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The soul of the flowers

Healing plant essences

from the perspective of Universal Sufism

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Forword

Introduction

About 30 years ago I got present a digitized version of the collected works of Sufi master Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882-1927). The included search function suddenly made possible a systematic collection of his statements about flowers and plants. This book concludes this inventory for me. It was an amazing journey through the thoughts and experience of the great mystic who spoke with flowers.

Nature mysticism was and is my passion. As a child enlightenment experiences in the forest. As a teenager the discovery of Saint Francis. As a young man the trip to Israel with the thriving citrus plantations, the ancient olive trees and the wild tulips on the hills. The scent of flowers mingled with the fascination of the various religions on the spot: Judaism, Druze, Christianity, Islam, Bahá ' í.

In Israel too I became painfully aware, how in modern agriculture plants are dealt with. I will never forget how any life has disappeared in a chemically treated orange plantation. So dire treatment of the so called "Holy Land": How does that fit together?

Such were the issues at the beginning of my adult life.

Today at 66, there are different answers. These have arisen in dealing with life, both professionally as private.

As a historian, I have been researching the origin of plants for this book with enthusiasm. Where do their names come from; from what region of the earth did they come from and when; how have people in different cultures thought and felt about them? The discovery that a number of crops, such as olive, wheat, wine and pomegranate so long accompanied us humans was an amazing discovery for me! It led me back to times in which mankind developed agriculture. It indicates a cultural revolution in Afghanistan, Persia and the Caucasus, many thousand years before Christ, which can be associated with the Prophet Zarathustra. But not just from there came the plants, which are discussed in this book. Sunflower and cactus come from South America; the water lily was a major crop in the ancient Egypt. Neem and Jasmine come probably from India. And then there are plants that had so far little to do with whatever culture. The celandine is a good example in its blandness.

As a horticulturalist with biodynamic training I learned to observe plants. In her phenomenology, they show their essence. This approach is controversial in modern times. The doctrine of signatures has led to excesses and unfounded fantasies about the use of herbs in the middle ages. However, much of the old knowledge is confirmed in modern science. A goal of this book was to get these contexts on the track.

As a psychological consultant I have accompanied many years people during their transitions. My own experience, that we can go into nature with the problems that we experience within us and around us, and find in flowers and stones solutions, was a guide and is reflected in this book.

As a private person I learned probably the most from the women that I was allowed to be with. They have opened my heart to the splendor of nature. Human beauty can truly become the crown of creation, even though in the chaotic big world seldom something of it becomes visible.

As a Sufi disciple I immersed myself deeply in the teachings of Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan. His brief statements about Dandelion and Daisy leave one at the first hand with a mystery. Terms from a mystical experience make first suspicious. I tried not to get stuck on the surface of worn religious terms. Here, my experience that we can speak at any time directly with the plants was of great help. In the end we don't need mediators, also no Sufi masters. In principle we human beings are not separated from the other realms of nature and we can get into contact again with the whole. A going together of heaven and earth is possible.

Murshid and nature

The life of Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan, called by his disciples "Murshid", can be told in so many different ways. From the pen of his brother Musharaff recently "The magic of India- from the life of a Sufi" was republished. His students have recorded their memories. He has written an autobiography. His son, Pir Vilayat rendered life and teaching of the master in the monumental book "The message of our time". Later Murids (Sufi-disciples) left biographies: Elisabeth de Jong-Keesing "Golven, waarom komt de wind". His grandson and current Pir (head) of the Inayati Order, Zia Inayat Khan published "A pearl in wine".

In this book, I want to highlight only one side of the life of the master: his deeply felt connectedness with the nature.

His childhood in Baroda, India was embedded in a natural environment. He liked to remember the pear tree, wherein he climbed, the puddles in which he stomped, the stacked wall on which he balanced.

In no period of his life he ever lost the contact with the stones, plants, trees, animals, and landscapes. Again and again, he sought for nature to recharge with new strength for his enormously draining tasks.

