

TURKISH POLITICAL THOUGHT WITH REGARD TO STATE AUTHORITY AND COMMUNITY CULTURE: WHY CAN A COMMUNITY NOT SEIZE THE STATE?

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Abstract

Actual issues that can be treated in relation to orders (*ṭarīqabs*) and communities (*jamā'abs*) resemble a labyrinth in which one can easily become lost. This process is similar to running on a minefield to grasp the true essence and objectively notate the principles of such issues that add some metaphysical spice to life. Indeed, true words are not always sweet and are sometimes bitter. Such difficulty becomes even more apparent when one treats an issue such as the Gülen Community, which significantly falls within the scope of intelligence. The manifestation of everything can equally be interpreted as total concealing. It is easier said than done to disclose why political power and the Gülen Community became foes. Therefore, direct words may not accurately represent the implications between the lines.

Key Words: State authority, community, religious order, politics, Gülen movement, AK Parti (Justice and Development Party), Fethullah Gülen, Sa'īd Nürsī.

Introduction: Complaining is Prior to Telling the Story

Once the historical circumstances are taken into account, past incidents seem very normal. Nevertheless, once circumstances leave the scene, it is clear that the incidents will be viewed and conceived in a very different manner. In this regard, it is wrong to evaluate any past crystallized issue through a current approach, as it is wrong to

evaluate present cases in the context of the past. However, the climate in which one lives indeed determines one's perspective; the measure is where one stands rather than the point observed. Accordingly, in an interview with Olivier Roy, an expert researcher on "personal and familial history," an Afghan asks Roy to explain the reason behind the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Before waiting for Roy's geostrategic analyses, he responds: "For melons, I think. Indeed, I don't understand for what else one would come here."¹ As rhetorical philosophers indicate, the mind of man is either at the tip of his pen² or in his words.

Actual issues that can be treated in relation to orders and communities resemble a tunnel in which one can easily become lost, which is similar to running on a minefield to grasp the true essence and objectively notate the principles of such issues that add some metaphysical spice to life; indeed, true words are not always sweet and are sometimes bitter. This difficulty becomes even more apparent when one treats an issue, such as the incidents occurring between the Ak Parti (Justice and Development Party) government and the Gülen Community, which significantly falls within the scope of intelligence in Turkey, especially in the aftermath of December 17, 2013. The manifestation of everything can equally be interpreted as the concealing of everything. It is easier said than done to disclose why political power and the Gülen Community became foes, merely grounding the answers in apparent reasons. Therefore, direct words may not accurately represent the implications between the lines. "Disclosing wisdom to one who is not confident is tormenting." It is necessary to speak only as much as the mind can comprehend.³ The expression "The statement of truth is superior to the statement itself."⁴ applies here as well. Therefore, we evidently do not deny that there are people who have penetrated into the essence of this issue, which

¹ Olivier Roy, *Kayıp Şark'ın Peşinde* [*En quête de l'Orient perdu*], ed. Jean-Louis Schlegel, trans. Haldun Bayrı (Istanbul: Metis, 2014), 137.

² Gelibolulu Muştafâ 'Âlî, *Manâqib-i bunarwarân*, ed. Ibn al-Amîn Maḥmūd Kamâl [Inal] (Istanbul: Türk Tarih Encümeni, 1926), 9.

³ İsmâ'îl Rusûkhî Anqarawî, *Sbarḥ al-Mathnawî* (Istanbul: Maḥba'a-i 'Âmirah, 1289), I, 53.

⁴ Müstakîmzâde Süleyman Sa'deddin [Mustaqîmzâda Sulaymân Sa'd al-Din], *Risâle-i Melâmiyye-i Şuttâriyye* [*Risâla-i Malâmiyya-i Şuttâriyyab*], in *Melâmet Risâleleri: Bayrâmî Melâmiliği'ne Dâir*, ed. Abdurrezzak Tek (Bursa: Emin, 2007), 252.

cannot be disclosed everywhere. Once we address the clear aspects of the incident, the occurrences of yesterday and today are precursors to what is to come in the future. The history of Turkey provides concrete examples of this fact. “Whoever is to grasp can grasp through a hair.”⁵

An analysis of the history of orders and communities reveals that the same occurrences are continuously repeated; the reason behind never-ending wars is that differences in temperaments, extravagances, and understatements have nourished one another, and everyone has a say to support his own cause, idealizing the people and classes he likes and appreciates; everyone uses his position as a hindrance to entangle his opponents, and no one ever wants to discuss what is best for Turkey; consequently, one always deems himself to be right. In fact, Muṣṭafā ‘Āli of Gallipoli is right: “Indeed, it is rare to find one who is truly right; however, in those days, those who claim they are right are abundant.”⁶ Therefore, when speaking about the community, one must speak about the state and vice versa; regardless of the noise that seeks to oppress every voice, one must question the possibility of refreshing this problem, which concerns the destiny of the entire country, and one should not forget that man is responsible for his deeds. As “complaining is prior to telling the story,”⁷ we have to settle the account of what the permissions and authorizations that are granted to orders and communities bring and take away. The rest will be mere gossip. “At this seat, the pretention of ignorance can never be a pretext.”⁸

