

**Social Githekas**

Series XXXII

*by*

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,  
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls  
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Githeka Series XXXII: Number 1

Much worldly knowledge may not be necessary for spiritual growth and understanding but great insight is very essential. It is not so important whether you are acquainted with facts, it is important to become attuned to the spirit behind facts. And it sometimes seems that no matter how devoted one is to the Message of God, no matter how long one has studied and meditated and practiced the Sufi instructions, the simple teachings included in the ten Sufi Thoughts may perhaps better describe the goal toward which one is tending, rather than the starting point from which one advances.

It may be pretty hard to do much studying this year without keeping an eye, so to speak, on the world without. That is, the studies will not be theoretical no matter how theoretical they may seem. The purpose of concentration, meditation and spiritual music is to attune the hearts of mureeds to their inner being, to bring the human portion of one's being closer to that Divine Essence which is your real being; and at the same time these very practices serve as a medicine for the whole of humanity. For those purified vibrations which you breathe into the atmosphere circulate over and through the whole world more rapidly and universally than do the so-called radio waves. They may even be called spiritual radio waves.

The important teachings of this season can all be found in the ten Sufi Thoughts. We shall begin our studies with the second thought which reads: "There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads his followers toward the light." This can be called the Social Darood, even as "Toward the One" may be called the Spiritual Darood, the Darood of Unity. This contains the answer to the political problems of the day and the religious problems of the day.

These problems take on three aspects which it might be well to examine. For instance in looking at the religious problem it appears to be more problem than religious. Pure religion would offer no problems and would help to solve some of the vexations of life. Today every time one offers an answer it tends to divide and delude humanity the more, making the realization of unity more remote. To counteract this condition, the mureed keeps his heart and mind fixed upon Unity.

This supreme thought, of "Toward the One," is not so easy and it becomes more difficult as one departs from the realm of pure insight and enters the sphere of the intellect. Sufism does not bring any particular answer; it does insist that the answer can come from the sphere of the heart, and never from the limited mind of ego. This is really the reply of Buddha when he told his disciples and auditors that particular answers of themselves were of no value; it was the deeper understanding of the meaning of the problem and answer which was essential. For this, one had to learn the nature of one's own being, and then problem would cease to trouble one.

So while the outer world may be filled with false pretenders to inner knowledge, the heart of man knows no division, it is always close to the spirit of unity, it cannot conceive duality. The brain has its many lobes with their purposes, but the heart acts as a unity; in this we see the reflection of the true mind and the true heart. One can even learn something of the higher spheres by studying the corresponding representatives of these planes in the world of manifestation. But again, it is the spirit of their activity, not the details, which is important.

Thus, when the social problem is studied, the first point to be considered is, "Does that one whom we are following lead us toward the Light?" Now how is one going to get the right answer? It may even be said there is no answer, yet there is something within the Sufi Thoughts which can also be called an answer and that is the seventh precept which says: "There is one Moral Principle, the Love which springs forth from self-denial, and blooms in deeds of beneficence."

Does this leader or that declaimer perform deeds of beneficence? Is he unselfish? Is he strongly devoted to the moral law? Especially in America do we see corruption and decay pervade the body politic. At the same time there are some persons who are held before the public view as models of proper behavior. But when we examine the lives of these individuals, do we find them condemning this corruption? Do we find them disowning the alliance of venial persons? Are they, for instance, acting as Christ would act, as Mohammed would act, as even a moral reformer like Savonarola would act?

For us the answer of itself is of little importance, except that as mureeds we must take caution in following others. Why? Because there is an aspect of spiritual and occult law to be understood in this connection. When we consider the one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, He is the positive and we are the negative. So as soon as a mureed is negative to any force, any personality, any movement other than those which lead in this direction, or which emanate from a higher source, that moment the mureed is in danger of separating himself from pure teaching.

It has never been intended that any Sufi teachings, even those included in the beautiful thoughts of Holy Murshid, were to be accepted dogmatically. They are not dogma for anything of the nature of dogma is contrary to the traditions of Sufism. At the same time there is another way to observe them. One does not call the principles and laws of science and mathematics and art, dogmas. Very often they are deep rooted principles, sometimes they are working hypotheses, and often they are the results of experiences. In the same way one may take to heart and mind that the Sufi Thoughts are the result of the actual inner experience of sages and saints who have led countless followers toward the light.

This law of Positive and Negative is very interesting. Something of a similar nature is discussed by Holy Murshid in his ethical teachings, especially in the essay "The Distinction between Grades" which has appeared in the Sufi Quarterly, and it also appears in other teachings. It shows that our behavior is not restricted, not limited, but that behind all outer differences there is a common center of vital radiance emanating from the heart of man.

The first agreement necessary for the Sufi is the agreement with God. Harmony with particular individuals is always secondary. For what is the purpose of harmonizing with others, if not to bring all into harmony with the One Only Being? It must always be remembered that those under the sway of the nufs will change their opinions more readily than the souls advanced in evolution, and the only real way to keep in harmony with them is to raise the pitch of their souls and bring them closer to God. To agree with man when such agreement would not keep one in harmony with Allah becomes more dangerous as one advances on the path toward God. For if the mureed follows the one who is in darkness, how can he help lead his fellow beings towards the Light?

It is well to remember that all persons who are not in the train of Allah are under the sway of the nufs. This means **all** persons, not some, but all. In daily life one may behold intellectual persons and ignorant persons, good people and bad people, sagacious leaders and unscrupulous philanderers, yet all of those who have not turned to Allah are outside the pale of His Grace. This is not because His Grace has not been offered to them, but because their thoughts, words and activities are centered around the limited point of view of the ego.

This point is finally developed in the tenth Sufi Thought which says: "There is one Path, the annihilation of the false ego in the real ... in which resides all perfection." If the leaders of the world, even the good leaders, were acquainted with the true Ego, if they had this understanding, they would accomplish deeds in their daily affairs which lead humanity toward perfection. It is not necessary to criticize them, yet it is certainly unwise for the initiate to follow them. Remember: They are as nothing in the sight of Allah.

Whosoever doubts this may study the Bible or Qur'an and his doubts will be relieved. It is always proper to cooperate with other people, even with other groups when one can do so, but it is always the most important thing in life for the initiate to keep in harmony with the spirit of the Message, and not only as the Message has been presented by Inayat Khan, but also as the Message has been presented by Jesus Christ, by Mohammed, by Moses and by all the other great leaders of humanity.

Remember the words of Jesus Christ: "The first shall be last and the last shall be first." Was this true in one day and age? It is true even now as it was in the past and will be true in the future, world without end.

The moral and social teachings of the prophets and sages are before us as an answer to the problem of the day, which means, they stand as answers to all problems of the outer manifestation, and we have been favored by the Grace of God with this great understanding. Let us praise Allah forevermore for His Wisdom, His Bounty, and His Guidance to His most humble servants.

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The Social Message of the day may be connected with all of the Sufi Thoughts. The reason for this is that while there are the ten thoughts, they arise from one feeling. There is one feeling and it is like the key-note from which springs a raga of ten notes. These notes may be carefully graded, the first one beginning with God, just as the words of the Bible say, "In the beginning God ... etc." And the last of the thoughts presents the idea of man's destiny, that he can unite himself to God, and that union will effect the solution to all problems, social and otherwise.

For this lesson it may be well to consider the third Sufi Thought which reads "There is one Holy Book, the sacred Manuscript of Nature, the only scripture which can enlighten the reader." The emphasis on the word only is full of meaning, for if only were not meant, then it would not be wrong to look to the leaders of the world for help and guidance. But the repetition of this word only in these thoughts should make us bear in mind at all times the principle of Unity and the words of the sacred Invocation "Toward the One."

It is useless to argue over the condition of the world. It may not be necessary for us to correct the whole world, to make everybody good, but we can correct ourselves, we can with God's help perfect ourselves. As we have discussed in the last lesson, even our prayers, our meditations, our devotions emanate a spiritual energy which goes over the whole earth and acts as a healing instrument. This is true not only in the Healing Service but every spiritual exercise of every mureed is a blessing to many, many souls and a great benefit to humanity.

Holy Murshid has brought us the essence of Wisdom. He did not and could not give it all to us in words but he has made it possible for the seeds to grow on the sacred soil, and each can attain to the Divine Wisdom Which is One, even as the Holy Book is One. This Wisdom is not subject to analysis, to logic, to discussion. It belongs to Life itself and can be considered along with life.

The Bibles and Scriptures, which have been given to the world from time to time are copies or reprints from the Universal Bible, the Archetypal Qur'an, the Cosmic Veda. But these sacred works cannot be considered apart from the actual precepts and contents. If a person does not follow the wisdom of Solomon, it may be no sin; even if an initiate does not fully accept the teachings of Jesus or Isaiah or Moses or Manu, there may be no harm done.

But there is a different picture presented when a mureed accepts the philosophy of the day and age, putting his faith in what is printed in the average book and newspaper. It is very necessary for some to read the news of the day and it is no doubt of great interest to others. Each such occasion should be an opportunity for developing one's insight; then that material set becomes a spiritual venture. But when one relies on the mere outer husk of the printed page, what advantage is it to be

on the path of God, to be one whose faith is in the heart faculties rather than in the senses?

Never was there a time when it was more necessary to know something of the feelings and spirits of the Holy Ones in regard to the social problems. What the Messengers of God have told their disciples and followers is recorded in the Scriptures. While there may be many details which were included in their lessons as part of the teachings of the day, the fundamental principles are eternal, and hold true today as they did yesterday. To learn something of their message in love and zeal and devotion should come from the free choice of the heart of every mureed. If such a task is irksome, let it not be done, but surely these who deeply love Holy Murshid will also love what he loved and do what he did.

Therefore it is never wrong to read the Bible too much, to peruse the Qur'an continually, to study Vedas and Gitas and Sutras and to delve into the social message of Zarathustra. So long as one does not become a fanatic it may be laudable, and by fanatic is not meant a term of reproach so much as a term applied to those who regard Scripture as dead material, belonging to the past, instead of real, vital and of the day. The real scripture is a living knowledge, an active, operative and eternal process of the Divine Mind which is revealed within the heart and mind of man and is reflected without the mind and body of man.

There is a tradition ascribed to Jesus Christ: that the Kingdom of Heaven would appear on earth when the without would be as the within. For us it means both to study sacred teachings and to objectify them. This can be done in two ways: in our daily lives and in our philosophy. In our daily lives we have not had much trouble, for with the beautiful teachings of Holy Murshid before us and with Murshida to guide us, it has been easy rather than difficult to lead a moral life, a reverential life, a life of devotion, and in this direction great progress has been made.

The next step for the student is to know and understand something of the philosophy of the Scriptures until the heart and mind and breath represent the Divinity. In this way each becomes a Khalif of God on earth, and then can one be said to be a lover of God with all one's heart and with all one's soul and with all one's mind. For this there can be no two loves, either the whole of the being is concentrated upon God or else it is divided in the outer life.

