

Ziraat Reader



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Davenport:

The Ziraat Ceremony and The Teachings of Murshid
Correspondences For Use in Creating Rituals/Ceremonies
On Ziraat—Pir Zia Inayat Khan
Ziraat—Prajapati O’neill
Meditation Themes on The Watchwords in Ziraat—compiled By Mikail Davenport
Nayaz, an Interpretation—Shamcher Bryn Beorse
Toil—Murshida Vera Corda
Some Thoughts on The Ziraat—Shahabuddin David Less
Nature’s Rhythms and Feminine Spirituality—By Rabia Clark
Ziraat in the Light of Hazrat Inayat Khan’s Eschatology—Pir Zia Inayat Khan
Spiritual Ecology (Part 1)—Murshida Vera Corda
The Working Basis of Ziraat—Firoz Holterman Ten Hove
Ziraat Fulfilled—Kurt Kabir Van Wilt
Our Work in the Ziraat—Sufia Carol Sill
Ziraat Universal Worship—Nur Jehan Dean

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The soul is a breath of living spirit, that with excellent sensitivity, permeates the entire body to give it life. Just so, the breath of the air makes the earth fruitful. Thus the air is the soul of the earth, moistening it, greening it.

—*Hildegarde of Bingen*

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Beloved Ones of God,

Every form of the Natural World is the expression of the incorruptible, unchanging, Ultimate Reality as it continually manifests as impermanent relative existence.

In other words, we can uncover Divinity, our very Being, through seeing the face of God shining as the beauty of Nature. We illuminate our experience of Self, of God, through understanding the Essence in the rhythms and manifestations of Nature.

This is **Ziraat**.

We learn by preparing the soil of the heart, planting the seed of intention, watering the soil of our efforts with flow and ease, weeding the soil of our confusion, composting it into more fertility for the Message to bloom, gaining strength and working together through our interdependence with the rhythms of day and night, the seasons and climates of other beings, and offering up the fruit of our experience for the benefit of all sentient beings.

These are just a few examples of the unfolding of Ziraat, experiencing “the Sacred Manuscript of Nature, the Only Scripture that can Enlighten the Reader,” (Hazrat Inayat Khan, the Ten Sufi Thoughts).

Hazrat Inayat Khan began to form the ‘school/concentration’ of Ziraat shortly before his passing and so it didn’t mature in his time. Now there seems to be new fertility for the seeds of this approach to Awakening, for Ziraat to serve humanity.

May the seeds of your wish to awaken and be of benefit bloom though this path of Beauty and may you be part of the unfolding of the way of Ziraat.

Much love,

Pir Shabda Kahn

Sufi and Other Practices, Ziraat Papers





Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan



The Sacred Manuscript of Nature

by Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan

THERE IS ONE HOLY BOOK, THE SACRED MANUSCRIPT OF NATURE,
THE ONLY SCRIPTURE THAT CAN ENLIGHTEN THE READER.

The Sufi, when the eye of his soul is opened and his sight is keen, reads in the manuscript of nature the divine law, which has been read from the same source and taught by the teachers of humanity to their followers. Though language does not suffice to express the inner Truth, yet what little of it could be expressed in words has been inscribed by the pen and handed down to posterity, from time to time, as a sacred book. Men have fought and disputed over the authenticity of these books, and would not accept any other book of similar character; and clinging thus to the book and losing the sense of it, have formed diverse sects.

The Sufi has in all ages respected all such books, and has traced in the Vedanta, Zendavesta, Kabbala, Bible, Koran, and all other sacred scriptures the same truth which he reads in the incorruptible manuscript of nature, the only Holy Book, the perfect and living model that teaches the inner law of life.

All scriptures before nature's manuscript are as little pools of water before the ocean. To the eye of the seer every leaf of the tree is a page of the Holy Book that contains divine revelation, and he is inspired every moment of his life by reading and understanding the holy script of nature.

—(Religious Gatheka #57)



Purification Breaths and Purification

by Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan

The following is the original instruction from Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan to his mureeds concerning the daily purification breath practices and an original teaching on purification itself. It comes from the archives of Ziraat Germany.

The Twenty Breaths of Purification

This exercise must be done without noise or apparent movement in the breathing. The finest substance in the air, the essence, ether or Prana, only is inhaled. The ideal times for this exercise are, from an occult point of view, sunrise and sunset.

During the first three months, the twenty breaths should be felt to reach the solar plexus [i.e., heart]; during the second three months they should be felt to reach the navel; during the third three months the abdominal region; and during the last three months the base of the spine. The last manner of breathing should be continued during the second year. The rhythm becomes slower and slower every succeeding three months. This exercise should be done standing, preferably outdoors or before an open window.

In this purification practice, there are twenty breaths to be taken in the morning, before food, standing, unless it is prescribed for a person to lie down or sit:

5 breaths in and out through the nostrils

5 breaths in through the nostrils and out through the mouth

5 breaths in through the mouth and out through the nose

5 breaths in and out through the mouth

Natural breathing is done with the mouth shut; the breaths inhaled and exhaled through the nose are the natural breaths. And in this exercise, when the mouth is open, it should be opened only as a little hole, as in whistling.

Special care must be taken not to breathe longer than a normal rhythm. Special attention should be given to stand quite relaxed and in no way force the breath, but to let it find itself its own rhythm.

The exercise is done rhythmically, naturally, without any effort, maintaining the same rhythm throughout (therefore it must not be started too slowly), without movement of the shoulders, and without sound. You are inhaling the subtle thread of air called Prana (Life, Essence of breath, in fact God Himself) contained in the external air that we feel and it revivifies, heals and purifies, nourishing all the invisible centers of the body, whose centers through which we experience the spiritual life,



photographer unknown

Murshid Samuel Lewis



and with which we learn to know Spirit. When the technique is mastered and the breathing done regularly and easily, then practice the exercise faithfully each day, whilst holding the thought and consciousness that you are inhaling the Divine Essence.

It is not merely a physical exercise (although it helps you to breathe regularly and rhythmically), but it is also for the unfoldment of the soul. It also teaches control and rhythm, and helps you to attain a habit of healthy, serene breathing. It is like the winding up of a clock daily. Begin the day with the exercise, and you will acquire the habit of always breathing rightly. Gradually the idea and consciousness of what you are inhaling with every breath becomes a natural habit, and part of your life. The exercise is the basis of many esoteric exercises and should be mastered before you can understand further mysteries.

Purification

Purification is most essential for mureeds, for on this their progress depends, and all delays and failures in the journey towards the goal are caused by its neglect.

There are three ways of purification:

1. Purity of mind, which is achieved by six different ways:

- a. by thoughtfulness in passion
- b. by forgiveness in anger
- c. by indifference in affection
- d. by independence in temptation
- e. by humility in pride
- f. by generosity in jealousy

This can be attained by seeing the Immanence of God in nature by harkening to His Word constantly, by breathing His breath continually, by being sustained by Divine Food and by having no other contact save that with God.

2. Absolute Resignation to the Will of God: to trust and lean on Him and to have no other object in life save union with Him. Purification of the soul depends upon the knowledge of the divine. No matter how pious a person may be, he can neither advance nor improve until his soul is purified of the Ego, which always ends to draw it back and hinder its advance.

3. Purification of the Physical Body, which is accomplished in 5 different ways: By earth, water, fire, air and ether.

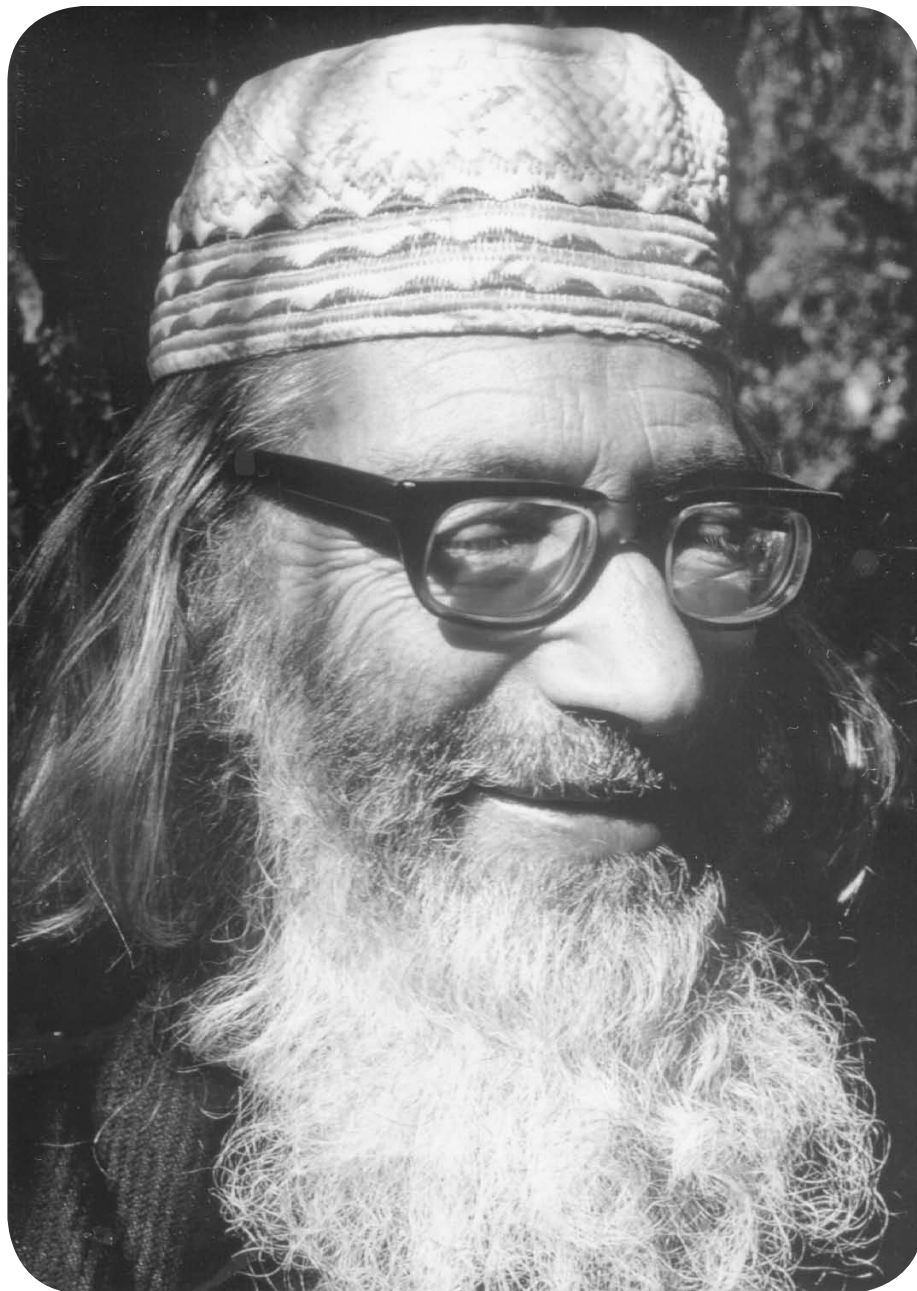


Each element requires in the first place its own element for purification and then the element approximate to it in the scale of ascent: water purifies earth, while fire purifies both water and earth, air purifies all four. For all things made of earth, although they are cleansed by water, yet if earth or some kind of powder could be used, being their own substance they would be more effectively cleansed. Water is always purified when mixed with a greater quality of its own element. The scientists also clean it of all impurities by the help of fire, its nearer element. Water, once warmed and again cooled, is considered to be sufficiently pure to be given to sick people [i.e. distilled water].

Several things, both of earth and water, are made use of after cooking, for fire removes all impurities. Fire is purified by fire; this can be proved by the fact that dim fire is kindled by a brighter and more intense fire as well as by its nearer element, the air, which draws it up by its power, all appertaining to earth, water and fire are kept fresh and pure by the air, in the absence of which they decay.

The purifier of air is air, for no matter how bad the air of the closed room may be, as soon as the windows are opened the fresh air at once purifies it. Air is also purified by its nearer element, the ether that is as vast as space. Naturally the air of the town is less pure than that of the country. All the properties of earth, water, fire and air have their existence and expansion and purification in the ether.

In the absence of water, earth can serve to clean the palms of the hands and soles of the feet by striking them against it and this absorbs all impurities. It has been proven scientifically that pure earth is a good disinfectant.