I. Can a Community Seize the State?

Various organizations in which people gather, communities and orders above all constitute the tightening links of the chain of the state. The state is apparent everywhere to anyone who knows how to look; through the medium of these gathering-places, the state

⁵ Ismā‘il Ḥaqqī Būrsawī, *Sbarḥ al-Mathnawī* (Istanbul: Maṭba‘a-i ‘Āmirah, 1287), I, 4.

⁶ Gelibolulu Muṣṭafā ‘Āli, *Naṣīḥatu s-selāṭīn* [*Naṣīḥat al-salāṭīn*], in *Muṣṭafā ‘Āli’s Counsel for Sultans of 1581: Edition, Translation, Notes*, ed. Andreas Tietze (Wien: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979), 93.

⁷ “Şikâyet hikâyet üzerine mukaddemdir.” Ismā‘il Ḥaqqī Būrsawī, *Sbarḥ al-Mathnawī*, I, 3.

⁸ Gelibolulu Muṣṭafā ‘Āli, *Naṣīḥatu s-selāṭīn*, 91.

becomes the people. Community, which places individuals under the order of the same will and has the secret of melting people into a greater whole, gathers everyone similarly to a shrine, becoming a milestone on the way to becoming a nation. Since no one can attain perfection on his own, “fellows back up one another; whenever one falls, the other picks him up.”⁹ The sense of belonging turns into an ability. Elements that can never blend in any other condition are blended in the same mold. In the history of the Turks, most elements are grounded in legends and epics; accordingly, this approach is rendered as functional as possible. An atmosphere loaded with mysticism is constituted. This is the heads side of the medallion. The tails side is knotted up in the question of whether the state can take the form of a state.

This question, which answers itself, can take us to many points, including the following: As with the state, which constitutes a metaphysical influence on life, the community occurs since man is not self-sufficient. Each man overcomes his deficiencies through others.¹⁰ In a community environment, “prayers are accepted, whereupon benediction is bestowed.”¹¹ In other words, man becomes self-sufficient by the virtue of his fellow creatures. Each meets a requirement that is necessary for another.¹² For this reason, cities, societies, and communities are formed. This cooperation assures their existence and subsistence. A community emerges as a consequence of the feeling of sufficiency within a rank, similarly to a state emerging as a sign of the self-sufficiency of a society.¹³ Human nature is inclined to seek shelter and co-habit with fellow creatures. Man seeks perfection within society but can only attain it through the assistance of others;¹⁴ in a community environment, man understands

⁹ Sinan Paşa [Sinān Pāshā], *Tazarru'-nāme* [*Taḍarru'(-nāmab)*]: *Yakarışlar Kitabı*, ed. Mertol Tulum (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2014), 453.

¹⁰ Plato, *Devlet*, trans. S. Eyüboğlu and M. A. Cimcoz (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2012), 54-55.

¹¹ Abū ‘Alī Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī Ibn Sinā, *al-Sbifā’*: *al-Ilābiyyāt*, eds. Georges C. Anawati, Ibrāhīm Madkūr, and Sa‘īd Zāyed (n.p.: n.d.), 452.

¹² Ibn Sinā, *al-Sbifā’*: *al-Ilābiyyāt*, 441.

¹³ Aristoteles, *Politika* [*Politics*], trans. Furkan Akderin (Istanbul: Say, 2013), 51.

¹⁴ Al-Fārābī, Abū Naşr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭarhkhān, *Kitāb taḥşil al-sa‘ādab* (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1981), 61-62.

himself and matures. For this reason, he comes together with others.¹⁵ Each is engulfed in one another. Perfection can be attained only in the environment of a city, a society or a community. The state, and therefore laws and justice, constitutes the ideal framework for attaining perfection. Accordingly, the Ottoman philosopher Qinālīzāda argues that *man's need of man is obligatory*.¹⁶ In his view, society forms the individual.

