

### Hostages of power

When Manas called my religion inherently dangerous, we almost had a falling-out. I know Manas not as a provoking man, at any rate not as a person whose aim it is to hurt. Besides, I do not see it as my holy duty to defend my religion, for I am not that kind of fanatic - I prefer to bend to the wind. My religion is private, my name is Suleiman O'Sullivan. What is happening in the world is perceivable for anyone who is well informed - one does not have to be religious to see. Yet, I find it hard to hear criticism to what is so close to my heart. Well, harsh judgement it was not, but it did hurt anyway.

### An ancient culture disappears

When I tell you all political systems and religions once were meant to elevate the people, but then were stripped from their purpose and used as means to control the multitude, do you think I am insane? Do you regard me as paranoia, a man who discerns conspiracies everywhere? Am I then seeing ghosts?" Manas was not himself. He sounded aggravated. I asked him of course with whom or with what he was angry.

"Angry? No, I am not angry, how can one be really angry with a child. Who gets angry with a child is still a child himself. Though at times in exceptional circumstances one has to act angry, for children have to learn to deal with that powerful emotion."

"What then is the matter?" I asked very prudently. The at any rate well-grown presence that distinguished Manas seemed to be much more extended than usual, as if the cat that had lain purring curled up in its dossier suddenly appeared to be a colossal tiger.

"There are moments I can get so immensely dispirited, Suleiman, when I see how people let themselves be deluded and cheer about it all the same." Manas gave me a glance and continued with a sigh. "I do not know exactly anymore where I have read it, but anyhow it was about how people in Europe, especially upper class, appraise the changes that are taking place in their society, the influx of islam confidants. About how they, as I see it, welcome a new wave of repression as if it were the youngest impetus for their ancient culture." Manas gave me another glance - assessing this time.

"Well, a little bit of history then - well, we will see if it is a little. In Europe, there has been a very ancient culture that is all but forgotten. At the end of the last Ice Age, some twelve thousand years ago now, from Asia and the east of Europe all kinds of tribes descended upon the land of the sunset. The tribes that planted their roots anew in the north of Europe are now well known as the Germanic tribes and the tribes that did the same, but more southerly we know as the Celtic tribes. These tribes are related to the Aryan tribes that invaded the Indian subcontinent. The Germanic tribes, the Aryans, the Celts, yet also for

instance the Iranian, Greek and Italic tribes like the Falisks and the Latins, came from an area where all Indo-European peoples hail from, roughly the area between the Caucasus and the Hindu Kush, the Eurasian steppe north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The Donets'k, Luhans'k, Kalmykia, Astrakhan, the Kirgiz steppe, the Plato Ustyurt, the Garagum, Qyzylqum, the Peski Moyynkum." Manas spoke



these names as if he were reciting a poem. "These regions border to the frontiers of Afghanistan and Pakistan, India and China. I descend from one of the tribes that some 40.000 years ago crossed the Hindu Kush from Afghanistan into the Eurasian steppes as the first humans in that unsullied Eden. Imagine the astounding landscapes of that wild pristine earth!" Manas pointed out where the region was situated on a map he had drawn from an atlas in his library, as if he was showing pictures of his family. "Based on kinship of the languages one can conclude that all these Germanic, Aryan, Celtic and Italic peoples were family. No doubt genetic proof can be found also, if it has not already."

"These migrations of Celtic and Germanic tribes into Europe were no military conquests, for in Europe virtually nobody was there. It was not at all like the migration age after the fall of the Roman Empire. Those were also much more recent, some fifteen hundred years ago. Neither do I refer to the people who lived in Europe before the last Ice Age - human bones have been found over a million years old, possibly the ancestors of the Neanderthals, and then there were of course the Neanderthals themselves and thereafter the men of Cro Magnon. However, the people of whom I speak now were the first original Europeans from whom all present Europeans descend directly. I speak of the tribes that travelled and settled gradually into the regions that became habitable after the ice receded to the north, now some twelve thousand years ago. The tribes we know as the Celts migrated to the Balkans, the Alpine region, France, the north-west of Spain and to Portugal, to England, Scotland and Ireland. For ten thousand years

these peoples lived in Europe in a relationship without any form of central government or any other form of co-ordinating authority, yet with a culture that linked them all together. The structure of the Celtic culture probably can best be compared to the internet, with the swiftness of the Bronze Age of course. The farthest places were connected by way of a decentralized network of roads with local hubs."