Murshid Samuel L. Lewis
Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti



Gathas: Mysticism

The Elements

Number 1

The Color of the Elements

All objects on earth have their peculiar element which is predominant in them—although everything is made of the commingling of the five chief elements—the difference being in their greater or lesser degrees. Not only in the substance but in the liquid, even in the gasses we can trace this.

The earth element has a yellow color, which may be seen in the earth when it is dry, and this shows that the color of pure earth is yellow. It is seen in many flowers as well as in fruits and leaves, and especially as the other elements in them lose their influence and the earth element remains. Therefore, from red or green they turn to yellow.

The water element is green, which may be seen in the water of the sea and in the effect of the rainfall on the trees and plants. Yet water in its pure state is white, which may be seen in clouds, in pure streams, and in snow.

The fire element is red, and not only in the rising and setting of the sun or in the burning coal is it noticed, but even in a hot substance such as pepper. Also, in the face of man during a spell of anger this color appears, and even the eyes become red.

The air element is blue, which may be seen in the color of the sky, which is its abode. Even the contact of the air with water makes the sea blue. The marks of this element, when predominating, are seen even on the tongue and lips of a person. It shows itself on the top of flames in the fire; this is when the fire turns into air.

The ether is smoky in color. It is the commingling of all elements, and even the origin of all. It is as the color of mist. The different grades of its activity have assumed different colors; therefore it is all colors and no color. The colors in the rainbow represent the different colors of the elements collected together as one embodiment of ether.

Number 2

The Form of the Elements

The forms of all objects tell the seer of their origin; and why a certain object is round, and why another object is square may be understood by the tendency of the element to manifest toward its peculiar direction. For instance:



Spreading is the quality of the earth element; therefore the earth is always seen as something spread out, and all objects in which the earth is predominant are square.

Water has a tendency to flow downward, and all objects belonging to the water element lean downward.

The fire has its tendency to rise, therefore the flame goes up, even the smoke rises, and all objects in which fire predominates will show in them a rising tendency. The circular form is significant of it.

The air has in its nature a zigzag direction, and all things concerning the air are zig-zag. But ether has no particular form, and all forms are originated from it. Being the finest, it is above limitation.

Number 3

Grades of the Elements

The five elements—earth, water, fire, air, and ether—are in fact grades of the abstract life in its gradual activity, and every element is distinguished by its form, direction, color, and nature.

The direction of the earth element is level, and its nature is spreading; therefore, the smallest island in the sea, in time, grows to be a big island.

The direction of water is downward. That is why rain falls, water falls from the springs, and water is found below the earth.

The direction of fire is upward. Therefore, the flame and smoke rise, and the sun, the center of all heat, is above.

The direction of air is zig-zag; that is why the weather changes from time to time.

The direction of the ether is not particularly perceived, because it is still.

It is the grade of activity which changes the still ether to air, and so changes its direction and nature. Thus the activity of the air, clashing by the zigzag direction, produces electricity, the fire element of which may be seen in lightning, which is zig-zag in form. It is the activity of the fire element which rises above in clouds and turns into the water element and falls as rain, as the heat of the body is the cause of perspiration, and the heat of the mind accounts for tears. It is the activity of the water element which solidifies and produces salt and minerals of different kinds, which develops into rocks and mountains, and then descend and make themselves a plain which is the part of earth. This shows the origin of earth in the source of water.

All these directions may be seen in the breath by one that can realize what element the breath is emitting at a certain time. The breath changes its element so many times during the day and night, and, if in right order, it does not miss the right succession of the elements. From this the seer knows all about his body and mind, and the body and mind of another, and according to his development, he gets an insight into the past, present, and future.



Number 4

The Relation Among the Elements

The elements are related mostly to their nearest element: earth with water, water with fire, fire with air, and air with ether. Water fertilizes the earth and makes it fruitful, and heat projects water in its liquid form and keeps it from solidifying. The tides depend upon the cosmic heat; in other words, the light of the sun reflected in the moon controls them. The fire is kindled by the help of air, and it is the vitality of the ether which moves through the air. Although all the elements are related to each other, yet earth and water are mated, and so are the fire and air elements, ether being exclusive.

The people of the temperament in which the earth predominates will harmonize with those of the water element; people of the temperament in which fire predominates will be harmonious with those of the air element. People have harmonious and inharmonious times with their friends; this is accounted for by the same reason. When they have the mated elements, namely earth and water, or fire and air, active in their breath, they are harmonious, and in absence of the same they lack harmony.

In fact, each of these elements creates out of itself its child-element and again in time absorbs it within itself. The elements show the Creator's nature, Who creates at times and absorbs at times. This is explained thus in the Qur'an: "All come from God, and all are bound to return to Him." We see that the ether creates air, the air creates fire, the fire creates water, and the water creates earth, and yet in the water the earth is dissolved, and by the fire the water is consumed, the air puts out the flame, and ether absorbs air. It is this mystery which enables the Sufi to master the constructive and destructive powers of the universe with the knowledge of mysticism. Mastery is not only in knowing, but in knowing and doing, both.

Number 5

Direction of the Elements

The direction that every object takes through its manifestation shows in it the nature of its predominating element. All things that bend show the water element. All things which spread in a straight line have earth as their predominating element. All things which rise and grow upward show in them the fire element. All things which develop in a zig-zag direction show in them air. And things which are hidden and are incomprehensible or in a mist show ether predominating in them.

It is fire, in man, which makes him rise against another. And it is water in his nature which makes him bow and bend before another. It is earth in one's disposition that keeps him set and firm in his ideas, however good or bad they may be, and it is air in the nature of man which makes his ways crooked. It is ether in man's nature when you cannot see what he is about.

The breath follows the same direction. It flows downward when the water element is predominating, and straight when the earth element is active in it; it rises when the fire element lifts it up, and it goes



crossways under the influence of air. It is incomprehensible when the ether element overwhelms it. And at every change of the element in the breath—which takes place often in the day and night—the mood of man changes; his desires, his inclinations, his expression, even his atmosphere changes. And not only that, every element that he breathes has its effect upon every affair that he does, or that is done in his presence at that moment.

Number 6

Effect of `Uruj and Nuzul in Grades

Inhaling is called `Uruj,” and exhaling is called Nuzul, and each has its particular part in the life of an individual. Breath is life, and its work is to take the condition from within to the external plane, and to take the conditions of the external plane into one’s inner being. When one exhales, the condition of the inner plane is brought out, and when one inhales, the condition of the external plane is taken in. When exhaling, the harmony or inharmony of the soul is brought out, its influence first working on one’s mind, then on the body, then on surroundings. When inhaling, the conditions of the external plane—harmony or inharmony—are drawn into the body, then into the mind, then into the soul, which sets the soul either in calmness or in disturbance. When exhaling, one’s feelings and thoughts first work on one’s body, then on surroundings. When inhaling, the thoughts and feelings from the external plane are drawn into the body and into the mind. The same is the case with the physical body; it sends out the gases with exhaling, and inhaling, takes in all the fine properties from one’s surroundings.

Number 7

The Effect of Jelal, Jemal, and Kemal

The whole creation has been formed by the law of rhythm, and rhythm is the cause of all the variety we see in nature. The sun, moon, the stars, woman, man, and all other aspects of nature differ owing to the law of rhythm. Therefore, the seer understands all things and their past, present and future, by the rhythm of the breath. There are two peculiar forces in the rhythm, which in music are called strong and weak accents. Suppose we push the pendulum of a clock with the finger. . . the first swing it will make will be strong, the next turn it will take will be the reaction of the first force, which naturally will be milder in force. So it is with the breath; the breath which flows through the right nostril is Jelal, which represents strength. The breath that flows through the left nostril is called Jemal, which is milder.

Breath being the very life, and its influence being not only on our mind but even on our life’s affairs, the Jelal and Jemal count greatly with our life’s affairs. And when the rhythm is broken, meaning upset, the Jelal and Jemal come into conflict with one another, That is called Kemal. During this time the strength with which the Jelal and Jemal hold our affairs is exhausted, and it brings failure and destruction. Therefore, the Sufi breaks himself to God, Who does not receive them who are unbroken. Uniting with God, the Unlimited, means breaking the self that is limited.



Number 8

Mysticism: Relating to Jelal

The Jelal aspect shows the strength and power of nature. We can find Jelal power flowing through the right nostril as breath; working through the right hand, giving it an inclination to move first; through the right foot, giving it an inclination to step first. In the senses, that which shows is Jelal, that which sees is Jemal. That which speaks is Jelal, that which hears is Jemal. The same thing we find in our thought. The thought which rises of itself in the mind is the Jelal thought; the thought which is caused by some other source is the Jemal thought.

Every person has either a Jelal temperament or a Jemal temperament. A person with temper is Jelal; with courage, is Jelal; with power, with strength is Jelal. A person with kindness, tolerance, forgiveness, meekness, mildness, modesty, humility, is of the Jemal temperament. Then, through the day and night, man changes his condition from Jelal to Jemal and from Jemal to Jelal, either owing to the influence of his breath or controlled by the breath of another, or a situation makes him be in Jelal or Jemal, or his own thought, speech, or action.

In war, the offensive is Jelal, the defensive is Jemal; in trade, the purchaser is Jelal, the seller is Jemal; on the stage, the performer is Jelal and the audience is Jemal. Jelal has a tendency to be active, and sometimes it acts beyond control. Therefore, in the capacity of Jelal, a greater control is needed than in Jemal, for everything that runs quickly is in danger of falling.

Among the Sufis, there are two kinds of adepts, Jelali and Jemali, and each has its own line of progress and action. They are not called so for their temperament but for their method of progress and action. The Jelali among them, with their great psychic power, can prophesy and cast out devils and heal, and control the world and heavens, according to their development. They are mostly among the dervishes, faqirs; and sometimes they are called rind, when they are under a guise which deludes the pious, keeping them from going near them. Jemali are the ones who are with God throughout the day and night, who love and repent, and bless and serve, and glorify the name of their Lord, and guide their followers through all difficulties in the spiritual path, and draw people to God from the struggles of life. Their way is that of the saints of the past.

Number 9

Jemal

Jemal is the balancing force of nature, which balances the power of Jelal. For instance, the sun is the Jelal force, and would burn the whole universe if there were not the moon to balance its heat. In Vedantic language, these two powers are termed Shiva and Shakti, the essence and nature. This can be seen in love and beauty, also; the former being Jelal, while the latter is Jemal. If it were not for the beauty, the love would have destroyed the whole being. There is a verse of Sharif: "It is my eyes in wrath that have created the lightning, stars, sun and moon. What upheaval there would be if a spark escaped from the fire of my heart!"



Jemal is the life force that in the breath flows through the left nostril, and during Jemal, all affairs of a gentle nature are well accomplished, as during the time of Jelal, works of a gross nature. The people who have the Jemal temperament show grace and beauty in their thought, speech, and action, and control and balance as well. The reason is that the life force is not in its great intensity in them. The people of Jelal temperament show the contrary. A person of Jemal temperament is easy to get on with, and a person of Jelal temperament is difficult. And yet, it depends upon the evolution of the person. The Sufi, understanding the nature of Jelal and Jemal, acts harmoniously in all situations of life.

Number 10 **Relating to Kemal**

Kemal is the culmination of Jelal and Jemal. Kemal comes when Jelal and Jemal meet, and in the meeting of Jelal and Jemal, there is naturally a conflict. The Kemal breath is that which flows through both nostrils. Every thing and object in this world is either Jelal or Jemal; no one except God can be attributed with Kemal. All destructions are caused by Kemal, such as earthquakes, storms, floods, wars, death, and Qaymat, the end of the world.

The Jelal or Jemal temperament can be found in everybody, but the Kemal temperament is found only among the holy beings who are living dead, who live in God, not in themselves. Every action, when it reaches Kemal, ceases to exist, and every person and every plane of his being, after reaching Kemal, has a fall back. Therefore, those who study the nature of life and who value the unchanging nature of life, drink the bowl of Kemal, however bitter it may appear for the time. This is the bowl of poison that Mahadeva drank, this is the cross on which Christ was crucified.



Elements Practices

Man is not only formed of vibrations, but he lives and moves in them; they surround him as the fish is surrounded by water, and he contains them within him as the tank contains water, ... There are two aspects of vibrations, fine and gross, both containing varied degrees; some are perceived by the soul, some by the mind, and some by the eyes. What the soul perceives are the vibrations of the feelings; what the mind conceives are the vibrations of the thoughts; what the eyes see are the vibrations solidified from their ethereal state and turned into atoms which appear in the physical world, constituting the elements ether, air, fire, water and earth. The finest vibrations are imperceptible even to the soul. The soul itself is formed of these vibrations; it is their activity which makes it conscious.

