

“The Commonality between the Notion of Singularity within Community  
and its Reflections in the Islamic Culture with Early Islamic Practices”

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“The Commonality between the Notion of Singularity within Community and its Reflections in the Islamic Culture with Early Islamic Practices”

“Cemaat içindeki Tekillik Kavramının Erken Dönem İslam Pratikleriyle beraber İslam Kültüründeki Yansımaları”

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*To my most significant and absolute other, to Camille*

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## Summary

This thesis attempts to constitute a questioning about both theory and practice of singularity experiences. In general terms, this work consists of two major parts. The former, human beings are defined as singular entities rejecting the notions of individual and society as the products of epistemological process of Western thought. Singular being's qualifications within the community and its inclination towards the *other* constitutes the grand pillar of this work. The latter is the very reflections of that philosophical investigation in the Islamic culture which is best experienced in the early Islamic practices. In that sense, the features and institutions with experiences of people in that community are analyzed in a comparative manner with modern understanding of life.

## Özet

Bu çalışma tekil yaşamın ve tekil deneyimlerin hem teorik hem de pratik düzeyde sorgulanmasından oluşmaktadır. İlk bölümde, Batı düşüncesindeki epistemolojik sürecin bir ürünü olan toplum içinde birey(sel)leşmesi gereken bir varlık olarak kavranan insanı cemaatin içindeki tekillik olarak sunan bu çalışma daha sonraki bölümlerde ise tekil insanın 'öteki' ile olan konumundan yola çıkarak yeni bir ilişkisellik ve cemaat durumunu ortaya koymaktadır. Son olarak bu sorgulamanın bir yansıması olarak İslami kültürün bel kemiğini oluşturan erken İslam dönemindeki olaylar incelenmektedir. Bu olaylar karşılaştırmalı bir şekilde modern yaşam anlayışı ile arasındaki bağları ve farkları da göz önüne çıkarmaktadır.

Key Words: singularity, community, individual, society, multitude, personalism, freedom, responsibility, communication, love, death and sharing, Islam, *Sunnah*, and *Ictihad*.



## **Introduction**

The notions of singularity, community and multitude are not newfangled in neither social sciences nor religious studies (theology or Sufism). This thesis attempts to constitute a questioning about both theory and practice of singularity experiences. The first pillar of theory is fed by J.L. Nancy and G. Agamben who attempted to seek for an exit for what Marxism faced in the last decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century in terms of singular beings within the community. However, they still keep their freshness as they were written today. Secondly, Nietzsche is presented as the root of singular studies because of his rejections to modern life style and its derivation: namely, society-individual dichotomy. Thirdly, personalist thinkers, N. Berdiaeff, E. Mounier, C. Renouvier M. Nédoncelle and their different works which gave shape the personalism throughout world in the beginning of the 20th century, who locate themselves against the individualization process of modern times are analyzed within the context of singularity-community concepts. The attempts of personalist thinkers are to locate person as the ontological and epistemological starting point of philosophical reflection. In that sense, the singular value of human is considered primary for them.

In the pillar of practice, early Islamic practices will be analyzed as a practice of very community and ability of maneuvers of each singularity in this period under the light of M. Hamidullah's entire works regarding early Islamic culture. Why we focus on early practices is the very reason of proper reflection of Islamic ideas and the peak status that concrete community in the world conjuncture. To be in peak compared to other systems is like the litmus-paper of sincerity. Any set of idea under domination can pledge many things; however, when they receive the control, the given words are betrayed. In other words, it is easy to give something you do not have it. In that sense, the concepts like freedom, responsibility, community, love, death and sharing will be rethought under a different perspective.

Although the studies and thinkers mentioned above are not new in the social theory, the recent developments in the realm of theory, namely the rise of singularity-multitude studies give us opportunity to reconsider them. They are still vivid, promising and worthy of rethinking about. J. L. Nancy's theory about singular being within community is more literal, about senses, about feelings in the most abstract form. On the other hand, Agamben's theory

touches ground more than Nancy's *The Inoperative Community*. Agamben partly provides a guideline, showing particular addresses to fight like State which keeps the control or media that maintains the spectacle going on. Under the name of communication which is presented as a gun of singular, its communicability qualifications, today is directed to the face of people in his analysis. Both Agamben and Nancy believe the suddenness and unexpectedness of the community. While Nancy calls it a community which happens to us, Agamben, is more impatient than Nancy, calls it as "*The Coming Community*". He is one by one seeking for the nucleuses of the coming community. That is why he locates the community and singular being as opposed to State. Singular being, by definition, is unperceivable, incommensurable and out of rhetoric. It is not a metaphor, not *either this or that but both this and that* says Agamben. Even it is not appropriate to claim both ... and ... category for singular being. It is mother and virgin at the same time<sup>1</sup>. It is a sort of experience beyond the certain possibilities of particular identities. It seems stranger to the order of dominant paradigm of subject-object and society-individual dichotomy. That is why it is not only against mythos-logos dichotomy but inversion of those polarizations. For both of them, to be singular constitutes a resistance against the domination and exploitation of State and Capitalism (or to the political-economics structure ruling the world) in general terms. It aims to create an autonomous realm for each singulars, or singular groups. The community on the other hand is the system of reciprocal relationships in which any singular element is excluded; that is to say that meaning of each particular experience is evaluated accordingly. Therefore, it is a completion of the community the boundary of which is drawn by reciprocal relations.

In the second part, what is focused to clarify the stance of those thinkers against society-individual dichotomy, the personalism and its common concepts with Singularity and Community will be analyzed. Personalism is a philosophical and theological investigation stemming from the concept of person as opposed to the notion of individual. Therefore, it is person that was located to the very heart of philosophical thought. The person is considered as a relational being with other persons, with nature and with its creator, God. It was an attempt to resist against enforcements brought by the process of individualization. The most significant qualifications of the person, for personalist thinkers were obliged to a removal, namely, freedom with responsibility, relational manner, communication and reciprocity. All

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<sup>1</sup> This phrase is used by Derrida in order to clarify the Notion of Khora

those notions were prisoned into the solitude of individualization, as an arbitrary category imposed on human. The incommensurability of the person was turned out to be a classification in which every identity is determined and freedom of human is withdrawn. It is also a resistance to determinism of the science and scientific applications in order to discover the reality of human. Similarly, relational character of the person is highly emphasized by personalist thinkers. It is an opening, exposure, or an inclination towards the other through interpersonal communication in which the persons share in an infinite manner; however, they do not lose anything from their own personhood. Therefore, it is sharing which multiplies the very essence of human in personalism. It constitutes a resistance to Cartesian subject, to cogito through Heidegger's words: being-with and being-together. This ontological interdependence creates a new web of relations. The path to reach truth and all primary determinations shift towards through Nancy's words: a being-in-common. On the other hand, from the very center of the relational character of person is also ascribed to God in personalism. It is the personhood of God which gives the one of human. According to personalist thinkers, it is that foundation which maintains a relation between God and human and among human.

Also, the notion of freedom also was touched upon and was made upside-down in the community. The notion of freedom in the community cannot be thought without responsibility. Like the personality of human, as personalist thinkers argue, stemming from God's personality, the notion of freedom is also thought within the limits of God's freedom. The mercifulness is the principle determining God's attitude. There is no exception that he digresses out of the principles he determined for himself. As in the case tawhid belief - the uniqueness of God is also the guarantee of the uniqueness of human – the freedom of God also depends on the responsibility. People are under his responsibility and God demands the same attitude in each and every human relationship which reflects the reciprocal attitude and interdependency between human and God and among human. Therefore, freedom of one person cannot be separated from the others. It is that interdependence keeping the community in the threshold.

In the last section, we focus on the very Islamic practices to show the relevancy between those practices and the concepts we used for Singularity and personalism which emphasizes the

freedom with responsibility, reciprocity, love, autonomy, multitude, exposure and so on and so forth. In Islamic culture, it is the multitude of very sources of Islam that constitutes a contradiction under the umbrella of ‘reason’. It is that qualification giving rise to the notion of singularity within Islamic practices. Since the standardization of religion would break the multitude in the community, the implications are differed according to singular qualifications of human beings rather than generalizations and categorizations. Otherwise, it would be the imprisonment of the faith to one particular space and time. From the beginning, the importance of community and of autonomy was recognized and provided in Islamic culture since the differences were considered as a sign and gift of God for the people. In other words, rather than unifying under the same identities, the truth can be reached in the very differences of other groups, religions, and people. That community will be presented as an anti-heorism in the very practices since the sole sovereignty was ascribed to God. On the other hand, the notions of love, of death and of sharing will be mentioned within the context of singularity. Besides, the birth of Islamic institution, their aims and qualifications will be analyzed in order to show that Islamic community is the place where public-private or profane-sacred distinctions disappear with those institutions.

Singularity within the community and early Islamic practices that constitutes the very Islamic culture, here, attempts to open a new gate for human being to be a sole interpreter of life with every aspect; in other words, it is “ontologization of what modern life has epistemologized so far”<sup>2</sup>. In other words, it is to question and to discuss the modernity, its derivations and relations with the concepts of singularity. It seems necessary to keep the singular beings away from the modern fictions and arbitrary distinctions. What is important here is to ontologize what was epistemologized so far by the modern politics. This problematic between singularity and modern fictions may best be illuminated through Delaloglu’s analysis between “wise” (*bilge*) and “knowledge” (*bilgi*). He states that whereas wisdom is experienced, knowledge is accumulated. The former accumulates in human but the latter in concepts, in books, and in shelves. Knowledge stays in files for people to apply and to use them; however, wisdom cannot be transferred because it cannot be standardized as singular beings; it does not work through arbitrary distinctions but more through contiguity, interdependency and coherence and completeness (*tawhid*). Since it is not standardized, it obtains a qualification to be over time-space considerations in order to transform the future. In H. Arendt’s terminology, it is to

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<sup>2</sup> Delaloğlu, *Benjaminia : Dil, Tarih ve Coğrafya*, Versus Yay. Istanbul, 2008, p. 44

find the future in the past. Early Islamic practices analyzed in this thesis locate the notion of “divine” as a seed of a fruit<sup>3</sup>; the rest is built upon the “reason”. The embodiment of this thought is “church” in Christianity and “closure of *ictihad*” in Islam which caused a certain polarization in terms of distribution of power. This phenomenon gives way to other polarizations and distinctions; such as the ideology of subject-object dichotomy. It brings a distance and frigidity between God and human in Islamic culture<sup>4</sup>. It is that distance the separatist modern fictions in the society forms the fundamentals of its legitimization. This process brings an eternal solitude to the notion of individual by separating human from the other in order to move as in the case of scientific necessities (methodology) that presupposes a certain distinction of subject and object. It gives birth to the notion of standard, of reasoning of the faith or of normal which has been the most ideological notion of social science since Foucault<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, both singularity studies and early Islamic practices are presented as un-normalized and non-categorized practices.

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<sup>3</sup> Delaloğlu, *ibid*, p. 78

<sup>4</sup> Delaloğlu, *ibid*, p. 78

<sup>5</sup> Delaloğlu, *ibid*, p. 81

## **PART I: Community and Singularity**

## A) Individual vs. Singular

The concept of community may be used against the society which carries highly ethical burden of centuries. The atomic (with the knowledge that atom is not indivisible) piece of the community is the singularity although individual is the one of society. According to social contract theories, individuals come together with a certain degree of consent. However, what we emphasize is the possibility of living together even without consent since all consents presuppose sacrifice of qualifications in a certain degree. The concept of individual, – according to ideologies and philosophies stemming from Cartesian tradition - without which one of the most important pillar of life is considered missing, is the very invention of modernity, in time, it was highly glorified and needed, and to which given certain restricted rights. However, M. Foucault, unlike D. Hume, J. Locke and J. J. Rousseau and many other thinkers following their heritage, does not ascribe an essence to human nature; therefore, he does not take into consideration the social contract. What he mentions is the singularity of each experience. Similarly, the fiction of individual is the very product of ‘from’ and ‘around’ singular relations. Briefly, discursive and non-discursive practices says Foucault transform the behaviors of human which lead to the changes in meaning, values, duties and pleasures.<sup>6</sup> After such a concrete relational analysis, what we call *subjectivity* emerges.

From that point of view by taking into consideration the analysis of singularity, community and multitude, the notion of humanism will also be reconsidered as the metaphysics of subjectivity<sup>7</sup>. It is the internalization of the values stemming from the discursive and non-discursive practices. For him, it is a veiled form of subordination. In that sense, the arbitrariness of the concept of individual becomes more visible which was considered a priori a stage to reach for each human being. It is the end of the dream now to be individual. It was plumped as the “sole path to emancipation from tyranny”<sup>8</sup>; however, it is the very figure of immanence which absolutely detached itself representing an origin and a certainty<sup>9</sup>. Individual has an immanence which constitutes an indivisible entity. What feeds individualization is the immanence that also feeds the notion of humanism. That is why the notion of humanism is not acknowledged by thinkers who (is able to) possess a stance against

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<sup>6</sup> These are the ideas noted in Ferda Keskin’s course: Singularity (PHIL 523) in 27. 02. 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Fynsk, C., ‘*Experience of Finitude*’ (foreword) in *The Inoperative Community*, p. 9, University of Minnesota Press.

<sup>8</sup> Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, University of Minnesota Press, 1991, p. 3

<sup>9</sup> Nancyi *ibid*, p. 3

Western metaphysics. However, the loss of immanence in each singular constitutes the community. “Whereas an individual can know another individual, juxtaposed to him both as identical to him and as a thing – as the identity of the thing – the singular being does not know, but rather experience his like”<sup>10</sup> says Nancy.

The concept of individual has also to be thought along with the official definitions of identity which categorize the certain qualifications including and highlighting the constraints. Each individual has a particular identity; however, their sovereignty upon life is about to finish, they are not considered neither natural nor essential anymore. Briefly, there is no essential component such individual. On the other hand, singularity, for Agamben, has no identity<sup>11</sup> because a singular being cannot be determined in terms of a particular belonging or concept. It is merely determined with its own totality of possibilities which cuts off the constraint of particular fetishism of identity. To be singular is to walk on the edges of the borders of possibilities *by means of this bordering*<sup>12</sup>. “It belongs to a whole” says Agamben and continues that “but without this belonging’s being able to be represented by a real condition: Belonging, being-such, is here only the relation to an empty and indeterminate totality.”<sup>13</sup> Unlike absolute, which confines on itself, singular being exposes in exteriority. Also, the Cartesian subject that is not sure about anything but itself reflects the absoluteness. The concept of individual, is fed by this root and this tradition, is not in need of anything (neither someone else nor God) because it has been glorified by the successors of this tradition. The attempts of thinkers who insist on singularity attempt to deconstruct this particular(ist) understanding. The discussion on singularity is also the reflection of inevitable debate between particular and universal. Where singularity is located is between them.

What individuality brought was the term of subjectivity, modern human is compelled to be individual through discursive and non-discursive acts of the sovereign<sup>14</sup>. At the end of the day, the individual, that was attempted to be saved, serves for the sovereign as a product of it.

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<sup>10</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 36

<sup>11</sup> Agamben, *Outside in CC*, part 16, p. 1

<sup>12</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 1

<sup>13</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 1

<sup>14</sup> Sovereign in this concept does not have a particular signification but rather the sum of the relations which create the domination.



What is necessary and inevitable is *communitas* rather than *societas* and singularity rather than individual. What we get rid of here is the domination of the sovereign and the terms we negate here are those very apparatus of it. The new understanding is not refusal of multitude with the negation of identities. Christopher Fynsk in the Foreword of *The Inoperative Community* written by J. L. Nancy says that “Before approaching what Nancy describes as the ‘singularity’ of Being – its singularity implying its multiplicity, and thus a differential structure that forms the ‘political space’ and the site of community.”<sup>15</sup> People are whatever they desired without any sacrifice of their qualifications or of potentials in the community. The singular being, for Agamben, has a potential character, it is not the potentiality of a particular power or strength, here Agamben also introduces a new understanding to freedom. If freedom is something we choose from particular options, singular has a one more thing additional which is the potential of not-be since the “singularity is capable of its own impotence.”<sup>16</sup> For example, a green leaf is neither red nor purple; however, “one can conceive of a being-thus that negates all possibilities, every predicate – that is, only thus, such as it is.”<sup>17</sup> Whatever being for Agamben is just *as such* which is like an umbrella term. *Such* here refers to totality of the potentials which appeared or will appear.

However, sovereign attempts to create the very sameness within the multitude and the differences are zoomed out. Having labeled as the individuals at once, we, you and me start distorting both multitude and reality. The notion of identity is fed from the same Cartesian tradition which has augmented by the thinkers of Enlightenment period. The hidden danger of identity politics becomes apparent with the analysis of metaphysical roots of individual as well as identity. The belonging condition of each identity group is a constraint, human, as a subject is subjected to apply the normative rules of it. The emancipation does not appear with the recognition of identities by the sovereign. To get rid of them as an identity means that having the whole potentials within the multitude without ascribing any sovereignty or domination to any of them. Otherwise, we are prone to be both subjects and objects of those normative constructed set of identities. Agamben in the very beginning of his book: *The Coming Community*, introduces the definition of singular being as whatever (this term in Italian and in French ‘*qualunque*’ refers precisely to that which is neither particular nor

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid*, p. 8

<sup>16</sup> Agamben, *Bartleby*, in CC, part 9, p. 1

<sup>17</sup> Agamben, *Preface*, in CC, p. 5

general, neither individual nor generic”)<sup>18</sup> being. Whatever being is not “being, it does not matter which” but “being such that it always matters”.<sup>19</sup> The relation of whatever here is not about a common property but only *such as it is*. On the other hand, Jean Luc Nancy introduces the term of being-in-common for the singular being. Both of them are not reclaimed to possess a particular property (identity) that binds to a particular class or set of relations<sup>20</sup>. The only belonging in singularity for Agamben is to belonging itself.<sup>21</sup>

## B) Community vs. Society

At the beginning, it is necessary to mention that neither community nor singularity are never articulated as a policy, a receipt or a strategy since the community is something befalls to human being rather than a project in Nancy’s philosophy. For that reason, Fynsk states that “Anyone seeking an immediate political application of this thought of community risks frustration”<sup>22</sup>. Nancy locates those ideas at a place where the metaphysics of subjectivity terminates.

