institutions, but one must also remind themselves of the price. This price Oktay presented is tuition fees. However, this is one angle of this issue since there is also a solution for this issue. Students can work part-time to lift this barricade easily, which will even provide them a work experience. In a way, American universities are not only preparing their students for academic ordeals but also for working experience by requesting these tuitions. While some people are ready to criticize this particular identity, Oktay argued that this is

¹⁴² Oktay, *Amerika*, 74–75.

nothing but a commendable feature for the development of students. This time, the reflection of the mirror is for American mentality in Oktay's eyes since both rich and poor students have been working to earn their money to pay their tuition without the help of their families, except for the gift of a car.

All American universities and colleges nurture a practical and realist culture. They only value the realities and do not endeavor with theories and logical nuances that Latins (the author refers to modern Romance language speaking people like French or Italian people) love. In addition, Anglo-Saxons (the author refers to American and British people under this umbrella) do not vitiate their efforts with the reality, and they even study matters in metaphysics. Their superiority over the Germans is not being sentimental like them. Moreover, Americans have already accomplished hitherto unseen in the medical field. It is indisputably clear that American scientific institutions, colleges, and universities will be at the center of intellectual movements.¹⁴³

This portrayal of Gedik demonstrates the mental culture of American universities under the umbrella of Anglo-Saxons. The concentration of these institutions is nothing but practical realities, unlike the love of Latin people for the theories. Even metaphysics cannot escape this material understanding of American universities. However, despite this generally-known negative prejudice of materialism toward American understanding, Gedik has applauded this quality again and even found it superior to German sentimentalism. Moreover, American scientific accomplishments and institutions will even guide them to become the future center of the intelligentsia. In other words, the past may belong to the Latins or Germans, but the future belongs to Americans for Gedik.

Almost all-American universities make their exams completely free under students' personal assurance of honor. After writing some parts of the answer to the questions, students can freely take a break from the exam. They will go to the cafeteria, drink their coffees, smoke their cigarettes, and then return to the exam hall to continue. I know what you are thinking, I have thought the same actually: Can they not find answers to the questions they do not know from their books? Can they not learn the answers from the others? They can do whatever they want! There is a signing sheet at the bottom of the exam paper: "When I am answering the questions above, I oath upon my honor that I did

¹⁴³ Gedik, *Amerika*, 129–31.

not get any help from anywhere.” Yes, as long as they can falsely oath upon their honor, they can do whatever they want!¹⁴⁴ Colleges have a remarkable honor system for the exams. Research assistants do not have to invigilate the exams personally. Assistants will just give the duplicated exam sheets to arriving students. Everyone will sit at their desks and start to answer the questions with books or without books regarding the course’s composition. After distributing the exam sheets, assistants will leave the exam hall, and no one will stay to monitor students. However, you will not hear any whistles during the exam, and you will not see any cheat sheets from students’ pockets. Everyone will answer the questions under the custody of their honor and leave the sheets under the desks after they finish.¹⁴⁵

The travelers have showcased various characteristics of American universities so far with campus qualities and their impact on students and professors, technological and academic advancements and connections with American culture, the economic reality of entrance to American universities, and mental understandings. However, both Bedii Faik and Sakibe Soyukut Ögel have directed this issue in a fairly distinct pattern by confirming each other: how exams occur in these institutions. Apparently, universities conducted these exams without any monitoring from the research assistants, thanks to an honor system that the students abide. While Ögel has deemed this system remarkable, and she did not encounter either cheating or noises during the exams, Faik is even questioning the possibilities of cheating since students are free to leave the exam area without returning their sheets and completing the exam to take a break, but he affirms that this system works without such problems since students have to oath on their honor.

Our travelers in this sub-chapter portrayed American universities in a positive and enticing manner. Both Çınar and Gökman mesmerized with their faculties of facilities and systems with outskirts campus impact on students’ success and professors’ character, and university libraries for studying. Binat saw the nucleus of American

¹⁴⁴ Faik, *Sam Amca'nın Evinde*, 25–26.

