

Appendix 2:

The Key to the Castle by Suleiman O'Sullivan

It is a voyage I offer you, hoping one day you will engage yourself making this journey to a distant place. I will not sell you anything, I am not a tourist guide and I do not conceal preconceived goals. On the contrary, I started writing this text without knowing exactly what it was I wanted to communicate. It can be described best as a sensation though - not as in a sentimental state of mind, but as in knowing without realizing fully the underlying facts. It is about something of which I must -yes, must- make you a partaker, that is all I know. I want to do this. I think it is called for.

Every time I spoke Manas in the past years he got me annoyed in one way or another. Nevertheless, afterwards I always had to conclude I had not been annoyed with Manas, but that a collision had happened between what Manas said and what I had known since childhood - with the roots of the collision not immediately obvious to me. Was I on the wrong track or was Manas going against the grain? Why did I seem to remember I was always contradicting Manas? Why did I object so often while he never refuted what I said? I think he annoyed me the most because he always formulated as if what he said was indisputable, as if there was no alternative to what he formulated.

Then suddenly it hit me. Manas is not the kind of person of whom you accept something just like that. Some people display a kind of natural ascendancy, a kind of charisma because of which you accept easily what they say. Manas does not show this kind of aphoristic authority. In spite of the absoluteness, the unambiguous character of what he says, you are only touched and never seized by his words. Yet, what he presents is not an alternative for existing religions, not a correction on what might have gone awry in the development of the religions in the course of time. He did not criticize religions, he just brushed them aside as irrelevant, old and decrepit, in need of recycling, as of something utterly beside the point, as if all religions persisted in stating the world is flat. Perhaps worthy of a place in the history books, but of no significance for the present or the future.

Manas Na'ala is the religions' undertaker and that affected me the same as when I was told that Father Christmas is not a real existing person. You first think you have not heard correctly, then you deny. You are likely to revolt when the rug of what you believed in since childhood is

pulled away from under your feet, when the solid ground you thought you were building on appears to be quick sand. My father had become a believer because he loved my mother greatly - and a true and great believer he became. My mother's father and all the fathers before him were devout believers who observed the duties of a believer meticulously. Yet, I began to question, not because of Manas, but because of my own thoughts having heard Manas - I am not even entirely sure anymore if I can call myself a believer.

Manas speaks like he writes. He can be long-winded and he phrases long sentences. He is not difficult to follow, but you have to pay attention whenever he is delivering a talk, or when you read his books. Manas often compares how people handle words with how they consume the images the telly brings to the livingroom. When people got their first television set, they were in awe for what that one single channel brought and they payed attention to it. Since digital television began people now have at least a hundred channels to their disposal. People tend to stay with a certain channel because of its ostentatious extremities only designed to grab attention until the next commercials. Words, Manas says, once were considered magical - how extraordinary it must have been for our ancestors who consciously used the first words. Words were meaningful and everyone must have been in wonderment when the first storyteller told the first stories. Manas's words are like a deep red claret, not like a can of pop.

Words are important to Manas, also when he speaks he does not consider them cursory and casual. He speaks as if he places them with a gentle urgency behind your breastbone, like religious Jews do when they leave notes in the Wailing Wall. Simultaneously it is not his words that are important, but what they do with you. What you do with them. Only in the first stage I find it important to know what precisely he says. However, using his words to avail oneself of the inner journey is infinitely more important. His first book, the Story, at first glance seems to be an uncomplicated almost artless narrative in which God and all other gods on earth are replaced by a new crew of whom Manas states that they are the only existing forces. Forces who by far outweigh the forces as we know them, like electromagnetism and gravity. He does not name these forces gods or angels, but means or mediums with which the FirstOne as he calls Him brought everything into existence. The FirstOne created everything by means of JustLove, WarmBeauty and InsightLight. It is not in the universe in which we humans exist that

these forces were created, but in the existence in which the soul exists, the inspiring beingness of everything. The inspiring beingness of man, animal, water, stone, everything. It is the existence where we all originated and to where we all return after our material existence.

Manas tells the forces the FirstOne let emanate from his being are not mere abstract phenomenon, but above all perceptible beings that epitomize the forces, like material man can be the embodiment of an idea. To this genesis story Manas adds just another extremely important ingredient, the complete freedom of will. Without complete freedom of will the inspired universe would be like an attic full with toy trains on an ingeniously built train yard with card board mountains and figurines on the platforms. The FirstOne then would blow his whistle and bring everything in motion by a turn of the switch of the transformer - all and everything would then run its preordained stretch repeating it into infinity. Complete freedom of will produces development - the trains are set in motion and all seek their own track.

