

**EXPERIENCING  
THE MIRACULOUS  
IN SUBUD**



**Maryam Ioanna David**



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*Published by: DeKa Publishing,  
Jakarta, Indonesia.*

*ISBN 960-256-628-0*

*Portrait & photographs arranged by : Mikhail David*

IN THE NAME OF GOD, IN PRAISE OF GOD  
THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE  
THE INFINITELY GOOD

*This book is dedicated  
to the late Y.M. Bapak.M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo  
who gave us the latihan kejiwaan of Subud  
and to Ibu Rahayu*

# Glossary

Yang Mulia (Y.M.)- Indonesian honorific

Latihan Kejiwaan of Subud - Spiritual exercise of Subud

Testing - Asking questions that we cannot solve with our minds.

-the inner self has this capacity to receive answers when we practice the latihan -.

Subud opening - the first time that we practice the latihan .

Bapak - father - Indonesian respectful term equivalent to Mr.

Ibu - Mother - Indonesian respectful term equivalent to Mrs.

Wisma - housing complex

# Preface

## The Basis and Aim of Subud

*A brief talk by Bapak M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo*

**Subud** is the abbreviation of the words Susila Budhi and Dharma

**Susila** means the good character of man in accordance with the Will of Almighty God.

**Budhi** means the force of the inner self within man

**Dharma** means surrender, trust and sincerity towards Almighty God.

This is the symbol of a person who has a calm and peaceful inner feeling and who is able to receive the contact of the Great Holy Life Force.

As the spiritual training (latihan kejiwaan) of Subud is free from the influence of the passions, desires and thinking and is truly awakened by the Power of Almighty God, the aim of Subud is naturally towards perfection of character according to the Will of The One Who awakens it, namely Almighty God..

It is also necessary to explain that Subud is neither a kind of religion nor a teaching, but a spiritual

experience awakened by the Power of God, leading to spiritual reality free from the influence of passions, desires and thinking.

That is why in the spiritual training of Subud one really feels that one's inner self is no longer influenced by the passions, heart and mind which means that in the latihan kejiwaan of Subud the inner feeling has truly been separated from their influence.

Why should the passions, heart and mind be separated from the inner feeling when these are man's most important equipment for his life in this world which can be used to increase and broaden his knowledge? It is because unless the passions, desires and thinking are separated from the inner being, it will not be possible to be in a pure state in receiving the spiritual training, so that it will be impossible for the inner feeling to receive the contact from the Great Life Force which in fact has permeated it inwardly and outwardly.

That is the reason why the influence of the passions, desires and thinking must be separated from the inner feeling. In such a state the inner feeling will awaken and will be able to recognise the existence of the various kinds of life forces which flow in and out and move it. Eventually it will be able to distinguish between the good and the bad, namely between the life force that originates from the true human self and the life forces that come from the subhuman forces i.e. the material, vegetable, and animal life forces and the life force of man.



In receiving the spiritual training of Subud the receiver is truly Guided by the Power of Almighty God towards the attainment of an ability to distinguish between the various kinds of life forces in man (chemistry in the spiritual realm)

This will eventually lead to the realisation of his true nature and elimination of the false one. In ordinary science such knowledge (chemistry) is very important, for with chemistry man can extract iron, tin, gold, silver and other materials from a lump of earth. The only difference is that the latter is man's work, done with his heart and mind, whereas the former, the chemistry in the spiritual realm, is the work of God Whose power reaches beyond the power and ability of man.

Finally in your worship of Almighty God you need not worry about anything.

God Is All Knowing, All Wise in all things. God can Create something from that which does not exist and God can put right something that from the mind's view, cannot possibly be put right.



*Bapak and Ibu Rahayu*

*Archives*

# **PART ONE**

## **The distant past**

The practice of the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud  
is my way.  
My spiritual path.  
Contact with my Creator

Our minds cannot grasp or even comprehend  
the benefits gained.

The latihan kejiwaan or practice of the spiritual  
exercises of Subud  
has to be experienced  
to be truly treasured in our hearts and souls  
as God's Great Gift to us  
like the sweetness in sugar which has to be savoured  
on the palate to be relished.

The inner reality of man,  
the real being in us  
when re-awakened by the latihan  
is miraculously experienced  
not only within our inner selves

Enriched in awareness  
our lives on earth widen consciously  
experiencing the miraculous daily  
in minor or major occurrences

In Indonesia, time moves slowly.  
One forgets the days of the week.  
The lack of disturbance  
particularly beneficial for creative arts  
pervades the feelings  
fills the soul with inspiration.

In the beginning in 1982  
when we moved to Indonesia  
we were fortunate enough to live  
in Wisma Subud whilst Bapak was alive.

A year after Bapak's transition to the Great Life, Pamulang became our home. We build ourselves a house and it welcomed us.

The open fields, the colourful Indonesian tiled roofs, vivid green vegetation, rich reddish brown soil, the quiet of the wondrous sawa, contrasted to the swinging palms all joined in our prayers, shared in our co-existence.

Bapak's majestic house in the background sadly without Bapak in his physical presence stands there as a blessed remembrance.

Luckily our dearest and respected Ibu Rahayu, Bapak's eldest daughter and some members of Bapak's family live near by.

Years have elapsed since then  
blessed , happy, eventful years, sad too

Endless the surprises in store, manifestations of God's Love. The course of events in our lives is never really anticipated.

Whilst I was living in Wisma Subud  
vivid memories of childhood days  
erased from memory all along  
returned into my consciousness.

I relived the distant past with renewed knowledge and understanding.

Words cannot describe how deeply these experiences gratify. My heart filled with love and remorse for misguided conceptions.

The greatest reality of all is God's Care for His children. Everything else that absorbs us in this world serves as the spice of life,

Almighty God's Protection and Guidance is ever there for us all since the very beginning of our existence.

That is true knowledge when we finally become aware of our proper Direction.

Without awareness we rest soundly in ignorance busying ourselves with our material existence, not even remembering consciously that we will one fine day return to our Creator.

All the frustrations from my childhood days evaporated.

A marvellous feeling prevailed making peace with misconceptions, setting right what was wrong.

## Introducing Ioanna

Due to the lengthy occupation of their land numerous Greek families were self-exiled to various parts of the world, where they lived contentedly, some of them settling there for generations.

One such family was ours. I was born in Alexandria, Egypt of Greek parents just before the second world war was declared. They christened me Ioanna, Rea

According to my father the name Rea, favoured especially by him was added to Ioanna, just in case at some time in the future I happened to dislike his choice of name. But when the time came for me to actually take another name, a name more suited to my nature, father freaked out at least for a while.

If you were named Marilyn Monroe- he said,- I'd understand. Your name "Ioanna" is lovely, why change it.? The truth may have unconsciously escaped to the fore. The daughter he loved and knew since her birth might grow to be different now, distance herself maybe ?

Both my parents were good and honest people. They had been married for three years before I emerged as an addition to their marital existence. They welcomed my arrival with particular enthusiasm, for their togetherness was far from ideal. They were really very different in their natures.



Both were fine persons, gifted, good looking and kind but not well-matched.

Mother came from a wealthy middle-class family, Father was self made. He had descended upon his eldest sister at the age of thirteen, travelling to Egypt from his island in Greece, alone. Financial assistance was not available to him only a home to stay at his sister's, for she had a large family of her own.

Father was not easily daunted though. A progressive man with a very keen interest in education and how to get ahead in life, having finished school in Egypt he proceeded on his own merits to go to University in Athens and to qualify as a doctor successfully. A very sensitive man but severe and disciplined, father did not tolerate any nonsense in himself or others.

Mother was just the opposite. A soft hearted woman very kind and generous by nature. The only girl in her family, with two brothers she was particularly pampered by her parents especially her father who doted on her.

When my mother turned seventeen, my grandfather who had the same nature as his daughter, was very concerned about her future as unknown to the rest of his family, he had developed a heart condition.

He had met my father, was impressed by his personality and decided to introduce him to his daughter. They apparently liked one well enough

assuming, I suppose, in their hearts, that they would cope with each other's idiosyncrasies despite their difference in age and background. So full of romantic thoughts and great expectations they were married.

Mother was seventeen. Father was twenty-eight years old.

For thirteen whole years they tried to keep their marriage going. Their relationship however was marred from the start.

My birth three years later elevated hopes that their married life would improve. They lavished attention and care on me but continued to be unhappy with each other.

Their lack of harmony must have disturbed me inwardly. My childhood reminiscences remained dormant for years and years. Memories of events of my childhood days were absent from consciousness, whereas most children dwell on theirs fondly to the end of their days.

When I was five years old, I had a near death experience. After an appendicitis operation, galloping double pneumonia hit my lungs. The doctors had diagnosed impending death short of a miracle.

I survived.

I was never the same after that illness.

At the age of nine, another near death experience.

I understood during my first near death experience that we have a double identity, another life inside. I was in a coma for a day or two and left my body. I was puzzled of course to see myself lying on the bed whereas I went through walls and joined my parents who were lamenting my condition, neither hearing nor feeling me around.

I gave up on them soon for the kind of Protection surrounding me was incredible.

Tender, Loving Care encircled me.

After what seemed a very short time, I received a command from somewhere within my understanding maybe, informing me that I could not remain any longer wherever I was held lovingly. I had to return to my family ... and opened my eyes for the first time.

Fifty days were spent in the hospital before I was strong enough to resume life at home.

That illness and near death experience changed me radically.

Naturally it also bothered me.

Why wasn't I just like other children?

What had made me different, more mature in thought?

Pranks and naughtiness normal to children sometimes disturbed me.

Added to my difference as a child, all kinds of queries

and observations puzzled me further regarding life and our true identities.

Children are prone to imitation. I felt strangely out of place. I differed. more like a grown up, mature and very serious in evaluating circumstances.

Compromise was the solution of course otherwise I would have been isolated from other kids and would have remained without friends. Children particularly in their teens, tend to belong to groups, like animals moving in herds.

It is a necessity to live one's years, for one's balance and well-being.

As I was entering my teens, one evening at dusk I went for a walk in the small private garden of our school reserved for boarders. I was a boarder at an English school in Alexandria, a model school built to enhance British education. I had no brothers or sisters so my father believed it would help develop my personality to be with other children.

It was a lovely garden, so peaceful, hardly used by us youngsters. As I was standing, I felt my height and smiled contentedly.

I looked up towards the sky.

The vastness of the Universe filled me with awe.

It often happened.

I became uneasy.

Where did I fit into it all?

Suddenly I felt fatigued inwardly and outwardly as though I had been bigger in size and had shrunk. An intense feeling of having lived ever so long took hold of me. The same feeling of two identities as in the death experiences. I had lived in Greece at another time, another epoch in Egypt too. I had struggled. I felt as old as the very earth I was treading upon, then tired again.

For a thirteen year old teaming with life those conflicting sentiments were disgruntling. I rushed away to join my friends and a swift return to my teens.

The garden was visited sometimes, but never again in the early evening. I thought I had understood I was unlikely to live too long. It did not bother me inordinately, for since my illnesses, my attitude to living was strange. Rather detached I would say.

But what about those loved ones?

My parents, my friends.

I did not wish them to suffer on my account.

There is little we can do if it is to be-I told myself. Life after death is a continuation. I had experienced a tiny part of its reality.

Half way through the summer holidays that same year I came across an article in a French magazine, the "journal d'Egypte", we were still living in Egypt, an article about the miracle of Fatima that totally engrossed my attention.

Despite a lack of dogmatic religious training and upbringing the miracle itself I did not question. Both my grandparents - deceased long before my thirteenth birthday had been very devout -our roots are never obliterated from our genes.

Somehow the article of this miracle imparted into my understanding a new incentive. Hope for the future ahead, living in awareness.

When I had travelled into the past in the garden, in my separate identity a strange awakening had taken place. I had not been born on earth through mere coincidence.

So many occurrences had happened since I was a small child almost daily to indicate we have a lot to learn to understand not only about ourselves the purpose of Life  
living,  
but mainly to regain CONTACT WITH OUR  
CREATOR  
and sustain this guidance in our daily lives.

Important changes were portended ahead for humanity. Some call it the age of Aquarius.

In the late fifties the article said -we were then in the early fifties- man would be facing the real being within himself and very challenging spiritual help would be provided directly to him or her by the Power of ALMIGHTY GOD.



*Alexandria - with my parents*

I started to count the years. I was going to be a part of it. I was certain.

My parents were finally separated when I was ten years old.

The war had ended.

Great political and social changes were taking place globally.

Both parents were against divorce in their hearts but their togetherness upset all three of us.

Mother was particularly adverse to this separation, hence the delay in their decision. She actually loved her husband in her own way, but was almost totally unable to comprehend his nature and remained much like a spoilt child. Divorce was a rather unusual event in those days for the conservative Greek community living in Egypt. .

My parents were divorced by "mutual consent" some months after my tenth birthday. "Mutual Consent" to be specific meant that they both had a right to my person. I was to spend half the time with one parent and the other half with the other.

Summer holidays were mainly shared by each parent for longer periods of time.

Subsequently I became a boarder at the English Girls College in Alexandria. Five days were spent at school and the week-ends at home. A week-end laden with



lessons for Greek was simultaneously taught to me privately as well as French. Father insisted that I follow all the curriculum of the Greek school and French lessons.

A year and a half after father's divorce, although he had decided never to re-marry, to travel widely maybe or emigrate to the United States,.... he met his soul-mate, a young, strikingly beautiful and kind divorcee. He proposed almost immediately. They were married within six weeks and lived happily to the end of his days- ie. forty years of marital bliss-

Father passed away ten days before Y.M. Bapak .on June 12<sup>th</sup> 1987, on the day of his dear wife's birthday whom he always called his good angel. My step-mother aged eighty eight, is still alive and does her latihan at home.

Mother re-married two years after her divorce to a kind and energetic man more suited to her make-up. They lived fifty two years together contentedly. I was truly privileged to look after them to the end of their days, after 1995 spending longer periods of time in Greece. They died within a year of each other, mother being eighty-six years old .

Both my step-parents created no problems for me personally. They were kind and loving. At length their divorce worked in my favour too. It created two sets of homes.

Both sets of parents welcomed my presence when I happened to be spending time with them. The way my life developed eventually also helped make me particularly independent in spirit.

At the age of fifteen I was sent to a boarding school in England, Tortington Park in Arundel, Sussex. The divorce had had its effect on my studies and personality the first few years. I had lost confidence in myself and felt deflated of enthusiasm. Going to school in England was truly a blessing. I travelled to this new destination by air, by myself unknown to all there. Even the guardian who had been appointed to look after me was a stranger to me.

I must at this stage, praise my father who was brave enough, trusting and generous, to have taken such a bold and unusual decision. We were living in a Middle Eastern country. I do not recall anyone else being as progressive and daring at the time. Besides no expense was ever spared to provide the best conditions regarding my development and education.

After his divorce father became very protective even keener to instill right values in life, particularly the benefits of marriage since he had failed once before. He took all the decisions for my upbringing unto himself. Nobody was allowed to interfere. My step-parents were not supposed to replace either parent, or take any responsibility regarding my person. They were friends and were called by their first names by me.

A member of the staff received me at the air-terminal when I reached London in the evening for the first time. She took me to a hotel in Kensington to spend the night, not far from the railway station. The next day we boarded the train and went to my new school.

Initially I was shocked by the school. The building had served as a barracks during the war. Its smallish size impressed me negatively. The English Girls' College was a palatial building, very luxurious with large play grounds and a swimming pool. University trained, competent teachers taught us. Our educational standards were higher than those in the U.K. Children of thirty six nationalities attended that school. All the facilities were provided for us to develop into useful and educated women in the world.

My problem was personal though. The English Girls' College was no longer fulfilling to my growth and development. My grades had tumbled downwards dramatically along with my self-confidence, after the divorce.

