

History, organizational structure and  
deeds of a clandestine crime syndicate

# FETULLAH GÜLEN AND FETÖ

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## **1. Brief history of FETÖ**

The foundations of FETÖ were laid by Fetullah Gülen, in Izmir in 1966.

In the early 1970s Fetullah Gülen and an inner circle of friends established the core cadre for the organization.

They exploited religious themes and concentrated their activities particularly on students and other youth groups aged 13-18 years.

Fetullah Gülen communicated his views through sermons and speeches recorded and distributed on audiocassettes and videotapes. Communal gatherings and particularly summer camps were other methods used to disseminate Gülen's views on religion to a larger group of followers.

By the end of 1970's, Gülen had already become a leader of a distinct, cultish religious group. The organization fed on perceptions of exclusion among Turkish society's conservative, pious section. The perception was that the traditionally secular state had excluded religious people from politics and state institutions. The regime had to be more Islamic, but in the way Fetullah Gülen understood it.

Solution for success advocated by Gülen was to be patient, to portray the movement as a benevolent civil society organization and gradually infiltrate key state institutions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gptKWc089A>: *"You must move in the arteries of the system without anyone noticing your existence until you reach all the power centers... until the conditions are ripe, they [the followers] must continue like this... You must wait for the time when you are complete and conditions are ripe, until we can shoulder the entire world and carry it... You must wait until such time as you have gotten all the state power, until you have brought to your side all the power of the constitutional institutions in Turkey... Until that time, any step taken would be too early - like breaking an egg without waiting the full 40 days for it to hatch. It would be like killing the chick inside."*

In the process the movement became double-faced. The visible face was non-confrontational, charity-oriented, education movement. The darker face was a secretive, highly hierarchical, anti-democratic, self-styled religious formation around the persona of Fetullah Gülen, a cult of personality.

In short, the movement gradually turned from a religious movement into a secretive operational structure aimed to transform society by taking control of the Turkish state from within. As its strength grew, the organization began to claim a messianic mission at a global level, depicting Fetullah Gülen as the “Imam of the Universe”; “the Chosen One”.

The evolution from a religious cult into a criminal organization can be broadly examined in three phases:

**The first phase lasted until the military coup of September 12, 1980.** During this phase, special dormitory houses (Işık Evleri- “Heavenly light houses”) and preparatory schools were established to recruit followers. In this phase, the organization concentrated also on infiltrating state institutions, in particular the critical ones such as the police.

**In the second phase (1980-late 1990s),** the organization doubled down on educational activities. Infiltration to public institutions in high numbers began. In order to raise revenues, the organization turned itself into a quasi-corporation and a conglomerate (Kaynak Holding) bringing together different companies sympathetic to it. It also established a bank (Bank Asya) and commenced activities in areas such as health (Şifa Hospitals), transportation (Sürat Logistics), and media (Zaman newspaper, Samanyolu TV, etc) and business chambers (TUSKON), alongside education. Moreover, this phase was the start of the globalization of the organization. Following the end of the Cold War, Fetullah Gülen expanded his network in Caucasia, the Central Asia and the Balkans, and eventually established presence in around 160 countries across the world.

**The third phase, began after the so-called post-modern coup of February 28, 1997, and ended with the infamous coup attempt of FETÖ on 15 July 2016.** Faced with a judicial process incriminating him on attempting to overthrow the secular constitutional regime, Fetullah Gülen left the country in

1999, and settled in the USA<sup>2</sup>. This marked as one of the milestones in the internationalization of the organization. After departing Turkey for the United States, Gülen adopted a new rhetoric, presenting himself and his organization as an enlightened, pro-Western progressive and moderate manifestation of Islam; concentrated on such themes as “interfaith dialogue”.

In the same period, the process of democratization and efforts for inclusive governance accelerated in Turkey, with the coming to power of AK Party. The governing party opened channels for conservative/religious groups to find a stronger voice in politics.

Yet, Gülenists purposefully chose not to enter into politics and compete legitimately within democratic rules. Instead, they continued attempts to capture more positions in the civil service by people with a hidden allegiance to Gülen, not to the legitimate public authority.

Efforts of the organization to expedite taking control of the state apparatus became stronger since mid-2000s. Members of the organizations who had already taken key positions in the judiciary and the police resorted to illegal methods to purge the opponents of the organization, including those in the army. Forged documents, faked evidences, sham trials, illegal wiretapping, blackmailing etc. were used for this purpose.<sup>3</sup> In short, the organization that started as a religious movement became a Parallel State Structure posing a grave threat to the democratic, secular, constitutional regime of Turkey.

The Government’s efforts to eradicate this threat intensified in the last three years and the controlling power of FETÖ in most of the state institutions was eliminated. 15 July coup attempt was the last and bloodiest resort of the organization to survive in Turkey.

## **2. The Structure of the Organization**

The FETÖ organization applies a "chain of command" principle, which is the most basic governing principle in military organizations.

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<sup>2</sup> It is noteworthy that the estate he now resides (Golden Generation Worship and Retreat Center) had been purchased and transformed to become his eventual sanctuary as early as 1991

<sup>3</sup> For reference, find the attached note on the Sledgehammer Trials

Every thought, act or attitude that can be interpreted as non-compliance with the order of the leader is forcefully crushed. All instructions originating from Fetullah Gülen are attributed sacred meaning and are fully implemented unquestioningly.

Whereas Fetullah Gülen and other leading cadres exhibit great humility in addressing people in the outside world, they exert absolute authority within the organization.

FETÖ has two structures that are autonomous from each other: "public institutions" and "civil society". These two structures are not connected to each other hierarchically.

