

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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ZEYTINDAGI

FALIH RIFKI ATAY

SYNOPSIS

In this work, Falih Rifki Atay narrates in a non-chronological way what he sees and thinks during the years of the First World War. While he is training as a reserve officer, he is summoned to Jerusalem by Cemal Pasha to his headquarters. Here he witnesses the power struggles between Cemal Pasha and other pashas and German generals. As he spends time in Arab-populated areas, he becomes convinced of the Ottoman Empire's failure to establish cultural hegemony.

PEOPLE

Abdulahak Hâmid	Poet and diplomat
Ali Fuat Erden	Soldier and military historian
Azmi Bey	Chief of police in Istanbul
Babanzade Ismail Hakki	Deputy
Bahattin Sakir	Physician and politician
Cemal Pasha	Soldier and statesman
Enver Pasha	Soldier and statesman
Erich Georg Sebastian Anton von Falkenhayn	German general
Esad Erbilî	Tribal sheikh
Haci Âdil Arda	Statesman
Hafiz Hakki Pasha	Soldier
Halide Edib Adivar	Writer and educator
Hikmet Bey	Principal Director General of Press Information Bureau
Mahmut Sevket Pasha	Soldier and statesman
Rauf Orbay	Soldier and statesman
Sait Halim Pasha	Statesman
Talât Pasha	Soldier and statesman
Yusuf Izzeddin	Heir apparent

EVENTS

As a Reserve Officer

While Falih Rifki is training to be a reserve officer, all students take a spelling test. Many are eliminated. Later, the remaining students are examined and selected by a physician. Although the successful candidates are those who pass these tests, some of them are privileged by the government.

When Falih Rifki learns that some gangs are formed, because he prefers being a civilian officer in the army, he meets Dr. Nazim, a man of the Committee of Union and Progress. Dr. Nazim tells him that these gangs are made up of prisoners and that there is no place for him and young people like him. Falih Rifki returns to the academy disappointed. He hears from his three friends that Cemal Pasha is going to Egypt and that they intend to join him. Falih Rifki does nothing as he believes it will not be that easy. But he never sees his three friends again. Finally, a friend of his mediates, and Cemal Pasha employs him.

From the 1915 Zeytindagi to 1918 Istanbul with Cemal Pasha

When Falih Rifki arrives at the headquarters in the German guesthouse on Zeytindagi in Jerusalem, he first sees Cemal Pasha's aide-de-camp. When he tells the aide-de-camp that he is the person Cemal Pasha wanted, he is accepted into the room. On the left of the room are the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. On the right is the city of Jerusalem, and in front of it is a Russian structure. Cemal Pasha is busy signing various documents with his back turned in the triangle between the left and front windows. He turns his head for a while and looks at one of the three officers standing in the room and

informs him that his aide-de-camp can let the notables of Nablus in. Nearly twenty people come in, but Cemal Pasha continues to sign the papers without turning around. As they wait, the guests make face. Cemal Pasha finally turns around and states that the punishment for the crimes they have committed against the state is death, but thanks to the mercy of the great Ottoman state, he will exile them to Anatolia. The guests express their gratitude to Cemal Pasha and leave satisfied with what they heard.

Cemal Pasha takes the officers out of the room and smiles at Falih Rifki, implying that he is taken seriously only when he acts tough. He asks him to sit next to him and asks what he knows about the fight between Talât Pasha and Enver Pasha. After talking for a while, he asks his aide to appoint Falih Rifki to the cipher office. However, Deputy Chief of General Staff Ali Fuat Pasha, who conflicts with Cemal Pasha because Cemal Pasha always places his men in that office, assigns him to another unit.

In those days, the word "Unionist" is used to define an element of the party, but everyone is actually a man of someone. Everyone is someone's man. At the headquarters in Zeytindagi is a distinction between Cemal Pasha's men and the officers. Falih Rifki is also afraid of being called someone's man during the war. Still, he cannot avoid being called Cemal Pasha's man.

Three years later, when the war cabinet is about to withdraw, as a twenty-four-year-old young man, he thinks about what to do next and becomes a Turkish teacher at the Heybeliada Naval Academy. The day he leaves the academy where he is trained, rumors spread that Minister of Maritime Affairs Rauf Bey will come to the academy. Everyone gets prepared to greet him, but they do not know what to do when Cemal Pasha gets out of the car. Falih Rifki watches what is going on from the window. When Cemal Pasha goes upstairs, he goes straight to his room, where Cemal Pasha is looking pensively at the Golden Horn in his armchair. He asks, "Is everything finished?" Upon the question, a few drops of tears fall from Cemal Pasha's eyes. Then he gathers himself and examines the newspapers of that day.