The term of community differs from society from numerous ways. For Nancy, society is a simple association within which needs and forces are divided<sup>23</sup> according to centrality of individual. People are the things to sacrifice for the glory of society. However, “community is made up principally of the sharing, of diffusion, or impregnation of an identity by a plurality wherein each member identifies him/herself only through the supplementary mediation of his identification with the living body of community... as a model of love<sup>24</sup>”. Distinct from the well-known separation of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, “society was not built on the ruins

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<sup>18</sup> Hardt, M., *Translator’s Note* in ‘The Coming Community’

<sup>19</sup> Agamben, *Whatever*, part 1, p. 1 in CC

<sup>20</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 2

<sup>21</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 3

<sup>22</sup> Fynsk, C., ‘Experience of Finitude’ (foreword) in *The Inoperative Community*, p. 12, University of Minnesota Press.

<sup>23</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 9

<sup>24</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 9

of community<sup>25</sup>”. For Nancy, even society follows the community; it is not the community he calls<sup>26</sup>.

Moreover, it represents an impossibility form a society for singular beings because the singulars, for Agamben, “do not possess any identity to vindicate nor any bond of belonging for which to seek for recognition.”<sup>27</sup> Community, neither in Nancy nor in Agamben, is ascribed an essence or substance; otherwise, there would not be any distinction between society and community.

If the community formed by singular beings is ascribed a particular identity, they fall into the hole which has been open since the modernity because in Agamben, it is the only thing sovereign cannot tolerate due to the indeterminacy of the community.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, what constitutes community is the lack of identity. Likewise, any substance is ascribed to the community; in which each singular can maintain their qualifications and potentials without melting in a higher or transcendent entity.

What is the meaning of inoperative in Nancy’s community is also a sign referring the very distinction between society and community: In French, this word is *désœuvrement* which has no adequate translation in English; however, in the book, it is translated as “unworking”. First of all, it is a reproach to the entire Marxist tradition which reduced the human being to the “work” disregarding all the other potentials of it. Nancy mentions this situation as a betrayal borrowing the idea from George Bataille. Secondly, it tells the suddenness and unexpectedness of the community, it is neither a project nor a process to reach or work on the community. Thirdly, a community constituted on work or a leader or a nation loses the “in” in front of the common (being-in-common), so does community.

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<sup>25</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 11

<sup>26</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 11

<sup>27</sup> Agamben, *Tiananmen in CC*, p. 2

<sup>28</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 2

### C) Singularity as a relation

In Nancy's philosophy, each singular is named as "being-in-common" which cannot be considered as actually existing ground or common measure<sup>29</sup>. He negates the priority of the self because each human being is welcomed to world with togetherness in his philosophy. The most promising relation is between singular and community which are illuminated with the words that share the same etymological roots through the prefix of 'co-' such as common, co-extensive, co-originary, communication, community, contingency, etc. It is the only condition a being may appear as a singular under that set of relations. The relation takes place in the community through exposition of the being-in-common; that is to say to be ex-posed in an exteriority.

The *relation* as a notion outshines here as opposed to the ones of individual and subject<sup>30</sup>. According to Nancy, "Being itself comes to be defined as relational, as non-absoluteness, as community.<sup>31</sup>" The relations between singulars keep their limits; exposure does not mean intertwined of singulars, as melting in each others, which is against the very nature of singularity.

The relational character of the singular engenders in Agamben's whatever being. He reveals the very relational nature of singularity as coming and going:

"The passage from potentiality to act, from language to word, from common to proper, comes about every time as a shuttling in both directions along a line of sparkling alternation on which common nature and singularity, potentiality and act change roles and interpenetrate. The being that is engendered on this line is whatever being, and the manner in which he passes from the common to the proper and from proper to common is called usage – or rather, *ethos*."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 10

<sup>30</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p.10

<sup>31</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 6

<sup>32</sup> Agamben, *Principum Individuation in CC*, part 5 p. 4

In order to clarify the relational character of singular, Agamben's concept of *manner* should be introduced here: It is the *rising forth* form of the being without ascribing any essence to it. Manner does not mean a being in a particular mode but it's the "mode of the being"<sup>33</sup> He says that only this modality of rising forth, as an original mannerism of being leads to a passage between ontology and ethics in which beings do not ascribe an essence to themselves and does not dominate their own qualifications under this essence but rather they expose, this being under such a relational character emerges from his own manner.<sup>34</sup> That is why he says that "That manner is ethical that does not befall us and does not found us but engender us."<sup>35</sup>

Nancy emphasizes the multiple and different character of the singular through singular and relational nature of each particular experience. This multiple character is reached with a certain deconstruction/finitude of the concept of individual and "subject's presence to itself"<sup>36</sup>. Only after this relational point of view, the experience of singularity appears as an ecstasy to the other. Similarly, the notion of freedom is not a property human possesses; it is an event to experience; thus, it necessitates the being-in-common in the sharing, communicating and exposure of singularity to the other<sup>37</sup>.

#### **D) Love and Death in the Community**

Here, the experience of love and the death of other step in the experience of freedom. Fynsk says that the death of the other and love call the singular beyond (the limit) itself and thus delivers it to its freedom<sup>38</sup>. Both death and love are unique events directed to the other. The definition of love is highly interfered to the one of singular. Agamben in this point presents that:

"Love is never directed toward this or that property of the loved one (being blond, being small, being tender, being lame), but neither does it neglect the properties in favor of an

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<sup>33</sup> Agamben, *Manneries*, part 7, p. 2

<sup>34</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 2

<sup>35</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 3

<sup>36</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p.13

<sup>37</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p.14

<sup>38</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p.15

insipid generality (universal love): The lover wants the loved one with all of its predicates, its being such as it is. The lover desires the *as* only insofar as it is *such*... Thus, whatever singularity (the Lovable) is never intelligence of some thing, of this or that quality or essence but only the intelligence of intelligibility.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, there is no particular feature of the beloved that steps in the transcendental event of love. If we consider each feature of the beloved as an identity, it is the singular sum of qualifications which matters. Similarly, singularity cannot be categorized or generalized this or that but whatever. For Nancy, love is an “experience of finite transcendence: the subject finds itself in love, beyond itself.”<sup>40</sup> What makes it transcendence is its suddenness and exteriority out of singulars. It cannot occur as an individual because individual keeps the immanence which is a resistance to transcendence. It comes from outside and what constitutes it is the otherness of the other<sup>41</sup>. Therefore, both Nancy and Agamben agree that love emerges out of the singularity of the beloved and it is the exposure of singulars beyond their limits. Love in this case is not a possession but just a passage because in that passage nothing arrives than arriving itself<sup>42</sup>.

The beloved is located as the absolute or the most significant other which prevents actually the possession. Nancy says that “if I say to other ‘my love’ it is of the other, precisely, that I speak, and nothing is ‘mine’”<sup>43</sup>. Love, here, can easily be projected to the community in which relation, communication, and exposure to the other and sharing take place. The only thing which cannot be projected is generalization to the being-in-common since it is the multiple uniqueness of singular being. In the community, “lovers are shared” says Nancy and adds that “their singular beings which constitute neither an identity nor an individual share each other, and the singularity of their love is exposed to community.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Agamben, G. *The Coming Community*, p.2, University Press of Minnesota

<sup>40</sup> Fynsk, *ibid*, p. 18

<sup>41</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 18

<sup>42</sup> Nancy J. L., *‘Shattered Love’* in *The Inoperative Community*, p. 102

<sup>43</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 102

<sup>44</sup> Nancy, *IC*, p. 39

According to Nancy, what love calls is the essence of thinking rather than a certain kind of thinking; that is to say thinking and speaking is love. “Without this love” he says and adds that “the exercise of the intellect or of reason would be utterly worthless.”<sup>45</sup> He claims that it is one of the biggest shortcomings of the philosophy which disregard and hesitate to interpret the experience of love; however, it is love which receives and arranges the experience of thought in the final analysis.<sup>46</sup> It is mostly considered as an access but not an end in the philosophy<sup>47</sup>. Moreover, it was so far presented that love suppresses the self in the experience despite its very qualification of completion of the singular<sup>48</sup>. Nancy here refers the very critical separation of mind and heart; however, within the multitude of the singular, they are highly bounded to each others without the importance of one single faculty over the others. It may open a new way of thinking through locating heart inside the process. In that sense, Nancy quotes from Pascal that “they have inappropriately removed the name of reason from love, and they have opposed them without a sound foundation, since love and reason is but the same thing.”<sup>49</sup> Because it is the only opportunity for us to go beyond our own self, in general manner, the location of love is the other; he says and continues that “or of an alterity without which neither love nor completion would be possible.”<sup>50</sup> In other words, love is the promise of completion for Nancy. It is a completion with and through other, a way to abandon the self-love<sup>51</sup>. It is not exactly the love of the self; “it is” he says “the love of one’s own excellence insofar as it is one’s own.” It is neither negation of life nor love to its own being. The self-love Nancy takes position against here is the love of possession, or love of self as a property.<sup>52</sup> From that point of view, desire cannot be love since it is established on the notion of ‘lack’ which sublates the logic of fulfillment. In other words, love does not lead to (by using a concept of Lukacs) reification. That is why desire is not love<sup>53</sup>. According to Nancy, “Desire is unhappiness without end: it is the subjectivist reverse of the infinite exposition of the finitude.”<sup>54</sup> That is to say that the very dialectic converts the negative appropriation of

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<sup>45</sup> Nancy, *Shattered Love*, p. 84

<sup>46</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 85

<sup>47</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 86

<sup>48</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 86

<sup>49</sup> Pascal in the ‘*Discourse on the Passions of Love*’ cited by Nancy in *SL*, p. 90

<sup>50</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 87

<sup>51</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 94

<sup>52</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 95

<sup>53</sup> Nancy *SL*, p. 98

<sup>54</sup> Nancy, *SL*, p. 98

desire into the positive one. Under such a strong power relations and with influence of media, who can claim that the desire I possess is really mine?

Nancy not only proposes a new path of thinking but also constitutes a resistance against the very capitalistic motives:

“If love is the gift of the self, it would thus also be, dialectically, the appropriation of the self. Self-love would therefore be at the heart of the love, it would be its heart, the heart of love and this implacably reconstituted economy – the dialectical economy of fulfillment, the capitalistic economy of an absolute surplus value of the self – would prescribe love from the heart of love itself. The tradition knows well this absence of love from love itself.”<sup>55</sup>

Therefore, the notion of love itself in Nancy, as the notion of belonging in Agamben, becomes an aim than an instrument, that is to say that they are the pillars of the community in their philosophy.

On the other hand, death (loss) of immanence and individual is the sign of community as well. They are not inseparable and it is through death that community shows itself - and reciprocally<sup>56</sup>. Nancy says that “It is death irremediably exceeding the resources of the metaphysics of the subject”. Death is not something to work out of it. Having located the community through/of the other, Nancy says that it is revealed in the death of others<sup>57</sup> that also reveals the very mortality of the self. In other words, a community presents the mortal truth to its members.<sup>58</sup>It is also to live on the edge of death because it is only death that consumes the premises and promises of the society as a product of modernity. The recall of death turns a priori acceptances upside down; human reaches a status to be served than server. However, Cartesian subject is not able to talk or think about his own death. It is death which renders community possible.

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<sup>55</sup> Nancy, SI, p. 95

<sup>56</sup> Nancy, IC, p. 14

<sup>57</sup> Nancy, IC p. 15

<sup>58</sup> Nancy, IC p. 15



## E) Linguistic Freedom

Both Agamben and Nancy seek for the experience of freedom in the language. According to Fynsk, the definition of freedom in Nancy as “the logos in its access to its essence” (essence here is used as difference) is the same thing what Heidegger delineates the “speaking of language”<sup>59</sup> in which the possibility of signification is given. For Agamben, it is the alienation from linguistic being that derives people “toward a single common destiny”<sup>60</sup> more than economic necessities or technological developments since it uprooted people from their vital inhabiting in language<sup>61</sup>. Then he adds that: “...the era in which we live is also that in which for the first time it is possible for humans to experience their own linguistic being – not this or that content of the language, but language itself, not this or that true position, but the very fact that one speaks...”<sup>62</sup> because it is in language where relation takes place in the community. When a singular is exposed to the other, it is a withdrawal towards freedom, it is the “mutual interpellation”<sup>63</sup> and “a response that articulates anew alterity that speaks in the other” is prior to any address in language.<sup>64</sup> Language here has a limit, thus a threshold which is unsurpassed. It is where Nancy locates his understanding of the community, in the edge of the language<sup>65</sup>.

On the other hand, Agamben calls singular being as linguistic being. He presents a comprehensive analysis of singularity, as antinomy of individual, within the language: each categorical word in language such as ‘leaf’ or ‘tree’ transforms the singulars in a set, makes them the members of the class. He says that “definition of the set is the definition of the linguistic meaning, what differentiates them from the others in the same class is solely the name or being called. Therefore, a paradox emerges that “the linguistic being is a class that both belongs and does not belong to itself, and the class of all classes that do not belong to

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<sup>59</sup> Fynsk, *ibid*, p. 22

<sup>60</sup> Agamben, G. *ibid*, 18th part: *Shekinah in The CC*

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*, 18th part

<sup>62</sup> *ibid*, 18th part

<sup>63</sup> Fynsk, *ibid*, p. 23

<sup>64</sup> *ibid*, p. 23

<sup>65</sup> *ibid*, p. 25

themselves is language.”<sup>66</sup> In other words, the linguistic being becomes both a set and a singular at the same time.<sup>67</sup> In that sense, Agamben presents the analysis of Bertrand Russell:

“When we say that certain objects all have a certain property, we suppose that this property is a definite object, that it can be distinct from the object that belong to it; we further suppose that the objects that have the property in question form a class, and that this class is, in some way, a new entity distinct from each of its elements”<sup>68</sup>

It raises an issue, indeed a paradox: “class of all the classes that are not members of themselves.”<sup>69</sup> Just like the notion of ‘example’ which is an element that ceased from the dilemma of universal and particular<sup>70</sup>: According to Agamben, example never fits the situation exactly, it has a difference; however, it still serves for the situation, example is something given. Example is a perfect example of singularity. “On one had, every example is treated in effect, as a real particular case,” Agamben says and adds that “but on the other, it remains understood that it cannot serve in its particularity.”<sup>71</sup> Therefore, neither example nor singularity can be located under a category since they contain an *empty place* which is not definable.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, we find the singularity in homonyms, in being called and because of which singular becomes un-nameable: “the being-in-language of the non-linguistic” says Agamben.<sup>73</sup> Two different entities do/may have common properties; however, it is their name (being called) distinct them from each others. Each property constitutes the multitude of singularity as far as that singular is not defined through the belonging to that property. Agamben sees that as a main challenge “cutting off the real community.”<sup>74</sup> Each belonging to particular property brings the constraints for the experience of other properties. For example, the person who is bounded to Turkishness\* will not be able to experience his familial, friendship, or religious properties properly.

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<sup>66</sup> Agamben, Example in the CC, part 3, p. 1

<sup>67</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 1

<sup>68</sup> Agamben, Homonyms, in CC, part 17, p. 1

<sup>69</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 1

<sup>70</sup> Agamben, Example, p. 2

<sup>71</sup> Agamben, Example in CC, part 3, p. 2

<sup>72</sup> Agamben, *ibid*

<sup>73</sup> Agamben, Homonyms, part 17, p. 6

<sup>74</sup> Agamben, Example

The empty place in Agamben finds itself another term: ‘ease’ as an ‘unrepresentable space’<sup>75</sup> in which each can move freely. Therefore, it becomes “the free use of the proper”.<sup>76</sup>

## F) The impossibility of Fusion & Communion in the Community

The singulars in the community maintain their own singularities without absorbed by and in a supreme entity. Being in common does not mean to be common. Therefore, it is completely different than communion or fusion in a body; there is neither ultimate body to reach nor an ideal level of being to attain<sup>77</sup> because “the community that becomes a single thing necessarily loses the in of being-in-common. Or, it loses ‘with and together’ that defines it. It yields its being-together to a being of togetherness”<sup>78</sup>. The notion of together appears in both Agamben and Nancy as a being as well. Agamben in this sense quotes Spinoza’s two significant propositions in the *Ethics*;

Proposition 13: “All bodies have it in common to express the divine attribute of extension.”

Proposition 37: “What is common cannot in any case constitute the essence of the single case.”<sup>79</sup>

Agamben introduces the concept of *inessential commonality* from those two propositions and says that “Taking place, the communication of singularities in the attribute of extension, does not unite them in essence, but scatters them in existence.”<sup>80</sup>

It is the very personal set of relations constituting the community. Like Simone de Beauvoir said that “personal is political”, community is the place of political; there is a bond without

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<sup>75</sup> Agamben, *Ease in CC*, p. 3

<sup>76</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 3

<sup>77</sup> Connor, P. Preface in *The Inoperative Community*, p. 38

<sup>78</sup> *ibid*, p. 39

\*By the way, there is no such a word in any other languages in the World refering their own origin such as Englishness or Frenchness, than Turkish (Türklük). It must be indirect way of talking about nationalism.

