



The Garden of Inayat

by Murshid Samuel L. Lewis

“People ask why don’t I do more for Buddhism. My tomato experiments have succeeded beyond expectations. My fertilizer experiments have brought excellent results. The people around the greenhouse are so cooperative and harmonious all around....”

—*Murshid Samuel L. Lewis, In the Garden*

The Garden of Inayat was instituted in the city of Novato, California, in the autumn of 1968. Plans were made for it to become the spiritual headquarters of a Sufi Murshid. This Murshid was Samuel L. Lewis, also known as Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti, and again as SAM, these letters being not only his usual nickname but also forming the initials of his spiritual sobriquet.

The Chisti School of Sufism has its headquarters in Ajmir, Rajputana, India. It is known for its use of music as an aid to spiritual development and in this country the Murshid has also added to it, dancing. The program has been very successful, drawing an ever-growing number of young Americans, mostly ex-Hippies.

Novato is located in the northeastern section of Marin County which is just north of San Francisco (and the Golden Gate bridge). The land is partly hilly, partly flat, characterized by ‘rift’ valley formations. The underlying soil is red adobe, of a terra cotta type, and the hilly parts are mostly covered by oaks. But there have been more pines near the Garden of Inayat, and this being at the bottom of a hill, has benefited from soil and silt deposits and a slightly higher pH. The good soil runs roughly about three feet deep.

While the temperature is roughly moderate all the year round, it is somewhat warmer in the summer (theoretically) and cooler and rainier in the winter than the land to the immediate south, and on the whole resembles that of Sonoma County which is to the north. This had once been chicken and grape country, but for various reasons, including the rise in land values, the whole functional structure has changed and Novato has become a prospering community of commuters.

When the khankah was established there was considerable flurry about “communes.” These have now largely disappeared, being basically emotional and often more concerned with what might



be uncomfortably called 'love-lust' rather than agape or 'love-love', the characteristic of the early Christians.

Sufis resemble these Christians in their emphasis and practice of heart-love and this has resulted in at least a successful flourishing commune (if one wishes to call it that) of spiritual devotees.

Sufis have preserved and practiced what has been called 'ancient wisdom.' This is very, very different from the hitherto prevailing hodgepodge of 'Oriental philosophies' offered to the public by a conglomerate mass of European or English educated savants. Their philosophies are no doubt most interesting and even practical, but they are not based on human experience, and Sufism is based on human experience above all else.

The real mystical philosophies regard the earth itself as living (cp. Chardin). We read in Psalm 24: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." Too often this has been applied to the rights of ownership rather than to its deeper meanings. For instance, the word *adamah* is mentioned in the 25th verse of the first Chapter of Genesis, just before the word Adam appears. These are really the feminine and masculine of the same root. We translate *adamah* as ground and Adam as man or mankind and so lose sight of their esoteric relationship.

The various scriptures of the world agree that there are three bodies; the various religions have de-emphasized this. We have added to the bodies of men, animals, plants and the earth itself, the lowest form of existence, the ersatz chemicals, thinking thereby we are adding life and actually we are depriving all of them—men, animals, plants, and the earth itself of living vitality.

In the actual evolution of plant-life on earth and then of the manifestation of animals, nitro-fixating organisms played a great part. We have still to study Algaeology so as to make use of nitro-fixating Algae for food or for soil additives.

The approach to organic gardening came from at least two entirely different directions: college laboratory research, and 'stoop-labor' on small vegetable farms in eastern states. But this was followed in later years by visits to many Asian lands and also to Egypt to study the agriculture and plant-life in general. This began with the hope that there could be plant exchange as a means of promoting international good-will and then more discrete examinations into food supplies; also the possibilities of desert reclamation.

The general acceptance or rejection of these investigations followed very closely Lord Snow's dictum that there are two cultures. In any event one has yet to meet any kind of agriculturalist or horticulturalist that rejected anything, and only a single scientist who did not assent, and almost unanimous rejection by publishers, writers, and 'social scientists' (so-called).

As a culture we are not aware of the importance of organic gardening in Southeast Asia; and the marked difference in social conditions in East Pakistan and Bengal generally contrasted with Burma and Thailand may be due largely to the proper understanding and use of 'manures' (in the larger sense). In any event, objective experience made one feel that one's garden should be organic. And believing that plants have subtle bodies only emphasizes such an approach.



Besides, the Young people of the NEW AGE have been leaning heavily to organics. So we started our place by adding organic soil conditioners and later liberal applications of Atlas Fish Emulsion. And our first understanding was the digging of a compost heap. We have already dug several, and the whole has been topped by manure; the composite will be spread on the land during the winter months.

None of the people at the Khankah have had farm experience and only one a little gardening. But all are anxious to get close to the land. Besides this we were only two miles from the now dismantled Olompali Ranch which also started out with manures plus fish emulsion and has turned out successful crops—their only successful venture.

Our own land is about 150 x 100 feet, but we also have use of the lot next door. Fruit trees, ornamentals, annuals, vegetable crops, herbs and some other plants were purchased. Generally the very instincts lead to proper planting in rows, hills, etc. Some mistakes have been made, especially in not transplanting lettuce rapidly with the coming of warm weather. Instinct tells one to plant the relatives of the wild growth, and it is not surprising that the crucifers have done marvelously. There has been so much Broccoli we have not even been able to give it away. The Squashes produce on the average of one good fruit a day. We have compared them with those on the market as to size, color and texture, and have been amazed at the difference. And our very first Zucchini, overlooked, was more than a foot long. Three crook-neck Squashes, selected at random for Atlas weighed, one four pounds, and two two-and-half pounds!

The Tomatoes have been so heavy on the vine that we intend to get a scale next year and measure everything plant by plant and crop by crop. And reading articles by Mr. Rodale in the course of this writing, one can assure you that the color, taste, fragrance, etc., are all excellent. (On the whole very little seems to be known of the production of the proper esters for taste and odor.)

This is only the first year and already both our Olive trees have a little fruit on them. They will be properly pruned in due course. And the one Fig tree has so much fruit we believe only one more is needed to give us sufficient fruit for the family.

The Beans have been a perpetual source of joy and wonder, and we have instituted a late planting. Parsley, and the Alliums do quite well, but root vegetables only fair. All our border plants are in excellent shape.

We have taken a picture of one of the Hollyhocks. These were self-sown. This one was over 13 feet high, and still growing in August! We shall collect seeds because this may be a 'sport'. We did not touch the soil here but did water with Atlas.

At this writing there are still some crops as Peppers and Eggplants which are just appearing.

Before starting this venture the writer was ill and the Chinese physicians warned against any kind of mineral intake—salt, preservatives, medicines, etc.; and from the real study of real Oriental philoso-

phies one knows one must feed the subtle as well as the physical body. And the writer, who is in his seventies, can at least attest with his own life and good health.

But this is only a beginning and we hope to have more scientific and less emotional reports later on.



The Maqbara of Murshid Samuel Lewis at Lama Foundation



Meditation Themes on the Watchwords in Ziraat

—compiled by Mikail Davenport, 1990

Introduction

This collection of Meditation Themes on the Watchwords of the Initiation Levels in Ziraat is designed for the use of Ziraat coordinators in preparing for, and use in, classes and/or ceremonies, and for Ziraat initiates in their spiritual growth. All excerpts contained herein are drawn from the esoteric teachings of Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan.

For example, a coordinator could use a theme relative to the new moon of a specific season. For instance, during the new moon of Spring, one could use themes from the Sower, as Spring is a usual time to sow seeds after the thawing of the frost of Winter. Coordinators should let their intuition be their guide, feeling that which deeply resonates in one's heart.

The purpose of this initial collection is to sow seeds which later will be harvested, and the chaff separated from the grain, within one's own consciousness.

Our thanks to Mikail Davenport, Chaitanya Gomez, Asha Kent, and Forest Shomer for planting the seed-thought of this collection into the fields of Ziraat.

May the blessings of God rest upon you, and may this collection of seeds from Pir-o-Murshid's "sower's sack" bear fruit, spreading the Message of Love, Harmony and Beauty to all who use them, and beyond!

Plougher

Watchword: "Toil" (Work)

The cobra can attract its food from a mile's distance, but man must toil with his hands for his daily bread.

Neatness in man's work and balance in man's actions show rhythm in him.

The question whether it would be advisable to so destroy the ego that others might take advantage of a refined person is answered by saying that it is not necessary that one should work against the ego, but one must control it.

As the work of an astronomer depends upon a telescope, and as it is necessary for him to keep the telescope as clean as possible, so it is necessary in the life of the mystic to keep the body in a fit condition.



The work of the Sufi is therefore to investigate the truth about all things or persons whom he likes or dislikes.

Very often it is most difficult for man to imitate fully the work which birds do in weaving their nests.

Very often one finds most learned and intelligent people unable to work as they wish and incapable of finishing a work which they have taken up.

When the mind is weighed down by anything, however learned a man may be, however capable and efficient, he can work but very little.

But after finishing the development of the willpower, then there comes a work, a duty that one has to perform toward God and toward humanity, by expending the thus-developed power of will.

The whole work of the Sufi, which he calls inner work, is towards soul-realization.

To do good is the work of the sage.

Naturally when a person is starting to accomplish a certain work and he happens to see beautiful flowers or fruits, that gives a promise of his desire being fulfilled, of its bearing flowers for him—the sign of success.

Even the animals are active, even they work for what they need in life.

It might seem hard work to empty one's heart of all bad impressions and ill feelings, of all bitterness and evil thoughts, and yet it is not nearly so hard as the task of earning one's daily bread. The work in one's everyday life takes most part of the day, the emptying the heart of all undesirable things takes but a few moments' silence.

We must work in the capacity of brother and sister to everyone.

And if we each considered our share of work in the Message and showed it by our own example in the world we should be doing a great duty toward God and humanity.

Therefore the way of Shiva was always to work against one's weaknesses.

The mind must be allowed to work normally with every action.

Noticing the steps toward the goal is the work of intelligence, and this helps to make the work of patience fruitful.

The force which is given at the commencement of the work must last till it is finished. When doing some work, we must try and keep our mind on it, not allowing it to be attracted by anything, however important and attractive it may be.



The physical mechanism of the body is so arranged that its health depends upon the regularity of its work, and regularity depends upon the soul, which possesses the body as its vehicle.

When exhaling, one's feelings and thoughts first work on one's body, then on surroundings.

There is a part of one's life which only could be called life; there is no other name appropriate for it, and the English phrase "to pull oneself together" means to set that part of life to work. People make concentration as a part of their everyday work, but mystics make their everyday work their concentration.

Yet the man who ignorantly strives after something and wrongly goes to work about it, ends in disappointment—disappointment not only to himself, but even to God.

If you did under the influence of Jelal the work that suits Jelal, and under the influence of Jemal that which suits Jemal, and under the influence of Kemal what suits Kemal, life would become much easier and better worth living.

The work of the mind is like playing ball or shooting at a target, for in this the first thing necessary is that one should have strength in one's arm to throw the ball or hold the gun steady. When one knows how to handle it and how to work with it, he has attained the Kingdom of God.

Work gives experience and experience gives confidence; and faith becomes firm when it is built by experience and strengthened by confidence.

Without a definite purpose, a work has not much use or value, and the efforts are often wasted.

The true work of the Sufi is not only to attain to God-consciousness but to make this realization absorb more and more of life.

The universe is a mechanism; we all have to work through that mechanism.

What is necessary is service done, for our own satisfaction that the work is done that has been given to us.

The work of the Sufi, therefore, is to stop and think before being annoyed and see what is the matter with a person, to find out what is at the back of it, to find out where is the sore, where is the wound which is hidden. Then his work is to wash that wound with the water of life and then try to heal it.

Only patience is required and a continual work with faith and confidence in the divine power of love.

We, at the same time, do not work for success, we work for the sake of the work.

Once a person starts to work in the cause of God and humanity, he does not consider himself.

Every mureed has to share its burden, every mureed is counted, however humble his work.



What is goodness, piety or orthodoxy without wisdom, without thoughtfulness? What does a good person accomplish by his goodness if he is not able to give a pleasure, a happiness by what he says or does? Of what use is his piety or spirituality if he is not creative of happiness for those who come in contact with him? It is therefore by tactfulness that we begin our work of healing ourselves and others.

Many work at a building, but the architect makes a plan.

Desire for work is not enough.

There is one single Cause behind all things, constantly working as an engineer would work the whole machinery.

We shall work together, we shall stand hand in hand to do the service to humanity.

From the moment that one has recovered the sense of the objective world, after sleep, one must begin to become conscious of one's meditation, so that meditation does not become a part of one's everyday life but a continual work.

The path of freedom is an ideal, to understand the real meaning of which is not everybody's work.

The greatest privilege is that we are allowed to become human beings, that we are allowed to be under the sun; to feel there is something to reach to, and that life has allowed us to work in the field of service.

A mystic's work is to play death from beginning to end.

In doing spiritual work one is always seeing friends, pupils, and strangers, with their different ideas, people of different dispositions in their various moods, and the spiritual worker has to expose himself to all natures.

The whole work of Sufism is to rise above Nafs, the little self.

Harrower

Watchword: "Courage"

The idea of the Sufi is always to suggest to oneself that which one wishes to be, that which one would like to be; and when he finds he failed to think, speak or act as he wishes to, he must think the condition of the process is to fall several times before one gets one's balance, instead of thinking, "It is my weakness, I cannot do otherwise." Those who walk toward the perfection of power and wisdom take every step forward with a new hope and new courage; and weakness, to them, was a story of the past, it does not exist any more, they don't recognize such a thing as existing.



A gradual progress, step by step, is advisable in concentration, which should be carried on with strength, courage, and patience.

A person with temper is Jelal; with courage, is Jelal; with power, with strength is Jelal.

A weak voice conveys an idea of timidity, a gruff voice shows a roughness in nature, a high pitched voice shows a higher reach of thought, and a deep voice shows a greater depth of mind, the resonant voice shows courage and power, and a soft voice refinement of personality.

All the courage and bravery that the commander has in his heart he expresses in his command. His word does not convey to his army only its meaning, but it imparts to the whole army his bravery and courage.

It is therefore that joy and sorrow and courage and confidence and confusion and trust and faith, all these things can be read in the eyes.

All that is necessary as conversation is a word of consolation to the downhearted, a word of courage to the weak, a word of sympathy to the suffering heart, and a word of enlightenment to the seeker.

Sower

Watchword: "Hope"

Therefore there is hope for the believer, but the case of the unbeliever is hopeless. There are souls who are capable of believing, even capable of understanding their belief, who yet for some reason or other are not willing to believe and reject a belief before the understanding comes.

Things that we have not attained to we look forward to, and hope to attain; ideals that we wish to reach we expect to reach some day.

Hope is a quality sometimes dependent on its object, sometimes independent of it, and these two different aspects of hope are the cause of two different natures, the optimistic and the pessimistic. When the dependent nature is developed it makes man a pessimist, and when hope stands alone, without dependence, this develops optimism.

