4 *Adab* as the art to make the right choice between local tradition and Western values

A comparative analysis of Khalīl al-Khūrī's *Way, idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī!* (1859) and Aḥmed Midḥat's *Felāṭūn Beğ ile Rāḳım Efendī* (1875), or: On the threshold of inventing national Middle Eastern cultures

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This chapter: After having had a look, in the preceding chapter, into the more properly linguistic aspects of the Nahḍa – the morpho-semantics of key Nahḍa terminology – Chapter 4 will now open a section that seeks to 'zoom in' on how some key concepts were used by the emerging/emerged subjects to process the changing world around them, both mentally and emotionally. As already mentioned towards the end of Chapter 3, Nahḍa language had not only to coin new terms (with the help of the devices discussed in Chapter 3) but very often also used existing terms to describe, analyse, criticise, lament, etc., this rapidly changing world. One of these old terms – actually an extremely old one, with a centuries-old history – is *adab*. It so happened that most of the voices of emerging subjectivity that we know of were public writers (sg. *kātib ʿāmm*) who belonged to the group of educated, learned people called *udabāʾ* (sg. *adīb*), a term that is usually rendered as "literati" in English, or "*hommes de lettres*" in French, and which, analysed in terms of its morpho-semantics, i.e., as a *FaʿīL* noun, originally means "someone in whom a lot of *adab* is concentrated", "someone possessing plenty of *adab*", or simply "person of *adab*". What is this *adab*? As we said, the term is very old and, as such, it can also look back on a long history of semantic development. Heribert Horst has summarised this development as follows: "Tradition → traditionelle (Herzens- und Verstandes-) Bildung → Bildung → Bildungsliteratur → Literatur".[1]

1 In my own approximative English translation: "tradition → tradition-informed formation (of the heart and mind) → formation, learning, cultivation (in general) → writings on formation, learning, culture (in general) → literature" – Horst 1987, 208. – Horst is aware of the shortcomings of this summary, which in fact is a 'summary of a summary', namely of the chart into which

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As these definitions show, *adab* is basically a type of cultural *knowledge*, acquired through education and learning; knowledge about things, persons, customs, norms, etc., that helps to do things properly. This essential function has not changed over the centuries, though, evidently, the variable has been filled with various meanings in the course of time, reflecting its modified function in changing societies. While medieval handbooks about *adab al-mulūk* or *adab al-qāḍī* sought to supply the reader/user with all that was needed to do a proper job as a king or judge, the type of knowledge that is needed during the Nahḍa and that the modern *adīb* is expected to provide is concerned mainly with the greatest challenge of the time, that is, the difficult navigation between 'tradition' and 'modernity'. The fact that *adab* mainly is a type of *knowledge* triggers, it is clear, mostly the mental, rational capacities of the emerging/emerged subject: the *adīb* is approached as a critical analyst of the world, a person who knows the old traditions as well as the many new, 'modern' and progressive ideas and objects that have flooded the East, so that within a short time two antagonistic systems, or world orders, have begun to compete with each other and it has become very difficult to navigate between the two, each coming with its own centuries-old complex set of rules, norms, and laws, as well as not-to-dos, restrictions, taboos, etc. However, as much as *adab* is about providing the right knowledge and a matter of the critical, analytic mind, as much it is also about feelings, due to the complexity and intensity of the dilemma Middle Eastern subjects find themselves in during this crucial period. While medieval handbooks and *adab* encyclopaedias still could treat their topics in a rather 'cool' way, in the style of learned treatises, this type of handbooks and encyclopaedias is now, during the Nahḍa, gradually being replaced by *novels*, and the *adīb* is not only transforming into a *kātib ʿāmm* (public writer and intellectual), but also into a novelist and playwright.

This Chapter 4 presents two of the very earliest examples of novelistic writing in the Middle East, one Arabic and one Turkish (in this way demonstrating the general *Middle Eastern*, not only Arabic dimension of the phenomena that will be addressed).[2] The chapter will, however, not so much focus on the challenges the new *genre* posed as such, i.e., on what it meant for the new *udabāʾ* to design *novels*;[3] rather, it will present in some detail the many aspects of Middle Eastern life – material (objects, artefacts), intellectual, ideological, psychological, ethical,

Carlo Alfonso Nallino (1872–1938) tried to squeeze the essential findings of his seminal twenty-pages study (Nallino 1948).

2 Other chapters of the present book that will widen the perspective to include a Turkish dimension are especially Chapters 6, 15, 18, and 19.

3 For a discussion of questions related to the new genre itself, conform below Chapters 6 and 7.

and more – that are discussed, or better: staged, in the texts. I will do so with the aim of conveying to the reader of this chapter an idea of the breadth and multitude of everyday questions that Middle Eastern subjects saw themselves confronted with, and hence also of the intensity of emotional engagement and the urgency of psychological pressure this confrontation exerted on the subjects (in a way, the chapter therefore is about the power of the *objects*). The fact that the world was changing so rapidly and to such a large and deep extent was not something that could simply be understood, grasped intellectually and digested mentally; rather, it was something *felt*, lived, experienced *physically*, i.e., *embodied*, in almost every moment of daily life, and this is why *adab* now also became a stage for the exemplary enactment of ethical and emotional conflicts, of dramas of morality, questions of identity, honour and shame, virtue, dignity, and other aspects, including the explicit expression of painfully disturbing as well as pleasantly enjoyed emotions and sentiments. *Adab* was no longer catering only to certain professions or dealing with 'luxurious' matters of a court elite (such as the refined art of courtly love, treated in Ibn Ḥazm's famous *Tawq al-ḥamāma*, "The Dove's Necklace"); now, *adab* was becoming a vehicle for the negotiation of pressing issues of everybody's life, including deeply felt psychological-emotional crises. This aspect of emotionalism – a key marker of emerging subjectivity and the human beings' wish to assert themselves – will be addressed towards the end of this chapter, but is discussed in more detail in other chapters below, especially Chapters 9 and 11 (and to some extent also Chapter 10).

As can be expected from the chapter's title, the Nahḍawī *adīb* will be introduced here as a kind of arbiter, a person who regards himself, and is regarded by the readership, as capable of making the right choice between an inherited set of values and a new, Western one. The detailed presentation of these values as discussed by Khalīl al-Khūrī and Aḥmed Midḥat will, however, not only illustrate several modes of emerging subjects' desire for self-affirmation. It will also show that, in the texts under discussion, emerging subjectivity appears, first and foremost, as a phenomenon of an emerging *middle class* that seeks to establish itself as a new social player, a voice that should be heard, and a group that should be granted an authoritative, guiding position in society. The comparison of an Arabic text with a (roughly) contemporaneous Turkish one will demonstrate that the Arabic Nahḍa is only one out of several other *Middle Eastern* variants of very similar phenomena, and the fact that both authors at about the same time discuss two competing sets of values that appear as two different 'systems' or 'orders of things' nicely demonstrates, again, that the 'global' period of Reproductionism

in which the Middle Eastern mid-nineteenth century participates,[4] is a period in which individuals (in their subjectivity, aspiring to something new) deal with large complex *systems* or *orders of things* that appear as sets of rules, norms, or laws that claim general validity and obeyance. We will, again, see that the individual emerging/emerged subject is already strong enough to critically ponder the pros and cons and make an informed choice (a good indicator of this strength is often the satirical mode in which the rejected aspects of the new order are ridiculed); the result of this choice, however, does still not consist in a radical rupture with the existing order but rather in an individually adjusted reproduction of the old system. Rotraud Wielandt's "certifier-on-call" (*Bestätiger vom Dienst*), a character whose appearance in Middle Eastern texts of the period is a telling marker of emerging subjectivity's lack of self-confidence, features prominently in Aḥmed Midḥat's text (and, in a way, also in al-Khūrī's), a fact that allows us to regard the two novels as documents of an attitude towards the world that is still not under the influence of global "Creativism" but rather resembles that of the *Biedermeier* or the Victorian age in Europe. This becomes evident as soon as we take a look at the componential structure of the texts.[5] In al-Khūrī's *Way*, *idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī*, for instance, this structure can be summarised as follows:

Actuality:	The *wujūd ahlī*, lit. "local way of being there", i.e., the authentic, indigenous way of life, including old-fashioned mores, dress codes, behaviour, etc., and, in this text particularly, the well-established practice of marrying daughters to a male member of the extended family
Potentiality:	The protagonist Mīkhālī's arrogant wish to elevate himself above his fellow countrymen by imitating European lifestyle, in particular his attempt to leave behind the despised cultural identity by marrying his daughter Émilie to a Frenchman and so overcome the *wujūd ahlī* for something allegedly better and more civilised
Resultant:	The painful recognition of the insurmountability of the naturally given identity and a regretful insight into the positive aspects of the *wujūd ahlī*

With these features, the PAR (Potentiality-Actuality-Resultant) structure of *Way, idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī* clearly represents a specification of the PAR structure of the 'global' period of "Reproductionism" as described by Falk:

4 For details on "Reproductionism", see above, introduction to Chapter 1 (internal periodisation of the Nahḍa) as well as Chapter 2 and, below, Chapter 18.

5 Cf. ibid. for the method of "Component Analysis".

Actuality:	The general and the lawful, dominating in space
Potentiality:	The specific and the unique, tending towards renewal
Resultant:	The individualised reproduction of the general

We will recognize the very same structure in many other texts discussed in the chapters to follow, especially Chapters 5 (on Ḥusayn al-Marṣafī's "Eight Key Concepts"), Chapter 8 (on Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq's "Leg over leg"), Chapter 10 (on Salīm al-Bustānī's "A Modern Girl"), and in a late Ottoman-Turkish version, in Chapter 18 (on Ḫālid Żiyā Uşaklıgil's "Forbidden Love").

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4.1 Introduction

Doch in der Mitten,
Liegt holdes Bescheiden.
(But midway between / Lies blessed moderation.)
Eduard Mörike (1804–75), *Gebet* (Prayer)[6]

During the nineteenth century the Middle East witnessed a steadily increasing European dominance not only in the military, economic and political fields. The later in this period we examine the region's societies the deeper we find them affected also by social, religious, moral and ethical change, brought about by, among other factors, the many reforms with which the governments aimed to meet the new challenges.

As a consequence of European hegemony, but also of increased travel activity between Europe and the East[7] and a number of 'Oriental' study missions that had come in close contact with Western civilisation since the first half of the century, and not the least due to the presence of many Europeans in the Middle East, Easterners not only became acquainted more and more with European literature, music and art; in fact, Western ways of life and Western fashion spread to the degree that Eastern societies felt themselves exposed to something like a 'global' standard they had to adapt to, or at least keep up with.

