

Verne's Tale of Two Cities: A Reflection on Science and Society in 'The Begum Fortune'

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Abstract- This analysis examines Jules Verne's depiction of the complex interplay between science, morality, and societal development in his novel, "The Begum's Fortune." Verne presents a dual vision of the future through contrasting cities: one representing a utopian society where science is used ethically to promote harmony and sustainability, and the other illustrating a dystopian world driven by unchecked technological power and moral neglect. The work underscores that technological progress is promising and dangerous, depending on human choices and ethical responsibilities. Verne warns that scientific advancements can lead to societal harm and environmental degradation without careful moral considerations. The novel encourages reflection on the importance of moral integrity, social responsibility, and the need for humans to balance innovation with ethical principles to build a better future. Overall, Verne's story conveys that progress relies on technological development and moral values guiding their use.

Keywords: Utopia, Dystopia, Science, Moral responsibility, technological progress.

INTRODUCTION

Jules Verne is among the most influential science fiction and adventure story writers. He is very good at blending science with imagination to create exciting stories, and his methods make us curious and adventurous. Verne's works show us how Science and exploration combine with discovery and wonders. His works often show us exploring a new place, with courageous characters using science and technology. Verne wrote his stories when the world was chasing progress, changing worldwide because of new inventions and discoveries. We can see the connection between science and technology in the 19th century; this era inspired Verne to imagine the future. One of the most essential works Begum published in this era, this story reflects on money, power, and society. In this story, Verne put his beliefs and the culture surrounding

him. He was very interested in knowing how people think about a better world or a perfect society, where our lives could be fair and reasonable for everyone. We can see that many of his novels have these ideas, and he was very hopeful that science could make a better society. His books continue to inspire today through science, adventure, and thought on creating a better world. Verne's novel is different from others because in this novel, he shows the positive and negative sides of science and technology. Science is not all good for us; it can also harm us if a bad person guides it. This story is an excellent example of the real cost of progress.

When Verne wrote these books, France had political and social problems, so the people considered modernizing France. People wanted to be stronger. At the same time, France was also trying to expand its colonies in different places, which was the impact of the Victorian era's attitude. This era influenced Verne; his books show how scientific advancements changed the world. In his works, we can see both the hopes and challenges. In his books, Technology played an important role. Verne was curious about science and technology, exploring unknown territories, and tried to understand the people who taught him how they lived. Verne criticizes through the story in the 19th-century political and social context. He showed militarism and capitalism. He also showed how industrial growth was uncontrolled. This society is the consequence of uncontrolled factories, technologies, and machines. Verne symbolized capitalism and unchecked capitalism as the cause of social division. This story has two principal characters, one from France -Dr. Sarrasin and another one is from Germany, Professor Schultze. This story was written after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, when France defeated the German states. This war created much tension between France and Germany. Verne wrote this story a few years before the First World War.

DUAL CITY UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA

In his famous novel, *The Begum's Fortune*, he shows two different ideas of Victorian-era societies. There are two cities: one is in France, and the other is Stahlstad. Jules Verne explored this in the novel Themes of Utopian and Dystopian. France Ville is like a utopian society; everything is perfect, and they use science and technology, live very peacefully, and care for each other. Dr. Sarrasin and Herr Schultz are Verne's principal characters in his books, but they are opposites.

Dr. Sarrasin is one of the main characters in the story. He is an optimistic scientist who receives much money from the Begum and decides to use it to create a French-style city. He builds this city, Franche-Comté, on the western side of the Cascade Mountains near the Pacific coast. In this town, he demonstrates how using science wisely can improve human life and promote peace. The city is full of new inventions, respect for nature, and the exchange of modern scientific ideas. It reflects the belief that the French model of society is the best. The people live happily in harmony, and the place appears almost like a utopia, where everything runs perfectly. Verne shows that a good city depends on its leader's wisdom and morality; Dr. Sarrasin's vision makes such an ideal community possible. In this context, Paris symbolizes progress and hope, suggesting that technology should not be limited to machines but should make life healthier, fairer, and more joyful. Through this novel, Verne leaves us with the question: Can science and morality truly exist together in society? He suggests that building such a community is difficult but also an inspiring goal. His city embodies the values of justice, equality, and sustainability.