Next to the gift of life, like every mother and father on earth can confirm, the gift of the autonomous development is a perhaps even more essential gift. JustLove, WarmBeauty and InsightLight each exist in dichotomies. Every twofoldness bears the characteristics of the masculine and the feminine, some say yin and yang, and could create from the own desire to do so. Like the FirstOne gave life to his creations, his creations gave life, passed it on, to their own people. The nation of JustLove, the nation of WarmBeauty and the nation of InsightLight. Caused life caused life.

It is not my intent to sketch Manas's books all over. I would rather love to speak to you about the influence of the books, the effect the books have had on me and therefore can have on you, dear reader. Where there is perceptiveness, there is also difference of perception; complete freedom of will makes anything possible. To my eye that is the crux. The enormous boundlessness and everything is possible gift the FirstOne provided. This gift is not only proof of love, but of so endlessly much more for which I cannot find the words. So boundless, much more traditional religious words like mercy and righteousness turn pale in comparison. On top of that one sees the abominable ludicrousness of the notion of submission to the will of God, like religions demand of ordinary people. What the act of creation precisely does not cause is submission. On the contrary, it is astonishment and joy, esteem and recognition of the inspiring example of the FirstOne. Submission is a

people's word not a God's word. Submission is a word of power and command, while the FirstOne's aim is not domination - if so he could have stuck to his toy train yard and the gift of complete freedom of will would be pointless. Domination and freedom of will are contradictory. Complete freedom of will and its consequential quintessential differences of insight brought us into this world. This world we call material, yet a world that can be anything. Indeed, we can have incarnated from where we have come, but it is also possible we have just fallen into a dream and dream our material existence, this existence in the flesh being a mere illusion. Countless since our beginnings have dedicated their religious and philosophical thoughts to hypotheses in this field.

I just spoke of 'us' - Manas does this to much greater detail and nuance, but basically I try to express the same. For in fact not all inspired incarnated into the material universe. Developments and differences of insight had become substantial. Once I heard from fellow readers that the separate development the nation of InsightLight chose bears close resemblance to the expulsion from paradise because of original sin. If there is any resemblance between what Manas says and what the book of Moses says, it must be said the latter uses symbolism and purport no ordinary man today can understand anymore - or it must be that the Eden story is about the transition from neolithic times to the agriculture based society. Besides, original sin again is a term typical of the old religions, distinctive for those who think in terms of a vengeful God, in terms of incapacity and power, good and evil.

Life was created in a physical universe. Not exclusively on earth, but throughout the universe - that multitudinous is the nation of InsightLight. In due course some factions could come into contact with each other, the vastness of space separates others to guarantee a separate development. The nation of InsightLight was presented with the universe as a gift of love and trust from the FirstOne to follow its own track lead on its way by Alnatreah and Luciwher, the creators of the nation of rationality. The physical universe is Luciwher's who with the people of reason seeks its way outside the FirstOne's direct sphere of influence. A wonderful fantastic and ambitious voyage.

In Manas's story not a trace can be found of the judgmental preconceptions all religions display. Luciwher, the Satan, is evil and man is inclined to do evil, the old legends tell us. Nothing is more beside the truth. Manas explains evil does not exist, that those who long for power have brought this idea into existence here. Is lust for power itself not an

evil property? No, Manas answered. The insecure long for power, from fright of harsh reality. Exerting power is an act emanating from pain for living and learning in incarnation is painful, including physical anguish. It is the anguish underpinning the woeful absence of the tangible presence of the FirstOne. Of all personal betterment desired for or unwittingly encountered knowing that in the physical universe Yahwehgodallah or Brahmavisnushiva, the FirstOne is not perceptible eventually gave me an enormous inward quiet. Knowing that Luciwher is not the chieftain of evil, yet that he and Alnatreah are the first among us to endure the absence of the FirstOne. That we all have to find our way back home and through arousal from this physical existence reenter our original state of being, the genuine existence we left to return. I hope everyone who will let permeate these last few sentences, absorb this message of comfort, will find alleviation as I did.

The disasters and catastrophes present in this universe on every level cannot be blamed onto Yahwehgodallah or Brahmavisnushiva's failure for the FirstOne is simply not the driving force of this universe - he is not here causing these calamities nor is it his doing they were not prevented. Neither do these catastrophes result from Luciwher's evil genius for evil does not exist. From being made redundant by your boss to the horrors of the holocaust, every holocaust, nothing can be blamed on the FirstOne. We only call it evil because tragedies hurt us. It is falling short and being imperfect that brings forth the pain. Instead of blaming everything and everyone besides ourselves we should look into the mirror. Sargon of Akkâd, Emperor Augustus, Atilla the Hun, Napoleon Bonaparte, Adolph Hitler, Josef Stalin, Pol Pot and Richard Nixon are no demons. Yes, they were powerful persons, yet mere persons nonetheless. Luciwher is not the ultimate evil, nor is he the creator and god of the physical universe.

