# Our Philosophy of Life

Some live without thinking; some only think, but cannot put their thoughts into practice. However, we have an obligation to live thoughtfully and while living, by producing the freshest combinations, to develop more and varied approaches to thinking. Those who live without thinking are the objects of the philosophy of others. Such persons always run from pattern to pattern, ceaselessly changing molds and forms, hectically struggling their whole life through, in deviations of thoughts and feelings, in personality disorders, and in metamorphoses of character and appearance, never being able to become their own selves. Although from time to time they share the achievements of society and benefit here and there from the occasional breezes of corresponding events, as if those breezes had some effect on their thought, consciousness, or willpower, they can never ease nor enliven their spirits with their own, freely-chosen merits and virtues, nor can they direct them to the infinite. These people always resemble a pond of water which is infertile, barren, stagnant, and marred by a bad smell. Far from being able to express anything that is in the slightest way life-enhancing, it is inevitable that such people will become like a life-threatening bundle of viruses or a nest of microbes.

These people are so shallow in their thoughts and so superficial in their views that they imitate everything they hear or see, like children, drifting along behind the masses, hither and thither, never finding an opportunity to listen to themselves or be aware of or examine their worth; in fact, they never perceive that they have values peculiar to themselves. They live their lives as if they were slaves who can never accept freedom from their corporeal and bodily feelings; they evaluate every opportunity they have had and will have within the narrow frames of corporeality; they turn their heart, willpower, feelings, and consciousness, which are the greatest gifts of God to human beings, into a worthless medium of corporeal pleasures, causing people to lead their lives in bohemianism. Such people's passion for rank, title, position, fame, interest, profit, luxury, and living are the most prominent factors determining their acts, deeds, and activities. Consciously or unconsciously, they find themselves caught up in one or more such fatal nets every day and slaughter their souls over and over again in the most wretched of deaths.

Such people, who have neither a past nor a future, say, like Omar Khayyam, *“The past and the future are all a tale / Try to enjoy it, do not ruin your life,”* and follow their animal instincts. They regard the world as a meadow, a pasture on which to graze, in which to live, despite their human emotions and faculties. In fact, they continuously thrash about in a swamp of decadence.

On the other hand, there are those who live thoughtful lives and who, according to their level, turn every hour or day of their lives into a launch for the freshest thoughts and ideas; they lead their lives within the extraordinariness, surprises, and charms of being always beyond time; they drink the past like a blessed spring, breathe it in and fill their lungs with it like a beautiful scent, studying it like an enlightening book, and walk into the future so equipped; they embrace the past with all the warmth of their hearts, color it with their hopes, mold it with their zeal and willpower. As to the present, they accept it as the center for developing strategies, the workshop for producing the necessary technology, the bridge for crossing over from theory to practice, in order to realize their ideals; thus, they always try to be beyond time and place.

While evaluating the creation and time from this perspective and leaving the narrow confines of material and corporeal life, they go forth into the vastness of the worlds of thinking and wander about the slopes, open to the infinite, of another world which has the dimensions of eternity in this transitory and perishable life. In this way they aim for the infinite with their thoughts, emotions, and aspirations; they observe the richness of being a human in the divine vastness they dig in the depths of their hearts; and with the nets they set up in their hearts, they try to hunt the surprises which no eyes have ever seen, no ears have heard, and which the human imagination cannot conceive or picture. They do all this in such a way that their learning, spiritual knowledge, and acquisitions, which are immeasurable, always show them the lofty realms, even the highest ones, and promise that each of them shall become a heavenly dove. You can call such people, who think and live in this way and who turn their lives into an orchard where abundant trees of thoughts have been planted, men of wisdom or heroes of belief-oriented philosophy. No matter how you define them, it is a fact that since ancient times the enlightened people who have woven history, like delicate and elegant lace, have always been raised from among those high spirits. Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism, which resemble philosophical systems rather than religion, are each a gift to humanity from such heroes of spirituality.

In the murmur of the long currents of thought of the past, you can hear the voiced compositions of such edifices of thought. In the four corners of the world, whether in the ancient or the new world, different worldviews and styles of living, and the cultural richness and universal accumulations of civilizations are always the product of the reflective, meditative harvest of such heroic people. In spite of many alterations and much distortion and the fact that people have been distanced from their essence, we can comfortably say that a great majority of the people in the world still long for that old spirit, essence, and content; yet this is in contradiction with how they live today. Until people take as reference the heroic representatives of the unadulterated, unaltered essence of their own, we will naturally continue to have such a good opinion of others.