The other city, Stahlstad, is like a dystopia, where the ruler is very strict, a dangerous place, dark, an unhealthy environment, factories, the latest machines, pollution, and the ruler does not care about that. It is the opposite of Franceville. They misused science to make weapons for war. People of this age have no freedom; science and technology are used to control them and to try to control other parts of the world. Herr Schultz is the ruler of this city; he uses technology for bad purposes and science and technology with bad intentions. His city has terrible conditions, which are harmful to the environment. He misused the science and showed the dangerous side of the technology to

show his power. In his writing, Jules Verne showed us that science is not always good; sometimes we have to face a hazardous side when we misuse it, and it can harm society, too. Using science depends on the person. Verne uses Schuktz to warn society and think ethically and morally about when we use science and technology. The people were suffering because of militarism and social division.

A spy from France-ville entered Herr's city to know about their deadly plans. He understood they were preparing for war against the French-ville and making dangerous weapons. This part makes us think that the destructive side of technology is when it's misguided. One city is focused on being healthier and happier; on the other hand, the other town focuses on weapons and power. This is the main difference in their ideas. These ideas make the story enjoyable.

Verne shows that the city of French Ville is a balanced city that includes ethics and technology. This city is a model for equity, social harmony, and environmental sustainability, and provides fair access to resources. Verne's work shows that we must work together towards a better society where we will find utopia meaningfully.

Verne showed that these two different cities put the readers in tension. Readers are inquisitive about how the future will go. This contrast helps readers understand the principal ideas of good or bad in science and technology. It looks at a different way of organizing society: Dr. Sarrasin's utopian and Herr's dystopian cities. Verne has given us a hidden message that wishing for a better world has great promise, but also risks, and depends on the person's choices. (Göschl, 2020).

Verne's story "The Begum Fortune" is not just about inventing a new machine but also shows what to do with the power, and they use it for good or bad. Verne's story teaches us that technology makes our lives better, and he also shows that it could be one of the worst reasons for harming society. Science and technology give us more power, but at the same time, we have to take on more responsibility. It can be dangerous when it grows without control. So, the author wanted to see how humans should react when they have more powerful tools, and warns that they can harm us when we progress without ethics. Sometimes we forget our moral duties.

Jules Verne uses symbols to show the difference between a perfect ideal society and a harmful society.

These two cities stand for different ideas and have various ways of life. In this novel, Verne shows the good and bad sides of trying to create a better world. The symbol used in this story is something we should consider in our lives, right or wrong. Verne uses this symbol for two cities, Franche-Ville, which symbolizes an ideal or perfect world; it is an open, clean, and very close to nature. Dr. Sarassin has used technology in this city to create a better world for the people. Where people live together, share ideas, and live peacefully. It is a symbol of hope for a better future.

Another city, Stalsthad, is evil; in this city, there is no freedom, no care about the environment, and it is a dark city. This city is for militarism; they prepare for war. In this city, pollution is spreading through machines and factories, but the ruler, Herr Schultze, does not pay any attention. He is a corrupt person, and he is absorbing. This book represents him as a greedy, technologically misused, and influential. He used this symbol to think about what is right and what is wrong. Verne did not just dream of a better world; he wanted to warn that the wish to create a better world can cause society. Verne tells us that we should be careful about the dangers, and his message is that sometimes achieving a good goal can be very risky.

These two cities are the symbols of both sides of technology. France-Ville helps people to improve their lives, but Stalsthad shows how, when we misuse the technology, the consequences are terrible. So Verne says the technology we can use ethically and morally should benefit that world. Verne's thesis makes the story more meaningful and more profound. This symbol helps to prove that he can show that progress can be hopeful and dangerous at the same time. This story considers the responsibilities, primarily based on the latest scientific invention.

HUMANITY, MORALITY, AND LIMITS OF PROGRESS IN VERNE'S VISION

Verne shows in this story that all hopeful visions are not realistic. Verne warns that to create a better society, one faces many problems from human nature. This difference makes the readers dream of creating a culture. Verne helps those who want to make a better world, meaning now we know what types of problems we can face, so that people can be ready for these issues. Technology can change societies rapidly, creating new problems and possibilities. We must

consider the use of science and technology and protect nature. Modern issues are very relevant to problems. We must never forget that, whatever we use science and technology to create a better world, we should first think about right and wrong.

Verne has left the question in this novel whether science and technology are suitable or bad for society when misused. Verne was apprehensive about society's future; people were inquisitive about change, but at the same time, they were very worried about danger in the future. Jules Verne shows the world an image of a perfect city through Dr. Sarasin's Franche-Comté. It is well organized, clean, and beautiful. We can understand that creating a perfect or better world is tough. There is a fight between two big cities, France Ville vs Stahlstad, one has the dream of an ideal and peaceful society, and the other has control, creating a harsh society.