With the printing press becoming *the* major means of communication since the 1860s, the journalistic and literary genres favoured in the newspapers and

6 The ideal of moderation and balancing between the extremes in Biedermeier, exemplarily expressed in Eduard Mörike's (1804–1875) poem *Gebet* ("Prayer"), congenially set to music by Hugo Wolf (1860–1903). Quotation from: Hugo Wolf, *Complete Songs*, accompanying booklet.
7 For the case of Ottoman diplomats at embassies in Europe, cf. Bouquet 2020.

periodicals of the time served as key instruments to discuss political events, to monitor the many new phenomena that were appearing everywhere in everyday life, to address the challenges of 'progress' and the 'civilisation process', and ponder the pros and cons, the purposefulness and necessity or, as the case may be, meaninglessness, if not harmfulness of all kinds of innovations and reforms.

One of the most prominent processes critical observers of their times began to register from, roughly, the 1850s onwards, was the ubiquitous and obviously steadily accelerating and intensifying spread of European fashion, ways of life, behaviour and etiquette that came in addition to the official reforms and their introduction of Western-type institutions in all areas, from the military and state administration to the educational system, legislation and jurisdiction. Given the fact that all this created sharp contrasts compared to how things had been before, to one's own tradition and previous identity, the fascination with everything Western became also an important topic of contemporary literature. More precisely, the evidently widespread phenomenon of uncritical and ignorant imitation of European manners and ways to dress etc. not only produced specific (and rather deprecatory) terms in the languages of the Middle East – *tafarnuj* in Arabic, *alafrangalık* in Turkish[8] – but it also triggered a sub-genre in its own right in literary writing: Euromania satire. In the following, I will analyse two key texts of this type, one from the Levant and one from Ottoman Turkey, in order to discuss the main features of this sub-genre and what it may tell us about the way intellectuals tried to negotiate reasonable compromises between the need to modernise on the one hand, and to retain a sound pride in the achievements and advantages of one's own 'indigenous' culture, on the other.[9] I will show that the discourse on the 'Europeanisers' bears in itself the germs of a 'nationalisation' of European/Western vs. Eastern culture[10] and that the ability to make the right choice between both became itself a marker of *adab*.

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8 Ar. *tafarnuj* is a verbal noun, denominative from *ifranj* 'Frank' (i.e., European), and means the (mostly ridiculous) adoption and blind imitation of European manners; Tu. *alafrangalık* is an abstract formation in *-lık*, from Italian *alla franca* "in the Frankish style". Almost a century later, in 1962, Iranian writer Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad coined the less neutral term *gharb-zadegi* "Westosis, Westoxification, Weststruckness" that already reflects a later stage of viewing the phenomenon. For a general definition, cf. Lewis, "Tafarnuḏj" [2012c].

9 The analysis here is based on the more detailed study of these texts in my postdoctoral dissertation: Guth 2003b, 10–47, and later *passim*, esp. § 82e.

10 Cf. ʿAbd al-Tawwāb's characterisation of one of the novels to be analyzed here as an expression of an "early consciousness of Arab identity" (*waʿy mubakkir bi-l-huwiyya al-ʿarabiyya*). ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, introduction to al-Khūrī, *Way*, 10.

Way, idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī! ("Woe, so I'm not a European then!") by the Lebanese writer Khalīl al-Khūrī (1836–1907)[11] was first published in 1859. According to Rotraud Wielandt, the text is the earliest Western-type Arabic narrative text we know of,[12] and it is of course highly noteworthy that this pioneering exploration by an Arab author into a new genre has precisely the *tafarnuj* as its topic[13] and takes place in a leading journal of the time, the impact of which obviously was so important that the moment it was founded made a contemporary feel that he was standing at the threshold of a new era.[14] – The Ottoman novel with which al-Khūrī's text will be compared, *Felāṭūn Beğ ile Rāḳım Efendī* ("Platon Bey and Rāḳım Efendi"), is from 1875, authored by the best-known, and probably also the most prolific, pioneer of modern Turkish fiction, Aḥmed Midḥat (1844–1913).[15] It is certainly not the first Turkish novel[16] but, like al-Khūrī's text, the first to make the Euromaniac one of its protagonists.[17] Before we proceed to the analysis proper, short synopses of the two novels' contents will be helpful.

4.2 Synopses

Way, idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī: Émilie, the daughter of a well-off merchant from Aleppo named Mīkhālī, is in love with her mother's cousin, Asʿad. Her mother supports Émilie's and Asʿad's plans to marry, since Asʿad seems to be a good and

11 For biographical information, cf. the introductory sections of the two recent editions of *Way* by ʿAbd al-Tawwāb (2007, 5–10) and Dāghir (2009, esp. 15–31).

12 Wielandt 1980, 130. – Both ʿAbd al-Tawwāb (2007) and Dāghir (2009) label it "the first Arabic novel (*riwāya*)" in the subtitles of their editions. The novel is not discussed in El-Enany 2006.

13 According to Lewis [2012c], al-Khūrī's novel is the earliest text in Arabic featuring the term *tafarnuj* (but it may be older).

14 Buṭrus al-Bustānī, in his famous lecture on *Ādāb al-ʿarab*, held on Feb. 15, 1859, praising the opening of the Syrian Press (al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya) in Beirut, with al-Khūrī as its director, as a landmark "that will be remembered by the sons of our country (*abnāʾ al-waṭan*)" as the "capture of the stronghold whose benefits our ancestors were ignorant of" (*al-ḥiṣn al-ḥaṣīn alladhī ghafala al-mutaqaddimūn ʿan fawāʾidih*). The metaphor used by al-Bustānī is actually that of the Atlantic Ocean: "[it is] as if I was standing at the shores of the big sea (*al-baḥr al-kabīr*) that separates the Old World from the New World". Quoted in ʿAbd al-Tawwāb's introduction to his edition of al-Khūrī's novel: al-Khūrī, *Way*, 7.

15 On him, see (among many others) Lewis, "Aḥmad Midḥat" [2012a], or the entry on the author in *TBEA*, 1: 27–32.

16 On the debate about which work could/should be counted as such, cf. Strauss 2003, 39, with n. 5–7.

17 Moran 1983/1990, 1:32.

reliable match: he is a decent young man, virtuous in every respect, from a honorable family. Mīkhālī, however, is against this marriage. For he thinks of himself as a European, superior to his Arab-Oriental fellow countrymen. In his class conceit-like arrogance he believes that a 'barbarian' like Asʿad is not good enough for Émilie, whom he himself has raised as a young 'European' lady. Against Asʿad, who in Mīkhālī's eyes would be a son-in-law below his own rank, the father favours another candidate, a Frenchman called Edmond who has arrived in Aleppo only recently and – allegedly – is of aristocratic descent. Mīkhālī is quick in disregarding his wife's well-founded doubts and suspicions about Edmond's identity, forbidding her once and for all to interfere in his efforts to marry Émilie to the "count" (*Comte*) Edmond. For some time it looks as if Mīkhālī's plans could be crowned with success: Although the "count" soon realises that Mīkhālī and Émilie are far from being like Europeans he continues to play the game, for he enjoys the company of beautiful Émilie. Émilie, in turn, after some initial scruples, is soon ready to abandon her earlier fiancé, faithful Asʿad, and instead grant her favour to *Comte* Edmond – only to find, however, that the latter one day has left the country, head over heels. It turns out that Edmond in reality is nothing but a waiter who had fled from France in order to avoid prosecution for a crime he had committed. On top of that, on leaving he rebuffs Mīkhālī, speaking out the truth he had concealed from him so far, namely, that a genuine European like him would never marry an Arab girl like Émilie. Thus, Mīkhālī begins to understand, painfully, that Edmond had not accepted him as the European he himself had believed he was: "Alas then, I'm not a European!" Émilie, whose coquettish hopes all have collapsed with Edmond's sudden departure, for some time tries to win back Asʿad whose faithfulness she had betrayed. But Asʿad is clever enough to see through the game and turns away from her, deeply hurt in his feelings. On this, Émilie, full of remorse and as a broken woman, decides to become a nun.

Felāṭūn Beğ ile Rāḳım Efendī: The novel has two main story-lines running parallel to each other, connected in time and space only through the fact that the protagonists of each, Rāḳım Efendī and the 'Euromaniac' Felāṭūn Beğ, respectively, know and meet each other on certain occasions, mostly by chance somewhere in town, or in the house of the rich Englishman Mr Ziklas who, together with his wife and two daughters, has settled in Istanbul's Asmalımescit quarter in order to spend his retirement there. The two plots are designed as a comparison between two contrasting approaches to life: Felāṭūn is rich, Rāḳım lives in rather humble circumstances; lazy Felāṭūn squanders the money he has inherited from his father (and eventually goes bankrupt), while Rāḳım cannot do much on his meagre salary, but calculates diligently and in this way manages to

make life a bit more agreeable every now and then; Felāṭūn is quite an ignorant, Rāḳım on the other hand is highly cultured and knowledgeable, etc. In addition, the author also conceptualises the contrast between the two antipodes as an opposition between Felāṭūn's ridiculous imitation of European lifestyle and Rāḳım's being at peace with himself and his 'Turkish'[18] (*alaturka*) way of life.

The novel has an episodic structure where each new event is a little story in its own right, more or less independent of what happened before or what comes after. However, all of them serve to illustrate, again and again, the contrasting characters of the protagonists and pros and cons of their lifestyles and philosophies.

There are too many such episodes to go into detail here. Suffice it to say that, towards the end of the novel, Felāṭūn Bey has dissipated his father's money in luxury, letting his French mistress and her accomplices fleece him at the casino. He is forced to leave Istanbul for a distant island in the Mediterranean where he has been lucky enough to get the position of a *mutaṣarrıf*[19] and will spend the rest of his life working hard to slowly reduce the immense loan he had to take up in order to pay his debts. On the other side we see a happy Rāḳım, who has a good job and is looking forward now to marry Cānān, a ravishingly beautiful young Circassian woman whom he has bought some years ago as a slave girl to help his ageing black foster mother and who, under Rāḳım's own tutelage, has grown up now and become a cultivated lady in every respect.

4.3 Themes, motifs, characters

Since the emergence of the printing press had triggered an interpretation of *adab* writing as a commenting *in public* on issues of *public* interest,[20] the new literary genres like theatre and the novel saw it as their fundamental task to take up such issues and expose them to public discussion. A precondition of commenting and criticising contemporary 'hot topics' was to monitor and *register* what was changing. One major feature of change as described in the texts is the *speed* with which it took place and the *extent* to which it befell the societies the authors were living in. Quite significantly, we read for instance in al-Khūrī's introduction to his novel that "whoever comes to our city [Beirut] from the East [where everything is

18 In single quotation marks because this is clearly a construct of the author's. In reality, Rāḳım's 'Turkish'-ness contains many 'Western' elements, esp. his protestant-like work ethos and sense of economy (see below).

