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On the Path
of the Friend

ORACLE RELEASING
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Unpublished Material

The material in this publication is from the Rahal Eks memoir, *On the Path of the Friend*, a memoir on his life in the Sufi Tradition.

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<http://rahaleks.com/store/>

REGROUPING IN HAMBURG

The first few days staying with Maria and Wilhelm were hell. My adoptive parents thundered accusations in my direction, especially Wilhelm. In their view I was a perpetual failure.

“What are you intending to do now?” he asked, sounding like the Great Inquisitor of the unholy Inquisition during a torture session with a potential witch.

“Hey, give me a break to reflect and then decide. One thing is certain, I won’t stay here. Consider this another visit, no more.”

Germany felt heavy to me. I wasn’t at ease. Even though summer had just begun the weather was not to my liking. Cloudy skies made me feel sad. People mostly came across as rigid and so very predictable and I thought there was a lack of joy and spontaneity. However, I deeply enjoyed the fact that I was in the free West and no longer under the observance of the Tunisian secret service, or having to deal with wicked North African bureaucracy. Here in Europe I had more freedom and above all more rights. But the other side of the coin was xenophobia, racism, and the Neo-Nazis creeping out of the under-wood, spreading hatred.

Soon my painting shipment from Tunis arrived and I began to consider alternative locations where to live and work. Amsterdam first came to my mind, but after contacting an old friend who had moved there the reality of settling in that city suddenly sounded a little more expensive and complicated than I anticipated. I was at a dead loss and quite confused, if not to say directionless. Doubts even crept in as far as my creativity was concerned. Should I continue the way I did in the past or instead focus exclusively on one media of expression and if so, which one? It was the pre-e-mail era; hence I indulged in letter writing to friends abroad, sharing my latest news, worries and hopes.

In order to get away from my adoptive parents I spent a lot of time with Hans and Bernd in Hamburg. Moha was back too after finally escaping from his Moroccan black-magic-induced marriage that had brought him unwillingly to another European country and a most undesirable situation. Now he was back to queer family life with the friendly old gay couple and a job in a restaurant. He was very happy in Hamburg.

One day the phone rang – Bernd took it – and Nouredine was on the line. We all listened to the conversation over the switched on loudspeaker. Nouredine had found the number in an old phone book of mine and - surprise, surprise – he was still calling from my former phone in my former *medina* house in Marrakesh.

I was most furious.

Nouredine didn’t know that I was in Hamburg, he had the *chuzpah* trying to plant seeds of intrigue between me and my German friends, telling them lies and, how typically Moroccan, begging for financial help - as if my friends would automatically owe him anything.

Back at Maria and Wilhelm’s place I had a bunch of letters waiting for me – replies to my first

writing binge to friends.

Jack in Dubai offered to invite me to London during his summer holiday in August and he hinted that Zahra wanted to meet me too.

What a surprise!

I took the London invitation as a sign to perhaps consider the British capital as an alternative place of residence. I would need a month to know. Jack's invitation was only for a few days. Therefore I contacted John whom I had met in Tunis to line up an accommodation for the extra time.

In a prompt reply he communicated that he was delighted to having me stay as long as I wanted. I felt hopeful and quite positive.

About the Author

Rahal Eks is the author of KHALIL & MAJNUN and HUSSEIN & THE NOMAD, both memoirs. He was a long time columnist for Huriyah magazine, writing about his travels. Currently, he teaches the Sufi Tradition on his website:

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