Hope cannot be called sureness of certainty, but it is a feeling which, almost by its own force, may bring sureness and certainty.

Hope dependent upon reason is weak, and the more dependent the weaker it is.

No doubt hope together with reason is strong, perhaps stronger than hope alone, but in proportion as reason supports hope, so hope depends on reason, and as in many cases in life reason cannot reach the object of hope, hope then sinks.



In fact hope is more than a faculty or a quality, hope may be called the substance of life.

Wise and foolish, rich and poor, all live in some hope.
Hope can prolong life and lack of hope can shorten it.

The joy that one gets from hope is greater than the joy that comes from the possession of the object hoped for.

The interpretation is that out of all things that are beautiful and that give joy and happiness the essence is taken and that essence is hope.

Hope is strengthened by reason, but it stands on the foundation of patience, for it is possible that in spite of all reasons a person may completely give up hope, if patience is lacking.

Reaper

Watchword: "Joy"

Think what joy trust brings, and what a feeling of suffocation doubt brings! When a person does not trust another that means he has no confidence in himself; he is not happy through this.

The joy that one gets from hope is greater than the joy that comes from the possession or the object hoped for.

All impressions of joy, sorrow, fear, disappointment, become engraved on the mind.

As all that is foreign to the body does not agree with the body, making it ill, so all that is foreign to the mind disturbs the peace or the mind, and it is that which proves that it does not belong to the mind: such things as worry, anxiety, fear, sorrow, or any sort of disturbance that takes away the tranquility of the mind, preventing it from experiencing that joy and peace for which it longs and in which alone is its satisfaction. There are many who do not know the importance of keeping the mind in a pure and harmonious condition, and the few who know it find it difficult to bring about better conditions in practical life.

That mind is pious which fears not, which is beyond life's anxieties and worries, which is above reproaches, which by its innermost joy makes even the body feel light.

There is an inner joy, a divine feeling, which rises up as water from a fountain and shows itself in many forms, in smiles, in tears, in words, in silence; the water which remains still in the depth of the fountain sees itself rising and falling within itself, and there lies its joy.

The spirit which rises upward is the soul, it falls again in its own being, and the realization of the spirit of this joy can alone be called spirituality.



Besides having one's wish granted, the joy of giving another happiness, that itself is greater than a wish granted, if one has risen to that plane of human evolution when one can enjoy pleasure with the pleasure of another, when one can feel satisfaction in the satisfaction of another, when one can be happy in bringing happiness to another.

In the lifetime of Jesus Christ the beauty of the Master's wonderful personality and the great intoxication of His presence and the constant outpouring of the Message that He had to give was so much for his disciples that it was beyond what may be called a joy or a happiness or something which is explainable, and all the blessing that they received and experienced during His presence was covered by the Master's personality.

Mind and soul both produce joy and wisdom.

It is by the breath that one contracts illnesses, but also one absorbs defects and the depression of others, as well as joy and happiness.

It is impossible to have no sorrow, but we want balance in sorrow and joy.

When too much joy and no sorrow then life becomes monotonous.

Therefore, if there is a response, one helps life to give a little joy, then the life will give one a little joy also.

Many have the defect of thinking at the thought of every coming joy, success, or pleasure, "Perhaps it is too good for me; I am afraid it will never happen." They wipe off the possibility by the mere suggestion. All illness, misery, failure, joy and sorrow in life can be attracted and repelled by the power of suggestion.

When this spirit is lacking, energy is lacking, intelligence is lacking, joy is lacking, rest is lacking; and when there is this spirit, there is hope, there is joy, there is rest; because the nature of this spirit is to hold intact the body or atoms and vibrations.

The joy of the original thing is different from an interpretation.

The joy of all things is in company.

Everything in this life has its joy, pain, or pleasure.

Neither nature nor art can give you sufficient joy if there was no one to share with you your joy.

To help others spiritually only means to exchange our joy, to share the beauty of spiritual ideas with another. There is nothing more interesting in life than this, if one only has the right notion of it.



The human heart is like to the sky, where the changes of light always take place—sometimes daylight and sometimes night; sometimes a joy rises like the sun, and sometimes the joy sinks like the sunset.

It is therefore that joy and sorrow and courage and confidence and confusion and trust and faith, all these things can be read in the eyes.

And in the expression, the slightest humor shows the joy and courage and strength, pleasure, happiness, love and affection.

You can at once feel the peace of mountains, the joy of the trees, and the harmony of water; at once you can feel.

Man's real being is joy itself and man seeks for joy by all different ways, by gaining wealth, power, renown, greatness, or by seeking for pleasures, comfort, by being good or virtuous, pious or spiritual.

In different forms, according to his particular evolution, man seeks after joy.

And yet ninety-nine out of one hundred can say in this world, "The more we pursue joy the further we seem to have been removed from it." Coming to the cause of the lack of joy, one realizes by pondering on the subject that it is not pursuing after joy that results in disappointment, it is the wrong method adopted in the pursuit of joy which brings, instead of joy, sorrow or disappointment.

Nothing can take away joy from the man who has right understanding. Through all conditions of life he will retain it, but the one who lacks understanding, nothing in the world or Heaven there is which can bring him a lasting joy. This shows that, in reality, joy does not come from the external life, though always it seems so.

Joy has only one source and that is the heart of man, which is the globe over his soul's light. It must be remembered that the heart is the source of joy and if it was only kept pure and glowing then joy would always be yours.

It is the joy that we feel at experiencing all the beauty and our horizon of a sublime vision being every day wider.

The complete joy is in sharing one's joy with another.

Thresher

Watchword: "Strength"

Lack of proportion of the body, in form and strength, is also caused by lack of order in the breath.

No doubt it is difficult for many to discriminate between right and wrong, but by standing face to face with one's ego and recognizing it as someone who is ready to make war against us, and by keep-



ing one's strength of will as an unsheathed sword, one protects oneself from one's greatest enemy, which is one's own ego, and a time comes in life when one can say, "My worst enemy has been within myself."

Breath being the life-power, it is the same life-power which gives man strength to endure all things.

The purity of the body is more desirable than bodily strength.

It only means that one prepares, before developing will-power, knowledge and strength to control it when it is once developed, and the knowledge and the clearness of vision to utilize it rightfully.

No doubt the imagination of a man with a powerful mind will also have an influence and an outcome; but thought, intentionally directed, has strength of will with it, and therefore its power is great.

The strength of will with which he is going may be exhausted in answering Why and Where, and then he may not find the energy and power to accomplish what he is going to accomplish.

This is the reason hidden under most of the illnesses and weaknesses; every mistake, failure, and every disappointment in life has this reason behind it: the lack of control, the lack of steadiness and strength against the disturbing influences which come from within and without.

A clear conscience gives the strength of a lion, but the guilty conscience might turn a lion into a rabbit.

And it is weakness on the part of the spirit that allows it to descend, and it is strength of the spirit that allows it to go on in its journey.

The thought is created out of breath, the word is manifested out of breath, and action is done by the strength of breath.

Vibrations are that which becomes audible, and atoms are that which becomes visible. So it is with the breath; the breath which flows through the right nostril is Jelal, which represents strength.

During this time, the strength with which the Jelal and Jemal hold our affairs is exhausted, and it brings failure and destruction.

The Jelal aspect shows the strength and power of nature.

A person with temper is Jelal; with courage, is Jelal; with power, with strength is Jelal.

For it is the nature of activity to become more active every moment; for it is the activity itself that produces energy, and the consequence is that by so producing energy, its own strength throws it out of its normal rhythm. This one can see in the burning of the fire.



When consciousness of wealth makes one feel rich, and when consciousness of strength makes one feel strong, how much stronger and richer he should feel who is really God-conscious!

Very often a person fails to obtain success with all his enthusiasm and power and will, and the reason is that either by the power he has he pushes along his object like a ball, or with his strength he hammers the rock, which he really needs as a whole and not in pieces.

At the same time the power of impulse is a great power; the person who has no strength in his impulse must certainly lose.

The work of the mind is like playing ball or shooting at a target, for in this the first thing necessary is that one should have strength in one's arm to throw the ball or hold the gun steady. This strength can be developed by concentration.

If strength is needed, strength comes from God; if love is required, God is love; if one must perform justice, God is Judge and Forgiver.

And every time when the will withdraws an impulse, the will is charged with a new strength and life, which makes the self-mastered man master of all.

For the tendency of that ego is to swim against the tides; it is strength of ego. Against this strength Christ has said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." It was the same strength of mentality which kept some Jews to their own belief, even being impressed by the personality of Christ; and it is this power which has in most part stood against the Messenger, building a wall of fortification between the Messenger and the souls who long for guidance.

You must ask yourself, "Is it my real feeling? Is it telling me to do it? Is my sense of justice satisfied with it? Is my reasoning in accordance with it? Is my deepest feeling in harmony with it? Is there any conflict with myself or is it all smooth?" If all is smooth within all is smooth without, the way is open, it is all clear. Then you only have to have faith, trust and courage to go forward in the strength of the goodness of God.

There are several supposed causes, but in reality the true cause of disease is weakness, while the cause of health is strength. Thereby is not meant physical weakness or strength only, but strength and weakness on all planes of existence.

Feeling of harmony, feeling of peace, feeling of independence (intelligence); feeling of ease and comfort and strength, it is that which can be called real happiness.

Our strength is not our pride, our strength is our conviction.



Garnerer

Watchword: “Thanksgiving” (Gratitude)

The best way of taking advantage of this opportunity that we have of living under the sun, is to do our best to bring pleasure to another in thanksgiving.

No meditation, no study, nothing can help in that direction except one thing, and that is to keep our eyes open to appreciate every little privilege in life; to admire every little glimpse of beauty that comes before us; to be thankful for every little love or kindness or affection shown to us by young or old, or rich or poor, by wise or foolish; and in this way to continually develop the faculty of appreciating life; and to devote one’s life in thanksgiving.

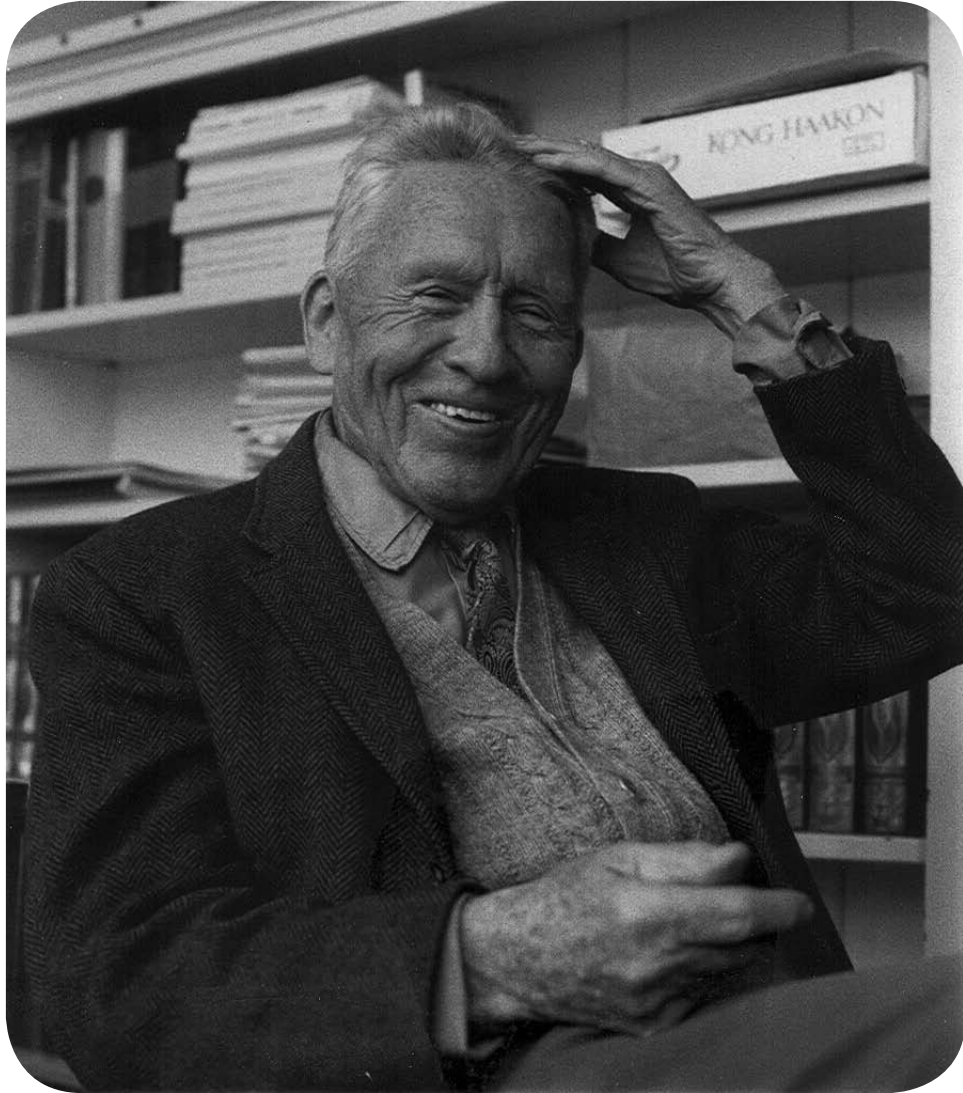
If, in speech and action a person shows a friendly attitude, love and kindness, the activity is mobile, and every impulse prompted by this activity will manifest in the form of gentleness, generosity, gratitude and goodwill.

There are many to whom one is indebted for their help, kindness, protection, support, for their service or assistance, and there is nothing material in the world, neither gold nor silver, which can express the gratitude so fully as a real respect can.

For the Teacher, one has gratitude, but love and devotion is for God.

“Unfold Thy secret through the nature
and reveal Thy mystery through my heart.”

—*Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan, Nature Meditations*



Shamcher Bryn Beorse

“We are constantly being bamboozled as to what is the truth. The Koran, any scripture is only a version. Nature is the only scripture.”



Nayaz, an Interpretation

by Shamcher Bryn Beorse

BELOVED...”

You stop, think, feel after that first word. Who is beloved? By whom? Without waiting for any answer yet, you let this one first word float enticingly in space and inside you, embracing you, bit by bit assuring you that every atom component of your body, of your surroundings, is beloved and loving; also the tiny thought components of your mind, feeling components of your heart. So your morning is new, your whole day is new and fresh, lovely and beloved! Cascades of fluid love course through your veins, circulate through your nerves, make you new and whole and incomparable and interlocked and interjoyed with all; with your friends and so-called enemies; with the whole.

And who is so compassionately loving all these atom components and thought and feeling components and friends, enemies and stars?

That lover must be whoever or whatever created all these things and beings, for why, otherwise, would It have taken on this gigantic task?

Who is this creating giant? Looking deeply into myself, could I possibly be involved? Being both creature and creator? And what shall we call It? The second word of the prayer suggests:

“LORD...”