"The tribes we are accustomed to calling Germanic settled in the region north and east of the Rhine and the Danube, the Celts on the other side, south and west of these rivers. History teaches us the Celts could not have chosen a worse spot. Celts from France and the Alps maintained a good commercial relationship with the tribes south of the Alps - Etruscan and Italic tribes. The Celts even are said to have introduced viticulture in Italy, though nobody really



Cro Magnon man

has been able to establish the truth of this. It was also understood the Celts were a fairly wealthy people. In France alone, they exploited dozens of goldmines. In the end in Italy this came to the attention of a necessitous Roman politician called Julius Caesar. The rest is history. In seven years Caesar overmastered the complete continental Celtic world. He delivered them the decisive blow in a battle against the last tribe in 51 bce, the battle of Alesia against the Averni and their tribe leader Vercingetorix. The name of this Celtic tribe the Averni still can be recognized in the name of the French region Auvergne." I knew Manas needed this history lesson to shed light on something else.

"The Latins who we know better as the Romans had, most likely without them knowing it, massacred their kinsman - they did not succeed in doing the same to the Germanic tribes, by the bye. Virtually all of the Celtic culture was Romanized in the course of a few hundred years and from the Celts we now know comparatively next to nothing. Caesar wrote the book 'Commentarii de bello Gallico' about his combats against the Celts, in all likelihood to justify his doings. To date this book determines the perspective Europeans have on their history. The Celtic perspective has been all but lost thereby. Indeed, history is always determined by the victor.

"What teaches history to us with these tales? As for me, that this world is not safe, a scary place, and that you are forced to defend what you have developed when you desire to keep it. In that struggle those with the most dominant level of organization have the advantage over those who do not organize centrally. Vercingetorix did try to organize the

resistance against Caesar, but it was too little too late. The Celtic culture has all but perished. However, within only a few hundred years



Vercingetorix (on horseback) and Caesar

the Roman culture also was on the verge of breakdown.” Manas created this terrific cliff-hanger here, for we both had to take a sanitary pit stop. I also used the moment to phone my beloved to say I would be home much later. We poured out another.

#### The suffocating dark

“By the mid fifth century all kinds of peoples wandered about in Europe - the were the migrations I just referred to. Rome’s central authority was too weakened to withstand the mostly Germanic invaders - eventually Rome’s authority was non existent. The Goths came from Scandinavia and moved to the region near the Black Sea. A section of these Goths wandered all along the Mediterranean coast to find peace in south-west France and Spain. Lombards left central Germany to settle in the north of Italy where they gave their name to the present region of Lombardy. The Vandals also left central Germany and travelled straight through France and Spain to cross over to the Maghreb, the northern part of Africa, to cross over again to Sicily and Sardinia and eventually to the main land of Italy. Angles and Saxons crossed the

North Sea to replace the Romans in the British Isles. The Germanic tribe of the Franks took over the continental Gallo-Roman territory and gave France its name. An invasion therefore, as you can see, of Germanic tribes into Romanized Celtic territory. The migration of most of these groups was caused by the only tribe in the migration age that came from the outside of Europe, the Huns. The Huns were not one ethnic people, though most of them were Mongols from central Asia. The Chinese called them the Hsiung-nu. The Huns that caused at least in part the European upheaval were besides Mongols comprised of Turks, Slaves and Allanes, led in a ruthless and central manner by their ruler Atilla. The Huns could have left a more lasting impression on European culture if Atilla had not died peacefully in his bed in Hungary in 453. Exit Atilla, end of the strikes of the Huns." Manas again glanced at me. "Can you still stand these history lessons? There is a purpose to them, but you have to bear with me if you do not mind." Outside the twilight began, but hungry I still was not. Being with Manas it happened often you felt existing outside the current rhythm of life, like sitting in a hole in time. As if what happened outside did not matter or even did not exist anymore.