The lower, baseline units of the organization have a modular structure and implement a cell-type organizational model. Except for the top level that runs the organization, each unit or cell is independent from each other.

Cells have a flexible organizational character. They have high maneuverability and can restore oneself. In the event of a disclosure of one of the cells, the organization can still maintain its unity.

The hidden structure is based on the concept of “imam”, that is an executive within the organization in charge of tasks assigned to him by the high level cadres. Each imam is a leader of a unit of the organization and many linked cells are subordinated to him. An imam ensures harmony and gives instructions to members of his linked cells. The members of the cells, however, have no connection to each other and there is no exchange of reports or instructions between them. Reports are given bottom up, whereas instructions come top down.

FETÖ/PDY appoints an “imam” responsible for each Turkish province and each public institution and organization that it has infiltrated.

The organization is based on a rigid hierarchical caste system consisting of seven layers. Fetullah Gülen decides upon all the movements beyond the fourth level.

*First Level; "People's level":* Consists of individuals who are bound with the organization by sharing its message of compassion, as well as people that provide physical and financial support. Most of these people do not belong to the hierarchical structure of the organization. They are usually unaware of the criminal activities of the organization. The main factors that bind these people to the organization are their Islamic sensitivity and their religious feelings.

*Second Level; "Loyal level":* This is the group that is loyal to the organization and consists of employees, students in and graduates from Gulenist schools, preparatory schools, dormitories, banks, newspapers, associations and public institutions. These people take part in communal meetings, pay membership fees and are more or less familiar with the ideology and aims of the organization. It is necessary to be a member of the organization in order to be able to enter into this layer.

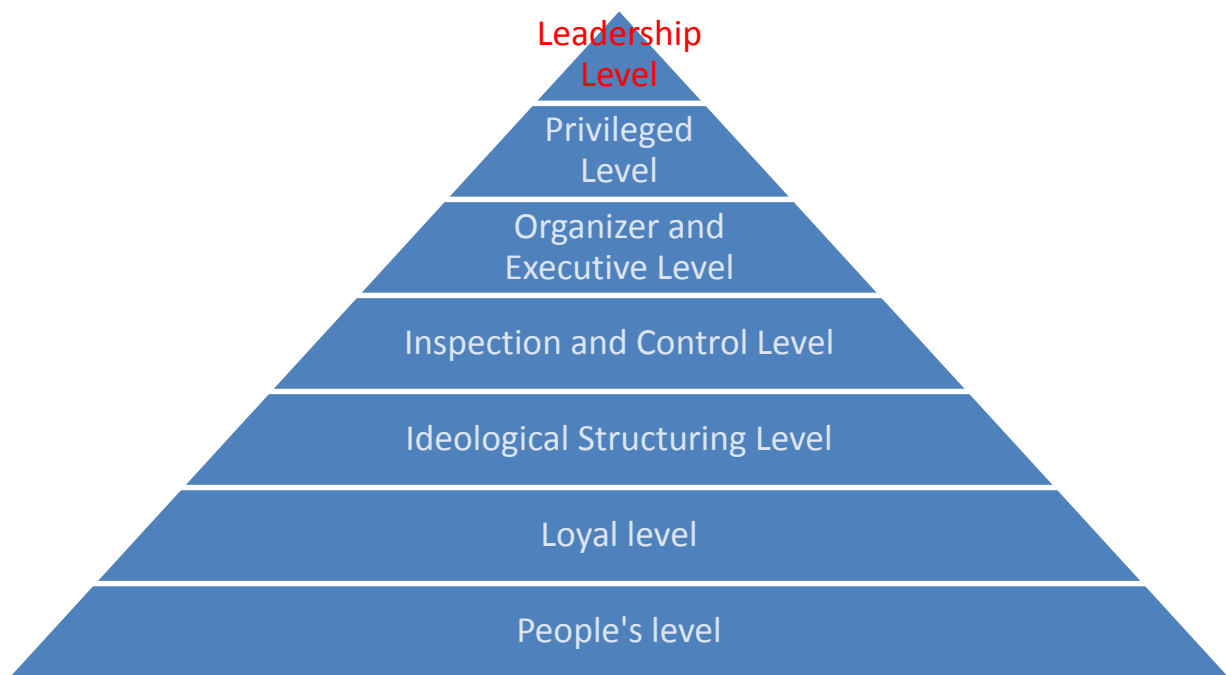
*Third Level; "Ideological Structuring Level":* This is the layer that has adopted the ideology of the organization, is extremely loyal and spreads the ideas of the organization to their surroundings.

*Fourth Level; "Inspection and Control Level":* It inspects the entire movement (its legal and illegal activities). Only those who rank at the top level in terms of devotion and loyalty may rise up to this level. Members of this level are chosen from among those who join the organization at a young age. Those who join the organization at a later age usually cannot be appointed to this level or to higher levels.

*Fifth Level; "Organizer and Executive Level":* Requires a high level of secrecy. This is the layer that organizes and manages the parallel state structure. Only those members who are also married to someone from the organization may rise to this level.

*Sixth Level; "Privileged Level":* Facilitates the communication between Fetullah Gülen and his subordinates. It is responsible for assignment of duties and dismissals. They are appointed by Fetullah Gülen.

*Seventh Level; ("Leadership Level"):* The Elite group directly connected with and appointed by Fetullah Gülen (Consists of 17 leaders).



The organization has integrated this caste system into its structures in Turkey and abroad.

The structures in foreign countries are composed of the continental imams and the country imams that are subordinated to them. Each country imam is connected to the other units abroad, depending on the situation in that particular country.