It is a much used word for this sort of thing and, perhaps, it is a good idea to use familiar words, and let any new aspect we want to introduce be expressed by associations and environment. For example, the word LORD alone may be a bit scary like a servant would feel toward a rude and abrupt lord and master. But after our loving introduction in which we identify with this new Lord, he has taken on the close and dear look of one who is already part of us, closer than a brother, sister, or lover.

Come the third and fourth words.

“ALMIGHTY GOD...”

If those two words had come first, there would have been a distance; cool, possibly insurmountable! We made the acquaintanceship the right way through a lovely being and beloved Lord whom, we now find, is the very same as the Almighty God, whom we did not know before because we had kept Him on a pedestal, high and dry and remote! Now we begin to suspect we ourselves are part of Him and He of us.

“THROUGH THE RAYS OF THE SUN...”

That mighty sun! Hot, beyond imagination, but its heat diffused so we can enjoy it and benefit from it—what a magnificent sign and symbol of the mighty Creator! So, also, thought many of the old-timers, who by scholars are now classified as “sun-worshippers”—a term encompassing a greater variety of wisdom, knowledge and maturity than our encyclopedia convey. In this morning prayer our magnificent sun becomes creature, creator—and self.



“THROUGH THE WAVES OF THE AIR...”

The air is what we find around the earth. It belongs to Earth, clothes earth in an evanescent veil which diffuses the sun rays, protects us and Earth from their stings and lets through what we need. The whole Earth is a sun dependency and the Earth is us and we are the Earth—more so than is often understood. More mighty suns and more dependent planets with vast spaces between them form the universe. The following words of the prayer are:

“THROUGH THE ALL-PERVADING LIFE IN SPACE...”

Yes, LIFE pervades all space and that life is creature and Creator. It created us and so we ask “through the rays of the sun, through the waves of the air, through the all-pervading LIFE in space, purify and revivify us and heal our bodies, hearts and souls...”

Even though we are in and of that LIFE, and one with it; yet, at this point in the prayer we dualize ourselves and think of that LIFE IN SPACE as coming to us (even though we are it) and purify, revivify and heal us. It sometimes is a little easier to think of it that way. In fact, it is so much easier that most religions and their sects today think only in dual terms and have forgotten the next essential step for each one as he is ready—the step to THE ONE of which each of us is a part, and potentially, the whole.

Through this morning prayer that vital step has been brought back into use. From the first whispered “Beloved,” one surrenders oneself to the creative forces and, in response, a flow of new, fresh life pours into you and “heals our bodies hearts and souls.” You know and feel that you are a new and whole man or woman.

(This commentary first appeared in Rainbow Bridge magazine, 1989.)

NAYAZ, revisited

(An inspired variation that came to Shamcher)

Beloved One,
Who plays in the rays of the Sun and through the waves of the air,
I see you
and I feel you
in Nature, in others, and in myself.



Toil

by Murshida Vera Corda, 1990

From the 8th millennium B.C. when the New Order began on earth with plowing, seeding, reaping, unmowing and harvesting the crops, Great Good Mother Earth became man's provider and sustainer. Only civilization has made us forget and forsake this gift of the Spirit.

The first stage is in remembering again the Source from which the Soul came. Determination re-establishes the goal as self-mastery and order now demand the commitment of each person on the earth plane. The illusion that we inhabit the surface of Mother Earth only, separate and unbelieving that from her dust we came and to her dust we shall return, causes us to toil. Just as the community of man developed through staying-put, tilling the soil, sowing, cultivating, growing and harvesting, so individually an awakened man consciously progresses in Spirit through this evercycling process in life, as he or she inhales the magnetism and cultivates the field of self.

To toil, one must be committed to a goal, or one would give up the first day. Toiling is a pattern of life monitored by the rising and setting sun, focused upon cultivating the soil of self and rewarded by self improvement. In the process one must be willing to break the crust, clear out the foreign matter, break up the clods of unknowing and ready the being for new life.

Because toil is hard work, self committed, it makes man sweat out the impurities, cleanse the glands and transform the channels of breath. The sense of accomplishment resides in each day's work accomplished. At times, the field seems endless as one plods along seeming to drag one's feet. Only in looking back at each day's work is it possible to see the miracle of what one has attained in preparing the field for change.

Viewing the fields on the surface only, the general effect of Mother Earth is seen. Seeking the quality of that soil as the farmer holds the clod of earth within his hand; crumbling it, smelling its aroma, tasting its clay, its color and texture, Mother Earth becomes a Being. The knowledge of her body relates to our own with its solid outer form. The hard granite and basalt of that crust must be broken through. Here the minerals are found and the elements exist. Beneath this crust the black magnesium iron silicate of the mantle are discovered with their great strength and rigidity, the qualities which drive us to toil on, even as we hold on desperately to the rigid patterning that must be broken through. And at the core, the dense iron and nickel, the solid foundation of our character is perceived.

To know that beneath our feet this exists is to give reason enough to the toil and tears one must go through to break through the crust, discover and nurture the elements of our bodies and attain the core of our being. The toil, the sweat, the aching muscles and objecting nerves, the tears, are the price we pay to enter at the toll gate. How smooth the Path that toil has made possible, how grand the view, how deep the realization that if we injure one part of her crust we desecrate a part of our own being! Slowly, we learn that toil purifies and transmutes the base ores to fine, shining metal of beauty and strength that is immortal.



When Mother Earth becomes a living, pulsing being with magnetism, emotions and attributes comparable to that which we embody, there can no longer be separation and desecration. For this we toil, for this we labor. In reality, we are One—Love Harmony and Beauty, through the seasons of our lives in Her, and of Her.



“We never arrive;
we are always enroute in life’s experiences.”

Murshida Vera Corda—Nov. 18, 2001

INVOCATION

Beloved Ones,

*Being as we are the Master Gardener's own seed,
may we resolve:*

*To allow the Creative Will to guide our
individual & collective actions, as we
are preparing the Garden for the
seeds to come &*

*Being as it is our hearts' desire to bring forth
a little of this Mastery in our own gardening,
may we resolve:*

*To consecrate all of our sowings & reap-
ings, in joy & thanks, in the rememb-
rance that it is the Master's Power
alone that gives these little lives the
Strength to grow &*

*Being that we truly wish to behold perfection in
all that grows in the Garden of our lives
may we resolve:*

*To convey the Master's Blessing to all
of our co-inhabitants in the Garden,
be they rooted, walking, or winged,
recognizing the Divinity of all &*

Peace & Love, Be With You

© Abundant Life Seed Foundation, 1982

by Vakil Forest Shomer



Tree planting at the first Federation gathering



Some Thoughts on the Ziraat

by Shahabuddin David Less

The one thing that everybody should know at the outset is, there is no definition of Ziraat. In reality, we can't say that Ziraat is this, this, this, or this. It is a work in process, and in progress right now. If you want more finite boundaries for the Ziraat, then just stay with the process, and the being of the Ziraat will emerge through us. We are creating the Ziraat, however. I don't even know if we're co-creating it, as they say. I think...that the Ziraat is fully created, and fully existent; just not manifest. Perhaps we are some of the instruments through which the Ziraat is manifested.

However, there is—I believe there is—a Being that is quite alive and quite healthy and quite vigorous, that has been lying beneath the earth for many years and is now beginning to emerge. I think... also that it is presumptuous to believe that we will create the Ziraat, and I have seen again and again, in my tenure at least, that as soon as we believe that, we get into trouble because the Ziraat seems to be different. This is the way this vision is choosing to manifest. I didn't have that vision nor did you have that vision. Hazrat Inayat Khan had a vision, and he saw something very, very clearly, and he also saw the rhythm. As you know, he was a very great musician; he saw the rhythm of this Being, the Ziraat, and therefore, instead of leaving a great tome for us to look at, there is no work like that. There are just a few symbols that were left, and even the symbols were very hidden for many years, and they're just beginning to manifest now.

Nevertheless, his vision was not incomplete. It was just a question of rhythm. It takes a certain amount of time before something can manifest in its own rhythm, and yes, we are approaching that period of time when the manifestation will begin. And I'm sure that many of us will believe it's coming through us, but it really isn't. It is, you know, and we just happen to be watching and observing.

Now, I don't want you to feel that that puts us in a limited role. In one sense [though] it's wonderful if you can feel that it puts us in that role, because it immediately diminishes our ego...I sympathize with many of us who really would like to know more. I do, I sympathize, because I'd like to know more, too, but all I can say is that it's becoming more apparent. It is becoming more revealed. And the other thing which I find so incredibly beautiful about the Ziraat, is that it is not revealed hierarchically. At least, I haven't seen it be revealed that way. Yes, we have these initiations; yes, they're relevant, and they have very powerful significance. But the Being is being revealed as it is being revealed, through all of us.

In the West, in North America, the Ziraat has always been—always, just, really for the last five or ten years—quite open, apparently, and many of us have silently laughed at the secrecy they have in Europe, where they don't even call it Ziraat; you know, they call it the symbols or something like that. And they never speak about it. And according to the mureeds in the Sufi Movement, it doesn't exist,—and over the years I've come to respect that. It isn't necessarily our way. It might be, perhaps not exactly in the same way, but they have maintained a certain energy for fifty years, of all the points of the star! You know...the five points of the star of the Sufi Message. The Ziraat would have been the easiest one to lose. And it could have been lost, lost forever. And then what would have been resurrected would have been something else. But they, by their concentration, the few mureeds have held



something real, alive, together by their secrecy and closeness, and also by that, they've given it a great power. The Ziraat has a great power!

...Now, one thing that I'm very happy about has happened in the Ziraat: the ceremony, the Lodge, has become much more important than personalities or ideas. Sometimes in any order, any spiritual group, personalities become dominant and perhaps that's not always the best way. But in the Ziraat, that isn't the case. What's become dominant, it seems to be, or is becoming dominant, is the Lodge. Even the teachings that Murshid has left us, those few lessons, and the dialogue and the tablet, and so on, even that is a gateway to the Lodge; the teachings are a path that really brings us back to the Lodge. Everything seems to start with the Lodge in the Ziraat!

(This article appeared in *The Rainbow Bridge*, a publication of Ziraat, in 1992.)



Pir-o-Murshid speaks of [the soul seeking to find its Divinity] as “a task waiting even after being human...the object gained which is called Ziraat. To understand this... we must look to the most common etymology of the word “Ziraat.” In Arabic, one finds the word “sirat,” which means the narrow path one travels to God, the “straight and narrow path.” Another common definition of Ziraat is “bridge”...[meaning] that once we have become fully human, we must tread the straight and narrow path or bridge homeward.

—Mikail Davenport (1991)

Zira'at is the generic word for “agriculture” in Arabic—and by extension, in Persian, Turkish, and Urdu. It comes from the root z-r-'a, meaning “to bring a seed to fruition.”

It reminds me of the parable [of the mustard seed]: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

—Pir Zia Inayat Khan (1996)

Ziraat is a heart-based approach to gardening and food production outwardly, and to spiritual growth inwardly. The heart, like the earth, is regarded as sacred soil to be prepared for planting. Rocks and roots are removed; last year's stubble is plowed under. New seed is placed in the furrow. Sunshine and rain attend the turning of the seasons, and the ancient cycles of sowing, growth, fruition and harvest are realized in ourselves and in our gardens and farms.

—Moineddin Jablonski (1996)



Nature's Rhythms and Feminine Spirituality

by Rabia Clark

Women are naturally spiritual, if by spiritual we mean in touch with the rhythms of nature and having a sense of the sacredness of life. Down to our very cells, we respond to the ebb and flow of the tides of the moon in a cyclical shedding and replacing of the lining of the womb. Month by month, year by year, women may spend 40 years in this rhythmical dance, responding to inner necessity as well as balancing our bodies with those of other women around us. In meditation communities where there is a celibacy and a vegetarian diet, many women gradually stop menstruating, no longer captive to the restless egg-making that ties us to our animal sisters.

And then there is the cycle of birth and death, of which women are so keenly aware. Such a miracle to be pregnant, steadily growing larger and larger, in an age-old ritual of impending motherhood, celebrated by family and community as if each birth is the first to ever be. The sacredness of the birthing process, a never-forgotten up-heaving of life into the universe, joining of spirit to body, and giving of a cherished part of oneself to the world. We hold the tender spirit in our arms, nourish it with the milk of our breasts, and bless it with ceremony and song. We covenant ourselves to our children, our pledge of fealty to their welfare and protection, until they are safely solidified in our world and can finally, in the separateness of maturity, begin their own search for truth.

We watch them grow older, as we too move through the stages of human life, celebrating holidays, birthdays, school, marriage, and finally our children's children. Each of these phases is remembered in our scrapbooks, or a freezer stuffed with corsages, too precious to discard. We see the cycle of death, as our own parents move in their rhythms towards the end of life, they ever march ahead of us, as our children march behind us, the parade of existence, single file towards the sunset.

We are ceremony-makers, each of us creating rituals anticipating birth, blessing the birth of the child, remembering birthdays and holidays. These rituals weave a tapestry which we remember as "family," special times which lace us together. Each woman remembers those rituals from her childhood, and embellishes them, adding those of her partner, to make a renewal of sacredness. How eagerly children await their Easter egg rituals, Halloween trick or treating, Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations! Mothers are the makers and holders of the family traditions. See the Queen of the Household as she performs the Sabbath ceremonies, presiding over the blessed food in the age-old ritual. It makes the heart glad!

The power of woman's spirituality is held in awe by many peoples. The Southern Ute, a Native American tribe in Colorado, do a five-day Sun Dance. Women attend, singing to support the men who dance. The women's energy is so powerful that they must sit with their knees together, to prevent their vibrations from escaping and overwhelming the men. The Muslim Sufis isolate the women from the men in their Zhikrs, both to protect the men from the strong energy of the women, which would distract them, and to enhance the power of the men by banding them together in song and prayer.

Women are natural shamans. We easily see visions, commune with nature spirits, call devas to the budding flowers and plants. The rhythms of the seasons mold our lives as the years march by in



stately procession. The earth is our mother, and we as mothers understand her ways. Feet upon the ground, we feed on vibrations from the earth and are nourished by the sun. Tree-like, we plant ourselves in a place and make a nest there, fruiting in plentiful measure for all who come to our abode. From Mother Earth we take the fruits, grains and vegetables and transform them into nourishment for body and spirit. We rejoice in the pleasure of creation over and over again.

We are healers, since giving is our way. From wounded bird to feverish child, we know how to soothe pain and reassure the frightened. We respond to the preciousness of life by giving our own life-energy to others, to maintain the balance. As we become receptive and empty vessels, we call on the Holy Spirit to come and radiate through us, till, as a full moon, we bring light to the darkness. And as Mary, we say, “My soul magnifies the Lord.”

Yes, women are naturally spiritual.

(Rainbow Bridge, Winter, 1988)

“I recognize Thy divine grace
in the tenderness of woman’s heart.”