<sup>79</sup> Agamben, *Principium Individuationis*, part 5, p. 2

<sup>80</sup> Agamben, *ibid*, p. 3

attachments. The multitude of singularity is the remedy to chase from a belonging to certain identity. It is the locus where communist ideals ended up when human beings are ascribed to an identity; namely, proletariat<sup>81</sup>. Any existence in the community is not supposed to be reinvested or sublated as in the Hegelian dialectics. “Community does not sublimate the finitude it exposes. Community itself, in sum, is nothing but this exposition” says Nancy to reveal that the community itself is finite as the finite beings-in-common. Compared to entire modern ideologies applying a priori certainty of society-individual binary, the process is neither acute, nor necessary; therefore, “singularization”<sup>82</sup> does not take place in the community. By birth, every singular is welcomed to community: “each birth” Nancy says and adds that “exposes another singularity, a supplementary limit, and therefore another communication.”<sup>83</sup>

## G) Sharing-Communication

Nancy introduces the term of *clinamen* for the community against the atomic understanding of ‘individual’ of the society. What *clinamen* means is inclination “of one by other, or from one to the other”<sup>84</sup> in *The Inoperative Community*. The usage of *clinamen* is linked to the notion of ecstasy: what happens to singular being<sup>85</sup>. It is the withdrawal of the singular being beyond its limits to share and communicate. The term outside comes into question with the introduction of ecstasy. For Agamben, outside is not a space beyond a certain determination in that context but a passage, a face to face exposure which is given access through exteriority. In *Before Sunrise*, Richard Linklater’s famous movie, the woman character (Julie Delpy) says that “any kind of God, it would not be in any of us, not you or me but just the little space in between and if there is something like a magic in this world, it must be in the attempt of understanding someone sharing something”<sup>86</sup>.

It is not the limit but threshold constituting the borders of the singular being. It is the threshold that becomes the experience of limit itself or of being within an outside through

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<sup>81</sup> Nancy J. L., *The Inoperative Community*, p. 2

<sup>82</sup> Nancy, *IC*, p. 27

<sup>83</sup> Nancy, *Myth Interrupted*, p. 60

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*, p. 3

<sup>85</sup> *ibid*, p. 7

<sup>86</sup> Linklater, R. *Before Sunset*, 1995, 1:02:10 – 1:03:21

ecstasy.<sup>87</sup> According to Nancy, “Bataille is the one who experienced first, or more acutely, the modern experience of community as neither a work to be produced, nor a lost communion but as space itself, and the spacing of the outside, of outside of-self<sup>88</sup>” is a gate to communication as well. Communication necessitates the community, as a birth out of relational co-existence. In that sense, neither communication nor sharing is regarded as a component of human being but what makes of it. Nancy also wrote:

“These singular beings are themselves constituted by sharing, they are distributed and placed, or rather spaced, infinitely other for the Subject of their fusion, which is engulfed in the sharing, in the ecstasy of sharing: “communicating” by not “communing.” These “places of communication” are no longer places of fusion, even though in them one passes from one to the other; they are defined and exposed by their dislocation. Thus, the communication of sharing would be this very dis-location.”<sup>89</sup>

Being-in-common does not recline upon anything but the outside out of which sharing, otherness and exposure emerge. We had mentioned above that singular beings are alike (not the same) beings rather than identical; in other words, identity does not possess an original point in the community. “What holds the place of origin is the sharing of singularities<sup>90</sup>” says Nancy; therefore, it is the edge of limits where exposure takes place and thus communication does. Likeness does not bring a (re)discovery of being-in-common but the recognition in the other<sup>91</sup>. The sharing in the community is something to be completed. What is more incompleteness is its very principle; every singular event is another experience of sharing in the community<sup>92</sup>.

For Agamben, communication takes place in the indefinable empty space of the singular which prevents the sovereignty of any identity, any property to dominate along with

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<sup>87</sup> Agamben, *Outside*, in CC, part 16, p. 2

<sup>88</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 19

<sup>89</sup> Nancy, *IC*, p. 25

<sup>90</sup> Nancy, *IC* p. 33

<sup>91</sup> Nancy, *IC* p. 33

<sup>92</sup> Nancy, *IC* p. 35

exposition<sup>93</sup>. The bordering of singularity in Agamben is a threshold “that is a point of contact with an external space that must remain empty.”<sup>94</sup> It is whateverness bringing the threshold to singular. What is determined about singular in Agamben’s *The Coming Community* is also the clinamen of the community which is the finitude in Nancy’s *The Inoperative Community*; the rest is indeterminable according to certain category. It is that empty place preventing the categorization but opening towards a “pure exteriority”<sup>95</sup> which engenders in Nancy as a “pure exposure”.

To sum up, singularity constitutes the only way for another politics, other life possibilities and for just an *other*. Community is the locus of sharing, love, exposures, togetherness and relation in which singularity may experience its full potentials. From that point we have to give the word to Peter Connor: “One thing at least is clear”: if we do not face up to questions raised by singularity-community analysis we presented above, the political under the individual considerations will soon desert human completely, “if it has not already done so. It will abandon human to political and technological economies, if it has not already done so.” For him, this will be the end of communication and thus community, “if it has not yet come about.” It is the singular, being-in-common, being-with, being-together which will open the way for an exit from modern fiction of individual and society. The finitude of singulars, if they do not come together in a community, they will lack even their tombs in this modern fiction.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Agamben, *Example*, part 3, p. 3

<sup>94</sup> Agamben, *Outside*, in *CC*, p. 1

<sup>95</sup> Agamben, *Outside*, in *CC*, p. 1

<sup>96</sup> Connor, P. Preface to *The Inoperative Community*, p. 12

## **Part II: Nietzsche and Singularity**

## A) Nietzsche as a ‘Singularist’ Thinker

What makes Nietzsche an important thinker is his role to reveal the Western philosophy what lies beneath of being “modern”<sup>97</sup> and individual, science, and society, implying the organic dependency among them along with ‘knowledge’ which is a product of human for him; thus, it can never be objective. According to Nietzsche, knowing, through ascribing categories to chaotic processes is giving a certain ‘power’ and ‘sense of control’ to the human. Similar to knowledge, logic is another fiction for which certain rules are highly necessiated. For example, “nothing can be both A and non-A (A’) simultaneously”<sup>98</sup> which is a certain way of simplification. A singular being, on the other hand, can have variety of qualifications at the same time. The aim of science (that is applied to people in this context) here is the oppression of one certain potentiality over all the other potentials. It is a certain way of creation of so-called reality. This approach takes us to another tricky realm, of homogenous groupings; the beings or objects consisting of innumerable differences are reduced into certain groups (trees, leafs, etc.)\*. This way of thinking and its applications are valid but that is also everything for Nietzsche without ascribing any further value to it.<sup>99</sup>

In Nietzsche’s philosophy, the idea of unity consists of numerous constraints via putting a stick to the wheel of thought. For example, “a young Greek philosopher keeps the qualifications of an Eastern Religious Reverend”<sup>100</sup> says Deleuze in order to clarify Nietzsche’s stance about singularity. However, with the problematic process of categorization stemming from the idea of unity, ways of multitude are kept close which is also the removal of the mystery of philosophy. From this point of view, the role of the thinker solely becomes legitimization of settled values stemming from the very separation of life and thought. The separation for unity is a separation in order to overwhelm the multitude. Deleuze says that “a philosopher, in order to be a metaphysician gives up being a doctor or a physiologist”<sup>101</sup> because such an understanding cannot bear multiplicity but specialization. What is more tragic is that those separations are done within the discourse to be reasonable and truth seeker.

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<sup>97</sup> Robinson, D., Nietzsche ve Postmodernizm, Everest Yay., 2000, trans. Kaan H. Öktem, p. 1

<sup>98</sup> Robinson, *ibid*, p. 21

\*Agamben also uses the example of tree in the Coming Community

<sup>99</sup> Robinson, *ibid*, p. 21

<sup>100</sup> Deleuze, G. ‘Nietzsche’, Otonom Yayınları, trans. Ilke Karadağ, Istanbul, 2006, p. 20-21

<sup>101</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 22



Even philosophy today is the synonym of non-trouble since it is just a pure science.<sup>102</sup> In that sense, G. Deleuze states that:

“According to Nietzsche, there is a connection between life and thought which forms a complex unity. Life styles inspire the ways of thinking and the ways of thinking create the life styles. Life activates the thought, and though affirms the life. We do not have a little idea of pre-Socrates times of this unity. We now only have the idea that thoughts negate, prevent, discipline and disable the life; and we listen to (hi)stories of the lives which revenge through dragging the thought into the madness and both of them disappear at the same time. We do not have any other choice than ordinary lives and mad thinkers.”<sup>103</sup>

The cornerstones of Western history are revised by Nietzsche. For example, “the Reform of Europe did not alter the deeper way of flow” says Deleuze and continues that “it is just a shift of space in terms of the burdens on the shoulder of people”<sup>104</sup> which were given by the 16th century Catholicism in Europe. Settled values were still the same values at the end of the day in another realm. People, who were devoted their own beings to the Church, did not emancipate from the burdens created by Men this time. To bring the values of ‘humanism’ instead of the ones of Catholicism is just a replacement of dimensions from God of church to idea of human. The basic motivation that enslaves human beings remained unquestionable. The rise of science and enlightenment period against the supreme authority of church followed a similar methodology. Although Galileo was presented as a figure against dogmatism, according to Feyerabend “Galileo did not simply ask for the freedom to publish his results, he wanted to impose them on others”<sup>105</sup>. Then, his followers were as totalitarian as the Church in terms of Truth and Reality.

## **B) Nietzsche vs. Cartesian Tradition**

Similarly, Nietzsche’s stance is clear for Cartesian tradition: there is an experience of thinking and therefore there should be someone who is thinking. For him, it is nothing more than gramatical “enforcement”. According to him, linguistic “truth”<sup>106</sup> hides the Truth. However, it

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<sup>102</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 22

<sup>103</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 19-20

<sup>104</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 23

<sup>105</sup> Feyerabend, P. *Farewell to Reason, Versus*, 2003, London, p. 256.

<sup>106</sup> Robinson, *ibid*, p. 27-28.

is not a negation of practical value of language. What is unacceptable is to feed a faith and morely, to be in need of this thought. From that perspective, one way or another, it starts to feed “apotheosis” of individualization. In that sense, Nietzsche also criticizes the notion of humanism since it is a replacement of God and human within the similar settled values.

Nietzsche’s philosophy is an attempt against the fixation of meaning, there is no one particular meaning but meanings as much as numbers of pair of eyes<sup>107</sup>. Because, here, the truth is behind the doors and each singular constitutes a key for contemplation of the multitude as a truth. It is neither about education nor public interests which are the negation of singular for one supreme entity (public, society, and nation)<sup>108</sup>. According to him, the notion of society provokes the development and progress for humanity. The magnitude of the progress can be measured for Nietzsche with piles of things human had to sacrifice; humanity out of piles is sacrificed for the development of one single human kind; that is called the progress in society<sup>109</sup>.

Nietzsche does not separate human from nature by emphasizing the relational manner between them. Human cannot be independent from the gigantic powers of nature and history, as Nietzsche defines it “will of power”<sup>110</sup>. The ‘Will’ in Nietzsche is the name given to the relation of powers. According to Deleuze, ‘will of power’ has to be evaluated in that manner<sup>111</sup>. This concept must not be defined as a desire of sovereignty which is in the realm of settled values, On the contrary, it is to be open to the new, not mentioned or forgotten values which come with the ‘will of power’. This notion, as in the community, has a strong relation with sharing and re-creation<sup>112</sup>. In a complex structure, it is a differential component of present powers and derivation of their mutual qualities. It is, therefore, always presented as active and pluralistic. Deleuze states that a ‘power’ commands with ‘will of power’ and at the same time obeys with ‘will of power’. It provides the affirmation of efficient powers, of their difference, and of life.

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<sup>107</sup> Nietzsche, F., *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üstüne*, Say Yayınları, trans. Ahmet Inam, Istanbul, 2004, p. 55

<sup>108</sup> Nietzsche, *ibid*, p. 24

<sup>109</sup> Nietzsche, *ibid*, p. 94

<sup>110</sup> Robinson, *ibid*, p. 28.

<sup>111</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>112</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 26.

As Agamben mentions in *The Coming Community*, the fight against the sovereign takes place not in order to capture the notion of the State and of Power, Nietzsche also does not consider such a change as a radical and a wished change: Even if the Weak or Slave captures the Power, they are still weak<sup>113</sup> since they stay within the same settled power relations. Moreover he considers this situation as the most dangerous phenomenon and that is why he says that “powerful should always be protected weak”<sup>114</sup>.

Instead of nihilism as negation of life, he proposes human, too human values which will liberate human from slavery (from possession, power, in the context of singularity); however, it is not a project but a mood or manner for human. Similar to Agamben and Nancy, he does not propose a project to follow for emancipation. In that sense, he says that “it would be the last thing I can do to pledge to correct the humanity”<sup>115</sup>. Because it is nothing else than constructing a new set of idols (*put*). However, what is needed is to destroy all the idols. According to Nietzsche, those idols were the ideals (every period has its own set of idols). And their augmentation decreases the value of truth<sup>116</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 27.

<sup>114</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 28.

<sup>115</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 54-55.

<sup>116</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 55.

**Part III:**  
**‘Personalism’ as a Relational Investigation on Human**

## A) Introduction to Personalism

As a starting point, we have to indicate that there is no one single personalism that thinkers agree upon. We face not a single personalism but personalisms which are fed by different sources. However, in general, it is a philosophical and theological investigation stemming from the person; that is to say that the centrality is given to person rather than individual for philosophical thought. What interests us here is the stance of this eclectic thought to the notion of individual and “the significance, uniqueness and inviolability of the person as well as the person's essentially relational or communitarian dimension.”<sup>117</sup> The particular concepts utilized in Personalism are worthy to mention despite their essential centrality. The attempts of personalist thinkers are to locate person as “the ontological and epistemological starting point of philosophical reflection”<sup>118</sup> In that sense, the singular value of human is considered primary for them. Veli Urhan, the writer of *The personality of Human and God*,<sup>119</sup> who analyzes the corner stones of French Personalism, namely, N. Berdiaeff, E. Mounier, C. Renouvier M. Nédoncelle and their different works which gave shape the personalism throughout world in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The appearance of personalism, indeed, extends over the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Especially, Renouvier, who considered personalism as a protesting and resistance, has influenced two important resistant figures of Western thought and metaphysics, Proudhon and Nietzsche.<sup>120</sup> However, Renouvier’s personalism could not go beyond the individualization. According to Veli Urhan, it is Nédoncelle and Mounier who separated the notions of individual and person.<sup>121</sup> Urhan’s arguments under the light of those personalists constitute our starting point.

In this part, what we will focus is the very particular concepts of personalism which are alike with the ones of Singularity and Community that we held in the first part: one of them is the conscious that is used as the relational character of the person with the other. Relation, love, reciprocity, freedom are some of the basic notions we will go over in this part. The location of each of them in the relational plane of individual and singularity will be analyzed and the relations of concepts in each others as well.