The structure of the organization abroad follows this pattern:

**European continent**

- a. Western European Imam,
- b. Balkans Imam,
- c. Former Eastern Bloc Countries Iman

**The Americas**

- a. USA-Canada Imam,
- b. South America Imam

**Asian continent**

- a. Turkic Republics Imam,
- b. Far East Asia Imam,
- c. Middle East Imam,
- d. Former Soviet Republics Imam

## **African continent**

a. Africa Imam

## **Australian continent**

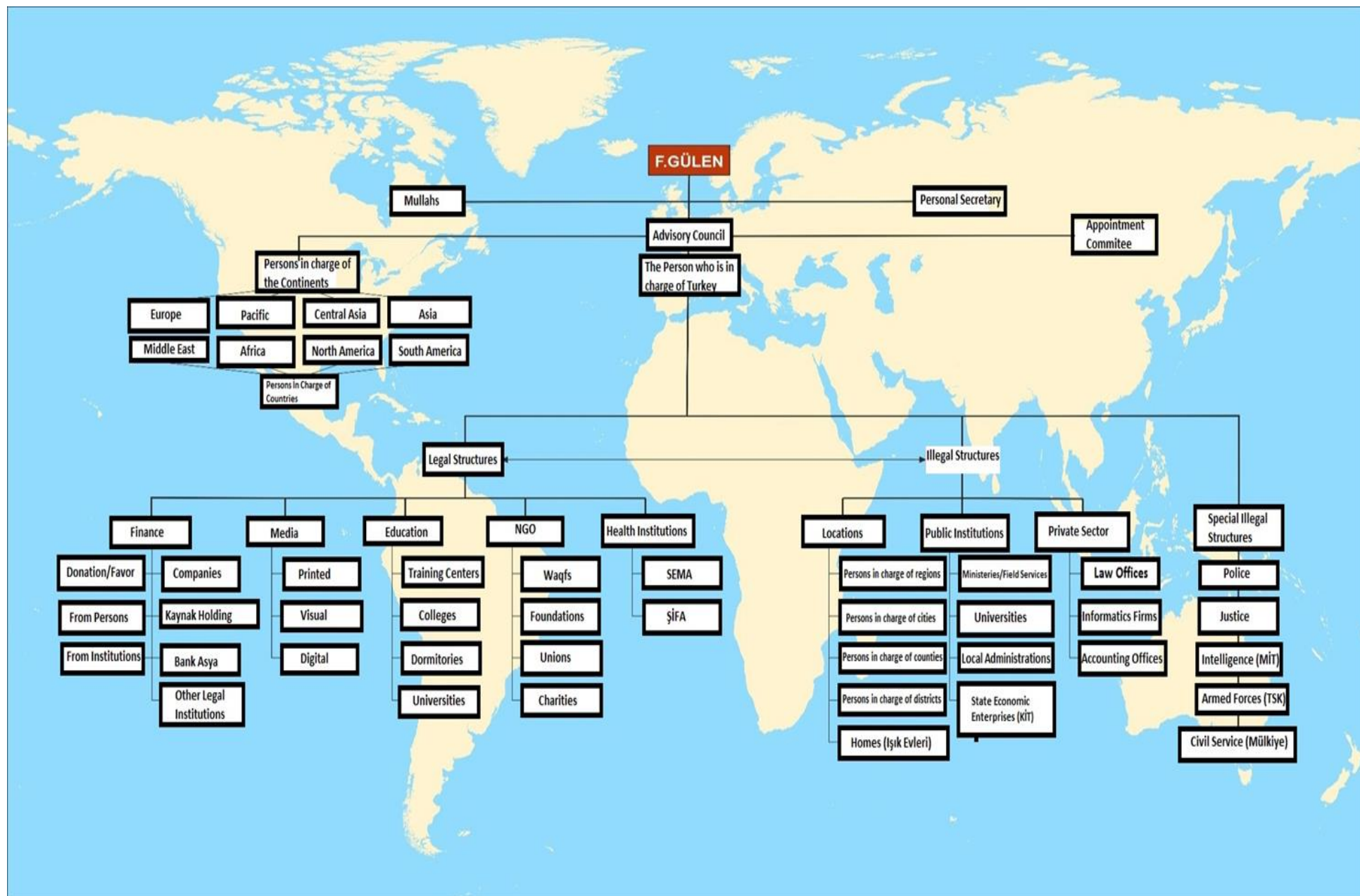
a. Australia Imam

Furthermore, there is an independent unit, which is called "private services" (*mahrem hizmet* -confidential activities). This unit within the organization, which is only known by the leadership cadres, has been implemented in a deliberately opaque manner, in order to preserve the organization and prevent the disclosure of its activities. Those in the "private services" are specially chosen from among those who carry out the orders with absolute devotion and full submission, and without questioning the appropriateness, rationality, legality, morality or religious basis of the instructions originating from Fetullah Gülen or the leadership level. Depending on the local requirements, this distinct unit can exist at every level, from continent, country, region, down to city, town, district, neighborhood and Işık Evleri. It is present at public institutions and organizations, ministries and their local branches, municipal administrations, universities, state-owned enterprises, and in the private sector.

The organization uses secretive methods for communication:

- Taking an oath that promises strict obedience and loyalty to the leader
- special encrypted communications, such as ByLock, Tango, Eagle
- using "one-dollar bill"s with special serial numbers in accordance with their rank, in order to show their allegiance with the organization
- Using code names in order not to reveal their identity
- Disseminating coded messages hidden in Gülen's sermons and interviews





### **3. Recruitment/indoctrination**

Schools are the main recruitment grounds for FETÖ. In addition, the so-called “Heavenly Light Houses” with 5-6 students each, are used to recruit and indoctrinate the new generation.

