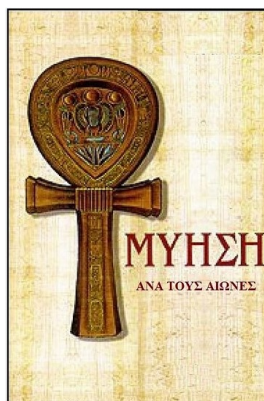


Η Μύηση ανά τους αιώνες



Initiation Through the Ages

PART 1

(INDIA)

PROLOGUE



This is a sacred book. It will provide you with all that both knowledge and Man can offer to the Eternal Truth.

The first roses bloom in the beginning of spring and the last wither in autumn. So, one spring, many centuries ago, did the Sacred Rose bloom. Many were drawn by the beautiful sight and, like bees, drank of its life-giving honey. Then came autumn and the Sacred Rose withered, but the human bees were still under the spell of its beauty and were fed by its honey and remained true to It.

Centuries elapsed. The seasons succeeded one another building up a magnificent edifice. Then, one day in spring, the Lily bloomed and reigned. The bees rushed to It but did not abandon the Rose, and the honey they drank from both these flowers was the nectar that nourished the Spirit.

You must drink of this honey with prudence, for it is both eternal and ephemeral. Never squander this sacred substance in idle words. Urged by the drive of your spiritual youth, do not try, do not aspire to add anything to a Work that has been delivered to you complete. Do not seek to find anything hidden in it, for everything in this sacred book is clear and definite. There is no confusion between things: between the Spirit and Matter, Matter and the Soul, the Soul and the Spirit.

Never forget these distinctions while you study, otherwise you will fall into error. Rein in your rapture for Wisdom because it will cloud your mind and will conceal the truth. Think deeply but do not impose on others the conclusions you have reached. If you wish to teach, do not add anything to these words. Teach them as you have been taught them.

Pray for all others but never for yourself. When your soul is cleansed and your spirit purified, take this book and withdraw to the remotest place where no one can see you, where no earthly noise can reach and disturb your work. Then read, study, ponder and do not get lost in details. Think deeply and focus your powers on the point from which light will spring. And when the light penetrates into you, when finally you come face to face with the terrible secret, may your soul then tremble with fear, for what you will then feel is nothing but the revolt of Matter.

Chapter 1 - Man and God

When the incestuous one took possession of the Earth, a being was born: Man. This being was to experience great wonder and feel immense admiration at the sight of the beauty and variety in Nature. Incest again prevailed on Earth and its fruit was another being: Woman. How great the attraction, how great the love of this human being for the beauty of the Earth!

God secretly watched His creation. He would lie hidden in the fields, concealed behind a daisy, or in the forest, behind a branch, or again by the seashore, under a pebble brought in by the waves. God lovingly kept a secret watch over His creation, the human being.

In the fields, the created human being looked at the daisy with deep emotion and his eyes and his soul were uplifted to unknown regions. In the dark forest, the rustling of the leaves frightened him, and by the seashore, the sight of the pebble gave him joy.

In such a way did the human being perceive God: as absolute goodness and love but also as a Being of great severity. And he felt the omnipresence of this God for Whom he had great veneration.

At times, the beauty and magnificence of the work of Creation awed him and made him feel his smallness. He was made aware of his weakness, and his respect for God was mingled with fear. To avoid His presence, he took refuge in the caves, deserting the surface of the earth, which he imagined could not but be the dwelling of the powerful Being Who transformed everything.

And when night spread its veil and the kingdom of the God of peace and joy was succeeded by that of the dark and severe God, Man felt his fear grow as the darkness deepened. Then a muffled and secret whisper, a humble prayer rose from these shelters of the night, a prayer from a being still lacking conscience, yet desiring to appease his God and attract His mercy. This secret whisper, this muffled and humble complaint of a passive soul, this sound whose grandeur no human harmony has ever attained, was the solid bond expressed every day, the bond that linked the Creator to the created one.

At the break of dawn, Man entrusted himself to the kindness of the God of day and stopped praying. Under the sun's rays, his strength - not sufficiently revived by his troubled night's sleep - regained its vitality; joy replaced sorrow and once again Man began to admire the work of the Creator. The fruits and roots of the trees fully satisfied his hunger and he received them with great pleasure as a gift from his God.

The male lived alone in the vast expanses of the Earth. Then suddenly, he saw the created female. The two beings were troubled when brought face to face. The woman was shy and felt her cheeks blush. She put her hands before her to hide her nakedness. The man covered himself too, for he felt that his God was watching him.

Unconsciously they started walking side by side on the deserted Earth and when they got to a tree they sat in its shade. The woman fell into a deep sleep while the man, cradling her in his arms, began to sing a sweet melody. This was the first love song. The mystery of the first Union was taking place. The woman woke up in the man's arms; she lived in him and he lived in her. The Divine mission on Earth was accomplished and God returned to His dwelling, leaving behind Him His Influence, which was to preserve His accomplished work.

In the beginning Man was in a subconscious state due to his previous isolation. The presence of the woman put an end to this and he gradually rose to self-conscience because of the need of effusion (utterance) which he now felt growing in

him. The need he felt to utter and make known both his feelings and his observations of the external world urged him to expressions that were eventually to end in speech.

Melody and mimicry were the first means of human expression. They were eventually replaced by the first utterance - a primary and rudimentary speech, yet one of truth - a kind of humming or confused noises and sounds, borrowed in great part from Nature. This was succeeded by the imitation of the cries of the animals living on the vast expanses of the Earth. Thus Man developed utterance and made it more complex. Croaking was added to the humming and eventually it prevailed. Finally, he managed to express himself in speech and this started a new era.

Still closely connected with his Creator, Man felt the need to express his devotion to Him by natural means. This was the beginning of worship, which preceded and later gave way to religion.

Worship is the great love for the Supreme Being and faith in It in all simplicity, deprived of all interference of reason to complicate it. Religion, on the other hand, is the combination of worship and dogma; it is faith expressed by a natural act but reasoned and complicated by another series of truths applied to the worship of the Divine. Worship played a leading part in the birth of religion by offerings, dedications and sacrifices.

Originally Men built an altar for the Creator and brought to Him the most beautiful of the first gifts of Nature; the first flowers and the first ripe fruit were retained and offered to God. No conscious being dared touch this sacred offering, which was a token of the respect of the humble ones on Earth for their God. It was left as food for animals or was returned to Nature.

Dedication soon replaced and perfected these offerings. To the flowers and fruit, Man added the first bird caught, the first lamb, the first kid goat, the firstborn child - the fruit of earthly love. He let the animals go free in the virgin forests but kept the dedicated ones in captivity, for he considered them the property and dwelling of his God.

Dedication was succeeded by sacrifice. Flowers, fruit, animals and at times even human beings were prey to the altar of God. This necessary evil was the first step towards dogma, for privileged persons were dedicated to perform the custom of sacrifice. They alone carried out the great rituals of Man's worship of God.

Thus a class of priesthood was created. It had the privilege of carrying out the rituals of worship. Man no longer had the right to worship his God without the mediation of priests. The effusion of the human soul towards its Creator was fenced in by the rules and privileges of the priesthood.

The priests were the first to establish dogma, and religion saw the light under their authority and protection. The priest enjoyed freedom and had absolute consciousness of his mission; he dedicated his life to the duties of worship and the research of things unknown. He was the one to disclose to Men the mysteries of Creation. He was the one to impart to them the knowledge of sacred things.

Yet, from the very first years, the priests got carried away by ambition. Their guilty schemes took up most of their time; they lost their sense of duty and neglected their sublime task, which was Initiation into the divine mysteries.

They took advantage of Man's artlessness in his faith and confidence in God, which was extended to those who officiated this worship. The priest thus became the absolute authority and tyrant and proved to be the most despotic and most cruel leader of society. He wielded his power over all, down to the lowest, and used this power to serve his individual and personal interests. And Man, in continuous

oppression and a victim of continuous injustice, in his naive faith, believed that he was constantly exposed to the slings and arrows of an irascible Divinity.

The priesthood was so blinded and degraded by ambition, tyranny and baseness, that the sublime principle of the worship of a Unique God, a Supreme Spirit, the Creator of the Universe, was soon lost.

This perfect dogma that reveals the grandeur of Wisdom, the fatherly Love of God, His mercy and absolute Justice, this perfect dogma of Truth which bore the stamp of such splendour and beauty that it overshadowed every deceitful figment of the imagination, gradually died from Man's memory and gave way to polytheism. This appeared under three forms: animal, stellar and mental.

Originally, these blind and faithless priests lifted animals to the class of divinities. Soon, however, Man's sacred instinct steered him away and allowed him to unmask this abomination. The divine character was then transposed to the stars and planets that Man could observe gliding in the firmament. Stellar polytheism met with the same fate as animal polytheism. Then, under the influence of his deluded imagination, the priest's mind gave birth to the mental religion. So great was the number of these gods, that humans ended up worshipping beings whose existence was very questionable. Their confused spirit pushed superstition to the extremes of irrationality and they ended up believing that they came across these imaginary gods in the streets and even in their very homes.