Atilla the Hun

"By now you have understood of course that I consequently give examples of strongly centrally led peoples, cultures, military structures, that conquered and suppressed other populations that precisely were not led centrally and hierarchically. When in the fifth century Rome's central authority really had passed and the mass migration came to a halt, a new wave of centralism descended upon Europe. As you may expect, I speak of course of the Christian church, the Roman Catholic church. It seized the opportunity to use what was left of the Roman infrastructure, the western part at any rate, to convert Europe to Christendom and bringing it under the church's rule. It was a different kind of authority though than the dominion of the Roman emperors. The Roman rule had been worldly and physical, while the Christian church organized the dominion of the mind. A reign that was even more effective than the political and economical dominance of the Romans. The Roman rulers tolerated local customs, traditions, whole cultures, as long as substantial revenue was delivered from the conquered territories. The Christian church worked exactly the other way around. Instead of a physical taking hostage for wealth, people were taken

hostage for their hearts and minds. For a period of a thousand years a time span then follows of fanatical spiritual dogmatism, by which the authorities do not shrink back from persecuting and murdering people and whole communities, on the pyre whose convictions were other than the church's official doctrine. In this millennium of spiritual predominance by the Christian church, Europe's economy declined dramatically. A period that is therefore called the Dark Age by later generations - dark also of course because of the suffocating intellectual climate."

"Geophysically though this period was not that dark at all, for a climate change occurred precisely in this stretch of a thousand years. In a period from the ninth till the end of the twelfth century the northern hemisphere became gradually warmed up. The icecap of Greenland melted largely and certainly the coastal area of that island became habitable and suited for farming - ever wondered why that land was named Greenland? This period saw extensive migrations of Normans and raids of Vikings. The Normans had already colonized Iceland and the tribe of Eirik Thorvaldsson went from Iceland to colonize Greenland. His son Leiv Eiriksson even surpassed his father in discovering new land to settle. It was Leiv who discovered America more than five hundred years before Christopher Columbus. Leiv's tribe established settlements in Labrador, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, and it is said as far south as Cape Cod. They did not persevere for long though, for the local Indian tribes did not appreciate their presence in a very enthusiastic way. The Viking raids and especially the Norman quests for settlement were more successful in Western Europe. Norman settlements were founded in France -Normandy of course- and in Britain. By the year 1000 the Normans had conquered a substantial area of England on the Anglo Saxons which they called the Danelaw - roughly the realm north of the line London Liverpool to the Scottish border.

Less than a hundred years later a descendant of the Normans in France, William the Bastard, conquered the other parts of England after the Battle of Hastings in 1066 - on October the 14th to be precise. From



then on William was called the Conqueror. Eventually William the Conqueror also managed to bring the Danelaw under his reign - the basis of the future United Kingdom was then born. Subsequently there was the Norman conquest of Sicily. Ever wondered why in southern Italy a relative large group of Italians is blonde? The Viking raids had little or no effect than temporary and very local suffering, while the very well organized Norman conquests like in England, France and Sicily, brought about enduring places of governance. However, they too were converted to Christianity." Manas smiled, for he clearly enjoyed telling these histories. I listened in with a glad heart.

"Are you peckish too?" Manas asked suddenly. "I have a pan with self-made vegetable soup in the fridge. Do you want any?" Manas shambled to the kitchen and put a cast-iron pan on the large stove. After about twenty minutes we sat at the table with fragrant bowls in front of us and a large plate of dark whole wheat bread and butter between us. We dipped the bread into the soup and fished the vegetables out with our spoons. "I could tell comparable stories about Pizarro and the Incas in Peru, or about Cortés and the Aztecs in Mexico, or about the Aryan and the Mogul conquests of the Indian culture and in fact nearly the whole of India. Here too cultures met while the supremacy came from absolutist rulers. However, this history is getting too augmented already, so let us keep it to Europe." I made a consenting sound. When we had brought the dishes to the kitchen we went back to the low chairs.