Images of the new school were created erroneously in my mind prior to my arrival. I liked the idea of going to school in England and my imagination had built castles. Father had carefully selected this particular school out of many other well known ones. The international spirit and wide approach to life at Tortington Park, convinced him that I would fare well. He was right.

I not only settled down in this new environment. I grew more confident in myself and improved my grades within a very short while indeed, making plenty of friends -some life-long ones. School reports were glowing with praise. Father was overjoyed.

One big snag was the weather at the beginning. Cold indeed.

That particular year had been the coldest in thirty years-we were told. To crown all the heating system broke down!

Sandwiched into at least two sets of clothes on each level, from my undergarments upwards, hobbling along because of chilblains plaguing my sore feet, I moved about trying to adapt as well as possible, feeling miserable and sorry for myself at times.

Until one fine day we woke up with snow falling. I dashed out, never having seen snow before, marvelled at its beauty and stopped complaining about the weather. I was home and I loved to be in England.

By June I had truly thought I was acclimatised. The sun shone brightly. During the sports period I jump into the swimming pool, forgetting that I was not in Egypt, swim for twenty minutes by the end of which time I was taken to the dispensary for a rub having turned blue all over.

So much for the weather.

Most children have a variety of wishes as they grow into adults. Besides my spiritual quest, which was of utmost importance to me, the second most fervent wish was.... to graduate from University. Both of these were strong resolutions, totally fixed as though they had been inscribed into my being with determination and fervour.

I wanted to study Philosophy or Psychology having obtained the O and A Levels required for entrance to University.

My Creator did not.

A short war, known as the Suez crisis, broke out in Egypt.

I had applied, been interviewed and provisionally accepted by two well reputed Universities in England but finances now were blocked from Egypt to the U.K. because of the war. The universities refused to admit me without their fees being secured.

God 's Will always prevailed, and I am not fatalistic by nature. My best friend's father whilst I was at school, had obtained permission from my dad to become my guardian. He really went out of his way to care for my welfare during all of my schooling and University years.

Solutions are always available to us if hope is not lost. My guardian came up with a way to further my studies, since I now could not get a visa out of Egypt for the U.K., finances being blocked and unavailable

for transfer to the U.K.

The University of Dublin, Trinity College, in Ireland it was. When I was admitted his daughter joined me for a short spell to keep me company...

I managed to graduate with B.A/ Honours Degrees in English and French Literature - ( later an M.A was added). This academic orientation decided from above, proved to be far more suited to my nature.

University life at Trinity College, Dublin, was immensely satisfying. Every moment was cherished and appreciated. Carefree still, devoid of major daily worries, relaxed, concentration was centred on cultivation of the mind, knowledge useful for life.

Extra curricular activities also helped widen us in every way. Having barely finished school, as an undergraduate my independent spirit flourished.

College activities, the Dubliners, their culture, their humour, particularly their literary heritage, some of the most famous literary giants graduated from Trinity College, are treasured in my memory.

Truly happy times.

Plans ahead, after graduation were to further my studies in Florence - art - another major interest of mine.

Destiny - plans had to be forsaken.  
I was married ....

to another graduate, five years older than myself.  
He had worked before attending to his higher  
education hence our age difference.

As an undergraduate he became my best friend and “  
guardian.”

We often disagreed on this last point as he fathered  
me quite a bit.

Until one fine day unknowing to us, we discovered  
that we were in love. Once that was established, we  
got engaged at the end of my third year.

One more year was left for my Degrees-I was aiming  
for Honours Degrees in English and French Literature-  
it was possible then, not any more to-day to obtain  
degrees in two modern languages simultaneously.  
Hard work is really not enough to cover the sheer bulk  
of literary works in these two modern languages.

Insecurity or maybe instinct overcame my fiancé after  
the first term of my final year. He insisted on taking  
me away before the end of my academic career to be  
married. For some reason, he did not wish to wait any  
further. A whole term was wasted on his side after his  
graduation guarding me, lest I changed my mind!

My father totally disapproved of our plans.  
He relented eventually and gave his blessing, only

if I promised to return to Dublin for finals and graduation.

Many disagreements and board meetings also followed among the professors - another rare event at the time - who allowed me to absent during the last two terms of my final year.

One more condition of my father's, before our marriage was that I had to meet my fiance's family.

In the summer of 1957 *a scholarship to Lund University in Sweden was awarded to me to attend a summer course.*

Father refused to let me go. He insisted that it would have been far more useful and practical for me to travel to Cyprus instead, since we were also contemplating to settle on the island after our wedding.

Meeting my husband's family for the first time came as a great surprise. It bonded me to them all to this day. I was immediately made welcome and accepted. Their unity charmed me. An incredibly large family closely knit.

My parents-in-law had three boys and three girls. Dozens upon dozens of relatives, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, more cousins were introduced. At the beginning it was not easy to remember them all. Many of my fiance's immediate family resided abroad. We had met some prior to my trip to Cyprus.

I returned to my own family filled with enthusiasm.



Father was re-assured that I would not be unhappy. Regressing in time, that first trip to Cyprus deprived me of a possible contact with Subud, for my spiritual restlessness had not stopped.

About that same time Y.M. Bapak Moh. Subuh Sumohadiwijojo and his family had gone on their first trip abroad to the U.K.

Initially Bapak had received an invitation via Hussein Rofe, one of the first Europeans who had sought spiritual understanding and had received the latihan by Bapak himself, in the early fifties in Indonesia. Rofe subsequently travelled to Hong Kong where he continued with his latihan and formed a Subud group, opening people who had contacted him. Through some articles of his in foreign newspapers in which he referred to the miraculous value of the latihan, an invitation was extended to Bapak in 1957 to travel to Cyprus on his first trip to Europe. A number of people, followers of a movement that John Bennett belonged to as well, who lived in Cyprus were interested in receiving the latihan and invited Bapak to visit them.

However due to the political turbulence on the island, Bapak had to refuse this invitation to Cyprus- which would have coincided with my first visit on the island- and travelled to the U.K. instead.

Hundreds of people were surprisingly opened by Bapak and his party during their stay at Coombe Springs in London within a very short time.

Thus Subud simultaneously spread to many countries all over the world, in 1957 all at once.

The time obviously was not ripe for me then.

Feelings now appeased on all sides, our wedding took place in Cyprus since we were planning to settle permanently on the island.

The turbulence and political unrest which subsequently took place after our marriage on the island during the few months that we were there, did not detract me from my promise to my father, thanks be to God.

I studied during curfews and my husband cooked, pretty much sacrificing himself....Cooking was not really his favourite pastime.

Due to the war in Cyprus our plans for the future also had to change after my graduation. A few months were spent in Germany (in training for my husband's job). He worked and I relaxed, a young married woman knitting, reading and learning German free from the stress of exams. It amused me whenever anyone addressed me as "frau David". Fraus to me were mature, plumpish, and experienced ladies unlike myself still a student in spirit.

We then moved to Lagos, the capital city of Nigeria in West Africa, to work for a large family business. Our only son was born to us almost two years later in Lagos.



*Cyprus - my wedding*

Married life  
motherhood  
work  
filled me with contentment  
We were in love and happy together.

I would have followed my husband anywhere in the world always trusting in his righteousness, honesty and bright mind.

yet  
quest number one,  
regarding my spiritual orientation  
never eased off  
all along

I read avidly to find the one within myself and the right direction  
hinduism,  
budhism,  
other practices.

not one was suitable  
nothing felt right for me .  
I was looking for Contact with my Creator .....  
longing for it.

The message about the Miracle of Fatima had been erased  
from memory including childhood experiences.  
Man is forgetful.

We looked healthy and felt well.  
We were young.  
The future ahead seemed very bright indeed and secure.  
The earthly fulfilment of our hopes and dreams was nearer  
-so it appeared.

Man is indeed forgetful.  
Forgetful and carried away  
by the various forces.

One of my main concerns was bonding in our marital relationship. The priests during the Greek Christian Orthodox wedding ceremony pray for union-for the couple to find each other, to become one in body and soul, Man then, will bear enlightened children.

Awareness of my failings and inherited weaknesses was prevalent before my marriage as well as in our daily life together. We discussed sometimes any of the problems that we envisaged in our relationship. To my amazement if my spouse realised something was not right, behaviour wise or in temperament, he immediately stopped his habitual reactions, adapting a new self from one day to the next.

I kept observing these changes wondering why I could not follow? Why was I lagging behind unable to get rid of some of these failings that I had been made aware of?

Watching Haralambos, my spouse, develop rapidly during the short time that we had together, amazed me constantly. He progressed so rapidly it was not easy to catch up with him.

Little of course did I guess then, young and inexperienced as I was, why this was happening. The light in his eyes kept changing too. He mellowed in temperament from one day to the next.

He had a brilliant mind, a very active personality. At the University he had excelled in activities and was given the Omolulu Trophy for International relationships. He also had a job as a part journalist and edited the University newspaper. Another of his talents was debating. He represented all the Irish Universities abroad as a member of the Philosophical society.

Nevertheless we both managed to obtain our Honours without much ado, he in Economics and Political Science despite our numerous extra curricular activities which we enjoyed so much together.

Accidentally I found a book in Kaduna, in Northern Nigeria,  
lying around our house one day.  
My husband had apparently bought it.

I stayed up reading it all night long  
my spirit elated  
my feelings wide open.

The book inspired confidence and seemed to contain all the answers for me to pacify spiritual restlessness to give back Life.

In that book the author, a well known actress, Eva Bartok, described how an exercise she practiced in 1957 had changed her existence.

The book was written without details about the Subud organisation, an earlier book.

Subud was in swaddling clothes- still being organised into an international association.

All I had understood after reading that book, was that a man from the East was opening people in Europe who were experiencing a new feeling, Rebirth - Guidance, living life with greater awareness of God's special Care for his Own whilst living normally like other people in society.

Very sure of my intention in my feelings to receive the opening, I talked to my husband and obtained his permission to travel to the U.K. to meet "the special man from the East".

Man Plans  
GOD ordains

The plan for my trip had to be temporarily postponed.

We were both working for the family business and our son was still a toddler. It was not easy for me to depart for Europe right then. We had just returned from our holidays. Foreigners who lived in Nigeria, unlike those living in Egypt were not settlers. They were employed on two yearly contracts. Travelling to Europe for one's holidays took place every two years for four months.

Times were different.

1961

On our return from our holiday my husband had risen career-wise very quickly in the company. He had been made general manager in charge of all the businesses, throughout the whole of northern Nigeria. I was employed working at the office, first in Lagos in the accounts department, and subsequently in Kaduna where we were now based and had recently moved.

Although we were closely related, the uncle who had created these large international very successful business concerns was self made and believed in strict discipline. All his nephews working for the companies, hotels, department stores, trading, representation of cars etc. in West Africa, started working with salaries down the ladder. They rose career-wise only according to their working capacity and merit and were to inherit the business when Uncle would pass away.



Shortly after we had settled in our new base in Kaduna,  
we went to Kano for a long weekend on business  
along with our toddler.

Worries had vanished after reading the spiritual  
book....

We were very happy, particularly content with our  
child who filled us with pride.

Kano - 1961

As the sun was setting that dark Sunday in  
November  
whilst sipping our tea

The Creator Claimed my husband back

aged... twenty -nine

He closed his own eyes.

Left us all behind

in less than five minutes

like a fledgling

flying home to rest

The good die young- they say

The plant had overgrown the pot.

Greece- 1962

On another bleak Sunday we landed in Athens  
my sixteen month old son and I hugging each other

a new life ahead

a fresh start

I felt more dead than alive despite my twenty five  
years

The latest development had created an enormous  
gap

darkness

inwardly and outwardly

Carry on for your son you will find solace in time-  
advised the older folk

Greece was now to be our new abode

to give the child - its roots-

along with my parents who also had to start all over  
again

as refugees from Egypt

'Blessed are those who mourn, they will be comforted'  
the scriptures say.

My spirit however was heavy, unable to react,  
to alleviate sadness.

The lesson had come early.

No plans for the future, just live the day to day events.

The healing process was slow.

Extremely slow.

But life indeed goes on particularly when one is young responsible for the growth, well- being and development of a small child.

Working was considered salubrious by all those concerned for me. A job was miraculously found within two weeks. I was actually a stranger in my own country never having resided in Greece until then and Greece was still developing after the various destructions of wars.

three long

long.

years went by

A few months after our arrival in Greece we moved away from my paternal home. Needless to say that moving back into my father's family with our toddler, after Haralambos' demise was an added sadness.

Father and his family had luckily established themselves comfortably on the outskirts of Athens. Being far-sighted he had managed to look after his financial affairs, long before the political situation developed into a real nightmare for some of his compatriots and friends living in Egypt.

He had settled and lived contentedly with his dear wife and a daughter born to them, peaceful in his heart that all was well with me too in my married life.

Father was also a new-comer to his own country, older by then, tired, not as energetic as in the past to continue with his successful practice..

Before he received the news of his son-in law's passing away, he was sleeping. He had a very vivid dream of Haralambos. In his dream, he saw him as a deformed baby, placed on a slate on the top of a long table with four big candles lit all around him. Father was not superstitious, nor did he believe in dreams but that dream left an awful feeling in his heart. It made him totally unwell physically. Just then he received an overseas call from some member of the family announcing Haralambos' sudden demise. He took to his bed for several days. It shattered him. In that short spell of time he had learnt to love and respect his son in law.

He now started to worry again about our future.

Mother and her family had also settled in Greece at that time, as refugees not as comfortably any more as they had been in Egypt.

Strangely enough, though we all expected mother to behave otherwise she was a pillar of strength, assisting whenever she could with her presence.

A flat nearer the centre where I worked, was now to be our new abode.

We moved six months later.

Work  
family  
responsibilities  
the three long years went by

The little boy filled up most gaps.  
He grew indeed to be the pride and joy of my life.

Throughout that long period however,  
I had reached the end of my patience spiritually.  
I had touched the rock bottom of my soul.

What of the spiritual message I had read, the uplifting  
feeling experienced after perusing the book in  
Kaduna ?

My belongings arrived from Nigeria  
The spiritual book had vanished.  
I tried London, other cities to regain contact with my  
Creator  
to find this association.  
The name Subud was unknown to me -not mentioned  
in the book I had perused.

My spiritual rebirth felt lost to me. .

No apparent spiritual help came my way.

## The theatre of life

the child  
both sets of parents  
my husband's large family  
all helped

life evolved centred mainly around the boy  
building a home and family life for him  
making him feel secure without his dad.

Those first few years were hard.

Surprises came our way too.

God-father to my child was his great uncle an imposing and successful personality internationally acknowledged. Once our dad was gone from us, this famous great uncle along with his wife made it their business to pay special attention to us, almost adopting us into their family life particularly for holidays. Their base was in Paris. Part of our holidays were spent together with them either at Christmas, in snow resorts or during the summer holidays by the sea when they visited Greece .

Right after my husband had passed away, before our departure from Nigeria, I was even offered a job in the company in Nigeria, if I had so wished to remain there and concentrate on a career. It felt wiser however to move to Greece where my parents had also settled.



Within two weeks a woman came to visit from Paris, a friend of the family's, Pavlina Pavlides, a sculptress originating from Cyprus, now deceased.

We talked for an hour. She belonged to an association called SUBUD.

They practiced - said she- a spiritual exercise, the latihan kejiwaan of Subud the abbreviated words meaning SUSILA BUDHI DHARMA

SUSILA means-the good character of man in accordance with the Will of Almighty God  
BUDHI means the force of the inner self  
DHARMA means surrender, trust and sincerity towards Almighty God

Though longing to understand, it all went through my head and out unable to comprehend what she was talking about.

Our friend however had a different opinion.

'I was ready to be opened' said she.

Despite lack of comprehension and sadness in my heart, SUBUD was not associated in my mind as mentioned above, with the contact I had read about years ago in Kaduna- since I had decided that particular contact was lost to me and as I was in great need of spiritual assistance....