—*Hazrat Inayat Khan, Nature Meditations*



Ziraat in the Light of Hazrat Inayat Khan's Eschatology

by Pir Zia Inayat Khan (1991)

The forthcoming discussion inspects the role of Ziraat in regard to eschatology, that is, the understanding of post-mortem phenomena. Rather than to attempt to insert Ziraat in a definitive context, I wish only to explore the relationship which it shares with what I see as a central aspect of Pir-o-Murshid's teaching, namely the process of resurrection. The symbolism of Ziraat is so rich in meaning that it admits of a variety of interpretation. For the purpose of conveying its eschatological value, I shall stick to one such perspective. As much as possible, I shall allow Murshid, his Sufi predecessors and the Qu'ran to speak for themselves.

The Name 'Ziraat'

Whenever confronted with a term which Murshid has left in the original Persian, Arabic or Sanskrit, rather than endeavoring to replace it with an English cognate which would prove more accessible to a western audience, I am inclined to suspect that there is some subtlety or linguistic value to the original term which would be betrayed by a seemingly equivalent translation. Since its revival in the Sufi Order in 1980, 'Ziraat' has been equated with the Arabic 'sirat'. This term confronts one in the opening Surah of the Qu'ran: "ihdinas al-sirat al-mustaqim" - "show us the straight path" (1:5). In its broadest sense the word means 'path', however in traditional Islamic eschatology its meaning is more definite, referring to the narrow Bridge of Judgment which vaults perdition and leads the righteous to Jannat ('The Garden of Paradise'). Of it, Shakir ibn Muslim says, "When the souls have left hell behind them and have traversed the sirat, or path of purgatory, they issue upon the plain that leads to paradise." (1) Murshid himself refers to purgatory as "pul sirat" - 'sirat bridge'. (2) Incidentally, sirat's indebtedness to the 'Chinvat' Bridge of Zoroastrian eschatology is very likely.

Connections I perceived (and still perceive, as I shall explain) between the mental cultivation enjoined in Murshid's Ziraat teachings and the eschatologia of the Qu'ran convinced me that 'Ziraat' was simply Murshid's peculiar spelling of 'sirat'. However, in recent studies of the Persian language I have discovered that 'zeraat' literally means 'agriculture' in modern Persian. In light of this realization, it would be entirely reasonable to discount 'sirat' as a mistaken etymology, since agriculture is so central to the Ziraat teachings and 'ziraat' is a truly phonetical transliteration of the Persian for agriculture, whereas it does not accurately transliterate the Arabic 'path'. However, I am still hesitant to discard the pertinence of 'sirat', since I feel its implications are so relevant to the Ziraat teachings. Rather, I propose that the similarity in the sound (and by Murshid's symbology, in the meaning) of the two terms did not go unnoticed by Murshid, and in fact gave him all the more reason for using the word 'Ziraat'. Thus, though 'agriculture' would seem the primary meaning of 'Ziraat', I doubt that it is only accidentally a double-entendre. Indeed this poetic device has been employed by Murshid elsewhere. He was once asked after a lecture: 'What did you say: the Holy Ghost is the divine Son or the divine sun?' Murshid simply replied, "I meant both." (3)

The Mind World

According to Pir-o-Murshid, "Every soul is creating a world." (4) This agrees with the eminent Sufi philosopher Mulla Sudra, who says, "Indeed every human being, whether among the blessed or



the damned, has its own complete and independent world.”(5) The landscape of this world is determined by the thoughts and impressions collected during one’s sojourn through physical life. Ibn Arabi explains that this sphere of imaginal perception is the birthright of only those souls who have undertaken full incarnation, and is thus inaccessible to angels and djinn.(6)

Murshid says: “The djinn come closer to man than the angel; for in the djinn there is something like the mind which is completed in man... yet the minds of the djinns are not so developed as the minds of men. The reason for this is that the experience of life on earth completes the making of the mind.”(7)

The djinn is nearer to man than the angel because it is on the djinn plane that the mould (akasha) of the human mind is cast, as Murshid explains: “The soul brings on earth an accommodation for its mind, already prepared in a very negative state, from the world of the djinns.”(8)

In Ziraat terminology the mental accommodation is the ‘empty and bare’ field.(9) This ‘tabula rasa’, however, is inevitably cluttered with a bumper crop of inadvertent dispositions and conditioned tendencies during the course of one’s life. In order to replace these unwanted subconscious attitudes with a harvest of enlightened thought, it is necessary to reclaim one’s receptive ‘djinn mind’ by un-learning, or ploughing up, all presumptions. This would be an appropriate place to stress the gravity of Ziraat training. The obliteration of all preconceived beliefs, values, and dispositions should by no means be entered into lightly. One’s psychological balance is at stake here.

Murshid warns: “This is the work of the Plougher, who once having begun work must continue to the end, for no one having put their 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 sowing.”(10)

Hard labor is necessitated by the intransigence of the dispositions one’s mind has aggregated: “What is once created manifests and goes on manifesting. It requires a tremendous power to destroy what one has created.”(11)

Yet, as demanding as this kind of work may sound, one is consoled: “Of this task one must not weary, for in the heart of the Plougher is the joy of a fresh beginning, and the labor of one’s hands shall be blessed.”(12) Furthermore, by shunning the toil required of the Plougher, labor of this kind is not avoided, but only postponed to a less opportune time. Murshid alludes to the advantages of mental discipline in your present state: “On this side of life, we have more will-power to control our impressions than we have on the other side. There we experience the impressions we have formed in our life.”(13)

Qayyamat al-Sughra

“Man makes his heaven or his hell for himself.”(14)

At the time of physical death, according to Pir-o-Murshid, one becomes an inhabitant of one’s own mind. In the Holy Qu’ran, this state of purgatory is known as ‘barzakh’: ‘a barrier until the day when



they are raised' (XXIII:100). The barzakh state constitutes the 'Lesser Resurrection' (Qayyamat al-Sughra), whereas "the day when they are raised" refers to the universal 'Greater Resurrection' (Qayyamat al-Kubra). Ibn Arabi explains: God has brought two Resurrections into existence, the Lesser Resurrection and the Greater Resurrection. The Lesser Resurrection is the transferring of a servant from the life of this world to the life of the intermediate world (barzakh) in the imaginal body, as in (the Prophet's) saying: 'When someone dies, his Resurrection has already begun.'...The Greater Resurrection is the Resurrection of the Raising (báth) and the Supreme Gathering (al-hashr al-ázam) in which all men are joined."(15)

Concerning the 'Lesser Resurrection', there is a Prophetic saying: "The grave is either one of the gardens of Paradise (al-Jennat) or one of the pits of hell (Gehenna)." (16) Murshid sheds light on this tradition: "If the mind is not much attached to this earthly life and has gathered up the satisfaction of its deeds, it enjoys heaven; if the contrary is the case, then it experiences hell." (17) Heaven and hell are not seen as topological regions, but rather states of mind: "It is sometimes said that the soul is that which exists after the death of the physical body, and that it is in heaven or hell; but that is not so. The soul is something much greater. How can that be burned which is itself light, Nur, the light of God? But owing to its delusion, it takes upon itself all the conditions that the mind has to go through after death." (18)

According to Pir-o-Murshid, the Lesser Resurrection thrusts one face-to-face with the manifestation of one's own subconscious, that vast storehouse of impressions whose veil one dared not lift in 'life'—save in dreams—lest the realization of its contents shatter one's fragile euphoria. Murshid says: "Every individual's Judgment Day will reflect the whole world within himself and will be peculiar to himself; in other words a world will be resurrected in each soul." (19)

The Ziraat symbology which represents the developed mind as cultivated land tallies with the Qu'ranic conception of the heavenly Paradise as a fruitful garden. Surah 11:25 informs us: "Theirs are Gardens underneath which rivers flow; as often as they are regaled with food and fruit thereof, they say: 'This is what was given us aforetime'; and it is given to them in resemblance." Likewise, Murshid says, "A man with an army of beautiful thoughts is in the Garden of Eden. He has produced a Garden within himself." (20) One feature of the Islamic conception of Paradise is the Tuba Tree, which is, according to the Dabistan, "a celestial tree which sends its branches into every corner of heaven." (21) Of this 'tree of knowledge', Ibn Arabí says: "We are Its 'earth' [in which the Tuba and its fruits grow and flower]." (22)

Qayyamat al-Kubra

"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." (23)

The Qu'ran tells us that the transfiguration of the Universe shall be heralded by the Last Trumpet sounded by the Archangel Seraphiel. The blasts of his Cosmic Instrument are two, as we read in Surah XXXIX:68: "And the trumpet is blown, and all who are in the heavens and on earth shall swoon, save who Allah willeth. Then it is blown a second time, and lo they have risen and are looking on." The first 'fiery blast' dissolves the Universe and inaugurates what Sheikh Ahmad Ahsa'i



calls the “cosmic pause”(24), a macrocosmic actualization of the state Sufis call ‘fana’. The Qu’ran speaks of this as: “The day when We will roll up heaven like the rolling up of a scroll for writings” (XXI:104). Murshid acknowledges “There is a time when the whole world is destroyed, even the Universe.”(25)

The second blow into the Trumpet ushers in cosmic renovation. Ibn Arabí describes the propulsive second blast as a catalyst which sets the suspended Universe ablaze with illumination. This universal resuscitation is the macrocosmic actualization of ‘Baqa’. The Qu’ran speaks of it as “The day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth” (VII:48), and says, “As We originated the first creation, (so) We shall reproduce it.” (VII:29). Murshid intimates, “When the Universe has ceased to be, it starts over again, and though this is repeated numberless times, each time is as fresh as ever.”(26)

Die before death... and resurrect now!

“Now since we knew that our meeting with God can only be through death, and because we know the inner meaning of death, we sought to bring it about sooner, in the life of this world.”(27)—Ibn Arabí

To the Sufis, death is not so important as a passage to Paradise as it is a catalyst to upward spiritual mobility. En route to Hahut, or Unity, it is necessary to traverse Malakut, Jabarut and Lahut. Death induces a metamorphosis to Malakut-consciousness automatically. The mystic, anxious for reunion with the Beloved, takes the initiative to die to the world of Nasut before passing his/her physical body, and to continue to die to each successive world until he/she lives eternally In Hahut. It will, of course, be difficult to extract oneself from Malakut if one is experiencing a hellish jungle of discordant imaginations.

Murshid entitles what Ibn Arabí calls ‘voluntary death’ the ‘negative resurrection’. He says: “The negative resurrection takes place when we pass to the higher planes of existence in the lift by means of the breath, and come back to the first floor, the earth, again. This is the meaning of those words in the Qu’ran, ‘Die before death’. This negative resurrection is the teaching of the Sufis, and is the whole object of the contemplative life which they lead. It takes away the fear of death, and death becomes ‘the bridge which unites friend with friend’ .”(28)

Neither physical death nor ‘negative resurrection’ should be seen as a separation or disengagement from the world. In a deeper sense, death is a journey within rather than without. Ziraat is much concerned with the interpenetration, and indeed underlying, integrity of the various worlds, for as Mulla Sudra says: “All of the ‘earths’ are the single Earth.”(29)

NOTES

1 Quoted in: Islam and the Divine Comedy, M. Asin Palacios

2 Aqibat V, p.59

3 The Soul Whence and Whither, p.31

4 In An Eastern Rose Garden, Viii, p.138

5 The Wisdom of the Throne, II:D. p.3



- 6 The Meccan Illuminations, 311, 42.13
- 7 The Phenomenon of the Soul, V, p.24
- 8 The Phenomenon of the Soul, V, p.92
- 9 *Ziraat Papers*: “Method of Ploughing”
- 10 *Ziraat Papers*: “Method of Ploughing”
- 11 The Soul Whence and Whither, p.1911
- 12 *Ziraat Papers*: “The Method of Ploughing”
- 13 Pearls from the Ocean Unseen, V, p.215-216
- 14 Mental Purification, IV, p.198
- 15 The Meccan Illuminations
- 16 Hadith, cited in *The Wisdom of the Throne*, p.179
- 17 Aqibat, V, p.43
- 18 Aqibat, V, p.43
- 19 Aqibat, V, p.52
- 20 In an Eastern Rose Garden, VII, p.138
- 21 *The Dabistan of al-Mazahib*, p.387
- 22 Quoted by Mulla Sudra, *The Wisdom of the Throne*, p.235
- 23 *Ziraat Papers*: Lesson Five
- 24 Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth, p. 216
- 25 Aqibat, V, p.61
- 26 Aqibat, V, p.61
- 27 The Meccan Illuminations, p. 165
- 28 Pearls From the Ocean Unseen, V, p.220
- 29 *The Wisdom of the Throne*, p.191



Murshida Vera Corda



Spiritual Ecology

by Murshida Vera Corda

Reason calls humanity at this last minute to restore the environmental balance to planet Earth; deeper than that, the awakened inner realization is that as we tune out responsibility for earth caretaking, we limit our power to expand our consciousness while we are yet on this plane.

Through our genetic inheritance, our biological ancestry and our biomagnetic field, we are indeed interlaced, interfaced with the lower kingdoms: the mineral, vegetable, animal, and with all mankind. It is not for lack of media coverage of what our high-tech lifestyles are doing to the forests, the air, the all-pervading life of this planet and its species, but rather the thoughtless habits of civilized man to waste, ignore and destroy that which he does not relate to consciously.

Spiritual ecology is the inner relationship that brings home to the higher mind of each being that when we become indifferent to lower forms of life, we also submerge into the unconscious a part of our divine inheritance. Just as we have our needs, so does the planet. Each of us is responsible for our corner of this earth and for educating by modeling to our young our duty and concern for honoring other habitats that must be restored; protecting the reproduction of species who have always shared Mother Earth with us but now are on the brink of extinction. The relation between all of earth's organisms and the spirit which is the seat of man's moral and religious nature call upon all awakened mankind to take responsibility for saving our planet. We must begin by seeing ourselves as spiritual stewards of our individual and collective environments, then renouncing old concepts of man as superior to the other forms of life on earth. We are in truth all related to "the all-pervading life in Space", as we read in the Sufi prayer, *Nayaz*.

On The Edge

We are now on the brink! "How the human species will treat life on earth so as to shape the greatest of legacies, good or bad, for all time to come, will be settled during the next hundred years," Harvard scientist Edward O. Wilson warns us. Spiritual stewardship accepts that all forms of life have the moral right to exist side by side in the divine balance of nature. Ignoring individual free choice to guide, guard and nurture other life forms with which we share the planet is self-destructive. Pir Vilayat puts it well, "When this alienation from our cosmic roots, the power that moves the universe and keeps it all in balance, is displaced by this self-styled assertiveness, counterproductive and self-destructive, wreaking havoc on the planet by violating her sanctity, nature restores the divine harmony by opening its consciousness to the emergence of the voice of Mother Earth calling her children back to rededicate themselves to their original motivation that got lost to view." Then one must make a covenant with Earth and all her creatures, pledging to serve her even as she serves us in mutual respect.