In Turkey the target group are poor families.

Abroad, mainly in Central Asia and Africa, influential families are targeted for these schools established by this organization.

It is estimated that around 1000 educational institutes are owned and managed by FETÖ worldwide.

The students who are brainwashed in these schools and dormitories are closely followed throughout their life. All crucial decisions regarding their personal and professional life are made by FETÖ.

FETÖ enables these students’ admission to leading universities (in reality through cheating in the higher education entrance examination system and entrance tests for the military schools);

Then, the organization secures a job for them upon graduation, (in reality through cheating in public personnel entrance test, and special entrance examinations of leading public institutions, armed forces academy and even that of the Turkish Foreign Ministry);

Then, FETÖ ensures their rapid promotion in the state institutions, (in reality through destroying the career opportunities of other public servants who are not affiliated with them.) For instance, it is now understood that in the last 6 years FETÖ-affiliated doctors in the military hospitals in Turkey discharged around 500 military pilots from service, by producing false reports indicating serious health issues. By so doing, they opened the way for the promotion of Gülenist military pilots.

In exchange, the followers would donate 10-20 percent of their future salaries back to FETO. They also act upon the orders of their leaders without questioning.



(Secret chamber discovered at the Izmir Yamanlar College, one of the first FETO schools in Turkey)

#### **4. Financial Structure**

The financial resources of FETÖ are derived from donations gathered from people by exploiting their religious and charitable feelings. The organization's money and property is collected as "himm<sup>4</sup>" generally grants, donations, contributions, offerings and aid for students, the poor and orphans. Donors are typically unaware of how their funds are used. Most do not reach their intended beneficiaries and are instead used to pursue the illegal activities to subvert the state.

The tuition fees collected from the students that attend FETÖ affiliated educational institutions in Turkey and foreign countries also have been one of the financial sources of the organization.

In addition, the organization is financed by the fees regularly collected from the members and affiliated entities.

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<sup>4</sup> Activities to collect required financial resources for the Organization.

Money collected by the trustees of Gülen is, then, used as seed capital for the establishment of Gülenist firms and companies. The main conglomerate of FETO for this operation is KAYNAK holding.

There are other FETÖ owned and managed financial enterprises, including BANK ASYA.

Companies owned or sympathetic to FETÖ are also brought under the umbrella of TUSKON ( Turkey Businessman and Industrialists Confederation).



It is evaluated that the net assets of FETO-owned companies in Turkey is at least 10 billion US Dollars, while the global capital of FETÖ is estimated to be in 50-100 billion Dollars.

This money is managed by the organization behind the doors. These corporations, far beyond being real actors, and instead of playing like rational actors in the free market, carry out the instructions of the organization's "elder brother", or "ağbi". (An ağbi is typically at the lower managerial levels of the organization.)

The businesses that are established with seed money from and managed by the organization also make monetary contributions to the organization .

The names of the real owners of the organization's trade corporations; unions and foundations do not appear in the legal documents.

In fact, after December 17, 2013 the ownership of the organization's trade corporations were swiftly taken over by the undisclosed members of FETO in order to decrease the visibility of the organization and move it further underground. Meanwhile, in order to prevent the appointment of a government trustee, some members of FETÖ have rapidly converted their possessions and assets into cash by selling their businesses. The ownership of the companies and personal assets of the members of the organization were then fraudulently passed to third parties to prevent seizure of the assets by the law enforcement authorities. The acquisitions of this kind of fraudulent transactions were transferred to third countries.

## **5. Crimes of the FETÖ**

Currently Fetullah Gülen himself is the prime suspect in different criminal indictments.

The recent probes into the activities of the FETO by Public Prosecutor's Office have shown that under the banner of service, tolerance and humanitarian organizations, FETO and Fetullah Gülen have established and managed an illegal organization,

- \*exposing confidential information belonging to state for political or military espionage purposes,

- \*violating the confidentiality of private life,

- \*unlawful recording of personal information,

- \*forgery of official documents, fabricating criminal cases,

- \*destroying evidence,

- \*money laundering,

- \*Murder

### **Murder of Prof. Hablemitoğlu, 2002**



Assoc. Prof. Necip Hablemitoğlu was killed in front of his house in 2002, while he was writing an investigative and critical book on Gülen. Hablemitoğlu's wife has long been voicing the involvement of Gülenists in the murder of her husband citing previous death threats. The judicial process was blocked many times by the Gülenist police officers and judges until recently. The investigation was reopened in 2014.

### **Bombing of Şemdinli Bookstore, 2005**

On November 9 2005, a bookstore was bombed in Şemdinli/ Hakkari. The Prosecutor of the case, Ferhat Sarıkaya, prepared a criminal indictment in which General Yaşar Büyükanıt, former Chief of General Staff, was accused of forming a gang and masterminding the bombing. General Büyükanıt was the Commander of Land Forces at that time. Later, following the 15 July foiled coup attempt, Prosecutor Sarıkaya confessed that he was ordered by FETO members (including a judge in the same court who would later become a member of the Supreme Court of Appeals) to include General Yaşar Büyükanıt into the criminal indictment, in order to prevent his promotion in the army and to ease the grip on Gülenist structures within the army.

### **Murder of Hrant Dink, 2007**



Hrant Dink was murdered in broad daylight in front of his office in Istanbul on January 19, 2007. He was one of the founders of Turkish-Armenian weekly, Agos, and was considered one of the most prominent Armenian voices in Turkey.

On April 20, 2007, prosecutors prepared an indictment of suspects, including Dink's assassin Ogun Samast. In 2011, Ogun Samast was jailed for 23 years in connection with the murder. However, the indictment was criticized since it only focused on the assassin and did not mention about the instigators or lack of action by law enforcement and intelligence.