I accepted to follow her exercise fortunately.



Once again I became a candidate member in Subud.

A short while later a book arrived written by Ouspensky. Though so eager to understand about the spiritual exercise. I soon gave up, could not attune myself or my mind to this reading. Anyway, this book was irrelevant to the latihan.

Waiting the three solitary months passed without further explanations. No other Subud members were present in Greece to offer assistance, share some of these experiences. And no news came from Paris about the opening until the very end of that period, as though God had forgotten about me again.

The three long solitary months almost to the day went by, the period indicated for candidate members in Subud, during which time all kinds of minor experiences occurred both positive and negative.

The soul nestling in pregnancy  
anew  
prepares like a baby in its mother's womb.  
Moments of uplift  
other moments of confusion  
took different turns to distract.

The preliminary battle of the forces that rule our lives preparing to loosen their stronghold had already started and just before the end of that period somebody or other in one's immediate environment objects to the forthcoming change that might mar habit-formed relationships causing you heart-ache.

Ten days before Christmas the big day of my spiritual re-birth dawned.

I was to be opened in Paris, spend a few days in London with latihans, then back to work and the routine of everyday existence after the Christmas holidays.

Six of the oldest helpers gathered in the studio of my Parisian Subud friend to help with the opening, all except one, unknown to me.

I was told to sit quietly, in the adjoining room-a kitchenette 1+1.

They would call for me when they were ready. No further explanations had been given to me since my arrival in Paris.

As I was trying to relax in the semi -lit kitchenette, a tremendous noise entered my ears through the walls singing, thumping, calling God's name aloud.

Too scared to even think,  
I sat on my stool as rigid as a piece of wood.

After what seemed an eternity, they came out to fetch me.

One of the ladies said...  
Relax,... how,  
I was uneasy, pure instinct made me persevere.

All those years of anticipation  
- What an anticlimax - I felt

They then recited a few lines concerning my sincere  
wish  
to receive contact  
with the Power of the One God  
Who envelops both outer and inner.

Those words felt like balm from heaven.

The opening latihan started.  
At first I continued to be tense, stubbornly normal.  
Despite my mind resisting,  
soon the noise was inaudible to my ears.  
The tension subsided.

I felt my body stiff like the trunk of a tree.  
the tension unwinding slowly moved upwards  
and out until I was made to bend forward,  
undoubtedly not of my own volition or thoughts.

My head was empty

down, down, down , my body bent forward  
until my head touched the floor in the form of  
worship.

It seemed as if only a few minutes had elapsed  
after the tension left.

The helpers ended the latihan.

Bathed in happiness  
I found myself standing again  
emptied.

Quiet.

Miraculous really.  
So amazingly simple.

After the exercise we sat together, six women of  
various ages and nationalities Russian, French, Greek,  
Cypriot, English, sharing experiences verbally united  
in our spiritual intent as sisters.

Whilst we were talking, the reality dawned upon me.

The latihan kejiwaan of Subud was  
..... what I had yearned for all  
along.

The message I had read about in Kaduna  
The same experience sensed when I was a child about  
to die.

The dual nature of our body and soul  
held as a wonderful surprise.... in suspense.

I was now becoming aware,  
Guarded by the One who Truly Cares.

Moreover the date of my re-birth coincided with the exact date of my second near death experience.

And much later in time with my son's wedding date in Indonesia.

Astonishing is it not?

In the years to come whenever an opening took place, whenever I assisted as a helper in openings, whether the woman was a friend, relative or a stranger, the inner communication consciously changed, it widened.

One of the most important factors for candidate members who wish to follow the latihan is to keep in touch with the helpers. Members familiarise with them and they receive answers to their queries, lest they be opened in complete ignorance, as in my case which makes it less easy to relax, let go of oneself to the Power of God.

Moreover, the date of my re-birth coincided with the exact date of my second near-death experience.

And much later in time with my son's wedding date in Indonesia.

Amazing, is it not?

In the years to come, whenever an opening book place whenever I needed as a helper in the office, whether the woman was a friend, relative or a stranger, the inner communication consistently changed.

One of the most important factors for candidates who wish to follow the labor is to keep in touch with the labor. Members facilitated with news and they receive answers to their doubts and they be opened to complete ignorance as in my case which makes it less easy to make the job of oneself to the Power of God.

## PART TWO

-----It is useless to speak in glowing terms of  
SUBUD

for what is needed is the experience, that is the basis upon which to reach the conclusion, that in truth, what we have received clearly comes from a stream which although we are incapable of understanding is beyond the power and influence of our thinking mind, our heart and our desires

*the Meaning of Subud- third talk*  
- Bp. M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo

## A Greek Pioneer -1965

An unsuspecting infant  
my inner self, now awakened  
and "i" in my body  
blissful as a voyager after a long journey  
returned home to Athens.

Sharing is instinctive,  
one wishes  
loved ones  
society  
the WORLD itself  
to open up  
to the inner reality of man

all too soon disappointments  
were encountered  
the likeliest of people  
those closest to us  
show hesitation  
unconvinced  
they need tangible evidence

Unbelief hampers our beings.



The gaps we are faced with in our daily exchanges and in our relationships come to the fore forcefully imparted upon us sometimes irrespective of one's heart's desires.

alone  
I persevered with my exercise  
twice weekly one half hour  
month after month  
isolated in my country.

understanding poured into my being  
with stunning rapidity  
yet  
adapting this identity into one's daily life  
is a long process particularly if no one else in our  
environment  
follows the same direction.

“So in all things, you must believe in that which you have experienced yourself. You must believe in your own self and inner being. This is the fruit, the result of the latihan kejiwaan of Subud”.

‘Make your life come good’

*Bp. M. Subuh Sumohadiwijojo*



*1960 - Bapak and Mr. Bennet at the Acropolis*

Subud first came to Greece in 1959 while I was still living and working in Nigeria.

The late Y.M.. Bapak M. Subuh Sumohadiwijoyo and his family were invited to Athens along with John Bennett. They arrived on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1959.

One hundred and fifty people were opened, mostly intellectuals within a very few days as was usual in the early days of Subud without the three months probationary period which Bapak indicated to us at a later date.

All dispersed shortly after Bapak and his party departed.

Contrary-wise my conviction and faith in the latihan grew by the day.

As I continued to practice the latihan alone I knew and felt how precious unfathomable, immense this Gift was to us.

The spiritual exercises of Subud were and are a very special gift from God, so simple, all embracing just with surrender to His Power.

My enthusiasm was limitless. Eyes shining with light I continued to hope that everyone, particularly all my loved ones, would be touched and interested to follow suit.

I had been warned however not to talk easily about the exercise unless I felt that there was a keen interest in anyone wanting to receive information.

We were not to PROSELYTISE.

Spiritual life has to be sought by one's inner need, to bear fruit.

Those whom I had believed more spiritually inclined, turned out to be less trusting and unwilling in themselves to open up to the inner reality of life, at least in the beginning.

Conclusive evidence of our receiving has also to be demonstrated in OUR own life.

Claiming to have received Guidance and not put it into practice, applying it in our daily life demonstrates that our inner state is still distracted, still headed by our passions instead of the clarity of our soul.

Our worship moves slowly, cleansing, putting right what is wrong in us. Luckily I was aware that the path ahead was and is still long winding and needs time.

A great number of people were now suddenly attracted to me like butterflies seeing light.

They emerged

took some of the spiritual energy and departed .

Every day brought more knowledge and growth though I was still a beginner.

After my opening an amazing transformation took over my mental capacity. All along since my graduation and before good literature was food, an absolute necessity for the brain.

Literature of any kind at that stage left me unmoved, unable to digest literary books for several years to come. The mind was being cleared of fictitious conceptions.

The gap now was made up by reading Bapak's talks, trying to follow Bapak's advice. Subud periodicals and news made up for the sense of loss the heart felt in Athens, still isolated from other people who followed the same path.

Fortunately all of Bapak's sayings and advice sunk into my being without reservations. Having not been in Subud long enough, I seemed to understand instinctively that parts of Bapak's advice in his talks had not become a reality for me, or experienced by my person.

Despite my university training which had centred around analysis of the written word, Bapak's words were not scrutinised by my mind. That was guidance indeed.

To this day Bapak's and Ibu Rahayu's talks were and still are valuable to me. Whatever was not understood or experienced was kept on hold for the right moment in time.

Later still whenever Subud people from abroad visited and shared news I kept my instinct on the alert always, checking for veracity.

The truth can be misinterpreted depending on our state of being and inner state. It saved me from following blindly other people's impressions regarding right and wrong.

Efrosini Vassiliou- Fofu, was the very first person to notice a major change in me after some months.

Fofu was my favourite first cousin, from my father's side of the family. Her strong faith in God, optimistic nature and simplicity were touching as well as a good example.

The first time Fofu and I sat together, she remarked about a change, some brightness in my eyes not present before. I avoided giving her any clarifications asking her to remind me to talk about this change when we met again.

On my next visit she had not forgotten. I gave her a few explanations and was really touched by her own experience and life story.

Fofu had been married twice. Her first husband was much older than her, a film producer by profession, very erratic by nature . She had had two children

with him, a boy and a girl. They lived in Palestine. When life became too strenuous for her, she divorced and returned to her family in Egypt with her two children. Luckily a young bachelor, an agriculturalist by profession fell in love with her. They were married and all her family moved to the farms where her second husband was employed.

Her first husband also moved making his home in Germany from where he operated. He convinced Fofa that her two children would be better off in German schools which she reluctantly had to concede to.

Meanwhile the political changes faced by the foreigners, including Greeks living in Egypt, forced them to depart. Her husband was unemployed part of the time in Greece. On one of her frequent visits to Germany she decided to become a beautician and she started training, to help with finances.

In the sixties on another of her many trips to Germany to visit her children, she was sitting on a bench at the railway station, waiting for them to come when a while-haired lady, looking very peaceful and enlightened started to talk to her. She first excused herself for the liberty she was taking to address a stranger but her feelings of joy were overflowing and she wanted to share her enthusiasm.

This very peaceful looking lady explained to Fofa that "a man from the East" had..... just boarded the train with his party, a very gifted and Guided man who

helped people find Inner Guidance within themselves with an exercise.

Absorbed by this lady's sayings, Fofu felt relaxed and happy, but not for long. Shocked into reality, she saw her ex-husband suddenly appear with her two children with a new very young wife-the fourth.

The stranger's account about the "Man from the East" was clearly forgotten until the time that we were conversing.

Not long after that specific visit to Germany, her ex-husband suddenly passed away. Her two teen-aged children, returned to go to school and to live with her in Greece. Added to that event, came another surprise.

After ten years of marriage with Vassili, her second husband, she remained pregnant and gave birth to a boy.

Fofu was opened and followed the latihan kejiwaan of Subud as the year was ending in 1967.

Her husband followed in 1969. Both became helpers eventually.

Fofu and Vasso are at this time still with us on earth. They are great-grand parents and live very happily together, two and a half hours away from Athens, in the country-side.



Meanwhile I wrote to Bapak to introduce myself, to explain our situation in Greece and that we were devoid of helpers. I also kept in touch with the U.K. helpers and my Greek Cypriot Subud sister in Paris.

Bapak wrote back and made me a helper. When in need everything is possible. I was uneasy naturally at first but openings proceeded smoothly which was a relief. Our problems regarding men helpers however continued for much longer in time.

Bapak suggested in his letter that I do not start a new group until I had contacted as many as possible of the original Subud people opened by him in 1959 in Athens.

A long list was sent from the secretariat with names. None of them were interested to come back and follow the latihan.

At a later date one of members opened during Bapak's visit to Athens, whom I met socially, was full of praise regarding the latihan

... but unwilling to continue practicing herself, afraid to face the reality within her.

She was at least aware of her fears.

Eleni Koniordou was one of our oldest and most dedicated Greek members. How we met is an extraordinary tale. I happened to be told by an acquaintance of ours that Eleni had been recently widowed. Having gone through the pain of widowhood myself, a strange impulse or instinct made me send her a message via our acquaintance that I would be happy to visit her.

Some days later I received a telephone call from our acquaintance asking me to visit Eleni, who happened to live not far from our home. As I was standing outside their front door about to ring the bell, I asked myself what exactly I was doing. I was twenty-nine years old and not that gregarious as to visit strangers. Besides we do not proselytise in Subud. I felt foolish, unable to comprehend my own initiative. Nevertheless I rang the bell.

Two girls opened the door in their early teens. All three, along with their mother welcomed me warmly and made me promise to return when the time came for me to depart.

Anyone who knew Eleni well enough, would have found it equally strange that she had accepted to meet with me. Her nature was reserved, her feelings at the time negative, darkened by her severe loss. It was not easy for her to surrender her sorrow and her spiritual uneasiness. The girls were very also keen to hear about Subud but of course this was not possible because of their young age.

Eleni Koniordou, was opened and received the latihan in 1967 at the same time as Fofo. Eleni was the first Greek national in Subud who had lived all her life in her own country. The rest of us - those first Greek Subud members who were opened during my time - were Greeks from abroad.

Eleni passed away peacefully after a short illness in Jan. 2007. Since the time she was opened in Subud, Eleni's dedication was moving. She never missed a latihan if she could help it. Both her children and grand children joined Subud eventually, and are part of our small group in Athens.

1973

Another of our dedicated older Subud members is Eleni Tsopanou, from Ethiopia of Greek origin.

We went to the same school with Eleni. She was my closest friend when we were boarders in our early teens at the English Girls' College, in Egypt. Unfortunately she only stayed for a couple of years in that school. We corresponded for a while and then lost touch.

Twenty five years or so later she moved to Greece from London, where she had been working. She contacted me through one of my father's old friends. Surprise indeed.

Eleni's probation was unusually easy. The first time we met after so many years apart, she was apparently touched by "the change in me. Unaware of course are we of those great differences in our make-up.

The next time we met, she insisted on finding out what had changed me. I felt sure in my feelings of her sincere wish and handed her the "Meaning of Subud" to read.

Within a week she became a candidate member and has been practicing the latihan kejiwaan regularly since then.

God moves in mysterious ways  
His wonders to perform.

As time passed doing the latihan, I kept consciously observing with distaste several of my usual reactions. Speaking for instance or laughing. How did I speak?.

The sound of my own voice aggravated me especially poignantly when I was dealing with probationers. No matter how hard I prayed my very voice continued to disturb me for quite a while.

We learn from infancy to imitate. We are encouraged to learn to talk, walk, laugh cry and by the time we grow up this becomes second nature instead of expressing our genuine selves.

## A history lesson from the inner

Our uncle and aunt as mentioned above were kind enough to invite us every year for holidays. Different trips took us to various parts of our beautiful country, on cruises.

We arrived by yacht on an island, late in the day. In the twilight the whole island looked magnificent, unreal like a picture post card. The structure and houses were magical.

Filled with admiration and a desire to return to this place, we proceeded, my son and I to go for a walk. The evening sun had set but it did not deter us from climbing to the top of the mountain, up the endless steps. A formidable castle in size stood at the top, dominating in its grandeur the whole facade of the island. When we had climbed all the steps, besides the empty castle we found an empty church waiting to welcome us. Having performed our evening prayers we proceeded hastily back to our floating domicile for dinner.

Late that night I did my latihan in my cabin-the boy slept elsewhere - A latihan to be remembered. I was comparatively new to Subud, yet untrained to balance deeper feelings unhampered by first impressions. That particular latihan was a nightmare. Wars. Blood everywhere, people massacred, more blood. Before the latihan stopped, I understood I had misjudged the historical evolution of this outwardly most beautiful

island which had been torn apart by wars, crusades, invaders and much sadness.

The rest of the information of the background and historical events of that place was filled in by a guide book.

Blessed are we indeed with this latihan of ours. It reveals to us all that is hidden, whenever we are in need.