While we are trying to renew ourselves and remain connected tightly to our own spiritual roots, what falls on us as a duty today is to raise heroes who know how to urge themselves on from their own souls, that is, who can reinterpret and voice today the music of our yesterdays without being caught or entangled in anything; those who can make us always feel the enthusiasm of our hearts in a different hue every time. In fact, until we raise them, it is obvious that we will continue to be ruined at the hands of strange novices who do not know what to do or how to do it. During this time, the whole of humanity will try to fill the places of the universal and eternal values which their consciences seek, but which they unfortunately can never find within their minds, or within their ancient tales, anecdotes, legends, and myths; thus, they will continually drift toward dissatisfaction and from dissatisfaction to crisis, and from crisis to destruction.

The fact that we did not have a system of thought or philosophy of life which constitutes the spiritual roots of our national culture and which is based on Islamic dynamics means that we have suffered great misery and wretchedness; we have not been alone in this, a large part of the world that is related to us has also suffered so. It is necessary to distinguish our system of thought and philosophy of life from that which is the system of wisdom of Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi (Al-Pharabius), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), and in a sense that of Ibn Sina (Avicenna). They were thinkers who also were the translators of the system of Greek philosophy that is pooled in the thoughts and concepts of Aristotle, whereas the roots of our system of thought lie in the Heavens, which is as old as eternal past (azal), and which is newer than the new, which is able to embrace every age. It is derived from and based on Divinity (lahut), divine Might and Majesty (jabarut), God's supreme dominion (malakut), and human nature (nasut); its origins are definite and known, that is luminous and which is based on and related to the truth of being created. If such an interpretation is comprehended within its own spirit and essence, it will be possible even at the present time to put forward and realize our own system of thought, which consequently will bring about serious renewals worldwide, opening up much richer ways and routes for all.

Since the middle of the fifteenth century, there have been many attempts initiated toward developing this idealized system of thought. However, they have never been able to reach the desired objectives. Although this observation is open to contention in certain respects, in general it is true. From Hodjazade to Zeyrek, from Mustafa Reshid Pasha to the architects of Constitutional monarchy, from these to the latest workers of thought, many, whether sincere or not, have tried to find answers to this search and expectations in the collective conscience. However, some became entangled in the Tahafuts of Ibn Rushd and Imam Ghazali, some drowned and perished in the whirlpools of the French Revolution and Auguste Comte, while some were kept busy in the delirium and obsession of Durkheim. They were always active, but they have never taken into account the age in which they lived, and have either gone beyond fantasy or routed thousand-year-old national values into bewilderment by treating their whims and fancies as their god. I wish we could have overcome such vexations and negativities by now. How I wish we could overcome such contrariness and develop a system of thought and a national philosophy nurtured by our own sources!

Let me express this concisely; because the angles of feeling, perception, and interpretation of the natural phenomena are different, if we do not have a strong foundation of thought or a system of philosophy on which to build everything, our views will always be in contradiction and we will devour one another in a web of opposition and conflict. Tomorrow, as well as today, can be our property only by means of this strong method and system, and by means of a common manner or style, which all the generations will voluntarily share. If we do not have such unity in our thoughts, feelings, and manner of life, it will remain nothing but grandiose wishful thinking to talk about national unity and solidarity, both today and tomorrow. For in every system, national logic, thinking, reasoning, and the spiritual inspirations (waridat) are very important. To the extent that a system of thought arises from a nation's own mind, conscience, and world of emotions, can the unity of feelings, logic, and reasoning, and the ease of living together as a nation be realized. On the other hand, where a nation's feelings, thoughts, interpretations, and styles clash with one another, and where reasoning and rationality are in contradiction, actions and activities would yield no fruit, even though there are a great many of them taking place. In such cases, complete devastation is also likely to happen. In a society where such conflict and commotion of understanding and interpretation are experienced, every effort will continually clash and break with another, just like the waves of the sea, and by pouring into its own pool of inertia everything will keep on whirling in a vicious circle. There is some seen and unseen wisdom in the clash of the waves at sea, their breaking and their calming of one another. However, there is only stagnation, rot, disintegration, and self-annihilation in similar collisions and clashes if found within a society. In such a society, everyone seems to be a wolf at the other's door and every thought a project of death; and even if heavenly blessings shower continuously on that society, it will be like clothes under attack from moths; even historical values are subject to attack and becoming moth-eaten, the sacred is face to face with the danger of destruction; and they don't recieve loyalty from the old, nor chivalry from the young; the young people, whom we expect to become heroes, to be the dynamic power that will carry the standard of the bright future on their shoulders, instead swear at the flag and curse the history of their country, considering the future as the arena in which they will perform all their impetuousness and insanity. The old and the intelligentsia, who indulge in hair-raising heedlessness, act almost as the advocates of such decadence; in their expressions, writings, and TV shows they incite bohemianism in the spirit and devastate the understanding and discernment of people, as if they were pouring acid on them.