#### The light of the east

"Constantine had become emperor of Rome. That was in 308. To him the credit must befall of making Christendom the official religion of the Roman empire, though he himself did not convert until he was on his death bed. He also has been responsible for establishing the official doctrine of the religion, as the Christians still honour it today. In 325 he convoked more than three hundred bishops in Nicea, Iznik in present day Turkey. Constantine exerted impellent pressure upon them, you can call it that, to produce a single and coherent doctrine. Until then Christianity knew many local variants of their admission of faith, including the Gospel of Judas, the Gospel according to Philip (the Nag-Hamadi library), the Gospel of Mary Magdalene and the Gospel of Thomas. Dozens of books were placed on the list of heretical works and only the gospels that are still in the New Testament of the Christian Bible today were



Council of Nicea

admitted as the official creed - Christianity was made into a centrally led power. For economic reasons Constantine moved the capital from Rome to Byzantium in 330 - the city was called Nova Roma at first, but was eventually widely known as Constantinople, Constantine's polis or Constantine's city. Byzantium had got its original name from Greek colonists in 667 bce, naming the city after their king Byzas. Though the Byzantine Empire de facto became a reality in 330, the official separation of the western and eastern Roman Empire did not take place until 395. For the west the separation eventually meant the end, like I told you when telling about the Migration Age. The eastern Roman Empire or Byzantine Empire as it now was called, existed for over a thousand years longer."

"Silvester I was bishop of Rome in 330. From the displacement of the seat of worldly power from Rome to Constantinople onward, the office of bishop of Rome developed into principal bishop of the Christian church. The successive bishops of Rome not only saw themselves as the successors of the apostle Peter, but also came to see themselves as the successors of the emperors of Rome - to date the pope still also carries the title of Pontifex Maximus. Like I told before, when the political might of Rome ceased to be, the Christian church took over to found the dominion of the mind." To hear Manas placing all these tedious book facts within a coherent story was very agreeable to me. I saw horses galloping the steppes and I saw Constantine ascending the throne in Constantinople before my very eyes.

"The Roman empire in the east held out till 1453. Did the European Middle Ages start with the fall of the western empire, the end of this Dark Age in western Europe coincided with the fall of the eastern empire. On May the 29th of the year 1453 the Turkish Ottomans took the military thoroughly weakened city. The intelligentsia, artists and the

businessmen left the city head over heels and sought a safe haven particularly in Italy, with which the culture and the economy of Western Europe received an enormous boost. The main church of Constantinople, the 'Hagia Sophia' or church of the supreme wisdom, was converted into a mosque, but when you want to see what it looked like as a church you only have to erase the minarets from the picture. Though the city officially remained to be called Constantinople, in due course among Turks the city became



The 'Hagia Sophia' as church - without minarets



better known by the phrase 'we go to the city'. 'To the city' in the Greek of that time, the language of communication in the Byzantine Empire, was 'eis tin Poli' which in time was degenerated by the Turks. 'Eis tin Poli' developed into Istanbul. It became the new delineation of Constantinople, though not officially until 1930.

"The Muslims made an end to the Christian Byzantine empire and, like I said, indirectly to Christianized western Europe. The church hierarchy had already roused the European nobility to action to wage crusades against Muslims who had conquered their holy places in the Middle East - Byzantium also had fallen into Muslim hands before 1453. It had never crossed the minds of the church elite the intellectually fettered Europeans would come into real contact with the cultural and intellectual richness of the Muslims peoples - who in their turn had learned much from Indian sources. While the military targets of the crusades were met only partially and only for a limited time, the Europeans meanwhile became aware of their status of spiritual and intellectual hostages of the Christian church - maybe not that explicitly right away, but in full conscious state eventually."

"I will not wear you out too much - I am already talking longer than I intended." Manas certainly was not anymore the grumpy man from the beginning of our talk. He was now like I liked him best, the benignant and somewhat preaching Manas. "The crusades and the fall of Constantinople are two major elements contributing to the genesis of the Renaissance, the artistic and intellectual revival that caused Europe to awaken again, to be born anew. One can safely say the Renaissance built a radical change with all that had gone before. Revolutions are somewhat like volcanic eruptions never events of a sudden character. Always there have been prolonged processes preceding the moment that in history school books is appointed as the date of the breaking point. The developments in Italy we can recognize as the beginnings of the Renaissance were already happening, yet got their definitive impetus at the time of the fall of Constantinople. The year 1453 therefore is seen officially as the beginning of the renaissance."