The FirstOne granted this universe and indeed said, "Let Light be there." Like the FirstOne created the physical universe as a cosmic soap bubble, when everyone has gone the whole distance and the last soul has come home, like so he will pierce the cosmic bubble in a gigantic firework. Never mind the "big crunch" or "big rip".

We are like children looking for breadcrumbs, searching for a trail that will lead us out of the wild. The noises around us frighten us for we lack security. Filling that lack we invent protection against the unknown. Yahwehgodallah or Brahmavisnushiva and simultaneously those who claim to be the servants of Yahwehgodallah or Brahmavisnushiva. They



Looking for breadcrumbs on the trail

who claim to know his will and thus hoping to gain the advantage. They who devise rituals to make this title plausible. Who advertise to help all the while they are insecure themselves. With which they create leverage over those do not know the rituals or are denied their intricacies, with which inequality entered the world, by which contest

appeared and murder to purloin belongings or to defend them. We are children, juveniles at best, who take away each other's breadcrumbs because we are benumbed and hungry, destroying the visible trail home.

Only one lead still remains which cannot be destroyed, that cannot be taken away, always present for those who look in the only place. For though perhaps you cannot see it yet, the lead already lays waiting in your heart, present to be discovered. The trail you can see when you explore the inside of your closed eyelids. The track you can hear singing when the train approaches once you have quietened the world around you. The mark you can touch like the seeing blind you are.

Finding your point of departure is the hardest, although you only have to start looking for it. I found Manas a certifiable looney being the next guru and he aggravated me. However, it turned out he was not my guru for he did not want to be that. He simply asked to think for myself, for the first time in my life to think and measure what could be the most important. After a long time of reflection, after a very long measure of pondering I decided not to think anymore what others had prearranged for me, not to swallow anymore what others had dished up for me, not anymore to dance after some else's tune, nor to do what was expected of me - on every level.

Then for the first time in my life I realized I was utterly alone in the midst of the crowds and I was shuddering. The least frightened I was because of the world, the cold and the rain, the heat and the thirst, wild animals and ruinous technology. The most frightened I became of people when I realized the world was chock-full of mad men and idiots, who are capable of destroying at any moment what you hold dearest. Until I realized they were not mad men and idiots, but desperate people

sedulously looking for what I had found, yet what could not be taken away from me. What I just said resounded in my ears: what I had found.

I had found my castle, the lock on which to fit the key. Internally I heard the mechanism turn. With it I fantasized a grandiloquent fanfare and an exuberant display of fireworks and I was happy. Nothing bothered me anymore, not even the obstructive neighbours' son, nor the thousands of dead as a result of a monsoon rain or a typhoon. It did not harm me because it could not anymore make me suspicious or anxious. Of course I spoke to the neighbour's son about his behaviour and of course I grieved briefly because of so many lost lives in the water, yet these incursions did not scare me anymore. My head could not be driven bonkers anymore feeding my desperation. I was not disorientated anymore and had discovered the central point in myself that with a clarion blare I officially proclaimed my point of departure. Every year since that day I organize a party.

I had lain down my angst and the mighty became extremely ridiculous. Political debating had always interested me. Now I heard the same politicians speech and it captivated me as much as the rhetoric of a power hungry bureaucrat in Beyondistan. When the other day I was fined I had to make an effort not to laugh - the policeman would not have understood. In our house of prayer I heard high-pitched orations that did not mean anything to me anymore, speeches of a toddler about adult life, a blind man about the plethora of colours in a flowerbed, a deaf man about masterful music.

I have lost my faith or should I say that the faith has lost me. Faith, I assess this will happen to every religion, will lose it - if ever they have got it. The religions will lose power and the hold they have on people. Not because Yahwehgodallah or Brahmavisnushiva is said to be non-existent, but because this surrogate is sold by quacks in the marketplace as the real deal, the elixir of life, the philosopher's stone. The contact with the FirstOne exists for everyone who walks the inner road - no outside influence, guidance or leadership is needed. Using the specifying word FirstOne hardly signifies I now have become an initiate of Manas. That is not possible because Manas is no guru, no prophet or a saint, nor does he take disciples. Manas is a good friend who tipped me of for which he demanded nothing in return.