In the meantime, journalist Nedim Şener who investigated the role of the police officers in the murder was subjected to smearing campaigns by FETO owned media, and subsequently arrested on fabricated evidence.

Things changed when a new prosecutor took over the case. In December 2015, an indictment linked to the 2007 murder called for the prosecution of 26 people on charges of "establishing an armed organization" and "neglecting their duties". They have been accused of intentionally causing Dink's death and forming an "armed organization". On 3 July, 2015 the prosecutor also expanded the case to the gendarmerie in light of new evidence.

Three of the previous prosecutors of the case (Fikret Seçen, Cihan Kansız, Muammer Akkaş) remain at large. One prosecutor stands trial. They are all suspected of having links with FETO, as the former police chiefs (Ramazan Akyürek and Ali Fuat Yılmaz) who were arrested in the context of their involvement in the murder plot.

In the ensuing period, it has been established that most of the people incriminated in this case, including the police, gendarmerie and prosecutors, have used a special encrypted communication application, entitled Bylock, in their smart phones. Bylock was produced by FETO to enable communication between FETO members. The latest revelation in the case is also shocking: It was just established that gendarmerie personnel who are now the suspects of the murder case were in telephone contact with the prosecutor Zekeriya Öz, a fugitive now in Europe, before the murder of Hrant Dink, and immediately after the assassination.

## **Ergenekon, Sledgehammer and Military Espionage Trials**

FETÖ also used its adherents to launch judicial and administrative investigations based on forged evidence against certain people to discredit or force them to work with them.

The involvement by the Gülenist judges and police during the Ergenekon, Balyoz (Sledgehammer) and other high profile cases are the main examples. (For reference, an information note on the Sledgehammer Trials is attached)

In these cases, military officials, opposition parliamentarians and journalists were accused of plotting a violent coup to oust the government. It later turned out that these cases were based on fabricated evidence, and that most such fabrications were produced by the Gülenists in the police.

The Gülenist media, in particular TARAF and ZAMAN, were instrumental in shaping the public opinion during these operations.



5 yıl süren tarihî  
darbe davasında  
karar açıklandı

# Ergenekon'da müebbet yağdı

275 kişinin yargılandığı davada mahkeme 5'i ağırlaştırılmış olmak üzere 19 sanığa müebbet hapis cezası verdi. 21 beraat, 17 tahliye kararı çıktı

<b>Askerler</b>	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>İLKER BAŞBUĞ</b> Eski Genelkurmay Başkanı. Hükümeti ve asker ve polisleri ortadan kaldırmaya teşebbüs. Ağırlaştırılmış müebbet aldı.	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>HASAN İŞSİZ</b> Eski Genelkurmay 2. Başkanı. Hükümeti ve asker ve polisleri ortadan kaldırmaya teşebbüs. Ağırlaştırılmış müebbet aldı.	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>ŞENER ERUYGUR</b> Eski Jandarma Komutanı. Darbe teşebbüsünden ağırlaştırılmış müebbet istendi. Müebbetle parçalandı.	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>HÜRŞİT TOLAN</b> Eski 1. Ordu Komutanı. Hükümeti ve asker ve polisleri ortadan kaldırmaya teşebbüs. Müebbet hapis cezası aldı.	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>NUSRET TAŞDELER</b> Emekli Orgeneral. Hükümeti ve asker ve polisleri ortadan kaldırmaya teşebbüs. Müebbet hapis cezası aldı.	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>VELİ KÖÇÜK</b> Emekli Tuğgeneral. 6 kez ağırlaştırılmış müebbet hapis cezasılandırılmış. Bu kez ağırlaştırılmış müebbet aldı.	<b>BAŞBUĞ SALONU TERK ETTİ</b> İSTANBUL. 13. Ağır Ceza Mahkemesi'nce Silivri'de görülen davada karar açıklanınca salon karıştı. Müebbet mahkûm olan eski Genelkurmay Başkanı İlker Başbuğ, karara tepki gösterecek salonu terk etti.
	<b>34 YIL 8 AY</b>  <b>MEHMET HABERAL</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Mehmet Haberal, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.	<b>MÜEBBET</b>  <b>AYŞIN YAZICI</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Ayşın Yazıcı, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.	<b>7 YIL 6 AY</b>  <b>CAN ERKEK</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Can Erkek, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.	<b>13 YIL 2 AY</b>  <b>FIRAT ALKAY</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Fırat Alkay, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.	<b>7 YIL 6 AY</b>  <b>AYŞIN YAZICI</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Ayşın Yazıcı, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.	<b>21 YIL 9 AY</b>  <b>CAN ERKEK</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Can Erkek, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.	<b>HABERAL TAHLİYE EDİLDİ</b> 12 yıl 6 ay hapis cezası alan CHP Milletvekili Mehmet Haberal, yattığı süre dikkate alınarak tahliye edildi. 15 yıl hapis cezası alan eski rektör Kemal Alemdaroğlu'yla birlikte 11 sanık hakkında da yakalama kararı çıktı.
<b>zeteciler</b>							<b>PERİNÇEK: HÜKÜMETİ YIKACAĞIZ</b> DOĞU Perinçek "Erdoğan hükümetini bir yıl içinde yıkacağız" diye bağardı. Müebbet mahkûm olan Balbay ise karara tepki gösterince salondan çıkanıldı. 20 yıl daha hapis yatacak Balbay'ın eşi gözyaşlarına boğuldu.

## OdaTV trials

Journalists who had written about the Gülen machinations in these trials endured slander campaigns and threats of arrests.

