



Inayatiyya

A Sufi Path of Spiritual Liberty

THE BIOGRAPHY OF PIR-O-MURSHID HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN CLASS #4 NOTES

SUNDAY, 7TH MAY 2023

Guest speaker: Sharif Munawwir Graham

QUOTES & NOTES

England (1914-1920)

First World War (28 July 1914 – 11 November 1918): Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire vs Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Canada, Japan and the United States; “total war,” trench warfare, chemical weapons; 16 million casualties; 50 million deaths from Spanish flu in 1918.

During the war, there was little interest in music or philosophy.

From his biographer Elisabeth De Jong-Keesing, on Murshid’s philosophy of peace: “His concern about humanity and what would become of it went much deeper than that of the politicians. When he spoke of peace, he meant the tranquility and resilience that are the result of meditation. He who possesses that balance will not start a fight and if attacked he has untold resources.”

Opportunities for his work: Higher Thought Center (New Thought), Royal Asiatic Society.

Speaks for six months to an audience of three. “During the war it was like cultivating a desert ... the seed was not yet sown, all that time was given to the tilling of the ground.”

A Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty was published in 1914 by the Theosophical Society. It had come out earlier in French and Russian. The Theosophical Society opened many doors for Murshid, and many of his murids came from that background.

[First Khankah, 86 Ladbroke Road, London, UK. 1915](#)

The Objects of the Order:

1. To establish a human brotherhood with no consideration of caste, creed, race, nation or religion, for differences only create a lack of harmony and are the source of all miseries.
2. To spread the wisdom of the Sufis, which has been until now a hidden treasure, although it is indeed the property of mankind and has never belonged to any race or religion.
3. To attain that perfection wherein mysticism is no longer a mystery, but redeems the disbeliever from ignorance and the believer from falling victim to hypocrisy.
4. To harmonize East and West in music, the universal language, by an exchange of knowledge and a revival of unity.
5. To bring forth Sufi literature which is most beautiful and instructive in all aspects of knowledge.

[Portrait of Murshid, 15 April 1915 London, UK.](#)

First English murid, [Zohra Williams](#) (in Southampton); Sufi Quarterly magazine ([Suluk Press](#) or [Nekbakht Foundation](#)), Sufi Publishing Society (*Pearls from the Ocean Unseen, Diwan, Hindustani Lyrics, Songs of India, Confessions*).

Sharifa Lucy Goodenough: “the spirit of discipleship which is so little known to the world,” “I traced in her my own point of view,” “many pearl-like qualities hidden under a hard shell”; The Voice of Inayat series: *Life after Death, The Phenomenon of the Soul*, and *Love Human and Divine*; the Esoteric Papers; Madar-ul-Maham.

Image of [Murshida Sherifa Lucy Goodenough](#).

From Murshid: “This began the work of the Movement, which gradually grew, some hot, some cold, some warm and some lukewarm. I found the heart of some flaming, some glowing, some flowing, and some frozen; many came and went their way.”

[Shabaz Best](#), UK, set up a center in Brazil. [Image of the interior](#). Publishes The Drama of the Soul, and Genesis Revised.

O.C. Gruner produced a translation of Ibn Sina’s *Canon of Medicine*. He also edited and compiled *In an Eastern Rose Garden* and *The Way of Illumination*.

Lord Lamington advised Murshid to work quietly; “I have discovered for myself that the King of England (George V) was not interested in India for its art, poetry, philosophy, or music.”

Sings to wounded Indian soldiers during the war and to Gandhi. Sings for the Indian community with a song supporting Indian independence, leading to canceled concerts.

Performs in Delibes' Lakme; [Emma Nevada](#) becomes Ali Khan's teacher in operatic singing.

Children born in London: Vilayat (1916), Hidayat (1917), Khairunnisa (1919).