His youth was also marked by an early spiritual search. Growing up in a Muslim family, he made acquaintance with a colorful Hindu culture which penetrated the daily life of the environment. Until he then decided as a young teenager, that prayer makes no sense if God never answers or proves His existence. The Sufi message XII, 131, he describes how he leaves the roof of the house, on which he had performed his prayers, runs to his grandfather, and announces that " *"I would not offer any more prayers to Allah until I had both beheld and gauged Him. 'There is no sense in following a belief and doing as one's ancestors did before one, without knowing the true reason,' I said. Instead of being vexed Mauhbakhsh was pleased with my inquisitiveness, and after a little silence he answered me by quoting a sura of the Qur'an, 'We will show them our signs in the world and in themselves, that the truth may be manifested to them.' And then he soothed my impatience and explained, saying, 'The signs of God are seen in the world, and the world is seen in thyself.'*

Shortly afterwards, his grandfather died and Inayat Khan followed this track all his life. Flowers became a sign from God for him and inside himself he tried to hear, what message they were conveying.

His career as a musician began exactly at that time. On a tour with his father in Nepal he wandered alone through the Himalayas. There he met a Muni, a hermit who has withdrawn completely from society and lives in silence in the solitude of the wilderness. The first time Inayat Khan sang for him, the next time he brought his Vina. The holy man did not move and did not talk. It was as if he would not hear or see anything. But he *"revealed to me the mysticism of sound, and unveiled before my sight the inner mystery of music."*

The eyes of the musician, who "see the essence of music", how should one understand this? Murshid here describes a breakthrough in the development process, which had begun in the preceding encounter with his grandfather. His career as a musician led him to listening to an inner reality, which was hidden "behind" the external sound. What was the role of the Muni? How can somebody foreign induce such an experience in us? Murshid describes the atmosphere surrounding the holy man as enchanted. There he sat surrounded by wild nature. *"Untouched by earthly contact, ambitions, and environments, he seemed to be the happiest man in the world."* The attunement of his soul was transferred to Inayat Khan. The Muni lifted the young musician to his own level and showed him the hidden world behind his music. A revelation in the truest sense of the word. Murshid: "The meaning of revelation is the understanding of the language of the soul. Every soul is always speaking if one can only hear it....; even the silent trees and the still mountains speak to us when we are able to hear them."

A number of conditions made possible the revelation of the music behind the music, Saut-e Sarmad in the language of the Sufis, in Inayat Khan.

- Murshid had learned to fully concentrate. He was known to know 500 ragas.
- In his childhood he was taught to respect the holy and wise from various religions.
- In the Nepalese mountains, a pristine nature without cultural influences prevailed.
- A realized master showed him the way.

In my own apprenticeship at my Sufi master, the actual training was the concentration. The subject of meditation was repeatedly addressed from many different directions. For hours, for weeks we sat at the feet of the master, and practiced. For years again and again I was driving in the Swiss mountains, where high up the tents of the meditation camps were built. Sun, rain, snow. Overwhelming nature. Silence, fasting. And then one day it happened: I heard the sound behind the

creation. The master gave me a sign to get up and walk out. Throughout the day I wandered through the mountains. Saut-e Sarmad accompanied me, or I accompanied Saut-e Sarmad. Interior and exterior came together.

Murshid: *"And with still another step further there comes the realization which may be called revelation. When the soul is tuned to that state then the eyes and the ears of the heart are open to see and hear the word that comes from all sides."*

Talking to plants

Murshid alerts us for the fact, that plants perceive and feel what comes from us humans: *"The plants perceive and feel that which comes from us. A loving person may attend to plants and rear them and water them with love and sympathy, and they flourish; but in the hands of another it may not be so. If we only watched plants closely we should see how much they feel our presence and our love. They flourish according to our love; the more love we give, the more fragrance, the more sweetness. Man is always working on farms and in gardens, thinking of them as material things, looking to see how plants can be improved by material means; if he could only believe it, there is a still higher means of helping them to grow, a spiritual means: the use of love and sympathy."*

Most people in Western culture have lost awareness that plants can feel our affection. The idea that we can connect with the other nature kingdoms still is not completely lost. People talk to their pets. Our former neighbor on the horse farm had the ability to reach incredible results in conversation with her horses. After some talking the horse at the request of the lady laid itself down and stretched his legs high. Just to give an exemple.

But to believe that we can talk to plants and rocks is hardly possible for us moderns. This form of belief is a worn. Maybe it's because the requirements of the believing have been overused in Christianity? Maybe because communication with plants is rather associated with superstition?