When Christ said to the rich man, "Sell all thou hast and give to the poor," did he mean that the wealthy should dispose of their property? Even if this be the material sense of the passage, there is a more subtle interpretation. For the Kingdom of the Heavens is the sphere of the Mind and the wealthy are the intellectuals whose minds are full of thoughts and facts and knowledge. They are not bad people, they are very often pretty good people, but they carry such a load of mental wealth there is no room for God.

If these people would rid themselves of their knowledge and their ideas, either by sharing it with others, or through unlearning or self-sacrifice, they would lose nothing, and still could gain the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the sacrifice of the rich, and if these rich would do it, they would become even wealthier, as it is said: "To him that hath shall be given, while from him that hath not

shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

Instead of looking to adjustments in the outer sphere, in the material world, the mystic first seeks communion in the heart. When that spirit of unity is once established in the heart, then the blessings of the mental sphere can be shared between one and another and so bring to realization the Brotherhood of mankind in the Fatherhood of God.

When we consider the words of Khatum, “Open our hearts that we may hear Thy Voice which constantly cometh from within,” it should help us to realize that if God is within our hearts and is constantly speaking to us there, it is better to listen within our beings than to attend to the many voices of the personalities which are echoing and re-echoing through the world. It is these voices which have brought the world into confusion and which are keeping it there.

From the Sufi point of view no man, no matter how moral or how esteemed he may be, upon whom the Grace of God has not been bestowed, can lead humanity through the wilderness. The story of the wanderings of the children of Israel was not only the history of a particular age, it was not only a tale of a particular epoch. It is a cosmic spiritual drama which is continually going on. For who is Joshua, the successor of Moses, but that Spirit of Guidance which has come to realization within our own being, our own conscious apprehension of Truth! So Moses, who represents our spiritual guide, can bring us to the Promised Land but cannot enter it with us. And Caleb, the companion of Joshua, means nothing but heart. In the heart the truth is ever echoing and this is represented by the character Caleb, the heart personified.

And it may be that the same promise holds today, it may be that there is an eternal promise. There are a few who listen to the Voice of God within their beings, who make of themselves living vehicles for that ever emanating Divine Message whose efflux extends to all parts of the universe. And one who keeps on being true to himself in this manner, by keeping the spirit of harmony and unity within his heart, within his being, may become as a Savior to humanity.

There are two meanings to the word Rassoul. In its higher significance it means the personality who has attained to God-consciousness (baqa), who serves Allah with all his faculties awakened. The lesser significance is that at any moment one who has drawn close to the Divine Spirit may express Divine Words, Divine Thoughts and Divine Acts. As Holy Murshid has said in *The Unity of Religious Ideals* (page 130) concerning the Rassoul, “Answering the cry of humanity, he fulfills the purpose of his mission on earth.”

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There are always two methods of determining a rule of conduct or for receiving an answer to a problem. One way is to listen to the spirit within one's being through the heart or conscience or intuition. The other way is to consult some scripture, or where one has the rare privilege, taking counsel with an illuminated personality.

In reading the works of Holy Murshid as in reading the sacred traditions of the religions, one has to be careful not to read in an interpretation which may not belong there. For instance, two persons may have had different opinions and they may have consulted Holy Murshid. He may have given a reply which seemed to confirm the opinion of the first person, yet when the other person would read the reply, he would not perceive the same meaning, and perhaps the more he read that reply, the more he would feel that Holy Murshid agreed with him.

To a greater or lesser extent this has been done with all scriptures, that people have read into them some meanings, and when the literal sense of the text was not obvious, such a one would insist there was a figurative or hidden meaning. No doubt this is true in many instances; most scriptures have an allegorical interpretation and a spiritual interpretation, and this may hold true for many of Holy Murshid's writings and statements. But there is another way of studying them and for this purpose we shall apply ourselves to his social lessons.

If we consider his article entitled "Democracy" included in *In an Eastern Rose Garden*, the title is very suggestive and the fact that he has used this term may give some people the idea that he was a staunch believer in genuine democracy, and in that interpretation one may over look the fact that the word democracy has various shades of meaning.

Then another person may come along and this person may be one of the nobility. Such a one does not believe in the same kind of democracy as the other people, and not only does not believe in it but thinks that in Murshid's private life and in his early history are every evidence of his being an aristocrat, and therefore that the article entitled "Democracy" cannot be taken too literally.

There is some truth in both of these positions. Undoubtedly Holy Murshid did not express all his inspirations in words. How could he, whose every heartbeat was an inspiration? At the same time he did not neglect to emphasize certain doctrines. The democrat or the aristocrat looking for particular forms of answers both overlooked something. It is very easy to select a sentence or passage and expand it to a doctrine. In doing this one fails to see the teachings as a whole; it is just like describing a person's arm as if the arm were not a part of the body.

To understand Holy Murshid's attitude toward Democracy, it is well to read this article, but it is better to read his words on related subjects, and it is still wiser to keep the whole of *In an Eastern Rose Garden* in one's mind while giving the subject consideration. In this way the spirit of unity is not lost and this is more important than any idea of democracy, aristocracy or other social theories.



The mystic is more interested in freedom than in form, and perhaps it can be said that in a spiritual social order this would be an ideal. Man must learn to free himself, and to do this, it is not only necessary to escape from prison, so to speak, it is also very necessary to remove the shackles which hold one's arms and legs.

Today everybody calls the social order in which they live a prison. Every person seems restrained and confined, and then they blame somebody, persons or institutions or conditions. No doubt all of these are to be blamed but anyone could remove his shackles even while in the prison, and these shackles are the bonds we put on ourselves, our short-comings and weaknesses and ideas and habits. Perhaps life is like a prison, yet the doors may be unlocked and if one could free himself from the slavery in which he has bound himself, all freedom might follow.

In explaining Democracy, Holy Murshid says: "That was democracy." And he follows this in the next paragraph with, "Whence did it come? It came from the depth of religion; it came from the spiritual law." The democracy which we are having today, the democracy which so many seek has not come from the spiritual law. It is based upon the social and political order and offers little restraint to the moral misconduct of mankind. For that reason it is failing—that does not mean that democracy is wrong of itself, but without this spiritual and moral basis, it can never succeed permanently.

In his poem, "The Man and the Holy Man," Holy Murshid says:

"While the man worries and cares about tomorrow,

The holy man lays his trust in Providence.

While man becomes disturbed and confused over misfortune,

The holy man is calm and resigned to the will of God."

But besides these two opposing attitudes in the world today there is another attitude equally opposed to both, and yet this is not the spiritual attitude for it partakes of the nature of death rather than of life. There are the ascetics who "flee the wrath to come," who decree wealth and learning. They see wealth and sin associated, so they blame wealth; they see knowledge and sin associated, so they blame knowledge. They read in the scriptures of the condemnation of the wealthy and are fierce in their denouncements, and they learn of the wickedness of the scribes and bitterly arraign secular learning.

This way of the ascetics is a reaction not founded upon inner understanding. For the zealot who is willing to give up wealth, to surrender worldly knowledge, is sometimes even more attached to the self than the seemingly worldly man or social idealists, both of whom are materialists. The ascetic may denounce and deny everything and everybody, everything but the self, and sometimes he expresses more ego than any other person.

So the Sufi, like the Buddha, does not follow any of those paths. He endeavors to understand the viewpoint of each and all, and the answer to this dilemma is found in the poem of Holy Murshid, called "The Man and the Superman," which is also found in *The Way of Illumination*:

"While man reasons out the happenings of life,

The Superman touches the cause of each cause.

While man looks at the outside of things.

The Superman knows the secret of their nature."

There are many grades and conditions of human beings, and it can be argued that they are right or wrong, according to one's point of view. But from the mystical teaching, until there is actual self-denial expressed in terms of life rather than in terms of thoughts or things, habit will make each see evil reflected outside his being, while the evil within himself man will not be able to see.

In considering the social problem from a spiritual point of view, it becomes clearer in the study of the sixth Sufi Thought which reads: "There is one Brotherhood, the human Brotherhood, which unites the children of earth indiscriminately in the Fatherhood or God." This should teach us that our relation one to another is dependent upon a third fact, the Fatherhood of God. It is parenthood which unites children and it is a Common Source and Common Goal which unites humanity.

The stream of life is as one stream and may be considered as a whole. Human suffering has now entered into this common stream. Never was the whole of humanity so united as now, united in suffering because there was the need of the lesson of unity. What has brought about this condition? It may be answered that it is the natural consequence of so many people thinking in terms of "I-ness" instead of "Thou-ness."

This kind of democracy supposes that there are many independent "I-s." This is a double illusion for it knows not the meaning of independence and knows even less the meaning of "I." What is an "I?" Is it the thinker that thinks one thing today and something also tomorrow? Is it the enjoyer who finds pleasure in this today and in that tomorrow? Is it a mere name?

The more one meditates upon these questions the harder it is to answer them. Appearing simple they become very complex and in the end one does not know what to say. And yet the more one meditates upon these questions, the easier it is to answer them. For when one's inner faculties become awakened, one develops the insight of the sage and ascertains the meaning of will. It may be said that we express I-ness, that is ipseity, insofar as we express will.

When in the political and social order we equate bodies we ignore minds, for certainly some intellects are greater than other intellects. Then one feels a sense of injustice, and this sense sometimes grows deeper as we examine life carefully and often one who starts out as a democrat

in this way may become an aristocrat, considering himself superior to those who think differently or who do not think at all.

This is from man's point of view. A mother may have a dozen children and she may not continually compare and contrast them, loving one more and another less because of various differences. She may not be moved so very much by attributes and qualities and habits in loving her children. Even more equitable is God in His judgments which may be hard for man to understand, for all are His creatures, all of them near and dear to Him and yet all as nothing in His sight.

At the same time there is a moral order and when one develops loving-kindness, one is no longer perplexed by many of the problems of the day. Once the heart of man is open the social problem will cease to vex him, because he will perceive all the injustice round about him. And therefore nothing is more important than the awakening of the heart.

What is the sangha? It was the brotherhood of the awakened souls who were following in the path of Buddha, whose hearts were opened. And what was the communion? It was the brotherhood of those to whom Christ had appeared, whose hearts were opened, and therefore they were said to have been washed in the blood of the lamb; innocence and loving-kindness become their attributes.

So what is more necessary than anything else is this opening of the heart. Then one will understand true democracy and true aristocracy. Not that one will thereby cease to act; rather, one will act with foresight and knowledge and that is the only real action which can avail. Then shall the flowers of the Garden of Allah bloom within man's being, and their radiance shall spread over the earth.

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The more one considers the sixth Sufi Thought: "There is one Brotherhood, the human Brotherhood, which unites the children of earth indiscriminately in the Fatherhood or God," the more will one recognize that every word of it is important. It must be examined word by word and yet it must also be considered along with the other Sufi Thoughts and the general principles of Sufism, all as one.

It states, "There is one Brotherhood, the Human Brotherhood," and one may wonder if there are

not other brotherhoods in the vast creation. No, one could hardly call them brotherhoods. For the nature of the animal is to be an animal and the nature of a plant is to be a plant, and in the good deeds of the angel there is no special merit; he is good because it is his nature.