19 On this see Findley, "Mutaṣarrif" [2012].

20 Cf. Dupont 2010.

still more traditional] will without doubt find that it has changed *stupendously* in *many respects* within *only a few years*".[21] The novels under discussion therefore are eager to register the many aspects of this change in *great detail* and with an almost scientific *accuracy* that alone would be sufficient to make them a highly valuable source for any research on the cultural history of the Middle East at the time.[22] From *Way* we learn, for example, that *café au lait* and tomato sauce (*sālsa*) seem to have reached the country only recently since they are still regarded as something novel (to be explained in a footnote! – al-Khūrī, 1860, 73) and typically European. In many places people are beginning to use knife and fork (ibid., 38), and not a few men have started to wear trousers (ibid., 7), hats (ibid., 33, 37), handkerchiefs and socks (ibid., 33). Even in a city as traditional as Aleppo a school for girls has opened only a few months ago, and there are soirées where women mix with the guests (ibid., 42). Musicians play Mazurkas from notes on European instruments (ibid., 53). Banks, until a few years ago still unknown in the country, are spreading (ibid., 44), European visitors are touring the Levant (ibid., 46), and French is heard everywhere (ibid., 32). To own Western products and have contact with Europeans is tantamount to high social prestige, to the extent that Mīkhālī pretends to have European ancestors (ibid., 34) and believes that hosting a Frenchman will no doubt ensure him a higher reputation (ibid., 91). Aḥmed Midḥat, too, is eager to mention mayonnaise and champaign (Mithat n.d., 99);[23] the fact that many now drink tea with rum (ibid., 100) and dance waltz and polka (ibid., 67–8); the fact that piano lessons now are something that goes without saying for daughters from "good families" (ibid., 41), etc. Like al-Khūrī, Midḥat too registers changes in the language: what used to be a *çorba* is called *soupe* now in the higher echelons of society (ibid., 17), and the Euromaniac Felāṭūn Beğ admires in his mistress, an "*actrice*", her "*éloquence*" and her "*sentimentale*" nature (ibid., 97). It is a time in which a rich man like Felāṭūn's father does not hesitate long before giving up a beautiful *konak*[24] with a wonderful garden in old Üsküdar and instead settle close to Istanbul's European quarter, Beyoğlu, "in order to lead a more comfortable life" (Mithat n.d., 12).

21 Al-Khūrī, *Way* 8, my emphasis. Page numbers refer to the "second print" (*ṭabʿa thāniya*) of 1860, see bibliography. The novel has been reedited twice only recently, once as a facsimile (ed. ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, 2007), and once with an emended and newly set text (ed. Dāghir, 2009).

22 The high attention to details, esp. of eating, drinking and clothing, is noticed also by ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, who also thinks that the author uses them with great skill, assigning each of them a function in the novel's structure. In his introduction to al-Khūrī, *Way*, 12.

23 Non-italic page numbers refer to the Gözlem Yayıncılık edition (republished? by Morpa Kültür Yayınları, n.d.). For numbers in italics, see below, note 28.

24 'Villa, little palais'. Cf. Kuban 1994.

Many already live in an "*apartment*" [25] (ibid., 100) and sleep in fashionable beds rather than on matresses on the floor (ibid., 45–46). Parents follow the "*dernier cri*" of European fashion even in dressing their children (ibid., 14) although this fashion is changing almost every other day. (ibid., 18).

In order to comment on all these phenomena and on the way society deals with them and the consequences of the rapid and ubiquitous change, both authors create a literary figure that is highly typical of the literature of the period, the "Euromaniac" (Ar. *mutafarnij*, "acting like a Franc", Tu. *alafranga züppe* "Francophile fop"). Given its prominence in literature we are probably not over-interpreting the textual evidence if we assume that these fictional characters were not simply products of their authors' phantasies but reflected, to a certain degree at least, a type of people one had a good chance to meet in the streets of major Middle Eastern cities in the second half of the nineteenth century. The degree to which both authors *exaggerate* this aspect of contemporary social reality in *cartoon-like* representations can be taken as an indication of how *strange* and *ridiculous* an unquestioning orientation towards the West must have seemed to these intellectuals:

> A Frenchman or Englishman [...] arriving in Beirut may think he is entering a big house of comedies, [...] for our guest will see there many gibbering (*yatabarbarūn*) in his language [... and using European commodities in a ridiculous way]. On the beach, [for example,] he will meet *khawāja* Shāhīn al-Fārūdī,[26] dressed in something that can hardly be called a garment (*libās*) unless the words should miss their meanings, wrapped into a white gown (*ridāʾ*) with coat-tails that elsewhere is called a *redingote*, clasping in his hand a (walking-)stick as though it were a ship's rudder, [...] in his mouth the chimney of a steamboat, i.e., the thing that is called 'cigar' and makes your fingers look as if they could get rid of that colour only by taking off the skin. As soon as this person happens to meet a fellow countryman in the same appearance, their two heads almost run into each other, their waists bend backwards, and their tongues, not even used to express themselves correctly in the language of their [own] country, start offending all grammatical rules that have been put up carefully in Paris or in London. [For a foreigner visiting Beirut] it will look as if our two friends were staging a theatrical scene that was caricaturing the manners and language of the Europeans.
>
> (al-Khūrī 1860, 4–6)

25 Cf. Sey 1993.

26 Wehr, *Dictionary*, s.v. *ḵawāja*: "sir, Mr. (title and for of address, esp., for Christians and Westerners, used with or without the name of the person so addressed)"; Badawi/Hinds, *Dictionary*: "1 European or Western foreigner. 2 *[obsol]* Christian". "Shāhīn al-Fārūdī" is probably only a phantasy name (with *Fārūdī* resounding French *parodie*?).

However, the *mutafarnij / alafranga züppe* serves al-Khūrī and Midḥat not merely to *register* the process of increasing 'Europeanisation' but to *express their critique* of an all too uncritical adoption of Western manners. Interestingly enough, Midḥat, although probably not aware of al-Khūrī's novel, addresses almost the same points as his Arab colleague, as we shall see now.

Both criticise the Euromaniacs' *incomplete* and only *superficial* Europeanisation: they have remained stuck halfway in their efforts. It starts with outward appearances. Although the *mutafarnij / alafranga züppe* spends many hours a day dressing up in front of the mirror (al-Khūrī 1860, 39; Mithat n.d., 18), the result is ridiculous. For example, when Mīkhālī in *Way* welcomes the "comte", the *mutafarnij* has squeezed his legs into

> green trousers, above which a belt of Tripolitanian silk, half a foot in breadth, topped by a made-to-measure jerkin of Aleppine brocade; [the whole] enwrapped in the European robe (*jilbāb*) he had made from blue cloth and lined with yellow silk, around the neck a tie made of red wool; above all these exquisite accessoires, the head was crowned by a straw hat, and on his hands he was wearing thick woolen gloves.
>
> (al-Khūrī 1860, 47)[27]

In a similar way, Aḥmed Midḥat focuses on Felāṭūn Beğ's trousers, stressing that they are much too tight and even letting them burst once their owner starts dancing polka. As if this wasn't enough, the author adds, in the exaggerating manner so typical of satire:

> and because the jacket [Felāṭūn was wearing above the trousers] was too short to cover [what was under it] the opening became visible. Praise the Lord, Felāṭūn had put on underpants that evening! For he used, when he went out in great style, to put on the trousers without underpants in order not to impair their proper fit; in fact, he believed that only this was truly *à l'européenne*. So, had he succumbed on that evening to what otherwise was his custom then an even greater opening would have become apparent.
>
> (Midḥat n.d., 68 / 1994, *44–5*)[28]

Dress is however only one of many other symptoms that point to the fact that the fops' 'Europeanness' is nothing but a blind, ignorant imitation of mere appearances. They have books, yes, but only on the shelves (al-Khūrī 1860, 6–7). They go to the theatre, but only to flirt with women (Mithat n.d., 76).[29] They like to be

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27 Cf. also the scene, quoted above, describing two fops meeting on the beach in Beirut.

28 Page numbers in italics refer to the edition of the text by Mehmet Emin Agar (1994), which is closer to the original Ottoman wording than the 'simplified, smoothened' (*sadeleştirilmiş*) modern Turkish version.

29 Midḥat, *Felâtun Bey*, 76.

called civilised but treat women in a traditional way, not as humans but as if they were mere parts of the house's furniture (al-Khūrī 1860, 7). They have knives and forks but do not know how to use them properly, etc. In sum, their pretended civilisation is nothing but an "imagined" one (*tamaddun wahmī*, ibid., 15).

For both authors, such behaviour can only be explained as resulting from a *lack of education and knowledge*.[30] So we read, for example, that Felāṭūn's ignorance and bad French do not come as a surprise: already his father had no great esteem for learning and therefore thought a *rüşdīye*[31] and French lessons twice a week would be enough for his son (Mithat n.d., 37–8). As a result, Felāṭūn Beğ learnt Arabic only superficially; he has not even heard of the additional letters *p*, *č*, *ž*, *g* used to write Persian and Ottoman (ibid.); his knowledge of French is markedly bad; and even his Ottoman is deploringly deficient (ibid., 67).

No wonder then that such ignoramusses often *behave downright stupidly and make fools of themselves* in the presence of those who know better. Mīkhālī's lack of knowledge about European cuisine and table manners, for instance, becomes all the more evident – and embarrassing for his wife and daughter! – when he attempts to behave like a European in front of Edmond for whom, as a Frenchman, it is easy to notice all that is not as it should be (al-Khūrī 1860, 67–81). Mīkhālī becomes particularly ridiculous when Edmond asks him about Émilie's allegedly 'European' education. When the false *comte* wants to know whether Mīkhālī's daughter had been taught how to dance the mazurka, the would-be European reacts indignantly: "we are people of esteem, not dancers!" Neither is Émilie allowed to practise singing, because it is indecent for a girl to raise her voice. As for knitting and sewing, these are too 'low' occupations for a daughter of a man of his standing. Mīkhālī does not even know what geography is and rejects astronomy as magic; and in none of the other highly valuable sciences like physics, history, or mathematics, or in the study of the New Testament or the art of writing, has Émilie ever received any instruction that could compare to that of a European girl (ibid., 53–7).[32] Midḥat's novel likewise abounds with similar

30 For the high importance attached to (the institutionalisation of) education and learning during the Arab *nahḍa* and the role it played in the transition process from *adab* to *literature*, see Allan 2012.