Every tree uprooted or cut from the forests must be reseeded, we must listen again to the song of the whales, the cooing of the wind, the magnetic recharging of our magnetic field through the soles of our feet, the awareness of the habitat of other endangered species that we plow under or trample down. Discovering new and exciting insights into the behavior and genetics of sea mammals can awaken us to the strong parallels land animals have with us. So many of our old conditioned views



about wolves and other wild animals can be re-patterned and taught to the next generation, the new stewards. The practice of setting the gaze at the infinity of space can make us aware of the ozone layer, the aura of our planet, waving, expanding and contracting even as our own auras do. Have we destroyed its perimeters?

Earth Stewardship

Spiritual ecology accepts the premise that spirit is the moral basis for all of life in its many kingdoms and forms to exist side by side, maintaining the divine balance the Creator intended. This view puts every man in the special space of being the steward of his particular environment. To serve in this capacity demands that each must make a voluntary sacrifice. Products like aerosol sprays and other advanced technological products and their byproducts which pollute air and water and eventually disturb the ozone layer must be eliminated.

Every freeway in America soon outgrows its projected capacity, leaving on its perimeters erosion of the land. We must demand contouring and planting of more trees on such lands by taking responsibility upon ourselves to see that it is done. In the oceans, the seals, tortoises and turtles need our protection to protect their nesting sites and journey back to their natural habitats. If one lives near a beach, there are many ways in which we can guide children to be a part of this renewal and preservation of our shores and tidelands.

As we consume more and more junk foods, we clutter our highways with tons of disposable paper and plastic toxic wastes. Recycling of cola cans and soda bottles is a rewarding task for any child or adult turned on to it. Planting of grass and wildflowers is another meaningful and discovering project to renew the mantle of earth. Visiting wildlife preserves and becoming a bird watcher enables one to connect with eagles and hawks and to learn their ways and instincts. Love for other kingdoms and recognition of how much we can learn and master from their element will build an ethic of being a protector instead of a thoughtless destroyer of other forms of life. By observation and attunement to the habits of endangered species like the little prairie foxes, the sea turtles, butterflies and the long-toed tiny lizards, we can all aid in conserving and renewing these species.

The inner rewards of feeding a pelican whose beak has been cruelly sawed-off by a competitive fisherman, or washing the oil slick from a seabird grounded by man's "accidents" and isolated thinking, or spending part of our time on the beach cleaning up and bagging trash and garbage of plastic so strangling to sea creatures can be the most healing experience one could ever have. In body, mind and spirit as we connect with the elements and the lower kingdoms of nature, man unwittingly heals his own spirit and reconnects with the "all-pervading life in Space" to which the Sufi prayer *Nayaz* tunes us.

There Is Hope

Taking time to introduce children to the wonder of the unity of all life on planet earth may be the catalyst that can make this new generation turn around our headlong race to the brink. Population experts predict that the 1 billion population, that took the last hundred years [prior to 1989] to expand to that figure, will increase to five billion in the next 100 years. We cannot afford to destroy the precious legacy that we have. As we connect with the magnetic pole of the earth's magnetic field



through the soles of our feet, the rhythm of breath between all kingdoms, the rays of the sun and the rivers within our ocean currents, it is possible to awaken higher mind through contemplation and meditation to that state in which we realize we are all One.

Instinctively, children know this, but the exemplars pattern fears in them which in turn make them destroyers through ignorance. If we take time to introduce the children to the unity of all life on planet Earth, we may be, just may be, making them the generation to turn around the race. The awakened steward of planet Earth will then understand the wisdom teaching that because we are one with the entire universe, we cannot destroy any part of the whole without destroying ourselves in the process.



Murshida Vera Corda—Communion



April 2004 European Ziraat Retreat on the Waddenzee, Northern Holland



The Working Basis of Ziraat

by *Firoz Holterman ten Hove*

After the 1988 Whitsun-Camp of the German Sufi Order in the Luneburger Heide, I was asked to provide the introduction into Ziraat in writing as well. The following is an elaboration of the text material from the Vadan and Nirtan of Hazrat Inayat Khan which I put together for the workshop. It would be difficult to convey, however, the intense experience of our sessions. We were guests on the Arpshof, a farming estate operated on the principles of biodynamic agriculture—the ideal place for us, where working with and for nature was practiced as a matter of course. We held our outdoor sessions in the meadows where the young cattle are raised, lovely extensive pastures crossed by brooks and lined with trees.

The Path of Ziraat

“If there is any place where one can meet with God, it is on this earth plane.” —Vadan, p. 200. This guideline stands out at the beginning of the path of Ziraat. It points out the direction of this path, and it comes as a surprise to us because from our cultural background we are used to the thought that the path to God takes us away from the earth.

“Nature is a bridge to cross to Thy dwelling place.” —Vadan, p. 145.

Translated, Ziraat means bridge. Nature is our path leading to God. Murshid tries to convey this message in many forms. Is God then not in the Heavens? As always, there is no duality here for the Master.

“I bend towards Thee, O Mother Earth, in veneration of the Father in Heaven.” —Vadan, p. 148. This means God is in His heaven and on earth. Having learned to find and honor Him in Heaven, you can find Him and incline towards Him on earth.

“First believe in the God who is all-exclusive, then recognize the God who is all-inclusive.” —Vadan, p. 199.

Here, Murshid describes the progression of religiosity. First you detach yourself from diversity to find the “only One God,” the unity in solitude. Then you go on and ask yourself, “If there is only One God, is there any place where this One God would not be?”

“In order to arrive at spiritual attainment, two gulfs must be crossed: the Sea of Attachment and the Ocean of Detachment.” —Vadan, p. 226.

You are tied down as long as you have not yet discovered the Heavens. Heavenly freedom, however, cannot be the final human aim. A greater journey is waiting: the crossing of the ocean of freedom with the help of the bridge of Ziraat.

“Let me not be detained in the heavens. Lord, for I long impatiently to come to Thy dwelling place.” —Vadan, p. 148.

These words are Murshid’s prayer when one sets out for the second part of the journey. But can it be imaginable to ask God to be freed from one’s freedom?



“I was perfected by Heaven, but am limited by the earth.”—Nirtan, p. 275.

This demands a complete rethinking from us. Shall we wish for limitation instead of perfection? Hazrat Inayat Khan teaches us that this new way of thinking can, in fact, take place. Paradoxically, limitation becomes then a higher ideal than our ideal.

“Shatter your ideals on the rock of truth.” —Vadan, p. 196.

Thus, this much-quoted saying can also be seen in a new light. There is a time when you discover and build up your ideals. That is the path which leads you to the heavens, to God-Father. But then comes the change, and your ideals take you further, because you still have not become the human being God wants you to be. You thought to find God only in heaven, only to find that an immense spiritual tension, a deep longing, drives you to move on further:

“My soul often has the feeling of being stretched, held fast by the heavens and pulled continually by the earth.” —Vadan, p. 189.

The duality of heaven and earth has to be overcome!

Light and Darkness

The difference between heaven and earth is described by Hazrat Inayat Khan this way:

“Heaven has the light, and earth the shade.”—Vadan, p. 156.

It means you can see the shade only after you have found the light. Searching for the light, you cannot accept the shade as being divine. We look for the heavens because we find earth too gloomy. But then again we search the shade because Heaven is bright all the time. Murshid does not regard this desire for shade as a weakness:

“The shade adds to the light, as zero adds to the figure.”—Vadan, p. 209.

To him, the return to earth means a quantum leap. The spiritual tension caused by the mental ascension into Heaven is the energy which takes us further on the path to Oneness. The union of light and shade does not bring about a doubling, but a ten-times heightening. A new range opens up when you have taken the second step and crossed the ocean of freedom.

“In the light I behold Thy Beauty, Beloved; through the darkness Thy mystery is revealed to my heart.” —Vadan, p. 151.

The path of Ziraat is like a marriage. At first you fall in love with the image of the other, then follows the physical union.

“Light is Thy Face and shade is Thy Bosom, Beloved.”—Vadan, p. 138.

The union of Heaven and earth is the new aim when the mystic searcher cannot stop at the image of his or her ideal, but longs for the physical presence of God.

Spiritual Sensuality

“The vision of nature is the Presence of God.”—Nirtan, p. 286.

Looking closely at this statement by Murshid, it becomes clear that it does not say: Nature is the Presence of God. Mankind has not found God on earth, in the creation, in nature. That's why we



searched for Him in the Heavens. There, our eyes were opened to see the Divine, and with this new perception, we can now find God on earth.

“I see Thine Own Image, Lord, in Thy Creation.”

This does not mean that we must dare to open our eyes again after samadhi and not fear to lose our divine vision again, but that we can also see on earth what we have seen in the Heavens. And not only that we can see it. Murshid describes with all senses this meeting with God on earth:

“Let me feel Thy Embrace, Beloved, on all planes of existence.”—Vadan, p. 144.

This is the prayer of a person who decided to leave the Heavens and to incarnate even into the deepest depths of earthly existence, because that means union with the Beloved, and he does not only want to see this union, but also to feel, hear, smell and taste it.

“Every form I see is Thine Own Form, my Lord, and every sound I hear is Thine Own Voice; in the lovely fragrance of flowers, I perceive the fragrance of Thy Spirit; in every word spoken to me I hear Thy voice, O Lord; all that touches me is Thine Own Touch; in everything I taste, I enjoy the savor of Thy Delicious Spirit; in every plane I feel Thy Presence, Beloved.”—Vadan, p. 175.

The Divine Creation

“In the promise of the dawn, in the breaking of the morn, in the smiles of the rose, Beloved, I see Thy Joy at my homecoming.”—Vadan, p. 170.

When man finally comes home after crossing the two oceans, he'll be received with an open-hearted welcome. And the ideal he searched for so long he will find in the end on earth in the form of nature. That we, as spiritual beings, can find our abode on earth is a challenging thought for spiritually oriented persons. Hazrat Inayat Khan gives many examples of how he feels well taken care of between stones, plants and animals. He sees his reflection in them and finds his true being again in nature:

“Sublime nature, thy reflection produces in my heart God's glorious vision.”—Vadan, p. 148.

One can also say that he, a human being, becomes conscious of the divinity of nature as part of himself. No other living being on earth can do this, and human beings have become capable of it only after a long spiritual path.

The Natural Balance

“The essence of today's message is balance.”—Nirtan, p. 279.

Hazrat Inayat Khan's message means a renewal of spirituality, a balance to come about between spirit and matter.

“Let the Heavens be reflected in the earth, Lord, that earth will turn into Heaven.”—Vadan, p. 142.

When this prayer is fulfilled in this beginning New Age, there will one day be no difference between Heaven and earth. But we are not at all there yet. I sometimes find that the difference between Heaven and earth has never been as painful as now. The impression is that mankind still tries with all the power it has to lift off from earth. It wants to reach the Father in Heaven at the cost of Mother Earth. This is true for many aspects of human existence: space flight at the cost of enormous natural



resources, women sacrificing themselves for the careers of men, the cultivation of hybrid grains at the cost of who knows how many species of plants and animals, on so on. This list may be prolonged as you please, by any given example. Murshid says:

“All conventionality that has limited the life of man and has removed it far from nature, comes from sex distinction.” —Vadan, p. 241.

This statement becomes more understandable now. Murshid does not mean “distinction” in the sense of “variety”—the latter being the very source of the liveliness of nature—he means the separation of the sexes in the life of human beings, the duality, the disconnection. By a new step mankind makes, this unbridgeable duality will be replaced by balance.

The New Task of Mankind

“The Message is a call to those whose hour has come to awake, and it is a lullaby to those who are still meant to sleep.” —Nirtan, p. 279.

There have been times when the spiritual leaders have called up mankind to break free from all earthly bonds and to seek the Heavenly Kingdom. Hazrat Inayat Khan calls us, when we are ready, to leave the Heavenly dream and to act.

“O sublime nature, in Thy Silence I hear Thy mournful cry.” —Vadan, p. 160.

Nature has made it possible for man to emancipate himself from her. Now she had reached the pain limit. Everywhere around us, we see the signals of nature that it cannot go on like this, that it is high time for a change (turning back). In the new spiritual orientation, it is no longer a question of meditation but of work. Though some nature still welcomes us when we come home, it is only a part that is left over. Mankind has the task now to create a new harmony between Heaven and earth. Some of us have been called upon to wake up and fulfill God’s wish on earth. And we should not wonder why others are still asleep.

“Religion is not in performing a ceremony or ritual; true religion is the feeling, or the sense, of duty.” —Vadan, p. 252. (1989)



Soil and Water and Peace

Some views of the work of Murshid Samuel Lewis

by Robert Margolis; edited by Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz

(published in *The Ziraat Newsletter*, 1983)

“SAM didn’t talk about Ziraat—he lived it!” —Murshida Vera Corda

“The wise man by studying nature enters into the Unity through its variety, and realizes the personality of God by sacrificing his own.” —Hazrat Inayat Khan

Murshid Samuel Lewis (Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti), was given many functions and missions during his lifetime. All of his life’s work and responsibilities were initially given to him by Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan, his first Sufi teacher. This transpired in a series of six interviews Samuel Lewis had with Hazrat Inayat Khan during the latter’s visit to California in 1926.

Murshid Samuel Lewis assumed many roles and took on many areas of study and accomplishment to fulfill the work given him. He said, “This person has been entrusted with two general duties in life, one concerned with the sciences and food production, the other with the awakening of hearts... Spiritual food for America and physical food for Asia. Actually these are two sides of the same thing.”

The more popularly known aspects of his life and work are his function as a Murshid (teacher in the Sufi tradition) to a community of young people and his giving out the “Dances of Universal Peace”. This was during the latter half of the 1960’s until his death in 1971. This was but the climax and final phase of over 50 years of training and realization in all the major spiritual traditions and extensive, far-reaching work and accomplishment in several life-long concentrations which he felt had been given to him for the fulfillment of his purpose in life.

Of his ‘life-themes’, Murshid wrote: “...The main themes of my life have been: (A) Peace on spiritual grounds. (B) Desert reclamation. (C) Real cultural exchange between East and West.”

Not yet well presented or explored is the work Murshid Samuel Lewis did as a biologist, soil scientist and horticulturist. This work resulted both in creating international, spiritual and cultural bonds of cooperation and in gathering solutions to food problems—effective and of import on a world scale; solutions which then and now could be easily implanted and with abundant success.

This article can only offer a beginning in presenting the scope and detail of Murshid’s work and its practical applications toward “the renovation of the earth” as he called it. What is presented here is not technical in focus; rather, the intention is to present Murshid’s integrative vision, the manner in which he worked, and the essential realization through which he was guided and from which he acted.