—Hazrat Inayat Khan, Vol. II, *The Sufi Message*

Murshid Samuel Lewis gave breaths and walks to experience each element:

EARTH: Take a natural inhalation (not heavy or shallow) through both nostrils. The exhalation, also through both nostrils, is heavier and more extended. Earth pervades, spreads out in every direction. It covers the surface of all in a flat way. Walk in 4/4 rhythm, breathing out through the soles of the feet and the palms of the hands. Knees may be slightly bent. Keep palms parallel to the ground. Stay concentrated throughout the extended exhalation. Visualize the color yellow (gold).

WATER: Take a natural inhalation through both nostrils. Direct the breath through the left nostril with a long deep exhalation. This exhalation is not necessarily heavy; it may be refined, but it must be fully extended. The direction of water is downward. There is a continuous flowing motion. Walk in 3/4 time. Keep your feet in this waltz time. Arms move from shoulder level on the right side, down to the left side. Feel the pull toward the left side. Visualize the color green.

FIRE: This breath emphasizes the inhalation through the right nostril. Use a heavy inhalation on the right nostril and let the breath be naturally released through both nostrils. Walk in 3/4 time, jumping up to the right side on the right foot as you inhale. Feel the upward movement of the fire element. Visualize the color red.

AIR: This element requires us to make the breath much more light and refined. We feel it in the top part of our body. It may come through both nostrils, through either nostril, or it may alternate nostrils. There is a freedom of movement here that is expressed in the body as it manifests the air in an active manner. There is an upward tendency here, but the overall manner is multi-directional. Visualize the color blue.

ETHER: This is the most refined and subtle breath possible. It is virtually imperceptible. You can feel it through every pore of the body. Ether is the origin of all the elements and the one to which all the elements ultimately return. Use no movement at all when you are concentrating simply on Ether. The ether breath can be combined individually with each one of the elements. Then the movement of that element is influenced by the peace and stillness of the ether element. As the source of all, visualize the color smoky grey. As the fullness of all, visualize the rainbow.



In the following practices, given by Murshid, one generally begins with the densest element, earth, and moves toward the most subtle, ether. Always watch the breath.

1. Concentrate on each element in turn, and watch the breath, both while sitting and while walking in a circle. Be aware of the nature of breath, and its direction and rhythm.
2. Sound: concentrate on each element and listen for sound. Sing, concentrating on each element, and be aware of the sound of the voice—its nature, direction and rhythm. Sing AH or HU or OM.
3. Concentrate on each element, moving the body in breath. Be aware of the movement. Walk in a circle. Spin. Walking outside, using the in-breath, concentrate on elements; for example, fire breath going up steep hills; water breath going down hill. Do not use ether breath when in traffic.

Other practices:

- Concentrate on each element using the sound of instruments. For example, drums to represent the sound of earth, the koto for the sounds of water; sudden sharp sounds for fire, such as in kabuki theatre, two sticks clacked together to warn of coming danger, the flute and other wind instruments for air sound.
- Concentrate on each element with mantra, and be aware of feeling and sound.
- Concentrate on each element before doing Zikr. Combine each element with ether, which allows movement.
- Combine each element with each other element.
- Begin with ether and move in-breath and concentration through each element to earth, and then back through each element to ether.

(Please give these practices to others only after experiencing them yourself.)

(The above paper originally appeared in “Manual for Teachers of Spiritual Dance,” from the work of Murshid SAM. 1975 Ed.) Present version edited by Wali Ali in 2005.



The Ziraat Lessons

(to be read only to Ziraat initiates)

LESSON ONE: Symbology of the Plough

Jelal = intensity, strong vibrations, straight, masculine

Jemal = gentleness, mild vibrations, beauty, grace, feminine

Kemal = conflict of both forces, also perfection, the blending of Jelal and Jemal

The plough is symbolical of Prana, the breath. The large wheel represents the Jelal power of the breath and the small wheel represents the Jemal power of the breath—both attached to one axle, meaning that both work in one body.

But the smaller wheel follows and rotates at a different angle to the other, showing that Jemal is a complement to Jelal, also signifying that Jemal is a response to Jelal; or it is the two forms of Jelal and Jemal that form the rhythm, which is the Cause behind every action.

Without action there is no life, and action must manifest in rhythm.

The blade attached to the plough and which cuts the stems and roots is “Will Power.” Its every action may cut the stems and roots of thought and imaginations, which stand in the ground undesirably.

The plough itself represents the human being, who possesses all these qualities. The absence of Jelal or Jemal would paralyze the actions of life. If will power were absent, one’s life would be like a plough without a blade. If the Jelal wheel were too small or the Jemal wheel too large, they could not go together; the plough would not be balanced. And so, in the life of human beings, it is harmony and the evenness of Jelal and Jemal forces which help the continuity of harmony and balance of life.

LESSON TWO: Cultivating the Mind

The human mind contains various possessions collected and accumulated throughout life, some lying on the surface of the mind and others buried in it, desirable and undesirable; all sorts of impressions, right and wrong thoughts, conceptions of good and bad, memories of sins and virtues, merits and defects, all lie there, buried.

Some take root in the soil of the human heart, others are hindered by not having scope for seeding. In this way the human mind becomes a wild forest, where flowers and weeds both grow; a soil whose purpose is to become fertile, wherein the substance for life may be produced.

The uncultivated mind is a barren desert, where the soul is starved for the food it hungers after. Every effort that man makes to turn this desert into fertile soil is action done in the right direction.



On one side, by the Jemal attitude, that is by thinking and reading about the value and purpose of one's mind, one cultivates the ground within oneself.

By the Jelal attitude, that is by the power of the mind, one is able to accomplish one's work.

One's own self is the plough; understanding and power are the two wheels of the plough. With this plough, one works on the soil of the mind and takes away frost, all roots of flowers and thistles both, thus making the ground free from every kind of root and stone, making it softer and smoother, almost ready to sow the seed.

LESSON THREE: Self-Analysis

The birth of every purpose is when the purpose has become known; the moment one knows "I am my mind" one begins to analyze what one's mind contains. If it contains error, then one finds oneself in error; if it contains pain, one finds oneself sad; if it contains fear, one feels discomfort. If one finds an accumulation of desirable and undesirable impressions, thoughts that one likes and dislikes, one feels confused. To feel in one's mind thoughts that one cannot bear to think is like standing in the mud.

Finding one's imagination undesirable and uncontrollable is like being in a forest, among wild beasts, who are not under one's control. To feel one's weaknesses and defects is like being in the wilderness, where life is every moment in danger.

All these are different roots that are to be found in the soil of the mind, and it needs "will power" to uproot and cast them out.

The first work of the Plougher (or Adept) or seeker on the path is self-analysis. Once self-analysis is made, the human being has brought out from the soil of the mind all that was there, onto the surface, so that nothing either good or bad remains buried there.

Self-analysis is the first necessary process in cultivating the mind. It brings out all that was within, onto the surface, open for inspection. In this manner a person can judge oneself fully, like a Plougher who sees all that was buried under the ground, when it is turned up in the furrow.

Nothing can give the Plougher greater pleasure than to see the results of one's efforts in bringing to the surface all that was buried and in feeling that one has thoroughly penetrated the ground and brought to the surface all that was hidden there.

LESSON FOUR: Purification of the Mind

Roots which become settled in the uncultivated ground of mind are of different tendencies: the tendency to like or dislike, to love or hate; the tendency to yield or dominate. Desirable tendencies if left in an uncultivated soil to grow by themselves prove in the end profitless, for they have not sufficient scope to grow together with the undesirable ones, and these cannot be rooted out without taking with them some of the desirable ones.



It is the clearing away of the whole foreign element from the soil that is necessary in order to fully cultivate the ground. Ploughing, therefore, is not meant to remove only the roots that are not needed there, but also those which are needed.

The process of purification does not mean that all which is desirable should remain and the undesirable be thrown out. It means that every substance that is to be purified must be purified of all that is foreign to it; in other words, of that which does not belong to it.

Many good tendencies, when growing with a bad one, lose their value, for the good tendency has no scope to grow together with the bad. Therefore, in order to cultivate the mind, good and bad tendencies both should be rooted out.

It must be remembered that there is no loss if the good ones are rooted out with the bad, for mind in its essence is incomparably superior to all good tendencies,

By cultivation of the mind, when the foreign element is rooted out, the mind becomes pure, and the person becomes one's own self.

LESSON FIVE: Doing Our Own Work

The spiritual force that is pouring out on the world today is quickening every kind of seed in the human heart.

If the seeds have been quickened, the harvest must be reaped; that is the law.

We cannot help until the field is again clear. What we can do is to sow fresh seed, and nourish them until they are quickened. But the reaping thereof will be for other hands.

There are Ploughers in the field, and there are Reapers of the harvest. All are different, and one cannot do the work of the other. But all are working out the divine plan, and all are necessary to the others.

To a little band of sowers has been given a handful of living grain.

Faithfully it must be sown; surely it will be reaped; and the harvest shall be for the sustenance of all who are hungering for the "Bread of Life".



Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan on horseback



Ziraat Ritual with Revisions*

To Open Before Greeting:

We invoke the Presence of the Owner of the Farm. We offer our whole hearted devotion to the Great Farmer.

Greetings:

1. Our wholehearted respect to the Great Farmer.
- or 2. Our respectful greetings to you our Experienced Farmer.
- or 3. Our faithful greetings to you our Farmer.

Salutations to the Elements:

To EARTH:

O! all-productive Mother Earth, we humbly offer our homage to You (Thee)!
(Hands out right and left, palms down)

To WATER:

O! all-purifying Water, we willingly offer our homage to You!
(Hands held as if dripping with water)

To FIRE:

O! all-consuming Fire, we wholeheartedly offer our homage to You!
(Hands raised above head, palms forward)

To AIR:

O! all-pervading Air, we gladly offer our homage to You!
(Hands crossed as wings)

To ETHER:

O! Ether, essence of all, we passively offer our homage to You.
(Hands clasped at level of heart)

One bow to one another and all sit down.

After the Salutations of the Elements:

(The Leader rises only)

The pure fragrance of earth and the brilliance in fire, I am;
I the rapidity of water, I the radiance in moon and sun;
The Word of Power in all Vedas, Sound in Ether and Virility in men;
As the Mighty Air, everywhere moving, is rooted in the Ether, so all beings rest rooted in me, this know Thou!

**in the original version, some spellings were slightly different and male gender words were used.*



As the One Sun illumineth the whole Earth, so the Lord of the Field illumineth the whole Field.
O! Bharata! (arranged from the Bhagavad Gita.)

Ziraat Dialogue:

For what purpose have we assembled here?
For farming.

What is the length of the Farm?
As long as time.

What is the breadth of the Farm?
As broad as space.

To whom does the farm belong?
It is our Parents' (Father's) heritage.

What is the Farmer's religion?
One's (Her, His) work.

With what attitude does the Farmer work?
One (S/he) plows with toil, sows with hope, and reaps with joy.

What is the achievement of the Farmer?
A successful harvest.

What are the principles of the Farmer?
That good seed is more precious than pearls, that fertile soil is more valuable than gold; that an experienced farmer can make greater riches by one's (her, his) sowing than a money-lender by the interest one (her, his) gets on one's (her, his) money.

Of what does farming consist?
Mainly of three kinds of work: plowing, sowing, and reaping.

What fertilizes the soil?
Cultivation.

What nourishes the land?
Water.

What raises the crops?
The sun.

At what time of day is plowing done?
At dawn.



At what time of day is sowing done?

At sunrise.

When does the Farmer take the mid-day rest?

When the sun reaches its zenith.

What time of day is reaping done?

Towards sunset.

What does a Farmer do at night?

One (s/he) keeps watch.

What does a Farmer do during the day?

One (s/he) works.

When does a Farmer begin work?

When the moon is waxing.

When does the Farmer rest from work?

When the moon is waning.

The Reception of Laborers:

Experienced Farmer: Here is a Laborer, wishing to toil, who is asking for work on the Farm.

Experienced Farmer: Are you free to work, Laborer?

Laborer: I am, Experienced Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: Have you decided to devote yourself to the work?

Laborer: I have, Experienced Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: will you be regular in your work?