A case known in Turkey as "OdaTV" trials has constituted a revealing example of this conspiracy<sup>5</sup>.

Journalists Barış Terkoğlu, Barış Pehlivan, Soner Yalçın, and Ahmet Şık served time in prison because of their work that showed Gülen's infiltration into the state, which was pursued closely by OdaTV. Şık was writing a book on Gülen's presence in the police force.

<sup>5</sup> For detailed information, find attached note on OdaTV trials

Moreover, journalist Nedim Şener was also imprisoned based on fabricated evidence, while he was investigating the links of Gülen's disciples with the 2007 murder of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink.

### **Cheating at the Public Service Entry Examinations**

In 2010, upon the orders from Fetullah Gülen, the exam questions and answer keys of the Public Personnel Selection Examination (KPSS) were stolen and handed out to the certain FETO members. The members with high scores were placed strategically in the critical state bodies. Judicial investigation into this case is continuing.

### **6. The 15 July Coup Attempt**

It is clear that FETÖ was behind the coup attempt in Turkey. It was led by a network of military officers of varying ranks who are affiliated with the Group. It was also supported by non-military individuals and groups known to be affiliated to Gülen.

Presence of FETO members in the military had been suspected for a long time.

Ahmet Zeki Üçok, a military prosecutor, carried out a comprehensive investigation into the Gülenists in the armed forces in 2009. He discovered a large secret network within the army. He identified many members of this organization by their names. However, he could not complete his investigation as he was detained on the grounds that he tortured certain witnesses by “hypnotizing” them and also as part of the Sledgehammer case. He spent almost five years in prison. Immediately after the botched coup attempt, he publicly declared that the leaders of the coup matched perfectly the list that he had prepared in 2009. Referring to the F-16s that bombed the Turkish parliament he recalled the words of now-retired Col. Selçuk Başyigit, : “*We are now very strong. We have F-16s, F-4s that will take off with a single order of Fethullah Gülen.*” Üçok's findings were corroborated by many soldiers who fought against the coup attempt or by those soldiers who were the victims of the Sledgehammer case.

There are other crucial findings pointing to direct FETÖ involvement in the coup attempt.

### **Testimony of Chief of General Staff**

On the night of 15 July, as the coup was progressing, Gülenist officers leading the coup urged General Hulusi Akar, Chief of General Staff, to speak directly to Fethullah Gülen, hoping to persuade him to join them, according to General Akar.

### **Testimony of Lt. Col. Levent Türkkan, aide-de-camp of the Chief of General Staff**

Lt. Col. Levent Türkkan has been the aide of the Chief of General Staff Gen. Hulusi Akar and the former Chief of Staff for many years. On the eve of the coup plot, he was among those plotters who apprehended General Akar forcefully at the General Staff Headquarters.

After the coup was thwarted, Lt. Col. Türkkan was taken into detention. In his testimony, he has confessed his affiliation with the Fethullah Gülen group and explained in detail how the coup attempt was orchestrated.

According to his testimony, he confessed being a member of the Gülen Movement since young age.

He passed the military school examinations in 1989, with the help of the organization that provided the test questions to him one night before the examination.

He obeyed the orders of FETO after becoming the aid to the top military commander, such as wiretapping both the present and former Chiefs of Staff on a regular basis.

He revealed the names of other Gülen-linked officers, including the Chief of the Cabinet who actively took part in the coup attempt.

## **Presence of Gülen-linked civilians at the Akıncılar Air base in Ankara during the plot attempt**

The prosecutors have submitted their indictment regarding plotters who have played an active role at the center of the coup attempt, Akıncılar air base near Ankara.

In the indictment, it was established that at least four civilians were present at the Akıncılar military base on the night of 15 July:

- Adil Öksüz, a professor of theology, known to be the “imam” of FETO for the airforce.
- Kemal Batmaz, CEO of a Gülenist company
- Hakan Çiçek, owner of FETO-affiliated school in Ankara.
- Harun Biniş, former employee at the Information and Communication Technology Authority, who was, then, accused of wiretapping the phones of senior government officials



*Adil Öksüz and Fetullah Gülen*

Their images were captured by the security cameras at the Akıncılar air base.

Prosecutors also revealed that Adil Öksüz and Kemal Batmaz traveled together at least 10 times to the US prior 2015 and 2016, latest one being on 11-13 July, just two days before the coup attempt. Before each US visit, Adil Öksüz

travelled to Ankara to hold meetings with the Gülenist officers in the army. Locations of these secret meetings in Ankara have been established by the prosecutors.

### **Former police officials who were dismissed due to their links with Gülen participated in the plot**

There are concrete findings that on the night of 15 July, some police officials who were previously dismissed from the Turkish national police because of their affiliation with the Gülen group, actively participated in the coup attempt together with the military plotters.

During the course of the coup attempt, there was intense communication between the military plotters and those police officers.

During the coup attempt, several ex-police officers were seen on locations in proximity to critical locations such as the TRT (Turkish Radio and TV institution) and the Police Intelligence Headquarters in Ankara. One of them was captured. His telephone records revealed several WhatsApp correspondences between the FETÖ members, including orders to support the coup attempt.

Gülen Aktepe had been the deputy in the intelligence department of the Turkish Police until he was suspended of his duty in 2014. He was captured while trying to take over the National Police HQ with the army officers on the night of the failed coup. Aktepe said he received a message that read: "The coup has taken place. For assistance, everyone must go near to the places they used to previously work." Aktepe said the FETÖ provided him with 4,500 TL (around \$1400) every month after he was dismissed from his position.