For instance, the ant is a good worker and the ants know how to cooperate one with another and they always help and share freely, but the ant does not do this of its will. It has no will, only a kind of enlightened instinct. And what does this instinct indicate? It means that the Spirit of Guidance operates through matter, through material forms and through living beings who occupy material bodies. So it can hardly be said that among ants and among gregarious beasts that practice mutual aid, there is a true brotherhood.

When one studies the various insects, one finds some who do live together, in the phenomenon called commensalism. When the ant becomes solitary he does not survive, at least not as ant. Then he would become a wasp. And between themselves, between groups, ants do not show the feeling of brotherhood and may even war one tribe with another.

Neither can it be said that there is a real brotherhood among the angels, for the nature of an angel also is to be an angel. If he is good, it is because it is his nature. His goodness does not carry knowledge with it, and for all his apparent heart qualities he lacks freedom of will. His apparent goodness comes from the light which shines through his being naturally. There is a fraternity among angels only so far as it is the nature of the angel.

If an angel ceases to associate with angels, if he tries to act contrary to the laws of the angels, he ceases to remain an angel. Either he leaves that plane for another plane, or if his action is perverse, contrary to the laws of his place, and contrary to the customs of angels, he becomes a devil. Besides that, there are the Jemal and Jelal types of angels who do not understand each other and while they unite in the cosmic harmony, it can hardly be said that they belong to one brotherhood. Rather may angels be considered as forming several brotherhoods, two or more, consisting of the Jemal type and the Jelal type and those who have returned to the angelic sphere after transmigration to lower planes. So there is not an exact brotherhood among the angels.

Man has a gift from God which the angel has not and the ant has not. That is the will, which is sometimes called the human will. Strictly speaking, there is one Will, which need not be considered as human or divine. It may be said to come from and through the Divine Central Sun which illuminates all creatures. In the human organism it sometimes follows the thought of the self, the nufs, which is created by the mind, and so becomes what is called human will.

Will in man takes three directions: (a) it may follow the nufs as just explained; (b) it may remain dormant, subject to all the vicissitudes of nature; (c) or it may return to the sphere of the heart and be assimilated to the love nature which is its real essence. The first type of man, who believes in free will, may be called a Voluntarian (Kadari); the second is the Fatalist, or Jabari; the third is the true lover of God.

These conditions or states of the will have been called the Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic conditions. The Sattvic state comes when the will and love are one, the Rajasic condition is that of the person who seeks to express his personality or ego, the Tamasic man or woman is the one who never comes to the realization of his human condition.

It is only man who holds within himself these qualities which he can control or which can control him. No doubt the angel is all Sattvic, but he is subject to that quality; likewise the ant can be called Tamasic, which means he is in darkness. For although the ant may lead a good life, he is lacking in nufs or spirit, so his evolution is limited. So one can see that only in the human kingdom is there the basis for brotherhood. All people must eat and sleep, and all have certain common instincts, and latent spiritual possibilities. In this respect the kingdom of Humanity is One, the Brotherhood is One.

Men and women have always been able to live in groups, even in grand kingdoms and empires. At times moral corruption has destroyed these organizations, yet the faculty of coming together and working together has never been destroyed. It is of the very nature of Adam, a quality implanted therein by God Himself. And who was Adam? Adam may be regarded as an individual but really he represents the entire human race, and all people partake of his nature.

It is in man that God can realize Himself and this realization is like a single note of a symphony. The symphony can only be played when all realize the nature of their beings, when all people attain enlightenment. And as the Buddha taught, every person has the potential seed of understanding within himself, which in an instant may blossom into a beautiful lotus.

The spiritual sangha, the most sacred communion, is not based upon beliefs or agreements. It comes out of life itself. Common causes always unite people. Yet there is just one common cause that can unite all of humanity, and that is expressed in the last part of the sixth thought, "which unites the children of earth indiscriminately in the Fatherhood of God."

God many love the sinner even as He loves the saint. The love of the heart and soul for God cannot be compared with anything else, and when this love is pure, one can perceive that Allah holds all within His bosom, and to Him all creatures are dear. The limitation of man's mind alone keeps him from this understanding. In brotherhood, race equality or inequality is of no importance, while attitude is a supreme factor.

A pure social democracy would probably mean quality of opportunity, not of personality. Love of another does not grant either party the right to impose. Spiritual democracy opens the doors for all to greet Allah equally, for all to worship Him, for all to receive His unlimited Grace. It does not mean that the violinist shall rehearse with the woodwind instruments, or that the horn always carry the melody. The concordance of life arises from the action and attitude man holds. This does not mean that one has unlimited right to do as he pleases, go where he desires, or mingle with all people to no purpose.

True spiritual democracy will be attained when people who meet in the mosque or in the market will become more friendly one to another. This natural cultivation of harmony, this free commingling with ability to express oneself naturally, will no doubt bring about many regroupings. But the artists may always desire to associate with the artists, the poets to congregate with the poets, while the scientific people will wish to have their own organizations, and the very nature of atmosphere requires this sort of social crystallization.

According to the Sufi teachings, it is important to rise above the distinctions and differences which divide men, above race, caste, creed, nationality or sex. But this does not mean that every artist must be a mechanic or that every woman become a man. Each has his nature and in the fulfillment of the purpose of life, the cosmic harmony resounds through the spheres.

As God maintains an equitable attitude toward the whole humanity, so the mystic in his inner understanding strives for the same divine attitude. Outer activity in the light of this inner awakening will always be correct, and such action will bear no relation to public opinion. Yet the true moral action of the sage will never antagonize public opinion for long; sooner or later the generality becomes reconciled to proper behavior. The selfish person may be overcome but the real moral agent always emerges victorious because there is the divine spark in all people and sooner or later their feelings will recognize the worth in another.

The more the mental horizon of man is developed, the more the whole of humanity is benefited. If even a few can see across the ocean with the mind's eye, and can pierce the walls of every dwelling with their heart's eye, the brotherhood becomes an established fact. If just one person on earth can do this, that may save the whole of humanity. But the time may come when this feeling will be awakened in every human heart and there will truly be a brotherhood, which will be established of itself, for it comes out of the very nature of man, out of his heart and his inner being.

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,  
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Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Githeka Series XXXII: Number 5

Whence we face the great problems that are disturbing mankind today, one may ask, "How can I help?" And then one may reflect that his own problem is so great, that it is so all absorbing, there does not seem to be any time or energy left wherein to help others, to make any sacrifice for the whole humanity.

The questions as to whether one should help others most or try to solve one's personal problems

can be answered by a careful examination of the ninth Sufi Thought which reads: "There is one Truth, the true knowledge of our being, within and without, which is the essence of all wisdom." And here, too, one must be cautious in interpreting this passage not to overlook a single word, and at the same time to keep in mind the relation of this thought to all the other Sufi Thoughts which form a unity.

It begins: "There is One Truth, the true knowledge of our Being." This looks very simple and it is very simple but the simplicity is not the same simplicity which the average person imparts to it. The simplicity becomes clear when one remembers also the first Sufi Thought: "There is one God, the Eternal, the Only Being; none else exists save He." And the keen minded person would see at once that the ninth thought therefore means: There is one truth, the true knowledge of God.

In Sufi terms, that is to say that Haqq and Ilm are one, that truth is the same as divine knowledge. Thus the knowledge of God is the only Wisdom. And this is further explained by Holy Murshid in the content concerning this ninth thought when he says in *The Way of Illumination*, "It is the knowledge of self which blooms into the knowledge of God." It is this knowledge of God, which explains to one the mystery of being—of being itself, rather than of "my being" or of "your being."

So when we come to the next words, "within and without," it should be kept in mind that only God exists without us and likewise only God exists within our being. This is very important and accounts for the strange action of many mystics in the Orient who do not appear to act like ordinary men. The average man, whatever his intelligence be, considers his personal thoughts and desires as more real and more important than the truth within his being, which he does not always recognize, and also as more important than anything he recognizes as being without his self.

From this point of view there may be no difference between the help one gives to another and the help one gives to oneself. Whatever one may call it, it is not charity when you present a gift or alms to another; it is only charity when the deed springs forth from the heart; in other words, when it accords with the will of God which is resting in the heart. Mere giving, empty gifts without love behind them carry no psychic power and no life and whatever man may call them, they are not gifts in the sight of God. There is not only no merit attached to such deeds, but if they are performed for the sake of gaining merit, they are attached to the nafs. Therefore in the eyes of God there is little difference between the self-appointed saint and the deliberate sinner, for the acts of each are deliberate and most certainly not selfless.

To understand true wisdom and true action one may study the last words of this thought: "which is the essence of all wisdom." In other words, there can be no true action (right action as the Buddha called it) until man learns wisdom. When this is attained, one cannot perform evil, for one is in harmony with God, and whatever man's opinion of such a one, it is only opinion born of mental limitation and has no cosmic value.

So it is the knowledge of our being which brings us to Wisdom. This is more than the knowledge of our body and even of our mind, for the body and mind are not being; the flesh is not life and the

thoughts and desires are not life. But what is this life? And can it be qualified by “our?” No, the life is of God Himself; it is the very God, so one cannot say it is “mine” or “thine” or “our.” This life exists both within and without our apparent selves, and there is no division in it except that which we have made for our convenience.

With this point of view, we shall certainly find the key which will take us out of the maze of today and bring us into the paradise of tomorrow. For when the question of action arises, we must first consider the actions of the mystic, how the Sufi would and should act toward another. When the mystic draws his examples from the average person, there is no God, for God is the first and the last, and it is the mystic’s actions which become the examples for others.

Suppose one comes to you full of troubles and sorrows, are you bound to help? Yes, most certainly you are bound to help. And how are you bound to help? You are bound to help that person as God would help him; if you cannot do that, it is better not to try to help. As soon as you become the average man, as soon as you act like the generality, where is your wisdom and where is your mysticism? And when the mystic does not lead, who can bring another toward the light?

This should teach us that sentimentality and emotionalism are not a part of wisdom, are very different from sympathy, which is born of understanding. If the mystic has anything to give, if there is any help he can bestow, it comes from his heart and goes to another’s heart. In this case he must have something to give and by wise counsel he can impart life and magnetism to another, and so help another help himself.

Does this mean to make people satisfied with their conditions? No, not necessarily. Neither does it mean to keep them dissatisfied; rather it means to teach them the meaning of satisfaction. One difficulty has been that when one in trouble, in sorrow, in despair, in want, comes to another for solace, the counselor may endeavor to soothe them by saying it is wrong to complain, that the world without is not wrong, rather that the person needs to overcome the nufs. Undoubtedly the trouble lies in the nufs, yet it is also true that the outer world is a reflection of the collectivity, the picture of the minds of humanity objectified. It is therefore necessary to understand what should satisfy a person.