The Supreme Lord of Creation looked on impassive at the evil work of the priests and sacrificers. Still, human decadence spread, poisoning and killing the spirit. The intermediate Celestial Plane was devoid of all human consciousness. God saw that Man was on the course which would sever him completely from Him. He saw that the numbers of the lost sheep multiplied and that corruption would complete the destruction of the human species. He then took pity on His children and decided to come to the assistance of His own creations. He ordered the leaders of the Celestial Dwelling to descend to the lower planes and become incarnate on the earthly plane so as to reinstate the straight course that had been cut short by Man's ambition and superficiality. This would allow Men to resume their ascent towards the Creator.

Then, beings of great intelligence were born on Earth and the age of the Chosen Ones (the Elect), of the Angels and the Prophets was inaugurated.

When one of these privileged beings appeared on Earth, humanity was humbled, repented for its errors and the Celestial mercy reconciled Man with his God. Once the Chosen One withdrew, the plunderer and desecrator of the divine mysteries would again make his appearance. This bloodthirsty animal exploited the fame of the Chosen One and canonized him as a saint, the better to delude and corrupt Men and satisfy his own ambitions.

This was the one and only reason that made some men of a superior spirituality rally together. They had been trained by the Chosen Ones and had received higher knowledge from them. They saw that the truths of their venerable Masters were degraded and perverted by the plunderers who were the privileged caste. They then gathered secretly, formed an invisible chain and established relations between Man and God firmly and everlastingly. No ambition, no tyranny, no 'connections' or personal aims ever distorted or disturbed the pure assemblies of the Great Mystics. Anything that might possibly develop into a defect was excluded by the very regulations and mores of those who took part in the Secret Societies of those times. It was only by this means that Man was able to reinstate his relationship with God and apply himself to the deep knowledge of mysteries.

Chapter 2 - Secret Societies

When Man first felt the urge to satisfy his substantial needs and was first compelled to fight for them, when the god of movement took possession of him and of his fellowmen, when the struggle for prevalence troubled the serenity of the astral currents of the Earth, then opposition and discord first appeared among Men - opposition not only in their material interests but also on the spiritual plane. Needs and desires differed according to the beings themselves and Men therefore thought and acted in different ways in their attempts to satisfy these needs and desires and to accord their actions with their aims.

This difference in thoughts and actions has been the cause of the eternal struggle which is so vividly symbolized by the ancient Hindu as a universal serpent whose head pursues its tail and tries to bite it.

Interest led to discord among Men, not only in the field of action but also in that of thought. This last made the division still greater and all convergence and conciliation impossible. On the other hand, similarity of thought has always united Men in the name of a common ideal and made them rally together under one and the same emblem. Thus, the first sects were established. Still, the union and agreement in material and mental interests divided nations into states or autonomous collectivities. An historical study of these divisions and oppositions reveals great mysteries to the Initiate, as well as surprises.

Before studying the subject of secret societies, let us glance briefly at what History discloses about the formation of the first religions.

Men were carried away by their deluded imagination, whose puppets they became, and ended up in varying and opposing spiritual conceptions. In due course, this same disorderly and unbridled imagination affected even the vast regions of action and knowledge and gave rise to great irrationalities. These in turn became very real obstacles that were to force Man's spirit into a stubborn fight in his course towards Truth.

Since the beginning of time, men of wisdom have been obliged to fight against the disastrous results of the heated imagination of those who - spurred on by pride and ambition and drawing at will from the very source of speech - have created dogmas and pernicious philosophies with the purpose of imposing their own interests and passions. These fabrications, however, were unable to stand up against or stifle genuine Wisdom, and their instigators resorted to persecutions and wars that have so often brought Man against Man, fighting for power and authority in titanic battles.

A difference between two persons of opposing interests could soon take great proportions, for though Men lived in ignorance and darkness, they took sides in any dispute and formed opposing camps. This eventually led to destructive conflicts and discord among them through the establishment of new nations and the founding of new religions, dogmas and sects.

God never intervened in these disputes but when peace and serenity returned, in His mercy He still desired to ensure Men's evolution by granting them His Providence and restoring order in the two opposing camps. This Providence was given in due time by an envoy, an Elect, who carried out the will and plans of God and brought the lost sheep back to Him. The evil that ensued from Men's shortcomings was thus restricted by divine intervention. Though evil did not manage to cut short Men's destiny, it contributed to the creation of both division among them as also great variety in their manner of worshipping the Eternal Truth.

Since then, the task of the Secret Societies has been to gather the various expressions of this worship, give them form and shape and reassemble them into what best represents the unique Truth and is nearest to universal reality. Yet, due to unexpected findings, this grandiose effort led its followers to the emblem of Unity and Brotherhood. In order to bring their task to a successful end, they felt the need to proceed to a comparative study and extend their research to all religions, so they contacted other secret societies. This co-operation led the wise men of various nations to a common basis of ideas and conceptions because the task of comparison and contrast proved that there were similarities and close bonds between the various forms of worship due to their common Source. The members of these secret societies felt this very strongly and expressed it by setting their whole work under the emblem of Brotherhood.

In spite of their noble aim and emblem, these secret societies suffered grave attacks, even in the very holy of holies of their temples, where their most sacred emblems were desecrated. The secret societies thus became both subject to and a prey of Man's baser passions. They disappeared only to be revived again. Thus, since ages past, just like everything that exists on earth, the secret societies have been subject to birth, life and death and by constant renewal have avoided the voraciousness of time. In spite of failures and vicissitudes they still continue their frenetic course in their quest of the great mysteries, of the unattainable splendour and the unknown idea.

These societies will die again and will again be reborn; they will grow and decline, but in their course, they will have accomplished their ultimate goal. Then Light and Truth will glow and humanity's ignorance will be wiped out forever.

Rivers of blood and martyrs' sighs have set their stamp on the course towards elevation. A thick veil will always separate the secular from the mystic. Man's hands will never be able to lift profanely this mystic veil, woven by such superb sacrifices unless he himself, by his own blood and sighs can become worthy to enter the sacred path.

Chapter 3 - History of the Secret Society of the Menoua (F. Menouas)

Ignorance, woman of complete irrationality and filth, drive your nakedness away from the path of human evolution for behold! Mene (F. Men) appears in the vast field of action of the white race, Mene, the first Elect, the first of the prophets. From Mount Verha he is on his way to the valleys of Saresia.

Mene (F. Men) was born in a humble, out of the way cottage, far from wealth and abundance, and his birth went unnoticed. As soon as he felt that he was past childhood, at the age of 16, he left his parents and the unclean surroundings in which he had lived. Like a pure and frightened bird, he flew towards the heights in search of light, the ecstasy of the soul.

This handsome youth full of vitality and agility, journeyed over hills and dales, scaling the great mountain range that circles India separating it from the lands of the yellow race. Finally, tired of his peregrinations, he settled in a cave, in complete isolation. There he turned his gaze beyond Men's common horizon and found ecstasy in his meditations on a subject that was simple and natural: he meditated on Causes and tried to find them by observing Effects.

Twenty years of isolation and contemplation allowed him to formulate the first principles, to set the foundations of the dogma that was later to give birth to the great religion of Brahma. At the end of this task, Mene arose, left his cave and cleansed himself in the waters of a spring. Then, turning to that part of the sky where the source of natural light shone, he raised his voice in a hymn, a song of songs, the real Veda.

"Oh Brahma, dynamic force, infinite, You, Who emit Your majestic and inexhaustible influence throughout the whole Universe, Universal Brahma in the Universe, great in the great, small in the small, least in Man, Brahma, absolute force in the intellect, creator of Wisdom, founder of the laws that hold the Universe, the Earth and the Being!

"Brahma! Your ray has penetrated into my being, my heart and my loins, and in its passage it has revealed the great mysteries of Your noble virtues.

"Brahma! Your word, expressing Your will, was imprinted in the Universe. It formulated it and Your Will was done. Thus You created everything, from the largest to the smallest. Your merit is absolute, for You created the largest before the smallest, the Universe before the Cosmos, the Cosmos before Man and Man before things, even unto the smallest. Man will never be able to equate himself to You, for You have established the supreme law that forbids Man to create the largest before the smallest. According to this law, Man is able to create the large only by first creating the small.

"Brahma! You created the Earth and set three seals on Your creation: the seal of the Intellect, the seal of Wisdom and the seal of Love. The seal of the Intellect gave harmony to forms, the seal of Wisdom directed the created things towards their goal and the seal of Love, joining harmony to usefulness, provided the urge of movement and life and allowed Your beings, created by Love, to live in You as You live in them.

"Brahma! You have set four other seals on Creation so that things may be discerned and differentiated. You have crowned it with a fifth seal, Man, so that he may suffer the irrevocability of Your laws until he is able to overcome them, subject them and use them according to his own desires and Your will.

"Brahma! You have created two types of persons, two types of being, two prototypes, so as to ensure Your Work of Creation. No power on Earth can unseal the ten seals of Brahma.

"Brahma! Your power is eternal and whoever denies it shall be annihilated and thrown to the abyss of abysses, to chaos and ignorance"

These were the words of Mene's hymn, at the end of which a brightness shone like lightning and the Chosen One fell into ecstasy and heard a voice saying:

"Mene, Chosen One among all others, son of the Heavens, friend of the Earth, My light has penetrated into your spirit, heart and loins, and you have lived in it. Your lips have spoken the Truth. Go down to the valley among the Men of the white race, tell them these words of Truth and your work will have My blessing."