"During the three hundred years afterwards there is a slow build up towards the next revolutions, incited by the increasing awakening of the citizens in the larger cities, moulded by an elite of thinkers. The eighteenth century became the age of Reason, the Enlightenment that ended with the revolutions of the Enlightenment, the American revolution of 1776 and the French revolution of 1789. In both revolutions protracted developments since the Renaissance came to an expression. The increasingly wealthy citizens did not feel represented anymore by kingship and its form of government and the old bunch was ousted, rather brutally in the case of the French. The new power established only through exerting a true reign of terror. In 1815 after Napoleon an effort was made to reinstate the old powers of before the revolution, but that attempt was not viable now the financial and economical power had transferred to the class of citizens."

"However, already within a hundred years the commonalty got lost of their monopoly on power. The Russian revolutions of 1905, 1917 and 1918-1922 brought the remaining European royal dynasties definitively to their knees. Not only in Russia, but also in Germany. In Russia the Bolsheviks dominated other political grouping by mere terror and centralism. The revolution of 1917 reverberated throughout Europe during, in between and after two world wars. The second world war also established the definitive exertion of power of a new dominant player on the stage of the world, the United States."

"The next revolution was about a protest against that might of America, at least in part it was a protest against the Vietnam war. The revolution of 1968 was the revolution of the imagination. A revolution against the powers that be, the old rusted clique of the war-generation - world war II that is. It was an insurrection against the immovable morality of the Christian church. The young generation of that time demanded the right of free speech and above all a free mind and they dethroned the traditional overlords. In America president Nixon was impeached, his corruption brought to light. Yet only twenty years after 'the revolution of the Imagination' was completed when common people not directed by any particular ideology with their bare hands, with sledge hammers and pickaxes tore down the Berlin Wall. The might of the common people was established definitively throughout Europe and the central rulers soiled their pants."

"The rulers had always been the financiers and standard-bearers of culture. Emperors, kings, popes, bishops, the nobility, philanthropists and maecenas in general. When the sixties of the twentieth century were over the word elite had become a dirty word, a curse. The elite was not seen anymore as directive and leading, but as synonymous to conservative, narrow-minded and often as anti democratic. After the sixties of the twentieth century there were two main developments. The popularisation of culture and a next revolution, the Digital revolution."

Manas looked at me a bit in an impish way as if he tried to measure up my endurance. "I really find all you tell wonderfully interesting, Manas. You take me through two thousand years of history. However, you are a bit older than I am, you are in no hurry and see the long links. Contrariwise I am younger and therefore impatient to hear your conclusions." Manas tapped me on the knee in a cordial way, a gesture one could easily interpret as encouragement. He got up and went to pour in some more. He did not say anything, yet he made some humming sounds like one can hear from singers who warm up their voices. Manas murmured not so loud though and perhaps slightly less in tune.

Beauty is far

"Leave it to the earthlings though," he said when he sat himself a bit groaning, "to squander a wholly new and positive change. Before they knew it, the revolution had created its own elite. What emerged from the idealism of a young generation during these sixties were the seventies, a total commercialization of artistic and academic ideals and suppositional individualism. From these years onwards to far into the twenty first century the 'common man' was the pivot in for instance many television programmes. Seeking the darkest corners of the tasteless, to the absurd freak shows that were presented as mass entertainment. The average person was not presented anymore with inspiring examples, but watched vulgar representations of itself that were meant only to benefit the money-hungry."



Hippies

"The dominance of the commercial sector became as hostaging as the dominance of religion before. In fact, both are out to enslaving the mind, although the Christian church elected submission as goal, while commercialism took this one notch further to shake out the money from as many pockets as could be found. Popular culture had been corrupted very speedily."