The answer is that it is not necessary for a person to be satisfied with anything on earth, with any person, condition or possession. From the mystical point of view it is equally wrong to remain dissatisfied, putting the blame upon others, or upon external conditions. The real trouble in each of these cases, with these two opposite psychological types, is that they are looking for satisfaction where satisfaction does not lie, and where it can never be found, where it does not bring happiness.

Until the soul finds its peace in God, until the soul attains to its true satisfaction, it is going to be dissatisfied in some respect, in some way. It may blame others, it may blame the world, it may blame itself, and while each of these may be justified from certain points of view, they all show that the soul is in darkness, the person has not found his self.



It is not necessary to tell the person who is in revolt that it is wrong to revolt, that the world is all right, and he is all wrong. If you are able, try to show him that even if the evils of the day are eradicated, that might not heal the pain in his heart. It is only the heart that can heal the heart, and in the midst of all else that man undergoes, the healing of the heart does more good than anything else.

The Sufi does not condone wickedness in any institution. From a higher point of view he sees that institutions are man-made, not God-made, and that being man-made they cannot be perfect in all respects. Therefore substituting one set of man-made institutions for another set may remove certain evils, but that is no sign it will not introduce others in their place, and who can say that such a change will bring peace.

Whatever social changes be necessary in the world today, whatever economic readjustments may take place, if the Sufi has any form to recommend he would favor making these changes in the spirit of Moses and Plato and Manu and Zoroaster, in other words, in the spirit of the great law-givers. All these sages sought first to prepare the heart of man, to cultivate his inner charity and to teach him the relation between this inner condition of being and outward circumstances, the dependence of the latter on the former. The mystic does not necessarily advocate any particular form of social order, but to keep his eyes open and his heart awake, this is the important thing.

Until there is communion of the hearts of men, how can humanity be at peace? And what is this communion of heart? As Jesus Christ has taught, it is to partake of the very flesh and blood of another, to feel with them, to love them, to suffer with them, to understand their point of view. So when one considers the true knowledge of being without oneself, outside one's apparent self or ego, it means the knowledge of all humanity.

The allegory that all fall in Adam and all are resurrected in Christ can be explained, that so long as every individual holds he is different from another, that his life is his life, all will continue to suffer. When the realization comes that all humanity is one single brotherhood in the Fatherhood of God, then there is recognition that the life within and the life without is one, and this is the true knowledge of being.

This is the communion of flesh and blood in Christ: this is the Dharma and the Sangha and the Buddha of Sakya Muni. The aim and purpose of creation is that the Creator through His Creatures comes to the knowledge of His Being, within and without, which is the essence of all wisdom—such is the teaching of Sufism which strives to unite all explanations into one.

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Githeka Series XXXII: Number 6

The difference between the true way of life and all the reforms and agitations that are going on in the world can be seen in the study of the seventh Sufi Thought, "There is one Moral Principle, the love which springs forth from self-denial and blooms in deeds of beneficence."

As Holy Murshid explains, there are many words used to describe, express or designate moral qualities, but these are in reality all aspects or derivatives of the true moral nature. As we look upon the world we are apt to say that man is partly good and partly bad, that he does some things right and some things wrong. But when we examine closely the affairs of the world, we shall perceive that among the things which are sometimes called "right," there is often the quality of self-denial, and where there is self-denial, in the end some good is always accomplished.

Yet there is a true self-denial and false self-denial. One does not attain to God's consciousness nor perform God's will by repeating in mind, thought or action, "I am not." If this is done it will destroy all action and seriously interfere with thought and speech. Man was created for the purpose of action, not action for man, and therefore instead of advocating "I am not," the Sufi repeats "Toward the One" whether he be in action or meditation and by this means his speech and thought, his action and breath are God's speech, thought, action and breath. It is by this means that God's Will becomes performed upon earth, blooming in deeds of beneficence.

We find in the world today two classes of people who are striving to control affairs. One of these classes is very much attached to things, material possessions. They want to own and control everything, all earthly goods, wealth and power and position. This process of mind is called ambition and is often regarded as a virtue. These people do not always care much about their fellow humans, concentrating all effort in their apparent self-interest which they place above every other consideration in life.

Then there is another class which believes all this is wrong, that power and possessions and wealth should be distributed, that they belong to the whole of humanity. When these people explain their doctrines, they not only declare that certain changes are necessary, they want to make these changes in a certain way. The result is that they may become intolerant, and bitterly oppose others who may have similar views as well as those with opposing views.

The great mistake with this philosophy which many people call "communism" is that it is not so much communism as materialism. While they would give to man earthly possessions, give him enough to eat and all comforts, they do not see that man also is heart and mind, he is more than stomach and flesh. And they do not give to man even in the mental sphere that ability to express himself fully and freely as they would have him express himself in the physical life.

In some respects these two points of view are reciprocal although they are supposed to stand far

apart politically. However philosophically they bear some resemblance one to the other. One group seems to impose a kind of economic slavery yet is not unwilling to grant a degree of mental and spiritual freedom; the other wants to give social freedom and then make a chain out of it, the very freedom becoming a binding orthodoxy that deprives man of the real freedom of the soul. At the same time we see these forces very bitterly fighting each other, dividing mankind, and if not controlled, liable to bring more bloodshed and horrors to the world.

The solution from the Sufi point of view is spiritual liberty. That is to say, the true sphere of freedom is in the heart. Whatever freedom of action or thought is granted to man, it is of not lasting benefit unless there is a fundamental liberty, something deeper than freedom of thought or action. For liberty is of the soul itself, it does not arise from the vehicles of man, which bind him to a greater or lesser degree.

If some people want to monopolize the world, to extend their legal ownership far and wide, in reality they also become slaves, slaves to these possessions. Yet there is the other group which, while willing to dispense with the material ownership of things, holds on to some dogmas or doctrines. This also makes slaves of men who are then controlled by thought, either the thoughts of themselves or of other people.

These two groups have placed the material condition of man before all other considerations, either explicitly or by implication. This has brought about a double warfare, the one on the material plane, the struggle between those who have and those who have not; the other is on the mental plane, in seeking justification of the exterior action a philosophy is adopted or fabricated which may have no spiritual foundation, may be untrue to life, and may even be in contradiction to the modern sciences. In other words, if there is any spiritual force in society, it is grafted on to it instead of being the fundamental principle.

There are many passages in scriptures which would indicate that great wealth is wrong, and yet there are other passages which explain how prosperity may be maintained. So it may be said that great wealth is wrong and at the same time it is not wrong. It is wrong to possess in a selfish manner while others starve or are in great want. For that reason the spiritual teachers have advocated alms-giving. The idea is that one may maintain wealth, one may not retain it. Just as one is unable to keep it in the future when one has left the plane, so one should not be attached to it even if one lives on this plane for many, many years.

All the sages have advised the sharing of the good things of life between one and another. This means a great ideal more than just giving away material wealth, for purposeless giving, or giving with the idea that one gains merit thereby is little than better than keeping everything for oneself. And the sharing of the good things of life determines what one feels to be the good things of life. If one shares only material things, or material things mostly, one is still under the sway of materialism, one is not helping toward establishing a spiritual society. The things of mind and of spirit also are to be shared with one's fellow-beings. They are not one's possessions, they also come to man through Divine Grace.

Unless one is graced by the spirit of Wisdom, the nature of sharing is not always comprehended. One is not to share one's bread with another or to drink wine with another on condition that the other accepts the philosophical ideas or the religious doctrines of the host. To compel democracy or freedom is to destroy democracy and freedom. There is no self-denial in such cases, there is a self-assertion which is subtle and which strengthens the sway of the nufs.

The story of Jesus Christ driving the money-changers from the temple can be regarded as an allegory. For surely when the Spirit of Guidance comes to life within one's being, there is no longer the attachment to the thought of wealth. It is not so much the temporary possession of wealth that is wrong, as the concentration, which is wrong. No one can love both God and Mammon, no one can have two masters. Therefore Jesus also taught that the meek, those devoid of ego, would inherit the earth, and that the poor in spirit would be blessed by God.

So long as emphasis is upon wealth, whether one considers it to be shared with another, or whether private ownership is stressed, or whether one takes the opposite point of view and wishes, like the ascetic, to flee wealth, in all these instances it is wealth and not God which occupies the person's mind. Under all these conditions God does not function, the nufs functions and to escape these three extremes, the Message brings hope to those who would solve the great questions of the day.

In his beautiful poems which appear in *The Way of Illumination*, Holy Murshid has given suggestions as to how his mureeds should live, what their ideas in life might be, what their morals could be. By this they might become examples to all humankind. He does not say "Do this, do not do that." He sets forth the ideal, and when that ideal is practiced it may become the moral for humanity.

The best suggestion one can make is not to praise the words or works of Holy Murshid too highly. Praise God, that is the proper praise. Besides that when one praises the works of a holy man, and does not practice them, he has already judged himself by that standard. It is not necessary that he live according to the standard of the sages and holy men and saints although this might be a very wise plan.

The Ideal of Sufism is to rise above all names and forms, even the names and forms one loves best until all become amalgamated into the Supreme Love of God. It is like all the rain-drops falling into the Ocean, the supreme love does not destroy their essence but includes them all. For there is only one Being, there is only one knowledge, the knowledge of that Being within and without, and there is only one love, that which springs forth from self-denial. In that we have the key to all salvation and the answer to every puzzle in life.

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Githeka Series XXXII: Number 7

There was probably never a time when a prophet was more needed than today. Many of his mureeds have felt that Holy Murshid was a prophet but there was no wisdom in pointing to him as such and then not taking his words seriously. There is no love to God or man in calling another great or wise, but when one realizes the spirit and essence of the Sufi teachings and sees them reflected in his writings, there may be all love and all wisdom.

The talib on the path to Sufism is not deprived of his liberty. He may certainly read all the newspapers and publications he desires. But when he draws his ideas from such sources, he has already deprived himself of liberty, that liberty which God has given him, that sagacity which Allah has bestowed upon him with the faculties of reason and judgment and intuition. When these are surrendered to other than God, at that moment one is not on the path to God.

For one to practice Zikr and then say, "This one is right, that one is great, where is Zikr?" The fulfillment of Zikr is to keep before oneself at all times, as in Darood, that naught exists except God. One does not need to condemn the generality, but one certainly should not follow the leaders of the day blindly, especially when a much higher guidance has been given. Trust is to be placed in God, not in the princes of the world; this was the teaching of the Bible from the earliest times.

For some of the most advanced teachings in Sufism we can always return to the elementary books. This is the method of the wise who hid their jewels, not in far away secreted places, but in the midst of humanity where they would be less likely sought. In section 7, part III of *The Way of Illumination*, called Nufsaniat, Holy Murshid explains the cause of the evil conditions in the world. It would be well for everyone, mureed as well as non-mureed, to understand the teaching he has given there.

Nufsaniat means the sway or control of affairs by the nufs. In describing it he says: "It is this aspect of evolution which has brought about floods, volcanic eruptions, and such disasters as the loss of the Titanic, and the recent upheaval of society." We are not compelled to accept his words blindly, but as mureeds we should weigh them well against all the philosophies of the day, and then if they can be substantiated by our spiritual understanding they become pearls of wisdom.