Laborer: I will, Experienced Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: What wage do you ask?

Laborer: Gold and silver, Experienced Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: In what form do you desire it?

Laborer: In the coin, which is current in the North, in the South, in the East, in the West.

Experienced Farmer: I will engage this Laborer. Let him/her listen to the method of ploughing, taught by the Great Farmer:



Method of Ploughing, Farming:

Before a field can be sown with fresh seed, everything previously sown there must be cleared away, the field left empty and bare to the purifying rains and winds of God; but even that is not enough, for underneath the brown earth, deep down and hidden from sight, there may be many old roots and stems of a past Harvest.

All these must be uprooted before the sowing can begin. This is the work of the ploughman who once having begun work must continue to the end, for: “no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.”

Every part of the field must be ploughed up and the furrows made straight and deep; from Sunrise to Sunset must one labor until the field is ready for the sowing. Nevertheless, of this task one must not weary, for in the heart of the plower is the joy of a fresh beginning, and the labor of one's hands shall be blessed. In the solitude of one's toil, one shall not feel alone, for in one's Soul one heareth the 'Song of Return'.

Blessed is the one who thus prepareth the Field.

Verily, one's feet shall tread on the Path of Wisdom.

Reception of Plower:

Experienced Farmer: Have you listened to all that has been said about Farming?

Laborer: I have, Experienced Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: Are you then ready to accept your work?

Laborer: I am, Experienced Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: Then, Laborer(s), I accept you as a Plower(s) in the name of the Owner of the Farm. Know that from this moment you begin your work on the Farm with the (Experienced) Farmer under the direction of the Great Farmer.

Experienced Farmer: Feel your responsibility!

Laborer: I feel my responsibility.

Experienced Farmer: Do your duty!

Laborer: I will do my duty.

Experienced Farmer: Be not weary!

Laborer: I will not be weary.

Experienced Farmer: Seal your lips!

Laborer: I will seal my lips.



Experienced Farmer: Take for your watchword: Toil!

Laborer: I will take for my watchword, Toil!

Experienced Farmer: May your labor be approved by the Owner of the Farm. In the name of God, the Owner of the Farm, I bless you. (Gives the cord.)

Silence

The Address of the Great Farmer:

I should like to speak a few words upon the need of cultivation of our souls, of our hearts, and of our minds. The human in essence of being is divine; the source from which the human soul has come is the Eternal One; but in order to manifest in human form, the soul has to pass through different phases, and the process through which the human soul manifests, being conscious and afterwards unconscious, is when the soul realizes 'I am a human being.'

In this journey the soul has passed not only through the angelic and the Djinn spheres, but through rocks and plants and through lower creation it has risen to become human.

Therefore, through all the names and forms we see in this world, even of the smallest germs and insects, the soul is working out its perfection to express itself in humanity.

A picture of the journey may be made, as if an angel from the highest Heaven came down and descended to the lowest depths of the earth, and from there feeling after and longing for the Paradise it has left, has worked its way through the lower creation and arrived at the form of the human being.

Although in essence, even after touching the deepest depths of the earth, the soul is divine, in order to realize for itself that Divine Element it has a task waiting even after being human, and it is the manner in which that task is accomplished, and the object gained which is called ZIRAAT, in which we all unite to offer our homage to THE OWNER OF THE FARM.

Ziraat Dance(s)

Salutations to the Elements

(in silence)

Closing

Let us depart, knowing ourselves the Willing Bondspeople of the Owner of the Farm, in Whose Service is Perfect Freedom.



Afterward

The original Ziraat teachings, ritual and symbols should be retained as central and sacred to the Ziraat School—even though it appears that they may become antiquated. This will show respect for the clear vision and pure intention of Hazrat Inayat Khan and other Ziraat forebears in providing a foundation for this earth-based school of heart development, a foundation from which evolutionary revisionings can from time to time spring forth as needed.

I would like to see optional versions of the ritual and symbols meditated upon and gradually introduced to see if they work and if people feel comfortable with them. The original lessons can be the basis for Commentary work that will update the old teachings and symbols and bring the Ziraat School into the new age to accord with permaculture and other earth-friendly methods of cultivation. —Moineddin Jablonski

...New forms yes, formlessness no.”
—Moineddin Jablonski, June 4, 1998



The Ziraat Ceremony and the Teachings of Murshid

(selections from the Gathas of Hazrat Inayat Khan,
corresponding to the various aspects of the Ziraat Ceremony)

The Invocation

“We invoke the Presence of the Owner of the Farm;
we offer our wholehearted devotion to the Great Farmer.”

GATHA II

TASAWWUF Number 8

Metaphysics: Tawakkul—Dependence Upon God

Dependence is nature and independence is the spirit. The independent spirit becomes dependent through manifestation. When One becomes many, then each part of the One, being limited, strives to be helped by the other part, for each part finds itself imperfect. Therefore we human beings, however rich with the treasures of heaven and earth, are poor in reality, because of our dependence upon others. The spiritual view makes one conscious of this, and the material view blinds man, who then shows independence and indifference to his fellow-man. Pride, conceit and vanity are the outcome of this ignorance. There come moments when even the king has to depend upon a most insignificant person. Often one needs the help of someone before whom one has always been proud and upon whom one has always looked with contempt. As individuals depend upon individuals so the nations and races depend upon one another. As no individual can say, “I can get on without another person,” so no nation can say, “We can be happy while another nation is unhappy.” But an individual or a multitude depends most upon God, in Whom we all unite. Those who depend upon the things of the earth certainly depend upon things that are transitory and they must some day or other lose them. Therefore there remains only one object of dependence, that is God, Who is not transitory, and Who always is and will be. Saádi has said, “He who depends upon Thee will never be disappointed.”

No doubt it is the most difficult thing to depend upon God. For an average person, who has not known or seen, who never had any idea of such a personality existing as God, but has only heard in church that there exists someone in the Heavens Who is called God and has believed it, it is difficult to depend entirely upon Him. A person can hope that there is a God, that by depending upon Him he will have his desire fulfilled, a person can imagine that there can be Someone Whom people call God; but for him also it is difficult to depend entirely on God. It is for them that the Prophet has said, “Tie your camel and trust in God.” It was not said to Daniel, “Take your sword and go among the lions.” One imagines God, another realizes God; there is a difference between these two persons. The one who imagines can hope, but he cannot be certain. The one who realizes God, he is face to face with his Lord, and it is he who depends upon God with certainty. It is a matter of struggling along on the surface of the water, or courageously diving deep, touching the bottom of the sea. There is no greater trial for a person than dependence upon God. What patience it needs, besides the amount of faith it requires, to be in the midst of the world of illusion and yet to be conscious of the existence of God! To do this man must be able to turn all what is called life



into death, and to realize that in what is generally called death, in that death is the true life. This solves the problem of false and real.

GITHA III

MURAQABA Number 7

Concentration: Tasawwuri Murshid

The power of mind upon matter is such an undeniable fact that the more one studies it the more one realizes the fact that there is no thought which comes for the hundredth part of a second that passes off without making an impression upon one's personality and without producing an effect. One can trace this, too, in the lives of great men, for no poet has become great without contemplating upon the life of some great poet and his work, nor has a musician been great without fully admiring the life and works of some great musician, no warrior has done a great work in life without being impressed by the life and work of some great warrior, nor has any reformer become great without having contemplated upon the life of some reformer. As a painter cannot paint a new form that does not exist, so man's mind cannot produce what it has not known or what it has not been impressed with.

Tasawwuri Murshid, the thought of Murshid that a mureed would hold with sympathy, cannot go in vain, without making some effect upon the personality of the mureed. In this the mureed contemplates upon a personality which is the outcome of divine wisdom which he is striving after, and according to the depth of the impression of the Murshid's personality upon the mind of the mureed, the personality of the mureed will be molded. There cannot be any personality so desirable for the seeker after Truth as the personality that has come out of divine Light. It is not only that the personality becomes that, but even the knowledge is inherited in this way without study or practice, since the whole life is constructed on the law of impression.

The Greetings

*"Our faithful greetings to you, our Ploughers."
"Our respectful greetings to you, our Farmer."*

GATHA II

'ITAQAD RASM u RAVAJ Number 2

Superstitions, Customs and Beliefs: Customs of Courtesy

There was a custom in the old, aristocratic times, which is even now observed in the East and somewhat in the Western part of the world, of taking steps backward when leaving someone who was respected. It was not only a custom but it had a psychological point of view. When two people are talking to one another, facing each other, a current of sympathy is established which chiefly runs through the breath and through the glance; and necessarily, one of them is expressive, the other receptive. When their backs are turned that current is broken, and the idea of the people of old was to retain that current, which they thought was valuable, as long as possible.



There was another custom of courtesy of the ancients which still exists in certain places, that in order to show respect to someone they bent their knees. This had a psychological reason, that every influence of love, affection, or sympathy, benediction, or blessing, is poured through the glance, through the breath, and through words, and if the receiver was taller than the bestower, the influence would go into the ground instead of touching the person. Especially the influence of the glance, which surrounds one with sympathy and good wishes, has, mostly, a downward direction, and it is naturally so with the breath also.

In the salutation made by putting one knee on the ground, the knee resting on the ground expresses readiness to receive the command and the knee that is up is ready to go forward to carry it out.

But besides their psychological influences, different manners of courtesy have been the outcome of human progress in the direction of refinement. And yet progress in every direction is like a wave in the sea, it rises and it falls. So it is with manners. This time seems to be the time when the wave is coming back. However, doing a thing is one thing, and understanding it is another thing. Whether one does a certain thing or does not do it, that is another question, but in the understanding of all things lies the purpose of life.

GATHA III

SALUK Number 3

Morals: The Manner of Friendliness

Adab (Respect) (2)

A respectful attitude is the first and principal thing in the development of personality, not only respect toward someone whom one considers superior but respect for everyone one meets in life, in proportion to what is due to him. It is through conceit that man gives less honor where more honor is due, and it is by ignorance that man gives more respect than what is due. Respecting someone does not only require a desire to respect but an art of respecting. One ignorant of this art may express respect wrongly. It is self-respect which makes one inclined to respect another. The one who has no respect for himself cares little if he respects another or if respect is at all necessary in life. To respect means to honor. It is not only bowing and bending, or external action, which expresses respect. A disrespectful person may bow his head before another and strike him on the face by his word. True respect is from the attitude which comes from the sincere feeling of respect. The outward expression of respect has no value without inner feeling. Inspired by a respectful attitude, man expresses his feeling in thought, speech, or action, which is the true expression of respect. A sincere feeling of respect needs no words, even the silence can speak of one's respectful attitude.

There are three different expressions of respect. One is when the position or rank of a person commands one to respect, whether one be willing or unwilling, and under the situation one cannot help having respect, which is nothing but an outer expression of respect. The second expression of respect is when a person wishes to please another by his respectful manner, to let him feel how respectful he is and what a good manner he has. By this expression one has two objects in view: One, to please



another, and the other to please oneself by one's way of pleasing. The third way is the true feeling of respect which rises from one's heart, and if one tried to express it one could not express it enough. If one were not able to express it fully it can always be felt, because it is a living spirit of respect.

The mark of people having tradition behind them, by birth, nation or race, shows in their respectful tendency. To them disrespect either on their part or on the part of another means absence of beauty. Life has many beautiful things, flowers, jewels, beauty of nature, of form, of line, of color, but beauty of manner excels all, and all good manner is rooted in a respectful tendency. It is a great pity that this subject is not regarded as the most important one to be considered and to be developed, especially today, when the stream of the whole world is running in the direction of commercialism, which tends to the beauty of matter in gold and silver instead of beauty of character and personality.

Salute to the Elements

“O, all-productive Mother Earth, we humbly offer our homage to Thee.”

“O, all-purifying Water, we willingly offer our homage to Thee.”

“O, all-consuming Fire, we wholeheartedly offer our homage to Thee.”

“O, all-pervading Air, we gladly offer our homage to Thee.”

“O, Ether, essence of all, we passively offer our homage to Thee.”

GITHA I

ASRAR ul-ANSAR Number 3

Mysticism: The Direction of the Elements

The five elements—earth, water, fire, air, and ether—are in fact grades of the abstract life in its gradual activity, and every element is distinguished by its form, direction, color, and nature.

The direction of the earth element is level, and its nature is spreading; therefore, the smallest island in the sea, in time, grows to be a big island.

