GYORANS AND TUMARIS
(A Newly Found Secret Religion in Persia)

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Many know the Gyorans in Tabriz: some of them are servants in Armenian houses, but no one knows anything about their religion: and I have found nothing in European literature concerning them. After much effort, I finally formed acquaintances with two chiefs of this religion, and began an investigation. At first they gave me only insignificant notice because they feared to speak freely, but placing more and more confidence in me, they became bolder. They took me to their church, gave me their Holy Book and performed their religious ceremonies in my presence. In the following pages, I shall give all the information which I could gather, during my three years acquaintance with them, about this new and unknown religion.

The Mohamedans give the general name of Gyoran to several religions which have nothing in common. We can enumerate ten or eleven sorts of Gyorans, for example, the religion of the Angorans, Which forms a community apart near Maragha, but we known nothing about their religion. It is also for true other kinds of Gyorans.

Among those called Gyorans, there is a sect entirely apart named Tumari. My two acquaintances were of this religion and consequently all the information given by them concern this doctrine.

The world, according to the doctrine of the Tumaris, is of an age 150 times two hundred thousand years. (By this we understand it to be 30 millions, as the word million is unknown to them). God created the world in three days. From the beginning of the world until now many prophets have come, but all these prophets were for one nation or for one country. The Tumaris accept none of these prophets. The greatest name of the Supreme Being is Hajer or Vezaver. "...As a king before organizing his kingdom chooses and prepares his greatest ministers and after them the secondary princes, so Hajer or Vezaver, God, before the creation of the world, caused to emanate from him his supreme ministers to whom he would deliver the government of the world". The first of these supreme ministers was Yadigar who issued from the breath of God and is presented to us as "...the Light of God". The second is Remzi-bar, who issued from the right eye of God: he gives to humanity news of God. The third is Zulfigar, who issued from the left eye of God: he distributes death among the people. The fourth is Sultan, who issued from the body or Existence (vujud) of God and who is the firman (order) of God. These four together are God himself and are called Charten (Quaternity), literally "Four Bodies".

"As the tree has one trunk and from this trunk several great fundamental branches issue, so God is a trunk, who is Hajer or Vezaver, from which have issued the four bodies of Charten".
From the four persons of the Godhead emanate new godheads, exactly as there emanate from each branch of a tree several smaller branches and leaves. The number of these godheads is 40, which all together are called Chilten (Forty Bodies). Charten and Chilten are the same as the head, trunk and the various members of a man are the same. Of the persons of Chilten I could gain information of only three:

Davud, who issued from the right eye of God;
Benyamin, who issued from the ear of God, who is the "Law of God";
Pirmusi, issued from the voice of God, who is the "Writer of the good and evil works of men".

God has many other names, such as, Sim, Nasim, Shapur, Hinu, Sagangur, Firenghinshian, and Rere. The Tumari priests could not explain the significance of these words, but it is not difficult to give the meaning of some of them. Shapur means in Persian "Son of the King"; Firenghinshian "Who has European form or manner"; Segangur is possibly to be compared with the Arabic Saqanqur which means a certain Egyptian mythological fish. Finally Sim can be the Persian word sim, which means "silver". or turkish sim "wire".

As God is unattainable for humanity, He resolved to take bodily form and to come into the world as a man, in order to make himself known to humankind and to teach the law of truth. The name of God Incarnate is Sim, although the other names can also be applied equally well. In order to announce the advent of Sim, a prophet was sent with the name Sultan Sahak (i.e. Sultan Suhak, or Sultan Ishaq.- Editor) 950 years ago. He preached to the world, but he did not leave any written works except a few little poems.

After Sultan Sahak came another prophet, with the name Kooshchi Oghli (son of a bird seller), two or three hundred years ago and announced the advent of Sim. He also left some works of insignificant quantity. At last Sim took human form and appeared to humanity. He was born at Tabriz, from a father and mother as an ordinary man, during the first half of the last century.

Sim was 34 years old, when, one Sunday, these was brought down from heaven the Holy Book called the Tumar. This word Tumar is without doubt the Greek τομαρινον which has the general meaning of book or volume, but which here has taken the meaning of Holy Book. From this word Tumar, the religion is also called Tumari.

The Tumar is composed of 16 volumes or books, of which I saw only the first; it was a collection of poems, approximately the same size as the Psalms. Tumar is not printed, but is kept in manuscript form, from which it is not the impossible to make copies.

The descent of the Tumar from heaven took place 54 years ago, in Tabriz, and, as Sim was 34 years old when he received the Holy Book, he evidently was born 88 years ago, that is in 1834 A.D.

Sim lived as a man in the quarter ofCharandab in Tabriz, in a simple house, where he died as an ordinary man. His body was buried in the floor of the chief room of the same house, but his soul went as God to heaven and united with Hajer, from which he had departed when he descended to the world. This house is now a church and at the same time a place of pilgrimage. Twenty houses of Tumaris surround it. It is kept hidden from the Mohammedans, and was from me also at first, but after two years of acquaintance, they permitted me with hospitality, offering me tea and fruits. Old and young people of the Tumaris gathered and sang religious songs.

Sim had two sons: the elder began, under the supervision of his father, to write and to set in order the Tumar. After many years of labor he died. Others continued this work and now we can say that the book is complete. They have even attempted to print it, but having no acquaintance with typographical affairs nor having a sufficient sum for the expenses, the project has been impossible to complete.

The second son of Sim is Resul, who is now the religious chief of the Tumaris. He has as assistant a man called Ramazan. Resul is a man of commonplace features, 40 years old; while Ramazan is a man of 30 years old, a common coppersmith. Many of the Tumaris are coppersmiths.

These two chiefs are my acquaintances. In the beginning Resul appeared as an ordinary man: he was a servant in the English Consulate. He did not know how to read or write.