When Mene came to, his soul was filled with great joy and happiness. He saw that he had recovered the strength and good health that had deteriorated because of his long asceticism. He then rose transformed and went among Men. The first human face he encountered was that of his father, who became his first disciple and spiritual child.

In due time he acquired seven other disciples who became apostles, travelling throughout ancient India. They formed the Great Society of the Menoua and its seven great Schools of Indian philosophy. The work of these Schools is the magnificent poetry of the Vedas.

Chapter 4 - The Dogma of the Society of the Menoua

The dogma of the School of the Menoua is presented by Manou (F.Mamu) himself, the Supreme Parabrahma of the School of the Menoua.

Gathering his disciples under the shade of a tree, Manou said:

"Brethren, join me in spirit and may our union protect the Temple we are about to dedicate to our God. If I am the foundation stone of this Temple, you are to be its pillars and walls, and those that come after us will be its dome and roof.

"Where are you off to in such haste, oh Vanity in human form? Do you really think that you can dazzle Brahma? Your diamond-studded mansions are but mean huts in His Eyes. Do you really think that you can move His Absolute Imagination, which has set Its seal on the most wondrous things in Creation, things that your own nature, oh vain one, has not yet been able to grasp? The brightest and most brilliant light of the Earth is but a feeble spark in the eyes of Brahma, whereas a simple thought, raised towards Him by his created being, is the beacon that guides Brahma amid His flock.

"Your Temple, dear brethren, will be Nature and your own selves, for any site outside Nature will always be sullied. Gather together under a tree. Its shady dome and your stature will represent the elements of your Temple. Set up your Temple in order to pray and dissolve it before leaving. Fear dirt, clean your bodies, for the Law of the 4 Seas is fatal. Never abuse the created beings that bear the 5th Seal of Brahma and always proceed straight ahead in the spirit of Goodness and Wisdom.

"Do not judge the actions of others or your own for, by His Seals, Brahma is the only judge of the Being. No one ever dies, no one lives. All of us, immortal, yearn for the Grandeur of Brahma. Those who have come and gone are not dead but are truly alive, for all works of Brahma are eternal. Cleanse your body whenever it is defiled, because to allow it to be defiled is like allowing your Spirit to be defiled. And to the

Supreme Creator Brahma, one who has a defiled Spirit is like one with the plague, full of ulcers, dirt and sores. Be severe and do not allow your Spirit to be overcome by desires. Protect yourselves against this, for it is the road in which the Spirit becomes corrupt and dissolute, it is the road that leads to madness.

"By the seven Seals that connect your being to Brahma, I exhort you ever to be present in all your actions throughout your life. Learn to attain this state through prayer and meditation. Evil does not exist anywhere, for everything that has been created has been weighed on the scales of harmony and perfection. Evil is therefore the deviation of the Spirit from its even course towards evolution. Deviation made unconsciously can be rectified by acts of atonement, but in the eyes of Brahma nothing can atone for a deviation consciously made unless it is true contrition.

"When you are alone, Brahma does not turn His eyes towards you. When there are two of you in absolute union, you draw His attention. When there are ten of you, Brahma watches you favourably and when there are more than ten, Brahma Himself is with you.

"Proceed in the path of Goodness, the path of Truth, if not for yourself, at least for the sake of others. You have been created for two purposes: to acquire Wisdom and perfection in Love itself and to be of use as an example and to give to those who are on the same path. To live for yourself alone is to live in negation of the being. To wish to live for others is vanity incarnate. These are two extremes that never meet. To live for yourself as well as for others - this is Wisdom, the real purpose of those who desire perfection. When you are pure in body and soul, you need not fear Brahma, for the waves of His anger rush only into the forbidden areas and woe betide the one crossing their path.

"Believe me, brethren, persistence in the path traced out by Brahma gradually becomes a habit, then a law and finally one's very nature. He who is able to bring about such transformation in himself can truly hope that a place of distinction in the region of immortality awaits him.

"These are the principles that every person should have in their conscience. These should act as a guide to them through the dark passages to immortality. Those who follow my steps should follow my words and obey my advice. They will have nothing to add for the completion of my work and nothing to subtract for the efficacy of their own."

Chapter 5 - Ritual of the Menoua

In a dastardly act, Manou was murdered by the Hindu priests who considered the great philosopher as one who persecuted and subverted their religion. In the aftermath, they usurped his principles and made them laws. They then lured the followers of the martyr-prophet by honouring and canonizing him. One wonders if this is the fate that awaits all Chosen Ones!

Yet the devout disciples and the zealous apostles of Manou did not accept this infamy. They withdrew to the heights of the Himalayas and there retained the beautiful tradition of the great Chosen One in all its purity. Six thousand years before the Renaissance, the great mountain Brotherhood of the Menoua waged its first battle against the monster that rushed out of the abyss - the priesthood.

The Ritual of Initiation of all Novices was as follows:

The Novice could in no way be a close blood relative of any of the hierophants (no closer than a 3rd degree of relation). He was first tested spiritually by the wise men of the Order. His horoscope was worked out, based on the 7 seals of God's Creation and if it proved unfavourable, the Novice was refused admission. If he passed the above tests successfully, then his face was scarred by three cuts - one on the forehead and one on either cheek - so that he might renounce all earthly pleasures and thus give his spirit the chance to accomplish the purpose of its incarnation.

The Ritual took place in a virgin forest crossed by a river. The Novice had to go through this forest alone, calling on the name of Manou every ten steps. At the bank of the river, he came face to face with the first hierophant of the Ritual and was asked: "Where do you come from, you unclean person, infected by the infamy of the priests?" To which the Novice answered, "I come from beyond the forest". Then he was again deterred by these words: "The way ahead is forbidden. Don't you see that Nature itself obstructs it and obliges you to get into the river to purify and cleanse yourself from the filth you are burdened with?" The Novice then fell into the river and swam across it. At the far bank, he was met by the second hierophant of the Ritual who accosted him with these words: "Oh bold and daring one, what is your business here in the region of Manou? Why do you come to disturb the peace of his eternal sleep? Your body may have been cleansed by the waters, but is your spirit worthy to be in his presence?" "I am indeed poor and unworthy but wish to get to his grave and let my tears water the flowers that bloom eternal on his holy dwelling place", the Novice replied. "You can pass. Your innocence makes you worthy of the Supreme Parabrahma!" was the answer. The Novice then proceeded straight ahead, alternately taking three steps erect and four on his knees. Finally he reached a clearing where all the roads of the Earth met. In the very centre, ten high priests formed a circle round an open coffin, the symbol of the Temple of Manou. On reaching this clearing, the Novice was attacked by four men who pretended to stab him four times on the chest and three times on the back. They then threw him into the coffin and closed the lid on him. While in the coffin, the Novice heard the ten high priests discourse on the eternal dogma of the Parabrahma. When they came to the part concerning resurrection, the leading High Priest called out: "Behold, our Supreme Master has sent us a neophyte as another link in the sacred chain of our Great Union." Finally the Novice was let out of the coffin and given the habit he was to wear throughout his noviciate. It was a simple white sack with three holes, one for the head and two for the arms. Thus dressed, he became one of the servants who were obliged to follow the steps of their Teacher and role model.

There were two grades in the Order of the Menoua, that of Novice and that of Adherent (Follower). The habit of the Adherent was much the same as that of the Novice and differed only in that it was slightly larger and adorned with a red fringe at the hem. The Adherents went through the following procedure: they would take off their sack, lay it at their feet and cover their private parts with a white cloth. After cleansing themselves, they would kneel facing the east and call out the name of Manou thrice. Then they would rise and lift their thoughts and prayers to Brahma, repeating the words that the Supreme Parabrahma had uttered when enlightened.

Chapter 6 - The Sandrapi (F. Sandrapys)

A century had elapsed since the death of the Great Parabrahma Manou. His disciples had dispersed, worn out by the persecution of the priests. Although the name of Manou still adorned the front of the temples, his fame was dwindling. Some of his followers had tried to re-establish the School of their Venerable Master but without success. With the death of the last disciples, this effort definitely passed into history, never to be repeated.

A youth was walking in the solitary regions of the Himalayas, disappointed and weary of men and the mundane. He had abandoned everything and gone to the vast wilderness in search of peace and serenity of soul. He was a simple worker - he dug pits and wells - but his spirit was of a nobler mettle. Nobler desires touched his thoughts, moved his soul and made his heart beat faster. "Was I born for just such base work?" he would often whisper to himself. This thought kept nagging at him and his whole being rebelled. He would dream of those blue mountains lost in the horizon and feel strangely drawn to them by a hidden power that grew ever stronger.

The day came when he could no longer resist this attraction. He abandoned his tools and left. When he reached the mountain he felt the intensive cold and was filled with fear. He thought of turning back. What with the darkness of night and the ever-increasing cold, he was worn out and afraid. He looked for some shelter and luckily soon found himself before an opening of a cave. He hesitated for a minute then entered. Feeling his way to a corner, he lay down and immediately fell into an exhausted sleep. When he woke up next morning, he was dazzled by the sight before him: a young woman of extreme beauty, in very fine clothes and expensive jewelry stood looking at him with kindness. She was the first to break the silence.