31 On this type of school that follows a primary (*ibtidāʾī*) level, see, e.g., Günyol 1998 or Sakaoğlu 1994.

32 The catalogue of skills and virtues listed here (foreign languages; geography, history, mathematics, astronomy, physics, and other sciences; the art of composing essays, keeping a diary, caring about beautiful handwriting; social dance and music, esp. singing and playing the piano; sewing, embroidery, knitting; and as frame: the study of the New Testament) echoes very much the bourgeois ideals for the formation of girls in the Biedermeier period, see below (p. 113).

situations in which the ignorant fop makes a fool of himself and is doubly disgraceful because of the presence of those who know best what European civilisation really is – Europeans themselves.

It is however not only the superficiality of knowledge or the complete ignorance that the authors criticise in the Euromaniacs. Al-Khūrī looks at Europeanising also as something *morally reprehensible*: it is *treason*, being *untruthful to one's self*, one's Arab *identity*, as well as to the community of one's fellow countrymen, paired with unjustifiable *submissiveness*, or even *servility*, testifying to a *lack of self-respect*, sense of honour, dignity, and upright manliness. Thus, Mīkhālī does not like to be taken for an Arab ("God forbid!", ibid., 49) and is not only ashamed of his fellow countrymen's 'uncivilised' way of dressing and behaving (ibid., 50), but even of his own wife (ibid., 52). He boasts of having taught Émilie to despise everything Arabic (ibid.), and does not complain when Edmond (who considers "these Arabs" to be "wretched scum") treats him without any respect (ibid., 91), makes him wait a full hour in the courtyard, etc. Mīkhālī allows Edmond to boss him around in a humiliating manner and displays an absolutely *disgraceful* attitude of *servility* towards him that is *disgusting* and proves the *lack of dignity* in the would-be European (ibid., 92). As for al-Khūrī, he criticises his Mīkhālī not only for almost never reading the daily newspaper, but when he does so the author lets him, out of stinginess, only borrow the paper instead of buying it. Such a behaviour, the reader is told, disregards the citizen's responsibility towards his community and the future of the nation: not to buy a paper means denying one's support to the print media that are an important factor in the nation's (*umma*) efforts to "rise again" (*nahḍa*, ibid., 58). This is in striking contrast to the *mutafarnij* spending excessively on any Edmond-come-lately (ibid., 64).

Unlike al-Khūrī, Midḥat does not seem – at first sight, at least – to show Felāṭūn Beğ as a traitor of his Turkish identity (although the author permanently contrasts the behaviour of the *alafranga züppe* with that of Rāḳım, the representative of *alaturkalık*). On a closer look, however, we may recognize a motif that is quite similar to that of al-Khūrī's accusing the *mutafarnij* of identity treason, namely the fact that Felāṭūn squanders what he inherited from his father. This is a motif that in the literature of the time often has the metaphorical meaning of frivolously gambling away the riches of the Ottoman-Turkish tradition and committing treason against the heritage from the forefathers. Moreover, the Ottoman author ascribes almost identical negative traits to Felāṭūn Beğ's *alafrangalık* as those al-Khūrī notes in Mīkhālī. Midḥat, too, parallels 'European-ising' with *moral odiousness*: On several occasions, Felāṭūn Beğ proves to be quite a scaredy-cat (Mithat n.d., 51), a trait that later is supplemented

by a *lack of manliness and self-respect* when he allows his mistress to address him using all kinds of embarrassing pet names (ibid., 99–100); Rāḳım's reaction to this: he thinks that Felāṭūn should simply chase her away. But Felāṭūn only laments "like a dog" (ibid., 133) whenever the woman gets sulky-huffy. Rāḳım leaves no doubt that he would prefer an old-fashioned Ottoman lady over such a French woman who does not stop treating her lover in such a *degrading* (*onur kırıcı* / *hakâretâmiz*, Mithat n.d., 101 / 1994, *70*) manner.

Although the 'Euro-fop' in reality has not much to be proud of, he behaves in a very *arrogant* way towards his fellow countrymen, an arrogance al-Khūrī evidently sees spreading everywhere in his environment, which is why he lets his narrator complain, already in the novel's foreword, about *kibriyāʾ* or *daʿwà* as ubiquitous phenomena of his time (al-Khūrī 1860, 5). An example of this in *Way* is the fact that Mīkhālī does not read the newspaper because he thinks he is civilised and knows enough (ibid., 58). He also behaves in an extremely arrogant way when he outrightly rejects any Arab as a potential husband for his daughter; when he makes derogatory remarks about his wife, etc. (cf. above). The same kind of arrogance also Midḥat is eager to demonstrate, deplore and condemn. He too takes his characters' attitudes towards European or non-European marriage candidates as a touchstone in this regard. Felāṭūn Beğ's sister Mihrībān, for example, snobbish like her brother, is very quick in rejecting any knocker-at-the-door who is not of a more prestigious standing than a *kâtip, asker, hoca* (scribe, soldier, teacher) – the narrator clearly disapproves of such a mindset (Mithat n.d., 19). A similar task of giving the narrator room to criticise the *alafranga züppe*'s arrogance is fulfilled by the long description of Felāṭūn Beğ's trips to the 'Sweet Waters of Europe' at Kâğıthane: The author leaves no doubt that the fop prefers to undertake these trips on weekends only because he is eager to effectively display his affluence and have the opportunity to make a show of all the luxury he commands (an arrogance that is almost insulting to those who witness it; ibid., 128). In contrast, Rāḳım Efendi usually arranges his excursions on weekdays because it is more relaxing; he also prefers home-made sandwiches over what is sold out there (ibid., 106). And while Rāḳım rejoices already in a glass of fresh goat milk he gets from a shepherd, Felāṭūn Beğ pretends, in hotel "C", to be a prince of noble descent (*soyluluk iddiası*, Mithat n.d., 174 / *asılzâdelik daʿvâ ederdi*, Mithat 1994, *127*).

4.4 Euromania as a threat

Both the Ottoman and the Arab author regard the uncritical Europhilia found among a group of their fellow countrymen clearly as a danger. For al-Khūrī, it

threatens first and foremost the coherence of the society he lives in. This becomes evident from the function Mīkhālī's *tafarnuj* has for the narrative as a whole: it generates a *conflict*; it is to be blamed for the non-conclusion of a marriage that, without his *tafarnuj*, probably would have made for a happy and harmonious couple; and Émilie would not have ended up in a monastery, Asʿad not in a faraway country. It may seem simply ridiculous, at first sight, when "some people [...] suddenly turn away from embroidered turbans to hats interwoven with gold and in less than a second make a clownish jump (*wathba bahlawāniyya*) from the East to the West" (al-Khūrī 1860, 33); but a closer look reveals that such a trend does *serious harm to social harmony*. To assume that al-Khūrī conceptualises Émilie, who ends up in a self-chosen seclusion/isolation, already as a symbol of the nation would certainly be an over-interpretation since she is not yet particulary marked as such a symbol (has no specifically 'national' attributes). It can be no pure accident, however, and is also highly noteworthy from a gender perspective, that al-Khūrī makes *her*, a young unmarried woman, the object that is to be 'gotten' by, or given to, either Edmond or Asʿad, and it is her whom the author makes the one who has to *decide* between the two alternative candidates and whose consciousness, thus, becomes the site of the major clash and conflict. Looking at the novel as a whole, however, this clash and conflict occupy only relatively little space so that Émilie certainly still is not the main protagonist – this remains clearly Mīkhālī's role so that the potentially negative consequences of *tafarnuj*, when compared to its ridiculousness, emerge only as a rather marginal issue.[33] Compared to the negative effects Europhilia has on society / the community, the damage one could imagine it to do to *politics* seems almost negligeable in al-Khūrī's presentation: Mīkhālī neither reads nor buys newspapers, i.e., he is not interested in politics, nor does he talk about it. This distribution of emphasis is probably to be explained from the fact that the 'Arabs' or 'Easterners/Orientals' al-Khūrī constantly is referring to are not yet a clearly defined *political* factor at the time, and the *umma* he sees himself as a part of is still more of a socio-cultural than a political entity. This would also be a plausible explanation for the 'Biedermeier/Victorian' character of the bourgeois morals and ethics that speaks from the novel (see below).

In contrast, Midḥat evidently does not only define himself in socio-cultural terms but also identifies with a political idea – the Ottoman Empire. In *his* narrative, Felāṭūn Beğ does not do much to affect social harmony: the protagonist's *alafrangalık* only harms himself. An uncritical imitation of

33 I disagree here with ʿAbd al-Tawwāb's reading (in al-Khūrī, *Way*, 14 ff.) that assigns the role of the "central character" (*al-shakhṣiyya al-miḥwariyya*) to Émilie.

European fashion, habits etc. is therefore, first and foremost, merely ridiculous. Nevertheless, the author does stress another aspect (which is missing from al-Khūrī's text): Felāṭūn Beğ is not primarily shown as a Europhile fop but as a *lazy squanderer of his father's wealth* (cf. the fact, mentioned above, p. 96, that this is considered a sign of treason). For instance, an average week in his life passes in the following manner:

> Being the only son of a father with a monthly income of not less than twenty thousand *ḳurūṣ*, he [Felāṭūn], who believed his own philosophising to be more precise than that of the followers of Platon, had reached the conclusion that a person with a monthly income of more than twenty thousand *ḳurūṣ* does not need anything else than this in his life. Since, on top of that, he thinks of himself as a mature and virtuous person, an excursion has to be made every Friday [= Muslim weekend holiday]. On Saturday, he relaxes from the stress and strains of the previous day. On Sunday [= European weekend holiday], it goes without saying that another excursion definitely *has* to be made since there will be even more European-type activities at the respective places. Monday then is the day of relaxing from the hardships of Sunday. On Tuesday, it could be an idea to show up in office, but usually it seems more appropriate to comply with the desire to visit some places in Beyoğlu, [...] see some friends etc., and therefore take off also this day. If he then [indeed] goes to office on Wednesday he passes the time between six and nine o'clock[34] telling stories about the first part of the week, and in the evening he always leaves [in such cases] together with two colleagues. Given that these two are as young as Felāṭūn Beğefendi himself and given that he lives in Beyoğlu [and knows it very well], he has, as a matter of course, to entertain his friends with some amusements *à l'européenne*, and the night will be spent in places of *alafranga* entertainment. The nightly excursion of course extends into the next morning, and this is why one has to sleep the whole of Thursday, right until evening. And then, yes, we have reached Friday again [...].
>
> (Mithat n.d., 15)

The squanderer of inherited fortunes (*mirasyedi*) is a type of character who figures already in earlier novels. But while in these texts he used to dissipate his fortune in bars and brothels, he now spends it on *alafranga* attire and entertainment. The fact that Midḥat, as Moran demonstrated, is concerned, in the first place, with the economic aspects of Euromania[35] can probably be interpreted as an expression of Midḥat's view of the preservation of the Empire's economic

34 Old way of counting! Corresponding, roughly, to the time between 11–12 a.m. and 2–3 p.m., since we have to start counting from sunrise (1 "hour" equalling one twelfth of the time between sunrise and sunset). Cf. Ruska and Gökmen 1988, as well as Hermelink 1974.