¹⁴⁵ Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde*, 90–91.

advancement and culture in the universities with critical analyses of the modern world and a strong desire to progress the technological developments even more without any indication of closed structures to foreigners. The glass was half full for Oktay since, despite the financial liability of tuitions on American students, they were able to gain both working and academic experience at the same time thanks to their obligation to pay these tuitions. In fact, this duality of simultaneous working and studying represents the American mentality for Oktay, and even wealthy students are not exempt from this cultural tendency according to him. Gedik perceived a so-called superiority of Americans in both mental understanding and practical success over the Germans and Latins and a clairvoyantesque analysis the future of American institutions as the leading impetus for scientific advancements and movements. Finally, Faik and Ögel demonstrated another admirable and unexpected quality of American universities: they have not only desirable qualities of magnificent achievements in technology and social sciences, functioning campus life, and a superior material understanding over the Germans and Latins, but also honorable knights of university students who will follow the code of honor without causing any problems, such as cheating, during the exam. Indeed, American universities are well-functioning, dazzling, booming, and diligent institutions with preferable qualities without any major problems in the observations of our travelers.

3.2. Skyscrapers and Highways

Skyscrapers and highways were typical structures that either urban Americans or travelers sighted and experienced in the United States during the 1940s-1960s. Their constructions and operations were nothing but an ordinary sight. It is impossible to recreate how a New Yorker have felt around their presence, but it is possible to imagine that it is not a mesmerizing view or a marvelous experience for them. At the

most, they perhaps feel ubiquitous around them, and the abnormal thing might have been not having them. However, these juggernauts were thoroughly Greek for the Turkish travelers. At best, these were utterly alien structures with an awe-inspiring sight and might. So, they were eager to share and analyze their experiences in an electrifying and sensational manner. Maybe ignorance is really a bliss. However, in an age without the internet, this justified ignorance created a unique experience for our travelers from a country with limited highways and no skyscrapers. So, this sub-chapter represents actual observations and analyses stemming from genuine shock and awe.

When you wander around the New York streets on your first day in the city, you cannot avert your eyes from the sky. It is not easy for people to adapt buildings with 50, 70, and 100 stories, especially if you are from a city where 10 or 12-story buildings are the highest. Looking above from under the 70-storied RCA building in Rockefeller Center or 102-storied Empire State Building, the world's tallest building on the 5th avenue, is an astonishing thing. I have to say this, what makes this astonishing is not the height of these buildings but what technical might was able to build these buildings, which heighten 380 meters, by piling every 102 stories.¹⁴⁶ After passing through Columbia University, we have entered what Americans call the "highway," which wraps every side of the United States, and it is one of the most beautiful automobile roads in the world. According to Mr. Jones, private companies built these marvelous roads. It is impossible for an automobile to pass a road and a bridge without paying the toll in New York and its surrounding areas. However, this system also convenes the best automobile roads in the United States, and it solved the road issue root and branch. I remembered how we were dealing with the municipality to remove the toll on bridges back in Istanbul. We said, "getting tolls when people are passing from the bridges is nothing but a primitive act!" However, our roads are not finished, and even the finished ones are distorted due to not being able to find maintenance fees.¹⁴⁷ We made our road trip around the United States, close to 3000 kilometers, with big busses with air conditioners. We did not see any one, single highway for arrivals and departures. Highways have always had 3-4 lanes and separate lanes for arrivals and departures. Every lane is reserved for separate velocities. Private companies built these highways and operated them through tollbooths by collecting the toll from the passing vehicles. They generally transfer their operative rights for these highways to their states at the end of 10 years of operation after earning their profit for their highway expenditures. After this transfer, those tollbooths still remain active, though but tolls become cheaper.

¹⁴⁶ Rado, *Amerikan Masalı*, 27.

¹⁴⁷ Rado, 82–85.

States use this money for the maintenance fee after its transfer from those companies. It is impossible not to marvel at how this mechanism operates solidly and perfectly. When I was an undergraduate student in Istanbul, we did everything we could not to pay for the toll while passing through Galata Bridge. Now I remember that buffoonery, and I just feel embarrassed. At that time, newspapers also criticized the tolls for the bridge and wrote that “no civilized nation has such an absurd application. This is nothing but beggary!” Unfortunately, all of those have been ungrounded and pretense... After 35 years, we see the United States, where the same system exists, with fascination and envy. New York has more than 15 bridges connecting Manhattan Island to other shores, while beautiful Istanbul, which we brag about its history, does not even have one single bridge connecting the Anatolian and European sides.¹⁴⁸