To this day I have not had a wish to revisit the island.

My parents were eventually touched by the latihan.

First to be opened along with my cousin Foyo was my step-mother in 1968. My father followed suit early in 1969 despite his numerous fears of the spiritual.

Mother who never showed any interest regarding the spiritual side in us, was also opened in 1973. Characteristic of my mother's as well my grandmother was the belief in leaving things as we found them from the past. No need to divulge any further or try to change, was her motto.

Granny was opened too, in 1981.  
Miraculous how they followed suit.

There was a period after their openings, entailing many demises mostly of acquaintances. It even became a family joke. Mother, step mother or myself were paying last respects at least once a month at some cemetery or other. Inevitably several experiences were gained, the ultimate goal being our own preparation, when called by God.

One particular incident stands out. My step-father's brother had a mortal accident as he was standing by the side of the road. He was personally unknown to me as he lived abroad with his family.

It was the month of the fast. I was fasting. Mother and I remained way behind the rest of the cortege as they were taking the deceased to his last resting place. Mother being unwell that day, we had to walk really slowly. Everyone else was in front of us near the open grave ready to receive the deceased.

At this point, I hear clearly within my being a command that I should say a prayer and throw some soil immediately before the burial.

I was fasting. I was puzzled. How was I to jump in front of everybody else, to say a prayer and throw soil on the coffin.

Was I hallucinating because of the fast?

The priest was in the midst of offering his last rights. The man's widow stood right next to him weeping.

All of a sudden, the widow goes into a faint. The priest STOPS the last rights to assist the widow -never had I experienced such a happening before or since. Everybody literally crowds round them, leaving a clear path open for me to walk straight up to the coffin and to say my prayers.

Awed, I actually could not assimilate the whole episode mentally as I walked forward.

Any further explanations regarding my surprise and amazement would be needless.

Praises were mixed with shame. Disbelief and doubts hamper us endlessly.

God in His Wisdom Knows Best.

Nothing is impossible.

In our Praises to God the greatest difficulty is sustaining our faith and trust to the very end of our days. Yet we remain vulnerable and forgetful.

Since the time mother had been opened we would go to latihan together.

Mother and I were very different in our natures.

We were very blessed to have her as a mother and grandmother. Besides her very kind heart she was a perfectionist. Mother's hands were miraculously



gifted. Whatever she undertook like embroidery, cooking etc any form of expression she perfected even though she had not been given a chance to further her studies in her life, since she had married young .

One evening as we were on our way to the latihan, we got into an argument. By the time we reached the Subud House we were both not ourselves.

When the latihan started I had obviously not discarded from my being this upset. We differed in our ways of envisaging situations.

As the latihan started, I must have felt dejected that my mother was so different to my nature. Less than a minute went by before I was thrown forcefully...on her lap. Mother being over weight with a bad back had to use a chair for latihans.

'This is your mother. You must love and respect her'...

All the religions advise children to respect and honour their parents.

Our inner beings must also feel this respect.

Later in time I understood inwardly that our spiritual progress retards if we do not honour our parents as we should.

This incident touched me deeply.

Those three years before my opening waiting to find my spiritual path were made even harder both for the deceased and us. God's Will had prevailed. He had been whisked away from our earthly life at this young age without illness.

Some awareness was not lacking in my person however. Forcing myself, I had stopped crying but could not give him up emotionally. It was impossible to accept the reality of death in my everyday routine. He was kept very alive in our new home and life in Athens. It was the only way I could cope with our loss. Photographs all over the house must have made it difficult even for visitors to restrain their emotions.

Haralambos had been transported from Kano and buried in Lagos, but we were unable then to get a permit to bring his remains to Europe. Visiting and praying by his grave was therefore also impossible. The best way I knew, to keep him alive in memory was to feel him around us. We lived with this illusion daily.

Not long after I was opened in Subud and started to exercise, I lay in bed one night sleeping. Suddenly I was awakened. Dreaming of Haralambos occurred rarely. It is apparently a usual experience for loved ones who have departed not to appear often in our dreams.

That night Haralambos was with us. He rang the bell. In a semi dream like state, I welcomed him. He had

been sorely missed and I asked what had kept him away for so long .

- But I have been here with you all along- was his reply.

Initially my heart felt lighter, happier. But as the hours went by in the night, I realised that this attitude was wrong, unreal for both of us.

The will of God had taken him away.  
He had returned from another level of life, one could sense it clearly.  
A whitish cloud filled the room.

Unease crept into my feelings. What could be done to help us both in our different predicament ?  
Latihan.  
The half hour that our exercise lasts released him  
to the Power of God, to rest in Peace.

From that day onwards, I was also able to come to terms and handle with greater submission his departure.

The pain is dulled as time goes by.

Little brother “adik” is a familiar appellation regarding our off-spring, particularly in Asian cultures.

Since the time he started to understand, my little brother ( called Neocles then) was invaluable to me. The centre of my life. His childhood, adolescence and adulthood were as important to me as my own evolution.

A single parent bringing up a boy is faced with numerous imbalances in the family, no father figure being the main one. One has to become both mother and father.

No matter how hard you try, mistakes even if they are not of major importance for the formation of a child’s character and upbringing are still unavoidable. These challenges are envisaged by every single parent.

My son and I grew together inwardly too as the years passed. It is difficult to share to what extent his presence enhanced my being, helping and supporting me with his presence.

In one of Bapak’s talks I believe he said that scolding your child severely is like scolding your grandfather.

The wisdom and genes of our ancestors is clearly passed on to our offspring along with their faults.

Perfection rests only with God Almighty.

Besides worrying about his welfare and growth, the rest of our time was spent very pleasantly indeed. Tender, happy years these were, still vividly alive in memory.

From the age of two until the age of fourteen, we were rarely separated except for one month during the summer holidays which he spent with his paternal grand parents in Cyprus, to learn about both sides of himself and his roots.

My son had a natural ability to comprehend his mother instinctively as many children do, still untouched inside by adult pressures.

Guidance was available to us both. I specifically tried to apply it as he was growing up. It bonded us. We lived and learnt together, he growing up physically and developing mentally and I maturing in understanding hopefully.

The latihan was crucial, of invaluable assistance all along.

One of Aesop's tales goes more or less as follows: The owl asked a mynah bird to take some food to her children at school, as she was busy .

'How am I to recognise them in class', said the mynah bird.

'Oh', said the owl 'You cannot fail to recognise them'.

'They are the most good looking and clever children

in the class!

Soon the mynah bird was back empty handed.

'Did you give my children their food?' said the owl.

'You asked me to look around the class for the most good looking and clever children. Well, I looked around and saw that the most good looking children were mine..... So I gave the food to them!'

One evening I was thinking to myself what a wonderful child I had, inordinately pleased with his progress, indulging in my thoughts, when he called out to me from his study.

'Mum, let me read to you a tale', and he read the above to me.

Smiling to myself, I had to concede that I had indulged.

My little brother was reminding not to forget.

## Kalamos

Prior to the time I was opened in Subud, we would spend some week-ends in the country-side in Kalamos, a real village in Attica on the mainland, with all its charm, forests, rich vegetation, sheep grazing only an hour away from the hustle and bustle.

Our flat in Athens was well situated in the centre of town, with a small forest on a hill only five minutes walk from our home and a park facing our apartment. Yet the country air, closer to nature replenishes.

At the beginning the boy and I stayed in a small hotel. There was no electricity after a certain hour. Once the child fell asleep my misery augmented. A place of our own was the solution. It materialised shortly before my opening in Subud.

The area is particularly appealing and soothing, a combination of mountains on one side and the sea-side on the other. Further up the mountain, there are ruins of an ancient resting place for those old timers who were suffering, to dream their ills away apparently. The vibrations in the area must be beneficial though at the time, I was unaware of the existence of this ancient site. The ancients were very wise in their selection of land for their needs.

Our tiny house built on stilts then was a great boon to our life and for many others. Besides ourselves and our Hellenic members, numerous other Subud members from abroad, as well as family have enjoyed the hospitality that our small house had to offer.

After some years when the younger Subud members had joined, we even made a group effort together in the country-side. We attempted to build the bottom part of the house by ourselves to give us more space for latihans !

Later still it was totally renovated, an ideal spot to care for my aging mother and step-father... and for the grandchildren to enjoy, during their summer vacations.

During the summer months when the Athenians disperse looking for a cooler spot many members join us for latihan regularly when we are there.

### Christmas- 1973

Mikhail-still named Neocles - had asked for a new name.

He was now barely thirteen. A very bright, sensitive and gifted child his upbringing did not really create problems for his mum .

Up till that time, he had been attending a Greek school as we were living Greece. He was happy at home, happy with his education-extra lessons and all.

Suddenly one evening he unpredictably announced to me as we were resting before bed-time, that he thought boarding-school in the U.K. would help. A simple explanation was given. He was growing up, he said and boarding school might help him to commute with other boys and to discipline him.

The atmosphere in the sitting room was light. A strong feeling of the latihan filled the room.

Stunned feeling wise, I was nevertheless very supportive regarding his decision, refraining from showing any personal emotions. This Plan had repeatedly been suggested by other members of the family including myself on several occasions. Up till



then he had categorically refused to stay away from home, to spend a large part of his life in a boarding school abroad.

Now he was asking to go... We talked for hours that same night.

It was late in the year already. He was not really well-prepared to take O and A Level exams.

That night acceptance and submission had to be practiced.

God's Plan was indisputable. We had to surrender to His Will.

1974

A school was found almost immediately in Wales—the same as his father and uncles had attended before him.

Preparations were also taken care of, extra lessons in English, formalities and so forth.

We drove by car from Greece to the U.K. the following summer. On our way through Europe, we attended a Subud summer camp in Germany (the first Subud gathering after so many years which had kept me away from Subud gatherings for various personal reasons).

The Subud camp in Rambach remains in our beings as one of the most memorable experiences. Both

Mikhail and I were deeply moved by the cultural and other activities taking place daily. It was a wonderful occasion too, to mix with the various people participating in the camp. Visitors were made really welcome by our hosts. The efforts our Subud brothers and sisters had made to organise it were indeed most inspiring and unforgettable.

Besides the numerous latihans and talks heard during our stay, the cultural performances every evening were wonderful, filled with idealism and spirit. They lightened our hearts and filled us with enthusiasm.

It was a real privilege to have experienced this particular camp. We gained in understanding and knowledge. When the time came for us to leave our hearts and feelings were replenished with energy.

Throughout the rest of our drive to the U.K. the songs from the camp kept our spirits alive, helping us to look ahead with inspiration into future activities.

Whilst we were still at the Subud camp, it was suggested by other helpers that I should have tested about this decision to send my son away from home to a boarding school..

How could I have doubted....it had all been arranged from  
Beyond  
... I was certain.  
If the test proved negative we would have had to

change all the plans and return home looking very foolish indeed. School fees had been paid, preparations made. All would have gone down the drain.

It took three weeks – the time we spent in the camp – for me to surrender to this last challenge.

Just before we were about to leave the camp, I found the faith and courage to test. Several experienced lady helpers joined in. They all received that attendance at boarding school was positive. Greece had no other Subud youngsters at the time. Testing showed that he would have been protected both spiritually and physically at boarding school and would have fared well.

He did fare extremely well, thank God.

From 1974 to 1978

When Mikhail was away at boarding school, the gap created by his absence at home was partly made up by various youngsters who had joined Subud. They were always around our house, visiting as often as possible becoming as time went by, part of us, included in our family -particularly since they were closer in years to Mikhail.

Frequent trips to the U.K. for half term as well as some other holidays, meant that we were not separated for long periods with my son. In my case when I had attended school in England, I only went back home for summer holidays.

Moreover a further chance to have latihans with other Subud members in the U K. and elsewhere now opened up for me, since time- wise I was not as tied up as before .

One more blessing was added to us, when Mikhail went to boarding school.

My eldest sister-in law, because of the political situation in Cyprus in 1974 where she abided, was compelled to move to London with her family. Her son, one year older than mine, close to Mikhail with whom he played every summer, became a boarder at the same time.

Mikhail was not alone without some member of his family at his new school.

Lessons in submission and acceptance come our way with regularity if we pay enough attention.

### Exams and assistance

As mentioned before the child progressed extremely well at his school in the U.K. He passed his G C E in all the subjects – twelve of them in one go – with excellent grades, quite a remarkable achievement considering his late arrival at this new school. Two years were left for him to obtain the A levels required for entrance to the University.

Mikhail decided to try to take the A level exams in some of the subjects he had selected as early as the first year.

My concern about his welfare affected me deeply at all times. His growth and development was of utmost importance to me. The work of my life.

Until one day he rang  
'Mummy I handed in a blank page in the exam. My mind stopped working even though I knew the subject well enough'.

At first he did not mind handing in the blank page he told me.

He sat in the garden as though nothing had happened.

By the time he rang however he was truly perturbed.

I must have felt his disappointment deep inside my heart and feelings. Restless at home I needed to get away to the country-side for fresh air. I knew how sensitive my son was and was worried about him.

Once I settled in the country-side, I did my latihan hoping that his sadness would be alleviated from my heart. After latihan I still felt sad. Feelings of the heart had won the race and would not relent their hold.

God's help then touched my understanding very tenderly.

This child belongs to His Creator. You yourself are a created being.

You are never really alone. The Creator Cares more for his own, anyway.

My heart was immediately pacified. Yes! I was not on my own nor did I have full responsibility for everything that happens.

We did not create our own lives. Life is...God given and often inexplicable in its development.

## Ancestral roots

As far as we knew from my father's family background both his paternal and maternal grandparents originated from the island of Samos, in Greece.

My maternal grandmother and her forefathers, my mother and myself, though Greek by origin were born in Egypt. Quite a number of Hellenes had to emigrate due to the fact that their country was occupied for 450 years.

Through the latihan kejiwaan – at some stage I felt we had some French blood stemming from 'noble roots'. Father was highly amused when he was told.

'Try to remember my child not to get carried away by your spiritual life.

Be pragmatic' was his advice.

'We know for a fact that my father was poor. Despite that, he managed to become a venerated teacher and priest serving the church and society to the end of his days. There was no inkling of noble or foreign blood in our family. Facts are facts you know.' Father was adamant

Not long after a book was published about the island of Samos and the various family trees. The author of the book rang father while I was paying him a visit. Whenever friends rang during those visits, father would politely ask to return their call later so as not to miss out on our getting together.

That particular afternoon he was inordinately long on the phone. Information poured over the other side of the phone - his maternal grandmother had French Blood.... Her forebears must have originated somewhere around Normandy and retreated hastily to Asia Minor after the French revolution. They crossed over to Samos... and married his great grandmother, my ancestor.

Father was speechless with astonishment but brave enough to share this information on his return to the sitting-room.

Later the maternal side of our roots - who probably went all the way back to the Byzantines...was also contended.



# Subud World Congresses

Patience and - prihatin (abstention or fasting)

How is it possible for a man to plant a mango tree today and pick the fruit tomorrow or plant padi now and tomorrow harvest the rice?

In fact no benefit can be reaped from anything without first putting your back to it, or without practicing prihatin. It is indeed a universal law that vegetable life grows taller and larger from day to day, through months and years but also it is not free from severe buffeting by wind and rain.