Murshid speaking of the ending of his musical career: "To serve God one must sacrifice what is dearest to one; and so I sacrificed my music. I had composed songs; I sang and played the vina; and practicing this music I arrived at a stage where I touched the Music of the Spheres. Then every soul became for me a musical note, and all life became music. Inspired by it I spoke to the people, and those who were attracted by my words listened to them, instead of listening to my songs. Now, if I do anything, it is to tune souls instead of instruments; to harmonize people instead of notes."

During this time Murshid made connections with interesting and influential people. Meets with Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar, who suggests an autobiography; various notable friends of the Order (see p. 131), including Edmund Dulac and Robert Bridges.

[Illustration by Edmund Dulac from One Thousand and One Nights.](#)

Sharifa Goodenough invites Marmaduke Pickthall, a novelist and scholar who had converted to Islam, to be an honorary member of the Sufi Order. After reading the 10 Sufi Thoughts, he answers that he does not wish to be affiliated with a movement that is not Islamic and asks, "is the Sufi Order really Muslim?"

Murshid's reply to Marmaduke Pickthall in 1917: "We do not shut ourselves off from any community, but are ready to unite with all and any, for within we are already united with the Infinite."

Sufi Order founded 1917/1918.

Objection of India Office to the establishment of the Anjuman Islam (for "the promotion of a better understanding between Christians and Moslems"), conditional approval of London City Council when registering the charity.

Tension arises between Murshid's Muslim friends and his murids, who were mostly non-Muslim. Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah did not approve of Murshid initiating non-Muslims. Some of his murids were uncomfortable with his efforts on behalf of the Anjuman Islam (goals included supporting an orphanage in Ajmer). There were

also tensions between the Christian and Theosophical inclinations of murids, respectively. Murshid found himself caught in the middle.

The murid who had made the Gordon Square rooms available withdrew her monthly support.

Murshid writes: “By the rising wave of enthusiasm of a mureed, we then were situated in Gordon Square in a much more suitable house, more convenient in every way; but at the falling of the wave it was ended.”

Nargis Dowland leads in England; brings out, over time, *The Bowl of Saki*, *The Inner Life*, *The Alchemy of Happiness*, *The Mysticism of Sound*, *The Soul Whence and Whither*; also writes [several books of her own](#).

[Image of Nargis Jesse Dowland, UK National Representative.](#)

Departure to France, 1920.

Guest speaker: Sharif Munawwir

Classes cost one pound, which was the way to support the Order.

There were whole series of classes.

One class was in concentration. Murshid gave increasingly difficult tasks in concentration, including holding an object in your inner vision for 30 minutes. After sensing he was overtaxing his Western students, he initiated the Gatha series; the old classes from London were upgraded to what we know as the Githa classes. (The classes now given to 4th, 5th and 6th initiates were the original beginners' classes in London).

A page written by Mahtab van Hogendorp, a Swiss murid who regularly helped out in the headquarters in Geneva confirms that the Esoteric Papers were not completed at Murshid's death. Many were completed by Murshida Goodenough.

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Practice (for the end of the day): I turn toward Thee, O God, Who art the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty, the Eternal Being.

Upcoming Events & Links

The Lexicon of the Sufis

Tuesday, May 9th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/the-lexicon-of-the-sufis/>

Sufi Healing Service for the World

Wednesday, May 10th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/sufi-healing-service-for-the-world/>

Seven Supports for Meditation

Thursday May 11th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/seven-supports-for-meditation/>

Hurqalya Attunement

Thursday, May 11th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/hurqalya-weekly-attunement/>

Divine Names

Thursday May 11th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/the-divine-names-2023/>

The Heart of Ziraat – Sharing from Experienced Farmers

Friday, May 12th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/the-heart-of-ziraat-sharing-from-experienced-farmers/>

Music and Mysticism

Friday, May 12th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/music-and-mysticism/>

Sama

Sunday, May 14th, 2023

<https://inayatiyya.org/event/sama/>

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