Rado is one of the travelers describing both highways and skyscrapers in his travel account. His first impression of skyscrapers includes bombshell, bewilderment, and astonishment with their heights, and the view they provided. However, his paramount amazement for these mighty sights of skyscrapers is what he calls “*the technical might*” of the United States at that time to be able to construct such buildings in one city easily. Nevertheless, this technical might Rado has encountered is not limited to skyscrapers, but highways are another aspect of this issue. This time, though, tolls play a critical role in constructing these highways since private companies are vital for building what Rado considers “*marvelous roads.*” Interestingly, Rado himself was against such tolls in Turkey and even called such an application “*primitive,*” while Turkey faced both maintenance and construction problems of roads. Although he did not clearly suggest upcoming implication, Rado’s deliberate comparison may suggest a criticism toward himself and Turkey’s issues with the roads. However, the certainty in this case for Rado is that he was impressed with the American system for the highways, which he considers “*one of the most beautiful roads in the world,*” unlike his previous experience with Turkey’s application, and American technical development for the skyscrapers. Köymen’s analyses contribute to Rado’s observation of the American system for the construction of highways. While he shared some

¹⁴⁸ Köymen, *İki Dev - İki Sistem, Rusya-Amerika: Gezilerden İzlenimler-Kıyaslamalar*, 158–59.

technical details about these highways, the vital part of his analysis of the highways is how Americans built them. Private companies have been mainly responsible for the construction and operation of these highways for a certain time until they are returned to their respective states. Tolls are the primary economic force for both private companies to undergo such constructions and states for the maintenance of these highways. In other words, tolls are a critical actor for Köymen as well. In fact, both travelers presented this system as a great system that provides these highways through a “solid and perfect mechanism.” However, although Köymen considers this system marvelous, he was in a similar position to Rado for tolls in Turkey, which he evaluates as “embarrassing” now. Nevertheless, he clearly criticized his behavior and newspapers’ approach toward this system and shared his fascination for the American system. His explicit criticism also included a comparison of New York and Istanbul, which did not have a single bridge to connect both sides of the city.

Americans have regarded their roads in a considerable manner for suitable traffic. Americans have covered their country with the most beautiful highways and the biggest bridges, just like how the human body is covered with blood vessels. When you go to one of those 60, 70 storied buildings and look below them, you will see roads and bridges the most. Almost no roads intersect with each other. To accomplish this task, they built underpasses, overpasses, and roads with multiple layers. Every highway has three or four separate lanes for every way, including the departure lane. The possibility of an accident on these highways is slim to none.¹⁴⁹

Uraz’s concentration is the technical qualities of the highways in the United States.

His first impression has been the complete coverage of what he calls “*the most beautiful highways and the biggest bridges*” around the living, pumping vessels of the United States from the view of skyscrapers. Then, as soon as he realized their existence from a possible magnificent view, he began to analyze the technical features of these roads. However, his last point puts the cherry on top of the cake: the highways

¹⁴⁹ Uraz, *Amerika Gezi Notları*, 26.

with possibilities of little to no accidents. While he manifestly indicated his wonderment for their technical qualities, a highway without a significant problem of accidents is beyond wonderment but aggrandized excelsior of these highways for Uraz.

That is Empire State Building! This building has a roof height of 380 meters. Even Eiffel Tower seems so tiny considering the height of this building, and it is a glistening chateau with 102 stories. Chrysler Building always changes its appearance to golden and crimson colors at night and radiates diverse luminaries. With its magnificent and deluxe crown, Chrysler is the world's second-tallest building. It is higher than Eiffel too, and its roof height is 318 meters. Wall Street is another jungle of skyscrapers. Chicago, San Francisco, Kansas City, Detroit, Pittsburg, Buffalo, and St. Louis are the cities of skyscrapers as well. Ultimately, they are the flags of American dynamism and willpower. However, New York, with its Empire State, grandiose Chrysler, the buildings of Rockefeller Center, and 60-storied majestic Woolworth Building, is notably the tangible form of American willpower.¹⁵⁰ New York is the United States itself in a way. This city's sky-scratching buildings are the symbol of American willpower, tenacity, and prosperity. We are visiting Empire State Building first. Although people tell and write about Empire State, one cannot overlook their experience for the alluring feeling of watching New York from the top of Empire State. It is an electrifying event for people to experience such feelings.¹⁵¹

Gedik and Oktay offer a concentrated perspective on only the skyscrapers. Apart from the embellished depictions of the buildings, what skyscrapers represent is the cornerstone of their observation. In their eyes, these artificial mountains of American architecture are the palatial fortresses of representation for the American "*willpower, dynamism, tenacity, and prosperity.*" While New York is the paramount archetypal city for this representation, Empire State is the ultimate one upon the United States, with qualities of a chateau or a first-time electrifying experience. In other words, rather than being technological wonders or massive centers for miscellaneous purposes, these buildings represented an overly-decorated perspective of the United States' developmental level in the eyes of travelers.