In "The Holy Book of nature", I described how masters and prophets from different cultural backgrounds withdraw into the desert or wild nature, before departing on their call among the people. Murshid expressly mentioned Saint Francis in this connotation: *"Sages, such as St. Francis, have spoken with rocks, birds, and animals, not as we talk, but by means of an insight into things; and every object expressed itself to them, speaking to them about its past, its present, and its future."*

A Saint from India was Prince Puran. He is reported to have lived for a long time withdrawn in the wilderness. Then he came back in the human world and turned dilapidated gardens and parks in paradises full of growth and bloom. How? By his presence, by his look, his touch. Murshid: *"There is a story in the East of Puran Bhagat, who was once living in exile in the forest; and after a long time, during which he had developed the true love in his thought and feeling and spirit, he returned to his country. The first thing he wished to do was to sit in his garden, which had gone to ruin during his absence. He went down to it in the guise of a sage, and began to water it with his little water bowl. The garden at once began to flourish, and in a short time it became such a miracle of beauty that*

everyone in the city began to talk about it and say, 'This must be some spiritual man, since the garden begins to grow and flourish'. The touch of the saints and sages and prophets makes things grow."

In our times, the example of Findhorn is impressive. Three people pulled out in an abandoned, rough area of Scotland. Dorothee Mclean, which had received part of their spiritual training in the Sufi Order, then showed how we can contact the soul of plants, the world of the Devas. The plants responded to this relationship with incredible growth.

What in the being of a human being causes a plant to be healthy and thrive?

Murshid calls it 'Faith'. Another possible definition could be "Trust". We give trust to ourselves and to our counterparts.

If we "see something in a plant", it means that we recognize the potential of beauty. This look, or ability, to see what could be, is based on a knowledge that springs from love.

Loving observation discloses to our eyes the development opportunities of our opposite. Such insight "what a flower could become", what it takes to do this, and what prevents her growth, rises out of love for the flower.

When Murshid Inayat Khan speaks of a higher, spiritual possibility in dealing with plants in horticulture and agriculture, he means no less than a greater sympathy for our crops.

Just who likes to spend time in the garden, just who is not aimed to finish as quickly as possible to have time for other interests, only this man loves his plants.

Murshid was an admirer of Luther Burbank, famous gardener, who in the beginnings of the 20th century worked miracles. He bred a whole series of new plants and trees with abilities that one would not have thought possible. If you read in his biography how he trained a cactus in an endless selection procedure, to stop bearing thorns, you can understand his statement: "I love everything! I love humanity - I love flowers - I love kids - I love my dog - I'm a lover of the man Jesus - I'm a lover of everything that helps." Burbank described himself as infidel. With that he meant that he would not accept the narrow-minded orthodox-religious anti-evolutionary thought. A lifetime, he showed that, if one carefully monitors and accompanies plants with much patience, they can actually evolve.

Murshid visited him in his garden in California. The overwhelming joy of Burbank in dealing with his plants impressed him the most. Murshid quotes Luther Burbank: *"You should watch the tendency of a plant, what is its inclination; for if you do not watch it the plant will not grow fully. I treat them as living beings. They speak to me, and I to them."*

That's what Murshid called faith. The trust that had Burbank in his plants was unshakeable. He lived with them in a love relationship. The loving gaze and the loving attention helped the plants to develop properties that one could hardly believe.

This attitude is called Murshid spiritual: *"In my explanation, spiritual means living.... And you will always find the tendency of spiritual personalities is to be interested in every person in their lives."*

That is the sign that they are living. A person who is shut up in himself closes himself; he has made four walls around himself. That can be his grave; he is buried in it. The person who is living, naturally sees all; and, as he sees all, he sympathizes with all, he responds to all, he appreciates all in everybody; and in this way he awakens in himself the sublime vision of the immanence of God."

What are plants?

Maybe do you belong to those people who are everywhere and in all circumstances first look around what plants are growing? Of course, the parents doing plays a role in this. On the long walks with my grandfather he showed me the various flowers and trees with his cane and told me their names. When I had to prepare for the high school exam, I had the urgent impulse to shape the parental garden anew. With much joy, I devoted my time the new location-oriented arrangement of plants. I laid new flower beds, lawns were reduced. In high school I failed then. Much later, when I as a management trainer arrived together with my boss at the company headquarters of our main customer for an important meeting and we were ten minutes too early, I inspected the park, while he used his cell phone. When he caught me putting seeds of some plants in my pocket, he had to laugh terribly. Something like that one doesn't normally do, he said. What would our customers think if they randomly looked out of the window?