There were similar cases in Istanbul. Mithat Aynacı was a police chief in Istanbul until 2013, when he was dismissed for his role in the two FETO-linked investigations against several government officials and politicians. When tanks were heading to Istanbul police headquarters, Aynacı was found in one of the tanks. A video recording shows Aynacı, wearing a military officer uniform, entering the tank, and another one shows him forcefully pulled from the tank.





*Mithat Aynacı, former police chief, dismissed from the Police force because of his links with FETÖ, was caught in one of the armored vehicles assaulting the Istanbul police headquarters on the night of 15 July*

## **ANNEX**

### **DARK UNDERBELLY OF FETÖ: THE SLEDGEHAMMER CASE**

#### **Background information on the Sledgehammer CASE**

- In 2009, a daily newspaper, TARAF, disclosed “plans” for a military coup plotted by a group within the Turkish military, based on certain “digital documents” dating 2003.
- Subsequently, hundreds of military officers were lynched in the media. Media outlets associated with Fetullah Gülen were particularly active, serving up the accusations with special fervor.

- Based on these “documents” published in TARAF newspaper, hundreds of military officers were jailed, tried, and convicted in a landmark trial called “Sledgehammer case”
- In a judgment issued in October 2013, Turkey’s court of appeals ratified the lower court’s judgement and the decades-long prison sentences were given against the defendants.
- However, within days of the breaking of the story in TARAF, problems with the coup documents begun to surface.
- None of the coup documents carried signatures. They were all digital files (in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint formats) that could have been easily forged. The CDs that contained these documents could not be traced to any of the defendants’ or military computers.
- Moreover, the hundreds of pages of planning documents and their annexes were marred with a lot of anachronisms and physical impossibilities that pointed unmistakably to their fraudulent origin.
- For example, an ultra-nationalist organization that was mentioned in the “documents” dating 2003, turned out to have been founded years later, in 2006.
- The most revealing evidence on the forgery of the digital documents was brought to the court by a defendant and a military engineer: He proved that the Sledgehammer documents had been prepared using Office 2007, a version of Microsoft’s software that obviously did not exist at the time (2003) when the coup plan was supposed to have been hatched.

### **The role of Gülenists in the Sledgehammer case**

- It was apparent that there was a conspiracy against the military that went beyond the handful of culprits who were responsible for the forgeries.
- Mounting and stage managing a trial of such proportions required the active cooperation of a large number of people and institutions.

- The police officers carrying out the investigation were clearly in on it: They produced one-sided reports full of distortions.
- Prosecutors of the case prevented the defense from seeing “documents” until much later in the trial, they also misrepresented their contents in their indictment.
- The judges had made up their minds before the trial started. They did not react to the pleas from defendants who presented evidence about inconsistencies of the digital documents. They repeatedly turned down defense requests to appoint independent experts to examine whether the incriminating files had been digitally tampered with.
- Beyond TARAF newspaper, other Gülenist media, in particular ZAMAN, played a significant in shaping the public perceptions of the trial. They published a stream of disinformation that distorted the basic facts of the case and covered up the forgery. Among them: the signatures on the Sledgehammer documents had been authenticated (a double lie, since there were no signatures to begin with); the CDs had been traced to military computers (false); the general staff in Ankara had admitted the veracity of the Sledgehammer plot (false).
- Moreover, three experts from Turkey’s scientific research institution, TÜBİTAK, produced a highly misleading analysis that seemed to authenticate the incriminating CDs.
- The culprits who played active role in the Sledgehammer case have all been affiliated with Fetullah Gülen.
- As a matter of fact, Sledgehammer was one of the many of the investigations undertaken during that period targeting opponents of the Fetullah Gülen.
- This had prompted an anti-Gülenist journalist, to utter his memorable sentence as he was being carted to jail: “those who touch the movement get burned.”

## **In pursuit of justice**



- Today it is established that the coup plans were in fact forgeries.
- Forensic experts have determined that the “plans” found in certain CDs that formed the backbone of the prosecution were produced on backdated computers and made to look as if they were prepared in 2003.
- The 230 defendants held in jail were eventually released on June 19th, 2014, following a unanimous ruling by the constitutional court finding the defendants’ right to a fair trial had been violated.
- Today, all the police officers, prosecutors, judges, “experts” orchestrating the Sledgehammer case are either in jail, or have become fugitives.
- In 2015, defendants of the Sledgehammer trial submitted a petition to the relevant court against TUBITAK experts, on the charges of “misconduct in office”.
- At that time, these TUBITAK experts had already left Turkey. **One of them is now working at a prestigious university in one of the EU countries.**
- The presiding judge of the case was Mr. İlhan Karagöz.
- On 4 July 2016, just 10 days before the coup attempt in Turkey, Judge Karagöz issued a verdict, acquitting the suspects.
- What is astonishing is that the verdict was a manifestation of **Fetullah Gülen as the Messiah.**
- The following expressions are from the verdict dated 4.7.2016 , by Judge İlhan Karagöz of İstanbul 18th Criminal Court of First Instance, who hid his identity of being a Gülenist until this ruling:

“Here we declare, Fethullah Gulen Efendi is an elected person whose arrival The Last Prophet Muhammad Mustafa Sallallahu

Aleyhivessalem announced, and since Mahdi Aleyhisselam is a special person who will show the wrongs by referring humanity to the right path separately and for the last time, and although it will have greatness and miracles, when it will appear, as many people will be standing ready, they will submit to him, they will start to repair and maintain and since he has the freedom of mobility and knows how and in what way to act and direct people, he will Come as a Disciple of God...

I hope that following our decision, Hazrati Mahdi will come out and then happiness will prevail in the entire world as mentioned in the song of the music group Zakkum and thus the Light of God will be completed...