Although human ambition is complicated, progress can make a perfect world for us, but it can also harm us if we can't use it ethically, so it depends on the person using it. Verne's messages are also relevant today because we face similar problems; we must protect people's rights and values by inventing technology. Verne gives the messages that we need to better everyone's life, not just some people, and make the planet safe; it's not about only the power or speed. This story teaches me.

In Verne's story, The Begum's fortune, both characters, Dr. Sarasin and Herr, play a vital role. The story moves forward with each other's actions, and the readers eagerly await the upcoming situation. Two different ideas, one has beautifully created a perfect world, and the other has to destroy the world. These opposite ideas are not the story; they make us think about how society can learn from using science, they show the real problems, and how people use science through transformation. This book shows that technology is used to create a better life, but it can also harm us.

Verne's novel shows us that technology and the latest inventions are essential for the city of France. Verne showed us how technology can make a better world through this city. Verne's advanced idea can give us a perfect, healthier, safer, and more comfortable life. He also showed us that technology can harm us. So, France Ville used by Verne that he wanted to show we can use science and technology for a better world. Paris represents hope because this city is clean, beautiful for

the people, and carefully planned, with a sustainable system for protecting nature. We can understand Verne's belief in science and technology. It's not about the physical infrastructure and modern technologies; the important thing is how the city is run and how they live together. In this city, everyone works together and shares their benefits based on fairness and teamwork. The latest inventions and scientific ideas are used to improve our lives, but some people want to control them, so they misuse science. This city thinks about the future generation, which is why this city is immaculate. Verne uses the other Ville, where rapid industrialization and factories, machine unfairness, and environmental damage. Here, we get a message from this part that we can't give more importance to power and technology than ethics and morals, and then there is a possibility of harming nature.

CONCLUSION

Verne uses clear pictures to show the difference between the ideologies of the two men. This imagery shows the contrast between utopia and dystopia easily imagined. Verne makes readers feel how each city works and what it stands for. It's not an interesting story; he makes us think about the big question: what are the possible dangers of building a new society? And the second is that good intentions can have some bad results. What are the moral choices when we want to make a better world? People should think when they have moral choices. Chasing a dream can be good and evil; sometimes, building a better society can be complicated.

Verne's story is not only an adventure story; he also shows two different visions of the future. Verne pushes us to think about what kind of world humans want to build and how progress can bring hope and danger.

This novel teaches us that technology has good and bad sides; it depends on how the user uses it. We have powerful things, but we have to use them carefully. In this story, both have powerful tools, but only Dr.Sarrasin uses them ethically and morally to create a better society. Verne shows us that making a perfect world is very hard. We must think about right or wrong, even with good ideas, because good ideas have problems and mistakes. So Dr.Sarrasin has faced so many issues in creating his Franche-ville. On the other hand, Herr does not even think about right or wrong.

This story shows us that people have choices, and we need to decide what to do or not. We need to think about the good and bad sides. In this story, both characters have the choice, but one has chosen to create a world where everyone will be happy, while the other has created a world where only some people have benefited. This novel teaches us a critical part of human nature: hope and fear. We can hope for a better world, but we need to be careful, as in this novel, Dr. Sarrasin has the hope but needs to be cautious. Not like Herr, because he creates something that harms society. Verne's speculative fiction raises the question of how human progress will happen. Today, Verne's story is relevant: AI, Biotechnology, and climate change. People are perplexed, wondering how to use these powerful tools correctly or incorrectly. It will be hazardous if we do not think about right or wrong. Verne warns us in this story that trying to make a better world sometimes leads to an imperfect world when we forget moral rules. Modern-day writers and thinkers learn from Verne's story because they always think about the moral and ethical side of the invention, so they see it carefully. In this way, Verne's stories still remind us of modern technology's problems and duties. These days, we are still facing issues. Technology, moral responsibilities, and developing a better society are the same problems Verne has shared in this story. The world deals with significant social and environmental issues because modern technology is advancing rapidly. Verne warns through his vision of a perfect world. What we feel if we do not think about good and evil is that it is good. Verne warns that people must believe, and at the same time, it is also an inspiration to make a better world. In Verne's story, we can see that progress can become dangerous if it grows without control. Humans should work together on this. We need to learn from Verne in this story, he created a city where harmony with nature, like it is green, clean, and sustainable. Through this, Ville Verne shows that nature and technology can work together.

Verne gives the message through this book that humanity depends on moral choice, which makes managing power and technology difficult. It's a cautionary tale, impacting social, technological, and ethical decisions. The story shows that wealth and scientific advancement go hand in hand.

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