The hierarchy of the individual, the community, and the nation shows that the state, which is a type of mirror that reflects everyone, has limits that no rank can surpass. Life is a realization as much as an idealization. Since the state cannot be imprisoned within a circle drawn by the community, it cannot merely consist of the scope of a rank. Therefore, let us reiterate the following: The state is governed by means of politics not by means of this or that community. At this stage, the expression “Caution means casting a glance at the consequence, namely, the other aspects and outcomes of something”¹⁷ becomes meaningful. Rulers cannot compromise¹⁸ since they know that tolerance will cause the world to slip through their hands.¹⁹ Once siblings argue, their father will undoubtedly get along with all of them. Sometimes, the grace of the state defeats its wrath, and sometimes, it is the opposite; however, after all, the state reigns over all of history as an overlooking plane tree, learns necessary lessons and keeps going. A. H. Tanpınar, the author of *Huzur [A Mind at Peace]*, is in the right: “Today, one can think Turkey can be or become anything. However, Turkey has to be but one thing, which is Turkey. This will be possible only if she proceeds under her own circumstances.”

A comparison between the state and the community, which is a comparison that is obligatory albeit wrong, indicates the greatness of the problem. The problem, which sinks deep while political will and community appear to melt into one another, becomes salient sooner

¹⁵ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārāʾi ʿabl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, ed. Albīr Naṣrī Nādīr (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1986), 117.

¹⁶ Kınalīzāde Ali Çelebi [Qinālīzāda ʿAlī Chalabī], *Ablāk-ı Alāʾī [Akblāq-i ʿAlāʾī]*, comp. Mustafa Koç (Istanbul: Klasik, 2007), 157.

¹⁷ Ismāʿīl Haqqī Būrsawī, *Sharḥ al-Mathnawī*, II, 27.

¹⁸ Sinan Paşa, *Tazzarruʾ-nâme*, 477.

¹⁹ Qochi Beg, *Qochi Beg Risālasī* (Constantinople: Maṭbaʿat Abū l-Ḍiyāʾ, 1886), 36-46.

rather than later. The fight is not a quarrel about who will rule the state; rather, it is the assignment of a roadmap by the state through the government and the community. The state intervenes in the community as soon as the latter matures in the field of politics; therefore, what the community views as a strength is in fact a weakness, and the power of community is valuable only as far as it is allowed. Any structure that is established in a manner similar to the state is born, matures and finally comes to an end. It is as clear as day that whoever aims at political power will have accomplished his task once he attains such a target. In this respect, this problem serves as a laboratory to observe how an organization, which does not abide by the invisible limits drawn by the state, can sustain its rule. Anyone involved in politics knows well that this involvement comes at a price. As religion determines the trajectory of the state, the latter forms the religion. There are countless examples thereof. This is what occurs within the state. Regarding the culture of orders, everything occurs within the relationship between the disciple and the mentor. "The right of the mentor is greater and higher than all other rights."²⁰ The same applies not only for madrasah and *takkab* but also for the realm of communities. The approach, *in which the organization carries the prayers of a sage (pīr)*, is also valid in the environment of religious orders. Once the frame is left, the *prayers of a sage* leave for other elements. Yūsuf Kāmil Pāshā, the Grand Vizier to Ottoman Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, said the following: "Ruling goes together with wisdom/a vizier has to be a ruler." In a state that abides by these words, each rank has a word of its own, and each skill has a body of its own.

II. Disguises of a Community

A community that has apparently forgotten the network of legitimacy for being the heritage of orders and that does not remember self-reflection or returning to its origins becomes an action that demolishes the thought of reclusion in Sufism. Consequently, a psychology that monopolizes all ways to Allah is born. However, "in the days of traditional culture, religious orders are separate, not as rivals or elements that look at each other with an evil eye but as necessary parts of a whole." "Their difference of temperament only

²⁰ Abū l-Khayr Ṭāshkuprīzāda ‘Iṣām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muṣṭafā, *Mawḍū‘āt al-‘ulūm*, trans. Kamāl al-Dīn Meḥmed Efendī (Darsa‘ādat: Iqdām Maṭba‘asī, 1313), I, 69.

exists since such difference renders service to the true goal.” Therefore, whether someone is Qādirī or Naqshbandī depends on his temperament. “Both orders support each other in terms of the availability for their members with regard to the search for truth.”²¹