The direction of water is downward. That is why rain falls, water falls from the springs, and water is found below the earth.

The direction of fire is upward. Therefore, the flame and smoke rise, and the sun, the center of all heat, is above.

The direction of air is zig-zag; that is why the weather changes from time to time.

The direction of the ether is not particularly perceived, because it is still.

It is the grade of activity which changes the still ether to air, and so changes its direction and nature. Thus the activity of the air, clashing by the zigzag direction, produces electricity, the fire element of which may be seen in lightning, which is zig-zag in form. It is the activity of the fire element which rises above in clouds and turns into the water element and falls as rain, as the heat of the body is



the cause of perspiration, and the heat of the mind accounts for tears. It is the activity of the water element which solidifies and produces salt and minerals of different kinds, which develops into rocks and mountains, and then descend and make themselves a plain which is the part of earth. This shows the origin of earth in the source of water.

All these directions may be seen in the breath by one that can realize what element the breath is emitting at a certain time. The breath changes its element so many times during the day and night, and, if in right order, it does not miss the right succession of the elements. From this the seer knows all about his body and mind, and the body and mind of another, and according to his development, he gets an insight into the past, present, and future.

GITHA II

RIYAZAT Number 3

Esotericism: Purification of the Breath

Purification is the innate tendency of every soul, but it purifies only that part of its being of which it is conscious. There is a Parsi saying, "Purity is the first piety." When striving to purify the body and mind, man often fails to find the real source of their purification. Really speaking, the breath is the source which keeps body and mind alive, and body and mind connected. Impurity of breath turns body and mind impure, and purity of breath gives purity to both. The question, how we should purify the breath, may be answered thus, that breath is constituted of the five elements—of which both the body and the mind are composed—and it is the same elements which are used by the mystics to purify the breath. After a Sufi has made his breath rhythmic by the practice of Fikr, and has acquired strength in the breath, then he may purify his breath with different elements.

By breathing on earth, he will give all his impurities to earth, and will attract purity from earth. By breathing before water, he will purify his breath and will give out impurities to water. By breathing before fire, the Sufi purifies his breath by that element. Therefore, incense is burnt in religious places, and the adepts in India keep fire before them when practicing meditation. One must purify one's breath by breathing in the open air, which is the air of purification. And life in the open space enables one to purify one's breath by the ether, which pervades the whole space. Purification of the breath not only gives sound health of mind and body, but gives perpetual youth and long life, until one has attained the life eternal.

GITHA III

SHAFAYAT Number 4

Healing: The Application of Healing Power—Healing By Magnetic Passes

All scriptures have explained in some way or other that life is like light. In the Muslim scriptures the word Nur is used; in the Vedanta it is called Chaitanya. The nature of this light is to express itself in



a particular direction; and that accounts for the face and back in our form. At the same time the tendency of the light is to spread. That can be seen in the tendency of fire to spread, of water to spread. Air shows the same tendency; earth and all things on earth show the same tendency. A deep study of every form will show the nature of life to spread in four directions, which make North, South, East, and West, and form head, foot, right, and left.

Life and light has its center in the center of every form, but takes its expression through the directions in which it spreads. Therefore the power of the hand has been related in the ancient symbology. Hindus have pictured four hands of the divine incarnations. It means two hands of the mind and two hands of the body; when four hands work, the work is fully accomplished. Therefore, in healing the hands are most important; the physical hands are needed to help the hands of the mind. And when thought is directed from the mind through the hand, its power becomes double and its expression becomes fuller. Every atom of man's being, mental or physical, is radiant and throws its rays outward, which is life itself and gives life. All illness and every kind of illness is, so to speak, lack of life, and it needs life to be given to it. The power of electricity has been discovered by the man of science, and he believes that it cures diseases when it is used for that purpose. The mystic discovered ages ago the power of this hidden electricity, the life of the mind and the life of the body, and he believes and knows that its application in healing is most beneficial. There are sores and wounds and painful parts which are too tender to touch. In such cases healing by magnetic passes, in other words by waving the hands over the affected part and so allowing thought to heal, brings about a successful cure.

[The above comes from a collection of materials used in the 1991 Ziraat Training at the Abode of the Message.]



Jamiat Khas Ziraat gathering 2002



Ziraat Dances

The Ziraat Activity is 'order-blind'—i.e., initiations are recognized by kindred groups in Ziraat without regard to one's lineage. What is most distinctive about the activity within the Ruhaniat, is sharing from the transmission of Murshid SAM, especially with regard to practicing the Dances of Universal Peace, and Element Walks, as an integral part of the teaching.

The idea for Ziraat Dances first arose during an interview with Murshida Vera Corda in 1998, and moved forward with her gently confirming support.

Presented below is a list of Dances which can heighten one's attunement to Ziraat, drawing from a diversity of traditions and modern sources. Consider the list a work-in-progress (inevitably obsolete the day after printing) in memory of Murshida.

Ya Hu,
Vakil Forest Shomer

Dances can be referenced in the publications/recordings cited:

Original Dance Manual

Ya Hayy Ya Haqq Progressive
Allah To The Four Directions
Element Practices
Universal Worship Dance
Ahura Mazda
Temple Dance
Simple Gifts
Ya Hayy Ya Haqq Progressive

101 Foundation Dances

Ya Hayy, Ya Haqq
7th Aramaic Beatitude
(Planting Peace Each Season)
Shaddai
Yemaya

European Dances V. 2

Let My Heart Reflect
Celtic Blessing

European Dances V. 3

May The Road

U.K. Dances V. 2

Every Wave
There Is So Much Magnificence

U.K. Dances V. 4

Anu Dann Don Danaan
Neesa
Wishi Ta
Innana-Ishtar
Be Thou A Smooth Way

U.K. Dances V. 5

Wise Earth
Return To Love



Dances Of Universal Peace V. 1

Ya Hayy, Ya Haqq

Dances Of Universal Peace V. 2

Zoroastrian Sun Dance
Zoroastrian Elements
We Circle Around
Hey Ya Na Na
Kadosh, Kadosh

Dances Of Universal Peace V. 3

Wah Taho! Taho!

Dances Of Universal Peace V. 4

The Earth Is Our Mother
Beauty Way Dance
The Ocean Refuses No River
Mir Miru Mir
Ama Usum

Dances Of Universal Peace V. 5

Gopala
Spirit And Nature
Thou Holy Asha
Ungawa
Sha Noon
Goddess Cycle
Yemaya

I Open My Eyes To You

Children's Vows
Be Nice To Camels
Ishe Oluwa

Shakur

Mantra Of The Elements

Creation Dances

A Seed Of God
Every Single Creature
Greening With Life

All My Relations

All My Relations

New Sufi Songs And Dances

Song Of Trees
At One (With The Essence Of All)
Oh The Beauty

The Ocean Refuses No River (CD)

Pele
Water Of Life
For The Beauty Of The Earth

Published By Originators

Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz:

Native Middle-Eastern Cycle
(7 Earth-Based-Goddess Dances)
3rd Beatitude
Innana Lachma D'hayy

James Burgess:

Flying Bird
Mary Meet
Let The Wave Break
The Rocks The Stones And The Crystals

Anabata Iradah:

Chief Seattle Cycle



Unpublished or Publication Not Known At The Time of This Writing:

Johnny Appleseed Dance (Vakil Forest Shomer)
Earth My Body (Shemmaho Jephi Sioux)
Da Pacem Domine (arranged by Leilah Be)
Zuni Sunrise (In Hopi Language)
Ninaa; Niahuna ("We Circle Around" in Arapaho Language)(Selim Trunor)
Haqqallah Zikr
Ixchelle (Ayesha Lauenborg)
Taino Te (Madelain Bullock, Aotearoa/New Zealand)
Ubiare (Brazil)
Ancestors, Sky People
Te Aroha (Aotearoa/New Zealand)
En La Kesh (Mayan)

Most of the publications cited above can be obtained from:

PeaceWorks

P.O. Box 55994

Seattle, WA 98155-0994 USA

www.DancesofUniversalPeace.org

“Murshid SAM used to say quite often, ‘One of the purposes of the Sufi Message is to restore not the “ancient” but the eternal mysteries.’ Perhaps one aspect of the Ziraat work will be to resurrect the Nature mysteries of Pan, the Green Man, the Great Mother, and others.”

—Moineddin Jablonski (1997)





Correspondences for Use in Creating Rituals or Ceremonies

The following is a listing of correspondences based on the Seven Directions, for use in creating rituals or ceremonies. These are offered as examples from various sources and are intended to support personal inner guidance.

EAST

Season:

Spring

Element:

Air

Attribute:

Illumination

Resurrection

Clarity of Mind

Release of Pre-Conceptions

Animal:

Eagle

Color:

Gold

Blue

Life Symbol:

Baby

Birth

Angel:

Uriel (Ariel)

Wazifa:

YA ALIM

SUBHAN ALLAH

Retreat Stage:

1—Forgiveness

Chant:

Eagle Chant

Gemstone:

Amethyst Quartz

SOUTH

Season:

Summer

Element:

Fire

Attribute:

Innocence

Cleansing the Emotional Body

Door to Life and Death

Animal:

Coyote

Mouse

Deer

Color:

Red

Life Symbol:

Youth

Growth

Healing

Angel:

Raphael

Wazifa:

FAZ'L

YA HAYYO, YA QAYYUM

YA RAHMAN, YA RAHIM

Retreat Stage:

2—Ascending

Chant:

Wolf Chant

Gemstone:

Rose Quartz

Pink Tourmaline

Watermelon Tourmaline



WEST

Season:

Fall

Element:

Water

Attribute:

Introspection

Experience

Physical Body Healing

Animal:

Black Bear

Wolf

Color:

Black

Sea-Green

Life Symbol:

Adult

Full Development

Angel:

Gabriel

Wazifa:

YA BATIN

YA QADR

YA SHAFFEE, YA KAFFEE

Retreat Stage:

3A—Beginning of Introspection

Chant:

“Let Me Do Thy Will, O Lord”

Gemstone:

Citrine Quartz, Golden Topaz

NORTH

Season:

Winter

Element:

Earth

Spirit

Attribute:

Wisdom

Knowledge

Truth

Order

Animal:

White Buffalo

Polar Bear

Color:

White

Yellow

Life Symbol:

Old Age

Crone

Old Man

Angel:

Mikhael

Wazifa:

YA NUR

YA HAQQ

Retreat Stage:

3B—Culmination of Introspection

Chant:

“Quan Yin Bosai”

Gemstone:

Clear Quartz



UP

Element:

Grandfather Sky

Attribute:

Creation

Descending Energy

Animal:

The Garuda

Color:

Sky Blue

Angel:

Vakil

Prince Huraksh

Wazifa:

YA ZARIR

YA JELAL

Retreat Stage:

4—Spirit coming into Matter

Chant:

“Brother Sun, Sister Moon”

Gemstone:

Aguamarine

Blue Topaz

DOWN

Element:

Grandmother Moon

Attribute:

Spiraling Energy

Animal:

Turtle

Color:

Brown, Tan, Sand

Angel:

Zamyat

Wazifa:

FAZ'L

YA JEMAL

Retreat Stage:

5—Purpose of Life

Chant:

“Brother Sun, Sister Moon”

Gemstone:

Moonstone

IN

Element:

Ether

Infinite Sun

Attribute:

“BE”-ingness

Animal:

Rainbow Snake

Color:

Rainbow Colors

Angel:

Metatron

Wazifa:

YA QUDDUS

HU

YA KEMAL (Balance)

Retreat Stage:

6—Everything and Nothing

Chant:

“Toward the One”

Gemstone:

Diamond

(From an article in *Rainbow Bridge* magazine,
Mikail Davenport, Ed., c. 1990)



“Let me approach near to Thee
as I grow old.”

—*Hazrat Inayat Khan*, Nature Meditations

The burial of the body symbolizes the planting of a seed. Nourished by the love and prayers of family and friends, the atmosphere becomes fragrant with memories of times shared with the loved one on earth.

—*Moineddin Jablonski*, Sept. 10, 1998



Bardo Teachings: the Elements

from "The Process of Dissolution,"—Venerable Kalu Rinpoche

The physical body that we now experience is composed of five elements or five elemental qualities: earth, water, fire, air or wind, and space. Perhaps these seem like something very real or solid, but they are actually just projections of the mind, nothing real in and of themselves, ultimately speaking.