*Extract from Pewarta Kejiwaan Subud- Vo.l VII No.4-  
page 23 - Y.M. Bp. M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo*



1967 - Tokyo  
*3rd Subud World Congress*





## *Japan- 1967*

*Not too long after I was opened I attended my first World Congress in Japan where the first real bigger experience took place.*

*I was about to go sleep, a couple of days after my arrival in Yomyoriland on my Japanese bedding, sharing a room with other Subud women, when a great force penetrated into me, like lightning entering my head with extreme rapidity. Its sheer force made me lie on my bedding almost in a faint but I had not lost consciousness and wondered what may have happened to me. I was truly shaken by the unexpected sharp pain that had entered my head.*

*Yet I slept almost immediately.*

*The next day when I awoke I was strangely different. I could see deep inside people, within their make up, their mistakes and grievances. Very rational by nature, it shocked even myself to see within other Subud members many much older than myself to experience and feel what was going on inside of them.*

*The light which had entered my head also brought many realisations to the fore about my person.*

*Our existence before we come to this earth including our daily life is LINKED TOGETHER like a string of prayer beads. As we grow with the years this realisation becomes clearer and clearer in our understanding through God's Grace.*

*We continue ever forward, ever onwards to our final Destination. But the truth sinks into our beings slowly, helping our individual efforts to connect.*

*Bapak gave talks and testing sessions as was usual with him during Congresses. In one of his talks about the spread of Subud, the miracle of Fatima as well as his intended first trip to Cyprus was mentioned.*

*Tears flowed freely from my eyes moving me deeply  
My life was starting to tie up..*

*By the end of the Congress I was getting really tired.*

*The after effects of this experience lasted about two or three weeks. I must have appeared different when I reached home, very much into my inner self, somewhat aloof, unusually quiet.*

*Scared due to his medical profession and an inherent fear of the metaphysical, lest one departed from one's norm, father panicked and forced medical help.*

*So my spiritual doors were rudely closed.*

*It nevertheless left me unflinching but slightly cautious.*

*I firmly believed in God's help and the latihan, never stopping at any difficulty that was encountered along the way all those years.*

According to Bapak's letter, the explanation given was that my awareness had already reached and penetrated my mind even though I was still comparatively new to the latihan. I had to accept Bapak's explanation yet still doubted that all this help received by me from God was being put into practice.

Jakarta- 1sr, July 1969

Dear Ioanna David

Bapak gives thanks to Almighty God that you are able to be fully aware of your inner self .....

*(Bapak's letter in full both in Indonesian and English -to be found in Appendix I-)*

I was really taken aback by Bapak's comment about being "fully aware".

Despite the certainly in my heart and soul that the latihan-our spiritual exercise-for us who practice, was a true receiving Guided by Almighty God, yet I felt the distance I had to cover spiritually even more acutely, possibly due to the difficulties surrounding my life.

As it turned out, many years later I understood during Bapak's visit to Athens in 1977 that my environment had not helped enhance my self esteem, whilst I lived in Greece.

The next bigger experience happened after the 1971 World Congress ended. I was unable to attend the Congress in Indonesia because my son was taken ill with hepatitis.

*This time I was being taught about wrong and right time of death, cleansing of ancestors, rituals of the church -one grandfather was a teacher and a priest in the Greek Orthodox church. His energy and experiences must have come down to my person through genes. Evidently it is important to understand our ancestors and how they practiced their faith.*

*The various messages and instruction handed down by prophets saints and apostles to assist man, and help him benefit from his life on earth as well as strengthen his faith, were also touched.*

*Moses for instance was choleric we are told in the holy books.*

*Among many other deeper instructions, I experienced Moses' cholera for one whole night..*

*I realised then, that my anger was usually very subdued -my English education and upbringing dominated my behaviour-*

*Different climatic conditions bear their influence on the inhabitants in every country. The Hellenes as well as other Mediterraneans are more demonstrative by nature. Their feelings are openly exposed and they tend to be a great deal more temperamental than those in Northern countries.*

*Besides feeling Moses' temperament, an explosion of anger burst out of me for some hours..*

*That release felt good. I obviously needed it. Anger is still controlled partially when I am harassed. But now when I lose my temper on occasion, I do not reprimand myself too severely for my outbursts.*

*Living and practicing the latihan in Greece however helped me to go back into my roots once more. My Hellenic identity was one part of me. The other part was an attempt to stretch out towards the whole world Globalisation:*

*a familiar word world-wide, nowadays.*

*How truly wonderful to learn to adjust from our inner beings, opening up our feelings to the whole world.*

*Yet growing into the knowledge received at every stage takes years.*

*I do not believe we are given to understand all at once the various stages that we are instructed in through our latihan, for more than one reason. Changes occur slowly like food that has to be masticated properly to be digested in order for us to benefit from it, and to build our body rightly.*

*Otherwise we might end up having indigestion.*

*Whilst I was experiencing my outburst of choler, unfortunately my father happened to visit. He was totally taken aback. Again he was unable to follow any of my changes and decided to enforce medical assistance upon me*



The doctor was baffled. His books did not include such knowledge or experiences as the one I was undergoing. He was unable to diagnose exactly what was happening.

Nevertheless with medical help administered despite the doctor's uncertainty once more my spiritual doors were rudely closed.

1971

Before and after the third World Subud Congress which took place in Indonesia, many Subud members came to Greece.

Our home was always open to visitors. We were delighted to welcome them and to offer them hospitality particularly as we felt isolated in our small group. Actually since we rented our first Subud premises in 1968 visitors increased in number.

I would usually go to the airport to receive them. Some of the airport's employees were so used to my presence at the airport. Sometimes they would ask me what travel agency employed me..

One particular trip though remains unforgettable. I was unable to attend the World Subud Congress in Indonesia as my son had been taken ill with hepatitis.

I arrived at the airport really upset to welcome the Subud members returning from the Congress in Indonesia. Two big airplanes had been chartered for the Subud members going to and from the Congress. When the aeroplanes arrived the noisy airport suddenly quietened down.

Slowly dozens of Subud members descended transmitting their tranquil feelings. What surprised me even more was how sympathetic towards me they were for not having joined the Congress. Many even remembered to bring small gifts.

The scene with so many Subud members filling the airport lounge all at once, quietening the place down, is really engraved in memory.



1975 - Germany  
5th Subud World Congress



After the World Congress in 1975 to which almost the whole of our group attended came another experience, again very different in instruction.

*I was strengthened not to let interference divert my path. And I had been overworked. My tired body needed some rest.*

The whole experience ended within a few days. In fact the previous experiences had lasted only a few days too, but due to medication enforced on me at every stage, getting back into the normal routine this time I needed the rest and enjoyed being leisurely without responsibilities, for about one month.

Whilst Y.M Bapak visited at last in 1977 in Greece, I asked for an explanation from Bapak about these experiences.

The questions asked were simple.

‘Could Bapak due to his enlightened spiritual capacity see in me any mental imbalance?’

Bapak replied in the negative. His suggestion was that my environment did not in any way assist my spiritual progress. I was getting no support from those around me and I had over extended myself spreading my latihan instead of keeping my spiritual energy to myself .

The next question was equally crucial to pacify my heart.

'Why was I having these experiences every four years after World Congresses even when I had not attended?'

I felt victimised unable to understand like a doubting Thomas. Father's interference shutting my spiritual doors rudely at every stage made it even harder for acceptance.

Bapak smiled in his peaceful manner and replied. 'You will understand. God will show you His Plan' and then Bapak left it All to God.

Once the questions posed were answered, Bapak proceeded to give us some explanations about the working of God's Power in our latihan and our lives.

As this was a private request on my part to which Bapak kindly conceded, Fofu my cousin by now a lady helper, my mother and myself attended this meeting. Bapak was accompanied by our dear and respected Ibu Rahayu and Sharif Horthy, Bapak's secretary and translator then.

The meeting was held in the Subud house in Athens. We were all sitting on the floor, on carpets except of course Y.M. Bapak who sat in an arm-chair ... and my mother who was overweight!

Bapak spoke and Sharif translated. Mother had hardly any knowledge of the English language, so I kept re-translating Bapak's sayings into Greek.

After a while mother stops me from re-translating, whispering in my ear.

'You do not need to explain what Bapak is saying'. He speaks so clearly (Bapak was speaking in Indonesian) 'I understand every word!'

No comment.

Grace

Despite my deep respect and trust in Bapak's awareness and knowledge I continued to fret. My heart objected to the pressures I was envisaging. I remained mystified and puzzled for another two years after Bapak's departure.

The manifestation of God's Love is such a personal experience.

We tend to understand situations with our minds, unless we are touched and transformed deeply by the Powers of Life. Many of us are mostly ruled by our thoughts. We often repeat spiritual and philosophical advice using phrases without having really experienced inwardly their true sense and deeper meanings.

The feelings and inner self have to have experienced the reality in order for it to be more effective and

convincing in our communications with others. Hence that is one of the reasons why we Subud members practice the latihan to let our genuine selves emerge properly.

We have all been initially blessed within our make-up with common sense and a better judgement or instinct. We can indeed feel and evaluate if things or people have content and greatness.

We can feel this reality. I believe God has furnished us with this gift when we were first created to help us as far as possible not to err on our way forward. And most particularly at the end of our lives on earth to return back to Him who Created us.

This gift inherent in us all, is clearly demonstrated with cultural expressions. If we see works of art, plays, films or read books, though they may not be altogether suited to our taste, we instinctively know if greatness characterises them, despite the fact that they might not be particularly to our liking.

The simplest of beings has this capacity. Inner understanding through our feelings is indeed a very special gift.

The 1979 World Congress was to be held in Toronto, Canada. I was planning again to attend and had even pre-paid Congress fees. But my mother had suddenly lost her two brothers prior to the Congress. They died within a period of six months, both younger

than herself. My grandmother who lived with her, was not informed by us of both her sons' demise. Mother developed a heart condition from stress. The Congress coincided with the holy month of the fast and our summer vacations.

Plans now were made for grandmother and myself to spend some time on an island to relieve mother of her chores and help her have a holiday herself with her husband.

*On August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1979 we sailed for the island with my grandmother. As soon as the boat left shore, I became distinctly conscious that I was spacing out. At first I thought it was the August heat.*

*We barely had time to unpack our belongings in a small but spotlessly clean hotel when the experience really started.*

*I was experiencing living in two dimensions simultaneously about to enter a new level inwardly. Two distinctly separate realities. Looking back in time, years of inner preparation had obviously preceded this wonderful event and it was all happening slowly and peacefully.*

*On the first day, in the physical sense all was conducted as though nothing was different. We joined some non Subud acquaintances, bathed in the sea, had lunch and dinner in an open air restaurant.*

*All these hours an intense inner activity was carrying on. At times I could not believe that this was humanly possible. I was listening to conversations, answering, eating as*



*normally as could be, whereas this intense inner activity was being conducted inwardly, like a separate orchestra.*

*By August 13<sup>th</sup>, the pace quickened.*

*It was now impossible to keep both levels going simultaneously. I retreated to my bed-room, left my grandmother in hers as she was prone to lie down almost the whole day normally.*

*The holiday became impossible. Lunch and dinner had to be brought on a tray from the restaurant next door for granny insisted that she was by then totally unable to circulate-she was eighty six years old and lived for another six years.*

*The other reality on another level was now in full swing in my being allowing very little space outwardly for life's every day necessities, including bringing food for granny to her bedroom.*

*On August 14<sup>th</sup> a latihan which lasted a very long time- in another dimension made changes in Me. Bapak in his spiritual capacity was a witness-but not all the while that I was in latihan.*

*I was experiencing True GRACE.*

*It is impossible and incorrect- as I found out later- to share these experiences in great detail. Our confrontations with our Creator are truly personal and private.*

*Changed inwardly I was now under complete Protection.*

*It was so peaceful.*

*No one panicked including MY FATHER, amazingly.*

*We had of course to discontinue our holiday and depart from the island two days later.*

Receiving and understanding did not end when I reached home safely in Athens.

All kinds of knowledge and understanding entered my being during the following three months. My mother returned from her holiday and decided to move in, to cook and look after me for the first few weeks. When the time came for her to go back home to her husband and responsibilities, she reluctantly left crying. Her spirit had apparently rested all the while she was around.

Peace had permeated her feelings.

Moreover *father was as quiet as a lamb* not in the least worried or concerned about me. Amazing actually, considering his worrying nature.

A complete understanding of it all may last to the end of my living days on earth.

Man tends to relapse into forgetfulness anyway, caught up with the problems in his life daily .

Gradually I returned into everyday routine. The whole procedure was conducted very smoothly and in an orderly way.

Shortly after it was over, my son was opened in Subud in Germany, in October 1979 aged nineteen. He had wanted to come to Subud since he was eighteen. Possibly due to his studies, I had felt that he should wait a while and the opening was put off. Coincidentally I happened to arrive in Germany the day before his opening.

Spring -1980

By the Grace of God it was now essential for me to visit Indonesia to receive advice about my latest experience from Bapak, the only living authority of our spiritual evolution in Subud.

Years had elapsed in Greece longing for a trip to Indonesia which seemed like an unrealisable dream. Numerous family and other reasons had made that trip impossible to accomplish.

Since the very beginning of my opening, my pace spiritually was truly remarkable, my soul racing away as fast as possible into this new self.

Arriving in Indonesia for a few days in 1980 in the Spring a private meeting was accorded me by Bapak, still very frail after his heart attack and long travel to Canada. I was very grateful that he had made time to see me.

Bapak asked why I had come. This came as a surprise to me since I was aware that Bapak had prayed for me and had been a witness to my spiritual experience. Only later did I distinguish whilst living in Indonesia more about our inner realities and outer realisations.

Bapak then asked me to give an account of my experience where upon my tongue got totally tied. Forcing myself I could utter but very few words regarding the essence of this experience, avoiding details.

Praising God, Bapak explained that what was received was True Grace. It would be better not to talk about it at great length to others, said Bapak. In fact he said that my lack of ability to go into a lengthy account even with Bapak was correct.

It is between God and ourselves.  
We should try always to follow Guidance diligently and trust in ourselves.

Looking back into the distant past, I must truthfully admit that it was partly indulgence on my part, that made my development harder for me in Greece and gave my father the liberty and right to interfere in my spiritual life, tiring me out.

In every other respect father was a very reliable man, respected and loved by me, as well as all those who knew him. Besides his love for my person, his efforts

to insure my well-being were very genuine. He also indulged in his love for me.

I had tried too intensely maybe to lay bare my spiritual self, sharing too much in the hope that our relationship would not encounter gaps and it frightened him. The heart can play tricks on us particularly with our loved ones.

I was not dependant financially or otherwise on father. Yet his advice was useful to me as a single person. He had taught my sister and myself to share everything we experienced in our daily lives and I did so want him not to be left out. His concern anyway stemmed from care.

Our difference of opinion entailed Subud. Father believed I was spending too much of my time building Subud up rather than looking after myself. He disapproved of my enthusiasm, constantly fearful that I would get tired. And disappointed.

His own spiritual fears however stemmed from his past. A couple of days after he had passed away, I found out from my step-mother that he had had a frightening spiritual experience in his teens, which he had... unfortunately never shared with me as I might have behaved differently all along. He even stopped doing his own latihan for several years to come after 1972 out of fear.

Nevertheless due to help and the latihan, our communication changed drastically. And deepened automatically without any effort or fears.

Before he passed away he finally concurred that Subud was of very valuable assistance to man and was very happy that both myself and his grandson followed the latihan of Subud diligently.

### Subud in Greece

Our very slow increase of Subud members in Greece was partly due to the restrictions we were faced with politically.

In April 1967 not long after the new members had joined and started following the latihan, GREECE lost its democratic government. A junta-military government took over.

It was impossible for us to be recognised by state and church due to the restrictions imposed. Meetings of over four persons had to be reported to the police. Gatherings of any sort had to be approved of. This was never strictly adhered to by us as a group, though it was an impetus for surrender. Undaunted, we continued on our way. Latihans were held in private homes as well as meetings and the occasional feasts or memorials.

Despite difficulties and prohibitions at the end of 1969 our first premises were rented, a grim two room

flatlet in Marcou Evgenicou St. No.7, not far from the Lykabettus-where a multi storey building now stands in its place.

We were blessed with numerous visitors from then on. Except for one occasion when we almost ran into trouble with the police and the land-lady, our open feelings and high hopes led the way. God's Protection was with us. Prayer and fasting helped as well.