Therefore, each order may have a distinct style; nevertheless, they agree on the method. Regarding the community, it pursues other alliances instead of picking legitimacy from the tradition of orders. It attempts to dive into politics while its cultural domain must mature. It strives to become a natural element in the path along which the state advances. It wants to render the mechanisms that maintain the system in line with its logic. Accordingly, it embraces discourses by groups who are against it in terms of ideals to create space for itself, and it attempts to lean on the components that it supposes to be powerful. The community looks to the idealization of the *Nursism* (*Nurculuk*) by Şerif Mardin, seeking legitimacy elsewhere and not within itself. The community turns its gaze away from Turkey and towards international gathering-places. A member of the community, who has confidence in nobody save herself, does not adopt the idea of a Turkey beyond the prescribed borders. They ground themselves on whence they look rather than where they stand. They take actual power, not principles, seriously. They do not think that the driving element that conserves the internal is only external and that the internal shall fade away once the external does so. In this regard, it is difficult to speak about an average ideology to determinate the route of the community that has a multi-character structure and that establishes a system on the basis of issues that it must obey rather than on ideas that it appreciates. The absolute meaning of the values, which are dubbed principles, are within the mentality of those who direct the movement. Although the view is so clear, this organization, which provides people with a sense of belonging, undeniably captivates its members within the group feeling of the community. It is true that the “Coming into existence of all entities and the survival of any who exist is through affection.”²² “Affection is such a trouble that one does not know until one is involved.”²³ Nevertheless, “affection renders one deaf and blind.” Thought and caution shy

²¹ İsmet Özel, *Sorulunca Söylenen* (Istanbul: Tiyo, 1999), 406.

²² Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi, *Ablâk-ı Alâî*, 420.

²³ İsmâ‘îl Hâqqî Bûrsawî, *Sbarh al-Mathnawî*, I, 184.

away from whoever is under the domination of feelings.²⁴

The community reminds people that they have a place to which they belong and ensures that everyone can safely moor at this harbor. Nevertheless, the greatest problem of the community is the lack of feeling of determination by its own field of activity; in other words, it fails to consider that anyone or anything that is not content with its natural space is condemned to disappear. It may be intelligible that, seeking to preserve its prestige in this country and to maintain a certain balance in the face of supposedly powerful elements, the community does not clearly express its intentions. Therefore, the profile of the community can be summarized in the following terms: the *community is what one who talks about it mentions about it*. As with all other things in the age of modernity, the community is a composition. Although firm in ideology, it does not refrain from wrapping itself up in every color. On the one hand, it does not appease traditional Islam; on the other hand, it does not abstain from becoming a representative of liberal Islam. Thus, the issues that are framed through *Risāla-i nūr* by Saʿīd Nürsī and the exegeses by Fethullah Gülen fade away in practice. Practical reason often hands over its functions to obligations. Apparently, the heads of the community do not think that the collections by Saʿīd Nürsī can solve everything. Good intentions are disclaimed by deeds. The fact that “knowledge without deed is sin and deed without knowledge is heresy”²⁵ becomes void. The saying “Overlook my deeds, regard my statements/leave out of speech the maker and behold his speeches”²⁶ is no longer applicable. The issues, which are evident in the true nature of things, become unclear. The arguments that gain meaning in the saying “No religion is greater and wealthier than Islam before the folk gnosis and no verdict is superior to that of Islam.”²⁷ becomes nothing but a tangled ball of problems. Nobody thinks that the potential to abandon Islam is identical with the potential to abandon

²⁴ Sinan Paşa, *Maʿārif-nâme* [*Maʿārif-nāmab*]: *Özlü Sözler ve Öğütler Kitabı*, ed. Mertol Tulum (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2013), 82, 192.

²⁵ “Bî-amel olan ilim vebâl ve bilâ-ilim olan amel dalâldir.” *Tâshkuprîzâda Aḥmad Efendî, Mawḍûʿât al-ʿulûm*, I, 111.

²⁶ “Fîilimi ko, kavlime eyle nazar/sözüne bak sahibinden kıl güzer.” Müstakîmzâde Süleyman Saʿdeddin, *Risâle-i Melâmiyye-i Şuttâriyye*, 299.

²⁷ Keykâvus [Unşur al-Maʿâlî Kaykâwûs ibn Iskandar ibn Qâbûs], *Kabusnâme* [*Qâbûs-nāmab*], trans. Mercimek Ahmed [İlyasoğlu], ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Istanbul: Kbalcı, 2007), 35.

Turkey. An approach that deems that anything permissible for the survival of the community gains acceptance. The individual is not allowed to remember himself. Personality is denied for the sake of the community. Placing its reflections under the order of the day, the community assumes a character with multiple faces and multiple aspects. The community wraps itself up into a syncretic character and appearance. It transforms into a market seller who closes out towards evening. His course is inclined to pave the way for hesitation. On the one hand, it identifies with Turkey; on the other hand, it disintegrates. Embarking on a supra-community search, it turns the political discourse of the day into a means of domination over local parties. For all of these reasons, we can assert that *the content of the community exceeds the estimates*. This may be the best phrase to explain the nature of the incident between the government and the community, an incident that surpasses a simple conflict.