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<sup>117</sup> Williams, T. D., <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism/>, 2009

<sup>118</sup> Williams, *ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> Urhan, V., *Giris, Insanin Ve Tanri'nin Kisiligi*, Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2002

<sup>120</sup> Urhan, *ibid.*, p. 11

<sup>121</sup> Urhan, *ibid.*, p. 11

Like the objections we raised in the first part against individual – society binary, Urhan cites from Mounier that a war has been waged in 19<sup>th</sup> century against “whole modern powers that led to the depersonalization of human in two different branches; the first one was a call for human, that has become dazed with the discovery and exploitation of the world, to the consciousness of the freedom by Kierkegaard; however, the second branch presented the deception which swept human very inside the social institutions that has been linked to corporal states and evoked human that destiny is not only in its heart but in his hand” by Marx.<sup>122</sup> Therefore, today, the resistance for Mounier has to be set upon their unity under the light of personalism.<sup>123</sup>

Personalism, according to Mounier, is not a derivation of individualism which has accepted an *I* in its own solitude in the universe. From this togetherness methodology of the personalism, it extracts as an individual, prisoner inside the cogito.<sup>124</sup> However, personalism, on the contrary, necessitates the *I* to go out of cogito in order to head towards to other beings. The fundamental attitude in personalism, for Urhan, is a communication among persons rather than a concern regarding self.<sup>125</sup> Therefore, individual and person go towards opposite directions. Personalism is thus against the sovereignty of the *monism* which imposes the supremacy of the general and abstract universal, both person and freedom cannot appear without pluralism.<sup>126</sup>

## **B) Indefinable person (singularity)**

Similar to singular, the person does not represent a frosty statement in personalism but rather is continuously in the course of creation; that is to say that the person is indefinable. The potentiality of the person reflects a singular multitude in its very historical development; thus, every person is a new world, even it is under a specific class, as Agamben mentions it does not reflect the characteristics of the set.<sup>127</sup> There is a particular critic to scientific approach

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<sup>122</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 13

<sup>123</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 13

<sup>124</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 55

<sup>125</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 55

<sup>126</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 75

<sup>127</sup> Agamben, Example in *The Coming Society*, part III, p. 1.

here, as well. “The anthropological sciences that are established on the basics of *objectivity* (italics belong to me, Y. A.) like biology, psychology, and sociology may introduce the person partially” Urhan says and continues that “however, the secret of human as a person does not seem possible to be illuminated by those sciences, because the personhood is a continuous creation and neither a repetition nor a replaceable action.”<sup>128</sup>

Another personalist, Berdiaeff indicates that personhood is an axiological category from birth to death; therefore, it is neither a combination of different pieces nor the sum of them but an original plenitude.<sup>129</sup> In that sense, person is neither an indivisible, nor an atomic entity; on the contrary, its significative qualification is freedom from natural deterministic understanding, from State, and from the society which are the grand pillars for arbitrary classifications.<sup>130</sup> Personhood is a thing to reach out of any analysis; otherwise it would be something measurable. However, it is the incommensurable character of the person making its freedom possible in its very particular locus. Due to this fact of the person, personhood remains indeterminate. The person as a being-with is not frosty existence but one in an action in the course of exposure. In that sense, freedom turns out to be the confirmation of the personhood as an experience.<sup>131</sup>

### **C) Relational Character of the Person**

The notion of other in Personalism does not constitute a particular opposition, but rather a collocation in which a relation takes place in an irreplaceable and in a singular manner. Only after then, the quality of the relation goes beyond the social locus and opens a new deeper locus for interpersonal communication.<sup>132</sup> That kind of relation renders the experiences of personality possible in a real sense without any constraints. It is an opening, exposure, or an inclination towards the other through interpersonal communication in which the persons share in an infinite manner; however, they do not lose anything from their own personhood<sup>133</sup>. The notion of sharing in the relation does not detract but propagates the singular qualifications of

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<sup>128</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 33

<sup>129</sup> Urhan cites from Berdiaeff, *ibid*, p. 33

<sup>130</sup> Urhan cites from Berdiaeff, *ibid*, p. 56

<sup>131</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 153

<sup>132</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 28

<sup>133</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 28

each person not always in a numerous sense but in quality.

Person and individual differ in terms of understanding of possession as in the case of singular and individual. The former has an upward mobility through exposure to the other beings, on the other hand, the latter one has a downwards attitude through closeness of the idea of the possession which leads the withdrawal of the individual towards his very inside.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, it appears that the decisive qualification of the individualization is the stinginess driven by the idea of having possession. It affects the direction of heading, in the case of individual, towards itself, rather than outside. This may bring us to the point to question about the rights of individuals which are inseparable from the possession. However, in the generosity, opposite of stinginess, there is priority of the other than itself.<sup>135</sup> Suchlike singularity, it is the reciprocal sharing that gives personhood a particular signification.

It is the point where the notion of love gets an upper hand against instinct in personalism.<sup>136</sup> As far as person or singular exposes itself to an exteriority from its limits, we may mention the inclinations of the notions of love and of generosity. Both of them necessitate the existence of, more than that, the primary position of the other. Thus, the primary direction signs the other in both of the theories; either singularity or personalism. For Urhan, both person and other are inseparable as completion, the presence of one person necessitates the other(s); it is a relation we are not able to find in the course of individualization.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, “since individualized human is in a position of receiving without giving or sharing,” says Urhan and continues that “there is no other or *you*; but there is (not even me) *mine*.”<sup>138</sup> According to Heidegger, limit does not sign a locus where the thing halts. Limit, as ancient Greek thought, is the locus where exposure of that thing starts. That is the place we find the roots of *Horismos* (horizon)<sup>139</sup>. Through such an approach to limit, the mainstream domination of (instrumental) reason is destroyed.

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<sup>134</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 56

<sup>135</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 60

<sup>136</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 60

<sup>137</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 61

<sup>138</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 62

<sup>139</sup> Chambers, *Göç, Kültür, Kimlik*, Ayrıntı Yay. Trans. İsmail Türkmen & Mehmet Beşikçi, İstanbul, 2005, p. 86



## D) Farewell to Cogito

To be person for Urhan, is a break to very distinction of spirit and body since Descartes. This segregation is an attribution of the object to the body; thus a negation of life. According to Mounier, there is no difference in the experiences of two different categories. Likewise, Heidegger uses the concept of *Dasein* in order to demonstrate human reality as he accepted as being-in-world.<sup>140</sup> This being-in-world reflects the being-together in Heidegger. For him, *Dasein* is a *I*; however, it does not stem from Descartes' *cogito* but from the very human reality<sup>141</sup>. Therefore, "while Heidegger's phenomenology breaks the dichotomy of subject-object that inherited from Cartesian tradition to modern epistemological theory," Urhan says and continues that "he liberates the *I*, that stand apart its world, from its solitude."<sup>142</sup> On the other hand, Heidegger attempts to break another pillar of Western thought through the notion of being-with. "'With', here" says Urhan "does not utter a reciprocal knowledge or a conflict (Hegel), but a kind of relation of ontological interdependence between *I* and the other for the contingency of the world."<sup>143</sup> In other words, we find the very confirmation of the togetherness through the concept of being-with (*Mitsein*) in Heidegger.<sup>144</sup>

What personalist thinkers try to do is to carry the reality we live into the philosophy; that is to say that it is an attempt of centralization of singular experience as an ontological problem rather an epistemological category. It does not contain a certainty or unfalsifiability analysis but to bring an appropriate conceptualization in the edge, in the limits of singularity. It is an attempt of ontologization of what is epistemologized so far in which all arbitrary binaries are taken to a single platform. Gabriel de Tarde, in the end of 19th century, raised his objections against Durkheim's understanding of sociology which was shaped more or less by positivism and organic understanding of the society which had an upper hand in that era. Recently, Tarde's understanding of sociology is revised by many scholars (Ironically, the meaning of 'tarde' in French is late)<sup>145</sup>. In his works, de Tarde charged Durkheim with shifting the distinction he made in methodology to ontology which is the distinction of society and

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<sup>140</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 46

<sup>141</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 46

<sup>142</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 46

<sup>143</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 46

<sup>144</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 46

<sup>145</sup> Baker, U., *Sosyoloji ve Monadoloji*, Önsöz, p. 7

individual<sup>146</sup>. According to him, reification and objectification of human being are the very premises of society-individual distinction<sup>147</sup>. On the other hand, he proposed another methodology and understanding for sociology in which the notions of change, difference, richness of persons within themselves are taken into considerations. Change and difference march through differentiation that affirms their absolute characters. “When we have a look at the world” Tarde says and adds that “rather than words, grammars, management mechanisms or law systems, we see richer agents and human beings in terms of continuous variations”<sup>148</sup>. The notion of change, which prevents to be located in certain categories, takes place into the hearts of human, the locus of love.

Personalism is a reflection of multiplicity of human beings like ‘duration’ in Bergson’s philosophy, as a singular experience of time because with a reduced notion of ‘time’, each experience is generalized and linearized that, indeed, have various significations for each singular beings. Therefore, it is an immeasurable category that reveals itself for example, in tiredness, fear and happiness and pain in which time moves differently. It is the duration of personal singularity. Aristotle in *Nichomachean Ethics* says that the existence of a single Goodness that provides a universally predicable of goods, it would never be attained by men; however, what we seek for is something attainable<sup>149</sup>. That argumentation clearly shows that there is a rare change in the way of seeking truth within the Western metaphysics. Moreover, what the notion of scientific revolution has contributed to this understanding was to disregard this variety of time in specific experiences; that is to say to minimize the differences, or variety of the Truth.

It is a situation in which the concept of change takes place in continuity that is affirmed by the changes. With the phrase of Personalist thinkers, it is a continuous re-creation. To accept the singularity in a broad level is the contemplation of change and continuity in personal life without distinctions and homogenization. In other words, it is the one within the other of the singular life. Each duration (*an*) in time is a unique period changing from person to person by constituting the meaning (*an-lam*) itself. Duration here is not a sequential line but a being together which reflects the enrichment of the presence. Singularity understanding and

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<sup>146</sup> Baker, *ibid*, p. 7

<sup>147</sup> De Tarde, Gabriel, *Monadoloji ve Sosyoloji*, Çev. Özcan Dogan, 1. basım, Öteki Yayınları, Ankara, 2004, p. 58

<sup>148</sup> De Tarde, *ibid*, p. 60

<sup>149</sup> Feyerabend, *Farewell to Reason*, Verso Publishing, London, 2003, p. 253

personalism breaks the logocentrism in that sense because it goes towards completion through an exposure outside itself; however, the starting point is not a lack; therefore, it is not a fulfillment. According to Deleuze, the very problem is the way of thinking itself through ‘plus’es and ‘minus’es within the settled values<sup>150</sup>. For example, he says that the idea of disorder stems from an acceptance of one particular idea of ‘order’ which prevents the discovery of many other possible orders<sup>151</sup>. In other words, thinking via plus-minus dichotomy is to disregard the basic differences of singular experiences. Simone de Beauvoir in *Pyrrhus and Cineas* says that

“According to Claudel, order is preferable compared to disorder. To choose order is more accurate rather than disorder because disorder is the negation of existence which gives the superiority of order against disorder. Moreover, order is convenient to will of God; that is why we ask for order. However, there is a point Claudel disregards: As Spinoza and Bergson indicates that what makes order an order is the glance of human, the way human sees it. Who may claim that Claudel’s order is convenient with the one of God? There are various orders: Bourgeoisie order, socialist order, democratic order, and fascist order. Moreover, each of them is disorder in the eye of their enemies. Each different groups claim the establishment of God’s order. Therefore, it is human rather than God that is claiming the order. Individualistic Protestant and Catholic churches may accuse me as I transform my inner voice to a godlike manner and they are right; that is to say that God is not outer but inside me.”<sup>152</sup>

Similarly, certain concepts are provided within the same logic in order to explain the phenomenon. In Kantian terms, “concepts generally define the entire conditions of possible experiences”<sup>153</sup> which is also negation of singularity of the experience.

Personalism, in that sense, constitutes a particular resistance to slavery of the solitude and to the objectivity stemming from modern thought. The person that is fed by exposure within togetherness and freedom stemming from this being-with head towards community, the objectivity is the death of the person<sup>154</sup> due to the atrophy of the very singular potentials and qualifications.

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<sup>150</sup> Deleuze, Bergsonism, p. 55

<sup>151</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 55

<sup>152</sup> De Beauvoir, *Pyrrhus and Cineas*, Cem Yayinevi, 1989, p. 50

<sup>153</sup> Deleuze, *ibid*, p. 62

<sup>154</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 73

## The Locus of God in Personalism

Personalism, as we have mentioned in the beginning of this part, is a philosophical and theological investigation stemming from the concept of person. The reality of human is located on an understanding of person. However, it is not only human who is ascribed a personhood but God as well. Urhan states that according to information we hold from monotheist religious sources; mainly, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, it is only God and human who carry the qualifications of personhood: conscious, relation, love, reciprocity, freedom.<sup>155</sup> Although human obtains the finitude versions of those qualifications, God possesses them in an eternal way.<sup>156</sup> All theist personalists share the idea that personhood of human stems from God, as a source. Those of their ideas stem from a verse which is present in the Bible that:

“Then God said,” let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”<sup>157</sup>

However, in Quran, this expression is given as *likeness* which says that “Surely the likeness of Isa (Jesus in Islam) is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was”<sup>158</sup>. Here, likeness is not ascribed to God but to humans. This Imago-Dei: « God created human in His own image » was interpreted with caliphness of human in Islamic thought; it is a representation of God in order to transform the universe under the light of justice. Hence, unlike Jewish sources which claimed the supremacy Jewish people or Christian thought claiming the salvation through baptize and communion, or humanism of western thought which exclude the rest of world, this Imago-Dei exist in each singular beings\*

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<sup>155</sup> Urhan, Sonuç, ibid, p. 189

<sup>156</sup> Urhan, Sonuç, ibid, p. 189

<sup>157</sup> Genesis, 1: 26-27, NIV, Bible

<sup>158</sup> Quran, 3: 59,

<http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/quran/003.qmt.html#003.059>

There is, however, a point we should not miss that it is not an ascription the very qualifications of human to God as in the case of anthropomorphism. Jean Luc Nancy, very well presents in *The Inoperative Community* that all divine names are missing. It is true only if each name is taken as a sole way to explain God. This idea may well be explained through Spinoza's thoughts of miracle. Italian autonomist Marxist Paolo Virno, in his article concerning virtuoso and revolution, gives place to Spinoza's thoughts of miracle. He claims that different than the universal laws of nature ascribed to God, miracles express a limited strength; that is to say that "miracle is obviously something humanely. It does not strengthen the faith but rather takes human towards atheism."<sup>159</sup> That constitutes the reason why in Islamic thought God is cleansed of any kind of thoughts. This principle is known as similitude within cleansing and vice versa.<sup>160</sup> Similarly, Urhan cites from Gobry that "when Platon, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, and Spencer talk about God as *Good, Pure Action, First, Universal Existence, Incentive, and Unknown*, they were totally right; however, the merely delusion they had was to reduce a limitless godlike richness to a single category."<sup>161</sup>

What is attempted to mention in personalism follows a path from God to human. Therefore, human possesses a godlike characteristic in his personhood.<sup>162</sup> What is high lightening here, according to Urhan, is the common point between God and human which renders the relation between them very possible.<sup>163</sup>

We had mentioned that person, unlike individual, consists of incommensurability. While individual stem from a naturalist category, a process of genetics, and is given birth by a couple, the person is exempt from this process, it does practically; however, for personalist thinkers, person comes from another world, from God.<sup>164</sup> It does not only come from God but goes towards God as well. The relational character of the person gains another meaning here. The realization of the relation between a person and the other is a path towards completion. It

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<sup>159</sup> Virno, P. "*Virtüölük ve Devrim: Çıkışın Politik Teorisi*" within İtalya'da Radikal Düşünce ve Kurucu Politika, Otonom Yayınları, p. 316, 2005.

\* Since we will go further this in third and fourth parts, we do not go into the details here.

<sup>160</sup> *Teşbihde tenzih, tenzihde teşbih*

<sup>161</sup> Urhan, ibid, p. 81

<sup>162</sup> Urhan, ibid, p. 190

<sup>163</sup> Urhan, ibid, p. 190

<sup>164</sup> Urhan, ibid, p. 62

\* As we will see the practices in the Early Islamic Practices in the last chapter.

is not to sublimate or melt in God, as a supreme entity. Each person keeps its personhood in any case. This completion is the realization of human reality for personalist thinkers. This reciprocity, through sharing of personhood, changes the very essence of human in human relations.\*

Moreover, the concept of freedom in personalism is not considered as a right (due its roots out of the notion of individuality and its ambiguity) to handle but the duty, responsibility, as an acceptance of the invitation of God. However, it does not constitute an obstacle for the freedom of human. The freedom of the person is the starting point for personalist thinkers through which human become responsible of its actions in front of God.

What constitutes the incommensurability of the person is the characteristic it carries in the name of God. The relation between God and person is constituted through the personhood that was given by God.<sup>165</sup> The notion of person and communication are related to each others in personalism; thereby, the personhood is defined as love in order to explain the reciprocal sincere togetherness between God and human. From that point of view, not only personhood but also love is ascribed to qualifications of God.<sup>166</sup> Likewise, Nancy analyzes the usage of the phrase: ‘My God’ in *of divine Place* in *The Inoperative Community*:

“‘My God’ says that it is I alone, each time, who can call on God. It is the voice of someone who is himself singular that can call upon and name that other singular being... We say ‘My God’ as we say ‘my friend’ or as we used to say ‘my Lord’. In each case, behind the apparent possessive there in fact lies what we ought to call an interpellative: you, here, now, are entering into a singular relationship with me.”<sup>167</sup>

Therefore, the usage of ‘My God’ constitutes the very presence or possibility of entering into a singular relationship with a singular God. Here, there is no identity ascribed to god as in the case of singular but the eternal potential. According to Nancy, it is “the very non-identification of the divine.”<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 83

<sup>166</sup> Urhan, *ibid*, p. 86

<sup>167</sup> Nancy, *Of Divine Place*, in *The Inoperative Community*, p. 117

<sup>168</sup> Nancy, *ibid*, p. 119

According to Urhan, godlike action elucidates itself in the personhood of human in a multitude qualification. Therefore, the persons all around the world becomes the reasons of each others without a hierarchical priority against a notion of other. The community they exist in cannot be exempt from the relations among them. There is reciprocity between community and relations of persons.

To sum up, personalism is a philosophical and theological investigation stemming from the concept of person as opposed to the notion of individual. Therefore, it is person that was located to the very heart of philosophical thought. The person is considered as a relational being with other persons, with nature and with its creator, God. It was an attempt to resist against enforcements brought by the process of individualization. The most significant qualifications of the person, for personalist thinkers were obliged to a removal, namely, freedom with responsibility, relational manner, communication and reciprocity. All those notions were prisoned into the solitude of individualization, as an arbitrary category imposed on human. The incommensurability of the person was turned out to be a classification in which every identity is determined and freedom of human is withdrew. It is also a resistance to determinism of the science and scientific applications in order to discover the reality of human. Similarly, relational character of the person is highly emphasized by personalist thinkers. It is an opening, exposure, or an inclination towards the other through interpersonal communication in which the persons share in an infinite manner; however, they do not lose anything from their own personhood. Therefore, it is sharing which multiplies the very essence of human in personalism. It constitutes a resistance to Cartesian subject, to *cogito* through Heidegger's words: being-with and being-together. This ontological interdependence creates a new web of relations. The path to reach truth and all primary determinations shift towards through Nancy's words: a being-in-common. On the other hand, from the very center of the relational character of person is also ascribed to God in personalism. It is the personhood of God which gives the one of human. According to personalist thinkers, it is that foundation which maintains a relation between God and human and among human.

