

Hidayat Inayat-Khan

Path of Remembrance

*Teachings on the Singing Zikar
of Hazrat Inayat Khan*



Edition Petama Project Zürich

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O SUFI, DID YOU KNOW...

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PREFACE

Zikar is a spiritual practice at the heart of Sufism, in which the ancient syllables „La El La Ha, El Al La Hu“ are rhythmically repeated, usually to the accompaniment of the head and body. The phrase may be loosely translated as: „God alone exists, none exists save He“. The first part of the formula „La El La Ha“ is a surrender, through which the seeker hopes to put aside the illusion of captivity. The second part of the Zikar, „El Al La Hu“, confirms the all-pervading Divine Presence.

Taken together, the two parts of the phrase encapsulate the Sufi point of view, which has no particular dogma, seeing Truth hidden in all forms and in all beings. Therefore, the Sufi respects all religions and all forms of worship, knowing them to be inspired by the same divine source.

The focus of the Zikar is the heart; the heart-centre has been called the gateway to the soul, or the altar in the temple of God. The practice of Zikar strikes repeatedly on this centre, striving to make the spark of love blaze up brightly. By this the Zakir, the one who practices Zikar, becomes more pliant and responsive to the life within and around. In the words of Hazrat Inayat Khan: „The expression of the countenance becomes harmonious, the voice becomes melodious, the presence becomes healing... There is nothing that by Zikar cannot be accomplished...“

There are many kinds of Zikar, varying in melody and movement. Here we wish to present the Zikar taught by Hazrat Inayat Khan, who brought the Sufi Message to the West. This Zikar is the fruit of deep mystical insight and high musical attunement. It uses ancient words, set to a melody

given specifically by our Master by this practice, for this age. To this are added traditional movements and visualisations, so that the whole forms a richly resonant experience in which, hopefully the illusion of separate identity dissolves in the consciousness of the Divine Presence.

This book is meant to offer some information and the insight of experience to those who practice the Singing Zikar of Hazrat Inayat Khan. Zikar is taught orally, but it is hoped that these pages will help sustain the beauty, grace and dignity of this most precious practice, and perhaps open some doors. It is not meant to encourage any speculation about that which one does not know, nor to stimulate displays of spiritual ,accomplishment‘.

Zikar cannot be communicated through books any more than the colour of milk can be explained to one who cannot see it; direct experience is needed. If, however, one has done the Zikar even once, these pages may help one deepen in this practice. This collection of words and pictures is no substitute for one's own explorations, but it is offered in the sincere hope that it may be of some use on the journey.

Finally, it must be said that this book is the fruit of much love and many helpful hands, to whom grateful thanks are offered. First of all must be mentioned Hidayat Inayat-Khan, whose instruction and encouragement in the practice of Zikar planted many seeds.

*Nawab Pasnak,
Sufi Movement Canada*

A first publication of this book was edited in 1999, the author of the book, Hidayat Inayat-Khan, had worked together with Sufi students in Canada for many years, and so a first publication came about.

In the course of the translation into German the Petama Project re-edits this English version of the book, with the support and kind agreement of the author.

Zürich, autumn 2008

Puran Fuchslin