"Where do you come from stranger and how did you manage to enter my grounds. I am the queen of this region and am surprised to see that my guards have allowed you to trespass into this sacred land."

"Gentle lady," said the youth, "I am deeply sorry that I have unwittingly offended your wishes. I shall immediately relieve you of my presence".

"No, don't", she answered. "Since you have transgressed my laws - albeit unwittingly - you must now stay on and serve me. Follow me".

The youth rose and followed her. They went through secret underground passages to the palace, where the youth took on his new duties. From that day on he waited on her at table and promptly carried out all her wishes.

Happy with this new state of things, he kept giving silent thanks to God but as time passed things changed. New and strange feelings began to torment his soul. He'd grow pale whenever he was in her presence, and cry in her absence.

Fate seemed to smile on him, however, for he noticed that the Queen herself grew pale and seemed extremely troubled when he accidentally touched her. Yet, whatever her feelings for him, he could not dare hope that a Queen was likely to fall in love with a plain workman, so he decided to leave. This he tried to do as soon as he had the chance but the underground passageways were so complex that he wasn't able to find his way out and wandered about not even able to return to the palace.

Exhausted by fatigue and emotion, he sat down and his thoughts wandered to the woman he adored. All of a sudden he was startled to hear her voice calling him. He rose and at the first turning saw her distraught with worry.

"Why did you leave?" she asked, falling into his arms. "Why do you wish to avoid me? You were a servant before, but from now on you will be the Master. Don't leave me."

A dream had come true! From their love a child was born - a child of great beauty and unusual intelligence. They named him Sandra, which is the Hindinaï for "fruit of love". Time went by in great happiness and the infant grew strong.

One morning the husband woke up to find his wife gone. He picked up the child from its cradle and rushed to the underground passages calling her name. His terror grew when he heard a distant voice say: *"Dry your tears. The woman you have loved so much is no longer of this world. She was a Celestial Nymph and has just flown back, leaving the child as a token of her love. Live for the sake of your son and you will find comfort and solace in him for he is a Chosen One of Brahma."*

Tradition has it that the man was so devastated by his loss that he cried for twenty-four hours and that the child's only nourishment that day was his father's tears.

He eventually found solace through Divine help and from then on lived in this underground dwelling, with one purpose in mind: to raise his son who alone could give him some comfort in his great pain. He gave all his love to this small being who grew stronger every day, showing signs of precocious wisdom.

Sandra grew to manhood and eventually assisted at the death of his father, who happily passed on to the other world, for his soul still yearned for his beloved Nymph. Sandra honoured his father's death and carried out all the proper rituals for the deceased. He then left his underground dwelling and for twelve years wandered in the virgin forests of the Himalayas.

During this period he was often tempted: he was offered great honours and even a throne, but Sandra always refused until finally the hour of his mission drew near. One morning he woke up as if from a torpor and was fully enlightened. He saw the world through different eyes. He could read the past, the present and could foresee the future.

He then turned his steps to the inhabited regions, walking to the rhythm of the hymn he sang, which was a profession of faith to his God.

"Lord of the Universe, Light that glows in the horizons of the Spirit, bright Sun of the vast expanses of the Being, Brahma, Whose warmth animates and fructifies the Universe, how shall I ever be able to pay my dues to You, my Creator? How shall I ever be able to show You my gratitude? Love fills my heart, intoxicates my spirit and deeply moves my whole being. You, Who are the Lord of Thunder and of the Winds that blow at the tops of the high mountains, You alone have been able to inspire this sacred feeling in me. This frail sapling growing in the fertile soil obediently bends and moves with the slightest wind. This harmless insect hidden in the shade of a leaf, leading the quiet life You meant it to live, all the expressions of Nature, from the smallest to the largest, under Your protection, contribute to the realization of Your noble Idea. Everything around me reveals the supreme perfection of its Creator. My admiration for Him grows even greater and my heart is filled with love for His created beings that were made in harmony, goodness, simplicity and chastity. Like me, all Creation whispers sounds that cannot be heard by human ears, Hymns that glorify You, Hymns of admiration for Your Supreme Being. And when all things vibrate in

harmony and the vast Hymn of the Universe rises high towards You, my soul rises in unison and I call out:

"Brahma! Greatness that no one has ever measured, for it is immeasurable. You are blessed for Your works and glorified by Your created beings forever and ever. Supreme Power, Who in eternal isolation live the dream of creation that delights You. The Idea that You conceived was made a realization by the Power of Your breath. You separated the opposing terms - night and day. In Your infinite mercy, You separated Goodness and abolished Evil. You created the Mother of all human destinies, of all Your beings. Supreme Brahma, it is from this Mother that beings draw the necessary strength of hope, desire and solace to fill the void that may appear in the process of their evolution.

"Supreme Brahma! I yearn to extol my worship of You in my heart, where the Mother of all beings, She Who is derived from You, sows the seed of hope and solace. The heart is the only noble area of the being and it alone can be offered to You as a dwelling place. When this sacred vessel, when this being is uplifted for Your glory - whether through tears or joy - then Man becomes aware of the wondrous secret of his noble origin. This is the supreme moment of the union of God and Man who was derived from God.

"Supreme Brahma! My spirit grasps the great Causes of Your profound thoughts but its independence (separation)¹ keeps me apart from You. On my knees, I lift my heart to You with the Hymn that my spirit, in obedience to Your greatness, dictates to it. Hear my plea and respond to it by sending Your vivifying influence and granting to my spirit the noble solace which alone can act like a balm to the pain of this separation."

By this time Sandra had drawn near the inhabited regions where he spread the flowers of his spirit and soul. These flowers adorned the earth he trod on but also formed a poem of divine beauty that prepared the way to his uplifting.

On the way he was joined by all those that were left of the followers of Menoua. They formed the society of the Sandrapi, which flourished and eventually held all the higher political ministerial offices of the time.

The already decadent priesthood was so shaken that it was almost wiped out and very soon religion was transferred to the hands of secular ministers. Though subjugated and mortified in these hard times, the hieratic monster was even now preparing the harsh blow that would later cause such harm and havoc, tearing people apart and setting them against one another.

Dogma of the Sandrapi

Sandra lay on his deathbed surrounded by his numerous disciples. Even now, with his last breath, the great man spread the word, thus completing his noble mission.

"Dear brethren," he said, "serenity of soul is Man's most significant and beautiful accomplishment in life.

"Do not use your heart for any base end - material or mundane - for God has given you a heart to worship Him with. Why do you wish to sully this sacred vessel

wrapped in a threefold mantle, fill it with carnal desires and use it for unspeakable baseness? The heart is the temple of Brahma; it is the vessel that becomes the dwelling place for the infinite goodness of the Creator. Is there anything more pure and healthy than Man's heart? When a cult is embedded in your heart, you worship God. Drive away all rationalization and computation, all number, quality, quantity and volume, for even these abstract meanings can help you measure nothing more than a rock or a distance, and you will be able to grasp only those ideas that fall within logic. Trying to understand God by these means is like insulting Him, like trying to diminish His infiniteness. The infinite can be measured by means of only one instrument, the heart - the heart that vibrates, throbs and is moved, the heart that is the sacred area, the temple, the dwelling place of God. Love, Divine Providence, Hope, and Solace are the four pillars that support the dome of this Temple. Under this dome you must exalt the secret powers of your heart and it is only thus that you will be able to grasp the vibrations of the Almighty Lord.

"Dear brethren, I have taught you the noble acts of this great secret and your whole being was often moved by the Divine cause. The blood in your veins comes from a common source - the heart. Many are the stops that it makes in its course through the body. In just the same way, Divine Influence springs from a heart - the universal centre-point. It passes through us all but it is only by exaltation that we can make our own heart cause a momentary stop in the course of this Influence. It is senseless to try to know God through Wisdom. If we feel God through our hearts, we can get nearer to the grandeur of our Divine origin.

"Do not fear God because of your actions, for He is very great and you are very small. Fear your actions themselves, for they devitalize your heart, they are sure to separate you and distance you greatly from any universal communion with the Supreme Brahma. Live in peace and may the following adage always be on the pediment of your Temple:

'Love, Heart, Hope, Solace, Goodness'"

With these words, the noble Sandra passed away. Tradition has it that his body was torn in two and a glowing, throbbing heart flew up to the heavens.

Chapter 8 - Ritual of the Sandrapi

After Sandra's death, his disciples convened in a session during which they lifted their hearts in accordance with his secret teaching, were enlightened and founded the dogma of their late Master.

The Temple was erected in a forest. Its dome and four fronts were supported by four huge pillars. It was open on all sides and stood on a raised platform four steps high. The natural setting was completed by a surrounding garden. The words 'Love, Hope, Solace, Divine Providence' were engraved on each pediment and a glowing golden heart hung from the centre of the dome. The words 'Goodness, Charity, Faith, Hope' were engraved on the steps of two opposite sides and the words 'Mercy Humility, Sincerity, Simplicity' on the other two opposite sides. The Temple was made of porcelain and the inscriptions were gilded. One of these Temples still lies in ruins on a mountainside of the Himalayas.

The supreme hierophant in command of all others would sit cross-legged in the centre of the Temple under the glowing heart and, according to tradition, face the east. Four other chiefs sat cross-legged around him on every side, between the Temple's supporting pillars.