¹⁵⁰ Gedik, *Amerika*, 38–39.

¹⁵¹ Oktay, *Amerika*, 9–13.

If you ask me the most enticing and interesting type of travel in the United States, I will not say train or air travel despite their all comfort. The most enjoyable travel for this everlasting leviathan will be the one with automobiles. You can find at least two highways to even the remotest places, not to mention smooth, top-notch concrete roads of these highways like a lacework. When you call the automobile association, they provide free travel maps and books. You can easily find gas stations, restaurants, and perfect resting places for spending the night along the highway. You do not need to know any geographical knowledge about the United States to travel by automobile. You should only know some English, be a member of the automobile association and have a functioning car.¹⁵²

While Ögel provided her personal preference of travel types as the automobile, she also mentioned the quality highways of the United States just like the other travelers. Afterward, she described how to travel along the highway journey: drivers can obtain completely free guides to learn the roads, and the highways provide multifarious services for the comfort and requirement of the drivers. Ögel creates this aura that a highway journey in the United States is an effortless, simple, and smooth ordeal with modern caravanserais along the way and without any issues, like security.

If an American buys a car, they do not think about anything but paying its installments. When its wheels meet with the turnpikes, Americans can travel the country entirely at 50 miles per hour by ensuring all of their requirements on highways. These requirements also include their pets, such as cats or dogs. They can find veterinarians to treat their precious pets and pet shops to feed them. American industrialists have provided highways for automobiles, pretty and tiny motels for the highways, hot and cold waters for these motels, and phone booths per three miles. New York is a terrifying place in daylight, genial in the evening twilight, and spectacular at nightfall. You cannot escape the feeling of being a tiny atom whenever you bypass those sky-scratchers in daylight. However, during nightfall, those skyscrapers disgorge a heavenly light by radiating rays of light from every window...¹⁵³ Yesterday, I received a letter from Diyarbakır: “To be honest, we reproach your exaggerator-like behavior. Do you consider us fools? Go soak yourself! We have not seen the United States, but we have read it. Thankfully, even if we have not read it, we have logic.” They are demolishing a building and constructing a new one instead on one of the streets connected to 34th avenue. Suddenly, one of my friends showed me an erected sign: “Butler Corp Construction. The building will have 64 stories. The beginning date of this construction is October 29, 1953. The ending date is April 29, 1954.” Hello my logician friend from Diyarbakır! They will complete this construction of a 64-storied building in 6

¹⁵² Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde*, 43.

¹⁵³ Faik, 21-24.

months. What logic are you talking about? Still, the United States is a country beyond the logic of the east and Europe.¹⁵⁴

In his depictions, Faik presented the free American spirit in a way without referencing the democracy and liberalism in the country: the vast freedom of automobile journey. These highways of the United States are like a travelers' Silk Road to embark upon their petroleum-induced journeys. Indeed, these highways offer nothing but everything, even for pets. Faik's portrayal not only supported Ögel's depictions of the highway services but also indicated a successful structure of American industrialists to create such an atmosphere on these joyous highways of asphalt with the consideration of all possible needs of the travelers. Furthermore, while Faik painted artistic and philosophical imagery of feeling for standing below the skyscrapers with a grandiloquent approach, this was an unsatisfactory attempt to depict them to a reader of logic. In this challenge, Faik played his trump card with an anecdote about a sign of project for a 6-month construction of another skyscraper with 60 stories, thereby reminding his reader that "the United States is a country beyond logic."

This sub-chapter presented thrilled and impressed depictions of the skyscrapers and highways. While the travelers that mention the skyscrapers demonstrated a clear awe-inspired approach of aggrandizing their experiences below or in them, their observations on highways offer more straight analyses of being impressed with the facilities along the highways, the system of their construction, and easiness they provide for the new travelers with limited experience. The technical might of the United States to be able to construct such giants has been an august characteristic of the country for Rado, and the system of highways for their construction offers a functioning system without any issues that Rado was against in Turkey. In fact,

¹⁵⁴ Faik, 47.