35 Moran 1990, 1:38 ff. Money matters to such a degree that Midḥat not only mentions exact amounts (vgl. Moran, *ibid.*, 41–2) but often also gives their equivalent in French Francs; in this way we are informed, for instance, that 1,500 Ottoman Lira at the time equalled c. 34,500 French Francs (Midḥat, *Felâtun Bey*, 77).

power as a precondition to the preservation of its political importance. Thus, it is less his compatriots' enthusiasm for everything 'European' that Midḥat, unlike al-Khūrī, sees as the major problem but, ultimately, Europe itself and those who, like Felāṭūn Beğ, weaken the Empire from within through their laziness, extravagance and life full of amusements – thereby cementing, albeit indirectly, Europe's strength, and preventing the Empire from defying its rivals. The inherited fortune that Felāṭūn Beğ frivolously spends on appearances thus also has a metaphoric dimension: it is the economic and political power of the Ottoman Empire, produced and accumulated by, and inherited from, earlier generations (the 'fathers').

4.5 Wujūd ahlī / alaturkalık

Despite the difference in emphasis discussed in the preceding paragraph, both authors develop in their texts a counter-concept with which a life *à l'européenne* is contrasted. Al-Khūrī refers to this idea as *wujūd ahlī* (roughly: "the indigenous way of life");[36] Midḥat calls it *alaturka* ("the Turkish way") as opposed to *alafranga*. Al-Khūrī has the *tafarnuj* embodied by one protagonist and assigns the role of the representatives of the *wujūd ahlī* to Mīkhālī's wife, Émilie's (ex-)fiancé Asʿad and, as its most powerful mouthpiece, to his narrator, particularly so in the non-narrative, explanatory and essay-like foreword and epilogue. Midḥat, on the other hand, stages the differences between the two principles as a regular juxtaposition of two opposing protagonists. Irrespective of this structural difference, however, there is a striking degree of congruence in what the Arab and the Ottoman authors mean when they speak about *wujūd ahlī* / *alaturkalık*. Some details:

Although the *wujūd ahlī* is on its retreat everywhere and almost nobody knows anymore "what is being lost and what is gained" (al-Khūrī 1860, 3) in the process of modernisation, the original way of living is still to be found in places like Damascus, places that "are not touched by Europeanisation yet" (*yad al-tafarnuj lam tadnu minhā baʿd*, ibid., 45). Even though there is nothing spectacular in such places, it is worth noting that, thanks to the absence or belated arrival of Europeanisation there, they have remained centres of "the noble Eastern manners, customs, ways of dressing and behaving" (*al-ādāb wa-l-ʿawāʾid wa-l-aksām wa-l-hayʾāt al-sharqiyya al-sharīfa*, ibid., 45–46). In Lebanon,

36 First mentioned al-Khūrī, *Way*, 3. – Wielandt translates *wujūd ahlī* as "die einheimische Art der Existenz" (1980, 134).

the *wujūd ahlī* is obviously to be found only in the *countryside* (though even the villages have already become places of mixing and contradiction, *tajammaʿat bihā l-aḍdād*, ibid., 9). It is true, al-Khūrī concedes, that life there is dominated by a deplorable inertia and laziness (*kasal*); on the other hand, you still find in these places a kind of *manliness*, *nobility of mind*, *generosity* and *liberality* (*muruwwa*, *karam*, *jūd*, *samāḥ*) that is unknown in Europe. Unlike the Euro-fops who tend to be ignorant fools, village people often still display an enormous *interest in education and learning*, and it is common to meet *highly cultured* people there (ibid., 10). According to al-Khūrī, another expression of *wujūd ahlī* in the countryside is that people attach the label 'true magnanimity and nobility of character' to *modesty* (*tawāḍuʿ*) rather than to boasting, and that they find true beauty in *simplicity* (*basāṭa*) rather than in extravagance; people are still *proud* to be who they are (*ʿizzat al-nafs*, ibid., 11), and this is also why they still attribute the highest value to *natural* rather than artificial beauty with its "delusive ornament" (*zīna kādhiba*) in women (ibid., 10–11).

Midḥat, for his part, does not localise the authentic way of life in the countryside but shows it first and foremost in Rāḳım Efendi, a representative of the urban middleclass. But he praises as virtuous the same type of behaviour and thinking as al-Khūrī does, and he lets these appear as expression of the good old *alaturka* tradition. Rāḳım, too, delights in everything *natural* (ibid., 123). The place where he lives is furnished modestly, yet – or perhaps precisely for this reason – it is homelike and cozy (Mithat n.d., 44). His *modesty* matches a true believer's *gratitude towards God* who has to be thanked for all the beautiful things one is granted in life (ibid., 122, 178). And it is none less than Mr Ziklas the Englishman[37] who appreciates Rāḳım for his "*good character/decency* (*ḥüsn-i aḫlāḳ*), *contentedness* (*toḳ gözlülük*), *chastity/honesty/uprightness* and *faithfulness/fidelity* (*ʿiffet ve ṣadāḳat*), *bravery* (*mertlik*), noble *manliness* (*mürüvvet*) and *generosity* (*büyüklük*)" (ibid., 118), virtues that the Europeanised people consider as 'something stupid' but that were held in high esteem by 'the old' (ibid., 17). Rāḳım demonstrates these virtues again and again, particularly in his treatment of subordinates. Whereas already Felāṭūn's father would not accept any "*arap çorap*"[38] into his service because he felt this could compromise him in front of European guests (ibid., 11), we find a sense of *general humanity*, across the classes, in Rāḳım's *alaturka* world: already in his childhood he learns not to treat his black foster mother – a slave – differently from his real mother, and this is

37 For European characters as 'certifiers-on-call' cf. soon below.

38 Paronomastic expression with deprecatory meaning; a literal translation does not make sense (*arap* = "Arab, negro", *çorap* = "sock").

why the former without any problem can take the latter's place as soon as the mother passes away. Later, Rāḳım does not behave with the class-conceit of a master and owner towards his slave Cānān, but rather coddles her as much as he can, lets her decide herself whether she wants to be sold or stay in his household (ibid., 88), in short, he is so nice to her that Mr Ziklas' daughters, i.e., young British ladies, would very much love to give up their life as free-born women in exchange for a life as Rāḳım's slave (ibid., 146)![39] On the one hand, Midḥat contrasts Felāṭūn Beğ's laziness and *mirasyedilik* by Rāḳım's *working enthusiasm* (see below), his *prudent economy* and his *rational calculations* (ibid., 73).[40] On the other, Rāḳım also proves to be really generous and openhanded, in spite of his limited resources, thanks to his *altruism* (not, as Felāṭūn, out of craving for recognition): whenever it comes to helping others Rāḳım always distributes liberally, and Cānān the slave girl lives a better life in his house than "the daughters of the high society (*kibār*)" in the latters' homes (ibid.). Rāḳım is also always *upright* and *honest*, even in personally difficult situations: as soon as he is aware that he has fallen in love with Cānān and is also attracted to her body, he terminates the relationship with his mistress, Mme Jozefino; but since this relationship always has been more than mere sex a *cordial friendship* remains (ibid., 93–95). Although Rāḳım is not perfect and shows moments of moral weakness (e.g., when he is a bit tipsy and allows Mme Jozefino to seduce him) he never takes advantage of the woman's 'blunder' but keeps her secret and is eager to protect the friend's reputation (ibid., 64). His inclination towards Jozefino does not make him less *bashful* (ibid., 48) and *chaste* than he usually is: Mr and Mrs Ziklas are at no time concerned about leaving their daughters alone at home taking lessons with their private teacher Rāḳım (ibid., 81). In Midḥat's sexual ethics it is also important that the youth's choice of their partners does not contradict the ideas of the older generation and that it thus is *in harmony with social hierarchy* (which is seen as part of the *alaturka* tradition/way of living). Again and again he stresses that representatives of the older generation, as moral authorities, *acknowledge* what he does: his love of Cānān is approved of by his beloved foster mother Fedāyī (ibid., 113); and Jozefino – who for Rāḳım and Cānān later is a "mother or elder sister", respectively (ibid., 179) – says "Bravo!" when Cānān confesses to her that her beloved master has made her a concubine (*odalık*, ibid., 180).

In al-Khūrī's text, virtues of a similar kind are embodied by Émilie's fiancé, Asʿad (though not to the same extent as in Midḥat's Rāḳım). On the one side, we

39 For the discussion about slavery in the late Ottoman Empire in general, cf. Sagaster 1997.
40 Cf. also Rāḳım's name, which is from Arabic *rāqim*, i.e., "the calculating one".

have here Mīkhālī's plans, motivated by nothing but a craving for prestige, to marry his daughter to a false French *comte*, paired with Émilie's coquetry – despite initial scruples, she is ready to betray her fiancé for the prospect of marrying Edmond. This kind of thinking is contrasted with Asʿad's *sincerity* (*ṣidq*) and *patient faithfulness* (*wafāʾ*), his *forbearance* and his *seriousness*, virtues that Asʿad himself knows he owes to his good upbringing – which has to be seen as an aspect of *wujūd ahlī* since the author constructs Asʿad as a representative of authenticity and Arabness. The same is true for the young man's *sensibility* that manifests itself, among other things, in his *love of poetry*.

It goes without saying that also Rāḳım is an epitome of *sensibility*: He always cares deeply about others (e.g., when one of the Ziklas girls is ill; Mithat n.d., 172–73), even about stupid Felāṭūn Beğ when he drops a brick (ibid., 70); Rāḳım feels *pity* for this man even though Felāṭūn did not listen to his advice and therefore is himself to blame for what he has ended up in (ibid., 171–72). And just like Asʿad's sensibility, also Rāḳım's manifests itself in *love of poetry*. – Since Rāḳım, as Felāṭūn Beğ's negative counterpart, not only represents *alaturkalık* but also has to be the opposite of the lazy *mirasyedi*, the author supplements his resting in *alaturkalık* with character traits such as *diligence*, *ambition*, and the ability to *work hard*. After having graduated from the *rüşdīye*, our *assiduous* hero is accepted – at the early age of sixteen! – into work at the Foreign Office (*Ḫāricīye Ḳalemi*), where he works "day and night" and is eager to improve his learning and to be promoted (ibid., 22). Alongside this job he seeks to increase his income through translations, writing articles in newpapers, etc. Slowly but steadily, through hard work, *ambition* and assiduous *endurance* – the narrator praises him as a virtual "machine" (ibid., 30) – he is able to accumulate a modest wealth. Asked about his profession he usually describes himself as a *"worker"* ("who works with his pen", ibid., 99). The characters associated with Rāḳım are such 'machines' too: When Rāḳım's father, a rather poor servant at Tophane, dies, without leaving anything to the family to live on, his mother and foster-mother have to work hard in order to survive and feed the boy, "in short, they earned their living with their own hands without having to rely on others" (ibid., 22) – a very *protestant-like work ethic* that had found its way into an Ottoman intellectual's world of thinking and that Midḥat merges here with his protagonist's *alaturkalık*!