The Temple was consecrated for rituals in the following manner: Each of the five hierophants held a drum and, with the first rays of the sun through the foliage, the Master of the Heart beat his drum thrice and said in a loud voice:

"Brethren, at the sight of the bright ray which is a symbol of the heartbeats of the superb death of the Great Brahma, I lift my voice and call upon you to rouse your love in a hymn to our God."

The Master of Love then beat his drum once and cried: "Sandra, You who animate our spirit, Love incarnate, hear the voice of your faithful servants and come to fill their souls with this Divine essence."

Then the Master of Hope beat his drum once and said: "Hope of both the small and the great, the ignorant and the wise, the Divine rays penetrate into our hearts and animate our spirit with everlasting hope".

The Master of Solace would then beat his drum once and say: "May misery disappear from the face of the earth, may Hope, Love and the Heart drive this horror away and may Divine Providence - the Supreme Brahma's divine gift - protect this Temple dedicated to His love."

Next came the turn of the Master of Divine Providence. He beat his drum and said: "Master of the Heart, and all you, Masters of the Faith, the Mother of Men has covered this sacred Temple with Her protective veil. Apply yourselves without fear of evil and let the noblest feelings within you flow freely during this ritual."

Lastly, the Master of the Heart would beat his drum three times and say: "Sandra has spoken through the mouth of the Master of Divine Providence. Brethren, let us open our Temple - our own Heart - and let the wondrous harmonies of our love spring forth to rise, like beautiful entities, to the Lord, the Supreme Brahma."

During the ritual itself, the other members of the Order of the Sandrapi would sit cross-legged around the Temple, forming a barrier.

The ritual of Initiation was as follows: the candidate who had previously passed all the preordained trials successfully would enter the Temple from the eastern side and kneel before the Master of the Heart, bend his head low and listen to him proclaim the dogma of Sandra. He would then swear never to reveal the names of the members of the Order, never to neglect teaching love to the secular, as well as - and in particular - to the priests, and, if ever persecuted, to walk the road to martyrdom with a song on his lips.

Every Sandrapi carried with him four poles of Indian cane tied to the four corners of a red or pale blue cloth. When the sun rose high, the Sandrapi would poke the poles into the soil in such a way as to stretch the cloth above, then sit in its shade and sing the Hymn of Love. If he was attacked by a wild beast or found himself in some kind of danger, he would again set up this temporary temple and stand under its shelter.

The Order of Sandra flourished for 5 centuries, spread widely and had a great number of members. This cult was adopted in the Orient in more than 1500 temples, and Monarchs and Emperors had the sacred protection of the Sandrapi. It finally declined through the fault of reformers who claimed to be incarnations of Sandra. The leaders followed them and the Order eventually disappeared. It merged into the religion of Brahma and added a page to the Book of the Vedas.

Chapter 9 - History of the Society of the Haroupi (F. Haroupys)

The few remaining Sandrapi mystics, dispersed and persecuted, were forced to abandon the inhabited regions and seek refuge in the mountains. There, they chose the highest and most inaccessible locations for their Temples.

One day, as two of these Sandrapi were wandering in these deserted regions, gathering roots and fruit, they heard cries of pain. They ran in the direction of the voice and saw a woman of great beauty in labour, alone and unprotected. They gave her all the help they could and when the sun was at its highest she gave birth to a baby boy. They laid the infant on banana leaves and turned to assist the mother. She had removed one of her gold earrings of a serpent biting its tail and had put it on the child's earlobe which she had pierced.

All of a sudden, in spite of their cries of astonishment and terror, a gigantic eagle fell among them, grabbed the infant in its talons and disappeared. The woman passed out never to recover and the two Sandrapi were left to finish their sad work. They dug a grave between two banana trees and buried her. They then carved the details of this tragic incident on the barks of two trees and named the child Har - that is, Heat.

Time passed. Twelve years later, the two Sandrapi, old men by now, returned to the place where they had been the only witnesses of this strange drama. As they stood there collecting their thoughts and memories, they saw the branches of the trees part and a bright-eyed boy appear before them. With a cry of amazement the two Sandrapi saw something that made them quake. A beautiful gold earring adorned one of the boy's ears. They cried out as one: "Har, the kidnapped child!"

The child drew near and asked, "Venerable elders, why do you look at me in such amazement?"

"We see that the Great Brahma has set on you the great seal of destiny. This is the very place where you were born, where your mother lies buried and where you can read the story of your life on the trees."

The child did not seem at all surprised by this but said: "Venerable elders, you are too taken up with details. I was born on earth and my mother was of the earth. The story of my life is that of the earth."

Such words from a twelve-year-old stunned the old Sandrapi. They took him under their tutelage and Har then got his first philosophic education on earth. Thus the tradition of Manou and Sandra was renewed.

When he came of age, Har was enlightened and was granted the gift of prophecy. He then started the discipline of fasting and abstinence by withdrawing to a dark cave for forty days and nights. When he reappeared, he first cleansed himself in the clear waters of a stream - just as Manou had done erstwhile - and then went to his mother's grave, next to which were the graves of the two old Sandrapi. Following their tradition, Har also carved their story on nearby trees. He then knelt before these sacred relics, placed both hands on the soil and chanted in a melodious, serene and clear voice:

"You who bear witness to my desires, you who are the descendants of the noble generation of Men thrown into space by the glance of the Great Brahma, I evoke and greet you. Carry my voice and my thoughts to the Supreme Creator and be the interpreters of my admiration and worship before His Work. His Power moved the Universe and made the spaces vibrate. At His command, the first Generators of humankind appeared in the depths of the abyss, fell before His Grandeur and said,

‘Supreme Brahma, absolute in quantity and quality, we stand before You sad and desperate because rebellion was instigated among us, rending us apart throughout the wide expanses and shattering our being to pieces. You see the signs of this mutiny in the Cosmos. Forgive us, Celestial Brahma, for it is not we but our offspring who have insulted You. Forgive our offspring, Celestial Brahma, for they only obeyed fate’.

"Noble souls," Har went on, addressing the dead that lay at his feet, "You are my interpreters before the Great and Supreme Brahma. Tell Him all that makes me despair. I too am one of the rebels. I too am an instigator of this mutiny, the 6th cause among the others. Yet my contrition will be felt and seen during the rest of my life. Tell Him that His Power has opened the eyes of my body and that the eyes of my spirit have initiated me into His wondrous secrets. My purpose is henceforth laid out for me and the Law of the Return (Reinstatement) will be accomplished, for it is a Law which each one of us and our descendants should follow.

"You, noble deceased, bear witness to this before the Supreme Brahma and tell Him that I shall declare to all human beings that I have not come to reveal to them the secrets of Heaven but to lead my flock to the regions of its origin."

Har then fell into a deep meditation and an ecstatic trance. He saw his Mother appear before him and heard Her tell him, on behalf of the Supreme Brahma, the fundamentals of his mission.

Before leaving for Her Celestial Regions, his august Mother added: *"Your deeds will let loose all Evil against you. Do not share your ideas with others. Do not consort with anyone, for your fall will entail the fall of all your brethren and, together with them, the whole of humankind."*

Har carried out his mission effectively but when it was about to reach its end, he yielded to the love of a queen and fell. His Mother covered the bed of his adulteration with a veil so as to save the Dogma, the Order and Society.

Har died, hidden in the arms of his lover, while all the time the faithful Haroupi, ignorant of the fall of their Master, thought him dead. They went on filling their temples with incense and addressing their prayers to the lost Chosen One, to the one they considered a martyr!

Chapter 10 - Dogma of the Haroupi

One day, as Har was sitting with his disciples, he was inspired. He concentrated for a while then rose and, with a piercing look, lifted his arms over their heads and said:

"Brethren, disciples and Chosen Ones of Parabrahma, I come to extend the beneficial vitality that was stamped on all beings by the Law of the Creator with the seal of forms. To worship Brahma you must first understand Him and the closer your knowledge of Him, the greater your worship. But do not ever be so rash as to desire to fathom the unfathomable. The fundamental desire of all beings is the knowledge of what exists within them. Then comes the desire of knowledge of all that surrounds them, and lastly the knowledge of what is above them. Yet, as your studies in all these three progress, do not let your spirit become excited and exalted with pride and arrogance, for these two are the only means by which the Almighty Creator will drive you away from the sphere of Wisdom and hinder you from participating in the happiness of the Chosen Ones.

"Avoid pride and arrogance but always keep your self-respect.

"Avoid evil and spite but be severe.

"Avoid wrath but be energetic.

"Avoid everything that might lure you to passiveness; become active.

"Finally, avoid negation and cultivate all that is creative within you.

"While you work, focus your energy and effort on the subject you are dealing with. Do not allow any alien or wanton thoughts to intervene, for these parasites would only defile, wipe out and absorb the productive activity of your spirit. Do not be deluded by natural appearances and their contradictions. Always subject these to logic and make no concessions to Matter against your own reason. Believe me, who speak to you in all truth, the Father, the Creator of light and of reasonable things, reigns above us whereas below us is that anti-productive, destructive power which tries to delude us and lure us to the workshop of destruction and annihilation through the false variety by which it makes all natural phenomena appear to us. I speak in all sincerity: protect yourselves by means of all your mental powers from this calamitous power, which is the utter destruction of the human species.