But there is another way in which to read this article, and that is, instead of looking at it as something which refers only to the past, to view it as something describing the present and future. For certainly the present condition of the world is worse than it was a few years ago when *The Way of Illumination* was written, and there is some evidence that it might become still worse.

Consider the words: "At the present time, a man's word is no longer his bond, a signed contract is

needed. A superficial politeness has taken the place of love, and artificiality has taken the place of truth. Machinery has usurped the place of personal bravery. Religion and moral have been superseded by trade unions. Material investigation has taken the place of life's realization."

When we read the daily papers, we find that some of those things which Holy Murshid has witnessed as evils are the very institutions which are praised, which are being lauded. And when we turn to the next section in *The Way of Illumination* entitled The Birth of the New Era (8), we have our warning. We have our warning and we should thank God for it. We cannot say that He has permitted us to walk in blindness. Due consideration to these words is of highest value, and we reverence Holy Murshid as prophet not by calling him by this or any other title, but by bowing before his every word.

He begins this section 8 as a climatic reaction to the former section, Nufsaniat, by saying: "Whether the new era will be better or worse is plain enough, for when the worst has happened there cannot be anything beyond that. The worst condition ends the cycle, and the new cycle must necessarily begin better." He does not state that the worst has happened, but tells us that the worst must happen before better conditions appear. Today it appears that the worst has not yet happened; we are still in Nufsaniat.

When we recall the holy tradition, "When Dharma decays, I come," we see how important was the mission and the message of Inayat Khan. He concludes his allegory concerning the spirit of prophecy, contained in *The Way of Illumination*: "But, in spite of all their resistance and the suffering caused to him, he guided the children of his father, as many as he could, until the name of his father was again glorified and his brothers were guided, directly or indirectly, through the puzzles of the world and the secrets of the Heavens."

This in itself is a prophecy of supreme importance. When all the world is suffering, when so many people are lost in darkness and despair, the light of truth is shining and calling upon us to glorify the Name of God, so that His Light will be reflected in our beings and we shall know how to act within the maze of approaching troubles.

We read further in section 8: "In whichever direction we look, the prosperity of commerce, the great progress of education, of art, of science, we can still see the demoralization of the world, bringing to an end the ideal of friendship and relationship." This should warn us that neither in the commercial sphere, nor in the schools, nor arts nor sciences shall we find the way out. They themselves are of no value, unless we seek first the kingdom of God. They are dragging us lower and lower, and while people are shouting, "Lo here!" and "Lo there!," there is no help, there is no solace, there is no succor.

No wonder there is a growth of Messianism within the world, so many looking for the approach of a Christ or a Buddha or a Mahdi. But the Christ and Buddha and Mahdi that has been prophesied in the traditions was not a man who would come and save us vicariously; it means that the spiritual rebirth in man, the awakening to the call of the spirit of guidance will save him.

One need not condemn the many individuals who are walking the earth with this claim, nor the many who will arise, but one certainly should be warned not to follow them. There are the spiritual schools of the past which continue the true teachings, and as Holy Murshid has said, the very purpose of the Message is to bring together all those sacred traditions which have come originally from the Hebrew and Hindu sources. So the second Sufi Thought reads: "There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads his followers towards the light." In the explanation of this thought the last word has been said, for who can improve the words and explanations!

Holy Murshid continues: "In the progress of education the knowledge of the soul's purpose, the only thing worthwhile in life is overlooked. Education qualifies man to become selfish to the best of his ability, and to get the best of another." This ideal is diametrically opposed to the spiritual ideal. We need not be angry about it, but through the awakening of our understanding we can help to destroy the existing evils more than by any other method.

The power of thought is enormous, and it is infinitely increased when operating in harmony with the will of God; that is to say, when directed by the heart-sprung intuitions. Calmly and quietly, yet with full determination one may achieve any purpose, reach any goal. And it is very interesting to observe Mahatma Gandhi; even his enemies find him interesting. Whatever our opinions be, we can see that there are other methods for attaining an ideal than by fighting and struggling on the outer plane.

The Sufi is not so much interested in the outer struggle as in the inner struggle. This is because his insight sees into the world of causes, of which the physical phenomena are mainly the effects. Political changes which substitute one group of selfish men for another can only eradicate minor evils. They leave us still in the condition of Nufsaniat. So Murshid says; "Those who are under the spell of destruction are unaware of all this, they cannot know it until the clouds of gloom have dispersed, their hearts are clear, and their minds have recovered from this intoxication which prevents them from thinking and understanding."

From this we see that it is not the machine which causes good or evil, but the sway of the nufs over the machine which does so much harm. It is not education of itself which is good or evil, but the sway of the nufs over education which increases the trouble. If there is anything that we can accomplish it is to weaken the sway of the nufs and extend the sway of Allah, by following the spirit of Guidance until the Name of our Father is again glorified and all humanity guided, directly or indirectly, through the puzzles of the world and the secrets of the Heavens.

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Githeka Series XXXII: Number 8

It was Jesus Christ who told his first disciples that after him would come the comforter. There has always been much discussion whether this meant he would appear to them in the flesh or out of the flesh, whether some divine being would appear to them, whether this meant that his successors would have all power and ability to lead them, or whether another great soul would be born on earth. This has resulted in considerable confusion, people arguing over the various possible interpretations of the words despite the often repeated command not to argue upon religious matters. So the spirit of unity has disappeared from earth.

If Holy Murshid had a mission, it was to attempt to restore this spirit of unity, to deliver the message of unity. Yet a very similar condition has taken place, and many souls have not been comforted, many seem to be in a worse condition today. This may seem surprising because he has left words to comfort those who believe in them. Strictly speaking no one has to believe in them for Sufism is not a system of beliefs. Sufism is the whole hearted love for God. At the same time it may be said of Holy Murshid as of Jesus that if we love him we should keep his commandments. This will help us to turn his words into prophecies and will assist in bringing his prophecies to pass on the earth sphere.

So in studying his predictions concerning "The Birth of the New Era," we read: "The races in the coming era will mix more and more every day, developing finally into a worldwide race." Although this may not seem a very comfortable prophecy to some, there have been worldwide races before. The evil in race has been the great thought we have put into it. All people may mingle in the mosque, and in Russia and South America we find all the ethnical groups commingling in society and even marriage.

No doubt every race has a purpose and mission. Sufism does not say, "Intermarry," Sufism says that the purpose of the race is to achieve part of God's plan; it should be a tool of God. When it becomes a special division of humanity, desiring to remain exclusive, that shows the sign of the nufs, that shows that the people are still in Nufsaniat. Wherever value is placed in any thought or any name or any form save God, that belongs to the sphere of the nufs.

"The nations will develop a democratic spirit, and will overthrow every element which embitters them against one another. There will be alliances of nations until there is a world-alliance of nations, so that no nation may be oppressed by another, but all work in harmony and freedom for the common peace." This passage is of very great importance. It requires much meditation rather than explanation. What we call "patriotism" will lose much of its present day value, and in its stead will come a new patriotism in which people will glorify God instead of their thought-forms.

"Science will probe the secrets of the life unseen, and art will follow nature closely." This gives the idea of the transmutations of the gunas, the qualities, so each can become spiritualized. For the awakening of the inner man does not destroy the nufs, but purifies and transforms it so that the nufs ammara and nufs mutmaina, which correspond respectively to the tamasic ego and the rajasic



ego, may be transmuted into the nufs salima, the soul at peace, which constitutes the true Islam.

For instance the one who has followed nature, who may have been a fatalist or a philosophical determinist, may continue to learn from nature. From nature one learns about beauty, one does not learn truth necessarily. This beauty can uplift the heart of the worshipper and what is today called Art will blossom into a marvelous life, full of color and music and dancing and ceremonies. It was the Greeks who developed this aspect of life most and you can still see a little of it in certain parts of the Orient. Among the Negro race there is a great possibility for growth in this direction, for a fuller expression which will be of unlimited value both to the individual and to the collectivity.

No doubt the European who is a democrat, a believer in free will, may develop in another direction. Among the members of the Aryan race there is the scientific spirit and already this spirit is seeking beyond the limits of sensual vibrations and has struck deeply into the recesses of the mind. The transmutation of these faculties will come when man recognizes more the intuitive faculty, which is basic. This will help the race and Science will become a positive road to God, incorporating much of what is now considered occult or even mystical.

“The people of all classes will draw nearer to one another and a spirit of equality will be seen everywhere. The caste system will vanish and communities will lose their exclusiveness, all mingling together into one human brotherhood.” Here is the great opportunity for those on the path to God, first to convince each one for himself, the truth of this statement and its value as a prophecy. This idea is more fundamental than socialism or democracy or aristocracy. Like all spiritual doctrines, it is stated in principle, leaving man free to decide how this principle should operate in the material world. To deny this principle is really to deny the active aspect of God.

It seems strange that while the world calls God “He,” and many do not see any feminine aspect of Divinity such as is symbolized by Lakshmi and Sarasvati, yet God is not always regarded as an active personality. He seems almost asleep or else watching the affairs of the world by staying afar off in the Heavens, not showing very much concern for mankind. Yet this very philosophy, if consistent and true, ought to regard God in the female aspect rather than in the male, for when He is viewed as inactive, as merely passive, that is to see His female aspect overshadow His creative nature.

An active God is always active, will always be active. God is not a nufs. He is the Supreme Spirit which is anywhere and everywhere. It may be said that He does not monopolize action, yet it is also true that He is the only Actor. The very purpose of creation was that God perfect an instrument through which to act and that instrumentality became perfected in man. So it is in man's hands how to materialize the principle of spiritual equality in the social, economic and religious spheres.

“The religions will draw closer together, and their followers will be tolerant to one another. The followers of one religion will be able to offer their prayer in the prayer of another, until the essential truth will become the religion of the world of humanity, when diversity of religion will be no more.” We can see signs of this already, for there have appeared several organizations, even since Holy

Murshid's departure, which are bringing together the religions of the world. They may be working for a common ideal, or exchanging ideas, or studying each other's doctrines. All of these are great steps forward, indicating that the antagonism of the various sects and faiths will gradually disappear.

"Education will culminate in the study of human life, and learning will develop on that basis." This is very important. The attitude of today is to look without, yet while looking without, present day education does not always prepare the child or the adult for the practical life of the world.

Children are taught through precept rather than through example. From both the moral and mental standpoints, while humanity has advanced in certain directions, in other directions there have been retrogressions.

Viewed from the spiritual aspect it is almost a sin to teach a moral precept that one has not expressed through one's being. The way to teach kindness is to be kind and the way to illustrate honor is to be honorable. Ethics is not a science to be taught out of books, it is something to be lived every day and every hour. There can be no positive morality until man realizes: "There is one Moral Principle, the love which springs forth from self-denial and blooms in deeds of beneficence."

