

AUMISM:
The Birth of a New Religion
A Short History of the First 47 Years
1961-2008

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Aumism is the Universal Religion of the Unity of God's Faces – or Unity between all Religions – the World Headquarters of which is the Monastery and Holy City of the Mandarom – the Name by which it is best known in France – an open-air Temple of Religious Unity built in Southeastern France, near Castellane, 1200 meters' high, overlooking the beautiful lake of Castillon, and where the tallest sitting Buddha (22 m.) faces one of the world's tallest statues of the Christ (17 m.), next to Temples for the 3 other major world religions.

When you understand that Aumism is the Synthesis of all mystical and religious Traditions, and when you perceive it thus as inseparable from each and every Religion, it is easy to see that the essence of Aumism is as ancient as Religion itself, as ancient as any form of human civilization. But those Origins of Aumism could be viewed as its « past lifetimes » so to say, and so, Aumism persay can be considered to have been born with the Initiation of its Founder, the Cosmo-Planetary Messiah, the Lord Hamsah Manarah, on February 13th, 1961, as a Sannyasin – or Renouncer dedicated to God - in Rishikesh, Himalayas, in the North of India, in Swami Sivananda's Ashram.

Five major periods have naturally emerged:

- **From the cave to the Mandarom (1961-1969);**
- **The Mandarom's early stages (1969-1981);**
- **From the Mahabuddha to the Revelation (1981-1990);**
- **From the Revelation to Transition (Persecutions) (1990-1998);**
- **Since Transition (1998-2008).**

1°) From the cave to the Mandarom (1961-1969)

This Initiation as Swami Hamsananda Sarasvati in Rishikesh in 1961 marked in His life a major turning point: from a very active, so-called « profane » life to the condition of a Western Yogi or Swami, Swami Hamsananda Sarasvati. He was originally a Frenchman born in Martinique (French West Indies), of Catholic upbringing, having actively studied successively Law, Philosophy, Economics and Medicine, while spending His nights pursuing esoteric research; He held important responsibilities in several Western Initiate traditions. He had already travelled to Holy Sites throughout the world and been initiated in many religions and traditions.

After His initiation in Rishikesh, S. Hamsah Manarah dedicated Himself entirely to the service of God and humanity. In this initial period of 1960-61, He lived one whole year in the Indian Himalayas. Upon returning to France, He began His Mission as a Sannyasin in Southeastern France, by spending the harsh winter of 1962-63 in an isolated cave – a remote shelter for shepherds built on the side of a small cliff, next to Carpentras and Avignon – where He compelled Himself to spiritual austerities and practices for many hours a day, getting up at 4:00 in the morning, melting snow for drinking water, sleeping on a wooden door... and where He also reached the highest states of consciousness or Nirvikalpa Samadhi, and devised the first Spiritual exercises of Aumism – although the name of Aumism had not yet been revealed. He would have been satisfied to continue living thus, as a Hermit and a completely liberated Buddha having fully reintegrated His Divine Essence, were it not for spiritual seekers, soon to be Disciples, attracted by His light, and who wished to embark upon the spiritual path with His help and guidance. He therefore accepted to teach, and a small run-down farm next to His cave was bought, the first *Centrom* (« OM Center »), which He and his companions renovated – there were times where He alone had to do most of the hard work. This is also where He started teaching and initiating seekers interested in spiritual Enlightenment into the path of Light. He also founded a Center not far from Paris and another one near Marseille.

In 1967, He founded the Association of the Knights of the Golden Lotus. In 1969, He put a down payment to purchase the barren property of what was to become later the Holy City of Mandarom Shambhasalem, next to Castellane in the Alps of Upper Provence, 1200 meters' high, overlooking the beautiful lake of Castillon. This Order in 21 degrees of Initiation aimed at Divine Reintegration or Spiritual Realization, has two branches: the Monks and the External Branch for people living in the world. Inside was later founded a Priesthood, for both men and women, with various degrees or titles, Priests and Priestesses having the right to be married and lead family and professional lives. The guiding principles of this Spiritual Path are: « Love, forgive, serve, meditate, realize the Divine within yourself. »

2°) The Mandarom's early stages (1969 – 1981)