Faith has lost me for I am a believer no longer. I now know for certain. Because I know, for certain all my angst in this world has gone. My way

and my quest remain the same for I am far from complete. Though I will find my road difficult to follow I am still young. Life in matter, this trying dream absented from spirited reality, is painful for living and learning anguishes. The conclusion though is clear to my mind's eye. My way through the landscape may not yet be perceptible to me, but the light high on the mountain is visible from any point.

How different my awareness is from the God my father worshipped, that from my mother's father and all fathers before him. That God prescribed what had to happen any moment of the day. When we could eat and when not and how we had to share our prosperity with those who were less fortunate, about how to participate in what has become a periodic mass psychotic hike to the spawning grounds. My life I felt had come under an increasing amount of imperativeness I could hardly endure, a pressure that likewise caused ever expanding hypocrisy all around me.

Now that I am free, I have noticed I still honour the most valuable traditions of my former religion, simply because I was reared that way. I still fast, however not anymore because it is obligatory for a period per year. Now as often as I can, I bring my choice of food in accordance with what farmers can produce responsibly and I do not eat meat every day anymore. The energy I consume I reduced to a moderate level and contracted it from a firm that only supplies green energy to the grid. In this way I fast, by living in a way that is as least as possible burdening my environment.

In this way I did not only find a new spiritual beginning, but also the translation of it in my daily life. I am not anymore subordinate to the rules of my religion and my social group. The new rules are now drawn up by myself, not with as goal to let it all hang out, but with the explicit purpose at the end of my days here to be able to say to my children and grandchildren, if I am so lucky to have them, that what I have done was well done. Not well as the opposite of wrong or even sinful, but as in to my best knowledge. I know I am and will be the only one who will judge my doings.

Could not I have come to my conclusion and adopting a new way of life without Manas? Is it per se necessary that my story contains a God, the FirstOne? I think it is very well possible. I think it is very well possible to live conscientiously, to behave in this world in a responsible way, being respectful to your fellow humans and to reflect upon your own standards to reach a better standard without a God you feel is peeking over your shoulders. Yet to me everything would be empty and cold



without the cause of everything, the ultimate answer to the question why.

Manas once said that our lives, in our original state and in this dream form -somehow that sounds more poetic to me than incarnation-, go along the line of seeking the answer to the question "what" and after that to the question "how". In this perishable world we look but will never find an answer to the question "why". Who thinks to have found an answer to the latter will always find to have found an answer to the question "how" and that there is another question to the "why" behind that. An answer to the question "why" can only be found when we have returned home and the cause of everything can be made a request. To me it is evident the FirstOne exists. I do not believe it, I am certain of it because logic infers it - the answer to the "why" can be found. Yet, everyone has to find his own part of the truth in his own way. Never again I will try to win over anyone to my take on life, to convert. For every life is a life with own autonomy. Every life has value and purpose, though one might not see that immediately if ever - blindness emanates from judging and prejudging. When even the FirstOne does not judge any soul, who are we to do so.

Though I not really aimed at reviewing Manas's books, the above is the result of reading just a part of the first book, and many a conversation with Manas of course. In the second book Manas one by one decomposes the myths of the elder. No apocalypse and last judgment, good and evil do not exist, all you always wanted to know about freedom of will and predestination, and so on. All used before to scare and frighten you simply does not exist. Those old 'demons' prevented you to see how things really are formed and prevent you to find your point of departure that is waiting for you inside.



The final judgement

The third book I find the most beautiful, however a subjective choice this may be. It pictures Manas from the beginning of his speaking and writing to the last furnishing people with his comforting messages. For it must be reassuring knowing Yahwehgodallah or Brahmavisnushiva and his rules of fire and brimstone, hell and perdition does not exist at all. It certainly is comforting to know one -everyone- already has all capacities to fathom in one's own fashion the mystery of the FirstOne without being hindered by others who claim to have your best interest at heart, yet who seize that opportunity to appropriate power by thinking for you and consequently force their reasoning on you. Beautiful to see how people with whom Manas talks develop.

As I write this in the fourth book hardly one word has been written, but Manas is still writing and talking. The fifth book directly addresses the great religions of this world. This is the book in which as I see it Manas makes himself most vulnerable, for it could give the powers that be motive to silence him. He on the other hand will not hear of leaving out this book. Manas does not write the books for his own benefit, but as a message to his brother. To Manas Luciwher is his brother for whom he has warm feelings. Not of forgiveness, for there is nothing to be forgiven. What he feels for Luciwher in a sense applies to all of humanity.

Manas designated "The Story" a synopsis. He has ready plans to turn it into a film script. I hope it will come to that.