Köymen shared a similar experience to Rado when he encountered the toll system for the construction payment of private companies and future maintenance revenues for the states with an impressed language. However, he also added criticism to both himself and Turkey's inability to erect a bridge for Istanbul. Uraz delved into the technical features of the highways with an analysis that these highways offer an environment with slim or without accidents, just like even God cannot sink the Titanic. Gedik and Oktay shared similar opinions about the representation of skyscrapers in their minds: the willpower of Americans. Ögel painted a relaxing scenery of highways with easiness to journey along the way without trouble thanks to the provision of the automobile association's free guides and facilities on the highways. Finally, Faik's depictions presented peculiar and thrilled images of American skyscrapers and highways with a logic that surpasses either Europeans or Easterners. In this full-meal course of skyscrapers and highways, Turkish travelers created positive and enthusiastic imagery of them with possible satisfaction from their experience.

3.3. Urban White Workers

In this sub-chapter, our travelers did not specify which workers they were talking about when they referred to them, their living and working conditions. We only learn that they are workers. This preference of the travelers may indicate that "workers" is an umbrella term for all the workers at that time in Turkey. In addition, since they did not visit, and even if they had visited, they did not mention the countryside in their works, it is safe to assume that these workers they had encountered were urban workers. Finally, as the study designated before, since they separately mention African-Americans rather than including them in the umbrella of Americans, it is presumably secure to clarify that these workers are White Americans. Thus, the title of

this subchapter will be “urban white workers” to specify where they are from and to which race they belong at least. Similar to African-American sub-chapter, this part will perhaps showcase some of the most aggrandized parts of the study for the White-American businesses and businessmen. In addition, unlike the main concentration of the separate analyses of the travelers’ observations before, except in some cases, since the arguments and observations for the workers have presented similar outlooks, such as the wealth of workers, American system and workers, and workers’ efficiency, the study will combine their observations for the analyses to avoid repetitive passages.

When someone mentions the workers, we tend to visualize a person with low living standards. Whereas in the United States, workers even have higher living standards than our dignitaries. Most of these workers own automobiles, fridges, radios, and dishwashers. Moreover, it is even possible for them to afford a house after a while in their work. If a worker's income is lower than the subsistence index, the federal state and their union will act immediately to aid. Indeed, this is a beautiful social guarantee!¹⁵⁵ High income naturally brings higher living standards after. The wealthy life standard is indeed like the best way to describe American workers’ way of living. They own radios, fridges, beautiful furniture with carpets, and even a medium-level car.¹⁵⁶ The living standards of working families in the United States are higher than in any other country. The factors that provide such high standards are the economic privileges of citizens thanks to mass production. Housing is one of the problems that all countries struggle with, including the United States. Nevertheless, it is an unquestionable fact that American workers are superior to the others in this matter. Many American workers own their houses. Approximately all of these workers have telephones, electric or coal gas ovens, fridges, washing machines, electric iron, toasters, radios, electric vacuum cleaner, and sewing machines. When it comes to clothing, a worker's wife does not wear different clothes than a wife of a lawyer who works in a famous company.¹⁵⁷ You cannot see shabby, tatterdemalion men in London streets; everyone is clean. However, everyone is elegant and chic in New York. A worker cannot buy great clothes with their weekly salary in Europe. Either the market will be expensive, or their salary will not cover the price. However, the prices are so harmonious in the United States that such a phenomenon will never occur.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Rado, *Amerikan Masalı*, 104.

¹⁵⁶ Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde*, 82.

¹⁵⁷ Oktay, *Amerika*, 67–68.

¹⁵⁸ Faik, *Sam Amca'nın Evinde*, 33.

Four travelers concentrated on the living standards and wealth of the American workers in their observations. Except for Faik, all of them mentioned how the workers were able to own houses and decorated their homes with household furniture and electrical appliances as a transparent sign of wealth. Specifically, Rado argued that the American workers were even more affluent than Turkish dignitaries and shared his observation about how their union and the government will aid them hastily in time of need. While Ögel described the living standards of American workers as “wealthy,” Oktay even presented these standards as the highest of all and superior to all the others, thanks to mass production. The final piece that Oktay and Faik mentioned was clothing. Both of them portrayed an environment where Americans are able to buy elegant clothes in equal conditions. To support their observation, Oktay made an argument that wives of workers and lawyers wear in a similar fashion, and Faik compared Britain with the United States by demonstrating a harmony of the market that allows equal buying conditions for lower and upper classes. So, in their eyes, American workers are living better than themselves in terms of buying quality goods. Such wording approach might represent another bias toward workers living in good conditions as an element of surprise, like how Rado mentions the classical visualization of workers as people with “*low living standards.*” However, it also signifies an observation of an exalted quality of the United States as a country of wealthy workers for the travelers.