Another phrase can be added as follows: Currently, it is conventional to speak about politics and sociocultural problems rather than issues within the scope of the Sufi tradition and the experience of religious order. The argument that the “social functions of orders have overtaken their religious function”²⁸ is also viable for communities. The community will die once it is imprisoned in a terminology that is in line with the level of everyday politics; in case it does not foresee this fact, it will go astray from the original claim of ensuring the domination of a certain ideology because its mode makes such an ideology dominant. Since it is currently confined in reality, its adaptation points undergo incessant change. In addition, the decline continues as it does not refrain from expressing an intellectual matter through political discourse. Although it claims to keep politics at arm’s length, it is imprisoned in an entirely political circle. The criteria, which are for determining the differences between politics and ideology, compel the community to leave the stage. It never directly assumes an attitude that is in line with the faiths or convictions that it seeks, constituting a way of life in the long term. Thus, a huge gap is formed between thought and act. Each new step deepens this gap to render it irreparable. The observation of this view as it is will never be sufficient to comprehend the meaning of the ebbs and flows within the community.

²⁸ İsmet Özel, *Sorulunca Söylenen*, 173.

At this point, the noted rank evolves into an organization that belongs to everyone but also to no one. Now, it claims certain names and nicknames, beginning with *community*, the most comprehensive of all, towards brotherhood (*jāmi‘ab*), service (*bizmet*), *Nursists* etc. and is dubbed with several names. In the eyes of its members, there is a reason behind each naming given to the community that constitutes its reality. The names vary, including *bizmet*, *jāmi‘ab*, *Nursism* (*Nurculuk*), and *Fetullahism* (*Fetullahçılık*), and finally, they gather under the umbrella concept of *jamā‘ab* (*cemaat*). This word, which signifies much without explaining anything at all, becomes a flag for the *nürsists*. It indicates a basin of mentality that we can comprehend not through definition but through mere depiction. The influence of the fluctuating attitude in the political arena is reflected in the names. At present, the approach of political power arrives at the word *assassins*. Whether such names are equivalent or reflect the true sense is determined according to the user of these names. Points of support are continuously refreshed and renewed due to political concerns. Such denominations provide their users with higher maneuverability; they do not have a cultural basis or framework but are consequence of a strategic positioning. We can continuously ask whether these concerns can be right or not.

Undeniably, the community is on the path of Sun Tzu, who says “keep your friends close but your enemies closer.” which evidently bears a logic that addresses and applies to everyone. Therefore, the community, which sets sail to a double-temperament world and is housed under the same roof with ideally opposite groups, collaborates with those whom it grudges even hell itself. The community prefers a discourse that is in compliance with its party and spirit. It follows the following principle: “Whichever *madhhab* suits your intent, it is your *madhhab*; whichever spirit looks congenial, that is your spirit.”²⁹ Thus, it is obliged to make implicit promises in certain domains. The community submits to persons and ranks that it deems powerful and that it fears. Accordingly, the behaviors of its collaborators are counted as those of the community.

Once it places its spirit under the order of politics and thus vaporizes its course, the community can never be itself in many aspects. The world that this rank desires renders such self-realization impossible, as its method of desiring the world. The brief meaning of

²⁹ Sinan Paşa, *Maârif-nâme*, 112.

the above is as follows: Seeking to reinforce its position through politics, the community desires constant expansion and growth rather than intensification. In this respect, it presents quantity as quality. Abandoning its character, it no more understands that the expansion of the contact network is a moral problem. The community does not estimate that this attitude and expansion during a transitional period will bring axial dislocation and endless turmoil. It no more provides a uniform view in terms of its present position and its defended issues; therefore, it rapidly withdraws from being a community and attempts to flee its very own history. It is unaware that any movement that does not have Turkey as its benchmark cannot have a future. The community pretends not to have heard the old saying that “the man of the community is not convinced by self-sufficiency.”³⁰ In the end, its loyalty to Turkey becomes debatable. The community plunders the opportunities given by the country to eliminate possible objections. It conducts actions that grant consent to the destruction of the state for the sake of unseating so-called adversaries. It is aware that it can only survive provided that it is authoritarian; nevertheless, it looks to approaches based on democracy, law, and freedom. Taking shelter under a previously disclaimed point, the community shows that everyone can somehow come together, political attitudes are of a transitive nature, friends may become foes as foes can become friends, and disputes, which appear with regard to amity and enmity, are not based on a solid ground.

The community is the sum of what it experiences. The greatest difference between its past and present is that it displays a composition that does not seem to blend in many aspects and that it assumes a borrowed style. One reaches the following conclusion: *If a person or rank lays great stress on something, it indeed hints that it is not related to that thing.* Due to the need for conciliating ideology with the current conditions, the present always prevails. Scales are broken once the future is stuck in reality. The garment of community for political aims becomes its essence. This anomaly cannot bring a normal life; therefore, blending becomes dissolution.