So, after having purchased the land - originally with the last 500 Franc-75 €-bill left in his pocket, placed in the hand of the previous owner, a local farmer, as a way to reserve the land – Swami Hamsananda moved to the new location with a handful of disciples. The living conditions in the beginning were extremely harsh, there was no running water, wood had to be gathered to cook and to keep warm. In the very beginning, everyone lived and everything was done in the same tent – praying, cooking, eating, sleeping. Little by little, during the Seventies, the Monks, Nuns and Knights of the Golden Lotus began to construct the various buildings making up the new Ashram of « Le Mandar'Om » - « Sacred Mountain ». They built their own living quarters, including a Chalet for « Gurudev », the refectory, a first Temple, and the Lotus Temple in 1977; the Temple where everyone gathered to pray, was also then extended, because of the increasing numbers of Disciples arriving, and has been called ever since then « Le Grand Temple » - « the Big Temple ». There were times when the monks and nuns went to pray on Sundays in the Catholic Church in the nearby village and town. It was also a time of many contacts with Tibetan Buddhist personalities: many various Lamas, Kalu Rimpoche, and even the XVIth Karmapa, came and visited Le Mandarom, various Masters from various Traditions also, including a Jainist Master, who gave Gurudev the Title of « Adinath » - something exceptional, especially for a Westerner. The XVIth Karmapa carried out a highly esoteric Sacred Ceremony of the Black Crown in the « Great Temple », an exceptional event. The first Books by S. Hamsananda Sarasvati, on Yoga and

natural healing methods, were published by a well-known French publishing house, called Albin Michel. The Lord also traveled several times to Canada, Africa and the West Indies.

3°) From the Mahabuddha to the Revelation (1981-1990)

In 1981, the building of the Western World's tallest Buddha, (22 meters'high), was a major turning point. The Lord fasted for 72 days while it was being built, which did not prevent him from personally taking part in the construction work. During the eighties, Aumism came of age, Swami Hamsananda progressively revealed Himself as the Lord Hamsah Manarah (same root as « Minaret »). The term « Aumism » was coined, the Sound AUM being the First Name of God, the creative Word also contained in Amen and Amin. In the early eighties, intense rituals were held over many months and even years to transmute the dark energies of the Earth's and Universe's unconscious or astral world ¹, ending up in the creation of the Column of Light revolutionizing the invisible world where all souls without bodies live. The Year Zero of the Golden Age in the Aumist calendar is 1986 - 1987 thus being Year One. To manifest the Ideal of unity and tolerance, not less than five Temples and Statues of different traditions were built from 1987 to 1990. 1987 was the year the Statue of the Cosmic Christ was built, 17-meters' high, facing the MahaBuddha, as Symbol of the meeting of East and West, of the intrinsic Unity between the Christ and the Buddha, between Love and Wisdom. In 1989, the Mosque of Unity of the Imam Mahdi Manarah, the Golden Temple for Judaism - a smaller-scale reconstitution of the Temple of Jerusalem destroyed in the Year 70 AD - and the Temple of Kalki - Master of the Maha Kundalini, Cosmic Healer and Architect for Hinduism - were built.

The Books of the Revelation were published (1989), the Community prepared to announce to the World this Revelation, the return of the Messiah to save life on Earth by accomplishing the prophecies and bringing about the Golden Age.

4°) From the Revelation to Transition (1990-1998) – persecutions.

To crown the other constructions, the Statue of the Cosmo-Planetary Messiah (33 meters) was built in 1990. It was placed between the Christ and the Buddha as a symbol of unification of Eastern and Western Religions. It was inaugurated on August 19th, 1990, and three days later, on August 22nd, His Holiness the Lord Hamsah Manarah revealed Himself as the Cosmo-Planetary Messiah, whose Mission is to save the Earth, help humanity take in charge the future of the planet and help bring about the Golden Age of Peace, Unity, Truth and Freedom. Six more Ceremonies of the Revelation and of the Sevenfold Crowning of the Avatar of Synthesis followed, one for each major Religion, until the 7th ceremony, the 7th Step of the Revelation, one year later on August 22nd, 1991, in front of the world press, invited to each of these events. The four Books of the Revelation were also published in 1990. It is important to understand that the one and single dogma of Aumism, the Unity of God's Faces, implying the Unity between all Religions, is a crucial factor of Peace in the world, diametrically opposed for exemple to The Clash of Civilizations, the worst possible scenario propheticized by Samuel Huntington's famous thesis.