Similarly more attention must be paid to both heart and mind, and something learned of the metaphysical constitution of the child as well as his physical being. Rudolph Steiner has presented this idea and some of the seeds which have scattered have born good fruit; Murshid left with us many valuable instructions in this regard also. Some of the ancient Greeks had excellent systems of education which gave the child proper moral and mental culture and at the same time developed his love for beauty and also prepared him for the everyday life in the world. Surely what has been done successfully in the past can be repeated by the enlightened humanity of the future.

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,  
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Githeka Series XXXII: Number 9

It may be of some benefit to continue our study of Holy Murshid's prophecy, "The Birth of the New Era," in order that we may better understand the changes that are taking place and that are about to take place on earth. It is possible for one to accept all these portents on faith, trusting with one's heart that they are true, or else one may meditate upon them to grasp their spirit and to ponder upon the meaning.

This section continues: "Trade will become more universal, and will be arranged on the basis of a common profit." While a Sufi as such need not openly advocate freedom of trade, it seems rather difficult to reconcile the idea of a high tariff wall with world brotherhood. Sometimes there seems to be the economic justification for a protective policy, yet it often tends to create feelings of bitterness, rivalry and retribution.

From the spiritual point of view, the wrong in the high tariff is that it accentuates the nufs of the country; it builds up boundary lines, it emphasizes separateness, it works contrary to world unity and world peace. Looking at the whole world as belonging properly to God and not to man, there does not seem to be much justification for it. It is always a karmic measure, dividing men and women by artificial lines, and so long as this continues, there is Nufsaniat, and misery will persist.

In the past prophets have condemned usury and other economic activities, so it is not entirely out of place to denounce the high tariff in the interest of spiritual unity. While some commercial organizations have felt they needed it, it has also been condemned by the economists of many different schools. No matter how divergent their views on other subjects, on this point they agreed, and in restricting trade we not only restrict the movement of goods, we restrict man's outlook.

If there is something which comes close to the spirit of religion in bringing people together, it is the transportation of goods and the traveling of tourists and students. In these ways races and nations become better acquainted with each other. It can almost be said that unless nations are willing to share their wealth, they may have to share their poverty. If they are going to restrict the movement of merchandise, let it be known they cannot restrict disease and earthquakes and storm-clouds and droughts by any artificial measures. If the brotherhood of man will not come through common sharing and a fraternal spirit, it may have to come through common suffering, signs of which we see even now.

"Labor will stand side by side with capital on an equal footing." Nowhere has there been so much misunderstanding as on this question. We see either the accumulation of capital in the hands of a few, or else revolt against this system to the extent of abandoning the idea of capital investment. Both of these viewpoints have a certain justification, but both are wrong when they regard man's material welfare as the supreme thing in life.

Labor is the creation of God in His active aspect, the purusha or energy. In this respect God is the Creator or Supreme Laborer. But capital and land are also God in the opposite aspect, the prakrit (Nature, prakriti), which is the creation. This is the feminine part of the Divine Personality. One can not say that one aspect of God is greater than another aspect of God. This gives the idea of Capital and Labor.

The idea of the cooperation of these forces in the past has not been the cooperation of equals. It is possible that every man may possess both capital and labor-power even as God does, so we may find them associated in the individual or in the collectivity in the future, whether ownership be regarded as public or private, individual or collective.

Freedom is more important than ownership. In ownership there is always the danger of attachment until man becomes the mental slave of that which he claims to own physically and legally, and this condition deters his spiritual progress. If society is to be modified, this will only be done successfully on a spiritual basis. So far as Labor represents the human personality, men and women deserve every consideration. There is even less cause to permit on any occasion the starvation of men and women than there is for war. It is war; in the eyes of God it is just as much a murder to starve people to death as to shoot them. In starving human beings, God is being starved, there is no opportunity for the divine energy within man to express itself. The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and should be regarded accordingly.

Yet man is not an animal. He has a purpose and in the fulfillment of that purpose economic Capital will be employed. This may not mean Capital in the exact sense we use it today. Rather does it mean that the materials of the world in land or machinery or produce or stored or coined wealth will be used for the benefit of all humanity—not wasted, but actually used.

“Titles will have little importance. Signs of honor will become conspicuous.” Because the nufs ammara is to be transmuted, the artificial customs which uplift the ego will be rooted out and the true personality will express itself. Praise to God and honor to mankind will follow in the natural course of things.

But in this and in the other prophecies there is a double meaning. That is to say, Holy Murshid is foretelling what will probably occur on earth because such is the condition already in Malakut. The divine concentration has already projected that condition there. For the social organization of Djabrut is according to God’s plan, while the society of Malakut represents a mixed condition, a combination of conditions and is subject to all manner of variety and presents different ideas simultaneously, so to speak, although the meaning of time and space is different there. Yet what will be on earth may be the present or even the past, or rather passing condition on Malakut. So if we do not see these prophecies fulfilled on earth, individually we may see them sometime in our future progressions.

“Bigotry in faiths and beliefs will become obsolete. Ritual and ceremony will become ‘Play.’” As Sufis we naturally feel that the bias of faiths and beliefs will disappear. There are many signs of this evident in the reforms now being made within various church groups and in the broad spiritual outlook of many scientists, philosophers and poets. But while there may be a gradual subsidence of orthodox religion, nevertheless many of the rites and ceremonies will be preserved because of their great occult and psychic value. Especially the Christian mass and the religious and dramatic ceremonials of the Orient will be preserved.

There is even some indication that the ancient ceremonies and mysteries will be restored at such places as Delphi and Eleusis in Greece and perhaps elsewhere. This will restore the cult of beauty. Music and the dance will harmonize with religion and merge into it. Then after several generations we may see some of the dramatic elements which were originally derived by the theater from the church restored to religion.

The Sufis especially have regarded music and dancing as spiritual aids. The principles of music are becoming known to more people. While tourists have been attending Zikr performances in the near East because of pleasure or curiosity, they will learn its true value and their pleasure will turn to devotion and admiration. All this will help the humanity of the future.

“Woman will every day become freer in all aspects of life. Married women will be called by their own name.” This doctrine has been explained in *The Book of Social Direction* and elsewhere. But the freedom of woman will not mean her freedom to become a man or a neuter. This is the tragedy of the day, that freedom is interpreted to mean to be what in a essence you are not and cannot be. As a result we witness the scenes of St. Paul's time repeated—lust and lasciviousness passing on to perversion.

Women have a great mission in the world as Nicholas Roerich and others are indicating. There are spiritual faculties which mankind had in the past and there is some likelihood that these gifts will be bestowed upon women in the future. They will play the leading parts in education of every sort and in the mysteries. The healers will be women in many instances. The hand of the male is made more for physical purposes or for the performance of mental acts, but the hand of woman can better coordinate with her heart. So we shall see many perform the duty of Shifayat within the Sufi Order, and without it, many women will be taking up the healing profession.

It is also probable that women will function as priestesses, as sybils, as oracles, performing again those spiritual functions which prevailed among the many ancient races. All this will mean a real new day for the women, and for the women as women. So there is no need for them to try to be men, although that does not mean they should be prohibited from taking their place at the side of men as co-workers in many activities.

Viewing God as the Actor, it is the male or lingam aspect which contains the creative force; it is the female or yoni aspect which will bring most inspiration for healing, comforting, beautifying and helping in life. The problem of sex, psychical as well as physical and mental will all be solved when God is placed first.

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Githeka Series XXXII: Number 10

That the social order of the future take a particular form need not concern us too much. That it be organized in a certain spirit does matter and we can already see some of Holy Murshid's

predictions being fulfilled especially in Palestine at this day. Thus he says, "The sons and daughters will be called by the name of their town, city or nation, instead of the family." We can witness the growth of communities in several countries, where it is no longer important to consider the family ties as the unit of society. It is to be hoped that all these changes may lead to the establishment of a real spiritual social order, wherein the statutes of the great law-givers God has sent into this world may be adopted as the fundamental laws of society.

"No work will be considered menial. No position in life will be humiliating." Jesus Christ has said, "Let him who would be the greatest among you be your servant." Apparently few have followed their master in this course. No wonder when Mohammed came and saw that people were not living according to the commandments of Moses and Jesus and the Jewish prophets that he softened the law, bringing a more rational if apparently less noble ethical code.

The result has been that Mohammed has been obeyed and within the precincts of the mosque a spiritual democracy has been fairly well preserved to this day. In the coming generation this spirit will gradually extend into all human affairs. When faculties will be considered more than action or accomplishment, when one may be permitted to work at any occupation for his sustenance or for his health, persons will be judged according to their moral behavior, not according to their material circumstances. So, as Holy Murshid continues, "Everybody will mind his own business, and will converse with one another without demanding introductions."

Very many may feel this way now, but custom, habit or fear often prevent them from acting accordingly. If we conceive the life in the angelic sphere, we may feel that the angels do mingle on such a basis. Whether man was created a little lower than the angels or is destined to evolve considerably higher than the angelic condition, if God's will is to be accomplished upon earth, surely there will be a harmony of feeling among His creatures commensurate with their state of being.

"The husband and wife will be as companions, independent and detached. The children will follow their own bent." We can see signs of this in Palestine today as well as in some other countries. Recognizing the divine life in all creatures, who can be called the master of another? The controller of another's destinies? From this point of view it should be realized and recognized that man and woman are both entitled to the fullest degree of freedom consistent with moral well-being and universal happiness. Sex has its physical, its psychic and its social function, but it is wrong to demand of it what it cannot give. There is a purpose in the sex function as in any other function or faculty and when rightly used it can be the source of the greatest good.

Likewise as every child is the child of God, its development is God's development. The instructions for the child have been suggested in Murshid's works. When one studies them one feels that he is prophecying as well as teaching what might be done in the education and care of the young.

"Servant and master will be so only during the time of work." This has been true in some monasteries and in some of the artistic occupations, but the spirit has not penetrated through

society. Even if human beings are potentially equal in certain respects, age and experience have their values and to place the old and young on an equal basis in some things would be foolish. Faculties are not the properties of human beings, but are gifts bestowed upon man by a benign Deity.

The sin of Cain referred to in the Bible was that he regarded as personal possessions those faculties and endowments which God had passed on to him. Within the Sufi Order we see the inequality of teacher and pupil and the different grades of mureeds in their studies, devotions and practices, but this graduation need not be carried on outside the spiritual duties. Excepting for the respect due the more advanced souls, the spirit of freedom and due consideration of one another as God's children is all-important.

"Medicine will take away the need of surgery. Healing will take the place of medicine." Through the ages some knowledge has been preserved of healing herbs and roots and plants in different parts of the world. There is a life-force in the plant which can heal wounds and cure fevers and diseases. This is because of the magnetic influence, for in this, the plant is polarized differently from the animal and human tissues, making it possible to use the elements of the vegetable kingdom to draw out fever and pain and poison from suffering bodies.

Many medicaments are the natural products of earth and it is not unspiritual to use them; it may be as high or even a higher process than partaking of food. Animals as well as man know the use of food, and many of them instinctively know something of the herbs which heal naturally. There is no reason why man should not learn about vegetable balms and use them for many purposes.