Falih Rifki sees him for the last time at his mansion in Boyacikoy. Pasha tells him that he has no money, that Enver Pasha gives some of his forty thousand gold coins to him and Talât Pasha, and that he wants to give some to three journalists to defend him. He leaves the country. However, these three journalists make the heaviest accusations against him.

About Two Grand Viziers

Although the Committee of Union and Progress overthrows Abdulhamid, it works with the men of the Abdulhamid era. There are two men among them brought to the position of grand vizier; Mahmud Sevket Pasha and Said Halim Pasha. However, since Mahmud Sevket Pasha is from Baghdad and Said Halim Pasha is from Egypt, Falih Rifki believes that they are actually Islamic viziers.

Kavakli Mustafa, who kills Mahmut Sevket Pasha in 1913, attempts to escape to Romania on a Russian ship. The Ottoman Empire has no right to take anyone from a Russian ship. However, Unionist Police Chief Azmi Bey kidnaps him from the ship. Expecting the Russian ambassador to come to the Sublime Porte in order to ask about the event, Talât Pasha and Grand Vizier Said Halim Pasha go to Edirne under the pretext of meeting with the Bulgarian foreign minister at the border. In the meanwhile, Kavakli Mustafa is strangled. However, Azmi Bey is dismissed due to the Russian government's pressure and then appointed as the governor of Adana. When the Russian government objects to this, too, he is dismissed from all state duties.

After a while, a journalist writes an article criticizing Abdulhak Hâmid. Known as the great poet, Hâmid complains about this situation to Said Halim Pasha. Said Halim Pasha calls Director of Press and Publications Hikmet Bey to say that a journalist cannot speak out against a noble person. He asks for the necessary action to be taken. Falih Rifki cannot accept that Abdulhak Hâmid, who remains only a poet for everyone, even if he is a deputy, is only a noble person for Said Halim Pasha.

With Talât Paşa

While the Balkan Wars are going on, Falih Rifki works in the *Tanin* newspaper. One afternoon, Babanzade Ismail Hakki submits his editorial and requests Falih Rifki to ask Talat Pasha if it is appropriate to be published. After the ministers leave the meeting, Talât Pasha invites Falih Rifki and his friend to his home. After they wait for a while, Talât Pasha shows up in a white calico dress and slippers on his feet. He asks them to publish the article the next day. Looking for another topic for tomorrow, he lies down and says he hopes the Russians will allow a railroad to be built beyond

Ankara. Then he yawns and walks out. That is the first editorial written by Falih Rifki. After a while, he starts working as a clerk in Talât Pasha's private office and goes to Romania and Edirne with him. That is his first trip to Europe.

An Article

The articles of Hafiz Hakki, who writes under the title of Army and Youth in *Tanin* newspaper, are banned. One evening, Falih Rifki goes to Teutonia, a German cultural center, to listen to music. A drunken officer walks in with his sword slamming on both sides. Falih Rifki gets angry as he does not act in accordance with the rules of the setting and writes a critical article the next day.

When he goes to the station to join Crown Prince Yusuf Izzeddin's trip to Thrace as a reporter, Cemal Pasha, the guard of Istanbul at that time, comes up to him. He tells Falih Rifki that his article is objectionable, and he is assigned to follow him, but he congratulates him as he tries to save the army from such officers. In those days, men and women are asked to show their marriage licenses when they are spotted in the same carriage. So, the article is revolutionary for young people.

Enver Pasha

Falih Rifki meets Enver Pasha when Edirne is taken back. Enver Pasha tells him that in a village, the villagers brought him an old man and said that the man had delivered the girls in the village to the Bulgarians who were looking for girls, and that he had killed the man. Afterwards, they dine at the governor's house. After the meal, Governor Hacı Âdil Bey resents Enver Pasha's reluctance to benefit from his experiences and tells Falih Rifki that Enver Pasha is a child.