"In this period I recounted, from the Romans to the Americans, the individual had been and still is the hostage of the overlords. It had been the Roman Catholic religion that in the west also took the mind hostage. For the individual it is virtually impossible to get away from the taking of hostage, for the state has a legalized monopoly on coercion and violence - you have ratified this yourself last time you went to the polling booth. Though the might of the Christian church has largely been broken, the masses immediately turned themselves in to a new hostage taker, commercialization. It has become so powerful complete states are in its grip, remember the multinationals, while in the case of the United States the difference between commercialism and state is all but perceptible."

"While no revolution brought freedom -or was not capable of bringing freedom I perhaps should say-, there was one revolution that was hopeful for humanity even to my mind, because no ruler or organisation of power had any control over the possibilities with respect to the contents. Also, the nature of the digital revolution is not alterable by commercialization. Exploitation of the digital revolution has been tried in the nineties of the twentieth century, yet commercialism itself fell victim

to it when the bubbles bursted. It would have been for the first time in human history that every person wherever was able to obtain all information worldwide without a ruler having a stake in it. The powers were powerless in having a say in the flow of information, unable to determine what one could write or read. That was the potentiality of the Digital Revolution."

"Through a detour there is a ruler though who can render the digital revolution impotent. From 'the ignorant drowning one' no real threat for the digital revolution can be expected anymore." Manas smiled. "I name the Christian church 'the ignorant drowning one'. It is an over the hill religion, it will fade away and die their God neatly tucked away in the drawer of history with Mithras, Zeus and Jupiter. The Christian church itself is one of the few that does not realize it is drowning, hence



ignorant. Christian religion, also the Jewish religion incidentally, ever more will acquire the status of obscure philosophy, just like the Greek and Roman cults. The Christian faith has had its time and is overtaken by time. However, there is something quite different going on with its contestant, the 'the skulking reviser'."

"Manas showed an even broader smile than before. "With the phrase 'the skulking reviser' I name of course the last true

religion, the Islam. Last and true because there will be no so-called God send messengers anymore. No more religions of inspiration will be anymore for Satan has found new ways. He has poisoned the great religions and has led his people back to the predicament of before the great religions, back to the plight of materialism." Manas was silent for a moment, drank from his tea that must have been cold. He was recalling the past he said and judging from his expression it must have been a pleasant recollection.

"I will show you the might of 'the skulking reviser'. I was in Cairo at the end of the Ramadan and I observed what was happening. All people were in preparation of Id-ul-fitr, the sugar feast, and that produced an exited yet convivial bustling mood in the streets. Everyone was merry and full of expectation. Everybody went shopping for a variety of necessities. Food of course, toys, new clothes. The next morning I went by bus across the city and there I saw it, there near the zoo and I suddenly understood. I saw families spending the day in leisure, taking a day trip on one of their most revered religious and social occasion. I did not see uniformity but like-mindedness, sameness in joy. I saw people having merriment in togetherness, I saw communal bliss and collective contentedness. Suddenly my head veered to the south of

Spain where I had seen a similar thing. The Christian Catholic faith in its heydays radiated the same. It very much warmed my heart to see such a congruity in sharing in public the specialities of culture and togetherness. The unity that is experienced without it being organized from above. That day in Cairo has ever stayed special to me and in my heart I understood how Islam brought those people together, very much the same as I saw Catholics do."

"One or two days earlier in the back streets of Cairo I saw quite different matters. The third pillar of Islam is the zakaat. The zakaat is the obligation to help the needy in their hardship, mostly collected as a tax on behalf of the poor. Yet in those back streets of Cairo I saw people, complete families living in the streets in an utterly despairing destitution I only saw before in Kibera, the slums of Nairobi, in rural India and China, in Rocinha - one of the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. So many people, so many many people I saw living in humanly disgraceful gross hopelessness, not caring anymore being bedraggled and fetid, very sick and highly infectious - lacking the strength to do something about it. And I saw the zakaat is a dead letter, like in Christian Europe the rich could not care less common people perished by the scores to the plague, if they themselves were out of harm's way. The hypocrisy of the human moral - it happens everywhere in this world, in the past and in the present."



