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## A New-Sociologist “Makes Peace with” One of his Former Subconscious Role Models

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### Abstract

This presentation contains extracts from the correspondence between a former-engineer Turkish sociologist and a foreign sociology instructor, with whom he had befriended years ago. At the time, the Turkish sociologist was an engineering student and as such, he used to underestimate sociology. Moreover; he did not even refrain from expressing this openly in his conversations. Years later, though, he wants to find the address of that instructor (now an emeritus professor) and in a sense submit his apology; because, now, let alone appreciating sociology, he himself has obtained a Ph.D. degree in sociology; in the mean time. The need to establish such a dialogue is a compulsory task of reliving his conscience as it would come equal to a professional debt and an ethical self-acquittal.

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### 1. Brief Introduction

The body of this article comprises of true letters and messages between an emeritus professor of sociology living in the United States and a Turkish scholar, who, years after graduation from an engineering department of a distinguished university in Turkey resorted to studying sociology until obtaining a Ph.D. degree from a university in Ankara.

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## 2. An Extract from a Letter Addressed to the Sociology Department of an American University

I own a Ph.D. in Sociology from (a Turkish University, since 1998. I would like to get in touch with Professor Emeritus (R) through your assistance, if possible. (He had taught Sociology in Istanbul in early 1970s). As a matter of fact, I would appreciate it a lot if you could please somehow forward the enclosed letter of mine to Prof. (R).

The letter, being of no confidential nature, is not even put in a further smaller envelope. You might as well go ahead and do read it. I have a feeling that it is worthwhile to read such a letter for the sake of sociology itself, anyhow!

I would hereby like to express my gratitude in advance of your hoped-for-help.

Respectfully yours,

p.s. Attached is the above mentioned letter (Very many thanks once again!)

## 3. An Extract From an e-Mail Message

Dear Sir; hello from Istanbul! Many thanks for your e-mail message. A friend of mine read it aloud to me through the phone.

The reason is simple: I had used his e-mail for communication. I personally do not have an e-mail in my work place, unfortunately. People with e-mail addresses in my proximity do not know English, either. Moreover, I do not have a computer at home either (\*).

Being an emeritus professor since ten years *is* a blessing. I am happy for you.

I had written a “*repentance letter*” addressed to you and sent it to (C) University, Sociology Department. They must have forwarded the letter to you by now.

Right now I am resending the letter itself directly to you, anyhow.

I send my respects and greetings. Yours faithfully,

## 4. The Above-Mentioned Letter Itself

Dear Sir; I would like to start my letter by refreshing your memory: In September 1971 you arrived on the campus of (D) *University*. Initially you had your lodging at the guest house of the university, were I was also staying (a privilege granted to me by the administration then, since I had found a summer job in Istanbul).

At the time I was a scholarship student at the Faculty of Engineering.

On one occasion I tried to tease you and said: “*In my opinion social sciences, including sociology, are unnecessary things for humanity*”. You gave a calm, reserved reply: “Well, I *used to* think that way, too”

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\* I think I am somewhat *old fashioned* when it comes to deal with highest technology of any sort. In this respect I resemble a novel character, Mr. *Walnikoff*, from *The Black Marble* by *Joseph Wambaugh*. *Walnikoff* is a detective in California. The time is mid 1970s. He is a descendant of the *White Russians*, who had escaped from *Russia* by ship (from the port of *Vladivostok*), after the *October Revolution*. Having grown up with old legends of the lost land; he turned out as a romantic, nostalgic adult, who clings to the past values stubbornly. He even drives his official police car very slowly and if possible avoids the rush hours in traffic. He is fond of classical music, especially works of his compatriot *Tschaikowski*. He likes the company of old people and enjoys Russian food. s.c.

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