As Enver Pasha wants to be the only big name in the Balkan Wars, he falls out with his old friends. Governor Hacı Âdil Bey goes to Dimetoka to break the ice. Falih Rifki accompanies him as *Tanin* reporter. In the meeting, he senses that Hacı Âdil Bey gives too much importance to a soldier with a low rank, and after the meeting he asks who this person is. Hacı Adil Bey says that the young man is Mustafa Kemal and adds that he is a formidable person.

In 1914, Istanbul is under the pressure of Enver Pasha, so much so that people hear that an officer is beaten at the central command headquarters for shaving his mustache, which is considered contrary to religion. Falih Rifki asks himself what will be the use of the victory. After the victory, it is necessary to get rid of the Germans and Enver Pasha, who wants to live in accordance with medieval Islam.

Despite the fact that the Unionists lose their hope in the last year of the war, no one has the courage to say it to Enver Pasha. One day, they invite Necip Bey, one of the notables of Skopje, whom Enver Pasha respects very much, to the headquarters of the Committee of Union and Progress and ask him to talk to Enver Pasha. Necip Bey goes to Enver Pasha's mansion. They eat lunch together. After Enver Pasha listens to him, he tells him that he is the one appointed by Allah to establish the Turkish khanate.

Failed Ottomanism

Falih Rifki is proud of the Ottoman flag waving in places from the Suez Canal to the Persian Gulf. However, neither Turkish currency nor Turkish culture can pass beyond Aleppo. He sees Jerusalem as foreign to his own culture as he sees Florence. He wanders the streets like a tourist. Commerce, culture, farms, industry, buildings, and everything else belong to Arabs or other states. Only the gendarmerie belongs to the Turks. Although he sees no Turkified Arab, he sees many Arabized Turks. Cemal Pasha is like an invasion commander in Jerusalem, Damascus, Beirut, and Aleppo. Therefore, as Cemal Pasha dreams that he will make Lebanon as Ottoman as Konya with his policy of reconstruction and improvement, Falih Rifki thinks that the Ottomans act with a sense of history, not reality in Syria and Palestine.

However, he executes about forty Arab nationalists in Damascus and Beirut. A law enacted during World War gives the commanders the power to apply the death penalty when necessary, and he uses this authority. In addition, during the Balkan Wars, the future of Syria was discussed in a congress in Paris, and the center of Arab nationalism became the *El-İâ Merkeziye Cemiyeti*. Court Martial gives death sentences accepting that the detainees still act on the orders of this society.

Among those hanged are notable members such as Abdulhamid Zohrevi, parliamentarians such as Sefik el-Mueyyed, journalist such as Abdulgani Ariysi, and poets such as Refik Rizik Sellum. But none of them think they will be hanged. When Zohrevi is kept waiting for a few minutes at Cemal Pasha's door, he is hurt because he is a notable man. When he sits in front of Cemal Pasha, he learns that he is arrested for what he did before the war. Then, he only says, "Forgive me."

Falih Rifki remembers the moment he delivered a letter to Cemal Pasha from one of the exiles because of the assassination of Mahmut Sevket Pasha. Cemal Pasha receives the letter, smiles and says, "Everywhere there are people I banished." Falih Rifki does not like this state of him. He questions how a person gets pleasure from seeing someone begging him before being killed by him.

Young nationalists are executed in Beirut. But Yusuf Hani is a rich man who spends the summer in Europe and the winter in Beirut. Falih Rifki says that he is an enemy of the Turks, not because he is a nationalist, but because it is fashionable to be an enemy of the Turks. He signs a document on a gambling table without noticing that it is a declaration of independence.

Falih Rifki also adds that a French document states that Lebanese Christians are French-friendly, Lebanese Muslims who do not like Christians are British-friendly, that most Beirut Arabs love the French, but the Orthodox adhere to the Russians just to be tied to a more honorable and influential flag than the Ottoman Empire's.

He learns the stories of those hanged in Damascus from a friend. Sefik el-Mueyyed's beard is white and long. The gendarme, who takes him to execution area, trims his beard with scissors before the execution. Refik Rizik Sellum is the last person to be executed. He examines the empty chair, smiles and says, "I think that's my place." Then he looks at Zohrevi's body and greets him, "O father of freedom, hello!" As a Christian, he even calms the priest, who is there to pacify him.