Fethullah Gülen, in his statements delivered on different dates following bad events, has included such and similar explanations and narratives but no reference with such openness was directed at him...

Probably, he would not say that himself either and as we mentioned at the beginning, destiny was lacing webs and I believe that God was charging such a task with me..."

- Judge İlhan Karagöz is now under detention.
- His verdict is considered null and void. The new judge continues the trial. There is now "an arrest warrant" against the accused experts.
- The next session of the court will be held on 1 June 2017.

## **ANNEX**

### **DARK UNDERBELLY OF FETÖ: THE ODATV CASE**

- ODATV Trials are among the showcases of FETÖ conspiracy led by Gülenist police, prosecutors and judges. The scheme is very similar to the Ergenekon and Sledghammer cases.
- It all started with a police assault to the head office of ODATV, a web-based newspaper, on 14 February 2011.
- Soner Yalçın, Editor in Chief, and other editors Barış Pehlivan and Barış Terkoğlu were arrested, and later detained upon implications on membership to the “Ergenekon Terrorist Organization”.

- Two weeks later, Prof. Yalçın Küçük, journalists Nedim Şener and Ahmet Şık were arrested. On the same date ODATV columnists Doğan Yurdakul, Müyesser Yıldız, Coşkun Musluk and Muhammet Sait Çakır were also arrested and detained.
- In a follow-up operation, a former high level intelligence official was detained on 10 March. A few days later came the order for detention against a well-known Police chief Hanefi Avcı who had been already in prison connected to another trial.
- Just a quick glance at the professions and the political outlooks of these people suggested that there was something weird. Some were leftist and staunch opponents of the government, while others were known for their nationalistic/right wing political orientation. Yet, they were all put in the same basket, accused of being members to the same terrorist organization.
- Their only commonality was their public disdain of Fetullah Gülen cult (later to be known as FETÖ). For example, the police chief Hanefi Avcı had just released a book ("*Simons living on the Golden Horn*") on the uncontrollable influence of FETÖ within the police force; while journalist Nedim Şener was investigating the role of FETÖ-affiliated police in the murder of the Armenian activist Hrant Dink. Ahmet Şık was about to release his book entitled "*The Army of the Imam*" on Fetullah Gülen and his network.
- It was also noteworthy that the prosecutors (Zekeriya Öz and Fikret Çeçen) the chief police officers (including Ramazan Akyürek and Yurt Atayun) and the judge (İbrahim Balık) of the case were all known to be Gülenists.

- The so-called evidence for these arrests and detention came later: Three digital documents alleged to be found in a hard disc at the ODATV head office. None of these documents were signed.
- One of these digital documents was entitled “Hanefi.doc”. It contained a few sentences: *“How is the progress on the book of Hanefi? It should be ready before referendum. We need to talk to Nedim, he should speed up. Let’s not directly contact Hanefi.”* The author of these sentences was not clear. But, the prosecutor claimed it was written by Soner Yalçın and this document was submitted as an evidence that Hanefi Avcı was ordered by Ergenekon terrorist organization, via Soner Yalçın and Nedim Şener to write his anti-Gülenist book.
- The other digital document was entitled “Nedim.doc” and it contained a sentence: “Tell Nedim to continue his police contacts”. This sentence was regarded as an evidence by the prosecutor that journalist Nedim Şener was taking orders from the same terrorist organization.
- The last digital document was entitled “SabriUzun.doc”. The content of the document (“Sabri has reservations on the book, try to convince him. Nedim should speak to Ahmet Şık on this matter. Be brave while working on the book. Congratulations to Nedim”) was considered as an evidence that Nedim Şener and journalist Ahmet Şık was taking orders from the same terrorist organization to write the anti-Gülenist book.
- Meanwhile, Gülenist newspapers ZAMAN ( Ekrem Dumanlı) and TARAF (Önder Aytaç, Emrullah Uslu) not only launched a smearing campaign against these people; but also went well beyond all the ethics of journalism to threaten other mainstream journalists with imprisonment who questioned the existence of “Ergenekon” and criticized the handling of these cases.
- The court trial started on 22 November, 2011.

- Soon it was established by three different independent expert reports commissioned by the defendants that all the **digital documents presented by the prosecutors as evidence were, in fact, fake**: They had been produced in other computers, back dated and sent to the ODATV computer from outside through **a virus programme**.
- Yet, the judge and prosecutors were stubborn. It took more than one year for the court to release the detained people. Editor in Chief of the ODATV spent 2 years in prison, while Mr. Kaşif Kozinoglu, the former intelligence executive lost his life in prison.
- Although these individuals were released, the judicial proceedings against them continued until April 2016, when the court, with a new composition of judges and prosecutors, acquitted all of them.

### **Role of FETÖ in ODATV case**

- All the police officers carrying out the investigation into ODATV (including Ramazan Akyürek, Yurt Atayun, Nazmi Ardiç) were Gülenists. Long before the initiation of the police operation, they had wiretapped defendants without a legal authorization; they played a role in forging the digital evidence; they produced one-sided reports full of distortions.
- Prosecutors of the case (including Zekeriya Öz) prevented the defense from seeing “the evidence”, they ignored the questions regarding the authenticity of the digital documents, they also grossly misrepresented their contents in their indictment.
- The judges (including İbrahim Balık) conspired with the police and the prosecutors, did not take into consideration the defendants’ arguments.

- Gülenist media, TARAF and ZAMAN, played a significant role in shaping the public perceptions of the trial and created an atmosphere of terror reigning over the mainstream media.

Today, all the members of this conspiracy are either in jail, or became a fugitive and found a safe haven abroad. For example, Zekeriya Öz is known to be in Germany