"When you wish to concentrate after some pure and healthy reasoning, you must first dissociate yourself from this fatal power. You can break off all contact with it if you make use of only the reasoning creatures and creations of Brahma and avoid all those that bear the stamp of this fatal power. When I say 'reasoning creations' I speak of everything that has been created by the Generator of light: in the vegetable kingdom, all the plants except those that are rough to the touch, bitter to the taste and cause irritation to whoever eats them; in the animal kingdom, all animals except those that creep, insects and parasites, namely, all those that have more than four legs as well as snakes, lizards, eels, frogs, scorpions, spiders (*midoupis* and *farsis* in the French Text) and in sum all those that insidiously harm the human being.

"I also say to you in all candour that though the stones and the dust of the earth are derived from the Generator of the light, all metals except iron bear the stamp of the fatal power. Therefore avoid all concoctions of this power and, when you wish to concentrate, set between you and them the barrier of the creatures that are faithful to God, the creatures that are purified by a ray of Divine Essence.

"Brahma, the Great Revealer of secret causes can be found on three levels that you should get to know. He can be found within us, within our vile body, outside of us, in Nature, and also in His celestial abode. He acts within us by inspiring and ennobling us. In Nature, He gives life and hope to beings, and from His celestial abode, He steers the Universe.

"When therefore you concentrate, in this supreme appeal, cover your face well so that your non-finite form may appear before Brahma and submit to His presence and so that the fatal power, the god of darkness, quaking with terror, may not dare attack you. Thus covered, prostrate yourselves and call upon the Great Brahma in mental worship and say unto Him: 'Brahma, Supreme Father of created beings, may Your Power drive away all intemperance from my intellect. Make your Divine currents flow onto my being and animate my spirit with your Divine virtues. Enlighten my soul and heal my body with the Divine and vivifying flux of the earth. Brahma, Father of all creatures, have mercy on my appeal, do not be too severe for my unconscious acts, which result from my ignorance. Punish my spirit if it has consciously strayed, and my body for its sick wantonness. Sanctify my will power which only desires to worship You and may Your light guide it.' If you appeal to the Great Brahma with such heartache, be certain that His Spirit will take part in your effort and enlighten your soul.

"You can pray within the Temple or in the midst of Nature, but you should never pray in a place that you have defiled. Always pray alone. Do not ever have partners

in your prayers, for you can never tell what feelings your companions may have during their prayer with you. He who prays is responsible for all those he has drawn to the prayer with him and his responsibility to Brahma is great.

"All cloth used in the Temple should be of linen or of wool and should be white, except for the cloth covering the altar and that worn by the sacrificial priest. These two should be of the colour of the sun.

"When you enter the Temple and are under its dome, do not ever turn to look back, for Evil always lurks behind whereas God always precedes. Let your eyes always be turned towards the Good and avoid looking at Evil lest you be bewitched by it. If you are closely set upon by the temptations of this fatal power, cry out: 'Brahma, the Lord of the Universe, is the Lord I have always served, the Lord I still serve and will serve for ever and ever!' In the face of your persistence, Evil will be annihilated and you will be saved.

"Always face danger fearlessly and if your limbs betray you through lack of fortitude and start shaking, just silently say the name of God and your terrified body will be sanctified. At the same time, place both hands on your forehead, on your heart, on your abdomen and lastly on your limbs, saying rhythmically, 'Bra-1,2, hma-3,4.' You will then feel a strange power go through your body, your eyes will shine brighter, your voice will inspire with dread all those who hear it and your gesture will drive away your enemies.

"When you are gathered together, teach my words but do not ever pray together with others if you wish your prayer to be effective.

"Never lie and never betray anyone, however great a crime they may have committed. Even when doing good, do not ever proceed to an action instigated by the fatal power. To lie in order to save the life of another is to participate in the start of an evil action prepared by the fatal power and it makes an accomplice of you.

"Have self-respect but not arrogance.

"Never go back on your word once it is given. Do not make promises and if you ever do, don't forget that the promise you have made will eventually become the onset of an action of wider scope.

"Do not take my name as a symbol for I am not worthy. No person is worthy enough to intervene between the pious and God and mediate on their behalf to Brahma.

"May the one who retains my words be enlightened in Divine Truths and may the one who speaks ill of them be a prey to the fatal power."

When Har had spoken, he sat down. All listened with wonder to the words of the prophet, whose eyes shone with exceptional intelligence.

Har continued to teach for a while and then he left his disciples with these words: "I am unworthy of you, unworthy of all men and am now about to die in peace."

Chapter 11 - Ritual of the Haroupi

The Temples of the Haroupi were mostly built of white stone and were many stories high. The Haroupi followers would meet there on the first day of the new moon. Since they could not pray together, they gathered there in order to transmit the teaching to the neophytes who came for Initiation.

Before the opening of sessions, each Haroupi would privately say the prayer that Har had given them in his teachings (see previous Chapter).

There were three grades in this Order and, for the first time ever, the life of its founder was the basis of its Initiation. The 1st grade represented his birth, the 2nd his activity and the 3rd his disappearance.

In the 1st grade, two Haroupi would enter the Temple and say to the brethren who were gathered there: "Brethren, though tired and worn out by our long journey, we insisted on entering this Temple for we wished to announce to you a very strange event that we witnessed on our way. A woman in labour cried out for help. We ran to her and witnessed the birth of a son and the death of the mother in great pain. She now sleeps in peace under the shade of two banana trees and her son awaits the assistance of the brethren." The Master Haroupi who presided in the gathering would then say: "Where else can this child of chance find better care than among the Haroupi brethren? Bring him here." The neophyte would then enter and sit among the Haroupi. He received the teaching from the Master and vowed to respect the memory of the founder of the Order who had disappeared.

In the 2nd grade, the novice would knock on the door of the Temple and enter without permission. The guards would then fall upon him, shackle him and bring him before the Master Haroupi, who would say: "Impious man! You are to be punished, for you wished to defile these sacred grounds with your sullied steps." "I am neither impious nor sullied, Master Haroupi," the novice would retort, "for Har, the Great Missionary, enlightens my soul with his Wisdom." "Prove this and you will go free," the Master would say. The novice would then kneel and go through the practice taught by Har. He was subsequently accepted into the 2nd grade.

Entrance into the 3rd grade required that all the Haroupi gather in the Temple. The presiding Master would then order the candidate to carry out the ritual of the teacher. The candidate would stand up, embrace his brethren and say: "I am unworthy of you, unworthy of all Men. I am now about to die in peace" and, as a Master Haroupi, the candidate would then salute and leave the Temple.

This Order did not meet with great sympathy and was viciously persecuted by the priesthood. According to the latter, Brahma had put a curse on its founder that would take effect thirty years later. By that time, there were no more than 10 members all in all and the Temples were deserted. But the prophecy of the priests did not come about and the Initiated perceived the lie and rallied together under the banner of the missionary Har.

The Order of the Haroupi produced intellectual works, which were to acquire great fame in history. This Order still exists in our days, but it has undergone significant alterations. The tradition of Har is lost and the common occupation of the wise Haroupi is the study of the Vedas.

Chapter 12 - History of the Society of the Sinoua (F.Senoua)

The air was filled with the delicate aroma from the ten different altars on which incense of amber and musk was burning in honour of Brahma. The scenic beauty of this brilliant feast added to the harmony of the whole and Nature seemed to contribute with its wondrous grace. Tall priestesses, adorned with flowers, in white robes that brought out their slightly dark complexion, were a sight that was the utmost that human imagination can grasp so as to glorify God.

But who was all this brightness and activity in honour of?

A few days before, Roupa, the glorious emperor of India, had acquired an heir, born in the maternal palace.

The infant was brought to the Temple with great pomp, for the happy father wished to anoint his heir and draw the grace of God upon him.

People were not easily to forget this great celebration and later, whenever prince Sen made a public appearance - even at an advanced age - they would say: "This is the happy prince whose birth was celebrated and brightened with all the beauty that Brahma created in Nature."

Years went by and Sen grew in grace of body, soul, and spirit.

One evening at sundown, as Sen was sitting by the bank of a river, his spirit flew to higher spheres and nobler thoughts. All of a sudden, a young girl of great beauty appeared among the bushes of the far bank. A single look at her was enough to throw the dreaming youth into ecstasy.

He fell passionately in love with her and when she disappeared into the bushes he jumped into a nearby boat and started after the vision that had bewitched him. The young damsel seemed terrified at being followed and ran along the bank of the river while the young prince rowed as fast as he could, following this heavenly beauty.

Darkness fell and still the young prince rowed away, caught by this sudden magic, as if following a vision. Dawn found him still at the oars and whenever his strength failed him, the sight of the girl's head among the tall vegetation renewed his passion and inflamed the fire that was burning within him.

This ceaseless pursuit went on for twelve days, and they eventually came to the source of the river. Like a startled deer, the damsel made for the mountains. Sen pursued her, as if in a dream and ecstasy, over numerous mountain tops and finally was happy to see her enter a cave. In sheer joy because he thought that his desires would soon be satisfied, he followed suit only to find himself face to face with a venerable white-bearded old man. Stunned by this unexpected turn of events, the young prince stopped short and respectfully bowed his head before him.