³⁰ Nurettin Topçu, *Mehmet Âkif*, 2nd ed. (Istanbul: Dergâh, 1998), 13.

III. Community Has to Vanish to Exist

The community seems to be in oblivion, forgetting the following: The highest worship is the justice it makes peculiar to its members;³¹ the heavens and earth are grounded in justice;³² law, which is the pillar of the heavens, is supported by justice;³³ and whoever disregards the criteria of justice will pay for doing so through the emergence of Divine fervor.³⁴ In such oblivion, the community claims that only it grows and can grow true men. Based on which, the community no longer allows anyone else to breathe. It spreads a group of its members to all of Turkey, even claiming that anyone can represent *Nursism*. It no more refrains from molesting the right of a country on behalf of disciples who know *alif* (ا) for being straight at *kāf* (ك) for being curved. The community does not want to remember that it will fall on its sword. There are many examples of this,³⁵ and justice will be performed once an unfair person is addressed with an equal injustice.³⁶

In brief, the greatest mistake of the community is to consider Turkey as a community and to ground itself in a policy that is peculiar to the community but not to this land. Indeed, our country is not a stranger to this attitude. A glance at the Ottoman era shows that this was almost a traditional behavior. When there was a Bosnian Grand Vizier, he brought along his own men; if he was Albanian, then he advanced his own. The wise always suffered.³⁷ As the example of Soqollu Mehmed Pāshā shows, each vizier grants benevolence to his

³¹ Cevdet Paşa [Jawdat Pāshā], *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* [*Tadhâkir-i Jawdat*], ed. Cavid Baysun (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986), IV, 162.

³² Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Ma'ārij al-quds fī madārij ma'rifāt al-nafs* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1988), 94, 99, 100.

³³ Yusuf Has Hacib [Yūsuf Khāṣṣ Ḥājib], *Kutadgu Bilig*, trans. Reşid Rahmeti Arat (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu), 2003, couplets: 3461, 3463, 449, 461.

³⁴ Na'imā Muştafā Efendī, *Târib-i Na'imâ* [*Târikb-i Na'imâ*], ed. Mehmet İpşirli (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007), I, 25.

³⁵ Sinan Paşa, *Ma'ârif-nâme*, 196.

³⁶ Al-Fārābī, *Fuṣūl al-madanī*, ed. Douglas Morton Dunlop (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 141-143.

³⁷ Gelibolulu Muştafā 'Āli, *Mevâ'idu'n-Nefâis fī-Ḳavâ'idil-Mecâlis* [*Mawâ'id al-naḡâ'is fī qawâ'id al-majâlis*], ed. Mehmet Şeker (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), 320.

own people. Official ranks are granted to relatives and friends.³⁸ Thus, the image of Gelibolulu ‘Ālī Efendī and Ibn al-Amīn Maḥmūd Kamāl Beg is a great mirror to reflect the community that boasts of and claims to have solved all of its problems. Once this view is questioned, the community, which has hitherto left an impression of drawing its strength from silence and caution, becomes active. It brings into view the connection between itself and politics. The dignity of silence becomes the frivolity of declamation; ultimately, the mechanism inevitably breaks down.

During its sojourn in the labyrinths of politics, the community reveals what it can abandon and what it can defend to the end. Currently, a weakness that trusts not in Allah but in earth rules. The fact that world will go dry once the rule of predestination and fate governs is overlooked. Regardless of how accurate the warning is, man cannot succeed if such warning does not comply with providence. The community seems unaware that no effort will help if it is down on its luck and that caution will be void once providence abandons it.³⁹ It does not take into account that Allah knows everything that man, either implicitly or explicitly, does, says or thinks.⁴⁰ The way of life in which one must fear Allah at each step, is abandoned. From this perspective, it is worth discussing who draws the course of the community. In other words, since the adversaries answer to this question only via a shortcut and it is questioned whether the claims are true, the response will satisfy neither of the two parties. It is reasonable to ask whether the leaders of the community can accept responsibility for their acts. In this respect, we are undeniably in the face of an incident in which the rumors are worse than the facts. The question of whether the issues, expressed by the representatives of community, have representative power

³⁸ Ibn al-Amīn Maḥmūd Kamāl (Inal), “Muştafā ‘Ālī Efendī,” in *Manāqib-i bunarwarān*, ed. Ibn al-Amīn Maḥmūd Kamāl (Istanbul: Maṭba‘a-i ‘Āmirah, 1926), 12.

³⁹ Kerīmuddīn Mahmud-i Aksarayī [Karīm al-Dīn Maḥmūd-i Āqsarāyī], *Mūsāmeretü’l-Abbār* [*Musāmarat al-akbbār*], trans. Mürsel Öztürk (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 39, 56, 86, 148.