## **Part IV: Freedom: Inseparable from Responsibility**



## A) Freedom in the Modern Politics

Geoff Mulgan, while analyzing the characteristics of modern politics, says that modern politics constitutes a scheme in order to judge the world which is mostly characterized by universal transformative ideologies<sup>169</sup>. They introduce ‘ought to’ as opposed to ‘is’, through carrying the universal values from philosophy to the arena of daily political life, such as freedom, equality, reason and life. Democracy is the most appreciated concept among those; for Mulgan, it is a mundane variation of Christian theology through which human beings took the status of ‘creator of its own being’.<sup>170</sup> However, “even though democracy continues to spread all over the world, those transformative ideologies seem to be indulged to grand economics system and they have suspects about the abilities of this creator of its own being...”<sup>171</sup>

The same human beings under the name of individuals in a society are highly encouraged to engage in the politics as s/he has a very central role on the daily issues. On the other hand, what is disregarded is the change in the definition and practice of the notion of politics that also changes the notion of freedom. Ulrich Beck in his unique analyses says that “political modernization renders the politics weaker, liberates it from old bounds and then politicizes the society.”<sup>172</sup> Mulgan also says that “the same politics, which was considered as a series of the ‘techniques of state administrations’ like the manifestations written by Lao Tsy or Machiavelli, has turned out to be dependent on the enlightenment philosophy. In that sense, it brought the grand stories of human progress which has taken the place of old religious stories about the salvation of human beings.”<sup>173</sup>

However it is Foucault who reminds us in the “*On the Genealogy of Ethics*” that the danger is not about “evil” but it was hidden inside the over-rational and inside the good wills.<sup>174</sup> Similarly Z. Baumann says that the rationality of the governed is the most powerful weapon of the governors<sup>175</sup>. What could not be rationalized was taken out of modernity in the modern

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<sup>169</sup> Mulgan, G., *Antipolitik Çağda Politika*, Ayrıntı Yayınları, trans. Abdullah Yılmaz, İstanbul p. 19

<sup>170</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 21

<sup>171</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 23

<sup>172</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 30

<sup>173</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 34

<sup>174</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 35

<sup>175</sup> Delaloğlu, Benjaminia : *Dil, Tarih ve Coğrafya*, Versus Yay. İstanbul, 2008, p. 181

politics. On the other hand, singular being does not constitute a rational entity whose attitude and behaviors are presupposed out of a particular identity because it does not enter under the umbrella of one single identity. The singular beings seek for truth through exposure towards other beings which is the statement of experiencing the other.

In the political philosophy, there have been many pieces about the very equality and human natural law (Lock, Rousseau, Montesquieu, etc.), which do not exist today. For Mulgan, this phenomenon can be explained with removal of religious culture from the agenda in the society. Recently people are not evaluated according to their relations with their religions and with God, but according to the sole relation among each others.<sup>176</sup> This new phenomenon is reverberated as progress in the history of human.

## **B) Freedom as a Category: Reduced to Choice**

According to Erich Fromm, “there is no freedom aside from a discrete concept” and he adds that “it is just the action of liberation in the course of choice”<sup>177</sup>. Beside, it is not a qualification human possesses or not. For him, to increase the range of choice is up to singular life experiences of each human being.<sup>178</sup>

Freedom can be attained, as Agamben mentions, without identities or models or idols. Every singular being within its qualifications, permutations and combinations create a notion of freedom through being-with other and being-in-common. The only model is the manner singular beings have themselves and exposure of them to the very *other* that constitutes an understanding of freedom along with responsibility. On the other hand, the notion of freedom in society is reduced to the notion of choice in which people miss the entire picture. As Nancy says, not to choose is declared out of category. Similarly, G. Bataille says that, although it is the most fundamental right not to imply any meaning, it is also this right which is trampled in the society<sup>179</sup>. For Vassaf, the ones rejecting to make a choice are threatened to be

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<sup>176</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 54

<sup>177</sup> Müftüoğlu, Ö, *Vahiy Kaynaklı Metinler Bağlamında Dinin Bağlayıcılığı ve İnsanın Özgürlüğü*, Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2006, p. 85

<sup>178</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 85

<sup>179</sup> *Illuminati, Temsil Edilemez Vatandaşlık*, within *İtalya’da Radikal Düşünce ve Kurucu Politika*, Otonom Yayınları, 2005, p. 350

forgotten<sup>180</sup>.

Through choices, the sovereignty of groups is built upon in the society; however, community is the place of not choosing. The action of choosing directly bounds human to consumer society as a repetitive movement until it turns out to be mechanical movement. Those choices prevent the experience of the process of the time. 'Choosing also consists of idea of possession' says Vassaf and takes us to the notion of Power. Therefore, it is to bring *I* pronoun in front of everything which is the phantasm of modern society. In the community, being-in-common does not need to choose or does not take a side, neither supporter nor opponent, through which the boundaries are broken up. In that sense, the other does not dwell in the other side and a singular does not melt in a supreme 'WE' as an exclusive term. The community does not force to choose the inseparable things out of which belonging to certain set of conditions emerge. Community is the place of meeting of differences. On the other hand, modern society is the place of separation in everyday life according to ages, sexes, incomes under the name and for the sake of 'order' in which different entities cannot come together. A young in a school, an elder in hospice never meet and never communicate<sup>181</sup>. Discrimination is everywhere in the society; even the very alternative groups constitute their own habitude and differentiate their life from others since they seek for liberation within the settled values. Therefore, each choice is to take one step more to totalitarian manner. People become part of what they choose; "even if the choice clashes with former choices" says Vassaf and continues that 'instead of changing the choice, people tend to change the past in order to keep up to new choice'<sup>182</sup>. With Adorno's approach to this issue, what is necessary is to have a distance to all movements,<sup>183</sup> ideologies and ideas which also automatically brings closeness to other singularities. It constitutes a non-belonging or just belonging to the notion of belonging itself. It is the only condition to get rid of dogmatism. Since the freedom is up to impenetrability of human being that kind of belonging brings the notion of 'uniqueness'.

### **C) The Notion of Freedom Islamic Community**

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<sup>180</sup> Vassaf, Cehenneme Ovgü, Gündelik Hayatta Totalitarizm, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999, p. 114

<sup>181</sup> Vassaf, ibid, p. 122

<sup>182</sup> Vassaf, ibid, p. 125

<sup>183</sup> Delaloğlu, ibid, p. 13

Islamic community, from the very beginning, emphasized and encouraged the significance of the relation with God and the other which are inseparable from the beginning. Therefore, it has never turned of its face from the very concrete phenomenon of the world, neither the one of God because from the beginning. Islamic thought does not support any arbitrary divisions like profane-sacred or religious-secular. Moreover, this community refused the very artificial distinction of religious and worldly affairs. The very consistent synthesis of life was taken place in the early Islamic community.

For example, the election of each caliph constituted a cornerstone in the community in terms of freedom of singulars. However to choose and pledge allegiance were not the only options. Not to accept was also a right for any singular in the community. For instance, Sad bin Ubade did not accept the Ebu Bekr's caliph and nobody forced him to accept. His difference not to choose and not pledging allegiance did not create a problem in the community<sup>184</sup>.

Besides, it is worthy to mention the freedom of God in that perspective. Despite the very fact that God is omnipotent, according to each religion, there is no obstacle for God for the realization of the things. Like human, it is clear that God is up to some particular regulations about himself. For example, God is considered as just and he never persecutes. On the contrary, mercifulness is the principle determining his attitude. There is no exception that he digresses out of the principles he determined for himself. According to O. Muftuoglu, there is nothing arbitrary in this situation. God demands the same attitude in each and every human relationship<sup>185</sup> which reflects the reciprocal attitude and interdependency between human and God. In Islamic community we observe the condemnation of logical flock.<sup>186</sup> Since it is a community consisting of singular beings, personal differences can not be suppressed for any reason. Any singular being is responsible in its own way of acting rather than obeying an entity; namely society.<sup>187</sup> It is an understanding of freedom that attempts to enlarge the range of movements through taking into consideration the personal environmental and cultural conditions.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam Tarihine Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ibrahim Arif Koytak & Veysel Uysal, Istanbul, 2003 p. 116

<sup>185</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 87

<sup>186</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 104

<sup>187</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 104

<sup>188</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 104

Nietzsche very well revealed to the western thought that while human is attempted to emancipate from slavery, it was transformed into a category in which human is identified as a competitor and alternative of God.<sup>189</sup> However, this relation in Islamic community is the realm of reciprocity rather than identification. Thus, each singular is merely at the presence of God, neither nearby nor against. This is a relation built upon the notion of love between two parties.<sup>190</sup>

The word ‘*Mevla*’ has a double reciprocal meaning in Arabic: ‘patronizer’ and ‘patronized’. Besides, there are other words that maintain this qualification in Arabic which reflects the reciprocity and interdependency in the community. The reciprocity is a notion going beyond the principle of equality. According to Hamidullah, it is one of the consequences of *tawhid* (oneness) community and fraternity and reciprocity and forgiveness<sup>191</sup>. This notion of reciprocity is applicable in every domain within which responsibility emerges regardless of qualifications of singulars. Like the personality understanding of personalist thinkers who mentioned that the personality of human stems from the personality of God, - as we have mentioned above that God is also up to his mercifulness rather than an absolute freedom in the practice - the reciprocity emerges from the responsibility of God on people, God asks for the same attitude from people in the community. He wants every body to be responsible to everybody for everything and for everybody.

If we restrict the notion of freedom in order clarify the issue and to obtain the capability to have a look from different perspective, Fromm says that freedom “is a part of structure of mature, totally developed, and producer personality. Therefore it is possible to describe free human as lover, producer and independent”<sup>192</sup>. This description negates the choice of two possible actions but shows the structure of personality.<sup>193</sup> Thus the person who does not have choice of evil must be considered as free human.

In the community, freedom cannot be thought without the notion of responsibility. The notion of responsibility within freedom is given to everyone in the community. The happiness of

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<sup>189</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 126

<sup>190</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 127

<sup>191</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam’da Devlet Idaresi*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Hamdi Aktaş, İstanbul, 2003, p. 78

<sup>192</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 127

<sup>193</sup> Müftüoğlu, *ibid*, p. 127

human is highly related to its responsibility.<sup>194</sup> Every birth in this community does not ascribe a particular ethical stance. It is the zero point. On the other hand, the responsibility is projected for the transformation of future rather than a recovery of the past<sup>195</sup>. Cobb and Griffin state that each situation is unique; therefore, future is radically open to transform. Future, from this perspective, is a creation by unique decisions of singular beings out of which they are responsible<sup>196</sup>. Each action held by a Muslim necessitates a responsibility from very reciprocal relations to the whole community. In everyday life, freedom is measured with the concrete possibilities for which a person may do or have power to do. However, such a power necessitates a closeness or integration into the event that will be realized. “In order to learn to swim” Virno says and adds that “it is necessary to jump into the water”<sup>197</sup>. In other words, it entails a relationship and a closeness which brings us to the notion of responsibility along with freedom. Freedom without responsibility is missing and a responsibility without freedom is considered unfair. It is not a coincidence that we find the verb of *response* in responsibility that reflects the reciprocal its character. In every exposure of a singular being; a response is met; from the time we are exposed to each other, we are responsible of each other. Like Dostoyevsky said in *Brothers Karamazov* that “all is responsible to all men for all men and for everything”.

Although the notion of freedom is minimized by the utopias (it is also relevant for many ideologies) we do not meet the maximization of responsibility in any utopia or ideology. One of the most significant elements of the responsibility is ‘sharing’ which was mostly underestimated in social theories. According to Mulgan, that is why the phenomenon of insurance has reached the crazy levels in modern societies<sup>198</sup> as a reflection of lack of responsibility and he adds that “it is not difficult to imagine a community that takes into consideration the notion of responsibility as serious as freedom and equality.”<sup>199</sup> In a society driven by the values of capitalism, there is only one relevant responsibility of companions which is between managers and share holders. Workers and consumers (customers) are kept outside the chain, whether they are pleased or disappointed are not taken into consideration in

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<sup>194</sup> Faruki, *Tevhid*, İnsan Yayınları, trans. Latif Demirci, İstanbul, 2006, p. 94

<sup>195</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 85

<sup>196</sup> Delaloğlu, *ibid*, p. 70

<sup>197</sup> Virno, “Virtüözlük ve Devrim: Çıkışın Politik Teorisi” within *İtalya’da Radikal Düşünce ve Kurucu Politika*, Otonom Yayınları, 2005, p. 146

<sup>198</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p.76

<sup>199</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 78

the existing situation.<sup>200</sup> Even the trade unions, that are supposed to protect workers' rights, are in a hurry of obtaining same particular legal immunities as opposed to workers.<sup>201</sup> "The less responsibility a human carriers, the less trouble s/he has" has become the motto of this society. On the other hand, in early Islamic community, responsibility was one of the most important pillars of the relational life and more importantly it was a reciprocal notion; that is to say that responsibility of a Muslim is neither less nor much than any other Muslim. It was something to share in Islamic community by every segment of the community from the caliph to the disabled old man, from commander to shoe maker. Mulgan claims that the idea of responsibility removes 'easy solutions' out of community<sup>202</sup> and brings comprehensive questions into the mind.<sup>203</sup> Beside, he adds that "none of the communities are able to keep the unity without the ideals of responsibility",<sup>204</sup>

The notion of responsibility also opens the way of multitude. If every experience is recognized as a singular event, every human constitutes a world that keeps the variety enormous. The only way to escape from generalization and categorization of the society is the notion of autonomy for people. That is to say that each group within the community receives their own responsibility. It was the only political act of Islamic community to provide autonomy to each particular group that distinguishes themselves different than Islamic community. In the ages, when humans were defined with their relations to God (religions), every community, group which displays their difference were given a unique autonomy. Because none of the groups can dictate their own truth to the others, all non-Muslims living under Islamic community had their own autonomy. It was how this community reflected the multitude. The aims of Islamic community is not to exclude any part of life within the autonomy of every singular being, it is sort of unity within the multitude. Not only singularities, but also the groups within the community benefited from the autonomy. Non Muslims under Islamic rule were given autonomy to run their own tradition and set of law with their own judges<sup>205</sup>. This reflects the multitude of law understanding and augmentation

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<sup>200</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 78

<sup>201</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 78

<sup>202</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 79

<sup>203</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 79

<sup>204</sup> Mulgan, *ibid*, p. 79

<sup>205</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam'a Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ibrahim Arif Koçtak & Veysel Uysal, İstanbul, 2003, p. 157-158

of differences through providing the certain autonomy because none of the human can be subject to a set of rules they do not feel any belonging.

Islamic community rose on personal responsibility which turns out to be the responsibility of the community. In that period, when a place was conquered, all residuals entered under the responsibility of Islamic community, and in return, certain amount of tax was received. According to Hamidullah, Having been conquered Humus (a city of Syria) Byzantium Emperor Heraclius send a army and Muslims had to leave the city, but before, they left back all the taxes they got from the city since residuals of the city stay out of responsibility<sup>206</sup>.

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<sup>206</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 267



**Part V: Integrism as an obstacle to Singularity vs. Islamic  
Practices**

## A) Integrism

The most challenging obstacle for the experience of multitude within singularity and thus in the community is the avoidance of multitude character of the singular experience, which is called in R. Garaudy's theory: Integrism. According to *The Grand Laurousse*, 'Integrism' is the statement of hardening and of ossification against all kinds of changes or developments in a religious activity. Briefly, it is to believe the very possibility of acquisition of absolute truth and imposition of it over the others. It consists of various kinds from Christian to Islamic, from Jewish to technocratic. All sorts of it constitute an enormous threat for the singularity.

According to Garaudy, there are two options in front of humanity; to communicate *within multiplicity* or to exterminate *the pluralism*.<sup>207</sup> The notions of dialogue and communication are the negation of Integrism.<sup>208</sup> On the other hand, the very feasibility and reality of dialogue and communication are highly questioned by many thinkers. Their unachievable character stems from the very existence of society, and of individuality. For Garaudy, the notion of dialogue cannot take place if the parties are hierarchically distinguished and both dialogue and communication turn out to be the instruments of domination.<sup>209</sup>

There are variety kinds of Integrism; one of the most significant schemes is the scientific domination, in the level of belief, in which technical reason and progress turned out to be the dogmas of this particular belief. It gave birth to the augmentation of engineers and industrialists with particular thinkers, who drew its theoretical framework such as Saint Simon and August Comte. They declared the rise of scientific age against the mythical world, the religions along with multitude.<sup>210</sup> In today's world, what lies beneath the very racial or ethnical discrimination is this Positivist understanding in the Sociological science which has imprisoned the history and the practices of the church to the darkness of Middle Ages.<sup>211</sup> The notion of distance is one of the key concepts for modern politics shaped by positivist understanding. Delaloglu gives place to Simmel who says that distance is the most important pillar of modern life style in the modern cities which is considered as an important form of socialization. It removes the concept of responsibility and relational character of the human.