About Cemal Pasha

In Damascus, a night is organized in the place called The Big Theatre in honor of Cemal Pasha. Cemal Pasha sends Falih Rifki to the place to check whether the hall and the public are suitable for his participation. He shows up late, as he always does. Poets and orators describe their gratitude to him for clearing the country of bad boys.

On Fridays, towards the noon prayer, hodjas come to the headquarters and preach, confirming that Syria is governed in accordance with religion. In the meantime, Cemal Pasha sits in the middle of the circle formed by them and tells his beads.

Now, legends about him start to circulate. People say that if he scratches his nose while talking to someone, he is considering whether to exile the person or not, if he scratches his beard, whether to forgive or not and if he twists his mustache, he is considering execution. In time, rumors spread in Istanbul that Cemal Pasha wants to be the Khedive of Syria.

Sheikh Esad

Because Sheikh Esad is exiled by Abdulhamid, the Committee of Union and Progress appoints him as a deputy. His place in the parliament is next to the Baghdad deputy, who does not speak Turkish. The Baghdad deputy sleeps in each session and asks Sheikh Esad what happened at the end. One day, when the Baghdad deputy asks him what happened during the session again, Sheikh Esad, who is disturbed by this situation, tells him that each deputy was given a ferry for his own province, but he missed this opportunity because he was sleeping. The Baghdad deputy angrily goes to the room of the speaker. The speaker tells him that Sheikh Esad puts him on. Upon this answer, the Baghdad deputy reproaches Sheikh Esad. But Sheikh Esad insists on his account. The Baghdad deputy rushes to the chamber of the speaker again. In the meantime, Sheikh Esad quickly leaves the parliament building.

One day, Cemal Pasha is invited to a meeting in Beirut. Women and Christians attend the meeting, too. He suddenly asks Sheikh Esad to give a speech. Sheikh Esad asks what he wants him to talk about. Cemal Pasha replies, "About womanhood!" As Sheikh Esad does not speak French, and the women do not speak Turkish, he makes a speech in Arabic, stating that as a Muslim, he envies the value given to women by Christianity.

Medina

Falih Rifki takes the train to Medina to go to Amman along with Enver Pasha, Cemal Pasha, a few staff members, two officers, Mevlevis and an Armenian waiter. Since Christians are forbidden to enter Medina, they leave the Armenian waiter in Madain Saleh.

The streets of Medina are full of Asian, African, and Anatolian beggars. An old man set off three years ago with a train ticket that would only take him to Mumbai, begged there for six months, went to Hyderabad with the ticket someone bought, and after spending six months there, he went to Jeddah with the help of the emir of Hyderabad. He reached Arafat and then Medina. He did all this to go to heaven. But now, Falih Rifki thinks heaven is his hometown, where his family and home are.

While they are praying, a man carrying a water jug passes in front of them. Falih Rifki thinks that the rule that one should not walk in front of a person praying is not valid in Medina. He interrupts his prayer and drinks the water that the man offers. He wants to continue to pray, but the man taps him on the shoulder, asking for money. Since he does not have any money with him, he asks the aide next to him to pay for him.

Falih Rifki expects to feel more closely connected to spiritual things in Medina, but this does not happen. For everything around the tomb of the prophet is traded. Thus, he concludes that Istanbul is the city that articulates and ennobles Islam.

Jerusalem

The pilgrims in Jerusalem are like the pilgrims in Medina. However, for Falih Rifki, Medina is an Asian market that materializes religion, as Jerusalem is a Western theater that dramatizes religion. Hotels in Jerusalem are semi-churches. Employees are half pastor, half nurse. The clothes belonging to both identities are in the same closet. Muslim gendarmes keep watch around the tomb of Jesus. As each part of the church belongs to another nation, each nation cleans its side. The tomb of Jesus is in dirt, as it cannot be decided who can clean it.

Falih Rifki and his friends are curious about the Holy Fire ceremony organized by the Church of Holy Sepulchre. First, the church's treasury is shown to them. Afterwards, the congregations settle in their lodges. Everyone holds candles lit by the sacred fire from the tomb of Jesus. The Greek patriarch in the front and the patriarchs of other congregations at the back circumambulate the tomb. The Greek patriarch is searched, as he should not have a match with him. He should light his candle by the sacred fire. The patriarch enters through the tomb door. A merchant on the upper floor lowers his basket of candles to his man below. Suddenly, the bells begin to ring. The patriarch comes out with the candle lit by the sacred fire. Those who are close to him light their own candles from his candle, while those who are far away from each other's candle. Thus, Falih Rifki and his friends, who cannot stand the heavy smell of thousands of burning candles, throw themselves outside.