The United States is one of the countries in the world where communism can never prevail because there are no unemployed people here. Everyone has agreed that they cannot earn without working. The shortest cut for living humane and better is to work however you wish in a liberal environment. Moreover, more production also provides more income to the workers. Every worker must work a certain amount of time. Thus, daily production rates are never lower than determined rates. On the contrary, they are usually higher than the determined ones. Therefore, workers earn even more with this

system.¹⁵⁹ Workers will never support an antagonist movement toward the capital, and they believe in earning by returning profits. Employers and workers are directing their labor force and capital to the best production and profits and trying to live together in peace. Employers also need to research to improve the labor force and dignity in their business. This parallel development between both sides generates the federal state's fundamental political, economic, and social power. Masses of workers are the most vital assistants of democracy, the best regime among the existing regimes, and they are the most vehement enemies of communism because they cannot possess a wealthy life standard of American level in any other country or regime.¹⁶⁰ American workers owe their all wealth, fortune, peace, and security to the democratic order. Today, the salaries and wealthy life of the American workers are superior to any country. In this vein, if some people want to defame the social order of the United States, they will concentrate on to find problems, inadequacies, and disarrays in workers' issues, and they will try to defame the United States from those. No matter what they say, the welfare level of American workers is a flawless perfection that the other workers around the globe will be jealous.¹⁶¹

In this part, three travelers mentioned the relationship between the American economic and political system and American workers. This part also includes the Cold War environment with a public enemy number one in western Alliance, communism, and whether American workers gravitate toward communism. Uraz presented liberalism as an environment of working humanely and communism as an impossibility for the United States because of an existence of a well-operated social and economic system with no unemployment that allows the workers to earn even more. On the other hand, Çınar portrayed a harmonious relationship between the workers and employers that augments the influence of the federal state. However, perhaps the most significant aspect of his analysis is how he portrayed the workers as “*the vehement enemies of communism.*” While they are assisting democracy, a system of government rather than an economic order, to flourish since they cannot have their wealthy life standards under any regime or anywhere besides the United States, they also oppose the alternative of communism as the pragmatic knights of the democratic order. Binat also

¹⁵⁹ Uraz, *Amerika Gezi Notları*, 47–49.

¹⁶⁰ Çınar, *Amerika'da Gördüklerimin Düşündürdükleri*, 10.

¹⁶¹ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 76–77.

emphasized American workers' wealth and so-called superiority, but he did it with a different route. Instead of their possession of quality material goods as the sign of wealth, his emphasis rests on how democracy enabled this wealth, similar to Çınar's point. Nevertheless, he considers possible criticisms and perhaps defamations toward the American system as denigrations of an efficiently working system, which even the other workers of the world can be envious because of the overly-emphasized wealth of workers as the ultimate proof. Consequently, the travelers of this part appreciated and praised both the economic and political system of the United States for its workers, which contribute their wealth massively in travelers' analyses. They also demonstrated workers' appreciation for this American system with their adamant behavior against communism. In short, a harmonious, cooperative, and united front of workers and employers for American democracy and liberalism.

Both employers and workers meticulously and perfectly protect their interests. On the other hand, while workers know how to defend their rights, they also know how to be beneficial to their employers, and they earn a fortune. This country, which rightly values the worth of human labor, does not only discover the ways to obtain maximum efficiency from it but also regards their welfare by giving their credit. This approach has decreased regrets and concerns and increased the efficiency of the workers. All of these chains, these connected factors to each other, operate positively, and therefore, the living standards of Americans have become the best in the world.¹⁶²The productivity of workers in a country depends on the quality, health conditions, intelligence, and education. Increasing rates in these elements will raise productivity. When productivity increases, the abovementioned elements will provide positive developments. First, it is enough to remember that public health and education stand at a high-water mark in the United States. The second considerable element affecting workers' productivity is the production's mechanization levels. This economic capital indicates means of production, facilities, installations, means of transportation, and existing raw and semi-manufactured materials. American production's mechanization is developing at a speed and scale that you will not encounter anywhere. While mechanization provides an easy and uniform environment for the workers, businesses investigate the effects of this mechanization on production by considering the social characteristics of workers. These investigations include morale, complaints, concerns, health