"Where are you rushing to and where do you come from young man?" asked the old man.

"Stranger, I come from a very distant place in pursuit of a vision that has fascinated me."

"Do you mean the young damsel?"

"Yes!" answered the young prince, shaking all over.

"You can come and look at her, you can come and worship her, but only after cleansing yourself and wearing clean and decorous attire."

The young man glanced at the silk clothes he was still wearing and to his chagrin perceived that the events of the previous twelve days had worn them to shreds. The old man led him to an underground room where two other men washed him clean and gave him new clothes to wear.

The young prince went through all these motions as if in a trance, for his mind was constantly on the beautiful damsel he was about to meet. As soon as he was ready, the old man came to him and said:

"Come with me and meet the beautiful damsel."

They went through a dark and narrow passage at the end of which his guide lifted a thick and heavy curtain. Dazzled by the bright light ahead, the young man stepped back. When he eventually entered, he saw that the hall was lit by thousands of hidden candles exuding an aroma of incense which numbed the senses and caused ecstasy. He gathered himself together and looked around in search of the young girl. To his surprise he saw her standing before him, as beautiful as ever but made of marble! Then he heard the old man say:

"You were drawn to this sacred place by the power and attraction of this Goddess. Your own limbs brought you here to adore her. Do you wish to stay?"

"Master," replied the youth, "I shall stay here for ever to serve and adore the beauty of this Goddess".

"Yet you are too unclean to serve her," was the retort, "for you were drawn to her by lust".

"Master, do not profane my feelings. Can one ever lust after a marble statue?"

"You are accepted as a disciple and your devotion to our heavenly Mother - the Venerable Goddess Takoui - will be tested until the day when your physical senses will no longer insult her person. Then the statue will come to life."

It was thus that Sen, the Crown Prince of India, was admitted to the hermitage of the Takoui and vowed to keep the strictest and most rigorous purity for, according to its principles, no family alien to the sect - whether of princely or royal lineage - could serve in the secret temple of this Divinity.

The prince stayed on and kept his vow with absolute sincerity. In the morning, he was the first to rise and enter the secret Temple of the Goddess and in the evening he was the last to leave and close the door behind him. He was also the last to retire at night and rest his weary limbs from the day's hard work, but his sleep was full of dreams and ecstasy during which, as legend has it, Takoui herself came to commune with him. He was honoured and revered by the followers of the sect and was looked upon as the future leader of those serving the Divinity.

One day, as he was serving in the Temple, he fell into a trance and saw the statue of the Goddess come to life, step down from its pedestal and draw near him.

"Sen, my beloved child," she said, "the time has come that my God, the Great Brahma, has chosen for you to leave this place to which you have been devoted. You must now go to the inhabited regions and teach what I shall teach you. Your emblem will be the wild rose - a rose that you will pick from the first rosebush you see on your way out."

"My beloved son, listen to what I wish you to convey to my faithful servants. Tell them that I no longer desire darkness and the iciness of a marble dwelling place. I wish to be chiselled amid smiling Nature and feel its vivifying vibrations. Tell my servants to take me out of this dark place and build a temple for me where you will pick your first rose. I want this temple to be white as snow, but not made of marble, for marble is too cold to receive the throbbing of a latent love."

Takoui then kissed her son's brow and withdrew. Sen cried out: "Lord and Father of all the race, what a miracle this is. Takoui has spoken!"

All the brethren gathered round him but no one dared touch him lest they offend the Divinity that had been there.

"Brethren", said Sen, "follow me, all of you. I shall announce to you the wishes of the beautiful Goddess."

Men, women and children rose and followed Sen, whom the Goddess had sanctified by blowing thrice on his forehead before leaving. They all left the cave and started towards the east. They soon reached a nearby virgin forest where, at a crossing, Sen perceived a beautiful wild rosebush full of fresh red roses. He drew near, knelt beside the plant and related his vision to the venerable elders of the sect. He then said,

"Brethren, I shall remain here for 40 days to commune with the revered Goddess. Meanwhile, you are to make ready to return to this very place where you will erect Her Temple. You will not find me here for I shall leave in order to accomplish my mission wherever She bids me go. When my mission is done, I shall return to die here among you."

The brethren were truly sad and they tearfully parted from the man they had adopted. When they had all gone, Sen ate some fruit and waited for sundown. At sunset, he knelt and eagerly awaited the solemn hour.

Suddenly, the bushes parted and a beautiful damsel appeared before him - the very same who had avoided him ten years before. This time She approached with a slow and stately step. It was the Goddess Takoui in all her wondrous beauty. Exhausted and ecstatic, Sen started shaking all over and fell prostrate waiting for what was to come. He tried to whisper the hymn usually sung in the Temple during their evocation to the glory of the Goddess, but his tongue would not move and he could only utter incoherent noises that sounded like groans.

The Goddess drew near, kissed his brow and Sen immediately fell into a trance which lasted 40 days and 40 nights. Tradition has it that grass grew all around his prostrate body in such a way as to make all passers-by think they saw just a mound of green grass. On the 40th day, this mound came to life and Sen's head reappeared. He had aged.

He rose, stretched his limbs and rubbed grass all over his body to bring it back to life and speed up his circulation. He drank the juice of some fruits and started on his way slowly towards the inhabited region. Not once did he look back or think back. He felt neither joy nor sorrow in his soul and his serene expression revealed inner enlightenment. He kept talking to himself on the way, but tradition says that he was communing with Takoui.

Twenty days later, he reached the inhabited regions. He went straight to his native city and sat on the steps of his father's palace. One of the guards approached him and ordered him to leave but Sen did not obey, for he had the live image of Takoui ever before him and was aware of Her support. The guard did not dare touch him but hastened to inform his chief. This last came along and in turn ordered Sen to leave.

"I wish to see the King," said Sen in a sweet voice.

He was ushered into the palace and brought before the King. Sen approached him, knelt down and bared his chest, revealing an ornament that hung round his neck. The King opened his eyes wide and looked at the stranger closely. He then rose and stretched his trembling arms towards him, crying out, "Sen, my beloved

son, has been found!" He embraced his son lovingly and gathered all the Court around him to share in his happiness.

The celebrations for Sen's return lasted 12 days and he resumed his place in Court. On the morning of the 13th day, he was informed that his father had died.

Sen succeeded his father to the throne. He was the first enlightened and initiated King ever. On the day of his enthronement, the whole palace was decorated with wild roses and a beautiful wooden statue was set by his throne. From high up on its pedestal it dominated the throne room.

It was in front of this statue that Sen received all the wise men of his empire and spoke to them of the great powers of Brahma. He never once uttered the name of the Goddess that presided over the accomplishment of his mission. Yet tradition says that he was often seen kneeling before the statue and conversing with an invisible entity.

Twenty years elapsed and then one day Sen put on his most luxurious clothes, mustered his troops and left on a mission to the mountainous region from which he had come. The troops were led by ten tall officers bearing the statue on their shoulders. After a journey of 20 days, they reached the forest where the Temple of Takoui, already erected, rose in its pure whiteness towards the sky.

The followers of Takoui were taken by surprise and approached the troops in great fear, bearing gifts so as to deter trespassing into the sacred grounds where their Divinity resided.

When they were brought before the King himself, they recognized him and fell into his arms. With the King leading them all, the Takoui followers brought the statue before the Temple and set it outside the sacred grounds.

Sen opened the door, took off his luxurious clothes and used them to clean the floor of the Temple. When he got to the other statue of Takoui, which the brethren had placed in the holy of holies, he sat cross-legged before it and fell into a trance by a kiss from the Divinity. When he came to, he placed the statue that he had brought inside the Temple and then called his younger brother to the entrance of the sacred grounds.

"Dear brother", he said, "here is my crown, my sceptre and my royal attire. Rule over our father's people with justice. I shall stay here to die. Go your way. May the Great Brahma lead you in the path of goodness"

Sen lived with his brethren in the forest and became a high priest of the beautiful Divinity. He died while in a trance, in the arms of Takoui.

The End

Brief Summary on the Doctrine of the Buddha

We have followed the precursors of the Great Revelation that was to take place in India through the expression of the Buddha. We have seen how, twice each, Love and Wisdom summoned their prophets: Mene and Har, Sandra and Sen.

The mission of these four prophets corresponds to that of the four major prophets of the Judaic Tradition and was to announce the forthcoming first expression of the Divine Word and prepare the Asiatic world to receive It.

In the Buddha, we acknowledge the first incarnation of the Divine Word and in Christ the second. We also acknowledge that the Word has been expressed numerous times in human forms (receptacles), but can provide no proof of this.

I will not here relate the story of the Buddha's life, for it is quite well known. I shall just give you an outline of it. The name Buddha means 'the one who knows', from the root 'buddh = to know'.

The Buddha was born in the city of Capilavastu at the foot of the Himalayas. He was the son of a native prince, Soudontana, of the Sakya tribe. As a young man, he led a life of pleasure and comfort. Then, four successive events changed his life and drew him to his mission: he saw an old man, an ailing man, a dead man, and a monk.

He then abandoned his young wife and new-born child and left in search of eternal happiness.