Unless they had made other plans most of the Subud visitors coming to Athens lived in our home. It was always a delight to receive them. Trips to and from were frequent. In fact in one of my trips to the airport, the airport officials had become so used to seeing me that I was asked whether I belonged to a travel agency.

Visitors helped fill the gap that we felt living in Athens.

In 1972 we rented another small flat-Athenians mostly live in blocks of Flats- in the area of Patissia, Mithimnis St. as most of our members lived on that side of town.

Before the end of 1973 however, one young woman made life so difficult for me during the time that she was offered hospitality at our flat. From then on, unless they were familiar, guests were put up elsewhere.

1974 brought many changes all at once.

Greece narrowly escaped war with Turkey during the month of August.

The Junta was overthrown.

A democratic government was established.

Young people started to be opened in Subud.

Subud Greece obtained its first rented house, a Neo Classical beautiful old building in the area of the Acropolis.

During the World Subud Congress in 1975, a major part of the Greek members attended and efforts for charitable work were first attempted as a group.

A small batik enterprise was also established by the young members who enthusiastically worked at it to make money for Subud activities. Unfortunately it lasted only for a couple of years.

Subud Greece was moving forward and managing. All these years due to the political situation we had been unable to invite Y.M. Bapak and his party, a very sad omission in our Subud lives.

Bapak and his family were now able to visit in June 1977.

At last.

Praise be to God.

Subud Greece was officially registered as late as 1981 and also managed to obtain a loan to buy a small house right in the centre of Athens, for the exact amount of the small loan-a miracle in itself.







1977

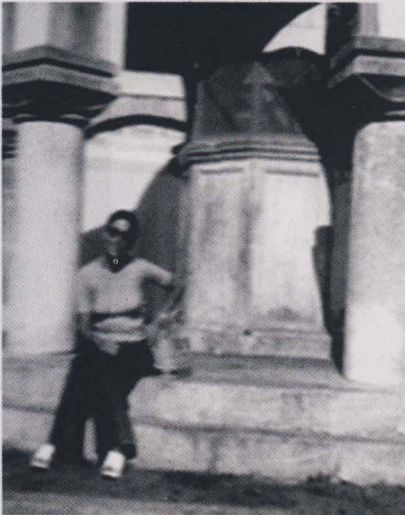
*Bapak's stay at Agrafon*



1973 Kos



*group holidays*



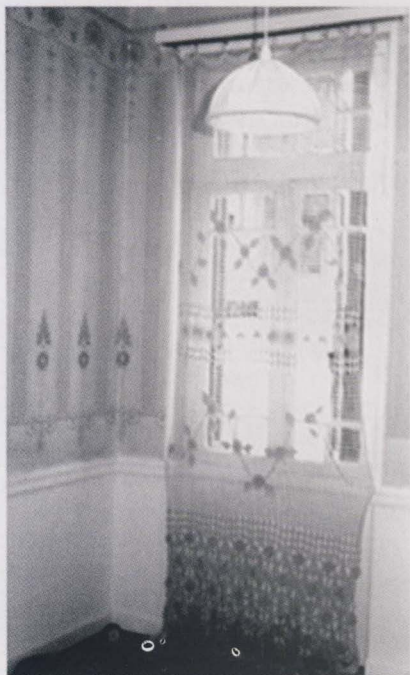


*1974 - First official International Subud Committee visit to Greece*





1974 - 1981  
*Our Subud House*



*Agrafon 4, Koukaki Athens*





*1974 - Renovating Agrafon*

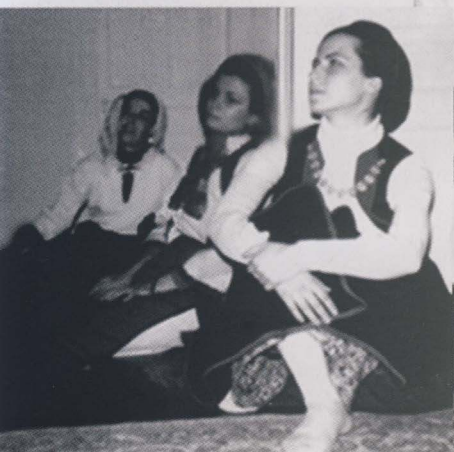




*group photos at Agrafon*

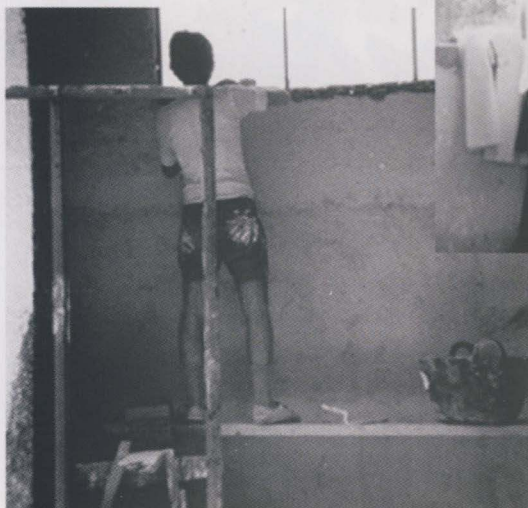


1974 – performance of  
*Elytis's Ilios Ithoras*





1975 Kalamos





*carnival*



*Samos & Mitilini*

*1997 & 1998  
Group holidays*



Although since 1967 Greece was represented one way or another in International Subud gatherings and Congresses, once it was established at home, members participated attending meetings etc. around the world.

The turn my life took after I had received Grace developed in a totally unexpected way from that time onwards, like turning the page, a blank one, in a book half way through the content of the story.

Following inner Guidance had now to blend wholly with my outer life. I had to be very careful and diligent paying especial attention to my inner voice and Guidance. Indulging in weaknesses was not permissible.

For several years to come instruction and inner knowledge was administered. It blended into my being and became one with me without undue trouble.

The experiences gained after 1979 were much deeper and a lot more intense and accepted by my inner without interference from others.

No more sudden out of the ordinary situations also happened every four years after World Congresses.

The change was definite.

Will power at that stage rested.

Will now changed to non-will, just by following inner guidance.

In time one cannot distinguish the difference.

Subsequently my first trip to Indonesia in 1980 captivated me wholly by its magic.

It was now made possible for me to travel more extensively, follow Bapak on some of his last trips around the world as well as move to another country.

‘Culture reveals civilisation of the human race for language itself derives from culture’

*Y.M. Bapak M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo - Extract from "Make your life come good" - page 6*

Testing for questions to which we cannot find solutions with our minds is another gift of the latihan. A useful test for instance is to find out to what extent we have progressed if we so wish and can receive depending on the clarity of our receiving ofcourse. We can also test if we have a problem that we cannot solve with our common sense.

This inherent gift Almighty God has furnished all his creatures with in their inner feelings as mentioned before. Animals however are more alert and open to their inner feeling as they do not use thought, the way we humans do. Their inner self is more recipient to following their feelings than we are in our daily lives using our lower forces, our hearts, minds and desires

to find ways to improve our conditions and make our lives 'come good'.

We can find all these truths within ourselves if we try but not should rely constantly on testing. For if we test excessively about every little thing that puzzles us, our instinct and common sense stop functioning actively.

Testing is also an extension of the latihan. We should try not to run to God for every little question we are faced with and try to use the various other inherent gifts within us to solve our problems.

New York- U.S.A. - In nineteen eighty one, during one of Bapak Muhammad Subuh's talent testing sessions in New York, the arts, more specifically writing, was indicated to me when tested as suitable to my nature 'Teaching was another. True talents!

*"Write"- Bapak said .....*

It certainly took me by surprise. After the test Bapak indicated that I should concentrate wholly on writing and not busy myself with businesses. Suddenly disorientated and insecure, I was at a loss how to start regarding this new direction.

How was I to apply this side of my nature?

Luckily we went to say farewell to Bapak at the departure lounge in New York. My son usually accompanied me on these trips. Just before Bapak left he gave me some more advice, recommending that I

start writing by sitting in front of an empty sheet of paper.

'Wait patiently until inspiration comes', Bapak said.

A few days after my return home to Greece I resigned from my job. Following Bapak's advice, I took myself to my little house in the country-side and perched on my verandah like a bird, there I sat nervously in front of an empty sheet of paper, full of disbelief that anything worth while would emerge from my being in writing.

Besides teaching English and French literature, spells of journalism had occupied me job-wise in the past without any trouble. But the challenge now was orientated otherwise.

It seemed to me that I had nothing to say. Really interesting to experience how stuck we can get within ourselves with ideas and impressions of our self image. .

After sitting in front of the empty sheet for about two hours firm faith and trust in Bapak's receiving finally won the day.

My hands suddenly activated themselves filling pages and pages. On and on I wrote, with no thought or plan in my mind. Stunned with astonishment, I thanked Almighty God profusely when I finally stopped.

The effect was not only pleasing but cathartic spiritually, like having a prolonged latihan. I felt

emptied, light- hearted, deeply satisfied.  
Inspiration is one thing.  
The end result another.  
Without copious work, many changes and corrections  
as a follow up, no work is ever perfected or  
complete.

### Our own Subud house in Greece - 1982-2008

Since the experience of God's Grace in 1979 as mentioned before I was able to travel widely for the next few years, as well as follow Bapak on some of his trips in the various countries Bapak and his family visited.

Unaccustomed still to this new phase, my behaviour changed radically adapting or adjusting to my inner needs throughout this period. On occasion I too wondered at the outcome of it all. Its like being pregnant wondering if your physique will ever return to normal after the child's delivery.

I was like a house or a vessel being renovated. The properties had to be renovated too, behaviour wise. Realisation of it all comes much later in time. You just live from day to day following guidance. Maryam was being renovated. The outcome of this renovation would appear when all the work had ended.



Nevertheless man being man, always errs and has to make his or her apologies to the Creator constantly.

For perfection really rests with God Alone.

After the various trips abroad, I found myself making preparations in Greece, tidying up our flat and house in Kalamos as well as completing many other jobs, consciously unaware that I was about to move to Indonesia for a long time..

By the end of the year all was in order. One very satisfactory event was the purchase of our new Subud house - a very big gift from God for the exact amount of a loan that we obtained. Admittedly, this property was not entirely suitable for our needs, the house being excessively old and smallish for our latihans. Our finances were limited.

Still it belonged to Subud Athens.

It was wonderful to own our own property.

The plan for my person - unconsciously- was to move for a while to Indonesia to be closer to Bapak, a long time wish and a more spiritual environment.

Our material existence has a very strong hold on us. I was ready to move on. My son was at University. Both sets of parents had each other. Still loved ones left behind not excluding our dog would be missed.

The dog kept my mother company after our departure and on her toes for he actually won her over and had his way with her. He died when he was twelve years old, really mourned by mother whereas at first she did not even approve of house pets in flats.

I thought that I would be returning soon from Indonesia, but in fact this did not happen. After moving, it took two years before I went back for a visit to Greece. I missed them all very much yet inwardly my feelings drew closer to them than ever before.

Prior to my departure a housewarming was held at the new Subud House. Visitors from abroad came to attend this happy event, the opening of our house.

As mentioned above the young girls who had joined Subud had also become close members of our own family treating me much like a spiritual mother. A smallish group tends to be like one family: Harina, Daphne, Sylvana, Marina, Melina and others.

We already had joyfully experienced Subud weddings. Daphne met Hardin Tibbs -unfortunately now divorced - at a gathering abroad. They were married late in 1981 in Athens. Marina married Pantelis.early in 1982. Sylvana was to be married after my departure.

Harina was still unmarried and very dedicated to the latihan and Subud. A Subud husband was more suitable and to her liking. But where was the Subud

member for her to marry? We did not have any Subud bachelors in Greece .

At the opening of our Subud house Robiyan Easty, still unmarried from his group in Loudwater in England decided to come and to celebrate with us in Athens.....

An interesting and Guided trip for Robiyan. He met Harina.

A few months later they were married in the U.K. and settled in Greece those many years always following the latihan with great dedication.

At this present time our Subud house has been completely renovated in Athens adding an extra floor to give us more space.

It has taken three years and endless difficulties were faced before completion.



## **PART THREE**

### **Indonesia a dream come true**

Living in Wisma Subud, Cilandak was very special.

A dream come true for me.

Bapak was still with us on earth residing in the same complex, right around the corner, very much alive but frail, despite his eighty years on earth, serving in God's Path with his inimitable faith, zest and vitality.

Bapak's presence was not just comforting and beneficial. It was a perpetual inspiration and example to us all in Subud, his large family, his immediate one, his children, grand-children and great grandchildren.

Wherever Bapak happened to be, at home or on his extensive travels in other countries, activities followed suit.

Our rented flat in Wisma Subud was on the second floor of a two storey building.

Surrounded on all sides arboreal friends - enormous trees - shaded our spacious verandah. From the verandah at the back a small part of a wild tropical forest remained untouched -untold for luck-

The view magical.  
Dense tropical vegetation  
Huge butterflies  
Birds  
Little reptiles  
added to the enchantment

The sound of the latihan kejiwaan practiced on various days of the week only a few minutes walk away from home to the latihan hall undoubtedly professed God's Love.

Unbelievable though it may seem the noise from the hustle and bustle of the main road and entrance to Wisma Subud hardly hampered.

Quiet pervaded the soul.

No. 4 in Wisma Subud  
was a haven of peace

Like a policeman whose profession  
is to offer services  
chasing around all day  
so were the twenty Subud years  
in Greece over.  
Now came another stage sitting and working  
at home in Wisma Subud, Jakarta.  
Quietly.

Subud was developing.  
Moving on slowly.  
Always slowly.

A second generation of Subud members old enough  
were being opened.  
With Bapak's inspiration and endless efforts  
businesses were encouraged, and set up to provide  
income.  
The young were trying to be active.



Pioneering for Subud  
was and is still a very great blessing indeed  
for me personally.  
A very special privilege

In a small country  
a small group  
is a micro cosmos of the whole World  
man being the epitome of His great creation.

The individual grows whether he or she belongs  
to large or small groups  
gaining insight according to one's nature.

The latihan or spiritual exercise of Subud is open to  
all, helps widen the spirit irrespective of language or  
creed.

God will take over wherever one may be living.

Wisma Subud was to become a real school all over again, to let those feelings develop hampered all the while by outer influences and a busy town life.

Learn to reap the fruits  
of the latihan further and.... sustain them.

The adjustment was not primarily easy. Gregarious by nature, my inner training now consisted in not opening up excessively the outer or inner doors to others. It was hard for the heart to accept initially.

As the inner feelings grew and strengthened however, the inner bond with the residents of Wisma Subud and all those loved ones left behind surprisingly broadened.

Distance is not as important in spiritual life.  
Feelings grow and bond you even more from afar.

Yet the heart always has its own demands.  
The heart needs satisfaction too.  
We have been blessed with our lower forces  
when first created.  
They help us carry on and deal with our earthly  
duties.

Everything is miraculously balanced in its perfection.  
We lose it at some stage.

Body and soul must learn slowly to co-ordinate  
again.

We definitely need to find this balance.

Now was the time for my inner life  
to be given space to grow.

Living in Cilandak as a helper too  
whilst Bapak was still alive  
was an unexpected realisation.

When carrying out one's Subud duties outside  
Indonesia far from Bapak one was sustained by  
another Energy, as Bapak's representatives.  
A great Power took over Guiding the way.  
Travelling away from Cilandak now and then without  
Bapak  
the same Energy took over.

When Bapak resided close by,  
an emptiness  
a lack of responsibility ruled the feelings.

The child in one came to the fore open to God  
and to one's identity.

As long as one steadily followed inner and outer  
guidance  
a glorious supporting feeling accompanied you.

The soul's wings were given space to spread.

Along with my literary efforts in writing with which  
I persevered diligently in Wisma Subud  
and some painting for relaxation  
the translation of Susila Budhi Dharma  
into Greek proceeded now with regularity.