To move in nature, admire the nature and enjoy, deal with nature, that is my passion. Do you belong to the kind of people that isn't convinced, that you should close your eyes when you meditate? Or why you should sit still, when you pray? Then welcome to the club! In that case you can understand what a relief I felt as my Sufi teacher expressly advocated that I practiced my Wazifas (spiritual exercises of the Sufis) on the bike in the forest. For me, spirituality means to feel the unity with the whole. Nowhere I experience this more intense than in nature. And with the Sufis I discovered that I am with this attitude in the best of companies.

Murshid Inayat Khan likes to refer to the testimony of Jesus "In him we live, we move and we have our being." He explains this as follows: *"We have to move, and we move to make our being in God. Without moving we are not living; without making our being we do not move, nor do we live. Therefore it is the condition of life that if we live we should move and progress, and attain that state of being for which we are destined. We can see this inclination in every being. A little plant, a tree, if we suppress its growth, if we erect a fence round it, if we cover it with glass, it will not flourish, it will not produce flowers; in time it will die. Why is this? It is because its life cannot express itself when it is covered, it cannot express itself when there is a fence round it. It is not enough for it to be alive, because life does not want only to live; to realize itself life must be able to make progress, and progress is only made when there is free movement."*

Murshid takes the plant as a symbol of growth. He says that we humans should take an example on the plants. He pictures human growth as a process comparable to that of the plant.

Is the comparison a nice parable? Is the parable to be understood as a poetic or symbolic image?

At this point we encounter something essential. Murshid makes it clear, that we humans are a further development of the plant Kingdom. We are like the plants, because the plant kingdom as a heritage lives in us. We are the plants, all of them!

Creation is one single development process in the Sufi teachings. Life has evolved from the mineral Kingdom into the plant Kingdom. After the stage of the animal kingdom God is currently busy to develop in us humans . So each of the various kingdoms are further developments of the principle of 'free movement'.

The movement, which pervades all the kingdoms of nature, has its origins in the sound. Murshid refers to the vedantic doctrine of Nada Brahma: Sound as the creator, sound as a creative mind. At the beginning of creation was and is a vibrating. The Sufis call this sound origin Saut-e Sarmad. The Pythagorean had knowledge of the harmony of the spheres. In the Bible it says: In the beginning was the word.

The next step in the process of creation is that sound becomes visible: The light is created.

All shapes and colours of the leaves and flowers are expressions of aspects of the Sun. Murshid: *"It is the different degrees of that light and their comparison with one another which give rise to the various colors. Colors are only the different shades of light; compared with one another they are colors, but in reality the light makes all colors. This is shown by the light of the sun which has no particular color of its own, but the light of which plants partake manifests in the colors of their flowers. These colors seem to be the colors of flowers, vegetables and leaves, whereas in reality they are the colors of the sun."*

So, life as a divine creative pulse passes through various stages of awakening in his development..

The Sufi master Jelalludin Rumi says, that God sleeps in the stones, dreams in the plants, wakes up in the animals and awakens to unity in us human beings. In every natural realm, the movement of life frees itself, becomes more alive.

The plant brings as a heritage from the mineral Kingdom patience with him. They patiently wait for rain. They never ask for a reward, when their flowers and fruits are taken. They just give without expecting gratitude.

The difference between mineral and vegetable Kingdom is defined by Inayat Khan, that compared to the stones the plants have developed a much greater pliability and flexibility. A plant, he says, can be influenced and is productive and creative as a result. The opening, which is created in the development of creation from the mineral Kingdom in the plant Kingdom, is on the soul level. Plants differ from stones in their ability to feel. Plants are sensitive, mild, friendly, so Murshid: "If we only watched plants closely we should see how much they feel our presence and our love".

I remember how in the 70's the book of Tompkins and Birds "The secret life of plants" became a real cult. Plants feel, perceive, experience pain, so the message of the book, which was based on scientific observations.