Kibera, the slums of Nairobi

#### Toy of the powers

"Particularly this debasing insincerity wrenches room for the 'skulking reviser'. The 'skulking reviser' can be found wherever you look. He is present, mostly without being noticed, and he pours dogmatic notions into your ear, he distributes reactionary fanaticism. He attacks and rebukes people who simply want to celebrate their Id-ul-fitr or their Christmas with their families and neighbours, luring them in the end into intolerance. The 'skulking reviser' will at first upholster his skull with a solemn gaze - a choked back graveness mistaken for earnest sincerity. Still, listen, listen well to his sermons, listen to his pitch. Does not it also remind you of 'der Führer' in his early years, shrieking to his early adepts in the beer cellars of Munich? He revealed his colours during the Crystal Night, like the 'skulking reviser' has shown his violent nature during the Christian Inquisition and like he in due course will

show the grimace of death of his Islam. What has not been blown up, how many victims has that caused? Yet, these are only incidents compared with what is to come. 'The skulking reviser' uses, or rather abuses the frailty and inconsequential aspects of man and undermines the communal sense replacing it with underhanded fanaticism. Destroying with this all of course the worldwide longing for togetherness, strangling the inspiring examples from the Buddha to Lennon."

"However, the centralistic world powers see through the skulking reviser, where the common Muslim steadily is sucked into the ravine. In its turn this will make an end to Islam, turn it in its turn into an ignorant submerged. The skulking reviser provokes the great central power that is the western world into a response that fits neatly in the scheme of the rabid Muslim. The lifestyle of the western world collides with the purity of Islam, the sneak assassin claims. The great central power and the skulking assassin are like two dogs fighting in the living room twirling around and knocking over and breaking all the furniture of the law-abiding citizen. Muslims living in the western world feel obligated or are forced to take a side in this fight, whichever peaceful life they led before, neglecting Europe has known a holocaust before - they were only Jews. Do not say it is impossible, that what happened in de second world war cannot happen again. Remember the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans at the end of the twentieth century."

I asked Manas whether he predicted the Muslims in the western world will be slain like it happened to the Jews before. With a pain stricken face Manas would not say much more. He would only say it will herald the definitive drowning of Christian values and the beginning of the end of Islam. Then he walked outside and I went after him. Silently we stared at the clouds that were highlighted from below by a setting sun. Deep shades of red with a dark lining in a sky pregnant with rain. The wind became chilly and we went inside again.

Manas rummaged somewhat through a drawer of one of his bookcases and then came to me with a photo-album. He showed me a picture of himself sitting behind his writing desk. "Do you see that computer on the corner of my desk?", he asked. "That, was my very first computer." We looked at the photo on which we both saw the computer, but on which I chiefly saw a much younger and leaner Manas. He snapped shut the album. "That was even before the internet existed."

"The digital revolution," said Manas when he sat again. He spoke the words short of sneering. "The signs are all too clear. The centralistic world powers will seize the opportunity of the polarization between the western way of living and the eastern way to suppress the nearly uncontrollable freedom of its own citizens. They will try to sink the digital revolution, for the almost anarchistic character of that freedom is the centralistic powers a thorn in the side. It is an age-old trick that when in need of putting the own population under the thumb, create a danger that comes from outside. The trick was applied for the first time in recorded history by Sargon the Great of Akkad, in 2334 bce. Sargon

is regarded as the very first empire builder in human history. By the way, about Sargon there is an interesting anecdote. It is said he was adopted, a foundling drifting in a reed basket on the river Euphrates eventually becoming the darling of the goddess Ishtar. Sounds familiar?" Of course this story was familiar to me. I recognized the same story motive that was also used to illustrate the provenance of the prophet Musa, also named Moses - Moshe in Hebrew.

"The warming of earth's climate is also such an exploited danger," Manas continued. "Everyone is made direful, in fear for some vague danger in the future - a ruler cannot wish for a more appropriate phenomenon. To forge an internal unity you need an external enemy. When there is no real danger, you just make up one like the 'skulking reviser' invented the great Satan. The Romans had Carthage. The Christian church the Huns. Fidel Castro the Americans and the Americans the Russians, and so on, and so on. Each time the ordinary man is the hostage of powers."



Šarru-kinu, Sargon of Akkad

On my bike on my way home it began to drizzle.