Endless hours were spent.  
Little impact was left on my person however  
-at least in thought-

Suddenly my attitude changed.  
My motivation changed direction.  
Instead of translating for others, or the future,  
-as we have only relatively few Subud members in  
Greece,  
-I worked for Me.

An amazing transformation took place in my  
perception.  
Bapak's beautiful poem  
God's words in melodious rhymes  
received by Bapak in true Grace  
touched and continues to have its effect  
on the very core of life and soul.

The result- a new translation flowed,  
became one with me.

Thanks be to God, the Merciful

Language is a very important factor in communication.

Having settled in Wisma Subud weeks turned into months learning Bahasa Indonesia.

Adjusting to Indonesia  
the Asian way of life  
their culture  
heritage  
identifying oneself  
better to comprehend  
in order to fit into one's surroundings  
was an imperative need for me

Instead of forgetting  
one's individuality  
is enriched  
by gaining insight

All those efforts were rewarded indeed.  
GOD BE PRAISED

After his studies were over in the United States and Canada from where he graduated, my son Mikhail decided to join and live with me in Wisma Subud.

Years- twenty five- have passed in Indonesia  
-though since 1996 half the year is spent in Greece-

I am now fully integrated in my feelings  
with this magnificent country Indonesia  
in more than one way  
for more than one reason.

My son married eventually

On December 15<sup>th</sup> 1995  
to a very talented , kind , beautiful Indonesian Subud  
member,  
a classical concert pianist

They collaborate activating together, as one unit,  
their visions in various projects.

and my two grand-children- God Bless them-  
who were born in Jakarta

are naturally  
half Indonesian

Moreover their wedding day coincided with the  
day of opening in Subud (the great grandmothers  
according to the Javanese custom calculate the date of  
their wedding using both the intended husband and  
wife's dates of birth)



*Bapak's portraits taken by my son*







## **PART FOUR**

**In memory of  
Y.M. Bapak M. Subuh  
Sumohadiwidjojo**

The late Varindra Tarzie Vittachi, a leading International journalist and development consultant, former executive director of UNICEF and several times chairman of the World Subud Council, completed a book about the late Y.M. Bapak M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo, shortly after the latter had departed from us into the Great Life.

Varindra described Bapak in his latest book as “the most extraordinary, ordinary man of our time”

The presence of such a rare individual sent on this earth by Almighty God was and continues to remain for all of us in Subud of great importance and benefit to our daily existence besides sharing with us the most important of all gift, the latihan kejiwaan of Subud.

Thousands of talks left behind for our perusal, help in proving partly that this “extraordinary man” was far above the norm. Spiritually Gifted indeed beyond common understanding.

Inimitable in his faith, always Guided by Almighty God, Bapak not only shared the latihan with us but assisted tirelessly Subud members even when frail health-wise, to the end of his days on earth. Endless advice was imparted at home in Indonesia and in his various travels around the world as well as in the thousands or more talks.

It might sound presumptuous on my part to try to sum up in ONLY a few lines the significance and effect of this great SOUL in our lives. But as Bapak clearly explained and we have understood that bigger and brighter beings than ourselves can only be felt by those who are similar in their spiritual capacity.

‘To know and appreciate the qualities of an angel you have to be able to feel like the angel yourself’

As regards Bapak himself, no matter what heights he may have reached spiritually, he never relapsed into the “I” - the self.

His concern rested totally on helping us understand a little more through his own experiences, in submission and in receiving God’s Guidance..

Bapak described his role metaphorically (in one of his talks in 1959) as a janitor who opens the doors of the school, sets up the class-room tables, chairs and writing board for the students to prepare themselves to be taught by their teacher - no other than....Almighty God and not Bapak himself.

“For Bapak is the servant of God not the teacher.”

My own father passed suddenly away on June 12<sup>th</sup> 1987. A few weeks before he had fallen and broken his hip-bone. A lengthy operation followed to mend the damage he had suffered. My son Mikhail who happened to be in Athens after his first painting exhibition was able to assist along with my step-mother and half sister.

The operation was successful. However father died peacefully and suddenly of a heart attack in his bed at home a few weeks later. Though he had apparently forewarned my step-mother that his death was eminent his departure took us by surprise. I hastily travelled to Athens to pay my last respects of course.

Amazingly a few days after we had buried my dad, despite the numerous chores that had to be dealt with, a strong feeling persisted that I had to return to Indonesia in time for Bapak's birthday.

Nobody objected or commented on my early departure.

I reached Indonesia on the day of Bapak's birthday in mourning and managed to attend the birthday celebration that same evening.

Those Subud members who were meant to be present before Bapak left us had congregated from various parts of the world in Jakarta. Eva -Ileanna - Bartok for instance who had not visited Indonesia for many years, had come as well as many others.

Most of us sat outside the house and in the Pendopo looking rather grim, for Bapak did not join us that night. He had been taken ill. When the time came for the birthday cake and wishes Bapak made a last effort and appeared on the balcony to wave good-bye. As many of us as possible gathered inside the house to wave back. Deeply moved we all saw him standing at the edge of the balcony waving good-bye. Tearfully many of us sent up our last birthday wishes.

Besides his invaluable assistance what particularly moved my person and feelings immensely was Bapak's transition to the Great Life. The humility and simplicity that characterised him as a human being persisted to the very end of his days.

Bapak left all of us as "an ordinary man", as a grandfather and a father to his immediate family as well as his large Subud family. He had repeatedly experienced death before in his spiritual path and had been returned to us, the time not being right then.

Yet when the time came to be called back by God, no-one around the world had been allowed by God, to sense inwardly this imminent transition ahead, of our beloved and respected Bapak.

Prior to this sad event many of us around the world had experienced different death feelings for a long time. Some thought they themselves would pass away -that feeling applied to my person as well. Others had a variety of experiences but nobody believed that Bapak would leave us soon.

He was so sturdy and determined, trying constantly to give us the utmost of his energy and knowledge.

Bapak was born on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1901 and passed away the night of his birthday June 22<sup>nd</sup>. 1987 unexpectedly, precise and punctual as he had been throughout his earthly life to meet with His Creator hopefully undisturbed by our deep sorrow.

We mourned for him as we would have done for an important and much loved family member, unable to restrain our tears despite our belief in God and His Will.

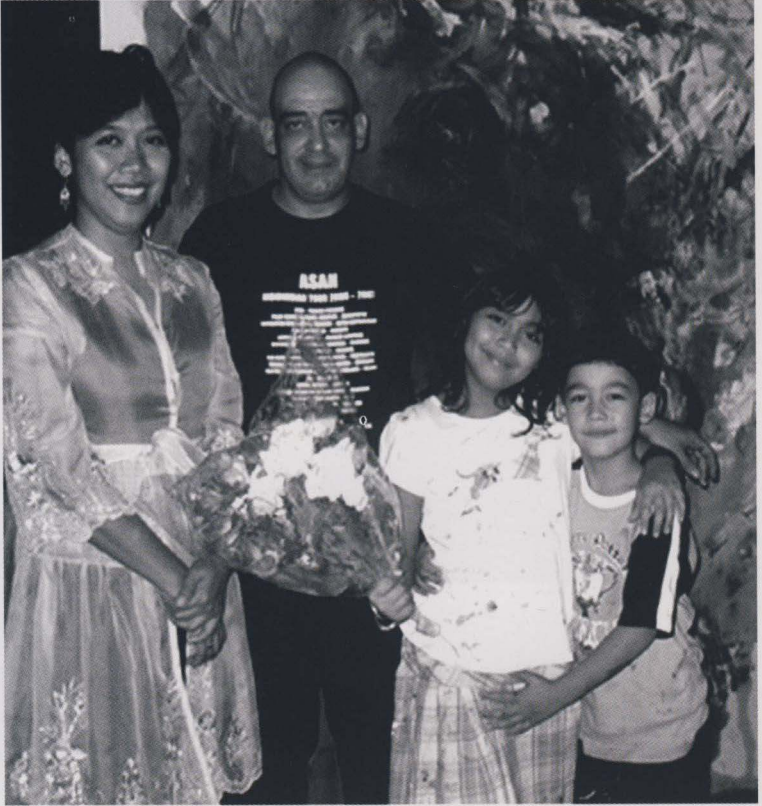
Unusual indeed  
this "extraordinary man"  
to have remained basically so humble  
yet deeply loved by God  
sincere  
caring wholly  
for our spiritual progress,  
untouched by pretensions  
and expectations of grandeur  
to the end of his days,  
pretensions that normally influence the make up  
of important personalities in their lives.

Bapak M. Subuh is now in the Eternal Life but his presence on this earth and in our memory remains alive.

His example and legacy lives on in our hearts and souls

making us hopefully better people, before we meet our Creator too.

*May Almighty God always continue to reward  
Bapak M, Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo with  
His Grace, Many Blessings and Eternal Peace.  
Amen*



*My children and grandchildren*



## An after thought

I, Maryam, Ioanna am so grateful for having been given Guidance and Direction in God's Great Creation through the latihan kejiwaan of Subud.

How long my life span ahead will be on the earth, nobody can tell.

Why has this autobiographical booklet been put together at this stage is also unknown to me.

Whilst Bapak was still living in Wisma Subud and I had moved to Jakarta spending some time writing, I specifically asked Bapak whether I should write a book with the exact title " Experiencing the miraculous" in our Subud lives. Bapak gave his consent.

Throughout those years that I have persevered with my latihan and literary efforts in writing, I repeatedly tried to put some of these thoughts on paper unsuccessfully. Whenever I had felt the desire in the past to include an article in Subud publications, that too did not take place.

Bapak's and Ibu Rahayu's numerous talks are so Guided and Enlightened and of greater importance to us all spiritually, clarifying whatever we are unable yet to understand inwardly or outwardly.

Whatever else we have to add in writing as Subud members seems to my mind to be of lesser importance.

A personal expression however to share a lifetime - to date- particularly the pioneering side in Subud, might be of some use to others along their way forward..

I ask your forgiveness if anything written is out place and has unintentionally hurt feelings.

May Almighty God forgive and Help us all to the end of our days.



*Vivianna my good friend and neighbour in Pamulang*

## Appendix I

Chronological order of some Subud events in Greece

1959 - Bapak M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo and his party along with John Bennet arrive in Athens. invited among others by Mr and Mrs Hadjigeorgiou -an aunt of Daphne Alexopoulos-Tibbs. -we found out later-. They were hosted at their hotel in Nikis St, Plaka in Athens.

150 people are opened during Bapak' s few days stay in Athens. Bapak also formed a committee before his departure.

All the members dispersed after Bapak and his party departed. including Mr & Mrs Hadjigeorgiou. At a later date their daughter was opened but also left Subud.

When Daphne' s mother, Ilona Merlin joined Subud we found out that her grandmother had been opened too, during Bapak' s visit- she resumed with the latihan at home, before she died.

1964 - 65 - Maryam is a candidate member for Subud December 15<sup>th</sup> Maryam' s opening takes place in Paris, France.

1966 - Maryam isolated member in Athens

1967 - Maryam represents Greece at the International Subud Congress in Japan

Sept.-1967- First two Greek lady members are opened in Subud

A new group is formed without official registration because of a Military Government now ruling in Greece from April 1967- August 1974 when the democratic government was re-instated

Meetings of more than four people have to be reported during the time that the Junta ruled.

1968 - 1969 First men opened - Vassilis Vassiliou and Dr. Emm.Patatimides. ( Maryam's father)

Other openings follow suit eventually

1970 - First Latihan premises rented in Marcou Evgenicou St.7 in the Lycabettus area. Frequent visitors now come to Greece

1972-1973 - New Latihan premises rented in the Patissia area where most Subud members reside .

1973-Summer - First Subud summer trip joined by only a few members on the island of Kos

1974 - Spring- Visit of ISC.Chairman -Richard Engels and Hermine Rutz

1974 - October - New Subud premises are rented- a House at the foot of the Acropolis, Agrafon No 4, in Koukaki, Athens.



2008 –  
*our renovated  
Subud House*



*Haidariou 4  
Ambelokipi, Athens*



1974- November to June 1975 -an attempt in group activities such as a play, getting together, social work etc. take place.

Small batik enterprise is established by the younger members

1975- World Congress in Germany. Most of the Greek Subud members participated at the Congress.

1977- June - Bapak and his party visit Greece. They stay in Athens at the Subud house for five days. Latihan and talks take place.

1977- An impromptu summer trip to the island of Lesbos by some Greek Subud members after Bapak's departure.

1978- Summer trip by Greek Subud members to the island of Samos

1979- Subud Greece is represented at the Congress in Canada, both committee and kejiwaan representatives.

1980- Summer group holiday

1981- First International summer vacation organised by the younger members held on the island of Aegina- Many participants from abroad joined this gathering.

## 1982- Purchase of our own Subud House

Subud is registered officially and as a charitable organisation.

From then on Greece was represented with members attending almost all the meetings internationally.

National Congresses are held yearly with international helpers attending.

Subud summer holidays have also been held in Greece almost every year.

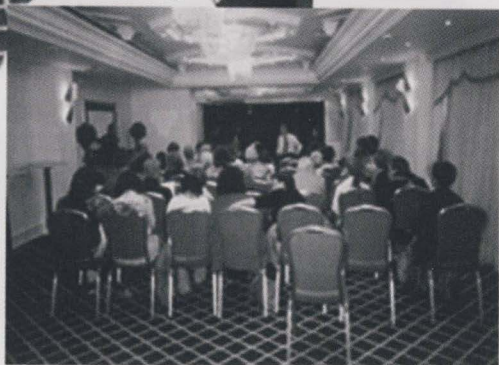
Mark Merlin- who lived on the island of Corfu-became Zonal Coordinator- zone II during the last period of his life-1998-2002.

A small group was established in Corfu who continue practicing the latihan.

Two zonal gatherings were successfully organised in Greece in the nineties in Athens - and the year after the World Congress in Bali, in Anavryta on the outskirts by the sea, well attended by numerous Subud members from abroad including the World Subud Association Chairman. and Wings.

Ibu Siti Rahayu -visited Athens in September 2004 for three days. Talks and latihan were held at a hotel in the Lykabettus area .





*Athens - 2003  
Ibu Rahayu's visit*



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"For Bapak is the servant of God not the teacher."

Jakarta, 1st July, 1967

To  
Ionna David  
7-3 Xanthippou Street  
Athens, Greece

Dear Ionna David,

Bapak gives thanks to Almighty God that you are able to be fully aware of your inner-self. And Bam also thanks you for your good wishes for his 68th birthday.

With regard to the news about the progress of Subud members in Athens, Bapak prays to Almighty God that they may always receive His Grace. However, Bapak feels it necessary for you and the other members to know that, in future, when someone wishes to join Subud he or she should be given explanations that he or she sufficiently understands, because otherwise the same thing may happen as in the past, that is to say, after following the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud for two or three months he or she may feel inclined to leave Subud.

Bapak feels it is again necessary to give clarifications to all of you to enable you to give explanations to people who wish to join Subud.

The latihan kedjiwaan of Subud is a latihan of the djiwe (inner-force) and the djiwa is the content of our whole self, which consists of all parts of our physical body, including the brain, the physical heart, the heart of the nafsu (passions) and the sex organ.

Clearly, it is the djiwe that has the power in the self of man. As for man's heart and mind, which are parts of his body and have a special significance in the life of man, these are only tools of the djiwe. So if it happens that a man has a djiwe of a low level, for instance, a setanic djiwe, then even though the man may be highly educated there is the possibility that his mind will be used by the djiwe of a low level. The proof is that quite a few people who are regarded as having great knowledge still behave in a way that is not as it should be.