Yet the future may also see an increase in the healing power especially among women. When people resume a more natural life there will be an increase in magnetic powers. Living closer to the earth, establishing rhythms in daily life, not rushing to and fro in industry at such a fierce rate, and returning to spiritual pursuits, the whole race will evolve. No doubt there will be more of mental magnetism in the man and more of moral magnetism in woman. Each will thus find new fields of endeavor and the human spirit will blossom in many new ways.

Thus Holy Murshid continues: "New ways of life will come to manifestation." This means the departure of many institutions of the present day. He then says: "Hotel life will predominate over home life." This is also coming to pass in many countries. The old home ideal has served its purpose and is disappearing. It cannot be expected to achieve the impossible. Family life has been greatly marred since the last war and the industrial changes are making practically impossible attempts to restore old conditions.

Nor is such restitution necessary. As students on the Path we may become more and more aware that no human institution is permanent. The one thing that matters is the fulfillment of God's purpose. Is it fulfilled on the stock exchange? In the bank? In the sweat shop? One might say that wherever Love, Harmony and Beauty are absent, Life is absent. Many evil institutions may disappear of themselves, but others may go only after a struggle.

If we must face an outer struggle, let us prepare for it by first completing our inner struggle, setting our eyes on the future for the fulfillment of those conditions desirable for the manifestation of God's purpose. For thus does Holy Murshid conclude: "Grudges about relatives, complaints about servants, finding fault with the neighbors will all cease to exist, and the world will continue to improve in all aspects of life until the day of Kayamat, when all vain talk will cease, but everywhere will be heard the cry, 'Peace, peace.'"

Will such come to pass on earth? That is not our concern. Our duty is to work for the cause of God. We may even consider these prophecies of Holy Murshid not as some kind of fortune telling but as directions for the future and as spiritual heritages for his disciples. If we cannot work outwardly for their coming, we can resign inwardly, reconciling our hearts to the changes which are at hand.

Call it socialism, communism, industrialism, it does not matter. Call it the day of the New Jerusalem, there will be some truth to it. Our leaders have been too much concerned with the production of better commodities and too little concerned with the preparation for better human beings. Man's work is man—not machinery, commodities, luxuries, comforts. These things are not forbidden him, especially when they beautify his inner or outer life. Nothing is absolutely forbidden when the nufs has been properly restrained.

It is not asceticism which is desirable nor poverty which is the ideal; neither is the accumulation of wealth the soul's ambition, but that man walk on a new path, a true path, the path to God, praising Him, glorifying Him, worshipping Him, and being assured that He will care for their every need both in the herenow and in the hereafter.

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In *The Way of Illumination* the conditions of Bayat are discussed and it says "that from the hour of initiation, one is the brother of ... all knowers of truth, whether they call themselves Sufis or not...." It is in this respect that the Sufis differ from other esoteric schools in that the Sufi recognizes as a brother any spiritual aspirant, any realized soul, no matter what his training or the name of his path, while other schools, even though some may recognize the Sufis, do not always recognize each other.

It is this broad spirit which led to the founding of the Church of Universal Worship and the writing of *The Unity of Religious Ideals*. For now is a period of intense suffering, and it is possible that this



may lead to a great awakening, for pain opens the way to inspiration more than anything else. Some will no doubt find God in their own religion, others may find salvation in another way, and it is quite possible that each will think his way of delivery unique, not knowing that there are many paths which lead to God-consciousness.

The second Surf Thought reads: "There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads his followers towards the light." Just as light is the source of many physical colors, which spring from the universal white light and return to it, so the inner light also breaks up into fragments, but are all part of the one light.

Especially in America we see many persons claiming spiritual liberation. Some of these persons preach that a particular religion or cult is the proper way, while others say their message is unique, perhaps unlike anything in the past. Others again hold to a particular mystical or esoteric tradition. When one comes and says his teaching is unique the Sufi need have no traffic with him. God only is unique, not even the Message is unique which may come in many forms, for "There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls."

If one comes to your doors and it would appear from inner and outer signs that he is an illuminated soul, and he is accepted as an illuminated soul, whether a Sufi or non-Sufi, it is well to keep harmony with him, and for the sake of peace, appear to agree with him. This is the teaching of Holy Murshid both in *The Confessions of Inayat Khan* and *The Way of Illumination*. This is also the idea in Khatum. Before one who is not a mystic, one may have to hold one's heart firm, but before a mystic of another school, one acts as a brother and does not try to explain to the other any error in the presentation of his views, knowing he is speaking in accordance with his spiritual evolution.

If one should meet a mureed who is not of our school, there may not be much difficulty in coming to full agreement. There is enough of the eastern terminology in the teachings of Holy Murshid to reconcile the travelers from the East and West. This is fairly evident from the reading of such books as *Letters of a Sufi Teacher*, *Islam*, etc. Besides that, the spirit to harmonize would be so strong that when both parties are sincere there would be no value in quibbling. Certainly if the stranger were of advanced spirituality, even the inner processes would bring you together into full harmonious agreement.

But with the mystics of other schools there is a puzzle. For the Hindus and Buddhists do not always recognize each other and probably neither recognizes the Jewish esotericism at all. A Christian or Jewish mystic, even a great lover of God, may see nothing in the teachings of the further Orient, and a follower of Zoroaster, though he attain the highest heaven, may not see face to face with the illuminated souls of other schools.

Of course our problem would be how to reconcile such a one with Sufism and for this there are two methods. The highest and best way would be to pray unceasingly for his inner enlightenment, trusting that God would show to such a soul the universal teachings of Sufism. It is always possible that this person might come to the full realization, finding the Spirit of Guidance behind many

names and many forms, at the foundation of all religions. No matter how zealous a devotee has been, there is always the probability and possibility that his inner eye may open and that he will see Buddha with Moses, Rama with Jesus, Krishna with Zoroaster, Shiva with Mohammed. When that experience comes, there is no further problem.

Yet there is such a thing as being blind with zeal as being darkened by the light itself. One may love God with an intense fervor and yet see Him in one name instead of in many names. From a certain point of view this is fine and noble, for this marked concentration raises one above the limitations of this world. But that is only one half of the spiritual purpose of life, to receive the teachings and Divine realization—by this alone one does not give the teachings to an unreceptive world.

Pure mysticism cannot be divided by calling it by the name of some particular religion. When a seer says he is a Christian or Buddhist or Hebrew and speaks before the world in these days, even the atheist may dispute with him, saying he divides man from man. Such a one is appealing to a limited number, and even when he appears to have the highest knowledge, to the ignorant he is not free from prejudice and tradition. So the atheist could successfully dispute with him and he would meet with many difficulties that the Sufi would not have to endure.

The very nature of the problem of the day, the commercial and political growth of the world, and the evolution of modern science call for a cosmic religion, a universal deity, a Lord Who is Lord of All, Who cannot be limited to One Name or to one group of Attributes. This is the very problem of the day, the problem to which Sufism has come as an answer, the secret behind the Mohammed of Blessed Syed Moudani to Holy Murshid, to come and unite East and West.

The mystic who feels he has a particular mission has a hard struggle before him because he does not realize that God wishes the Message to be universal. We may always help such persons when we can show them that they divide God from God. They cannot know God in His fullness until they recognize Him in every name and in every form. To call God omnipresent and then limit Him to a particular group is to deny His Omnipresence. Use of a word means little, it is the thought and feeling behind it which count. If God is within every soul, He is within every human soul and therefore He must have revealed Himself or sent His Divine Wisdom to all peoples at some time or other in the long ages that mankind has dwelt upon earth.

In discussing the second Sufi Thought, Holy Murshid says; “Those who saw the person and knew Him recognized Him in whatever form or guise; those who could only see the coat, went astray. To the Sufi, therefore, there is only one teacher, however differently he may be named at different periods of history, and He comes constantly to awaken humanity from the slumber of this life of illusion, and to guide man onwards towards divine perfection. As the Sufi progresses in this view, he recognizes His Master, not only in the Holy ones, but in the wise, in the foolish, in the saint and in the sinner, and has never allowed the Master Who is One alone, and the only One Who can be and Who ever will be, to disappear from his sight.”

In the practice of Darood one concentrates for union with all the illuminated souls. This means one must not argue with an advanced soul of any particular religion. But that does not mean one may consent to follow that one on his unique path. Sufism includes all paths, all roads and is not concerned with the road but with the Goal. When the path is emphasized, then the concentration is not upon the Goal for one cannot concentrate on two things—either one concentrates with all one's heart and all one's soul and all one's mind on the Goal or one puts all one's fervor in the path.

This latter way of reaching God-Consciousness may be very good; it has been an excellent method by which many souls have come to divine realization. But this is not the way of Sufism which tries to view life not only as the devotee sees it, but as God Himself sees it. The philosophy of Sufism is more than the love of God, it is the idea that the lover becomes and really is non-existent in the Beloved, having no life except the Beloved. So he tries to see all things through the heart of his Beloved.

And God being the Father-Mother of all souls, all people are dear to Him, all faiths are near to Him and in holding to this supreme relationship there is a strength which can overcome all other strengths, a faith which can overcome all other faiths, a hope which can overcome all other hopes.

The Sufi Message, the answer to all the problems of the day, will succeed with God's help to overcome and unite all the separate Messages, not only to bring mankind back to God, but to harmonize all those who have an inkling of the higher evolution from every race, religion and philosophy to rejoice that there are many doors open to the sacred teachings. And in this all the paths will come together amalgamating the teachings of the Common Universal Source, and Common Universal Goal.

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There are two values in every spiritual lesson: the value for the moment and the value for all time which arises out of the truth in the principle which may be hidden in the lesson. From one point of view any spiritual teaching is comparable to advising: "Use an umbrella." This is very good advice if it is raining. Therefore the teaching cannot be separated from the problem at hand, although the mind may often try to see them as separate.

Sometimes one looks for logical consistency in spiritual admonitions, but if one were to say: "Do not eat between meals," one might find such a phrase consistent or inconsistent according to

one's habits. For every meal is between two other meals and the custom in France, Germany, America, India and Siam are all different from each other, and accordingly as one understands the terms eat and meal, one would find his or her particular meaning. This is because of the activity of mind. When the mind covers the intuitional faculty it becomes difficult to apply spiritual solutions to the problems and perplexities of everyday life. So it is with the use of an umbrella, which is suitable or not according to the condition of weather and the season.

The fourth Sufi Thought reads: "There is one Religion, the unswerving progress in the right direction toward the ideal, which fulfils the life's purpose of every soul." This is a very interesting phrase because it is just as true in the Hindu religion as in the Christian religion, just as much a part of Buddha's teaching as that of Moses or Mohammed. The followers of these masters have often regarded the teaching of each as unique, attaching a name to pure truth which ceases to be truth the moment it has such a name.