Since his youth, Murshid Samuel Lewis had great interest in gardening and horticulture—both ornamental and today what is called “organic gardening”. During his late twenties and thirties, while



living at Kaaba Allah (a center for the Sufi work in Fairfax, CA) Murshid, then a Khalif, gardened, was groundskeeper and lived off the land. Later in life he worked in Golden Gate Park and on highway crews planting trees and shrubs. In the last years of his life, maintaining Khankahs (Sufi centers) in both San Francisco and Novato CA, he kept active and successful gardens at both. (In fact, at the request of *Organic Gardening* magazine, Murshid wrote an article on the methods and success of the garden kept at his Novato Khankah, “The Garden of Inayat”. The article was never published.) [Ed. note: the article is available separately from the *Ruhaniyat*.] He took numerous university and college courses in various of the plant sciences, as well as organic chemistry, etc.

His predominant concern became the solving of world food problems. Murshid tells us: “...It pained me deeply to see malnutrition and starvation in a world of plenty filled with indulgence and complacency. Once I was in Karachi (Pakistan) and saw 100,000 people hungry in one place... amidst plenty of food, and I went crazy and never recovered. Then I changed my interest from ornamental horticulture to the solution of food problems.”

He worked in several ways for solutions: through research and experimentation with vegetable and fruit strains, through international seed exchange, and by being what he called a “Mercury messenger.”

Solving the problems of feeding people, Murshid said, was both his *ryazat* (spiritual practice, and his *koan*—to fulfill Jesus Christ’s words: “Feed ye all my lambs.” In his diaries and letters Murshid clearly states that bringing food to people and sharing the abundance as God intends it to be shared fulfills Jesus Christ’s ministry of healing. Murshid also says that, according to what he received from the Master, His healing would be transmitted through the giving of food to all.

Both esoterically and exoterically Murshid’s food concentration work was guided by his spiritual teachers and those entrusted with his life’s guidance. He mentioned Pir-o-Murshid Maulana Ghafoor and Jesus Christ as directly behind his efforts in food distribution and development and soil science. Murshid focused his efforts principally on Egypt, the Near East, India and Pakistan.

The obstacles to peace and prosperity in these areas he felt derived from the lack of international cooperation in remedying soil deficiencies in salinity and erosion, in matching suitable crops with regional soils, and in not uniting in efforts toward desert reclamation, water source management and salt-water conversion, including Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion. As he once said, “Everyone wants social reform and I want soil reform.”

Seeing clearly the situation(s) and what needed to be done, Murshid put his studies and knowledge to work in what he saw as his principal function—that of being a “Mercury messenger”. As he said during his visit to Egypt: “This is the work I like to do. You bring people together, they make exchanges directly...Man can meet with man and man can help man and that is why I am here...I feel this is working as Allah wants man to work.” While in Pakistan he wrote: “I am not an expert (on saline soils and related fields) but I am an expert on finding out what bothers others and then trying to do something about it.”

Murshid discovered again and again—corroborated by many scientists he met and worked with—that actually there were no problems, because somewhere, someone on a university campus or at a



research station had already found and experimentally proven the solutions. This should be emphasized, and it was Murshid's thesis. Writing in a letter in 1966 he said, "There are no problems, there is not a problem on earth. There is just ego-intervention and the denial by all but the scientists themselves that 'Whatsoever ye do to the least of My creatures, ye do it unto Me.' This statement has been accepted in turn by physicists, spectro-analysts, soil scientists...and on to anthropologists, but not by social scientists, philosophers and demagogues..."

Therefore the 'problem' and chief work became, as Murshid put it, "getting the answer and the question people together", and often as well getting certain people, or groups, in the Near East, India and Pakistan to accept the solutions for their soil and food growing/preserving/distributing problems. In many ways he tried to dispel the ego-barriers that prevent such exchange and direct collaboration.


As both mystic and scientist, Murshid could relate and integrate one level or area or field of knowledge with another (and all of them together). Thus he became an "answer man". He collected, collated, and presented solutions for different means of food production (adaption of food crops and soils), desert and soil (especially saline) reclamation, salt-water conversion and proper management of water sources, which would be successfully applicable to one or all the areas he was responsible for. These solutions he would then integrate with the actual culture and spirituality of the peoples and lands involved—of which he had ample direct experience. He wanted to demonstrate the effectiveness of bringing together the ecological and religious understandings, and the keys inherent therein for harmony and cooperation. He considered cooperation to be paramount; to those demonstrating simple cooperation would be given the means of being peacemakers. Cooperation among peoples was based on all having the three basic needs fulfilled: adequate and nutritious food, suitable clothing and shelter.

Murshid wrote three papers, summaries of what he wrote and traveled far and wide to convey: *A Proposal for Peace in Southeast Asia*; *A Summary Report: How California Can Help Asia*; and *Draft: Integrative Program for Peace in the Near East*. They remain well worth studying for their content, their integrative vision, and ability to delineate actual problems and actual solutions.

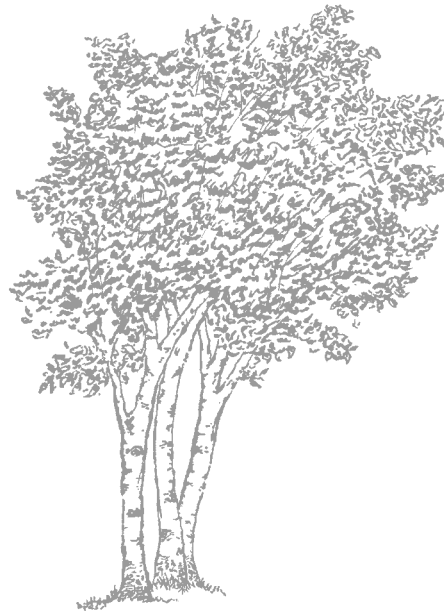
Through copious correspondence and many, many in-person meetings, Murshid sought to convey his findings and experiences to scientists (often informing them of each other's work), government officials, private foundations, and others in the United States, Near East, Japan, India and Pakistan whom he felt could be effective in motivating the use of solutions already available.

Murshid often referred to his efforts as a whole as "How California Can Help Asia" (at one point he was considering writing a book with this title). As he very often stated, every soil and food problem of Asia had been solved by researchers and scientists in the campus system of the University of California. The problems of desert reclamation, water resources, and salt-water conversion as existing in the Near East, India and Pakistan had been solved there as well. He worked to make this known in every way he could.

"I am very much for one world. I have lived in many lands. I have had no trouble with strangers anywhere, no matter how exotic we may claim for them to be." —Murshid SAM



“How California Can Help Asia” later expanded in vision, scope and technical repertoire of solutions to what Murshid called “Project: The Garden of Allah.” This was a “program for the suitable agricultural development of the whole Earth from New Delhi to the Atlantic Ocean.” Referring in summary to this program, Murshid said, “This is a compendium of a life effort: rejuvenation of soils, the sowing of proper crops and a vast program of salt water conversion plants, etc., with the induction of suitable personnel.” At the time (1964) Murshid said this program had been received favorably by “all industrialists and agriculturalists and scientists” he had submitted it to.



The Skin of the Earth

“Of the thirty billion acres of land on the earth, more than nine billion are already desert. We cannot afford to lose more of this green mantle or the water table will sink beyond recall. Trees are like the skin of the earth. If the being loses more than one-third of its skin it dies. One-third of every country should be kept in tree cover. A country’s very poor that doesn’t have trees!”

—*Richard St. Barbe Baker*



Ocean Energy

by Shamcher Bryn Beorse, 1980

We have a choice between a great many energy sources, many of them cheaper, faster to build and ecologically far superior to any energy system now in use. Several of them are connected with the Oceans. The power of waves has been harnessed in Japan and England. In ten years this power will be operating. England sees half of its energy supply coming from this source. Tide power has been operating successfully in France for twenty years, now competitive with current power sources economically, and much more benign ecologically. Ocean currents are of themselves promising power sources.

The temperature difference between sun-heated water on the surface and deeper colder currents is a well developed power source that could be operating within five years if we so decide, and in 15 years could produce enough power to stop all import of oil to the United States. Eventually, this power source alone could produce all the power the world will ever need, with only a modest use of available sites. The Gulf of Mexico, the coastline around Florida, the Pacific along the Mexican shores provide sites for Ocean Thermal Plants. The Sea Solar power, New Orleans shipyards, and the Hydronautic Company in Maryland have offered such plants built for \$500 per Kilowatt, which is competitive with any existing power system. Other companies have planned titanium heat exchangers and other novelties assuring longer life and less corrosion, so their price is upped to \$1800 per Kilowatt—still competitive with more conventional plants when it is remembered that the Ocean ‘fuel’ is free: the Ocean itself.

This does not mean that we ‘must’ build Ocean plants or any other touted device, but it goes to show that we have no ‘energy crisis’ whatever, just an ignorance—or laziness crisis.

There are two types of ‘ready-to-build’ ocean thermal plants. In the ‘open cycle plant’ the surface water itself is brought to a boil by removing air from the boiler and thus lowering the pressure. There is no heating. The steam runs a turbine running a generator. After that the steam is condensed in a condenser into which cold water is pumped from deeper layers. The condensed water can be tapped as fresh water. In the ‘closed cycle’ the warm surface water heats a working fluid—ammonia or another refrigerant. The refrigerant boils and this vapor runs the turbine, after which it is condensed by cold water pumped from below. Then again this ‘working fluid’ is led into the boiler: a closed cycle. The two types will be suitable for different conditions and requirements. The plants of either type may be built on shore or as ships, in the ocean, anchored or free moving. The latter type may move according to where maximum thermal difference may be found. This is a type designed by the Applied Physics Laboratory of the Johns Hopkins University. Newer, not yet fully researched designs are foam, mist, and hybrid cycle plants, investigated at the Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh and the University of California at Berkeley.

Working With Mother Earth

She breathes, she lives, she whispers, sings, and thunders—to all who care to listen. When my Viking ancestors came to these shores a thousand years ago they found the native Americans—like themselves—attuned to her vibrating voice.



Thoughtlessly we have abused her, bled her white, poisoned the life on her surface, threatened her atmosphere, headed for chaos and ruin.

An army of brave volunteers of all races are turning the tide, working with Mother Earth, repairing her soil, tilling it her way, using the ways she has always offered us—from her father, the Sun through her land, her oceans, her space—all the life force, all the energy we can ever use, cheaper, faster to build, sustaining all and harming none, bringing plenty for all and peace between nations and races—as the Great Spirit intended.

“Politics is the application of Sufism to earth-life... To refuse to act politically is to starve your children, destroy civilization.”

—*Shamcher Bryn Beorse*



Ziraat Fulfilled

by Kurt Kabir van Wilt, Farmer

Hazrat Inayat Khan left little direction for Ziraat, except the basic initiatic structure and statements indicating its future importance. I feel that the emergence of Ziraat is very much implicated with the building of the Universel [in Suresnes, France, near Paris], and the realization that G-d [It is Jewish custom to not spell out the name of the deity] is fulfilled in becoming man, that Spirit is fulfilled in consciously becoming matter. When we speak of ‘conscious becoming’ we clearly refer to rebirth rather than birth. It is necessary that revelation not only be embodied in humanity, i.e. the Messenger and the masters and saints that follow him/her, but the earth itself. The transcendent must become immanent, and ether must become earth. I call this ‘earthalization’. It is very important that what lives subtly as our breath, and I speak now of the Message, lives in rock; Spirit must be shaped. The formless must be given form.

The Purpose Of Ziraat

Giving form to the formless completes a cycle. It is one step beyond the Art of the personality, or we might say that it is the expression of the Art of the personality. Specifically, I see Ziraat as providing a spiritual structure, a framework, a matrix, an understanding and way that encompasses and integrates the metaphysical and the physical. We might refer particularly to the reinstitution, in a mode relevant to our time, of the mysteries of sacred growing and building.

The Cycle Of Becoming

The cycle I referred to begins at our first birth, our unconscious emergence. It progresses when we awaken and cooperate in our own evolution. This cooperation or surrender culminates in *fana*—annihilation, and resurrection. Next, with grace, we are reborn, thrust out of love to freely embrace existence. This last station involves the Art of the Personality. But does it stop here, with our becoming the temple of G-d?

It should not. The station of transfiguration —*baka*, means that duality is relatively overcome. Spirit and matter, which were never really opposites, are constantly becoming each other. Perhaps we should create a dual word to indicate that in the illuminated individual they are not separated; a sort of perpetual motion and integration has begun. This may seem humorous, but we really must create new means to say that which is beyond dualistic language.

Living In A Sacred Manner

The point is, that when a being is at this threshold they have created themselves or aligned themselves with the archetype of their being, their ideal, their Lord. They can take the process another step by growing and building in a sacred manner, *and* then eating the harvest and living or praying in the structure. Such beings that plant and build are the hands of G-d. Remember that the second birth, rebirth, is the birth of G-d. These acts are the retelling of Genesis on a higher octave, a further section of the evolutionary spiral. Hazrat Inayat Khan says very subtly, “that it was necessary that G-d become man.”



So the drama of creation is carried on when we who have been recreated create, and then partake of and share that creation. This was spoken very well by Jesus, peace be upon him, when he said, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” It is unfortunate that Christianity has developed in such a dualistic fashion; although with its focus on resurrection it is understandable.

The Importance Of Ziraat

This is one of the reasons why Ziraat is so important. Man must again have a spiritual spine, a natural manner of living in harmony with the higher spheres. Not only must the ‘word become flesh’, something that resurrection alone can never bring about, but the flesh as word must sculpt itself in stone as a sign sending forth its essence. We must work with the element and substance of this plane, earth. Ziraat is highly symbolic, and symbols are the means of coordinating the heavens and the earth.

These are a few indications of what I am understanding Ziraat to be. In a realistic manner, it is starting from scratch and applying in a new way the non-dualistic wisdom of the ancients, beings whose material lives were symbolically lived, whose physical existence was metaphysical. It is ironic that we now must look for guidance to the traditional religions we once condemned as heretical and paganistic. The only sin is separation.

Many traditional cultures were holistic in the sense we are speaking of. Not only did Native Americans construct their homes symbolically according to higher law, but the villages themselves were formed in the shape of the medicine wheel, with a center, four gates in the four directions, and an outer perimeter that was the circumference of the wheel, the collective breadth of the village. One can find many correspondences in traditional societies, even in our own culture with the town square, the soul of the city, where everything of importance was attended to by the group which therein converged. This center was the heart of the town.

We Create A Bridge

Personally, I have begun studying the heavens, symbolism, numerology, geometry, the earth, agriculture, and sacred architecture. My friends and I are also concentrating on specialties and creating forums for sharing, very conscious that we are creating, in a very small way, a bridge between lover and beloved, heaven and earth, Mother and Father, the One and the many.

This is a natural extension of my becoming more and more able to read the sacred manuscript of Nature. Such work as this is especially important for those persons who tend to be otherworldly, etheric, and angelic. It is unnecessary to dwell on the degree to which the earth suffers from our ignorance, alienation, and compartmentalization of consciousness.

I have often suggested to persons with unbalanced etheric energy to carry around a rock, to meditate in a cave, or dig a deep hole and sit in it. In one way we could look at Ziraat as resonating very deeply with the elements.