¹⁶² Soyukut Ögel, *Rüyalar Ülkesinde*, 82–83.

conditions, selections, education, encouragement, promotion, discipline, salaries, and workers' connection to the production.¹⁶³

Two travelers discussed the efficiency of American workers. The welfare of workers has become a typical theme of travelers' analyses with different outlines, and Ögel continues in this vein. While Ögel also mentions a similar harmonic order between employers and workers, she also argues how the American system, which accomplished to create the best living standards in the world for her, enables workers to reach maximum efficiency with the high value of human labor by providing welfare to them. Au contraire to all travelers, Akin provides a quasi-academic analysis to describe this effectiveness of American workers. He separated this analysis into two parts to implicitly argue how productive American workers are: social and mechanical development for productivity. While he presented social standards of the United States, such as health system and education, as top quality, mechanization falls under the close position with "*a speed and scale that you will not encounter anywhere.*" In other words, both the travelers presented an ideal system that maximizes the efficiency of the workers through welfare and high development.

This sub-chapter exhibits fairly concerted analyses on American workers with three constant themes: welfare, place of workers in the American system, and efficiency of American workers. Possessing quality material goods demonstrated a sign of wealthiness in the eyes of the abovementioned four travelers; hence, they painted a picture of wealthy American workers from urban zones. Then, the other three travelers portrayed a harmonious order for the workers in the American liberal and democratic system with wealth; therefore, they composed a song of knights of labor with an adamant tendency against communism for the protection of this system. In the finale,

¹⁶³ Akin, *Amerika'yi Tanımak İstedim*, 174–77.

two travelers presented a great environment with high values of human labor, socially developed conditions for workers' health and education, and rapidly ever-improving progress of mechanization to maximize the efficiency of workers; thus, they narrated the story of a grand accomplishment for the productivity of workers. Conclusively, all three pieces of the travelers combined the perfect art with a highly functioning, beneficial, and profitable system for the urban white workers.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Edward Said's well-acclaimed and influential masterpiece, *Orientalism*, paved the way for the debates and studies about both orientalism and occidentalism in academic circles. However, occidentalism has no work of magnum opus, just like Said's *Orientalism*, to be meticulously and definitively crafted as a concept. Instead, the studies of occidentalism are oriented to bestow their own definitions or depictions through their sources, and this study is no exception to this tendency. After portraying the protean concepts of orient and occident, though, instead of wholly focusing on the primary accounts, the previous definitions of these studies to occidentalism became the sources to aid for crafting this description. Through the abovementioned description of occidentalism and its methodology, the analyses for the works of previously-studied Turkish occidentalism established its particular concepts and qualities as occidentalist works: a tendency of generalization for the consideration of the west as a tool to accelerate Ottoman/Turkish scientific and technological development, and the west as a morally decaying civilization that is inferior to Turco-Islamic civilization. This contrasting imagery also provided tendencies of hegemony-

seeking, sexist, and self-comforting characteristics during the 19th and 20th centuries for Turkish Occidentalism. Nevertheless, Turkish occidentalism is not only limited to these concepts or characteristics but also generalized visualization and conceptualization of the west. Alternatively, the selected travelers of this study offer a separate route from them to display another example of Turkish occidentalism with entirely different features. An upcoming example will facilitate to form them.

Some Europeans perceive the current American civilization as a masterpiece of a success story conducted in modern technique and industrial and technical fields. The people who have acknowledged this theory shortly want to apprise how Americans are inadequate and plain in real cultural fields that develop the human soul like philosophy and art. Americans also have been thinking about this subject occasionally. After comparing ancient Greek civilization with scientific and artistic foundations, and fugacious Carthaginian civilization due to total commercial base, deceased Harvard University president A. Lawrence Lowell wondered “whether the United States is in danger of becoming like Carthage?” I think it is unwarranted to ask this question or be concerned over it: newly opened hundreds of art museums, worldwide philharmonic orchestras in various big cities, hundreds of art galleries in metropolitan areas or university towns, growing great interest in the last quarter century for opera, dance, and melodramas, and the recent developments on literary and plastic arts are the basic foundations of American civilization.¹⁶⁴