He listened to many Masters but none was able to satisfy his quest. He put himself through great privations, but even these brought no solution to his problem. Finally one evening, at the outskirts of Gaya, he retired under the branches of a tree - the pipala - and felt the truth surge and grow within him. Without the help of any Master or of any God, he discovered the concurrence (sequence) of the twelve causes that perforce connect existence with suffering, and saw that if one becomes master of this chain, one can also dissolve it.

Not wishing to keep such a precious secret to himself and anxious to spread it, he sought out five of his previous companions who had scornfully deserted him when he had renounced the conventional method of privation. He found them in the bright valley of Benares and there, for the first time, as the saying goes, he 'set the wheels of the Teaching - or Law - in motion'. The traditions of all Buddhist Schools have unanimously kept this sermon, which can be considered as an authentic speech of the Lord.

And the Sublime One then spoke to the five monks and said:

"There are two extremes that should be avoided by the one who leads a spiritual life. What are these two extremes? The first is the extreme of a life of indulgence and material pleasures, for this is base, vile and contrary to the Spirit, unworthy and futile. The other is the extreme of a life of unreasonable and futile privation. The Enlightened One transcends these two extremes, for He has discovered the path between them. This path opens the eyes of the Spirit and leads to serenity, knowledge, enlightenment and Nirvana.

And what is this path, oh monks, that opens the eyes and leads the Spirit to serenity, knowledge, enlightenment and Nirvana? It is the Sacred Eight-fold Path, the Path of pure faith, pure will-power, pure speech, pure action, pure means of existence, pure aspirations, pure memory (mindfulness) and pure meditation.

This is the Middle Way that the Perfect One has discovered, the Way that opens the eyes and the Spirit and leads to serenity, knowledge, enlightenment and Nirvana.

"Birth is Suffering, old age is Suffering, sickness is Suffering, death is Suffering, union with the unloved one is Suffering, separation from the loved one is Suffering and, in brief, the five-fold attachment to the elements of the being is suffering. This is the Sacred Truth regarding Suffering.

"The thirst for existence that leads from one rebirth to another, together with indulgence and envy, which meet with some pleasure at times, the craving for indulgence, the craving for existence, the craving for power: this is the Sacred Truth regarding the Cause of Suffering.

"The obliteration of this craving for existence by complete extinction, rejection and renunciation of desires, by denying desire, dismissing it and becoming free from it, this, oh monks, is the Sacred Truth regarding the Cessation of Suffering.

"The Sacred Truth regarding the Path that leads to the Annihilation of Suffering is the Sacred Eight-fold Path of: pure faith, pure will-power, pure speech, pure action, pure means of existence, pure application, pure memory (mindfulness) and pure meditation." (*Translation: Oldenberg-Fouche "The Buddha"*)

The whole doctrine of the Buddha is enclosed in the above sermon at Benares.

The Lord expounded on certain points for us, all of which can be found in the Teachings of our Order.

The two extremes mentioned correspond to the Law of Duality and its side effects: struggle, antithesis, opposition, etc. Again, according to the Buddha, the solution lies in the discovery of the Middle Way (the Median Path). In the Ritual of Initiation to the Order, you were told that "*The Law of Opposites and Contraries creates the Law of the Intermediate (Median) Unity*" and that "*your comprehension of this key is equivalent to your perfection*". Is it not the same thing? It is presumed of course that, upon receiving this key on their admission to the Order, the Adherents will apply it. As a rule, however, no one pays due attention to it. In the above case, the Buddha too is addressing people who do not follow the right path, the Middle Way, that leads to Nirvana, which could better be described by the term '*the Impersonal*'.

This Middle Way is also depicted by the two heads of our Eagle. These, however, are in no way connected to the two extremes mentioned. They are symbols of the positive and negative aspect of the Middle Way or - to give a simpler picture - they are the symbols of Good and its Preservation or Defence.

The Buddha applies 8 terms to this Unity:

pure Faith,
pure Will-power,
pure Speech,
pure Action,
pure Means of Existence,
pure Aspirations,
pure Memory (Mindfulness) and
pure Meditation.

Here again, the great mystery of the number 8 appears, which we name '*Morality*'. When analysing these terms we come across our own phraseology and numerology. Once again, through the study of the Buddha's Theory, the significance of constant catharsis and purity is stressed.

As regards his theory on Suffering, it is akin to that of the Eonian Tradition, which states that '*every realization on the physical (material) plane entails suffering*'. This

suffering is expressed by the insatiable desires that characterize those who have not attained the Impersonal - the Nirvana of the Buddha.

According to him, birth, old age, sickness and death are sufferings; union with the unloved one, separation from the loved one, and desires are all sufferings. These seven landmarks in life are sufferings because a mixed state intervenes and the Ego is in anguish.

The antidote to all this is the '*Impersonal*': through Universal Love, this state wipes out all egotistic self-centredness. St. Francis of Assisi is an example of this, for throughout his life he was never able to distinguish between an enemy and a friend, between a good person and an evil one.

What the Buddha says regarding the Cause of Suffering is found in the Order as '*the desire for individuality*', which is the root of all the actions of an incarnate being - person or creature. This ceases to exist once the Impersonal State is attained through the discipline of purity as defined by the octagonal cross and the above-mentioned Eight-fold Path.

Let us now follow one of the Buddha's disciples in action. According to the authors Bournief and Sylvain Levi, the story of Purna goes as follows:

Purna was the wealthiest merchant in the port of Suparaca near Bombay. During one of his voyages, he heard certain verses that revealed to him the doctrine of the Buddha. He believed, followed the Teachings and was ordained. Baghavat (blissful) then asked him:

"Where do you wish to dwell? Where will you settle?"

"I wish to settle in the land of the Sronaparacandas," he said.

"The Sronaparacandas are violent, Purna, they are aggressive, tough, irascible, passionate and impertinent. When they speak to you in a spiteful, offending and impertinent way, when they are filled with rage against you and insult you, what will you say?"

"Lord, when the Sronaparacandas speak to me in a spiteful, offending and impertinent way, when they are filled with rage against me and insult me, I shall say: the Sronaparacandas are truly good people and sweet-natured, yes, the very ones who speak to me in a spiteful, offending and impertinent way, who are filled with rage against me and insult me, for they do not beat me or throw stones at me."

"The Sronaparacandas are violent, Purna, they are aggressive, tough irascible, passionate and impertinent. If they beat you and throw stones at you, what will you then think?"

"Lord, if they beat me or throw stones at me, I shall think: The Sronaparacandas who beat me and throw stones at me are truly meek, for they do not beat me with clubs or swords."

"The Sronaparacandas are violent, aggressive, tough, irascible passionate and impertinent. If they hit you with clubs and swords, what will you think?"

"Lord, if they beat me with clubs and swords, I shall think: the Sronaparacandas are truly good people. Those who beat me with clubs and swords are calm and serene, for they do not take my life."

"The Sronaparacandas, Purna, are violent and aggressive. They are tough, irascible, passionate and impertinent. If they take your life, what will you think?"

"If they take my life, Lord, this is what I shall think: there are those who hear the Baghavat (the Blessed One) and, because of this vile body, they are tortured, scorned, despised, poisoned, hanged or thrown into gorges. Therefore the Sronaparacandas are undoubtedly good, for they release me from this vile body at such little cost."

"It is well. Because of the infinite patience you are endowed with, you can settle and live in the land of the Sronaparacandas. You have been saved, Purna, go therefore and save others. You have reached the far bank, see to it that others reach it too. You have been comforted, so must you comfort others. You have attained Nirvana, see to it that others attain it too."

Finally, in order to prove a point, I shall refer to a poem called "The Triumph of Valmiki." It is a dialogue between two Veda holy men, concerning the struggle of class and caste to retain their privileges. In the orient, just like here, Man's freedom is a nightmare for the class conscious.

Haraprazad Sastri was a Brahman, the jewel of Hindu knowledge. He was named Mahatma Hopandhaya (Teacher of High Mastery) by the Government. He did not hesitate to ascribe the darkest plots to his peers. In a poem, called "The Triumph of Valmiki", he wrote of an imaginary dialogue between two well-known holy men of the Veda age. One of them, Vasis-ha, was a typical representative of the clergy. The other, Visvamitra, was a member of the military aristocracy who worked his way into the ranks of the Brahmans.

"The prevailing tendency for independent thinking must be checked", said Vasis-ha, "The lower classes must be prevented at all costs from having freedom of thought."

"How can you claim that half a dozen Brahmans will be able to check the current of independent thought among all the peoples of the Earth?" asked Visvamitra.

"There is no difficulty for one who has intellect" answered Vasis-ha. "I shall change the content of their spirit from early childhood. I shall draw them towards indulgence and pleasures and will not allow any other thoughts to develop in their minds."

"One glance, just a single glance, at the boundless azure of the sky is enough to awaken freedom in the soul," was Visvamitra's retort.

The boldness of Vasis-ha was unable to triumph over the indomitable power of Truth. He failed, hoist with his own petard. Will Visvamitra ever be able to re-create an India that is worthy of great men like him?

As you can see, the work of the Order is a difficult one. It is not easy to retain one's objectivity against all those around one, and try to extend the freedom that leads to the 'Impersonal'.

Let us hope that our Order will accomplish its mission and bring a small number of persons out from among the hordes.