Such is the situation of the djiwe that has power in the self of man, if it can be seen uncovered. Therefore we do the latihan, called the latihan kedjiwaan, so that it becomes possible to get a djiwe of a high level instead of a low level. It is fortunate for us that by the Grace of Almighty God we have been able to receive the contact from His Power, which results in our inner-feeling having movements and arising free from the influence of the nafsu because, in fact, during our life on this earth only God is able to bring this about, and therefore we should really have faith and surrender with sincere trust and submission to His Will.

From this being so, and having already been truly experienced by us, it is clear that the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud is our worship of Almighty God in accordance with the guidance and direction that manifests in the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud whose way we receive and follow. And so clearly, the principle and purpose of the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud is: our worship of Almighty God in accordance with His guidance and direction, with the aim that we may become human beings having a human djiwe and a noble and good character according to His Will.

What has been explained above is very important so that the helpers can help others to understand, that is, those who are interested in joining Subud and the Subud members themselves who do not yet understand the principle and purpose of the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud. It is necessary that they do not consider the latihan kedjiwaan as an exercise to cure sick people and to obtain a great fortune, although this may come about when following the way of the latihan kedjiwaan. What is most important is our worship of Almighty God and surrendering everything to His Will.

It is also necessary that those who are interested in joining Subud understand that Subud is not a new religion, but an association of people of various religions and nationalities who, together, receive the Gift from Almighty God through His Grace. The latihan that we receive is beyond our will and understanding. It is usually impossible for a man to avoid the influence of the nafsu, but with the latihan

*Copy of letter addressed to Ioanna David  
by Bp. Muh. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo*

Djakarta, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1969

To Ionna David  
7-9 Xanthippou Street,  
Athens, Greece

Dear Ionna David,

Bapak gives thanks to Almighty God that you are able to be fully aware of your inner self. And Bapak also thanks you for your good wishes for his 68<sup>th</sup> birthday.

With regard to the news about the progress of Subud members in Athens Bapak prays to Almighty God that they may always receive His Grace. However Bapak feels it is necessary for you and the other members to know that, in future, when someone wishes to join Subud he or she should be given explanations that he or she sufficiently understands, because otherwise the same thing may happen as in the past, that is to say after following the latihan kejiwaan of Subud for two or three months he or she may feel inclined to leave Subud.

Bapak feels it is again necessary to give clarifications to all of you to enable you to give explanations to people who wish to join Subud.

The latihan kejiwaan of Subud is a latihan of the djiwa - inner force-

and the djiwa is the content of our whole self, which consists of all of our physical body, including the brain, the physical heart, the heart of the nafs-passions- and the sex organ.

Clearly, it is the djiwa that has the power in the self of man. As for man's heart and mind, which are parts of his body and have a special significance in the life of man these are only the tools of the djiwa. So if it happens that a man has a djiwa of a low level, for instance, a satanic djiwa, then even though he may be highly educated there is the possibility that his mind will be used by the djiwa of a low level. The proof is that quite a few people who are regarded as having great knowledge still behave in a way that is not as it should be.

Such is the situation of the djiwa that has power in the self of man, if it can be seen uncovered. Therefore we do the latihan, called the latihan kejiwaan, so that it becomes possible to get a djiwa of a high level instead of a low level. It is fortunate for us that by the Grace of Almighty God we have been able to receive the contact from His Power, which results in our inner feeling having movements and arising free from the influence of the nafs because, in fact, during our life on this earth only God is able to bring this about, and therefore we should really have faith and surrender with sincere trust and submission.

From this being so and having already been truly experienced by us, it is clear that the latihan kejiwaan of Subud is our worship of Almighty God in accordance with His guidance and direction, with the aim that we may become human beings having a human djiwa and a noble and good character according to His Will.

What has been explained above is very important so that the helpers can help others to understand, that is those who are interested in joining Subud and the Subud members themselves who do not yet understand the principle and purpose of the latihan kejiwaan of Subud. It is necessary that they do not consider the latihan kejiwaan as an exercise to cure sick people and to obtain a great fortune, although this may come about when following the way of the latihan kejiwaan. What is most important is our worship of Almighty God and surrendering everything to His Will.

It is also necessary that those who are interested in joining Subud understand that Subud is not a new religion but an association of people of various religions and nationalities who, together, receive the Gift from Almighty God through His Grace. The latihan that we receive is beyond the will and understanding. It is usually impossible for a man to avoid the influence of the nafsu, but with the latihan the influence of the nafsu is automatically separated from the inner feeling.

This is a sign that the latihan kejiwaan is a Gift from Almighty God through His Grace. And we in responding to His Gift, need only be patient and surrender with trust and sincere submission to the Will of Almighty God.

If it is the Grace of Almighty God that brings it about, the latihan kejiwaan of Subud, in its nature is: guidance and direction from Almighty God.

Furthermore because of His guidance and direction, it becomes possible for our djiwa of a low level to be changed to one of a high level, and with it we have a good and noble character in accordance with the Will of Almighty God.

Returning to the question of religion; if Subud were a religion, then ofcourse Subud would not be able to accept people from the various religions; and what is more these people would not want to join Subud, because each religion has its own way of worship for its followers. But after joining Subud and being able to receive guidance and direction from Almighty God which is part of the latihan kejiwaan, each one is exercised in accordance with his own conditions and capacity, so that a person of the Islam religion receives in the way of the Islamic faith and one of Christian religion receives in the way of that religion, and so forth and supposing someone asks why there is no disagreement or differentiation among the members regarding their religion. Well.. because in Subud one

guidance and direction is received: the guidance and direction from Almighty God. And in receiving it the Power of Almighty God separates from the inner feeling the influence of the nafs that resides in the heart and mind.

Thus brothers and sisters, it is clear that dissensions among people is caused entirely by pressure from the nafs residing in the heart and mind. This is the reason why people of different religions, nationalities and origins can associate as brothers in Subud and feel as though they are in the midst of their own family.

Bapak hopes that you will understand all Bapak has expressed here, especially the helpers, for whom it is necessary so that they can give satisfactory explanations to people who are interested in joining Subud and also to the Subud members themselves who are not yet fully able to understand about the latihan kejiwaan of Subud.

*From Bapak, M. Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo*



kedjiwaan the influence of the nafsu is automatically separated from the inner-feeling.

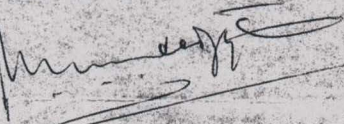
This is a sign that the latihankedjiwaan is a Gift from Almighty God, through His Grace. And we, in responding to His Gift, need only be patient and surrender with trust and sincere submission to the Will of Almighty God.

If it is the Grace of Almighty God that brings it about, the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud, in its nature, is: guidance and direction from Almighty God. Furthermore, because of His guidance and direction, it becomes possible for our djiwa of a low level to be changed to one of a high level, and with it we will have a good and noble character in accordance with the Will of Almighty God. Returning to the question of religion:--If Subud were a religion, then of course Subud would not be able to accept people from the various religions; and what is more, these people would not want to join Subud, because each religion has its own way of worship for its followers. But after joining Subud and being able to receive guidance and direction from Almighty God which is part of the latihan kedjiwaan, each one is exercised in accordance with his own condition and capacity, so that a person of the Islam religion receives in the way of the Islamic faith and one of the Christian religion receives in the way of that religion, and so forth. And supposing someone asks why there is no disagreement or differentiation among the members regarding their religions. Well... because in Subud one guidance and direction is received: the guidance and direction from Almighty God; and in receiving it the Power of Almighty God separates from the inner-feeling the influence of the nafsu that resides in the heart and mind.

Thus, brothers and sisters, it is clear that dissension among people is caused entirely by pressure from the nafsu residing in the heart and mind. This is the reason why people of different religions, nationalities and origins can associate as brothers in Subud and feel as though in the midst of their own family.

Bapak hopes that you will understand all Bapak has expressed here, especially the helpers, for whom it is necessary so that they can give satisfactory explanations to people who are interested in joining Subud and also to the Subud members themselves who are not yet fully able to understand about the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud.

from Bapak,



Muhammad-Subuh Sumohadiwidjo



art@  
2001

Appendix II  
Jakart-2000- 2001-2002-2003-2004  
Unique Festivals

Before the tenth International Subud Congress in Spokane, Mikhail David conceived of a vision through his latihan to organise a festival as a tribute to the memory of the late Y.M. Bapak M.Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo for the centennial celebrations of his birth. As it happens Bapak's date of birth on June 22nd, coincides with the birthday of the city of Jakarta. Hence the intention was for the cultural festival to be held throughout the month of June 2001. Mikhail travelled to the Spokane Congress-despite the fact that their first child was to be born at approximately that period- the little girl waited however for his return-

A resolution was passed at the Tenth International Congress to the effect that this Jakart Festival was to be a Subud event. Later during the Holland Subud Gathering in July 1999 another resolution was passed for the festival to be included as a S.I.C.A.event.

It sadly transpired that this festival was not to be either a S.I.C.A. or a Subud event at least in name. The resolutions, as it often happens in Subud were not strictly adhered to.

Some Subud members participated and exhibited enthusiastically sharing with us all their expertise and their talented work. Hundreds of others, not in Subud also participated with equal enthusiasm.

By the Grace of God, Jakarta 2001 took place and was a great success. A miracle considering the incredible impasses Indonesia was encountering. Despite all the obstacles the political and economic crises, perpetual strikes and serious troubles on some of the Indonesian islands. Jakarta happened.

The day before the opening ceremony for instance, we were still in doubt if the following day would be peaceful enough for the opening to take place. Two and a half years of organising, endless days and nights of work would have been wasted for those closely involved in the organisation.

Jakarta was the result of combined efforts of an impressive number of individual artists and concerned citizens who collectively agreed along with Mikhail and Ary-his wife realising that some action was called for imminently.

These same individuals had struggled for many years and to various degrees of success to address the concern of the lack of adequate educational and

financial support often due to the lack of understanding of the important links between the arts and everyday economic and social activities.

The city of Jakarta has about fifteen million inhabitants. Most of the cultural projects and events address themselves to narrow and specialized audience and seldom reach the wider public.

What made Jakart 2001 different was that for the first time in many years it emerged that if all these noble efforts in the various fields and disciplines could be pulled together, for just one moment in time i.e. June 2001 and in just one space - Jakarta, a monumental event would be created - and was indeed created - that reached a wide audience and drew attention to a number of important issues.

Jakart 2001 was a celebration of human culture, a NOT FOR PROFIT festival. Jakarta was miraculously transformed into a huge stage for a whole month.

Not only most of the existing venues in the city, such as concert halls and theatres, but also unconventional venues such as schools and universities, community centres, community theatres, parks, the streets, mosques, churches, cafes', a bus that opens into a stage and more were used. The local community was involved to the maximum extent possible, by taking the festival to them and creating hands on experiences and events.

Knossos, a theatrical group from Greece arrived with 18 members and gave us two performances of Sophocles tragedy "Antigone". Some of their costumes were prepared by the famous Indonesian designer Harry Dharsono.

What was particularly interesting about this performance was the collaboration with an Indonesian theatre group who performed simultaneously in Indonesian as the chorus. The collaboration and practices started two months before the arrival of the theatre group using the Internet to practice their roles.

Another of the world famous artists participating was Vivianna Torun Bulow Hube a dedicated old timer in Subud. She painstakingly prepared her exhibition sharing with us all, 50 years of her collective work- 25 years which were inspired from her life in Indonesia. This by the way, was her first complete exhibition in Jakarta.

Some of the other Subud members participating were Rahmadi Fiedorowitz, Ridwan Tomkins, Mansur Geiger, Rashid Carre, Leila Dempster, Valentin, Utami Geiger, Raymond Lee, Reynold Feldman, and Miaran'da from Australia.

Antoine Predoc-by the way gave us an amazingly poetic presentation among other architectural events including competitions for young Indonesian artists.

A whole month of cultural expressions neither fatigue nor late nights mattered. One was at a loss what performance or event to follow every single day. The joyous feeling the festival imparted filled our hearts with enthusiasm-those of us who made the effort to follow.

Jakart 2002, 2003, 2004, could happen as well, because of God 's Will. Also because of the help and co-operation of a number of private and government institutions organisations and establishments which offered assistance in various ways with their valuable support.

As for the volunteers who worked day and night looking after the performers and guests their enthusiasm, warmth and attention brought tears to our eyes.

The zest, impact and deep feelings this festival created is not easy to impart. Thousands watched some performances. Others were not too well attended. but God's closeness, the openness was always there. The artists as well as the audience confirmed this feeling. The atmosphere in some of these sparsely attended events was one of blessedness.

For my person, it was all amazing, an active example of seeing the latihan put into practice, as each day followed the next. Hope for us all and for the future of our undertakings if the intention and aim is clearly

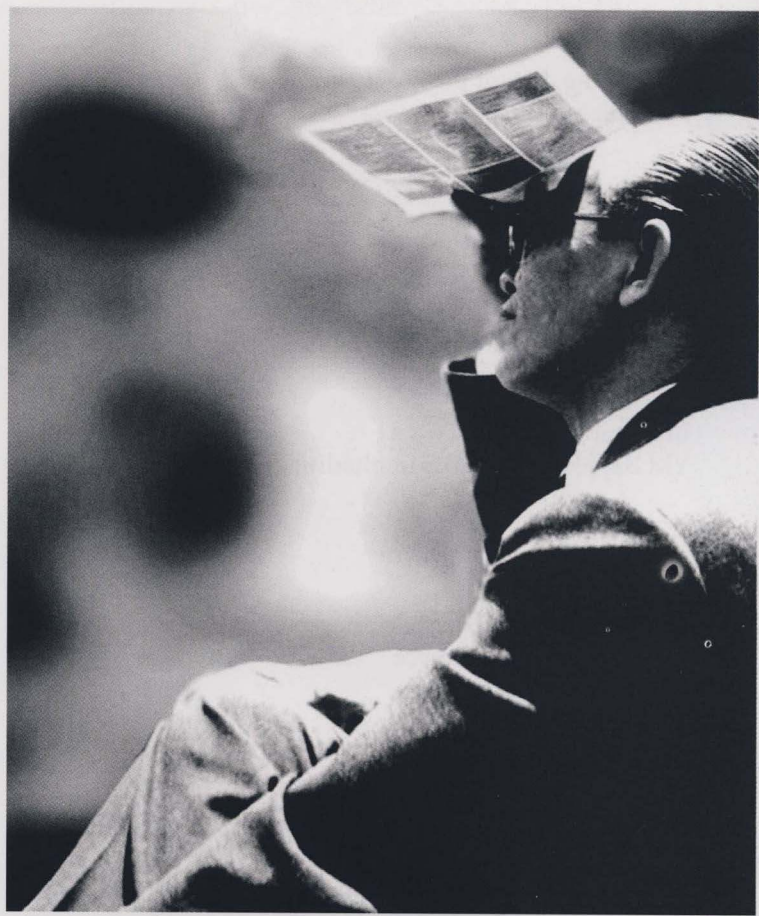
defined in us and is unselfish in its scope Unshakeable faith in Our Creator can move mountains .....the mountains of lower forces or passions too.. For without Him who Created us, we are nothing.

Thank you Almighty God, for sending us Bapak and to Ibu Rahaju for being supportive.

Thank you Mikhail and Ary for your inspiration, tireless efforts and to your dedicated team of workers.

It left us much richer culturally and wiser spiritually and physically.





## Contents:

Glossary	page iii
Preface	page
PART ONE - The distant past	page 3
Introducing Ioanna	page
PART TWO	
A Greek Pioneer	page
Subud World Congresses	page
PART THREE	
Indonesia - a dream come true	page
PART FOUR	
In memory of	
YM Bapak M. Subud Sumohadiwidjojo	page
An after thought	page
Appendix I	
Chronological order of some	
Subud events in Greece	page
Copy of Bapak's letter	page
Appendix II	
JakArt 2000 - 2004 - Unique Festivals	page