During such a period, the seats of science and knowledge are not able to evoke a love and thought of knowledge. Those who represent power and authority become the pawns of particular ideologies and devour one another; logic, reasoning, and inspiration are condemned to walk in the narrow aisles of enigmatic signs and expressions. In a society in which such contrariness and vexations develop, idleness, ambition and vanity replace thinking, life becomes nothing but a torture.

Our system of thought or philosophy of life, however, is related to not only the world of existence, but also to the realm of pre-existence, and to whatever is beyond existence. It also deals with all natural phenomena and things which lie beyond as a whole; it is vast enough to define the manner of our entire lives in continuity. It is with such a system that society, in its smallest particle, the individual, is able to realize the universal justice awaited on Earth and respond to all the expectations of humanity by stimulating individuals to act morally; in this way, society is fed with spirit, morality, virtue, and contemplation and thus reaches a state of being renewed as itself. Thus, our understanding of civilization and cultural richness becomes a desirable good, demanded, and sought after all over the world; we are therefore able to extend our helping hands to the rest of the world to present comfortably our ideals of humanity, our philosophy of morality, our understanding of virtue, and our acceptance and interpretation of justice. Again, as a result of having acquired such a level and position, like all the power sources of a state, administrative dynamics and social and economic principles will spring out from the people's own spirit and in this way society will save itself from all sorts of *“dependence.”* So far, the tacit dependence which we have been carrying like a yoke around our necks due to our weaknesses and indebtedness, has paralyzed and caused inertia in our political, economic, and judicial systems, just as it did in our administrative system. In the past, our golden generations, who had once made Anatolia one of the most cultivated, prosperous countries of the world, developed and established their own administrative, political, and judicial systems out of the materials of their own spirit. They did not let any thinking, system, or understanding enter the institutions of the people, which were safeguarded like their homes, family pride, and good name, without having checked it by their own criteria and measures. Far from letting these in, even after they had struggled with nearly the entire world and experienced a temporary defeat, and even while they were retreating wounded and shaken, but ever hopeful, with faith, and with great zeal and desire, they tried to preserve their own origins, gathered around the consciousness of history, and held tightly to the dynamics to which they owe their existence-as expressed in a hadith, they *“held (them) tightly between their teeth and their palate.”* Their heads were not bent down, but held high, their understanding, acceptance, and interpretation of the world and the Hereafter were sound and intact, and they advanced toward a fresh revival without pausing for a breath.

Today, when dawns follow new dawns, from the perspective of our own horizon of wisdom, if we are able to evaluate soundly and once more make use of the world in which we are now living, if we are able to interpret things and events well, if we are able to determine the basic materials of the inner structure of our own people, and if we are able to attach ourselves to the ideals that exist until eternity, we will always be like our glorious ancestors; we may even advance ahead of them. Indeed, why should the insightful generations not be in advance of those of the past; indeed of all generations? They will take the past, the present, and the future, putting them into perspective all at the same time, evaluating and making the best of them; they will take the traditions, culture, and historical dynamics of the society in which they live under their protection; they will interpret well the cycle of the recurrence of history in the direction of their own renewal.

It is important to recall, once again, that the first responsibility that falls to us is to make felt in the consciences of the generations the effects of pain, suffering, hardship, beliefs adopted and the cultures rooted in direct proportion to their weightiness. This will be done by developing in people the consciousness of history. If we can do this, after a few generations no one living in our land will think of looking for or finding any foreign source for our various institutions beyond our spiritual dynamics.

We will be bringing all the elements of our life tomorrow from the past. If we are able to blend them with the light of our religion and the rays of science and knowledge in the crucible of our culture, we will have prepared the glue of our eternity.