From 1990 to 1993 were published the Books of the New Laws in five Volumes: The Law of Evolution for all Souls, Towards a Golden Age of Unity, The Revolution of the World of the Living and the Dead, A Law to Destroy Evil, The Torch of Unity

In 1994, was published The Book of the Sacraments of Aumism,

And finally, in June, 1995: Adventures of a Yogi and Western Initiate, His last Work.

After these Sacred Ceremonies exceptionally open to the Press, prejudice and intolerance by journalists and society against the Message of Unity of the Lord Hamsah Manarah and His Revelation, set off a phase of intense persecutions, first by the media and the anti-cult

movement, later by the police and the army, in 1995 and 2001. TV Channels and magazines did take advantage of the powerful visual impact of the Holy City, but mainly as a tool to reactivate the phobia of cults, called « *sectes* » in France, the Mandarom being systematically used to illustrate any article or report on this topic, it became in the public's eye the epitome of a « *secte* », the French word for « cult ». S. Hamsah Manarah and 18 of His disciples were violently arrested in June 1995, during a Waco-style early morning raid by commando forces, under trumped up charges of abuse designed to discredit the Lord and the Mandarom, to destroy the new Religion and prevent the projected building of the Pyramid Temple of Unity – the date of the raid (June 12, 1995) was the very same day the French Supreme Court (« *Conseil d'État* ») was to pronounce its judgment on an appeal to save the Pyramid Temple's building permit, finally cancelled two days later. The charges against S. Hamsah Manarah did not hold up to scrutiny though, and the Lord was freed after 17 days, on June 30th, 1995. The Association of the Knights of the Golden Lotus was dissolved during the summer of 1995, and replaced by the Association of the Knights of the Triumphant Vajra, or « AVT ». Less than three years later, S. Hamsah Manarah « left His body » or died, on March 19th, 1998. The authorities refused to respect His last will to have His body buried in the Mandarom, forcefully burying it in an abandoned ossuary where no burials had been done for 50 years, to the discontent of His Disciples, the Monastic Community and local population... The persecutions by the French authorities against S. Hamsah Manarah continued even until after His death.

5°) Since Transition (1998 – 2008)

These persecutions culminated 5 days before 9/11, on September 6th, 2001, when the Statue of the Cosmo-planetary Messiah was blown up with dynamite in the presence of hundreds of soldiers of the French Army. Throughout the legal battle and up until today, the government and media have been lying about a building permit which they claimed never existed, but the existence of which was confirmed by a recent legal judgment, on June 22nd, 2006. That this destruction was a vendetta against the Founder of Aumism is confirmed by the fact that the Statues of the Buddha and Christ, built with the same types of building permits, were never challenged or threatened, only the Statue of the Cosmo-Planetary Messiah, which was destroyed. The publication of an ethnological study about the Mandarom by a well known and highly respected French academic publishing house (« *Les Presses Universitaires de France* ») in February of 2002, called « *Un ethnologue au Mandarom* » - « An Ethnologist in the Mandarom » - by Maurice Duval, was a turning point: the fate of the community has been improving ever since, for the first time legal judgments being pronounced in favor of Aumism and the Mandarom.

The enemies of Aumism thought that they could destroy this emerging religion, and the media, almost always siding with them, have given the impression to many people that the Mandarom and Aumism had disappeared in 2001, after the destruction of the Statue of the Cosmo-Planetary MESSIAH, Symbol of Universal Unity, a Sacred Heritage for Humanity on September 6th, 2001. However, the Mandarom continues to exist and for example Bi-yearly International Aumist Colloquia are held, the Sixth one having just occurred last weekend in Paris, France (April 12 & 13, 2008). Several signs lead us to believe that a more favorable environment is starting to see the light of day in France, and Aumists hope to be able to inaugurate the Pyramid Temple of Unity, a Temple which they have been struggling to build against massive opposition since 1991... For the first time in a long time, the chances that a new building permit will be granted for the Pyramid Temple of Unity seem better than ever. In this Temple, people of all creeds and origins will be able to come and pray for peace, gathered in Unity, with the conviction that God is in each of us, under various Names and

Forms. I believe that Aumism is likely to become one of the major world religions of the Third Millennium, as it suits the spiritual aspirations for peace and unity of much of human society everywhere. The future will tell. Blessings to everyone: OM AUM OM

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London, Saturday, April 19th, 2008.

¹ « The Combats of the Awaited Messiah to Save Earth and Creation », © Le Mandarom, 1991