The great difference between the Sufi and non-Sufi devotee can sometimes be summed up in the words Holy Murshid has used in *The Bowl of Saki* (November 19); "Narrowness is not necessarily devotion, but often appears so." Yet the way to oppose this narrowness is by being broad oneself, by enlarging one's own horizons. A devotee can know his path is the path to salvation, but he cannot positively know that the path where he has never walked will not lead to the same goal. He has not gone there, he cannot know.

The mistake of certain devout souls is that they confuse what is not knowledge with knowledge. Knowledge is the experience of life, which must be something real, something positive. It cannot be a negation; a negation cannot tell you something. In Zikr one never uses the negative portion (La Illaha) except along with the positive portion (El Allahu). But one may use the positive portion without the negative part, for it is the positive part of Zikr which brings the real knowledge, which is truth, which is reality.

There are still six great religions today which lead toward the truth, and there are philosophies from the past and perhaps some new movements also which lead toward God, toward a salvation, toward spiritual liberty. Each one of these is good but fails when it ceases to be all inclusive. That is to say, if one says: "Buddhism has the whole truth," the Sufi nods his head in assent, but if one says: "All other religions are false," the Sufi might reply: "What do you mean by other religions? What do mean by false?"

The Buddha did not disclaim the ancient Hindu religion. What he did disclaim was the supposition that the Vedas or certain practices and ceremonies and beliefs contained the truth and would take one to Nirvana, when in actual experience this did not turn out to be so. He did not oppose the Vedas as such, or Brahmanism, but he refuted the false claims of those who had assumed cosmic realization when they did not have it. And the Sufi never opposes the positive assertion of anyone, but when they claim that which they do not know, have never experienced, then the Sufi acts according to his wisdom and insight.

The real Lover of God will see His Face everywhere, and would therefore be incapable of a negative statement. The only thing false to him would be a negative statement. The supreme lover rises above even the assertion of "I am not;" he can only say: "thou." All else is beyond him, he has passed it by. One might paraphrase the four serbabs of Zikr so: (1) Naught also exists but Thou exists; (2) Thou alone exists; (3) Thou exists; (4) Thou. While this is not a translation, it gives the spiritual idea which occupies the lover's heart in the performance of Zikr.

The Sufi therefore asserts God and agrees with those who assert God. He cannot agree when they deny, he cannot disagree when they affirm. This may make him appear logically inconsistent to some but a moment's thought will show that he is the only logical person. For the logic of positives is not the same as the logic of negatives and the reason which one applies to finite things cannot be applied to the Infinite.

Therefore it is possible that every mystic may be in some respects different from every other mystic, and besides he may differ in his utterances and actions at some particular time than from some other time. For one whose eyes are closed to the unseen world to criticize one whose eyes are open can only reveal blindness on that one's part. It is even worse for one whose eyes have been opened to be blinded by light and not perceive the light that has come to another, for division among the spiritually advanced is more dangerous. Judgment not based upon positive knowledge and experience is only self condemnation in the eyes of God.

Holy Murshid has wisely presented four types of belief in *The Way of Illumination*. According to one's evolution there is a certain kind of belief, a certain type of action, a certain kind of realization. According to the evolution of each will there be a kind of belief, and just as the fern differs from the moss and the rose bush from the fern and the apple tree from the rose bush, so people will behave differently. And this they cannot help, for according to the degree of divine light shining through the personality, so will they act. But the wise person will always seek the divine light, and without overlooking the shortcomings of another, will find the true understanding beneath the outward appearance.

When one considers that the word "Islam" signifies peace, it should also be understood that one has not attained peace unless he also imparts peace to others. Of course the first step is to make peace with oneself, which is very necessary and important. But for one to assert: I have found salvation, I have found peace, I have realized God—for such a one to cause uneasiness to others in his presence, his assertion becomes a lie. Unless one also imparts peace to others, there is no sign that he has found peace.

With so many people, so many traditions, what is needed is broadness of vision to include them all even as God includes them all. When a person says: "My religion is highest and best," that is true, for religion is that which unites God and man and nothing can be higher than the union of

Creator and creature. But when one emphasizes differences, that is to say that God is not always God, that there is duality, that there is division. The Sufi regards these assertions as the sign of

evil, for they do not lead "Toward the One."

When one says: My religion, and considers it different from another's religion, there is the danger of reaching the conclusion: I exist and God is my ideal. When one has the highest realization the conclusion would rather be: God exists and I am but an idea of His. From this point of view man is God's ideal rather than God being man's ideal although from the opposite point of view the latter appears true. God has made man with His idea and after creating all the other forms He perfected the ideal form which is man. Through man He can realize His cosmic nature through and in limitation, which is the purpose of the creation.

So by keeping this feeling of positive and negative before one, the universal harmony is possible which may lead to greater harmony, and at the same time it prevents discord by opposing discord. No man can judge another man either upon a theological basis or because he has been given the right by any superior power. In the end we judge ourselves, and as we have judged others we shall judge ourselves (even as David in the story of Bathsheba). Though we partake of the fruit of good and evil, in the end we may find our way back to the Garden of God, for His Grace and Love are bestowed freely upon all creatures.

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,  
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls  
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

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As Holy Murshid explains in *The Way of Illumination*, there are four stages of belief, the first of which is Iman-e Muhmil of which he states:

"1. Iman-e Muhmil, when someone believes in a thing which others believe in, but no matter how strong his belief may be, when those in his surroundings change their belief, he will likewise change his."

This is the belief of a person who is negative psychically. He is like the chameleon whose color depends upon his environment. In that case the light does not shine from within, there is no light reflected from within. And there being no positive light or inner ardor, there is no chance for the personality of such a one to develop either in the worldly way or in the spiritual way. This state corresponds to the tamasic condition to some extent.

While the Sufi need not oppose the custom of his surroundings, he is not always bound by them. The idea in Sufism, especially as presented in this day and age, is to rise above the distinctions and differences which divide men. So if customs unite people, the Sufi follows them; while if he finds that habits and ideas and practices separate groups, he selects his own course of action. And it is not only philosophies and beliefs which separate people, but with some the traditions of the past carry full weight and with others the response is to the general opinion of the present time.

“2. Iman-e Kamil, the next stage of belief, is the belief of the idealist who has faith in his scriptures and Savior.”

Now this condition is not wrong. There are and there have been many beautiful souls who have been guided far through their strong faith and belief in the sages of the world, in the messengers sent by God. If there is anything wrong in this stage, it is the weakness due to limitation, that the faith is not supported by experience and full realization. As Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, of many devotees some few strive to seek him in reality and of these comparatively handful of seekers, only an occasional person may find him.

If any criticism be made of such people, it is in their holding on to I-ness and my-ness, not in their belief. Many have reached the stage of supreme devotion through love, becoming absorbed in the Ideal. This is a very beautiful faith and when faith brings knowledge it is not so different from Sufism. Only Sufism differs from Bhakti and Christian mysticism in recognizing all the different paths and seeing in them the same mission; in seeing God under many different names, and perceiving the same purpose for every soul, regardless of the outer cover.

“3. Haq al-Iman, the third stage of belief, when man believes because his reason allows him to believe.”

This is the general condition among the scientifically minded and it has effected others also especially in what are called the civilized countries. But there is a great weakness in it, for one man's reason is not always another person's reason. From the same causes, various persons appear to reason to different conclusions. Is the fault in the reasoning or in the persons?

It may come from either source, for the fault or shortcoming of reason is that it is an analytical faculty, not a creative faculty. It cannot introduce any knowledge; it can only help one to understand knowledge and facts. So it often appears to act contrary to love and sometimes actually does.

The person who attaches any value to personality, seeing in personality other than the divine seed, has the tendency to depend on the ego, and no matter how great his knowledge and his logic may easily go astray.

The real danger is in speaking of my reason. This indicates that one is following the nufs. Such a

one places a limitation upon knowledge. Pure knowledge has no limit, yet the capacity of individuals becomes limited when they consider “my knowledge” or “your knowledge” or “my reason” or “his reason.” Pure knowledge and pure reason belong to no one and yet may be utilized by all.

Besides, this form of reason limits one to a certain knowledge of names and forms. Especially in psychic investigations and mathematics, the learned may reach conclusions quite different from those of the generality. But the learned, even though employing reason, depend more upon investigation, upon what they call fact, and where fact and fancy seem to part company, they adhere to the facts. This is the difference between science and common sense; common sense always relies upon the nufs, while science is principally interested in pure knowledge.

The weakness in science comes from its concern with external knowledge, with names and forms. This was particularly true of the science of the 19th century. Today we see a great growth in many directions, in the search for causes, in the realization that there is a universe within, in the realms of consciousness, which may extend far beyond imagination. So science employs intuition, inspiration and imagination as well as logic and by this draws closer to the spiritual traditions of humanity.

The Sufis are always one step ahead of this type of believer. The mystic does not oppose him, he may never oppose him, only he sees that until God is rediscovered, ultimate truth is not found. He cooperates, encourages, defends those who, while working objectively, are coming closer to the knowledge of God, but does not necessarily use the other's methods. And if a mystic should also be a scientist, he will probably employ his intuition on many occasions whereby he will be brought directly to the hidden laws and processes which ordinary human reason may not discover.

“4. ‘Ain al-Iman, the fourth stage of belief, is a belief of conviction.” Now, while the Sufi seeks realization beyond belief, it is also true that for certain things there must be a belief or faith. The faith in the sacred tradition, the trust in the inner practices, the faith in the spiritual teacher, the trust in the teachings—all these are necessary. Love strengthens this form of faith greater than anything and leads to the highest form of knowledge.

It is spiritual realization which is most to be desired. Then one becomes a seer, who actually sees. When one opposes his reason to the direct knowledge of the seer, it is as darkness being opposed to light. The light may shine through the darkness but the darkness will comprehend it not. So it is foolish for one to oppose the seer because his reason does not bring understanding. Nevertheless when one's insight is awakened, agreement or disagreement will result from insight and knowledge, not from opinion or reason.

When the seer proclaims that which cannot be accepted, it is even better to reject it than to subject it to logic and keen analysis. If a teaching is rejected promptly, the erring one may correct his opinion later, but if he has tried to measure it by the norms of logic or by his limited mental ability, he will not only have to correct his opinion, he will have to change his habits also, which is much



more difficult.

Of course a finer and easier way is to cultivate the heart, which believes in a simple fashion like a child. The heart can know and perceive any kind of knowledge. If it permits the mind to stand in the way to accept or reject what it (the mind) understands, the heart may starve. And it is a marvelous thing that whatever the mind can understand the heart also can understand, while of the many things that the mind cannot grasp, the heart can grasp them also.

Therefore the best culture is the cultivation of the heart, which is the spiritual education of Sufism. Mind is not neglected. In fact it can be said that mind is neglected so long as it is trained to be that which it is not. When the heart is given the proper culture, it permits one to give the mind the proper culture also.

So heart development is the best method of preparing for the highest mental development, and in the awakening to the fullness of the inner life through realization and experience, one will find how to employ the mind as an instrument, even to perfect it, employing it not only to collect and hold the knowledge of this world, but even to use it as a reservoir for the vast store of wisdom which is within.