Latest studies have shown that plants can smell, see, hear, touch.

How comes that this insight is so new for us? Probably for several reasons. First, plants do not respond when they are suffering. Plants tolerate simply. Or they die, if the suffering is too great. Most plants do not defend themselves. They serve.

Secondly we humans have distanced ourselves far from the plant world. To understand plants, you must be willing and able to become like a plant. So is the principle of all understanding. When we start to get in touch with plants, that looks at least childish or even crazy. Who's talking with plants? Plants don't answer.

This type of contact entry is a contact from soul to soul. Here we've reached a further impediment. In the Western world we have little cultural confirmation that plants have a soul. Apart from the fact that we Western people no longer even know whether we ourselves have a soul, a barrier against nature mysticism was erected in the Christian religion. The witches, who had rescued a knowledge of the forces of nature, were wiped out.

But it is so easy to be friend of the plants. Plants are immediately willing to reciprocate this friendship. On the soul level, namely, there are no barriers. Plants are completely open in their feelings. Our soul reaches their soul without obstacles. The deeper our soul, the deeper we enter the flora. Why? Because there is no difference between human beings and plants at the soul level. The soul level, where we humans become friends of all beings, is exactly the world, where the plants live all the time. We are talking about the level of the angels. Murshid calls the angels who are located in the plant Kingdom, Devas.

To the angels, I have dedicated a chapter in "The Holy Book of nature". Angels are sound creatures moving very close to the divine source. They remain in the vicinity of the divine origin of light and glorify their creator. Angels dance weightless and sing Hallelujah. They confirm the splendour and glory of the creator without ifs and buts. Angels have no doubt. They are in harmony with the One and let it hear. The need to explore the creation, to think about it and to wrangle with it does not exist on that level. We call this level of being Heaven.

Man has access to this level inside himself only if he has filed his pride. If we bow with humility in our hearts before the beauty and wisdom of the creator, we are in heaven.

The plants can show us how we are in our angel appearance. Thus, we can understand why Murshid in the Gayan says: *"The lover of nature is the true worshipper of God."*

When we befriend with the plants, we have left the spheres of men and animals behind us. We went so to say the way back to the origin.

In the Gayan, we read:

"Trees to the clouds:--With raised hands we pay you our homage. Clouds:--In tears we grant your request"

Of course, this is a poetic depiction of trees. But if we analyze this poem, we can see that trees in their essence praise and that they are nourished, because they praise. We humans will become like the trees, when we no more worry about our survival, but raise in complete confidence. Then the answer can not fail.

Finally once again in a graph a representation of how the creation "evolves" until the human beings and how then man "involves" to the source of all being:

We humans come from nature and should return to nature.

The birth of the plant

"There will come a day of awakening, of unfoldment; we are silently awaiting it.' If he went into the forest and saw the trees standing there they would tell him that they too were waiting patiently. One can feel it; the more one sits there the more one feels that the trees are waiting for the time when there will be an unfoldment. " This statement by Murshid applies to all living things: Stones, plants, animals, people, planet Earth, the creation. If we want to discover the secret of creation and the purpose of our lives, where we've come and where we're going, we should go in the nature. "A soul who is not close to nature is far away from what is called spirituality. In order to be spiritual one must communicate, and especially one must communicate with nature; one must feel nature. There is so much to be learned from plant life....."

With this statement Murshid does not meant that we should be all biologists. There is no mention of science in the strict sense here. Murshid means that to understand ourselves as a human beings, we should go for counseling to the other realms of nature. Our task in the creation and our deepest desire is in the end not to be selfconscious, but to become aware of the divine in all nature. As creativity unfolds in the plant, it unfolds in us and in all.

The first step in the life of a plant is the germination of the seeds. At the moment, where we can feel the infinite longing for revival, development, expansion in the transition from seed to the germ, we better understand the lasting call of our own soul.

What happens exactly?

A perfect world resting in itself exists in the seeds. The essence of the plant was there captured and stored on a very small area. It is the end result of plant life, reduced to its essence, and as such perfect. One could perhaps say that the principle of the plant is being held in the seed. But truly speaking the seed is a condition, about which we cannot say nothing. It is simply too small and with nothing comparable.