⁴⁰ Muhammed b. Alī b. Süleyman er-Rāvendī [Abū Bakr Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Ālī ibn Sulaymān al-Rāwandī], *Rābat-üs-Sudūr ve Āyet-üs-Sürūr* [*Rāḥat al-şudūr wa-āyat al-surūr*] (*Gönüllerin Rabatı ve Sevinç Alâmeti*), trans. Ahmet Ateş (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), I, 71.

awaits an answer. Therefore, the issues that surround the question of who will be responsible for the acts performed on behalf of the community should be appropriately placed on the agenda. It is necessary to cease crushing the salvation of our country in the mill of politics.

As state officials and policy makers are well aware, one cannot understand the community through the comprehension of Sa'îd Nûrsî. This lineage, established around Fethullah Gülen, constitutes an internal hierarchy towards lower layers. Anyone involved in the movement fulfills his respective duty in the community. The same should apply for the state as well. Anyone who feels that he belongs to this country should fulfil his duty, become friends with its friends and foes with its foes, proceed in a reasonable, average course and not go astray for the sake of another direction. The community should act as a community and the state should act as a state; the order's sheikh should not place himself in the shoes of the president. It should be remembered that the country will become unbalanced once any rank surpasses its assigned duty and attempts to dominate the others. Another point to consider is the following characteristic of Turkish political philosophy: "An object who does not obey has to become involved in politics."⁴¹ Anyone who is aware of this fact will not allow the following saying: "If only sultans of yore knew how to distinguish the right person from the wrong, whose business is all treachery."⁴²

We have the following two-faced view: The deeds of the community, which desires everything but does not assume responsibility for its desires, signify not the demolition of the tradition of order but taking the latter to new grounds on the course of the past. According to those who see heads side of the coin, the state cuts its own throat by shaking off a structure for which it has cleared the way for so long. Since doing so is impossible, the community is either intensified or localized and domesticated. Above all, the assignment of new communities to the areas in vacancy shows that political power cannot be indifferent to the culture of the community. It is true that some problems are impossible to solve today, as they were yesterday; indeed, all elements, driven forward since the beginning of modernity, have become possible by oppressing others. In this

⁴¹ For an example, see Ibn al-Amîn, "Muşafâ 'Âli Efendi," 9.

⁴² Gelibolulu Muşafâ 'Âli, *Mevâ'idu'n-Nefâis*, 330.

regard, since the community has left its original sphere, it is clearly necessary to return to this sphere. In consideration of the saying “Knowing your weaknesses is such maturity that there is nothing superior to it,”⁴³ the community has to vanish to exist once again. As Allah created this world of beings out of nothing, something has to set sail to the realm of nonexistence before it can come into being again.⁴⁴ “As the saying goes, water flows back to whence it flows.”⁴⁵

We will have taken the first step towards comprehending the situation if we can answer the following question: *How did the community become powerful enough to decide on the course of politics?* The distance between points of departure and arrival is more profound than expected; therefore, the tracts by Nürsî can only serve as a beginning on the way to finding the characteristic traits of the community. Therefore, the community sets its sight not on tomorrow but on yesterday, it should seek possibilities of taking refuge in the realm of orders in which connection with anything other than Allah is over, and it should remember that Sufism is the way of life of a living Islam, that Turkish Islam has an entirely mystical character and that no one unaware of this fact can establish a connection with the nation. Accordingly, the sayings “no enemy can counter if there is maturity in religion and diligence in piety” and “the course of religion is the ground for benediction in life”⁴⁶ should become its motto, so much so that the community should make these sayings into amulets so its members should wear them. In brief, the community should not further test whether strategic methods do not lead to sovereignty in a profound and spiritual life, whether communities without a mystical aspect cannot maintain their gains and traditions of local life, and whether entrainment merely around the works of Sa‘îd Nürsî will never be sufficient.

⁴³ İsmail Hakkı Bursavî [İsmâ‘îl Hâqqî Bûrsawî], *Kitâbü'n-Ne‘îce* [*Kitâb al-natîjab*], eds. Ali Namlı and İmdat Yavaş (Istanbul: İnsan, 1997), I, 75.

⁴⁴ Şams al-Dîn Ahmed al-Aflākî al-‘Ârifî [Shams al-Dîn Ahmed al-Aflākî al-‘Ârifî], *Manâkıb al-‘Ârifîn* [*Manâqib al-‘ârifîn*], ed. Tahsin Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1976), I, 175; id., *Âriflerin Menkıbeleri*, trans. Tahsin Yazıcı, 3rd ed. (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1995), I, 355.

⁴⁵ İsmâ‘îl Hâqqî Bûrsawî, *Sharḥ al-Mathnawî*, I, 404.