One thing that has brought me more fully into the consciousness of Ziraat has been sharing with Native American medicine persons. Native Americans, and I realize I am generalizing, lived in a



sacred manner. This is what Ziraat is for me, a spiritual structure for living in a sacred manner. I have been working with the sweat lodge and medicine wheel not only as spiritual ceremonies and principles, but an example of sacred structure and symbol. There can be no simple perpetuation of the past. Revelation, as Ibn Arabi reminds us, manifests with every conscious breath.

Again I return to the example of the Universel: what we make—and it is most important that we do this directly with our hands—must be timeless and time-full.

The Importance Of Stones

Before ending, I will add that stones are very important evolutionarily. I call attention to such rocks as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, the Kaaba—the meteorite that was honoured in the time of Abraham, peace be upon him, and the cornerstone of the Universel. They are an axis, a center, an earthly point of orientation. It is interesting that there is nothing comparable in Christianity, which being rather unearthy is a balancing force for the messages that preceded and followed it. It is very important to have an earthly pole of orientation.

I have realized, though it has not fully unfolded, that we have an earthly essence, a stone nature, that is just as important as our etheric essence, or soul. It is associated with the statement ‘G-d needs man’. Just as Spirit manifests through soul, soul must finally manifest or breathe through (our) stone.

The practice that represents this progression is *Ahad/Wajid*, the up becoming the down, the Seal of Solomon, the circulation of the poles, the integration of zenith and nadir, the marriage of heaven and Earth, the concretization of the One. The Father/Mother and the Son/Daughter will have become one. When the opposites become each other, duality is overcome. There is One again, but an even greater One. Such is the mystery.

This is simply an offering of an individual’s approach to Ziraat. (1983)

“Work one is able to do,
one must;
service alone cures a breaking heart.”

—*Nirtan Sokoloff*,

“A Light Unbroken: View from Mont Valerien”

(dedicated to the memory of Noorunisa Inayat Khan)



Our Work in the Ziraat

by Sufia Carol Sill

Ziraat shows clearly the idea that each one of us has our own version of God in our hearts. And the worship of this God in human nature is one of our main activities. Of course all is included in this worship, in this activity. And seeing humanity as a microcosm of the entire universe, we naturally worship God in all of nature, seen and unseen, the visible world and the world of physics and the world of metaphysics.

Through the understanding of symbolism, with the idea that “there is one Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, which can truly enlighten the reader,” we work toward cultivating the garden of the human heart.

When the heart bursts open, all the elements shoot out like a rainbow. We explore these elements, their tendencies, colors, natures and interactions and relationships. As seen in humanity, in the world around us, in the breath, in the unseen. We learn to understand more deeply the receptive and active qualities, the balance of life, life’s purpose.

By recognizing the importance of balance and harmony in all things, those involved in the Ziraat naturally take as responsibility the work of creating this balance and harmony in all areas of life. As each heart develops, the responsibility naturally increases, and intuition has its play to indicate the direction of the responsibility. Each one of us knows in our hearts what to do, and we cannot judge what others choose to do or not do in this regard. Simply: to do what we know in our hearts must be done.

It may be to work in balance in the world at our daily occupations, it may be to develop OTEC as a benign source of energy for the world, it may be in economics or psychology. It may be in developing the Ziraat itself, or in planting trees, or... Whatever the field of endeavour, the natural responsibility presents itself and as intuition develops, so do refinement and the required forces to fulfill your particular responsibility. The more problems that are solved, the more problems are required to be solved. And the worker in Ziraat sees this situation as an opportunity in which to work.

For each the way of acting is different. For some it is physical, for others symbolical, for others it is through art, for others by political action. Just as in nature there are many forms, many activities, so in human nature also are many different forms of development. Ziraat encourages these. But where previously growth has been wild or choked by weeds, it is encouraged, given direction, cultivated and directed into useful beauty.

To worship God in human nature is to live in love, love as devotion, service and action. The form of this love is known by the heart.

Christopher Alexander, the architect, said, “We can make any place as beautiful as any place we have ever seen.” Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan said, “Some people look for a beautiful place, others make a place beautiful.” Ziraat is creative. It is the art of personality, sometimes reflected in the outer world,



sometimes within. In Ziraat we create from our hearts love, harmony and beauty, projecting balanced radiance to renew the world, all for the benefit of God in humanity.

A Ziraat group is an esoteric seed which helps enable the work of cultivating the human heart, through activities and ceremonies which lay out lines of development in connection and re-connection with the ancient ways and wisdoms. Those who have taken responsibility in Ziraat lay lines for the harmonious development of humanity's future.

When Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan established the Ziraat, it was for those who wished to take responsibility for the Sufi Message in a symbolical form. A symbolical ceremony was designed by Murshida Saintsbury-Green, based somewhat on Masonic rites, and some mystical dance and pageantry was also involved.

The Ziraat was left unfinished, but Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan had established it as a manifestation of the Message, and laid the lines of its evolution at the proper time. Connected with the ancient Greeks and with the "pre-prophetic" lines of humanity, Ziraat retrieves and releases the pre-religious impulse in the light of the Sufi Message, thus bringing all spheres of human aspiration into harmony, which is our present Sufi effort.

This work doesn't occur without the fully engaged hearts of each one who has taken responsibility in the Ziraat. For as all minds are one with the universal mind, so all hearts are one with God also. In Ziraat, the human being is the microcosm. "There is nothing that is not in man." The worship of God in human nature is a deep study of symbology in life and offers beneficial action for the good of all. (1988)



Noorunnisa Inayat Khan



Innovation

Innovation: a thought, behavior or thing that is new because it is qualitatively different from existing forms (from Webster's Dictionary)

(from *Innovation: The Basis of Cultural Change*; Barnett, 1953):

“Old ideas...taken out of other contexts of time and place...must almost inevitably be modified to conform to existing modes and requirements.”

(from *Ho'oponopono*; Shook, 1985):

Renaissance, three stages:

- (1) Conformity (to the existing form)
- (2) Revitalization
- (3) Radicalization (a new synthesis of old/new)

“Diverse backgrounds in terms of [nationality, training] may account for ...different interpretations.

“One explanation for a drop in use [of an old form] is that the group as a whole is quite innovative, able to take risks, and able to use an old practice in a new way.

Where have the Ziraati of past decades gone? Paraphrasing the author Shook:

Many in this first group of [Ziraati] were “movers and shakers” and...it is the nature of movers and shakers to move on. The business of sustaining an innovation is often left to others.



Just Don't Call It Ziraat Ceremony

My purpose in opening up alternative agricultural methods/symbols for discussion is to release pent-up emotional content on the part of those whose strong and impassioned feelings for the earth need acceptance and healing, and because new more co-creative ways of approaching Nature need to be looked at.

—Pir Moineddin Jablonski



I am thrilled to see the responses to this list and am very interested in the discussion on the symbols. I understood that the plough used was an Indian plough with two wheels, one larger and one smaller, representing the jela and the jema breaths, with effective balance occurring during the correct directing of the “plough”.

This symbology can easily be redirected to another metaphor. But we must take care not to lose some of its secrets.



We know the connection of the plough with the early agrarian societies, the settling from the hunting culture into the beautiful rich soil of the union of the Tigris and Euphrates. Was the goddess seed scattering replaced by the (perceived) aggression of the plough? What about the tremendous metaphor of removing the stones? What will we use for this?

In reconsidering the Ziraat symbology we must take great care not to remove the centuries-old resonance and blessing of the profound metaphysical nature of this work.

Instead of only focusing on the earth level through the farmer metaphor, we could also focus on the water sphere, the fire level, or the realm of the air. Even to replace the word farmer with the word gardener would yield more beautiful results. And I really feel those multiple hierarchical designations are no longer the thing.

—Sufia Carol Sill



I really like the idea of using Gardener in place of Farmer. For me that implies a love of the earth and a desire to cocreate with her in producing plants beautiful and useful.

—Rabiya Majid



The following quotes are from personal e-mail between Moineddin and Vakil Forest Shomer in 1999.

Earlier this morning I said I favored the term Gardener over Farmer. That was based on personal feeling and impression.

After I drove the kids to school, I thought about it some more and decided to look up the ancient roots of both Farmer and Gardener. Here are my findings:

The root of FARM is DHER. Dher means “to hold firmly, to support.” Important words derived from dher are “strong,” “throne,” “firmament” and “dharma.” Dharma means “that which is established firmly.”

As you can see, the origins of the term FARM have quite positive connotations.

The root of GARDEN is GHER. Gher means “to grasp, to girdle, to enclose.” Important words derived from gher are “enclosed yard,” “shelter,” “orchard,” “choir” and “dancing ground.” All positive connotations here too.

In both ancient and modern contexts, FARM would seem more suited to large-scale cultivation, and GARDEN to the “small is beautiful” approach of E.F. Shumacher.

—Love, Moineddin



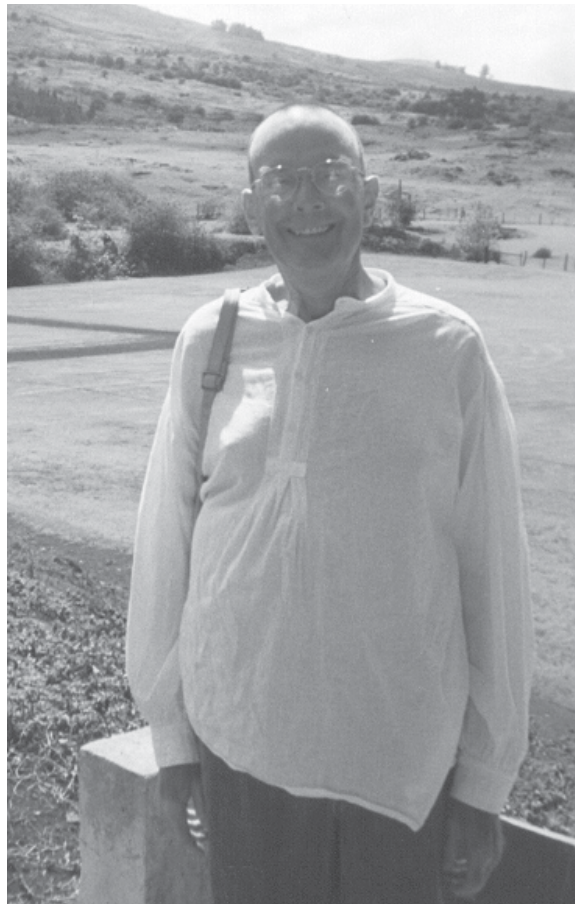
Your suggestion to utilize Hazrat Inayat Khan's "Unfold Thy secret through Nature (inhale), and reveal Thy mystery through my heart (exhale)" to discover ways to re-vision the Ziraat School for the coming century, speaks to my heart.

Not only has the Universal Worship/Service of Universal Peace been upgraded to include singing and dancing, but white robes have replaced black robes, and the Religion of the Great Mother, the Native Religion(s), and Taoism are now represented on the altar. Also, the water-based Flower Service provides an alternative to the fire-based (candle) ceremony. The water-based ceremony can be used by itself, or in times of prolonged drought, or to restore other imbalances, for example.

Even the prayer Nayaz can be upgraded to include mention of the Earth and Water Elements, in addition to "the rays of the sun, the waves of the air, and the all-pervading life in space."

"Woman as Divine" and "Earth as Divine" are needed to balance the references to Fire and Light that were appropriated by the patriarchy and which have come to be identified with the masculine principle. The prayer Salat will soon include the names of world-recognized women prophets and saints to balance the original listing of divinely realized male messengers.

—Moineddin



Pir Moineddin Jablonski in 2000



The Angels of Nature

—contributed by *Abdul Quddus*

Several years ago at the first Islamic Unity Conference in Los Angeles, “City of Angels,” I had the good fortune to meet Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani of Lebanon. His scholarship has been a great aid, particularly, his *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine*, Volumes 1 through 7. It is, however, from his book *Angels Unveiled* that we are given many insights into the angelic realm. The Shaykh points out that Allah has created a group from the angels who are in charge of every seed in the earth, every leaf that falls to the ground and everything in nature, both wet and dry, green and dead.

“Not a leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain amid the darkness of the earth, naught of wet or dry but it is noted in a clear record.” (vol. 6, p. 59)

The angels of nature fall under the authority of the Archangel Michael. They have under them angelic legions and hosts constantly asking for forgiveness on behalf of human beings. Their intercession is according to the infinite numbers of the species and genera of nature they oversee. They ask intercession from the Lord and Creator of everything great and small. Even tree-leaves cause forgiveness of human beings through them. The Shaykh goes on to tell the story of one from among the *as-saliheen* (the righteous people) who purified himself to the extent that he could hear the intercession of the angels of tree-leaves and of all nature. He began to recite with them:

“Praise be to the God of creation,
The Lord of everything,
Who created before the sky was hoisted
and the earth flattened,
Before the mountains were erected
and the springs made to burst forth,
Before the oceans were contained and the rivers tamed,
Before the sun was set alight and the moon and the stars,
Who wrote in the Book of His knowledge the name
Of every single rain-drop, of every leaf and seed,
Who owns whatever descends from the sky
And ascends from the earth,
And whatever grows under it,
And has entrusted it to His servants,
The loyal, unwavering, tireless angels.”



A Service of Elemental Peace

(inspired by Hazrat Inayat Khan and Hazrat Moineddin Jablonski)

Note: This ritual arises from the long-standing Sufi tradition of meeting the needs of the moment in the culture in which it finds itself. That is, Sufism does not simply continue shared historical traditions of spiritual practice but attempts to apply these for the sake of peace and unity between the members of what it sees as one human family. This tradition of “spiritual brother/sisterhood” has clear roots in the message of the Quran, which throughout emphasizes justice for all people, not simply those identifying themselves as “muslims” (literally, those surrendered to the One Reality.)

In the 1920’s, the Indian Sufi Hazrat Inayat Khan developed one of the first forms of an interfaith worship service, which placed candles and scriptures for six major religions on one altar in what he called a “Universal Worship.” Pir Moineddin Jablonski in the late 1970’s adapted this form to conditions of drought in California, North America, but substituting the watering of flowers for the lighting of candles. He called this a “Service of Universal Peace.” The present shared ritual takes its inspiration from both of these and substitutes regions of the earth for religions. Instead of a sermon or talk (found in the latter part of the original service), it substitutes a guided meditation for peace based on Sufi alchemical principles as well as the traditional practice called *mushabida* (or “greater witnessing”). Participants are invited to join in the chanting and meditation, which is dedicated to the benefit and unfoldment of all beings.—Saadi Shakur Chishti

*Toward the One:
the perfection of love, harmony and beauty,
the only being,
united with all the illuminated souls
who form the embodiment of the message:
the spirit of guidance.*

1. **Blessing of Water** (Before watering flowers or plants for the traditions of the continents):

*In unison with
the Love behind all Love,
we water the plant from and representing
the wisdom growing
from the earth and water
from the fire and air...*

... of Africa
... of the Middle East
... of Asia
... of Australia and Oceania
... of South America
... of North America
... of Europe



(Order of the areas/continents begins with the region immediately to the east or south of where the ritual takes place and ends “at home.”)