The Jews in Jerusalem

Most of the people in Jerusalem are Arabs. But the new villages are built by the Jews. These German, English and French-speaking villages are full of oranges and figs. Villagers offer Falih Rifki and his friends the ripest orange and the oldest wine.

The state decides to settle the Jews in towns such as Hama and Homs until the end of the war in order to prevent famine and hunger. Thereupon, rumors spread in the European press that the Jews are deported. Cemal Pasha calls a few Jew representatives to tell them that he will either deport them like the Armenians, or put guards in their own gardens to execute anyone who touches even a single orange. The press thus falls silent, and the Jewish population moves from Jaffa to Hama and Homs.

Halide Edib and Bahattin Sakir

While Falih Rifki is in Istanbul, Halid Edib and a few educators are invited to Damascus by Cemal Pasha. Cemal Pasha intends to open Turkish colleges resembling American and French colleges in order to Ottomanize Syria.

Falih Rifki leaves Istanbul with Halide Edib and other women teachers. Bahattin Sakir gets into the compartment at a station. Falih Rifki introduces him to Halide Edib. Halide Edib criticizes the government's policy towards Armenians, while Bahattin Sakir wants the Armenians to be massacred. After Bahattin Sakir gets off the train, Halide Edib tells Falih Rifki, "You made me shake the hand of a murderer unknowingly." Sometime later, Bahattin Sakir leans in his ear and whispers, "Precious young people like you should be prevented from contacting this woman"

Cemal Pasha and the Armenians

Cemal Pasha considers relocating Armenians in Syria against Arab nationalism. In fact, a committee is formed to offer land and houses, provided that they are Muslims. While Halide Edib finds this policy protective, Bahattin Sakir blames Cemal Pasha.

Cemal Pasha corresponds with Talât Pasha to transfer two Armenian deputies, Zohrap and Vartkes, who are sent to the court in Van, to Lebanon. However, Talât Pasha says that they should appear at the court in Van at least once. When Cemal Pasha shows the last correspondence to both of them, Zohrap starts to cry. A few days later, the two are killed on the way by the gang of Circassian Ahmet and Nâzim. The governor of Aleppo informs Cemal Pasha that these two people tell him that Armenians are protected in Syria. Thereupon, Cemal Pasha wants both of them to be arrested, but they flee to Istanbul. Cemal Pasha takes all responsibility and orders both of them to be sent to Damascus no matter what. They are finally sent to Damascus, but the government still tries to protect them. When women's rings, earrings and jewels are found in their bags, it is proved that they committed murder not for an ideal as they claim, but for money, and thus Cemal Pasha has both of them executed.

Medals and Ranks

Enver Pasha and his entourage arrive in Gaza. At night, Enver Pasha and Cemal Pasha come out of their tents, and Enver Pasha puts a medal on Cemal Pasha's chest. When Cemal Pasha hears that this medal is given to Enver Pasha, he gets angry, thinking he is forgotten. Thus, Enver Pasha gets permission from the sultan to give this medal to Cemal Pasha.

After a while, Enver Pasha becomes lieutenant general. Telegrams begin to pour in congratulating Cemal Pasha on his promotion. Cemal Pasha cannot say that he is not the one who is promoted for fear of humiliation.

While all this is happening, British bombs shatter the crown of the Ottoman Empire.

The Issue of Money

One day, the General Directorate of Posts and Telegraph in Syria is ordered to collect silver and coins. Arab officials spread this news among the people, and the reputation of paper money suddenly falls. When wheat is to be purchased from a tribe in Havran, the tribe accepts paper money only on condition that one piece of paper is accepted as one hundred gold coins. During the war, wheat, camels, and all other services are bought with gold coins in Syria.

In order to bind the Druze sheikhs to the state, medals are given to first class sheikhs, robes of honor to second class sheikhs and gold coins to third class sheikhs. When a first-class sheikh is getting his third medal, he pushes it away with his hand and asks for gold coins.

Due to economic difficulties, it is announced that paper and gold coins are the same, and anyone who does not accept this is to be exiled or executed. Syrians agree with this order but withdraw from any military service. The railway comes to a standstill as trains run on wood. The governor of Damascus is forced to price the wood separately for paper money and gold. Thus, he officially acknowledges the difference between the two.