As is clear already from the conceptual terminology referring to 'the Franks/Europeans' on the one side and 'the Turks', 'the Arabs', or 'local population' (*ahl*) on the other, we are witnessing the *beginnings of a nationalisation of ethics and*

culture in the Middle East.[41] The authors themselves often provide their readers with a more general theoretical framework that serves as a justification of the distribution of certain skills and virtues among specific "nations". For al-Khūrī, for example, each individual nation (*umma*) has a "specific predisposition", or "susceptibility" (*qābiliyya khāṣṣa*), pre-ordained and willed by God, for a specific type of civilisation[42]

> that matches [this nation's] character disposition [or should we say: ethics?] (*akhlāq*) and manners and customs [or should we say: culture?] (*ādāb*), [and it does so] in a way that makes it impossible to exchange it for another without putting the best of its human values [...] at risk.
>
> (al-Khūrī 1860, 3; similarly also ibid., 159)

Hence, any attempt to try to exchange one's identity for that of another "nation" can only have harmful consequences. As a rule, al-Khūrī concludes, it is therefore to be wished that "an Englishman remains an Englishman, a Frenchman a Frenchman and an Arab an Arab" (ibid., 4). So, since an Easterner, like a leopard, cannot 'change his spots', i.e., his God-given nature, the *tafarnuj* and its denial of one's identity are characterised by a certain obsessiveness, which at the same time is something *insincere*, *deviant* and *dishonourable*.

This holds true also for Midḥat's way of looking at things, as can be seen, e.g., in the way the author lets Felāṭūn suffer when he forces himself into tight 'European' trousers or when he, after his father's death, and only in order to please the French *actrice* Polini, tries to adopt European mourning traditions although they actually run contrary to what he would have liked to do himself (Mithat n.d., 95).

Yet, although al-Khūrī and Midḥat on the whole strongly recommend Eastern tradition as the option that is at least as good, if not better than fashions imported from Europe, both authors are not completely opposed to Western achievements.

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41 Cf. also the re-configuration of *adab*, observed by Bouquet (2020) as a necessity for Ottoman diplomats. The "périmètre[s] de la distinction" that, according to Bouquet, served as markers of an Ottoman 'national' identity were "le harem, la viande, et le fez". For the writers' task "to make the *ʿāmma* [common people] realise that it form[ed] a community united by its culture, language, history and belonging to the same land; in a word that it is a nation", cf. Dupont 2010, esp. 174–5. – Inside the Ottoman Empire, the nationalisation of ethics and culture can probably be observed even earlier. As Albrecht Hofheinz remarks (personal communication, Feb. 18, 2017), Arabic sources from the beginnings of the nineteenth century in the Hejaz/Red Sea region often tend to contrast "the Arabs" (as the good ones) by "the Turks", whom they depict as a debauched race that does not obey Islam in the way it should be obeyed.

42 Cf. Wielandt 1980, 134.

In spite of al-Khūrī's thesis of the fundamental incompatibility and intrinsic antagonism of European and Arab identities, ways of being and thinking, the list of things, figuring in the short novel's afterword, that the author finds worth adopting from Europe is impressively – and conspicuously – long (Al-Khūrī 1860, 160–62). It shows that al-Khūrī is highly critical not only of the *mutafarnijīn* but of his own society as a whole, and that he does not shy away from registering many things that could, and should, be improved. Cf., e.g., the sharp words he finds about the litter and stinking dirt that make living in the East often rather uncomfortable:

> This disgusting dirt [...] has its reason only in the fact that the people show themselves indifferent and nobody cares about removing the dirt, which pervades and contaminates the air we are breathing. Or perhaps the reason is...[43] – but we should say this with a lowered voice since we, the noble Arab people (*anna-nā maʿshar al-ʿarab al-kirām*), rarely find it convincing to commit ourselves to, and put our efforts into, something that is 'only' for the community's benefit. [...] Rather, when passing by a heap of refuse, we content ourselves with holding our noses, try to flee from the fetid and leave the contaminated environs. What does it concern us when our neighbours or friends die from it?!
>
> (al-Khūrī 1860, 40–41)[44]

This kind of almost sarcastic self-criticism is also in line with the view, expressed elsewhere (ibid., 13), that constructive criticism is something the Arabs should learn from the Europeans. To learn from the Europeans is not tantamount to betraying one's own identity or automatically becoming like them, for "scientific truths are not valid exclusively for *one* nation" (ibid., 162).

Both authors also agree, however, that the decision about what is worth, or not worth, to be learnt or taken from Europe has definitely to be left to *completely* educated persons who, like Midḥat's Rāḳım or the omniscient narrator in al-Khūrī's *Way*, are versed enough in their own *as well as* the foreign culture in order to be able to critically separate the wheat from the chaff. It is clear that for this purpose a *comprehensive* education that also includes Western knowledge, is essential and indispensable.[45] Accordingly, al-Khūrī is not only eager to give

43 Elliptic sentence the remainder of which has to be guessed by the reader him/herself. From what follows it could be something like 'a lack of feeling of responsibilty for the community' (or even 'an inclination not to care about filth'?).

44 Cf. also his complaints about fellow-countrymen who have been to Europe, but only to return from there with the most negative of Western achievements, although there would have been many useful things that are worth to adopt or copy (*Way*, 41).

45 Cf. Bouquet 2020 on the Ottoman diplomat as both "gentleman" and "homme de savoir". It is obvious that the traditional cultural ideal of *adab*, comprising encyclopædic knowledge, high linguistic skill in the written language, good education and manners (Dupont 2010, 173–4), is

proof of his being at home in the Arabic literary tradition but also quotes, interprets, and criticises Lamartine (al-Khūrī 1860, ch. 3, esp. 22ff.);[46] he knows who Narcissus is (ibid., 25), uses foreign vocabulary such as "mythological" (*mitūlūjī*, ibid.) and concedes that his own translation of Lamartine's verses is of a lower quality than the original and that Voltaire is perfectly right in saying that compared to an original, a translation is like the reverse of a fabric as compared to its front (ibid., 30). Last but not least, he is always able to see through Mīkhālī's *tafarnuj* as empty, false and anything but the 'Europeanness' it claims to be – no wonder since, as we know, the author is well versed in both cultures, Eastern *and* Western.

So is also Midḥat ('s narrator). He not only assumes that the reader knows Molière's theatrical pieces (Mithat n.d., 190) but also makes quite an effort to let Felāṭūn's lack of knowledge and education, both Eastern and Western, meet its exemplary counter-ideal in Rāḳım. Unlike Felāṭūn Beğ, Rāḳım continues after school pursuing with great ambition four years of vocational training; it happens quite often that instead of enjoying some off-time, he lets his Armenian friend lock him up in the library even over the weekend. In this way, he acquires new knowledge without the help of a teacher, or widens his command of Arabic grammar, logic, *ḥadīth*, *tafsīr*, and *fiqh*. He also reads and memorises large portions of the classical Persian poets; he improves his French[47] and his knowledge of world literature through extensive reading of novels, drama and poetry; in addition, he studies physics, chemistry, anatomy, geography, history, law, etc., and reaches an extraordinary level, far above average, in all of these modern disciplines Mithat n.d., 23).

For Midḥat, the criteria for a decision about the adoptability, or the necessity to refuse, Western cultural goods are, first and foremost: *moderation*, the goods' *innocuousness*, a *need* for a solution from outside, and their *well-considered* and *skilful* use or application. Being well equipped and happy with *alaturka* culture, Rāḳım does not really need any commodities or ideas that are imported from the West. Nevertheless the reader is made to appreciate the fact that the hero speaks a brilliant French and that he is interested in French literature. When he decorates his home with wallpaper and paintings, hangs

expanded here so as to encompass also corresponding knowledge about and skills in *Western* culture.

46 On Lamartine as one of the favorite French authors to be translated into Oriental languages in the late nineteenth century, cf. Strauss 1994, 157.

47 For the importance of French language acquisition in the context of Ottoman diplomacy, cf. Bouquet 2020, section "De l'émissaire au diplomate".

mirrors on the wall and uses a canapé (as the Europeans do), this is not described as an act of aping European lifestyle but as an indication of a *fine taste* (ibid., 45–6). Also, when Rāḳım buys clothes *à la mode* for his beloved servant and later wife, Cānān, and when he lets her take piano lessons, Midḥat does not have any objections against that or describe it as an 'un-Turkish' contradiction of the *alaturka* way of life – on the contrary, it is counted as yet another proof of Rāḳım's generosity, love, fine education and culture. – Although Rāḳım, as a Muslim believer, usually abstains from alcohol, there is nothing to say against his having a glass every now and then, particularly so when he is among Europeans where it would be impolite not to drink together with the host (ibid., 62). Even less objectionable it is to consume local *rakı*; for, in a traditional *alaturka* company of drinkers, it enhances the spirit of friendship and sociability (ibid., 115). Some bigots may regard dancing as offending religious teachings, but for our narrator it is out of question that a modern, cosmopolitan Ottoman should know how to dance. However, Rāḳım dances only at European parties, and refrains from polka and waltz because he always gets dizzy (ibid., 67–8). When Rāḳım has European guests at home there is nothing to say against women and men mixing freeling in one room (ibid., 140–41). And when Felāṭūn Beğ complains about having to mourn his father the European way and therefore being surrounded "from all sides by black, like the night", Rāḳım replies:

> Yes, the Europeans have this custom. But why should that mean that we, that is, we Turks, should have to follow this rule? To have the Noble Yāsīn [surah] recited on Friday in memory of the deceased, … [is a good indigenous tradition that we should continue to observe, there is no harm in it].
>
> (ibid., 95)

Compared to Midḥat, al-Khūrī is more utilitarian. Only those achievements that have *proven* to have a *useful function* should be considered for adoption. Especially those that are known to have helped the Europeans advance could and should be put in the service of the *umma*. For instance, no objection is to be made against wearing gloves or stockings since they protect from cold and are a nice adornment (al-Khūrī 1860, 33). In contrast, smoking (cigars, cigarettes) is harmful; taking this habit from the Europeans means importing a disease (ibid., 43). In contrast, Arab musicians who have bought European instruments and learnt how to play on them, even though perhaps not without the help of supporting notes, are to be praised for this since they enrich cultural life (ibid., 31).