2. Blessing of Voice (wisdom teachings and practices):

*Toward the One:
the perfection of love, harmony and beauty,
the only being,
united with all the illuminated souls
who form the embodiment of the message:
the spirit of guidance.*

After sharing songs, practices stories or scripture (memorized, no book.) Repeating after each offering:

*In unison with
the Light behind all Light,
we offer our respect and gratitude
for the wisdom inspired
by the earth and water,
by the fire and air...*

... of Africa
... of the Middle East
... of Asia
... of Australia and Oceania
... of South America
... of North America
... of Europe

3. Blessing of Breath

*Toward the One:
the perfection of love, harmony and beauty,
the only being,
united with all the illuminated souls
who form the embodiment of the message:
the spirit of guidance.*

A. Element breaths attunement, with body awareness (earth: bones-supporting life; water: fluid-muscles-flowing life; fire: heartbeat, blood pulse-pulsing life; air: skin, breath, changeable/freely moving life), completing each with:

We are part of the earth (or water, fire and air), becoming conscious of itself...



B. Attunement to all the elements in harmony:

We breathe with a harmonious breath of all the elements together, in fullness....

Then as transition to the blessing:

We are part of the breath of nature, becoming conscious of itself.

C. Then breathing peace plus life energy (person focusing may also breathe ya Hayyo ya Qayoom; or Salaam, Shalom or Shlama, or ya Shafee ya Kafee, depending on the circumstances.)

*In unison with the Life behind all life,
we breath the peace of new beginning,
the hope of new creation
with the earth and water,
with the fire and air...*

... of Africa

Then a few breaths for each area (leader focusing the energy through her/his atmosphere).

*... of the Middle East
... of Asia
... of Australia and Oceania
... of South America
... of North America
... of Europe
... of the whole planet
... of the whole cosmos*

To complete we breathe with the image of the whole planet and cosmos within our own hearts, feeling our own hearts within the heart of the One (or Sacred Unity). (Mushahida practice).

All then repeat 11x together:

*In unison with the delight of the One
we desire to have peace and healing.*

(Affirmed by those present with any of

Amen, Amin, Om, Shanti, Svaha, Ho Mitakyosin, Blessed Be or other)

As the leader feels, may end with a song that is sacred to the specific community in which the ritual is being offered.



Preparation for Leadership of the Service:

- ◆ Daily practice of the elemental healing breaths including the body awareness attunements.
- ◆ Regular practice of the Sufi meditation of mushahida.
- ◆ Ability to lead a chant or very brief (1-2 min) movement/Dance without musical instruments and with very few words. The intent here is not to “lead” a practice or give explanations, but to seed the atmosphere of a chant.

For questions: Saadi Shakur Chishti saadishakur@mac.com

Appendix: Sample Plants and Regions

Europe: Cyclamen (Mediterranean), Rosemary, Heather, Aloe (Canary Islands)

Africa: Dracaena, Jade Plant, African Violet, Desert Rose (Impala Lily), Geranium

Mideast: Hyssop (Za'atar variety), Dwarf Chicory, Purslane (Marrow), Garden Rocket (*Eruca sativa*), Mustard, White Lily (*Lilium candidum*), Wild Rose (*Rosa sp.*), Saffron (*Crocus sativus*), Mint (*Mentha longifolia*), Dill, Cumin, Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

Asia: Hydrangea, Jasmine, Curry Plant, Bamboo

Oceania: Scindapus

North America: Sage, Juniper, Cedar, Cactus

Central/South America: Philodendron, Amaryllis, Christmas Cactus, Bromeliads



Ziraat Revisited

—a letter from Ayesha Foot

I am feeling so much pain at the desecration of the earth that I feel we on the Sufi path should look again at Ziraat and see whether we can produce something which is relevant to the urgent needs of today. What triggered this feeling of urgency for me was the destruction of an orchard not 20 yards from my home, which was the habitat for a rich variety of wildlife. My agony is expressed in the attached “Lament”.

Hazrat Inayat Khan’s *Ziraat Papers* are fairly sketchy and were produced a few months before his death. It was designed to help his mureeds, many of whom were steeped in the Masonic tradition, hence presumably the hierarchical structure, the secrecy and the use of farming imagery. I think he intended to help them to see eternal truths, to read the “sacred manuscript of Nature”, to come to know the celestial Earth—Hurqalya. This ability is *tawil*, tracing back to the archetype, penetrating the inner meaning. This is very similar to Saadi’s work with the written word, finding multiple layers of meaning. Corbin calls it “harmonic perception”, hearing the same sound at many levels. And it is richly rewarding to the individual. My concern is that in becoming so absorbed in the esoteric or wave reality, we forget the material, the particle reality, because in our culture we tend to forget that there is no inner and outer. For someone like HIK this separation would not exist.

I would dearly like to see a network of people (as in the prayer circle) dedicated to inner work with the concentration of healing the wasteland, sharing their experiences and coming joyously together sometimes to celebrate the seasons or the phases of the moon and perhaps carry out projects together, e.g. creating a place of beauty together where people could come for rest and refreshment, or creating a wildlife haven, CONNECTING DEEPLY with the earth.

Can we resurrect or recycle Ziraat to fill this need? In Britain it has never really grown. I think the name is too strange, and the Masonic structure and secrecy act as a barrier for many people. I did not set out to create a new symbol, but one has arisen whether I like it or not.

In trying to work with my pain, I began to paint. What my logical brain could not untangle, my hands knew. The picture that emerged is so rich in symbolism that it has taken me a while to understand at a conscious level what is evidently a cellular memory. The image is the grail. Now I write, it is the feminine in me that is in turmoil, and I would particularly welcome feedback from men, though I hope to hear from all sorts of people in the hope that we may come to a collective vision of what we must do to heal the wasteland.

These are some of my thoughts:

In the grail stories, its discovery leads to the healing of the wasteland. The grail, the cauldron of Wisdom, the chalice are all deeply feminine symbols. It is the container for the Holy Blood (and in my vision this is not the blood of sacrifice, but the blood of fertility.) From this womb the Lord of the Grail can be born. The totally feminine contains within itself the masculine. The chalice is also the container for the water of life, surely an appropriate symbol in the age of Aquarius. Another grail image is the vessel held by Kwan Yin, filled with the sweet dew of wisdom and compassion. Compas-



sion arises when we allow both Rahman, the generous love for all beings, and Rahim, the response to the cries of the suffering, to flow through us.

The Divine Feminine—until we recognise both masculine and feminine in the Unity, we struggle to find this harmony and completeness within ourselves. The reconnection with the Divine Feminine cannot be separated from the inner quest for wholeness. Only when we no longer look outside ourselves for the satisfaction of our deepest needs, when we no longer project upon others the sense of fulfillment—in which we are always bound to be disappointed—can we relate at the fullest level to one other. Then we can begin to experience real compassion for all beings.

I believe tawil is an essential part of the inner work, but equally we have to work with our own subconscious soul, with the dark as well as the light, and with the exoteric as well as the esoteric, particle as well as wave.

In our inner work we become the grail, the cauldron of Wisdom. But in order to heal the earth, the water of life must flow freely, must bear fruit in our own time and place so that we become “food—lachma, Wisdom’s gift for what comes after”. There will be a flowering of creativity, both for the individual and for the group.

I see Desert Wisdom as an essential resource for the inner work, but would also like to explore our Celtic heritage; particularly the pre-Christian. I am convinced there is a link between these two streams of wisdom. Why else should I feel this deep connection with the wisdom of the Middle East?

So is there room for such a network within the Ruhaniat, as a reborn form of Ziraat? It seems in some ways far removed from the ideas of Hazrat Inayat Khan, but what he put forward was a message for his time, and I believe the need for healing the earth is even greater now than when he perceived it. In many ways it seems in harmony with the teachings of Murshid SAM. Please share your visions.

Lament for a green woodpecker

Come back, my love, my green one
I miss your laughter
And your shy beauty.

Hot tears flow
As I listen in vain
For your Hu-hu-hu-hu.

Where have you gone
Now your home is destroyed,
The land laid waste?

“When you hear the water-bird
Rain is not far away,”
My uncle taught me.

The parched land cracks
The trees are dying
The beasts search in vain for food—

And the water-bird has fled.

Ayesha, Sept. 25, 1995



Ziraat Universal Worship

by Nur Jehan Dean, Farmer, Ithaca, NY

Ziraat is the inner light of the Universal Worship.” These words of Hazrat Inayat Khan, repeated one sunny afternoon at the Abode of the Message, penetrated my heart like an arrow shooting home. Inner guidance whispered that I was to seek the relationship of Ziraat to the Universal Worship, but my mind couldn’t integrate these two into one whole. Wasn’t the Universal Worship service, celebrated formally indoors with books of scripture, incongruous with Ziraat’s guiding thought that “There is One Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only manuscript which can enlighten the reader”? What was the relationship between these two seemingly disparate branches of the Work?

Shortly after this burning question framed itself, Shibli Douglass and Kalimi Grandison offered a Universal Worship service outdoors near Ithaca to celebrate the Summer solstice of 1983. Surrounded by a burst of green leaves, honeybees working the flowers, the healing waters of Buttermilk Falls nearby, Shibli’s sermon encouraged each one present to grow more of our own food. A deep chord of simplicity and harmony was struck.

The following summer on the solstice, Moinuddin Smith and I offered the Universal Worship service as a dedication of the “Abode of the Sun” in Newfield, NY. My beloved husband, Mahbud, offered his gift of song and those present shared in reading from the scriptures of many religious traditions. After a blessing, each person launched onto the pond a small boat illuminated with candles from the honeybees’ wax, symbolic of our work in the world which gives expression to the divine guiding light.

La Petite Vallee in the eastern Townships of Quebec is an expansive stretch of clean air, sparkling nighttime skies, and fertile gardens tended by lovingly inspired hands. This community had been Mahbud’s home before our marriage, and with great joy we returned to celebrate a Ziraat Universal Worship service. In honor of the cultural richness springing from Quebec’s soil, friends were invited to lead attunements and read from the world’s religious scriptures in their choice of language. The many children present helped to light the candles, and soaked in Mahbud’s telling, in French, of the Zoroastrian story of creation.

The 1985 spring equinox was celebrated in Ithaca through a day-long renewal led by Moinuddin Smith. A day spent turning within culminated with a sweat lodge and the Universal Worship service. Songs and chants from many religions flowed spontaneously from the group’s deep attunement.

“Awakening” was the theme of a Universal worship service offered in Kingston, Ontario, as the culmination of a weekend of classes on Hazrat Inayat Khan’s teachings. Spring, in all her freshness, was bursting forth in nature and in our hearts. Saturday’s class had ended with an invitation to bring scripture selections on this theme from any religious tradition which people felt deeply attuned to. Mahbud’s gift tuned the music of our souls, and in turn people shared from the scriptures closest to their hearts.



Two years after receiving the call to seek the point of balance between Ziraat and the Universal Worship service, inspired by services offered near orchards, ponds, gardens, and waterfall, I returned enriched to our classic site for Universal Worship: Anabel Taylor Chapel at Cornell University. This lofty, formal space was filled with the pipe organist's practice as we prepared the altar for this evening's service. Sunlight filtered through stained-glass windows, and the spirit of thousands of worship services of various traditions sanctified this special place. This evening's theme was "Honoring Our Mother Earth".

Candles were lit symbolizing Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, the Native American religion, the religion of Judaism, Christianity, the religion of Islam, and "all those who, whether known or unknown to the world, held aloft the light of truth amidst the darkness of human ignorance." As we attuned in turn to the spirit of each tradition, as each friend approached the altar to share an homage to Mother Earth from the scriptures which inspired him or her most deeply, the sacred thread binding all of nature together was strengthened.

My search for the meaning behind Hazrat Inayat Khan's words had led me, in a full circle, back to the starting point, just as each round of seasons brings us, enriched, back to the beginning. It is not in form, but in spirit, that "Ziraat is the Inner Light of the Universal Worship." The sacred manuscript of nature, which reveals the divine splendor in such rich and diverse forms, reminds us of how intertwined we are with all living beings. We return to our daily lives, our dedication to the service of Mother Earth renewed by the symbolic act of honoring our covenant with all people, all creatures, and with the forces of nature which sustain us all. Truly, Ziraat is the inner light of the Universal Worship. (1985)

“The whole universe is an instrument whose
rhythm is conducted by Thy baton.”

—*Hazrat Inayat Khan*, Nature Meditations



The Canticle of Brother Sun

by St. Francis of Assisi

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.

Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.

Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious and pure.

Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister,
Mother Earth
who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon
for love of You and bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
By You Most High, they will be crowned.



Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility.





And in the original Italian, the first known work of literature in the Italian language:

Altissimu, onnipotente, bon Signore,
tue so' le laude, la gloria e l'honore et onne benedictione.
Ad te solo, Altissimo, se konfano,
et nullu homo ène dignu te mentovare.

Laudato sie, mi' Signore, cum tucte le tue creature,
spetialmente messor lo frate sole,
lo qual'è iorno, et allumini noi per lui.
Et ellu è bellu e radiante cum grande splendore:
de te, Altissimo, porta significatione.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora luna e le stelle:
in celu l'ài formate clarite et pretiose et belle.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per frate vento
et per aere et nubilo et sereno et onne tempo,
per lo quale a le tue creature dàì sustentamento.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sor'aqua,
la quale è multo utile et humile et pretiosa et casta.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per frate focu,
per lo quale ennallumini la nocte:
ed ello è bello et iocundo et robustoso et forte.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora nostra matre terra,
la quale ne sustenta et governa,
et produce diversi fructi con coloriti flori et herba.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per quelli ke perdonano per lo tuo amore
et sostengo infirmitate et tribulatione.
Beati quelli ke 'l sosterrano in pace,
ka da te, Altissimo, sirano incoronati.



Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora nostra morte corpore,
da la quale nullu homo vivente pò skappare:
guai a quelli ke morrano ne le peccata mortali;
beati quelli ke trovarà ne le tue sanctissime voluntati,
ka la morte secunda no 'l farrà male.

Laudate e benedicete mi' Signore et rengratiate
e serviateli cum grande humilitate.

“Let earth reflect heaven
that I may read life as an open book.”

—*Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan*



We Are Comrades of the Tulip and the Rose

We are comrades of the tulip and the rose
Who raise our heads to praise Allah
Like daffodils in garden rows
Then bow our foreheads to the earth
In surrender when the wind of Spirit blows.
We wonder at the courage of the crocus
Pushing through the alpine snows;
and feel the lotus blossom of the Heart
Outshine earth's woes.
We know the lily as the emblem
Of our resurrection through repose.
We are comrades of the tulip and the rose
And Love grows... and grows... and grows...

—*Pir Moineddin Jablonski Sept. 13, 1978*