Binat’s examination and answer to Lowell’s questioning summarized the observations, analyses, notions, and arguments of Turkish travelers in the study about the United States brilliantly, except for their exclusive characteristics for African-Americans. He challenged the implicitly material understanding with his argument through examples similar to how travelers in the well-known infamous biases sub-chapter challenged the negative interpretation of materialism and consumerism through their concept of “comfort,” demonstrating an astonishment even when Lowell was questioning just like how travelers in sub-chapters of skyscrapers and highways and universities/colleges demonstrated their amazement for American technical development or so-called American honor system in exams, and provided imagery that contains an incredibly

¹⁶⁴ Binat, *Burası Amerika: Bir Geziden Notlar*, 81–82.

active artistic society similar to how the other sub-chapters provided an American dream that maintains highly-functional socio-economic, political and cultural systems and values with excellent living standards, and morally mature and vigorous, moderately religious, dynamically industrious, respectful and tolerable society. In short, the qualities of their occidentalism included amazement, praise, respect, and fondness for the United States with an aggrandizing outlook for Euro-Americans. The search for comfort and higher living standards were the vital components of materialism and consumerism in the United States. Religion is a harmonious and beneficial tool for American social and political life without any disrespectful understanding against other believers. White people either respected the blacks without any indication of segregation or tolerated them despite their regressive and tribal behaviors. Universities were all harmonious structures with excellent facilities and exam systems without any problems of exclusive nature. Skyscrapers and highways were more than pieces of technological progress in the eyes of travelers; but they were embellished, astonishing works of infrastructure and construction that surpass logic. Workers lived a great life with profitable salaries and a significant role against communism as the folk heroes of liberalism in an efficient work environment with caring business people for their living standards and working conditions.

However, it is also fair to ask this question: what makes their tale aggrandizing? Their observations and analyses about materialism-consumerism indicated a general assumption as if all Americans had the same luxury of pursuing higher living standards and comfort in a brutally segregated society. In religion, they overlooked the fact that Protestantism also had historically exclusive movements and bigotry that caused severe problems to various groups such as Native Americans, Catholics, and African-Americans with tenets like Manifest Destiny. Moreover, the 1950s and 1960s

included the rise of the reactionary evangelical-right political bloc, especially in the Republican Party, against the civil rights movement, and groups like the John Birch Society that promoted religiously conservative tenets against the civil rights movements and second-wave feminism. The sub-chapter of African-Americans either portrayed a paradise of harmony between both whites and blacks without any segregation or conflicts or hell for whites because of black violence without referring to any historical details between both sides. Furthermore, their attempts to portray the blacks are mainly through white-washed lenses like the appreciation of white politicians' efforts to abolish segregation or disparaging African-Americans by projecting racist generalizations on them. In these white-washed lenses, the trauma caused by the brutal conditions of previous slavery and the poor economic conditions from the inhumane segregation were supposedly unregarded issues that only blacks cared about and reminded the fight for equality with the civil rights movement. They excluded the financial liabilities of the students that create an economically exclusive nature for rich people and the problems that minorities, females, communists (especially with McCarthyism), and people with non-traditional genders faced in the universities sub-chapter. Their astonishment and perplexity about skyscrapers and highways reached a point that they acted like they discovered El Dorado, Mu Continent, or Shangri-La for American technological development. Finally, they generalized the conditions of American workers through narrowed and limited experiences and observations with an exclusive approach that only concentrates on the urban areas without including the others, such as minority workers, female workers, miners, prison labor, or agricultural workers.

Nevertheless, unlike the previous examples of Turkish occidental literature, Turkish travelers who journeyed to the United States constituted a completely new one: an

example of Turkish occidentalism with qualities of being astonished by an aggrandizing nature within a specific manner through the white people of the United States during the 20th century. While the characteristics of material western superiority but moral inferiority without a future and self-comfort through the mirror of the west were dominant concepts in the previous examples, the selected Turkish travelers showed concepts of American material and ethereal balance with a healthy future, industrious and functioning systems in both sides, a possible exemplary nation for both technological and moral development, and self-criticism through the development of the United States. Their observations, analyses, notions, and arguments provide a valuable example of another form for Turkish Occidentalism distinct from the examples of previous studies. Therefore, they constitute why Turkish Occidentalism is not only limited under the boundaries of previous examples.

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