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<sup>207</sup> Garaudy, Integrism, Kültürel İntihar, Pınar Yayınları, trans. Kamil Bilgin Çileçöp, 2005, p. 5

<sup>208</sup> Garaudy, ibid, p. 8

<sup>209</sup> Garaudy, ibid, p. 8

<sup>210</sup> Garaudy, ibid, p. 14

<sup>211</sup> Garaudy, ibid, p. 15

In that sense, Heidegger says that it reduces the being in a space as it is one out of everybody and also one out of anybody<sup>212</sup>. This is also the space of individual in the society.

Integrism does not recognize the concepts that concern singularity; communication, the other, exposure, etc. That is the reason why today the notion of multiculturalism is attempted to deal with in dark waters of this heritage under the names of orientation of immigrants in Germany or the attempts to create the 'Islam of France' by a commission out of Muslim experts and French bureaucrats, or the melting pot of USA. The parties they contact are the States of the origin of migration rather than people living there. The notion of multitude is lost by definition when the State is in the process.

Another significant kind of Integrism for Garaudy is the Real Socialism of Russia. Despite K. Marx's emphasis on the very human factor and rejections to the rules of jungle, the revolution took place in Russia in a way. Trotsky summarized the process of revolution in Russia as: "Party speaks in the name of class, then, organs in the name of party, directors in the name of organs and at the end, one person both thinks and speaks in the name of everybody".<sup>213</sup> Therefore, it turned out to be a political integrism than socialism through the pumping of 'socialist realism'.<sup>214</sup>

Garaudy also mentions the Catholic and Jewish kinds of Integrism along with Islamic one which has intertwined with world politics. The issue we will raise here is the domination of Saudi kingdom upon the Islamic communities. As it is well-known, appointments and consignments of *imams* are in the monopoly of Saudi Arabian Kingdom in the contemporary world. Despite the central role of the mosques in the Islamic community\*, what they brought is a new Saudi mentality, the continuation of the status quo beginning with 'the close of the doors *ictihad*' in the mosques. The expenses of the delight mosques in Geneva, Rome, and Madrid are met by Saudi Arabia. Neither needs nor demands of the community in those regions are taken into consideration since they are not the products of the community. That mentality does not touch upon the local cultures; they were put in a position to be isolated islands within the community thanks to the special attempts of Saudi Arabia. What gives spirit

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<sup>212</sup> Delaloğlu, *ibid*, p. 221

<sup>213</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 28

<sup>214</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 31

\*It is going to be mentioned in the last chapter

to a place whether a temple or house is the sharing of the singulars; however, in that case, each of them represent an abstract existences since they were constructed by an upper and foreign hand (outside the community) in order to keep the separation. In France, Italy and Spain, all the applications provided by the communities in order to build a modest mosque with their own possibilities are rejected. On the other hand, when it is under the sponsorship of the Saudi Arabia, acceptance of approval in a few days seems inevitable. It is a way to break the multitude and incommensurability of the community through co-operation of States. Moreover, in Africa, Saudi Kingdom handled a certain control through suppression of the local Islamic movements. What this mentality deals with is to count the head of people who converted to Islam with the help of subsidizes. In such an atmosphere, the local Muslim people have no room to realize their possibilities, Saudi Integrism ties all their means to communicate and share within and outside the community.<sup>215</sup>

## **B) Singular Being in Early Islamic Period**

Since singular being of the Islamic community is highly appreciated, there are certain ways to reach the multitude. In Islamic community, the notion of Sunnah signify the words and attitude of the Prophet, Muslims try to implicate them in their life. Although it seems paradoxical with understanding of singularity, they constitute an ethical stance/a care out of which all singular beings find their way. The universality of the message, according to Yildirim, necessitates the acknowledgment of difference, multitude and singularity<sup>216</sup>. We also see that understanding in Sunnah. It is possible to claim that there is not Sunnah but Sunnahs. For similar situations, the reaction of Prophet radically changes because the agent of the situation changes. People may understand an act differently since their point of view differs in the life. It is the multitude of Islamic community rather than a certain generalization and categorization. There are innumerable events reflecting the qualifications of early Islamic community. Hamidullah gives place to some particular events in his works:

Islam, by definition is to accept the sovereignty of God, and gives certain responsibilities to each believer within the balance of this world and other world. From the beginning, it is a universal invitation regardless of class, nation and language. Quran and Hadith constitute the

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<sup>215</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 77-79

<sup>216</sup> Yildirim, *Resul-i Ekrem Zamanınsa Sünnet*, Fark Yayınları, Malatya, 1994, p. 58

two important sources of Islamic law. In the practice, if there is no revelation for a certain issue, the Prophet used to take decision with consulting other members of the community. In worldly affairs, he used to take decision through consulting. Therefore, he did not leave 7/24 as a Prophet but also as one of others in the community<sup>217</sup>.

Although certain passages may seem contradictory in the very sources of Islam, here what we argue is that those contradictions exist due to the very emphasize on singularity of human beings. For example, according to a hadith, vanity is a way of attributing partner to God<sup>218</sup>, which is considered as the worst act in the Islamic community. On the other hand, another hadith says that God wants to see his felicity on human<sup>219</sup>. This hadith was documented when a rich person in the community appeared with a shabby manner. In that sense, it also shows that Islam did not bring the negation of life, but on the contrary, the affirmation of beauty while taking into consideration the singularity of each person.

The notion of equality in Islamic community shifted to the difference as an awareness of different qualities of singular beings which brought a relative way of life with different responsibilities and expectations<sup>220</sup>. Since the standardization of religion would break the multitude in the community, Prophet responded differently to very similar questions about belief, God and religion itself. Moreover, different ways of Quran reading were highly welcomed in the community (there were seven different ways of reading Quran which was decreased to one single reading by Caliph Osman because of serious clashes in different regions)<sup>221</sup>.

The notion of immunity was also made upside down in the community. It had stemmed from the divine legitimization, as the ruler was shadow of God on the earth. Besides, in modern politics, this right is legitimize through the notion of public. The person elected by people gets the immunity. The shift of sovereignty we explained in modern politics, from God to human, shifted also the rules of immunity. After human was constituted as a supreme authority, its vote turned out to be divine as well. However, in early Islamic practices, neither Caliph not other governors benefited from immunity. They went to the trials regardless of status and

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<sup>217</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam'a Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ibrahim Arif Koytak & Veysel Uysal, Istanbul, 2003, p. 33

<sup>218</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 65

<sup>219</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 66

<sup>220</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, 78

<sup>221</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 78-79

religion of the plaintiff.

According to Hamidullah, Islamic community also benefited from other religions and civilizations in terms of law, as far as they do not clash with the principles of Islam<sup>222</sup>. For example, tax law was transferred from Sassanid Empire in the Omer's era because their competitor, Byzantium's tax system was an enormous burden for people<sup>223</sup>.

After hijra, there were more than 500 hundreds Muslim immigrants<sup>224</sup> who were in need materially and spiritually. Prophet matched them as brothers and sisters with local people by taking into consideration their singular qualifications<sup>225</sup> and they shared their presences reciprocally. Besides, immediately after hijra, Prophet prepared a constitution in Medina as the foundation of the community<sup>226</sup>. What is significant in this document was the notion of sharing/helping in a reciprocal manner regardless of religion, color, or social status. Muslim immigrants and local people were matched to be brothers and sisters. For every situation, every single being were rendered, responsible through this document that was also the recognition of different religions and inclusion of other groups to the community (Jews are a community with Muslims)<sup>227</sup>. Moreover, one of the most important features of this document is to give autonomy to each group within the community. It was an age people were defined according to their religion; therefore, each religion acquired and absolute autonomy.

The motivation of the constitution was to protect the city from any foreign attack and construct one entire defense of different groups. However, it gave birth to a singular community in which each group holds their independence. According to Hamidullah, it is the first multiplicity constitution<sup>228</sup>. The avoidance of interference was prescribed, and issues concerning each group were going to be held by the very members of it. After, it may turn out to be the product of the community for which people feel belonging not to the product, but belonging itself. Therefore, "multitude within singularity" says Hamidullah and continues that

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<sup>222</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 183

<sup>223</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 184

<sup>224</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam Tarihine Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ibrahim Arif Koytak & Veysel Uysal, Istanbul, 2003, p. 74

<sup>225</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 76

<sup>226</sup> Hamidullah, *Allah'ın Elçisi Hz. Muhammed*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ihsan Süreyya Sırma, Istanbul, 2003, p. 101-103

<sup>227</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 228

<sup>228</sup> Hamidullah, *İlk İslam Devleti*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ihsan Süreyya Sırma, Istanbul, 2003., p. 64

“became a tradition rather than an exception<sup>229</sup>. It formed a unity in which melting of singularities is not allowed; through assemblies of *istişare* (consulting), participation to the issues concerning community was maintained. In order to avoid any sort of abuses, servers (governors) of each region were encouraged to go to Mecca for Hajj during which Caliphs had opportunity to listen to both servers and local people<sup>230</sup>.

Being singular is to differentiate people within the same conditions. In early practices, when the community was in need of urgent money, one of the friends of the Prophet brought a certain amount of money. When Prophet asked what he left at home, he answered that he left ‘only the love of Prophet’. However, a few days later, when Prophet visited a dying old man who asked to leave his property to people in need, he saw the rejection of Prophet because of the needs of his own family. After the insistence of the old man, Prophet accepted one third of it and said that it was already too much<sup>231</sup>. In those examples, Prophet is acting differently to two different persons by taking into consideration their singular situations. It shows that for the sake of community, no singular being is left in misery. After the war against Havazins, the properties were shared in the army but the prophet gave back his share after their inclusion to the community and is followed by some other friends in this attitude. There were also some Muslims who did not agree with behavior and wanted to keep their share since it was their right. For those people, prophet paid from *Beyt’ul Mal*. Therefore, any idea differed in the community is not neglected under the motto of ‘rule of majority’, even if the idea was taken Prophet himself<sup>232</sup>. Finally, Islamic community is run not according to equality, but according to singularity.

### C) Omer’s Period: Completeness of Community

It is wrong to claim applicability of rules in Islamic law in every time and space since there are in the realm of *Ictihad*<sup>233</sup>. In early Islamic practices, Quran was interpreted according to reasons of each *sure* with applicability of Quran's manner. This explanation regarding the

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<sup>229</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 84

<sup>230</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 85

<sup>231</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam’a Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ibrahim Arif Koytak & Veysel Uysal, Istanbul, 2003, p. 191-192

<sup>232</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 121-122

<sup>233</sup> Jansen, *Kur’an’a Yaklaşımlar*, Fecr Yayınevi, trans. Halilrahman Açar, Ankara, 1999, p. 19

interpretation of Islamic sources in a way summarizes Caliph Omer's era.

Caliph Omer was one of the most important figures of this early Islamic period. He has changed some particular implications of Prophets despite their very existence in Quran since he gave importance to the principles and meanings.<sup>234</sup> One of the first thing he changed was the distribution of *Zekat*; although one of the shares (there are eight shares to distribute *zekat* in Quran) which was primarily given to the ones whose «hearts will be won»<sup>235</sup> is declared invalid by Omer because of the changes in conjuncture in Islamic community. Having enlarged Islamic community had started to share and taste the coexistence of differences.<sup>236</sup>

With a similar critical thinking, he did not give the share of booty (*ganimet*) to the soldiers in the army when they conquered Syria; otherwise, the soldiers who may have obtained rich Syrian lands were going to cause an economic polarization within Islamic community which is against the principles of the Islam.

#### **a. Anti-Heroism in the Community**

According to G. Vassaf, human beings can be singular without heroes but with heroes they constitute a group with only a capability of concord. He states that “Human being can live as a singular; however, human can only survive as a group”<sup>237</sup>. Humans with their potentials are whatever they are but heroes are whatever humans are not<sup>238</sup>. Vassaf resembles heroes to military uniforms and the other of group attempt to look like them; read what they read, eat what they eat. Therefore, he says that “all heroes are totalitarian”<sup>239</sup> avoiding the potential any singular being has. Vassaf quotes from an American socialist leader: “I can put you inside the doors of socialism; however, another person can easily take you out of that door”<sup>240</sup>. Therefore, society cannot exist without heroes but community cannot exist with heroes.

The mechanism of heroism contains of vanity which is considered for both the Prophet

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<sup>234</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 97

<sup>235</sup> Quran, 9: 62, Unal, A., *Kur'an-I Kerim Meali*, Define Yayınları, Izmir, 2006

<sup>236</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 97

<sup>237</sup> Vassaf, *Cehenneme Ovgü*, *Gündelik Hayatta Totalitarizm*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999, p. 80

<sup>238</sup> Vassaf, *ibid*, p. 81

<sup>239</sup> Vassaf, *ibid*, p. 84

<sup>240</sup> Vassaf, *ibid*, p. 85



Mohammed and famous Islamic thinker Gazali as attributing a partnership to God. Every single Muslim in the community is responsible of transforming the universe. This transformation cannot take place in the name of heroes, leaders, or saints but only God<sup>241</sup>. Therefore, it is only the sovereignty of God which is represented in the community. It is a transformation to realize as a being-together; any kind of actions is praised when they are shared in the community because only after it becomes the product of the community.

Omer in his reign dismissed Halid bin Velid, the most important commander of the era, named as 'sword of God'. The outward reason was his over-spending in the army; then, Omer sent an information document to all cities about this issue in which he says that 'I did not dismiss Halid because of his behaviors or of my own displeasure about him but due to his status among people<sup>242</sup>. His role in the army as a leader was overemphasized. In other words, the consequences of community's general attitude were ascribed to him alone. This decision was taken to show that community cannot depend on a leader<sup>243</sup>. It is a sign that community cannot gather around a leader, *tawhid* community attempts to give just right to each singulars rather than highlighting of heroes. Besides, Omer tried not to cover his acts with the mask of political interest, the reasons of every single decision were declared to people, as a manner of exposure.

### **b. Importance of Singularity in Omer's Era**

Before we start to analyze Omer's period as an example of community, it is beneficial to remind not to fall into the fallacy of anachronism whether it was an autocracy or republic discussions. It was a singular experience in unique conditions in the past. However, if it is necessary to make a comparison, it is possible to claim the tendency that both politics and its control were highly shared among all members of the community in this era.

Although the singular beings of today's world resist against the power of States, it may seem as a paradox to examine an era in which the institutionalization of the State is realized. However, as we mentioned before, the role of the State cannot go beyond an instrument in this

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<sup>241</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 88

<sup>242</sup> Şibli, Hz. Omer, *Timaş Yayınları*, trans. Ahmet Karataş, Istanbul, 2004, p. 175

<sup>243</sup> Şibli, *ibid*, p. 174-177

community rather than a result or aim of the community. For example, in the election of Ebu Bekr as a caliph, Omer says that “nobody should deceive that Ebu Bekr's election was presented with a *fait accompli*; however, obeisance (*biat*) occurred in that manner. God protected us from the wickedness of this obeisance”<sup>244</sup>. It clearly shows that any act without the consent of each singular being is considered as an act of cruelty, an act to be punished in return in the community. However, that does not mean to take every obeisance from people. There is an option of not to choose in the community.

Another action of Omer for the community was to gather a parliament of *shura* from the different groups of the community. Although its name is parliament, the functioning is far away from the understanding of liberal parliamentarism. Before the meetings, people are called to *namaz* and immediately after the issues are held with people willing to discuss<sup>245</sup>. Omer started each session through recalling that “I invite you to share the custody you gave to me... because I do not want to render you as a subject to my own desire”<sup>246</sup>. It was through deep discussions and communication; the decisions were taken from grand policies to every single detail with initiatives of singular beings. Moreover, governors of the cities were elected by their own residuals rather than a typical appointment by a central authority<sup>247</sup> and every single complaint about them were immediately listened in order to find a fair solution. Omer is well-known with his never-ending changes of governors because of the single evidence showing that they isolate themselves from the community or that they abuse the power financially or politically.

Although Omer is well-known with his strict stance, community did not face with domination in his era since the responsibility of every single person was above Omer's mission as a caliph. For instance, when Omer heard that many Muslims married with non-Muslims, he received his displeasure to those people, one of them, Huzeyfe in Yeman in return asked that 'Is it your opinion or Islamic law?' After he learnt that it was Omer's personal statement, Huzeyfe said that 'We do not see any reason to act with your personal ideas'<sup>248</sup>.

One of the most significant performances of Omer for the community was to open the doors

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<sup>244</sup> Şibli, *ibid*, p. 232

<sup>245</sup> Hamidullah, *İslam'da Devlet İdaresi*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Hamdi Aktaş, İstanbul, 2003., p. 233

<sup>246</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 234

<sup>247</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 235

<sup>248</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 395

of *ictihad* and so was *fikh* (Islamic law). Having changed the conditions, Omer differed from his own Prophet in terms of certain implications which reveals the importance of Islamic principles giving way to embodiment of multitude. Rather than certain categories, he preferred to evaluate every single event within its unique conditions. Hamidullah gives one of the examples revealing the importance Omer gave to *ictihad*: Omer and his friends break their fast since they thought that sunset occurred but then sun emerged, while people around him was going anxious, his response summarizes his contribution to multitude of Islam “Issue is simple, we made *ictihad*”<sup>249</sup>.

There are many other events reflecting the multitude in Omer’s era. In order to sum up, Şibli says that Omer, on the one hand, send armies to Iran, Iraq, Syria, negotiated with envies of Iran and of Byzantine, invites his well-known commanders to Medina in order to interrogate the complains about them. On the other hand, he was wearing old clothes; he was carrying water for old women and food to needy people's houses and stays in the mosque in order to listen to other people<sup>250</sup>.