Regardless of whether we are thinking of them as something ultimately real or not, to a great extent our experience while in the physical body is due to the interaction of these elements. When there is a disturbance in the balance or harmony between the elements, there is a blockage of the flow of energy in the various channels in the body. This results in what we think of as sickness on the physical level, or depression or unhappiness on the mental level.

Just how these five elemental qualities manifest in the physical body would be explained as follows. The earth element is the solidity of the body, the flesh and bones, the solid parts of the body. The water element is all of the blood, urine, bodily fluids, all of the liquid parts which make up the physical body. The fire element is the biological warmth of the organism. The air element or wind element is the respiratory process which maintains the organism. And the space element is the orifice and cavities of the body, and also the spatial differentiation between the organs.

At a certain point, of course, this composite system is going to start to break down. The body begins to die. When this happens there is a dissolution of these elemental qualities, one into the other, from the grossest to the more subtle. So the process of this dissolution is earth element into water, water into fire, fire into air, air into space, space into consciousness and consciousness into voidness or emptiness...

...In the first case, when we speak of this solid element, the earth element of the body, dissolving into the water element, the external sign connected with the physical body itself is that of the body being extremely heavy... The body is completely heavy, and the person who is dying is unable to move the body. The inner experience is of being actually crushed, as though a huge mountain were being pressed down upon one...

When the water element dissolves into fire, the external sign is that fluids begin to leak from the body...One simply loses control over the body fluids. The inner sign or inner experience is of drowning in an ocean or being swept away by a huge river.

The next stage is the dissolution of fire into the element of air. The external sign which is perceptible to others is the gradual disappearance of warmth...From the extremities in towards the center of the body, heat is lost from the body. For the individual dying, the inner experience is of being consumed in a flame, of being in the middle of a roaring blaze or perhaps the whole world being consumed by a holocaust of fire.



The next stage is that of the element of air dissolving into space. The perceptible exterior sign is difficulty in respiration... The internal experience for the dying individual is of a great wind sweeping away the whole world, including the dying person, an incredible maelstrom of wind consuming the entire universe.

The next stage of the process is a more subtle stage of dissolution which takes into account that at the moment of conception the physical form is imbued with a kind of polarity of energy which is derived from the father <masculine force> and the mother <feminine force>...the white and red bindhu, two forces in the physical body that are part and parcel of the psychophysical organism.

With the meeting of these two forces in the heart region, the experience is as if the consciousness were being squeezed or crushed between them. This particular stage is connected with complete and utter darkness and the arresting of any thoughts...this the final moment of death...



May the element of space not rise up as an enemy,
may I see the realms of the blue buddha.
May the element of water not rise up as an enemy,
may I see the realm of the white buddha.
May the element of earth not rise up as an enemy,
may I see the realm of the yellow buddha.
May the element of fire not rise up as an enemy,
may I see the realm of the red buddha.
May the element of air not rise up as an enemy,
may I see the realm of the green buddha.
May the rainbow of the elements not rise up as enemies,
may I see the realms of all the buddhas.

excerpted from "Inspiration-Prayer for Deliverance from the Dangerous Pathway of the Bardo," in The Tibetan Book of the Dead (translated by F. Fremantle and C. Trungpa, 1987)

Essays, Commentaries, and Inspirations





Murshida Vera Corda



Ziraat

by Murshida Vera Corda

Ziraat is an inter-faced message. The outer fabric weaves a too brief outline with harvesting the fruits of the earth. The interfacing is the cultivating of the soul by individual workers under Allah's all-seeing eye. Ziraat enables the initiate to comprehend the qualities of the soul in every aspect of nature. By attunement of the breath while walking on Mother Earth and setting our sights on "Father Sky" we ground our beings to the planet. Through knowledge of the hydrologic cycle, seasons, and solstices, man learns how the veins of Nature circulate from earth's core through the vegetable kingdom. This exchange forever makes man dependent upon the exhalation of oxygen from foliage and the inhalation of carbon dioxide gas from our exhaled breath into the vegetable kingdom.

The substance of planet earth contains a spirit which the American Indian knew personally and revered. Because of this he respected and maintained the balance of Nature in all of the kingdoms: mineral, vegetable, animal, and human. The earth and its mantle can be compared to man's body and the skin which covers it. The core is the home of the Kundalini power carrying the base fire element by means of magma, exhaling its powers through volcanic action into the air element. Becoming conscious of the mystery of the Elements and Winds enables the spirit of the Farmer to develop and grow throughout the repeated seasonal transitions. The desecration of the earth's mantle by man insults the Spirit of Planet Earth and starves man of the magnetism which heals and sustains his soul.

No rock from earth's depths is without life for, as Murshid teaches us, "through (the rocks) pulses the blood of the Universe." The Experienced Farmer sees each layer of the earth as sacred as he works on the cultivation of his soul, ever "Toward the One." Within the rocky layers man finds the source and goal of evolution in the planet and in himself. As the gardener clears the soil of rocks, surrounding the area with his tillings and rakings, working around landmark rocks and maintaining the contours of the land, so he realizes within his heart the rock qualities of his own character. The Experienced Farmer knows that Mother Earth accepts our thoughts, our power to act upon her mantle, and our responses to protecting her. As Mother Earth does not think for herself, her rhythms are impaired by man's judgments and behavior. To protect, nurture and respond to her needs is the Farmer's first duty. When we respond to Mother Earth's rhythms we prove ourselves worthy as her caretakers. It is not by chance that the Rishi chooses to sit in a cave of rock upon the earth's mantle or that Murshid SAM knelt and gardened on his knees upon the earth. As the Ploughman follows the furrows he has made in life, West to East, East to West, each according to his makkam, so the body magnetism tunes to the earth's magnetic field. As the life force flows up the chakras revivifying and illuminating the spirit of the Ploughman, he can relate Mother Earth to Father Sky and Planet Earth to the cosmos.

Ziraat brings to the surface of the mind many lost memories that become meaningful as one ploughs the soil of the Soul. Recalling my early childhood in a Dunkard community where one observed the farmers planning the Spring sowing, their mysterious actions now become meaningful. First they removed their shoes and socks and paced barefoot from stone boundary marker to marker, stopping at each one and picking up a handful of soil, crumbling it, smelling it, tasting it with tip of tongue, then scattering the remainder to the four winds with an inaudible prayer. Years later I saw the last



of the Yosemite Indians in the Sierra Mountains of California doing much the same thing. As each stone was removed from the garden area, they scattered a bit of tobacco in that spot. Today in my valley I see the farmers of Swiss extraction turning to the four compass points and humming as they walk the rows planting seeds. On my great-grandfather's farm in upstate Schoharie County, New York, my father recalled seeing his grandfather shoot corn to the four winds from his rifle, "to scare any evil spirits away and allow the good spirits to work in his fields." Whatever the cultural background may be, at the core it is the awareness and respect for the spirit of the Earth Mother and the promised fertility which moves all such honoring and tuning to her divine qualities whenever the mantle is broken.

Hazrat Inayat Khan tells a story about a man who found a stone he called a magic stone, but in reality it was quite ordinary, only it often changed color and shade, especially when a particular person held it. "Even a stone responded to that person's mind and taught him that there was a great deal to explore and learn from the mineral kingdom." All ancient peoples knew this, and aborigines today still remember it. Modern man seems to have forgotten most of it.

The collecting of special stones, meaningful in color, form and texture, that the Farmer uses as boundary markers is important because once placed they become guardians of the land in the absence of the Farmer. In California there remain today many of the original Spanish Land Grant stone markers. They are still respected by modern land owners. No one will move those stones, even now. They are considered sacred. To the Indians they were spirit houses that guarded the land.

Jelal-ud-din Rumi taught us in his poetry: "God slept in the Mineral Kingdom, dreamed in the Vegetable Kingdom, became conscious in the Animal Kingdom, and realized himself in the Human Kingdom."

...Hazrat Inayat Khan warns us that modern man may question or ridicule certain superstitions of the past, present, or future, but in the Sufi Message we accept that there is one life in which the circulation is always pulsing. "If we are able to communicate with even one vein of this one life, then we are in touch with all the veins of the universe." It is the tuning to the land, becoming one with the magnetism of the earth and her many layers, that we become aware of this one life which binds man from the soles of his feet to the crown chakra touching Father Sky. When we lack this understanding, earthquakes and famines that we see today on the planet are the result. Disorder in the body of Mother Earth or Father Sky causes every part to suffer. The whole world feels the strain and pain. When we tune to Father Sky we hear the answer: "Every thing and being is put in its own place and each is busy carrying out that work that has to be done in the whole scheme of nature." So every stone raked from the garden bed by the Farmer becomes a border to the plot it was removed from.

The unity of life which exists between the Kingdoms is reinforced in the work the Farmer does in the magnetizing of the atmosphere by breath and thought power: more, as he nurtures and heals the Plant Kingdom, he also heals himself. We are One. Some Ziraat practices are valuable tillers of the soil of our soul. Starting with the earth walk is tremendously important. Use it daily in your garden walks as well as at times of planting, cultivating, or harvesting.



This is a slow, flat-footed, heel-toe walk in 4/4 rhythm. Breathe in 4 through the feet and out through the heart; or, in the second phase, breathe in through the feet to the heart, then exhale through the hands, which are held open and limp as though the fingers were dripping, so that the earth's magnetism is circulating through our bodies. One may add the earth movement as one walks: with the palms toward earth, moving in a slow, undulating ripple, like the horizon of a rolling plain. The movement is done left to right, then reversing right to left. Thus we imbibe the magnetism of Mother Earth and return with love and recognition the magnetism of our own hearts.

Then practice the earth breath: inhale the magnetism of the earth's core, pull it up through the feet to the heart, then exhale down the arms and out the hands via fingertips, back to the earth. This unites man to earth. Learn to heal and be healed by Mother Earth. Healing is performed standing. Concentrate on the water table beneath the earth, the minerals, the matrix, clay, sand, loam, and the mantle. Maintain the 4/4 rhythm. Pull the earth magnetism to the heart, then breathing very slowly on the exhalation, direct it downward and out the feet. At the same time, send your magnetism consciously through the palms, back to Mother Earth again with love and reverence.

The tillers of the soil who are depleted emotionally or physically may do this practice lying down on the earth's mantle, with palms down and eyes fixed on the infinity of Father Sky. Complete your practices as you inhale on count of 4 from the magnetic field above earth, hold 8, exhale 4 into mantle of the earth you're lying upon, with palms turned downward.

The earth is His and He made it and we are the guardians of the Garden of the Soul.

(Note: except where otherwise identified, quotations in this article are from Hazrat Inayat Khan. The terms Plougher, Sower, Farmer, and Experienced Farmer are grades of Initiation in Ziraat.)

*(This article appeared in the October 1985 NEWSLETTER
of the Sufi Ruhaniat International and is copyrighted.)*

“Man’s need for oneness with nature is not fulfilled simply by hiking or camping in nature, but by penetrating into the consciousness of the trees and the flowers, of the planet and the atoms, experiencing what it would be like to be that flower or tree and getting into the spirit of the wind on a landscape or of a musical note: in fact, switching to a totally different focus of consciousness, tuning into a transfigured world which, as the Sufis say, ‘transpires through that which appears.’”

—*Introduction by Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan
to the Nature Meditations*



The Meaning of Ziraat

by Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan (in The Message, May 1981)

While Freemasons have been celebrating their rituals of building “the temple”, the edifice which forms the cornerstone of present-day civilization with its emphasis on industry, Hazrat Inayat Khan foresaw that the day will come when humans will fall back on a still deeper juncture upon which all life is built: agriculture.

In so doing, he was giving the ancient mysteries (like Eleusis or the cult of Osiris) a new perspective. There would be no skyscrapers, no aircraft, no computers, and so on, if their builders, technologists and business executives could not rely on the farmers to provide the basic need of life’s sustenance: food.

In a crisis, we may discover how lucky we are to be able to rely upon a piece of land having its own water supply. These will, indeed, appear to be the greatest riches on the planet.

Going overboard in the industrial drive, humans lost their grip of the sensitivity of this live being, the Earth. Raped, hard-driven, overexploited, abused, Mother Earth yields denatured produce on the conveyor belt. The price we pay for artificial fertilizers, pesticides and pollutants has been widespread and alarming: endangered or even extinct species, and health problems culminating in cancer. As a result of the warning of the better-informed few, an age-old observance has now been raised into modern concept: in ecology a new consciousness is arising. It is this consciousness that Ziraat embodies.