In a situation where, as al-Khūrī has it,

> [the notion of] progress unfortunately has been contaminated [...] with many things that are potentially harmful to our indigenous way of life and may throw our society/community into the [vicious] circle of confusion (*dāʾirat al-irtibāk*),
>
> (ibid., 8)

both authors are eager to provide via their novels some concrete, practical advice in life, and this is why al-Khūrī concludes his text with a morale that, implicitly and *mutatis mutandis*, can also be found in Midḥat's text:

> Limit yourself to European sciences, knowledge and art and try to enliven Eastern culture in a way that is appropriate to the spirit of the Arab nation that [...] is rooted in a tradition of fourty generations. Be a cultured Arab, not an incomplete European.
>
> (ibid., 163)

4.6 Europeans proper

The presence of 'real' Europeans in the countries of the East does not seem to be a major problem for any of the two authors, although they register in their novels some rather negative traits. According to al-Khūrī, many are ignorant, arrogant (*jibāl min al-kibriyāʾ wa-l-daʿwà*, al-Khūrī 1860, 5) and condescending towards the native Arabs (cf. the way Edmond treats his host Mīkhālī). Compared to this, the Europeans Midḥat creates in his novel, esp. the piano teacher Mme Jozefino and the British Mr Ziklas, are more positive characters. They are, however, not free from faults either: Jozefino seduces Rāḳım and makes him her lover (Mithat n.d, 62); and Mr Ziklas shows the 'typically European' materialist thinking that has difficulties to accept Eastern *karam*. It is almost an offence for Rāḳım when Ziklas wants to pay him for having come to see his sick daughter: "Such a kind of selfishness is perhaps to be found with you Europeans – with Ottomans like us it is unknown" (ibid., 153). And the wife, Mrs Ziklas, shows racist traits similar to those of al-Khūrī's Edmond when she vehemently opposes marrying her daughter to Rāḳım, one of "those Turks" (ibid., 157). Nevertheless the reader is never made to think that it is the Europeans present in the country who should be blamed for the *mutafarnij*'s / *alafranga züppe*'s stupid and ridiculous behaviour – this is clearly the latters' own fault.

On the other hand, both authors also underline that one should meet Europeans and everything European with a good deal of scepticism and sound mistrust, for a nice appearance often is rather deceptive – as is made more than clear in the person of the false "count" Edmond.

Irrespective of their being positive or negative characters, however, Europeans often fulfil an important function in the narrative texts of the time. As

Rotraud Wielandt has convincingly shown, the role that authors like Midḥat or al-Khūrī assign to European characters can tell us a lot about intellectuals' attitude towards the West. The role Wielandt called the "*certifier-on-call*" (Bestätiger vom Dienst) is played by "count" Edmond in al-Khūrī's story while in Midḥat's novel it is distributed between the Ziklas family and Mme Jozefino. It is one of the most important tasks of these characters in both novels to confirm and explicitly 'certify' that those who emerge from the narratives as the better ones are right also from *their*, the Europeans' perspective. *The ultimate authority in questions of* adab *is thus conferred upon the representatives of the hegemonial powers*. As also in other texts of the time, the presence of such "certifiers" can therefore be interpreted here, too, as "a strong indication of an already broken self-confidence".[48] Al-Khūrī seems to be less affected than Midḥat by this broken self-confidence. This is evident from the fact that "count" Edmond's primary – though not exclusive – function is to brand the *mutafarnij*'s ignorant imitation of everything European and thereby to 'turn state's evidence' in that the author is right in his refutation of *tafarnuj*. In contrast, Midḥat's Europeans (while also serving the purpose of unmasking and condemning ignorant Euromania) first and formost have the function to acknowledge the superiority of *alaturkalık* over their own European culture. Al-Khūrī obviously does not yet feel the same need as Midḥat to provide, by way of positing the East's cultural superiority over the West, an ideological-psychological compensation for the factual loss of economic and political power at the hands of mighty Europe.

4.7 Adab as the art to make the right choice between the Eastern and the Western way

So far, the analysis of the two sample texts does not leave any doubt that, by the mid-nineteenth century, the political, economic and cultural hegemony of the West had begun to pose a challenge to Middle Eastern societies. As the role of "certifiers-on-call" assigned to European characters in fiction shows, the loss of political and economic power had resulted in a loss of cultural self-confidence. While intellectuals like al-Khūrī and Midḥat probably were not aware of this themselves (nor of the inferiority complex they had built up deep inside them), they nevertheless registered as an alarming signal the often unquestioned admiration for everything Western that was growing in Middle Eastern societies. Was not the emergence of the 'Europhile fop' a clear indication of the degree to

48 "Indiz für ein bereits gebrochenes Selbstbewußtsein", Wielandt 1980, 57.

which undesirable aspects of Western civilisation were rooting themselves in one's own society? Western civilisation could no longer be seen as something that left the identity of Middle Eastern societies untouched: the 'Europhile fops' were native, indigenous people, and the hegemonic culture thus had started to creep into local societies and become part of their very bodies. (This is perhaps the reason for the – exaggerated – em-*bodi*-ment of the 'need' to adapt to the hegemonic Western culture in the character types of the *mutafarnij / alafranga züppe*). How to behave in such a situation of confusion about one's own identity? This was a moral-ethical question, i.e., a challenge in terms of *adab* (in the sense of manners, behaviour, and ethical values). Under the strained conditions of a quasi-colonial situation, with a hegemonious West on one side and an 'outgunned', 'backward', 'inferior' East on the other, the moral-ethical choices one had to make began to be interpreted as *cultural* choices, choices between two ways of living and two sets of values, or *ādāb* (in the sense of cultures): an 'unauthentic', 'Frankish' or Westernising one, and an 'own', 'authentic', 'indigenous', 'Eastern' one.

4.8 *Adab* and literature

As in premodern times, questions of *adab* like these continued to be discussed and negotiated in the type of writing traditionally associated with normative ethics: *adab* literature.[49] Although *Way, idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī!* and *Felāṭūn Beğ ile Rāḳım Efendī* both already display a number of traits (first and foremost, a reality-referenced fictionality) that make literary historians usually classify them as early *novels*, i.e., representatives of *modern* (= Western-type) Arabic/Turkish literature, they still show much continuity with the older type of *adab* literature, in the sense of a writing that is both entertaining and edifying. As texts that enjoyed a much wider distribution than handwritten books, they address a much broader public than their predecessors and therefore try to combine the entertaining fictionality of 'light' 'popular' story-telling (*1001 Nights*, folk epics, etc.), traditionally regarded as 'low' literature, with the seriousness of ethical treatises and other 'highbrow' *adab* literature. Certainly, both texts *do* have a plot and a continuous storyline (*Way* even more so than *Felāṭūn Beğ*) and thereby display a key feature

49 Cf. Bouquet 2020 who observes (in section "La nouvelle *adab* : la langue des diplomates") that the style of notes taken, letters written, travelogues etc. composed (in French) by Ottoman diplomats abroad obviously bases itself on, and clearly shows a continuity with, the style of *inshāʾ* / *inşa* used until then in official documents.

of modern fiction. This remains, however, rather superficial, with the dominant structural principle still being that of a sequence of episodes interrupted by the omniscient narrator's (here still to be taken as more or less identical with the author's) explicitly explaining and interpreting comments. Apart from creating an atmosphere of entertaining diversity, the episodes narrated serve two main functions, reminding of *adab* encyclopedias:[50] (a) they provide the reader with comprehensive *knowledge* about the topic dealt with; and (b) each episode sheds light on the one major *ethical* topic from a new, different perspective.

4.9 Emotionalism and the 'nobility of the feeling heart'

What is definitely and primarily new about this new *adab* (literature) is, however, its *emotionalism*, a sentimentality that often borders on, or runs over into, sheer lachrymosity, combined with exaggerations and black-and-white categorisation. Both texts (Midḥat's more than al-Khūrī's, which, quite significantly, is the earlier one) are eager to underline their *moralising, normative* messages by creating *moving*, *pathetic* scenes that appeal to the reader's *heart*. Thus, al-Khūrī's narrator, who usually is rather economic and concise in his descriptions and reports, quite conspicuously goes into detail when he tells the reader about the *suffering* a representative of the *wujūd ahlī*, Émilie's faithful fiancé Asʿad, undergoes when he first is betrayed by Émilie and she later asks him to return to her. The same narrator also stays quite a while with Émilie and her *pain* and *tears* when she comes to know about the alleged count's true identity and his sudden disappearance/flight. Moreover, the author chooses to let the story end *tragically*: in an attempt to forget the disappointed lover's grief, Asʿad leaves the country; nobody knows for how long and whether he will regain emotional balance abroad; Émilie then decides to spend the rest of her life in a monastery as a nun. Emotionalist aspects can also be observed elsewhere in *Way*, for example in some passages on poetical criticism that are woven into the text. In these, al-Khūrī('s narrator) says that he is convinced that poetry should be of the kind that *appeals to the heart* (al-Khūrī 1860, 18) and "leaves a lasting impression on one's *soul*" (ibid., 20, my italics), and that the true poet is the one who "lets people *feel* what he *feels* himself" (ibid., dto.).

Emotionalism is even more present in Midḥat's Felāṭūn Beğ, perhaps due to the fact that the text came out later, one and a half decades after al-Khūrī's Way

50 Cf. the continuation of this type of writing in the *adab* manuals for diplomats in the Foreign Service as described by Bouquet 2020, section "Le nouvel *adab* : *habitus* et bonnes manières".

when the efendiyya had grown again. As already mentioned above, a feeling heart like that of al-Khūrī's Asʿad counts among the foremost traits that also Midḥat uses for positive characterisation. For Rāḳım emotions matter so much that the piano teacher Jozefino for him, unlike actress Polini for Felāṭūn Beğ, never is just a *metres* (mistress) but always also a good friend (Mithat n.d., 77). We have also seen above that Rāḳım not only feels pity with Joan, one of the British girls, when she is ill; he also feels sincere pity for Felāṭūn Beğ wherever he makes a fool of himself and when he is finally sent to a remote island (ibid., 70, 171–72). The narrative turns particularly emotional also wherever feeling hearts become aware of some miraculous luck that is bestowed upon them, for example when the poor orphan Cānān is overwhelmed by what Rāḳım grants her although she is a poor orphan and, moreover, his slave (ibid., 110). The Text gets highly sentimental also when Rāḳım's mother, immediately before she dies, says that she would be dying in peace now because her most ardent desire – to see her son making his career – seems to be fulfilled (ibid., 22). Another highly sentimental scene occurs when Rāḳım, for the first time in his life having earned a lot of money with a translation, sits down weeping, together with his fostermother, out of happiness: if only it had been granted to his mother, "may she rest in peace!", to share this moment with him (ibid., 25)! Very emotional scenes are also those in which noble hearts decide to renounce (e.g. Jozefino who, although still loving Rāḳım, renounces her love in favour of her favorite pupil, Cānān; ibid., 79).