While this is happening, the Bedouins are on good terms with both the British and the Turks for gold and precious stones. Sometimes they sell the horses they steal from the British front to the Turks, and the horses they steal from the Turks to the British. Hiding on the battlefields, they risk their lives to collect the booty left behind by the fleeing side before the victorious side's soldiers arrive.

Death Sentence

There is almost no business that Cemal Pasha does not get involved in. That is why there is an expert in almost every subject at the headquarters. They learn that there is a field called urbanism from a Swiss professor. One day, while looking at a house, this professor says that he cannot understand how the Turks, who build so many buildings, has their own mosque architecture, fountain architecture, and tomb architecture, do not have a house and inn architecture.

Cemal Pasha orders a road to be built on a specific date. The governor of Damascus states that this is impossible, and the chief engineer comes to Lebanon to explain the situation. Falih Rifki meets him and takes him to Cemal Pasha. Cemal Pasha orders the chief engineer to leave all the files and ruler he brought with him on the table. He asks him to provide everything necessary for the construction of the relevant facilities and then declares that otherwise he will have him executed. The road is completed on the requested date.

During the war, the death penalty is like a five-lira fine. One day, in Beirut, Falih Rifki sees a telegrapher with dozens of telegrams waiting in front of him. On each telegram it is written, "One who delays this for a minute will be executed!"

Cemal Pasha and the Others

As the influence of Cemal Pasha increases, people gossip about him. Rumor has it that he does business, as his noteworthy visitors bring silk fabric to Istanbul. When Talât Pasha attempts to assign a friend of his named Ismail Canbolat to inspect him, Cemal Pasha writes a letter to Ismail Canbolat stating that he knows he is gossiping about him and he does not hesitate to kill him if necessary.

In the letter he writes to Talât Pasha, he says that now, he crosses the line. According to the rumor, after the death of the Minister of War Mahmut Sevket Pasha, the Unionists want Cemal Pasha to be the minister of internal affairs. However, Talât Pasha plays the grand vizier against Cemal Pasha. Afterward, the alliance with the Germans is hidden from Cemal Pasha, and Talât Pasha drives him away on the pretext of the conquest of Egypt. Actually, he expects Cemal Pasha to die in battle or kill himself for failing.

Arbitrary Decisions

When Cemal Pasha is informed that one of his orders is against the law, he immediately asks for a paper and writes a telegram to the Ministry of War demanding that the law in question be changed as he wishes.

As it is costly to build a road in Beirut in accordance with the law, Governor Azmi Bey does it by destroying the neighborhoods and lands. The road is beautiful, but the property rights of many people are violated.

The worst examples of violations happen in Syria. Unwanted families are deported to various places. Once Cemal Pasha asks why a family should be deported from a village in Lebanon, he learns that it is a sergeant's demand. Then, he says that he cannot make a decision based on the request of a sergeant.

Since Ali Fuat Pasha is angry with these arbitrary exiles, he gives Falih Rifki a draft to be given to Cemal Pasha, stating that these arbitrary decisions are wrong. Falih Rifki rewrites it in his own handwriting and delivers it to Cemal Pasha. In response, Cemal Pasha sends a note stating that nobody can interfere with his business. Thereupon, Ali Fuat Pasha gives a petition to Falih Rifki to be delivered to Cemal Pasha, demanding his retirement.

An Emirate

There are semi-independent sheikhdoms and emirates in the deserts of Arabia and Iraq. The name of the emir in one of them is Saud. Since the time of Abdulhamid, it has even had an ambassador named Resit Pasha in Istanbul. Its capital is Hail, a town of five to six thousand people. Here, people are divided into three classes: the nobles who do nothing, the tinsmiths and butchers, the children of the slaves and white women, and finally, the slaves. The emir's mother is a woman who has someone she doesn't like fed to the dogs, and the emir takes all his decisions under the influence of his mother and his representative in Istanbul.

The government pays this emirate in order for it to be submissive. When a rebellion breaks out in the Hejaz, it continues to pay it to keep watch over the border. For the only thing the emirate values is money. Falih Rifki reads a letter written by Resit Pasha, the representative in Istanbul, to the emir. In the letter, Resit Pasha says that the government gives him money in return for the military support of the emirate. However, in order not to provide this support, he recommends that the emirate attack a tribe on the grounds that it does not give alms. Thus, when he arrives at the emirate, the expedition can provide him with an excuse not to send his men to help out the government's troops.