#### **D) Islamic Institutions within Islamic Culture in Early Period**

Having examined Omer’s period in early Islamic practices, the institutions, settled mostly in Omer’s period, are worthy to mention in order to clarify the singularity understanding of Islam. The practices in Islamic community in early period differ from modern politics in terms of the understanding of institutions. In the roots of (Western) modern politics, the affairs of State were tended to be separated from the ones of religious (secularism) since Roman Empire. This gap has evolved and led to a grand fracture in Western politics. However, in the Islamic community, caliph was, at the same time, commander of the army, political chief (server) and also *Imam* in the mosque<sup>251</sup>. Caliphs were making their speeches for political or religious issues in the mosques. Therefore, in early period, mosques had both political religious roles in the community. Although praying is considered to be in the realm of spiritual, it has also function to come together of community<sup>252</sup>. It is the removal of notion of

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<sup>249</sup> Şibli, *ibid*, p. 421

<sup>250</sup> Şibli, *ibid*, p. 449-450

<sup>251</sup> Hamidullah, ., *İslam Müesseselerine Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ihsan Süreyya Sırma, İstanbul, 2003, p. 24

<sup>252</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 24

distance upon which according to G. Simmel, modern society was built. This closeness also led to diminishing role of social status. Omer, before died, said that “if Ebu Huzeyfe's slave, who was called Salim, was alive, he would like to propose him as a caliph for the community”<sup>253</sup>.

#### **a. Hajj as a place of sharing**

Each singular being is reflected as Kaaba in M. Ikbal’s poems in order to signify the central role of human as a singular. Acknowledgment of truth prevents to turn around other things in the world. The ceremony of turning around Kaaba is considered as an acceptance of God’s sovereignty. On the other hand, the experience of Hajj also breaks the notion of motherland and nation as an exit from nationalism in the community. It praises the gathering of differences in which they expose themselves to each others<sup>254</sup>. Hajj is one of most important *ibadet* in Islam. It necessitates wearing a simple and modest white clothe in order to withdraw difference of statuses. (Therefore, a King and a slave can come together and pray shoulder to shoulder). Removal from social statuses is the stance of Islamic community because slavery was the driving mechanism of that time. It was a father to son period in terms of social status but the practice of Hajj was a way to break to that understanding. That white clothe has a significant role that recalls the finitude of human being and of the community. Another function of wearing it is to increase the awareness of Islamic community as one single unity.

#### **b. General assembly**

Although it is known as the supremacy of Caliph in that era, the assembly was the place of discussing the decisions regarding community in which everyone had an equal right to speak, from elder to young and from women to men. For example, in Omers era, people had difficulty to get married because of high demand of property by the parents for their daughters. Omer wanted to fix that money to a certain amount. However, an old woman resisted Omer and explained her stance in the assembly, Omer immediately after halted the discussion thanks to contribution of that woman<sup>255</sup>.

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<sup>253</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 116

<sup>254</sup> Albayrak, Muhammed Ikbal Sözlüğü, Lamure Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005., p. 116

<sup>255</sup> Hamidullah, *İslam’ın Doğuşu*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Murat Çiftkaya, İstanbul, 2003., p. 116-119

### c. *Icma*

Another significant institution of the early Islamic community was *Icma* (consensus) revealing the importance of community. According to a hadith, although singular Muslims may take wrong decision, community does not unify in the wrong decision<sup>256</sup>. Similarly, what is considered good within the community through *Icma*, is also considered good by God is another hadith<sup>257</sup> signifying the role and importance of *Icma*. It is to take decision according to circumstances and conditions of time and space. However, it does not reign as a universal norm but can be replaced with another *Icma* of different time and space.

### d. Mosque and Importance of Communication

The mosque in the Islamic community had a much more different role than today. Similar to practice of Hajj, it was the heart of the community in which people come together eluding from their social roles. Mosque has a significant role in terms of communication and sharing in the community. It is the place where all the decisions are taken concerning community with participation of all members of the community.

### e. Ecoles

In time, different écoles emerged and developed within Islam because of the necessities and growing population of the community. Ebu Hanife tried to unify the set of rules stemming from Quran, Hadiths, and his own reasoning while Imam Malik attempted to develop it from traditions of people of Medina (the way of life stemming from Prophet's friends). Imam Malik, despite the demand coming from Caliph of that time to write a general law, rejected this idea not because of his disability but his consideration of the fact that such a situation would give birth to the imposition of one person ideas on community<sup>258</sup>. Although the founders of big Islamic écoles did not claim the universality of their set of rules, as there were beyond time and space. After them, the doors of *icdihad* were closed according to people who hold the power upon the community. One of the important Islamic law makers Pezdevi says that not only a personal statement, but even a previous *icma* (consensus) can be replaced by

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<sup>256</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam'da Devlet Idaresi*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Hamdi Aktaş, Istanbul, 2003, p. 36

<sup>257</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 36

<sup>258</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 116

another *icma*<sup>259</sup>.

The Imams of big sects of Islam continued Omer's manner in terms of singularity in their unique interpretations that were describing the ways in a completely different geographical, cultural, economic code.<sup>260</sup> When people observed and reflected their disappointments and disagreements to Imam *Shafi* whose education distinguished after he moved to Egypt from Iran; he just responded that "education is same but here, the conditions are different".<sup>261</sup> Therefore faith in Islamic community goes beyond the formalism and fetishism of ceremony.

Indeed, every singular Muslim is given potential for their own *ictihad* which may differ from region to region and from person to person. Therefore, there is no single truth but truths in the Islamic community. No one can claim that it is false as far as the decision does not go beyond the limits or principles determined by *Sha'ria*. There are different sects in Islamic world whose implications both differ and feed each other<sup>262</sup>. In early practices, *Ictihad* differences were not rejected. However, nowadays, in Sunni world, their number felt to four sects headed by Ebu Hanife, Imam Malik, Imam Shafii, and Imam Ahmet Bin Hanbel<sup>263</sup>. There was a chain of studentship in those écoles and not surprisingly, students felt free to change the implications of their successors in regard to changing conditions (what Omer did for implication of Prophet). Ecoles, even if they differ in certain ways, their roots do not change, the rest is considered only as the differences of *ictihad* in the community. In Hanife's Ecole, Ebu Hanife formed a student assembly; forty students from different disciplines discussed the issues raised by Ebu Hanife. According to Hamidullah, those discussions were sometimes taking forty days for a conclusion. It continued after the death of Ebu Hanife. Indeed, only 15% of what we know today about Hanefi Sect belongs to Ebu Hanefi. The rest was constituted by his students<sup>264</sup>.

According to Serhandi (Imam Rabbani), the corner stone of Islamic division, clash between Ali and Muaviye was also a matter of *ictihad* difference<sup>265</sup>. Ebu Yusuf, who was the student of

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<sup>259</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 118

<sup>260</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 98

<sup>261</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 98

<sup>262</sup> Serhandi, *Eshab-I Kiram*, Işık Kitabevi, trans. Hüseyin Hilmi Işık, Istanbul, 1980., p. 28

<sup>263</sup> Serhandi, *ibid*, p. 33

<sup>264</sup> Hamidullah, *İslam'ın Doğuşu*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Murat Çiftkaya, Istanbul, 2003., p. 126

<sup>265</sup> Serhandi, *ibid*, p. 41

Ebu Hanife and Ebu Servin, student of Imam Shafii, in many ways constituted their own *ictihad* against their successors<sup>266</sup>. Thus, differences rather than an obstacle were considered as richness, as a multitude.

#### **f. Autonomy**

According to Virno, the concept of autonomy refers to a movement with uniqueness, richness of differences and a rupture from the understanding of representation through formalist politics with its various mechanisms<sup>267</sup>. From many perspectives, the concept of autonomy recalls the singularity through preventing the domination of one particular class, group, or qualification over the rest. Early Islamic practices constitutes a unique situation; according to Hamidullah, that structure may best be understood as a con-federal structure through responsibility of each group reciprocal consensus, *shura*, and participation of everybody to policies regardless of differences. When there is no consensus in any idea in the community, opponents were not dominated but their demands were met as much as possible. After a war, people who did not want to release what they had were paid in exchange by the treasure of the community. It reflects the heterogeneous characteristic of the community and the autonomy given in singular level.

Moreover, that term was also applied to the groups within the community. All religious groups within the community are declared as an independent entity in terms of material conditions and juridical works with certain authorizations<sup>268</sup>.

#### **g. Calligraphy (*Hat*): Singularity Emphasized Islamic Art**

One of the foremost art works of Islamic community is, as it is well-known, the Calligraphy (*hat*). According to Naci Zeynuddin, « there are five basic features of this art:

- i. *Tevfiye*: Each and every letter within the word is written through

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<sup>266</sup> Serhandi, *ibid*, p. 42

<sup>267</sup> Virno, *ibid*, p. 41

<sup>268</sup> Hamidullah, ., Allah'ın Elçisi Hz. Muhammed, *Beyan Yayınları*, trans. Ihsan Süreyya Sırma, Istanbul, 2003, p. 179

maintaining the balance; that is to say that each of them is neither over-emphasized nor ignored. It is to remunerate each singular letter. (Here, each letter reflects a singularity and how it is given importance in the community.)

- ii. *Itmam*: It is to locate each letter in the exact place according to its strength it deserves.
- iii. *Ikmal*: It is to give a unique visual personality to each letter; right, straight, inclined, decumbent, etc.
- iv. *Isba*: It is to place each letter according to its acoustic qualification.
- v. *Irsal*: It is to extend the letters without scrambling the reading or the very nature of the word. (This extension can be considered as the exposure of each singular being towards exteriority in Nancy's Inoperative Community).<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Faruki, *ibid*, p. 223-224



## **Part VI: Islamic Community shaped by Tawhid**

## A) Qualifications of Islamic community

According to Garaudy, this community, first time in the history, made a spiritual revolution. In a short time period it reached the very heart of big civilizations (Iran and Byzantine) with a warm welcoming to all cultures and to all existed prophets of all beliefs and all men of faith.<sup>270</sup> For him, there are a few significant features constituting the early Islamic period:

- a) Universal dimension: Any principles in the community were not restricted with any tradition of Middle East or Arabs. In general what was emphasized were the differences; exposition of Muslims to each others in order to get rid of self closure of the community.
- b) Love dimension: against all formalism and fetishism of ceremony, the importance of love was highlighted. However, it is not a denial of particular *ibadets* which are the musts of the Islamic community. Each *namaz* is a singular experience, a way to enter in a relation with God, each *zekat* is an exposure and possibility of coexistence with others in the community, each pilgrimage is a singular practice to be with all *ummet* (Islamic community), each fasten is a chance to get closer to God and community with Quran.<sup>271</sup> On the other hand, they are merely the instruments to reach the main aim.
- c) Social dimension: it is the prevention of political economic polarization of the community which was rendered possible through *ibadets*.
- d) Critical dimension: it is the existence of critical reasoning in the community such as the reasoning of caliph Omer which has a particular name in Islamic tradition: *ictihad*<sup>272</sup>.

This community is a call for every singular being to response the invitation of God without any mediator.<sup>273</sup> Only after them all social, political and economic reasoning can be constituted depending on the morality stemming from the very heart of the community.

## B) *Tawhid*: the Driving Force of the Community

What Islam brought was a new community in which a new set of relations emerge for every

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<sup>270</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 101

<sup>271</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 103

<sup>272</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 104

<sup>273</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 104

human being. The very initial but the trickiest step to penetrate into this community is called *tawhid* which signifies the very singularity, oneness and uniqueness of God. Since, in Islam, God defines human as his caliph, every human being takes his own singular share from the adjectives of God in order to transform and to bring justice to the world. Islam can be summarized as relations between human and God, and among humans themselves. What *tawhid* necessitates is the recognition of God as one without ascribing another partner to him.<sup>274</sup> This uniqueness in the community does not only belong to God but also to human beings as well. Every human is a singular entity under the *tawhid* belief. Therefore, what Islam brought was to put God in the center of singularity understanding and of authority.<sup>275</sup> It is a very tricky issue within Islamic culture since what is extent of going out of *tawhid* is very difficult to determine. For God, this extent determines the value of its singular being rather than his/her social, political, economical statues. According to Faruki, what highlights each Muslim in the Islamic community is the understanding that the human is the caliph (*vekil*) of God in the universe. It is applicable for each singular being regardless of differences.<sup>276</sup> This notion brings the issue of responsibility to consider within freedom.

Another cornerstone of Islamic community is its universality as a part of *tawhid*,<sup>277</sup> there is neither geographical boundary nor race/blood, class/nation relation in the community. As Elias Canetti reveals in his unique work, *Mass and Power*; it is a community which is never fed up<sup>278</sup>. The pillar of Islamic community is *tawhid* which is established on justice and happy life. Every singular Muslim in this community is supposed to act by taking this into consideration that she/he will be judged in front of God; which is another important column of *tawhid*.<sup>279</sup> This belief keeps community to act justly within the limits of responsibility among themselves and also out of the community. Finally, it is another reciprocal mechanism: the mercifulness of God contained under *tawhid* which makes the members of community to show mercifulness to each others.

In the *tawhid* community, sovereignty is ascribed to God. In Islam, property cannot be thought differently than sovereignty. Most of the times, those terms are used alternately. In

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<sup>274</sup> Baltaş, M. A., *İlk Mesajlar*, Araştırma Yayınları, Ankara, 2007, p. 12

<sup>275</sup> Baltaş, ibid, p. 13

<sup>276</sup> Faruki, I, R., *Tawhid*, İnsan Yayınları, 2006, trans. Latif Demirci, p. 9

<sup>277</sup> Baltaş, ibid, p. 15

<sup>278</sup> Canetti, Elias, *Kitle ve İktidar*, Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2006, p. 42

<sup>279</sup> Baltaş, ibid, p. 18

this community; God has no partner in property. Therefore, each Muslim regulates his/her own relation with pro(s)erty accordingly. The oneness of God in *tawhid*; therefore; finds its reflection both in community and upon every singular being.<sup>280</sup>

*Tawhid* is one of the biggest pillars of Iqbal's philosophy. A singular can maintain his completeness to that oneness and uniqueness. He resembles the life to a trade cortege (*kafila*) in which a singular goes all together but different than all the others<sup>281</sup>. This approach is the togetherness of being inside and outside that is a threshold. It is to cover all existing beliefs and knowledge but to reside outside of all of them at the same time, only after then, people who fell into the heart of modern life built upon separations, can maintain the contiguity.

When we talk about Islamic community and *tawhid*, it is inevitable not to mention the *ibadets* that constitutes the big part of Islamic culture (it has a broader meaning than the 'worship' in English). *Ibadet* in most broad sense means to accept the authority of God; rather than particular forms of worshipping.<sup>282</sup> Other than God, it necessitates to struggle against the supremacy of every nation, class or groups. *Ibadet* covers every single act in a Muslim's life that also necessitates the guidance/sharing with others as well as with God.

In this community, those principles create an exit from the very binary oppositions. There are no oppositional binaries like « religious-secular », « divine-profane », « church-state ». Therefore, like the oneness of God (*tawhid*), human beings are not categorized or separated according to very arbitrary classifications. In that sense, Iqbal also considers the separation of body and spirit as the hiding of the truth of western metaphysics out of which secularism was born. Oneness is inseparable for Iqbal, it is *tawhid* belief that oneness and uniqueness of human is reflected. For him, although Oneness constitutes the truth, multitude is the contemplation of it. He establishes that relation between singularity and multitude as an inseparable entity.

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<sup>280</sup> Baltaşı, *ibid*, p. 19

<sup>281</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 193

<sup>282</sup> Baltaşı, *ibid*, p. 20

### C) Reciprocal Community

Faruki mentions that this community (*pax islamica*)<sup>283</sup> consists of multitude, in an age people were evaluated according to their religious stance. To be in this community did never necessitate the conversion to Islam. In today's world, it is the rationality of human beings that determines the boundaries of its habitude mostly. What is necessitated was the free accumulation of ideas in which each human enters in a relation with others.<sup>284</sup> The actions of each singular should be by its free will, the contrary is against the very principles of the community. Therefore, if it is appropriate to use the notion of healing instead of transformation of the universe (it is not the healing of another human being, otherwise it turns out to be the hierarchical relationship driven by domination) as Ferhat Kentel's unique analysis “in order to be healed, we should think about healing as well”<sup>285</sup>. This indivisible relation between transforming and being transformed takes each singular towards completion.

Contrary to well-known ideas about Islam as a negation of life, what is proposed here is not a negation of life, on the contrary, the principle is to better off the life, to enter in a relation without cheating, lying, stealing, exploiting, and prosecuting either human or nature.<sup>286</sup> The elements of moral values are the products of human relations in the community where relation itself gets an upper hand. It is confirmed by a *hadith* of Prophet that “religion is an issue to be in relation with others”.<sup>287</sup>

As we mentioned before, non-Muslims are also included within the community and their social security (in today's terms) are met by *Beyt'ul Mal*, non-Muslims in need are exempt from taxes. Moreover, the needs of those people were under the guarantee and responsibility of community from the beginning. The development of the notion of responsibility prevented the interference of any party to the autonomy of single groups; however, we see some implications which seem contradictory to this understanding like the ban of wearing clothes resembling the ones of Muslims. According to Hamidullah, it is an implication in order to maintain the continuity of their communitarian spirit. Due to the fact that the ruling motive was Islam, tendency towards Islamic way of life was considered as a privilege; therefore, this

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<sup>283</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 19

<sup>284</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 19

<sup>285</sup> <http://www.taraf.com.tr/ferhat-kentel/makale-ayni-anda-iyilesmek-ve-hasta-olmak-4.htm>

<sup>286</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 98

<sup>287</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 128

ban, for him, was for the contiguity of the differences within the community in the early Islamic practices<sup>288</sup>.