Emotionalism/sentimentalism in this *adab* can be read as a mode of expression of the *efendiyya* class who have emerged from the modernising and secularist reforms of the first half of the nineteenth century as a new '*troisième état*', between the masses (Ar. *al-ʿāmma*, Ott. Tu. *reʿāyā*, or just *rāyā*), on the one hand, and the traditional elites (*ʿulamāʾ* etc.) and the upper class (*khāṣṣa*), on the other.[51] Like the European bourgeoisie in the process of emancipation, the new Middle Eastern 'middle class', too, has continuously grown over the past decades and in this process also gained self-consciousness as an emerging important player in society. And just like the emerging European bourgeoisie, the new Middle Eastern middle class expresses the fact that they have begun to 'feel themselves' with a recourse to the emotionalism/sentimentalism just described. As in the sentimentalism of the European age of Enlightenment, it seems that the emphasis on a 'nobility of the feeling heart' here, too, serves the function of compensating for a lack of 'nobility of blood', religious prestige and/or material

51 Cf. Dupont 2010, 175, who explains the linguistic choices made by the emerging "public writers" as informed by the need "to satisfy two conflicting demands: to please the 'elite' (*khāṣṣa*) while being understood by the 'common people' ('*āmma*)".

affluence. Later on in the century, and then especially on the eve of World War I, emotionalism will culminate in the pathetic, larmoyant, melodramatic outcries of writers like Jubrān Khalīl Jubrān or Muṣṭafà Luṭfī al-Manfalūṭī, outcries that accuse the ruling classes of oppressing the 'simple and pure', in this way implicitly claiming political rights for the middle class that has not yet been assigned a role that would correspond to their grown importance in society.[52] This, however, is not yet the case in *Way*, nor in *Felāṭūn Beğ*. None of the two texts makes political claims (at least not explicitly). They rather seem to confine themselves to the domestic sphere and to creating, within this framework, the above-mentioned 'nobility of the feeling heart' in order to legimitise the fact that they have become subjects (i.e., 'heroes') of printed literature. Moral/ethical 'beauty' is the heroism of the emerging middle class[53] that in this way accumulates the symbolic capital that later will be equal to the other types of capital owned by the ruling classes, and will be capable of outdoing them. As for now, however, al-Khūrī, and also fifteen years later still Midḥat, seem to be satisfied with what has been achieved so far. In this, they resemble European authors of the so-called Biedermeier period (1815–1848), a period that preceded the 1848 revolutions, or of Victorian England where the bourgeoisie, in times of political restoration, retreated into the private sphere, cultivated and often even 'celebrated' family life and the idyllic 'sweet home'; in this atmosphere, also bourgeois virtues like diligence, honesty, loyalty, faithfulness, modesty and sense of duty were turned into general moral principles.[54] The kind of *adab* that is promoted in works like *Way* and *Felāṭūn Beğ* seems to be inspired by that of the Biedermeier/Victorian age with its focus on the private, on bourgeois ethics, and emotionalism, and also with its self-satisfaction and complacency.

4.10 Conclusion

In the moral-ethical confusion caused in the course of the nineteenth century by European lifestyles swapping over into Middle Eastern everyday worlds, and under the pressure of a hegemonic Western value system, the newly emerged

52 Cf. my "*Fa-ghrawraqat ʿuyūnuhum…*" (1997b) = Chapter 11 in the present volume.

53 This can serve as an explanation also for the high degree of popularity enjoyed by *translations* of European popular fiction at the time. Cf. esp. Strauss 1994, passim. "Romans d'amour", in particular, seem to have been so popular (thanks to the new large group of *women* readers, cf. ibid., 146) that the sultan considered strict censorship as an absolute necessity (ibid., 127).

54 Cf. also the skills mentioned as an ideal of girls' education above, p. 95 with note 32.

Middle Eastern *efendiyya* took the lead in suggesting ways to deal with these challenges (and with the fact that one's own culture was being increasingly devaluated as the culture of the 'loosers'). The texts analyzed above can be read almost as manuals to help the readers to make their choice in the question of what to adopt from European civilisation and what to retain from one's own traditions, manners, customs, and values. As this was a question of the right *adab*, it was negotiated in belles-lettres, i.e., *adab* literature.[55] Being themselves advocates of a secular reformism that, in general traits, sought to follow the *European* model (enlightenment, education, democracy, positive law, sciences, role of women in society, etc., all under the label of 'progress' and 'civilisation'), *efendiyya* authors staged the choice one had to make as one between an enlightened (= reformed) *wujūd ahlī / alaturkalık* (represented by the narrator, Asʿad and Mīkhālī's wife in al-Khūrī's *Way*, and by Rāḳım and the narrator in *Felāṭūn Beğ*) and a superficial, ignorant adoption of 'Frankish' appearances (Mīkhālī in *Way*, Felāṭūn Beğ in Midḥat's novel). In other words, and as Einar Wigen has shown in his brillant dissertation, *moderation* was the ideal also of this new *adab:* a *middle way* between slavishly clinging to tradition, on the one hand, and an unreflected adoption and ignorant imitation of everything Western, on the other.[56] With the ideal of moderation, of a well-reflected balance between Western and Eastern *ādāb*, both authors (and with them most of the *efendiyya* of the time) came very close to the type of moderation and set of values that is characteristic, again, of European Biedermeier and Victorian culture (cf. the quotation from a poem by Eduard Mörike, preceding this article). This, by the way, can also be seen in the middle position al-Khūrī and Midḥat take with regard to *woman*-related *ādāb* and male-female relations. As in Biedermeier/Victorian culture, both authors here, too, advocate a moderate emancipation of women without, however, questioning the overall patriarchal order and a cult of purity.[57] Al-Khūrī has severe criticism

55 For an analogous process of interpreting the challenges of modernity in terms of *adab*, cf. Bouquet 2020 who, with regard to questions of the right conduct of diplomats on foreign service in Western countries, speaks of embassies as "un espace d'extraterritorialité de l'*adab*": "Loin de peser sur l'intégration d'une modernité extérieure, l'*adab* offrait un cadre favorable à l'acquisition de nouveaux usages" – Bouquet 2020, section on "Politesse des usages, réalisme de la visée".

56 Cf. Wigen 2014, 126–33 (chapter on "Edep, Ahlak and a Bourgeois Sociability"). For the corresponding attitude in questions of language, cf. Dupont, where the author concludes that for literati like Jurjī Zaydān "language had both to be preserved as a heritage and modernized until it would be able to express the new realities of a changing world" (2010, 171).

57 Cf. the fact, noted by Bouquet, that Ottoman diplomats were, as a rule, not allowed to take their women with them to Europe. Bouquet 2020, section on "Les périmètres de la distinction".

for the fact that the woman in the *mutafarnij*'s house has no other position than that of mere furniture, "a chest, or a chair", as though "she did not belong to the human species" (al-Khūrī 1860, 7). Compared to such utterances, the author himself thinks much higher of women and accuses Mīkhālī of treating his wife like a traditional despot (without however categorising this despotism as part of the *wujūd ahlī*). Although the text is not free from statements such as "[It is a wellknown fact that] women's desire for power and rule is generally stronger than true love" (ibid., 106), we find al-Khūrī making Mīkhālī's wife, i.e., a representative of the female sex, his own, the author's, *mouthpiece*: it is her who, from the very beginning, warns her husband and tries to divert him from trusting the false *comte* Edmond (ibid., 61); it is her who defends the poor Asʿad (ibid., 86–7); and it is her sceptical, down-to-earth attitude that proves to be right in the long run (ibid., 127) – so convincingly that Mīkhālī eventually decides that it will be wiser to listen to her opinion and advice in the future (ibid., 129). Midḥat for his part stresses the value of women's *education*. The ideal is presented in Cānān who never tires to study her lessons and (like Biedermeier/Victorian girls) to do her piano exercises (Mithat n.d., 48) and who, as a result of this attitude, shows quick progress (ibid., 40–41). More important than education and learning, however, are *diligence* and *hard work*. As Cānān's negative counterpart, Felāṭūn's sister Mihribān is characterised as a spoiled rich girl who always had her servants work for her and therefore has no idea herself about the laudible skills that ennoble a middle class girl, such as sewing, embroidery, crocheting or knitting, washing laundry, ironing, or cooking. Not even her hair does she comb herself, for the hairdresser comes to her house. Because of her laziness she also learns nothing and does not make progress in her piano lessons (ibid., 18–19).

In spite of the fact that education in girls is a sign of *adab* and therefore should become standard, neither Midḥat nor al-Khūrī seem to advocate a radical change in the patriarchal order, nor in the domains traditionally assigned to women.[58] In accordance with their emphasis on the feeling heart, both are advocates of (chaste) *love* as an essential ingredient in husband-wife relations. Nevertheless, al-Khūrī still supports Émilie's point when she argues, in a conversation with Edmond, that the traditional dowry (*mahr*) paid to an Eastern bride is an institution that should be maintained, because it demonstrates that in the authentic Arab *wujūd ahlī* women are held in higher esteem than their sisters in the West (al-Khūrī 1860, 111–12). In order to represent an ideal man-woman

58 Cf. Bouquet (2020, section on "Hors du monde de l'*adab*"), with the additional remark that also the traditional view on society as a whole, its hierarchy, compartmentalisation, etc. *in general* remained unchanged.

relationship Midḥat goes even a step further: Rāḳım and Cānān start out as master and slave. But like al-Khūrī, Midḥat, too, *mitigates* the traditional 'extreme' by introducing a *moderate*, enlightened, women-friendly ('Western') interpretation of patriarchal rule: it is an ideal only if the man, like Rāḳım, is benevolent, complaisant and sympathetic towards the woman and does not abuse his power against her, and if the woman, in turn, shows herself as grateful for the man's mildness and understanding as Cānān, who would prefer to remain a slave under a master like Rāḳım to a life as a free *hanım* without him (Mithat n.d., 77–79, 89–91).