A Trip to Europe

Falih Rifki believes that among the Easterners who go to Europe, it is only the Japanese who can free themselves from the lure of the streets of Europe and can work. The Ottomans, who are sent to Europe, do not want to work at a desk because of the new liberties they discover in Europe.

When Cemal Pasha is invited to Germany, he gives Falih Rifki a medal and a badge because he does not want a companion with an empty chest. Later, Falih Rifki is awarded a medal after watching the opera in the emperor's lodge in Berlin, a medal after attending an invitation in the Municipality of Hamburg, a medal, which is given only to captains by the Austrian emperor, and another medal when he is back. Falih Rifki returns to Damascus having seen and learned new things but lost his hope of victory.

Handing Over the Army

General von Falkenhayn and Cemal Pasha cannot get along as two authorities in an army district. In the end, General von Falkenhayn is left at the head of the armed forces. Cemal Pasha, who does not want to return to Istanbul having lost Syria, is given the title of general commander of Syria and Western Arabia. Thus, while the Syrian army is gradually handed over to the Germans, Cemal Pasha is transformed into someone responsible only for the civil administration.

One day, when a German officer occupies a building, Cemal Pasha, who is used to execute many people for many reasons, have to speak with this officer for a long time to explain what he does is a mistake. But it is not Cemal Pasha that falls; it is Syria. Neither General von Falkenhayn nor the German commander who comes after him can hold out against the British in these lands that go out of the hands of the empire.

Returning to Istanbul

While returning to Istanbul with Cemal Pasha, he is sure that the empire is left without Jerusalem, Damascus, Lebanon, Beirut, and Aleppo. Cemal Pasha looks at the Anatolian lands and says, "I wish my duty were here," and adds that he wants to work in Anatolia now.

They see a woman at a station. She asks everyone passing by, "Did you see my Ahmet?" and adds, "He went this way," showing the opposite direction of the running train. Falih Rifki reflects on the woman's question. One hundred thousand men are lost now. However, he feels incapable of explaining for what they lost Ahmet. Because, according to him, they lost Ahmet in gambling.

THEMES

Power Struggles There is an endless power struggle between Cemal Pasha and the other important names of the Committee of Union and Progress, Enver Pasha and Talât Pasha. Enver Pasha believes that he is chosen by an extraordinary power to establish a Turkish khanate. In this way, he finds in himself the right to punish the soldiers not because of their military mistakes, but because they act and live contrary to his belief system, which is Islam. Talât Pasha, on the other hand, works against Cemal Pasha in a way that Cemal Pasha openly warns him in a letter. Cemal Pasha also has conflict with Ali Fuat Pasha. Ali Fuat Pasha condemns him for placing his men in various positions in the army. This conflict causes Ali Fuat Pasha to demand his resignation. But conflicts don't always end like that. The rivalry between Cemal Pasha and Enver Pasha is covered with medals. While these power games between the pashas continue, the empire gets weaker day by day.

Arbitrary Rule While working as Cemal Pasha's private secretary, Falih Rifki witnesses how easily he and other state officials break the law. Although Cemal Pasha has experts from all fields around him, he does not hesitate to threaten the experts with execution when what the experts say

contradicts his own desires. For example, he terrorizes the chief engineer to finish the road construction the way he wants. Similarly, the governor of Beirut violates the private property rights of many people for road construction. The law is no different than a puzzle for every official.

Disloyalty When Falih Rifki goes beyond Aleppo, he realizes what a weak influence the empire has on the Arab population. Although the government distributes gold coins to the sheikhdoms and emirates to gain their loyalty, these semi-autonomous entities continue to use the money from the center for their interests and to manipulate the government. We see the most obvious example of this in the letter written by Resit Pasha, the representative of an emirate in Istanbul, to the emirate. He takes money from the government for military support but concocts a story not to provide it.

Unsuccessful Governance The government displays an inconsistent image because it does not act systematically. For example, it declares that paper money and gold coins are of equal value. However, when the Syrian merchants who meet the vital needs of the army resist this decision, it determines the price of wood separately for paper money and gold coins. Thus, it overturns its own decision.

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