Rather than a mechanistic instrument that can be manipulated at our whim and for our gain, the Earth exhibits all the characteristics of a sensitive, conscious being endowed with her own will and emotion and tendencies. As a fellow being, she exhorts in her interrelationship with humans. The magnetism of the human touch enhances the growth of plants from her soil (this is the meaning of “green fingers”). Her magnetism makes humans thrive, regenerates worn and run-down body tissue, and gives radiance to the mind. If our consciousness is high, we sanctify the earth as hierophants and shamans have done since the beginning of time. If we commune with her soul rather than extort her yield, she sanctifies us, making us whole, and therefore holy and healthy.

We have to know how to communicate with her, grasp what “transpires beneath that which appears” (as the Sufis say). Or, like the Zoroastrians, ask her soul whose body is the water of the river, for example, permission to bathe. Ask the soil, which is the body of the archangel of the earth, for permission to cultivate and prevail upon her produce. Make a tryst of mutual respect with her, as villagers do in Southern India with the cobras. Humans promise not to kill cobras, and the cobras refrain from killing humans; and it works!

The soil is glad to bestow upon us her produce providing we release some of it to her as compost or organic waste or even in the form of seaweed. The secret in triggering off a communication with the nature spirits is invocation, an age-old practice. It is plugging into the signature tune of each being or archetype, and observing a sensitive respect for the laws or principles that they represent and an un-

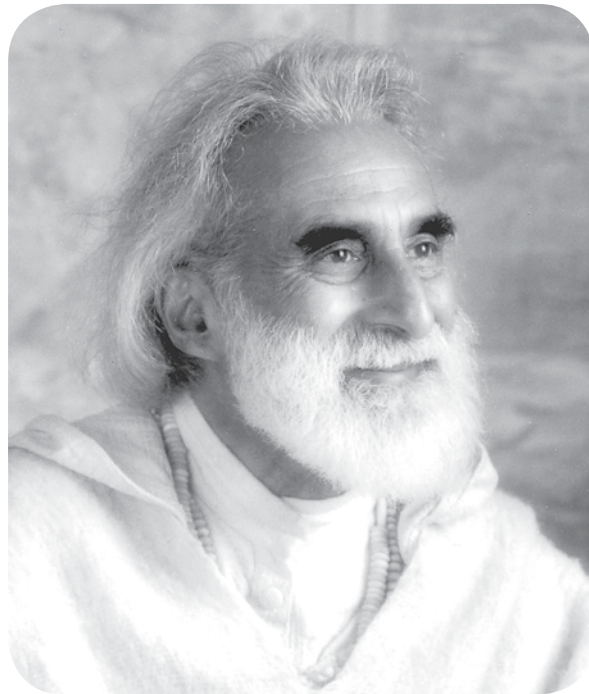


derstanding concern for their wishes. Luther Burbank observed these wishes by encouraging plants to grow in accordance with their natural trend instead of forcing them to conform to the human will.

Truly enough man's intelligence and will represents a further step in evolution. As Hazrat Inayat Khan says, "Man's creativity is the extension of the Divine creativity", but one has to learn how to coordinate one's will with these natural forces. This is like the surfer who takes advantage of the forward thrust of the wave to launch himself upon the next wave just as the former one is about to recede. One can harness the bountiful gifts of nature so that she will abound in still greater profusion without denaturing her, just as a horse will run faster when it is ridden than on its own, providing that the rider does not kill its spirit.

If one only knew what intelligence, what emotion, what beauty lies beneath the spectacular display of life on the planet, one would realize what one misses by reducing nature, considering it just matter. So much is gained by discovering and contacting this world of the soul, which has its correspondence in us, and comes through the forms and behavior of nature as the unwritten law of life. The silent voice of the Divine Presence, of the Divine Message, is whispered by all beings as they announce their names respectively as their contribution to the symphony of the spheres.

This is the meaning of Ziraat, and consequently it is for those who have the necessary sensitivity and are moved by respect for nature as a being in whom the Divine Presence and the Divine Intention are discovered.



Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan



On Ziraat

by Pir Zia Inayat Khan

(The following is a transcript of an introductory talk on Ziraat by Pir Zia during the Summer Camp at Tessin in the Swiss Alps.)

I will give a very broad introduction for those of you who are already in Ziraat and those who have not yet been initiated into Ziraat. This is an opportunity to become acquainted with this organization which was founded by Pir-o-Murshid.

To begin, I will say a few words about the history of Ziraat. It was founded in 1926 by Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan at the Suresnes Summer School. By the time he left for India, after which he passed to the other World, only five Ziraat lessons had been taken down. These five lessons were taken down by his disciple Siraj van Tuyll, and the subject of these papers was the symbolic cultivation of agriculture, but symbolic of the purification of the mind and soul.

The material for Ziraat is all in symbolic language, and as I said deals primarily with agriculture. There is a similarity between Ziraat and the Orders of Freemasonry and early European orders such as the Order of Templars, who also used symbolic language in a similar way: not of agriculture, but of architecture.

In fact, many of Murshid's original mureeds were members of these orders, especially of the Freemasons. Siraj van Tuyll who took down the Lessons from Murshid was himself a member of a Masonic order and informed Murshid on many of their secret ceremonies. So Murshid, being very interested in the symbolic language of Freemasonry—which represented stages on the inner paths—used similar concepts. There is significance, however, in the fact that he chose agriculture, not architecture. And no doubt this type of symbol concentration was not foreign to Pir-o-Murshid who, having been trained in symbolism in India, must have been familiar with them. We find many works of the ancient Sufis who used symbolic languages to convey messages which they did not want to be revealed to the uninitiated public. And examples of these symbolic treatises are Shahabuddin Suhrawardhi's "The Crimson Intellect" and "The Simurgh's Cry", plus many other visionary treatises, including the famous story of Avicenna.

And it is also known that the actual origin of many of these orders—Freemasonry and the Order of Templars—had their roots in the soil of Israel and gained momentum after the Crusades, when the Knights of Europe went to the Holy Land to fight, and encountered the Dervish Orders in the Middle East, carrying back much of the original doctrines of the ancient Sufis there. In fact, the Ka'aba of Mecca is the original prototype of the Temple by which the Knights Templar received their name!

al-Sirat

Even though Pir-o-Murshid was introduced to Freemasonry in Europe, he had already studied its foundations which lay further East. It is interesting that Pir-o-Murshid chose the name "Ziraat" for



this order. Perhaps the most familiar to all Europeans is the mentioning of the name Ziraat in the well-known lines of the poet Byron:

“By Allah. I would answer ‘Nay!’
Though on al-Sirat’s bridge I stood,
Which totters o’er the burning flood.
With Paradise within my view,
And all the houris beckoning through.”

Now this is certainly an allusion to Islam, for in the Qur’an we find the Muslim prayer “Ihdi-na-sirata-i-mustaqim” which means “lead us on the straight and narrow path.” These are words of the daily Muslim prayers. And also in the Qur’an we find the verse, the statement, that the bridge of Ziraat is finer than a hair and sharper than a sword.

So in the Qur’an the Ziraat bridge represents the straight and narrow path to heaven which has been called the ‘path of righteousness’, but the word Ziraat actually has older roots, for we find in the Zend Avesta of Zarathustra many references to the bridge of Chinvat. Now this bridge ascends from the peak of the Chicadi deity, meaning the “peak of judgment”, one of the many peaks of the Cosmic Mountain, Mt. Qaf or Mt. Albor. It is called the “peak of judgment” because it is on the dawn of the third night after death that one arrives at this peak. And it is when one faces what is called the lesser resurrection, as compared with the greater resurrection.

Thus when dawn strikes after the third night, striking the mountain Ushidarena (which is to be envisioned as made of pure rubies and glistening among the cosmic sea) it is imagined to be within the cosmic sea, whose waters are steeped with Xvarnah—the light of glory, that one faces one’s higher self, the angel Daena. She is seen as a luminous maiden who corresponds to one’s good thoughts, good deeds and good words. Daena represents one’s spiritual accomplishments that greet one at the gate of the next world and accompany one across the bridge of Ziraat.

It is interesting to note that in Zoroastrian angelology Daena is considered to be the daughter of Spenta Armaiti, the archangel of the Earth. So this means that just as we are the sons and daughters of the physical earth, so our higher being—our Daena—is also the daughter of the Earth, but of the higher being of the Earth. And the degree of luminosity of this archangel Daena depends on our actions in life. The nature of this judgment is put very well by Professor Henri Corbin:

“The vision that transmutes the Earth and the things of the Earth into symbols already inaugurates the restoration of the Earth in its paradisaical purity. The victory of the soul incarnated in terrestrial existence is measured by the degree of this restoration, that is, by the degree of the soul’s Xvarnah, of its growth toward its celestial existence to come, of its resurrection body, the substance of which, reciprocally, is made of that celestial Earth which is its actions and its work.”

So the angel Daena who is the one who crosses the bridge of Ziraat is of the world of symbols and archetypes. And apparitions such as Daena in this imaginal world possess dimensions and extend, but have no material substrata. Much like we can imagine the state of our dreams where we also find directions and forms, but no substrata. While we have been speaking about the Zoroastrian cosmology, we also find similar concepts in Sufism.



Shahabuddin Suhrawardhi & Ibn 'Arabi

In the teachings of Shahabuddin Suhrawardhi, who resurrected the ancient Persian knowledge of the Zend Avesta but updated it in the language of the Sufis of his time, this imaginal world is called the world of Hurkalya, and he finds reference to its two great cities, Jabalka and Jabarsa, in the Qur'an itself. This world or universe, he says, is on a term-for-term correspondence with our world, so that all of us and all things that we see have something corresponding to that in the imaginal world. There is where we would find the higher beings of the angels in Zoroastrian angelology.

For example, the physical Earth is only the icon of that archangel Armaiti. This imaginal world is also described by the great ancient Sufi Ibn 'Arabi. So, if I may, I'd like to quote a precious passage from the Revelations of Mecca:

“The world is two worlds and the presence (hadra) of two presences, even though a third presence is born between the two from their combination (majmu). The one presence is the Presence of the Unseen (al-ghayb); it has a world called the World of the Unseen. The second presence is the Presence of Sense Perception (al-hiss) and of the Visible (al-shahada); its world is called the World of the Visible. That which perceives (mudrik) this world is sight (basar), while that which perceives the World of the Unseen is insight (basira). What is born from the combination of these two presences is a presence and a world. The presence is the Presence Imagination, the world the World of Imagination. Imagination is the manifestation of meanings (ma'ani) in sensory frames (qawalib hissiyya), such as knowledge in the form of milk, firmness in religion in the form of a letter, Islam in the form of a pillar, faith in the form of a handle, and Gabriel in the form of Dihya-al-Kalbi, in the form of a bedouin, and imaginalized (tamaththul) to Mary as a man without fault. In the same way, a black color appears in the body of gall nuts and vitriol when the two are combined (in the process of making ink), though they did not possess this quality when they were separate.

This is why the Presence of Imagination is the vastest of presences: it combines the two worlds, the World of the Unseen and the World of the Visible. For the Presence of the Unseen does not embrace the World of the Visible, since no empty space (khala) remains in the former; and the same goes for the Presence of the Visible. Hence you know that the Presence of the Imagination is the vastest, without doubt.”

I think that this passage throws a lot of light on the symbology of Ziraat because it describes the conveyance of terms in this imaginal world by the use of its corresponding symbols. I see a strong similarity between the bridge of Ziraat which connects this earthly universe with the celestial spheres and the imaginal world which connects the world of sensory perception with the World of the Unseen. It has—as Ibn 'Arabi states in the above passage—imaginization which is different from imagination.

The word “imaginary” would be an okay term for what we are speaking of, but the way it is commonly used refers to fairy tales or other imaginative creations. We want to refer to the world of images and archetypes, but we do not want to use a word which would refer to “imaginary”, which would imply some sort of irreality.

So, according to ibn 'Arabi, imaginization rather than imagination is the mode by which we can transfer from the merely sensory to the unseen world. Thus the symbols used by Pir-o-Murshid



Inayat Khan in Ziraat, e.g. agriculture! This is an imaginal mode of working on our higher beings, using the symbolic process of cultivation. But I must say that it is not merely accidental that Pir-o-Murshid used the symbol of agriculture to describe the work on our inner beings. For he lived the beginning of the industrial revolution, and I believe he saw that the order of Freemasonry (and others of these orders) were behind this industrialization.