⁴⁶ Bûrsawî, *Tuhfe-i Aliyye* [*Tuhfa-i ‘aliyyab*], ed. Şeyda Öztürk, in *Üç Tuhfe: Seyr-i Sülûk*, (Istanbul: İnsan, 2000), 209, 229.

The history of the Turks undeniably provides the state with a divine character.⁴⁷ Thus, it is easier said than done to rearrange Turkish political life, leaning on the authority of the community in the face of state authority; as is known, the customs of each generation are subject to the customs of its own ruler. The people are of the religion of their ruler.⁴⁸ People often imitate sultans, to whose religion they are adherent.⁴⁹ The difference between rulers and others is that the word of the former is absolute law. Dynasties, cities and provinces are always subject to a person, and once this person dies or is abandoned, the government of power is upside down.⁵⁰

There is not much to say about the opponents who consider communities to be the greatest obstacle against becoming a nation but who will establish their own community given half a chance; It has the value of the statements of opponents who do not fear criticizing the community when it is stronger but not when it is weak. The state should not rely on anyone who has acclaimed the community yesterday but who has now changed sides. We are far beyond the stage of “friend becomes foe upon harsh treatment and violence.”⁵¹ In spite of everything, let us lend an ear to Niẓām al-mulk: “One should fight against an enemy while estimating the possibility of peace; one should prefer peace without ignoring war; one should establish intimacy with friends in such a manner that it is possible to break the bonds and break them in such a manner that it is possible to re-establish them; the best is to choose the middle course.”⁵² Please bear in mind that anyone who looks naively at the culture of the community and the order evaluates the view as follows:

⁴⁷ Âşık Paşa-zâde [‘Āshiq Pāshā-zādal], *Osmanoğullarının Taribi*, eds. Kemal Yavuz and M. A. Yekta Saraç (Istanbul: K Kitaplığı, 2003), 340.

⁴⁸ İbn Haldun [Abū Zayd Walī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Ibn Khaldūn], *Mukaddime [Muqaddimab]*, trans. Süleyman Uludağ, 2nd ed. (Istanbul: Dergâh, 1988), I, 242.

⁴⁹ Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi, *Ablâk-ı Alâî*, 462.

⁵⁰ Niẓāmü'l-mülk [Niẓām al-mulk], *Siyâset-nâme [Siyâsat-nâmab]*, trans. Mehmet Altan Köymen, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), 95-96, 166.

⁵¹ Abū l-Najīb ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Naşr al-Suhrawardī al-Shayzarī, *Nahj al-sulūk fi siyâsat al-mulūk*, trans. Naḥîfî Meḥmed Efendî, 3rd ed. (Istanbul: ‘Alî Riḍâ Efendî Maṭba‘ası, 1286), 28.

⁵² Niẓām al-mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings: The Siyâsat-nâme or Siyar al-mulūk*, translated from the Persian by Hubert Darke (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 251; id., *Siyâset-nâme*, 344.

“If they see two friends, they long for a fight / once the two are in conflict, they long for the throwing of stones.”⁵³ Although the community censors certain facts to some extent, all is clearer than it seems. Everybody knows very well who is who; therefore, nobody should refrain from disclosing who he is and stand where he should stand.

Conclusion

The Gülen Community, which is the symbol of a period, has become open to investigation by others in Turkey, triggering the pruning of the community concept in the imagination of the nation, utilizing good for evil and becoming the story of a ruined ideal. This community leaves the impression of a lock clamped by its own history. In this respect, the condition of the Gülen Community includes lessons to be learned. The community, which has been synonymous with absolute obedience throughout history, has currently become a reaction to a significant extent. The current situation demonstrates the level of political competence of the community. This political and religious organization has transformed the culture of the community, a long-lasting source of power and strength for the state, into the most important means of combatting the government. Ultimately, consequences of this attitude exceed the Gülen Community and brings readiness against all communities. Currently, in Turkey, the field of communities and orders is no longer reliable or safe. Passing through anxious times, the country shall face the psychological effects of this fact in upcoming years. Thus, let us conclude with the saying that “only the brave understand the truth”⁵⁴ and repeat all again: “Whoever talks knows not himself; whoever knows does not talk.”⁵⁵

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⁵³ Sinan Paşa, *Maârif-nâme*, 294.

⁵⁴ “Hakk anlamak merd işidir.” İsmâ‘îl Hâqqî Bûrsawî, *Sharḥ al-Mathnawî*, I, 520.

⁵⁵ “Söyleyenler kendin bilmez bilenler söylemez.” Müstakîmzâde Süleyman Sa‘deddin, *Risâle-i Melâmiyye-i Şuttâriyye*, 277.

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