This community can be reduced neither to the qualifications of one certain race nor to a sole relation between God and human. Being beyond those categories, the relational characteristics prevailed within the community in which the exposure takes place. The commitment of salvation was not devoted to a certain class in the community. It also does not ascribe a burden like ‘original sin’ to human being, there is not an expectation of sacrifice of potential qualifications which brings a passive attitude for human. On the contrary, human being is responsible to transform the future<sup>289</sup>. The differences of colors, of languages and of cultures constitute the way to realize the truth in the *tawhid* community<sup>290</sup>.

#### **D) Muslim as an Indivisible Unit in the Community**

The notion of self-conscious in Continental philosophy has a significant role from Descartes to Hegel as a peak of spirit and primary condition of freedom<sup>291</sup>. However, today, in English, it is defined “the person who is easily embarrassed and nervous because they feel that everyone is looking at them and judging them”<sup>292</sup>. This lack of confidence can be considered as unexpected and inevitable consequence of Cartesian subject which brought the notion of individual because self-consciousness is considered the sine qua non of the individualization. In that sense, B. Pascal considers Cartesian subject as the tale of nature (the notion of nature in Pascal's thought is highly cultural) such as Don Quixote's story<sup>293</sup>.

In the early Islamic practices, the notion of reciprocity was applied among the members of community without arbitrary distinctions; that is to say that there was no separation of political bodies and the rest about the issues concerning everybody in the community through *shura* and *istişare*<sup>294</sup>. According to Rahman, we cannot talk about a religion and state

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<sup>288</sup> Hamidullah, *İslam'da Devlet İdaresi*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Hamdi Aktaş, İstanbul, 2003., p. 173

<sup>289</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 396-397

<sup>290</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 397

<sup>291</sup> Virno, *ibid*, p. 114

<sup>292</sup> <http://www.seslisozluk.com/?word=self-conscious>

<sup>293</sup> Pascal, *Düşünceler*, Kaknüs Yay., trans. Metin Karabaşoğlu, İstanbul, 1998., p. 281

<sup>294</sup> Rahman, *İslami Yenilenme*, Ankara Okulu Yayınları, trans. Adil Çiftçi, Ankara, 2004., p. 35

distinction; therefore, they are not brothers as in the Western thought<sup>295</sup>; state is not an extension of religion but only an instrument<sup>296</sup>. Islam surrounds all domains of life; therefore, State in Islamic community can declare neither right nor sacrifice upon the members.

Rahman also mentions the importance of *shura* in the community which turned out to be an elitist mechanism in Emevi reign. It brought the concentration of power in particular hands as a restricted circle. The power relation on the community is only benefited by certain people who have an upper hand. Then, the issue of the closing doors of *ictihad* became inevitable for community which was a lost of singularity<sup>297</sup>.

This community does divide neither world nor human as secret/profane or clergy/non-clergy. Those divisions are considered highly arbitrary. In the Islamic community, it is hard to talk about a subject-object dichotomy. Under a certain belief that everything is subject to re-creation, it gives way the experience of God in the face of other. Therefore, each singular rests in the limit of presence and absence which constitutes the automatic valualization of the other rather than over-emphasis of the self along with sharing, exposure and responsibility.

The transformation of the *sunnah* is also another important point in the Islamic culture that reflects the indivisibility of life. Islam does not have separation of public-private spheres but it tends to have a holistic understanding rather than arbitrary separations. For example, in transformation of hadith, the safety of exact documentation was maintained through a detailed search his\her way of life and morality. Buhari, who wrote the most famous and comprehensive hadith book, went to visit a hadith transferor. That person was ploughing his field with an animal which was cheated with food in order to accelerate the process. Having witnessed such an event, Buhari annulled all the hadiths he passed on.

According to Faruki, Islam touches upon life as the completeness from the deepest subjects of metaphysics to small details of everyday life. The very sources of Islamic law, Quran and *Sunnet* give a grand picture about *ibadet*, politics, economics and morality<sup>298</sup> from salutations to how to respond it. The rest and newly appearing phenomenon are let to singular beings to

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<sup>295</sup> Rahman, *ibid*, p. 64

<sup>296</sup> Rahman, *ibid*, p. 64

<sup>297</sup> Rahman, *ibid*, p. 71

<sup>298</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 133

decide upon. Those very principles are given for the actualization of the potentials in a relational way. However, it is clear that Muslims are prisoners into the *ictihads* of early periods because of closing doors of *Ictihad* since 4<sup>th</sup> century of Islam. This tradition turned the qualification of Islamic community into blind since it was the certain negation of potentials of singular beings. However, what was highlighted in the early Islamic practices that the principles consist of both general and specific characteristics, universal and unique, integral and multitude, about singular and about community.<sup>299</sup> Islam, in this point, attempted to create a balance between absolute individualism of Christianity and absolute collectivist understanding of Judaism. In Islam, belonging to the community does not lead to the domination of singular beings under the heaviness of the community.<sup>300</sup>

The co-existence constitutes the grand pillar of the community and it is the sharing of spiritual and material prosperity that keeps this co-existence.<sup>301</sup> In that sense, earned property is considered as bitter as far as it is not shared with others.<sup>302</sup> Moreover, this sharing does not take place only among Muslims. Likewise, the existence of differences is considered a different path to reach the truth. To be inside the community is to concentrate on transformation of the future; that is why, in the very beginning of Islamic community, after the Hijra, having carried people strong grudge to each others are declared 'brothers and sisters' in the very foundation of the community regardless of colour, race, or social status since the sharing was highly emphasized within the community.<sup>303</sup> Ebu Bekr, the first caliph of Islamic community immediately after the prophet, declared in his first speech that “In my eye, strong people will remain impotent until the rights of Poor are taken from them. On the other hand, impotents are powerful, for me, until their rights are received”.

## **E) Love and Death in the Community**

*Belief in the existence of the other human beings as such is love*<sup>304</sup>.

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<sup>299</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 136

<sup>300</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 138

<sup>301</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 156

<sup>302</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 193

<sup>303</sup> Faruki, *ibid* p. 196

<sup>304</sup> Weil, S, *Gravity and Grace*, Bison Books, Reprint Edition, 1997, p. 64



According to Hamidullah, Kaaba means both square and circle in Arabic. Panoramic view proves both of them. He also claims that it looks like and reflects the heart, both real and metaphorically. A hadith states that God does not fit into neither earth nor sky, but God can only fit into the heart of a human. Heart is the place of love; hence Islamic community is built upon this love, as well as the finitude of singular beings<sup>305</sup>. That metaphor is well reflected in the experience of Hajj. The circumambulation of the Kaaba during the Hajj is done seven times, as in the Islamic art, seven represents the eternity as repetitive seven days of a week<sup>306</sup>.

According to Albayrak, M. Iqbal also attempted to transform the knowledge into wisdom (*irfan*) and reflection. The locus for this transformation is the heart in which truth and reflection of *tawhid* take place. What keeps the motivation is the love and desire for Iqbal because he considers the love as an epistemological process than a sole feeling. According to him, love unveils the potential of human. Knowledge can turn out to be wisdom only through discoveries of those potentials. The awareness of those potentials takes place in ontological level<sup>307</sup>. His philosophy was also a rejection to the age under supremacy of reason undermining both love and esthetic<sup>308</sup>. Truth seekers, for him, were mis-led. All is inside human's singular entity and so does truth. This discovery takes place through breaking the chain of reason; that is to say "to be born without mother and father"<sup>309</sup>. He supported to examine the things in singular beings as well as a completeness rather than arbitrary categories. He says that "sea is not older than its own waves"<sup>310</sup>. He defines this discovery through a metaphor of constitution of mirror which gives birth to the exposure of truth<sup>311</sup>. As we have mentioned in the first part for singular being, he does not ascribe a super entity or communion or fusion, but he defines life as a thing not to melt inside<sup>312</sup>. He constitutes an unbreakable link between life and death in which one without the other loses its uniqueness and importance<sup>313</sup>.

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<sup>305</sup> Hamidullah, Allah'ın Elçisi Hz. Muhammed, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ihsan Süreyya Sırma, İstanbul, 2003, p.131

<sup>306</sup> Hamidullah, *ibid*, p. 132

<sup>307</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 10

<sup>308</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 15

<sup>309</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 47

<sup>310</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 47

<sup>311</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 50

<sup>312</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 101

<sup>313</sup> Albayrak, *ibid*, p. 102

According to Vassaf, totalitarian regimes of today's world withdrew the notion of death and hell in order to find paradise on earth. Indeed, it was the withdrawal of other, concept of other life. He finds the legitimization and empowerment totalitarianism is in this withdrawal or censorships<sup>314</sup>. On the other hand, the notion of death takes an important place in the community. The notion of death, unlike modern regimes, always stands in the forefront because it does not signify an end but continuity. People who are about to die are visited and their finitude is shared by the members of the community because it is the point they find their presences and a finitude world and discovering the notion and importance of other. In Islamic culture, as a heritage from early practices, people are encouraged to visit the cemeteries since they recall the death for living people. Therefore, death is a notion that is welcomed and shared in the community.

Similarly, in I. Bergman's movie, *Cries and Whispers* (1972), Agnes (Harriet Andersson), who was about to die because of cancer, begs for a simple human touch in order to be able to die. The death of Agnes recalls the finitude of their lives for her sisters, but they can not find courage to touch Agnes because of distance constructed among them, the lack of exposure shows itself in the scene. Only the server of the house, Anna (Karin Sylwan), comes and hugs Agnes to make her able to die. However, Agnes' spirit can not manage to die and returns back to the room in order to complete the death with a simple touch of her sisters. It is again Anna who sends her to the finitude<sup>315</sup>. Anna in this scene, shares both the pain and finitude with Agnes.

## **F) The importance of Communication in the Community**

Levinas, in *Totality and Infinity*, brings two options in order to communicate with others. The former is reduction of everything to a certain single totality and the latter is the leaving of existences to themselves. For him, what is primary is not to explain or assimilate or take it to our own world but on the contrary to develop a relation going beyond us, different than us. When this exposure takes place the exposure of other turns out to be the recognition of impossibility of speaking in the name of other. In other words, it becomes the impossibility of

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<sup>314</sup> Vassaf, *ibid*, p. 29

<sup>315</sup> Yalom, I. Güneşe Bakmak Ölümle Yüzleşmek, Kabalcı Yayınları, trans. Zeliha İyidoğan Babayiğit, İstanbul, 2008, p. 113

representation. After that point, the person inscribes this limit and this impossibility to its own discourse. At that point, the meaning of the presence shifts to another realm as the recognition of own presence through others (being in common). This exposure for Levinas takes place in the open network of language rather than rational transparency of self-centered Cartesian subjectivity<sup>316</sup>.

In the community, speeches, singular beings, and experiences are reduced neither to each others nor to a common ratio or a general totality. On the other hand, it is exposure of singulars within the finitude. This exposure is open to radical alterity of eternity. The notion of communication is highly important for the removal of individualization and nationalism in the Islamic community.<sup>317</sup> It is a community in which each singular being has something to learn from each others and is ready to question its own truths.<sup>318</sup> It is a community which does not give chance to any hierarchy of truths then the notion sharing itself takes place. Garaudy distinguishes beliefs from the faith, for him belief is the projection of faith in terms of particular culture, traditions and ideology.<sup>319</sup>

However faith is about the core of signification through exposure in the community. The truth of the other merely enriches the truths of each singular being.<sup>320</sup> It is to discover missing parts of each truth through which community goes towards the completion, as a co-existence. Garaudy says that “what is crucial here is not to locate the other as an object to investigate but to welcome the other like making an internal questioning or like meeting with something unknown or indefinable in itself. Only after that point, faith turns out to be a questioning than an answer. It becomes the victory of the communication, of multitude against particularism, and of symphony against hegemony.<sup>321</sup>

## **G) Linguistic Freedom**

Both Agamben and Nancy prescribe the language as a gateway from society because they

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<sup>316</sup> Chambers, *Göç, Kültür, Kimlik*, Ayrıntı Yay. Trans. Ismail Türkmen & Mehmet Beşikçi, Istanbul, 2005, p. 263

<sup>317</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 151

<sup>318</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 151

<sup>319</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 152

<sup>320</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 152

<sup>321</sup> Garaudy, *ibid*, p. 153

follow the quotation “language is the house of existence” from Heidegger rather than Lacanian “rules of language are rules of society” or Wittgenstein’s “the limits of my language are the limits of my world”<sup>322</sup>. Language in community has a central role since it is the only way of communication. It is the mean to communicate with God in Islamic culture. If we are the residuals of language in Benjaminian and Heideggerien terms, meeting with others within the texture of that language is to prolong, to multiply, to question and to re-create the language. It is that practice that renders the meeting of different worlds, histories, and experiences possible in the community. Such a practice necessitates questioning and settling up with the notions of self, reason and certainty<sup>323</sup>. According to Hamidullah, language in the community forms the only way to seek for the truth; to read Quran or praying are the linguistic practices which are considered the way towards liberation<sup>324</sup>.

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<sup>322</sup> Delaloğlu, *ibid*, p. 59

<sup>323</sup> Chambers, I, *ibid*, p. 48

<sup>324</sup> Hamidullah, *Islam’a Giriş*, Beyan Yayınları, trans. Ibrahim Arif Koytak & Veysel Uysal, Istanbul, 2003., p. 44

## Conclusion

According to Simone Weil, “in today’s world, human is a social (*stems from society*)\* animal; however, if we do not want to lose our spirit, we cannot accept this argumentation. The life built upon this is uninhabitable anymore. Therefore, we need to escape to an other, doors are closed but remedy is to continue to knock the doors in order to get rid of being social existence”<sup>325</sup>. On the other hand, in the community, there is no determined political value through institutions. The notion of community, here, does not refer to sum of individuals or a primary essence but the communication of singular beings. It is Arendt’s “realm of appearance” in which political actor does not restrict its own presence through exposure to the other in a reciprocal manner. It is the community of others, the presence of togetherness because being-in-common reflects a dissimilitude and heterogeneity in terms of time and space.

Singularity and multitude are the incommensurable notions; that is to say that they cannot be categorized. Like the impossibility of definition of freedom, – the point we make a certain definition for freedom, the restriction of its essence becomes inevitable – therefore, what is important is the suddenness and unexpectedness of the community. That is why Nancy says that community is something happens to us. It should always go beyond the reason: a farewell to reason because it is mother and virgin at the same time. It is a sort of experience beyond the certain possibilities of particular identities. It is neither sub nor super identity but it is to break up the chains of identity. That is why it is not only against mythos-logos dichotomy but also the inversion of any kinds of polarizations.

In Islamic culture, it is the multitude of very sources of Islam that constitutes a contradiction under the umbrella of ‘reason’. It is that qualification giving rise to the notion of singularity within Islamic practices. That is why there is no *Sunnah* but *Sunnahs*. Since the standardization of religion would break the multitude in the community, the Prophet, Mohammed responded differently to very similar questions about belief, God and religion itself. That is why Imam Shafii changes his *ictihads* for the very similar problems or questions in two different places. Otherwise, it would be the imprisonment of the faith to one particular

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<sup>325</sup> \*Italics belong to me

□ Illuminati, Temsil Edilemez Vatandaşlık, within İtalya’da Radikal Düşünce ve Kurucu Politika, Otonom Yayınları, 2005., p. 344

space and time. From the beginning, the importance of community and of autonomy was recognized and provided in Islamic culture since the differences were considered as a sign and gift of God for the people. Human beings can be singulars without heroes but with heroes they constitute a group with only a capability of concord. That is why human being can live as a singular; however, human can only survive as a group. Humans with their potentials are whatever they are but heroes are whatever humans are not in the Islamic community that was revealed by Caliph Omer when he dismissed Halid bin Velid. Therefore, it is only the sovereignty of God which is represented in the community. It is a transformation to realize as a being-together; that necessitates the notion of sharing. In this community, any act without the consent of each singular being is considered as an act of cruelty. Rather than this or that, a third category appears in the community, not to choose or not to imply a signification. Under a set of choices, every choice would take the community one step closer to totalitarianism. Every institution from mosques to assemblies open to all men and women constituted an opportunity for inclination of singulars to their Others, every *ibadet*, from Hajj to *zekat*, was a chance for exposure to God and community. It is the place public-private or profane-sacred distinctions disappear.

The notion of freedom also was touched upon in the community. Indeed, more than freedom, the concept of responsibility was highlighted for augmentation of the freedom. Even, the mercifulness is the principle determining God's attitude. People are under his responsibility and God demands the same attitude in each and every human relationship which reflects the reciprocal attitude and interdependency between human and God. There is no exception that he digresses out of the principles he determined for himself. As in the case *tawhid* belief - the uniqueness of God is also the guarantee of the uniqueness of human – the freedom of God also depends on the responsibility.

Finally, we make the farewell with P. Connor's unique paragraph he wrote for the *Inoperative community*; He says that "One thing at least is clear": if we do not face up to questions raised by singularity-community analysis we presented above, the political under the individual considerations will soon desert human completely, "if it has not already done so. It will abandon human to political and technological economies, if it has not already done so." For him, this will be the end of communication and thus community, "if it has not yet come about." It is the singular, being-in-common, being-with, being-together which will open the way for an exit from modern fiction of individual and society. The finitude of singulars, if

they do not come together in a community, they will lack even their tombs in this modern fiction.

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