I therefore believe he foresaw the inevitable results of this industrialization and chose instead something more natural such as agriculture as the symbolism for his order! And indeed, much has changed since the time of Pir-o-Murshid, and we are facing an enormous ecological crisis. One statistic I heard which particularly struck me was that one species becomes extinct every 25 minutes! And I have also read in a scientific study that at the current rate of deforestation in fifteen years at least one-third of the world's total forests will be destroyed!

Pir-o-Murshid

So the bridge of Ziraat -which connects the physical world with the spiritual world- relates to both spiritual enfoldment and physical purification. I know that were Murshid alive today he would be a strong voice in the ecological movement; I know this just from reading his words on the intelligence behind nature. And if I may, I would like to read this beautiful passage on the intelligence behind nature which Murshid found manifested not only in organic life but in rocks and the Earth itself:

“Intelligence in its most dense form appears in things and in beings as radiance. From a mystical point of view, it would not be wrong to say that the freshness of the leaf, the color of the flower, the brightness of precious stones, and the expression of man's countenance are the light of intelligence in its dense form. No object can be visible without radiance. Although we need the light of the sun to make an object more visible to our sight, every object is radiant in itself. It cannot exist, it cannot be visible if it is not radiant. If we made a synthesis of all the things in the world which we have separated by analysis and called by various names, we could safely and rightly say that all things and beings are made of light, or that all things and beings are the manifestation of the light of intelligence.

What about the sun, the moon and the stars? There is intelligence in all of these. If the planet on which we live had no intelligence, it could not have intelligent beings on it. For what is nature? Nature is the development of the planet. The planet has developed into organic nature and has culminated in human beings, intelligent beings, and it still remains a planet.”

So perhaps if we came to recognize the intelligent being of the planet on which we live, we will hear her desperate cry for help. Murshid heard this and he says: “My deep sigh arises above as a cry from the Earth, and an answer comes from within as a message.”

I believe that Ziraat is a very large part of this message. And as Murshid says, the reply comes from within. So in the Ziraat Papers we do not find practical regulations on how to combat ecological problems of our time. Instead we find the cultivation of our inner self, because the only real solutions to the ecological crises facing our planet must come from within the souls and minds of those who are causing these problems! And this is why Ziraat is called Ziraat: it is a bridge or link between the outer world and the inner! (1990)



Ziraat

by Prajapati O'Neill

“For what purpose are we assembled here?
For farming.”

The realm of nature around us is a world of “sacred analogies.” Since its beginning, mankind has found in the processes of nature deep insights into him/herself and his/her activities. These insights have usually taken the form of symbols and myths. For example, the Eleusynian Mysteries of ancient Greece were based on the myth of Demeter, goddess of grain, and her daughter, Persephone, who was taken into the underworld for part of the year. During the absence of Persephone, Demeter was in anguish and the crops did not grow (winter). Thanks to the intervention of God (Zeus), Persephone is restored to the world of the living (spring, summer) during which time the crops flourish. Exoterically, this can be seen as a mystic reflection on the rhythms of nature and the cosmos, of which humanity is an organic part. It is a reflection on the rhythm of the growth of plants and crops of which ancient man was acutely aware and upon which survival depended. On an esoteric level, this myth came to be seen as a symbol for the spiritual growth of the individual and as a promise of immortality which one shares with the goddess by participating in this cycle of death and rebirth. The Eleusynian Mystery cult developed not as an exhortation to the practice of agriculture as the primary means of participating in this rebirth and resurrection, but rather it called one to the spiritual, initiatic path (the Mystery cult) through which one received a training and underwent certain ritual practices designed to bring about the realization and experience of immortality.

Another use of a symbol of nature is in Christ’s parable of the sower in which the seed (the Message) falls, some on the path some on rocky ground, some among thorns, and some on fertile soil. Exoterically, one might say Christ is offering advice to farmers on how they should plant. However, this is clearly not the purpose of this symbol, which has to do with the sowing of the Message and the response of those who hear it.

The beauty of a true symbol is that it explores something which is ultimately mysterious. It is rich with connotations, and it points to many possible meanings. A true symbol is not purely allegorical (with a one-to-one correspondence between the images of the symbol and that which is being expressed); it is always multi-faceted. The downfall of a symbol is a too literal interpretation. To say that the Eleusynian Mysteries are based upon a pre-scientific explanation for the cyclical nature of crops, or that Christ’s parable is about how one should plant grain, is to miss the real depth of the symbol.

Anyone who has studied the teaching of Hazrat Inayat Khan knows how deeply aware and keenly interested he was (in symbolism). Also, one is aware of how many of the early mureeds were members of esoteric “mystery cults”, especially the Masons. The Masons are “an international fraternal order, evolved from the medieval guilds of stonemasons. Members are bound to secrecy by an oath. It teaches spiritual morality and charity using the mason’s working tools as symbols.” (Autobiography, p. 561) In his Autobiography, Hazrat Inayat Khan speaks of the Masons as having grown out of the Dervish orders of the East which were encountered by the Crusaders, some of whom were secretly instructed in the teachings and rituals of the Dervishes. The Masons “sought exaltation by the



Masonic ritual supported by a long tradition, and avoided any disputes on religious ideals by keeping their lips closed and by a vow of secrecy... So the secret of the life of the meditative dervishes, expressed symbolically in the form of ritual, was brought to the Western world as a key to the mystery of life.” (p. 221) This idea of a secret society based on a symbolical ritual which leads the initiate into a higher level of realization is the inspiration behind the Ziraat.

As the Ziraat has been revived in the past decade, it has tended to be seen as a call for a re-attunement to the earth (ecological consciousness) and as an inspiration to more natural styles of living (organic agriculture, gardening, etc.) As mentioned above, a true symbol allows many interpretations and has implications and connotations at many levels. It seems very prophetic that Pir-o-Murshid would return to the realm of our most basic physical connection with the cosmos which the ancients always found in the realm of nature. We, in this day, see how this fits in with the need of our time to recover the sense of the interrelatedness of all realms of life and the necessity of recognizing the sacred quality of the natural world. We feel called to restore it to balance after so many years of neglect and abuse. It is clearly part of the awakening in our time. It seems obvious and appropriate to us that the symbolism of the Ziraat should be drawn from the earth and our interaction with it, rather than from some man-made or technological dimension of life today. However, I notice that in bringing out this connotation of the Ziraat, we have lost sight of what seems to be the most fundamental activity symbolized by the Ziraat, which is not farming the earth (to grow food), but farming humanity to develop the individual spiritually and through them to grow the Message in Our Time. I would like to offer a commentary on the Ziraat which highlights this dimension of the ritual.

“For what purpose have we assembled here?”

“For farming.”

The first thing which strikes one about the Order of Ziraat is that it is organized hierarchically on the basis of spiritual realization and function. The Owner of the Farm is God; the Great Farmer is the Pir-o-Murshid; the Experienced Farmer is the Murshid; the Farmer is the worker(s) in the Cause. The degrees of initiation correspond to different functions in the spreading of the Message, as well as aspects of the unfoldment of the individual.

The Plougher is engaged in the purification of the soil (the mind and heart of the individual and of humanity). In order to grow a crop, one must first root out all the old thoughts and impressions. “The first work of the Plougher (or adept) or seeker on the path is self-analysis. Once self-analysis has been made, the man has brought out from the soil of his mind all that was there... so that nothing either good or bad remains buried there.” “One’s own self is the plough; understanding (Jemal) and power (Jelal) are the two wheels of the plough (which is a symbol for the breath, prana). With this plow one works on the soil of the mind and takes away... all roots of flowers and thistles both, thus making the ground free from every kind of root and stone, making it softer and smoother, almost ready to sow the seed.” (Ziraat Lessons 2 & 3”, *Ziraat Papers*). The work of the Plougher, then, is purification and preparation. The watchword of the Plougher is toil, he must labor from sunrise to sunset, but “of this task one must not weary.” (“Method of Ploughing”, *Ziraat Papers*).

The other Degrees, which are not elaborated on, follow the sequence of the growth of the seeds (the personal, spiritual ideal and the Message) from sowing to reaping. The Harrower covers the seeds



with the thought of courage which the Sower has planted with hope. When the harvest is ready, the Reaper will cut the grain with joy, the Thresher will separate the grain with strength, while the Garnerer will store the fruits of the harvest with thanksgiving. Each of these stations has its own particular time and function. "There are ploughers in the field and there are reapers of the harvest. All are different, and one cannot do the work of the other, but all are working out His plan, and all are necessary to the others." (Ziraat Lesson 5, *Ziraat Papers*). Pir-o-Murshid is showing that each individual who has been called to the Message has their own particular work to do.

Pir-o-Murshid makes quite clear that it is the work of the Message at this time to sow: "To a little band of sowers has been given a handful of living grain." (Ziraat Lesson 5, *Ziraat Papers*). The primary concern is not with the harvest, but with this process of ploughing and sowing: "What does it matter if we worked and others became known. If we sowed and others reaped the harvest? It is our work, our mission to sow and leave the harvest to others to gather." (Addresses to Cherags, p. 32). The work itself is its own reward: "Greatness is in humility; wisdom is in modesty; success is in sacrifice; truth is in silence." (Gathekas for Candidates, p. 74) The farmer of the Message does the work and leaves the harvest to God.

The work of sowing the seed of the Message, within the individual and then, as an outgrowth, in humanity as a whole must be done in accordance with the mystical laws. This is why the knowledge of such things as the elements and the power of the breath are so important. The mastery of these forces is worth infinitely more to a mystic or a spiritual movement than a large bank account or huge endowment. The Ziraat is a way of awakening to a deeper understanding of the importance of these dimensions in the spreading of the Message.

Dialogue

Here Pir-o-Murshid describes the awareness of the Message and its growth which is required in order to work effectively. The worker must realize that it is God's farm and God's Message with which one is working. The farm is as long as time and as broad as space; the Message has always come in all times and it is meant for all of humanity. The growth of the Message follows the cycle of uruj-kemal-zaval. The preparation and sowing are done according to the developing rhythm (uruj) at day break, during the waxing of the moon. The reaping comes at sunset (zaval) when the cycle of work is completed. The farmer rests during the time of change from sowing to reaping (kemal), the midday when the sun has reached its zenith and during the period when the generative energy has been expended (the waning period of the moon). During the time that the farmer is not working outwardly, he works inwardly (watches) through meditation. The whole work is done with the confidence that good seed (the Message) cannot help but grow and that the rewards will be greater through doing this work than through any other activity.

Reception of the Laborer to Plougher

There comes a time when a mureed awakens to the real meaning and significance of the Message. At this time, one realizes that the only meaningful work in life is to serve the Message of God. One is called forth to join the many other hands engaged in this work. The work is hard, requiring all of



one's mind, all of one's heart, all of one's soul, and all of one's spirit, and yet the reward will come since this service destines one to "tread on the Path of Wisdom." (*Ziraat Papers*, p.13). One will be rewarded with "gold and silver" (*Ziraat Papers*, p.12) in the form of "the coin which is current in the North, in the South, in the East and in the West" (*Ziraat Papers*, p.12), which is the Message in Our Time.

Those who have seen a glimpse of the Message realize that the forces to bring about the return are now at work in the world. "The spiritual force that is pouring out on the world today is quickening every kind of seed in the human heart" ("Ziraat Lesson 5, *Ziraat Papers*). The Ziraat is really a mystery school made up of those who are engaged in the work of preparing themselves and humanity for the Message. Ziraat, then, is the mystery cult of the Sufi Movement and is the form for this esoteric work which is appropriate in our time (just as the Universal Worship is the appropriate form of religious worship). It is a ritual which seeks to awaken the spirit of Risalat (prophecy) in the participant. There is a tremendous sense of privilege in having been blessed with discovering the Message so close to its source. It is significant how many overtones the Ziraat has to the teaching of Christ in the spreading of the Message in that time. One can't help but feel that we are in very similar positions as the first generations of the disciples of Christ.

I hope through this meditation to inspire those who are currently working with the Ziraat to bring about into their work this dimension, as well as to awaken others who may not be connected directly with farming the earth to realize that they, too, are within the Ziraat as farmers of the Message. As Pir-o-Murshid said, "Faithfully it must be sown, surely it will be reaped; and the harvest shall be for the Sustenance of all who are hungering for the 'bread of life'." (*Ziraat Lesson 5, Ziraat Papers*). (1983; revised 1991)



Jamiat Khas Ziraat gathering 2003