# Reunion with Ourselves

The twentieth century was a century of incessant problems and the present continues to be the same. One of those problems is so very deep that it makes us forget all others; it is chronic and resistant to intervention and treatment, and is so urgent that it must not be neglected. This serious problem is the neglect of our values by our own people, especially the young. If it cannot be fully resolved by skillful hands, with no further loss of time, we will find ourselves immersed in a great many undesired ills and misfortunes, and so experience complete failure despite convenient circumstances while new events will appear at the most unexpected times to darken our destiny.

The cancers of negligence, ignorance, indifference, inadequacy, and the fantasy of estrangement and alienation in the entire community appeared in the form of nodules yesterday, and have metastasized within a very short time, spreading rapidly throughout our body, making us fall to our knees. This has happened to such an extent that a distinct *“decline”* has occurred in each and every circle of society and the color in our people has been washed away. Alas! How many times have we been shaken by such ailments! How many times have we suffered the misfortune of failing and being defeated! How many times have we deteriorated, seeing the dark fate we are doomed with! How many times have we attempted to express our anger at such events! How many times have we felt the inadequacy of being unable to find words against these events, whether they be foul and unbecoming words, or an appropriate response! How many times have we suppressed and quenched our exasperation and palpitations by taking refuge in God! Some of us have been writhing in the currents of such murderous feelings, while others have succeeded only in blaming those who fell into foulness.

However, instead of blaming and calumniating such people, as well as others, for the path they have followed, we should have embraced them with a promise of a new and fresh life; by greeting their enthusiasm and excitement with respect, while finding reasonable causes and excuses for their obsessions and delirium, we should have tried to remove the atmosphere of anger, violence, and terror; by giving them some rights, we should have prepared the ground to discuss matters which were common or mutual between us. It is a fact that our society is one which shelters various thoughts, concepts, and philosophies. Therefore, while advancing on our national course, we came across the French tracks and were influenced, and then were entangled in the German approaches and interpretations. Sometime later, we indulged in the English way of thinking, and recently we have been intoxicated with the free American philosophy. Thus we have always placed barriers in our way. It is true that all these concepts, interpretations, and philosophies have negatively affected our national culture. Yet it is also true that such variety and colorfulness can always be appreciated as richness. To me, what is important is that our nation preserves its own values and that the nation revolves in its own orbit. However, having been unable to evaluate such different cultures, each of which is considered to be the latest synthesis by those who support it, we have been caught up and obstructed by trifles, like soil and pebbles encountered while excavating a mine. Like inexperienced miners searching for a mineral seam, they either dig into the soil and rock and assume the shaft leads to rock only, leaving off without seeing the wealth-or they fail to be interested in the mineral seam because they assume that the mine they have entered is merely rock. We have so far had access to many sources of light, but instead of evaluating and making the best use of them for our illumination, we have produced flames and fire from them, allowing the fires to devour us instead of illuminating us.

It is strange that some among us, no matter how little they know, always take others lightly; all who think, even a little, consider themselves to be a philosopher. Those who represent power treat reason and logic as superfluous, but continue on their way in being the executers of brute force. Those in politics make partisanship the ultimate target and sacrifice everything for it on the understanding that they cannot exist without it. Our socio-cultural, political, and economic activities have never been able to emerge from the vicious cycle of opposition and conflict in the web of jealousy, envy, competition, and intolerance. Those who do not even have the maturity of teenagers have used their featherweight toys and olive branches to strike each other’s heads; the young, instead of repairing our shaken credit and broken pride, have used the dynamism of their spirits against their own nation and people, causing fissures and gashes in the spirit of the nation.

Why is this so, I wonder! Why do we not love one another while we can? Why do we not establish lasting understandings and friendships? Why can we not share anxiety, grief, afflictions and joy, success, and happiness? I wonder if the effort and struggle on the way to gain hearts is more difficult for us than the effort and struggle of the battlefield. Is the heart of humanity closed to love, tolerance, acceptance of others; does it shy from embracing, and sharing; is it inclined to hatred, malice, coarseness, intolerance, restrictions, and selfishness? I cannot believe that this is true! I swear by God, who creates hearts that what is richest and deepest cannot be so closed to virtues, yet so open to vice!

The greatest conquerors in the world started with the conquest of the hearts. Their first stop was the hearts of the people and, using those hearts as their base and port, they sailed forth unto other parts of the world. If they had not first entered the hearts of the Anatolian people, they would not have won at Manzikert, the battle between the Seljuk State and the Byzantines in 1071, a battle which opened the gates of Anatolia to the Muslims. The ramparts of Constantinople would not have yielded to attack if it had not felt the promises of the soldiers' hearts beating with sincerity. The web of love and compassion, which emerged first as emotion and interest and later took all hearts and people under its control, welcomed and tolerated those who ran to it of their own choice and free-will, making them listen to legends of love and affection.

So now, if it is not in our history, where did this hatred, malice, enmity, and intolerance come from and how did it infiltrate into our people? While we have felt a deep admiration for France, Germany, England, and more recently America and Japan over the last few eras, why do we hate and undermine one another and live like wolves, devouring one another? Why do we spoil and make life a hell for others? Do we have a personality disorder? And we say, *“Yes, and we might as well take refuge in foreign souls,”* and thus throw our thousand-year-old values into the garbage for the sake of a fantasy.

While we have been making chaos out of nothing for ourselves, so many generations without any base, support, course, targets, ideals, or of course, spiritual knowledge have been raised as the children of whims, ambitions, fancies, and fantastic day-dreams. Such generations, who have lost all metaphysical considerations, are unaware of their national identity, and continue to live deluded in the belief that they have found the answer to the question *“who am I?”* in the out-moded disposable philosophies that they have scrounged from the seven continents. They have struggled in the net of the ebb and flow of the material; they have lived tongue-tied and heartless, and from time to time confused religion with epic tales and historic legends; they have sacrificed morality with the arrival of permissiveness, tainted the understanding of art with the hues of lust, turned poetry and music into shamelessness, and finally found themselves right in the middle of a killing arena in which countless contradictions and conflicts ruthlessly war against each other. Indeed, the consequences cannot be thought otherwise.

And then these generations attacked everything with wrath and fury; they denigrated and despised our past; they lost their trust and their own trustworthiness along with their faith; and they felt the loss and absence of affection deeply, as well as that of humane feelings. Moreover, during this period, they were surrendered to the hands of foreign consciences; their upbringing and education were left to foreigners; they were raised like babies in the nurseries of foreign countries, becoming closer to foreigners than to us; they were the victims of different ideologies, shivering because of the distance and coldness between them, though they were in fact close enough to feel each other's body heat. It is these people whose faith was pierced with thousands of doubts and uncertainties, whose trust was shaken from its foundations, whose hopes were routed in confusion, whose hearts were like the bed of a river long dried up, whose human feelings were entrusted to hatred, malice, and enmity, whose hearts become the orbit for and hunting ground of so many fears, who were always delivered to the tides of purposelessness and aimlessness, and therefore beaten by the distances, whose horizons were plunged in darkness, with no hope of light, who, even when ascending, were in decline, and who became false, artificial, and temporary, as if their essence had been squeezed out and they remained standing, with only a husk.

In fact it is very difficult to breathe life into such a walking corpse, for it is alienated from this life of ours and reacts against its own values. On the other hand, despite everything, it falls to us again to support and raise it. Our belief is that when the Divine Will flows into our willpower like life that this corpse will rise as if having heard the trumpet of Israfil[[1]](#footnote-1) and cry out once more its good fortune, prosperity, and felicity. In fact, it will not be easy to fill the emptiness and repair the damage that was produced in the body of society by the great negligence of the last few eras. However, the heirs of thought in the world, who have so many times transformed not only their own misfortune, adversity, and disgrace, but also that of all those who were oppressed, wronged, and unjustly treated, will certainly overcome such a terrifying misfortune, and establish a peaceful and prosperous Paradise for others while continuing to inhabit their world of bare necessities. They will naturally fill the voids in society with the expanse of their tolerance and leniency; this is their responsibility. They will ignore the faults of others looking at them through the binoculars of their own faults which are, perhaps, the cause of the faults of others. Without pressuring, ill-treating, or making others suffer under the guilt of their faults, such heirs will demonstrate a number of alternatives for ridding oneself of these faults, alternatives for rehabilitation and improvement.

We are aware that it is not possible to change everything overnight; we do not await a miracle. In a society whose values have been so long overturned, and which has been accustomed to such discord, it will of course take more than a little effort to replace atheism with faith, arbitrariness with discipline, chaos with order, immorality with morality, lust with love for God, and personal interests and gains with altruism. We are sure that the eradication of atheism, which long ago sat itself on the throne of faith, of this too free and easy behavior which has toppled moral values, of the depravity and unfruitfulness which profits from the lack of discipline, is not, and will never be easy. It is not easy to replace all these and establish in their place what God wills and what the Prophet advises. For all the criteria which make masses into a society and which make a society into a true society, were routed by deviant ideologies, nihilistic thoughts, and defiant deliriums all over the world. At the same time, a sense of responsibility was eradicated from our hearts, and the vigorous youth drank their fill of bohemianism; everyday a new fantasy pulled the masses along behind it; and certain free, independent spirits, and intoxicated natures expressed their defiance, rejection, and contempt of all our values, allowing themselves to be swept away in the currents whose destination and destiny are always uncertain.

Now it falls to us, to everybody who loves this country and this people, to eliminate all this disorderliness and to reawaken our stagnant activity in accordance with the horizon of own philosophy. By drawing on the innermost part of the national spirit and by using our willpower as much as we can, and with a resoluteness sharpened by so many years of oppression, wrongs, and ill-treatment, just like the apostles of Jesus and the first Muslims, we should say, *“Let's get on with it,”* and try to go everywhere in the understanding that *“where there is a person, so there should be faith, consideration for others, and knowledge”*; and thus we should make our lives gain the depth of moving from one emigration to another. From this time on, we should try to weave the lace of our lives on the canvas of thought and action of the heroes of truth who have won the pleasure of God.

We believe that almost everyone on Earth will appreciate and admire hands extended to them by hearts of such caliber. If they succeed, the possessors of such mature, sound, and dignified willpower will be the standard-bearers of our religion, country, language, and ideals; they will travel all over the world, will be met like Khidr wherever they go, and what they present to people will be accepted and drunk like the elixir of life. Wherever they visit, they will set forth into the infinite in a friendship like that of Moses and Khidr, will build protective ramparts and defensive walls for those who await Dhu al-Qarnayn[[2]](#footnote-2) and will point out the roads that lead to the resurrection to those recluses who have been spending their lives in caves for years. Who knows, they will perhaps take first glimmers of the thought of the greatest, the most comprehensive Renaissance wherever they go; this has been awaited for centuries.

1. The archangel who will sound Sur, the trumpet at the Day of Resurrection. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Dhu al-Qarnain: *“He of the two horns.”* His name is mentioned in the eighteenth chapter of the Qur'an. Various sources report him as a messenger or a prophet, whereas 'Ali, the fourth Caliph, says he was a righteous servant of God, neither a prophet nor a king. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)