If we look carefully, it is clear that here we encounter a stage in the plant kingdom, which Murshid describes as pre-existential stage of being: *"Before Manifestation what existed? Zat, the Truly Existing, the Only Being. In what form? In no form. As what? As nothing. The only definition that words can give is as the Absolute"*.

In this state of absolute silence something changed then. How can that be? Why should something change when everything is perfect? And the next question: when does this change occur? What causes it? Just questions about this mysterious awakening in the seed.

Murshid Inayat Khan simply states facts: *"A Consciousness arose out of the Absolute, the consciousness of Existence. There was nothing of which the Absolute could be conscious, except Existence."*

Perhaps we can imagine, that the seed had been forgotten. He was finished as the outcome of the lifespan of the plant, and what is done, is filed. What ends up in the bin, disappears from consciousness. It's gone. In the seed nothing reminds us of the original plant. The whole thing was drawn into a nucleus. In a nucleus everything is present, but nothing is visible any longer. The seed itself may not even remember any more. He rests in peace.

And then, for unexplainable reasons, an awareness of being arises "in" this standstill. I have written "in" between quotes because it is of course impossible to be inside a nothingness. So the word "in" is not correct, but neither comes the consciousness from outside. That is impossible, as in the absolute there is no outside. The absolute knows no inside and outside.

The development of consciousness pervades throughout all creation. The state of the absolute is like the deep sleep. Nothing stirs. This condition is similar to the "awareness" of the stones. The soul of the stones lies in the unconscious. Nothing's happening. A stone can remain forever.

A plant, the Sufis say, dreams. Something awakened in comparison to the mineral world.

A creature which dreams, is not completely there. But something stirs. There is an experience. But one has the impression that the look of the plant is directed on the dream and not on its surroundings.

Exactly like that is described the behavior of angels: The only thing for which they have eyes, is the throne of God. Plants orient themselves on the source of existence, through all stages of development. But in comparison to the stones they move. They dance and sound.

When we take up Murshid's description of the beginnings of the creation process again:

"With the feeling of I-ness the innate power of the Absolute, so to speak, pulled itself together; in other words concentrated on one point; thus the all-pervading radiance formed its center"

Divine desire to express itself in creation, forms step by step its centre of I-ness. Plants have more "I" than stones. In the plant, the Center gets also a clearly visible location. The germ breaks away from the seed. The seed falls apart into two halves and in the middle, connected with two halves, the seedling emerges.

Actually, one should say: the seedling emerges and merges at the same time.

Murshid: *"This central light then divided existence into two forms, light and darkness..... This light and darkness formed an Akasha or Asmam, an accommodation, a mold..."*

At the plant, this means, that the impetus for growth reaches out simultaneously upwards and downwards. Upwards, the germ forms cotyledons, stems, more leaves. Downwards roots expand in ever further formations.

These two sides of the plant are mutually dependent. Without roots no leaves, without leaves no roots. Experiences and nutrients from the dark contribute to the shaping of leaves; experiences from the light provide for root formation. In the middle lies the heart, originally the point of germination. When the heart is closed, the polarity may not work and no growth is possible.

Man basically functions as the plant: In the polarity between thinking and body man unfolds and returns to his origin. The center of these proceedings is the heart.

Thinking and acting, head and limbs are determining each other and are the two poles of the human being and in the middle lies the heart.

As in the plants the dark side is formed by the roots, so in us humans the invisible aspect is created in our thinking. The leaves and tendrils of plants are the movement apparatus in humans.

In this picture, the two poles are pictured intentionally not below and above, but side by side. Symbolically this means that one pole is not more important than the other. With the Sufis, the red side means "Love", the blue "beauty".

The warm side in the sun is red, blue is the cool side in the shade.

The centre is the feeling heart function where thinking and acting are brought into harmony.

Love, harmony and beauty form a trinity, according to the Sufis

Plant life

According to the dictionary, a variety of living things can be called "plant": Tree, flower, Bush, grass, perennial, vegetable, shrub, grain, herb, weed, forest plants, flax, moss. Again according to the dictionary, the antonym or opposite of a plant is a beast. So we're talking about all the living beings that grow from the ground and are not animals. Thus we have delineated more or less the area of creation, where we are talking about plants. But do we know now what is a plant?

Murshid: *"You can make a tree intelligible by seeing how it is: its stem, fruits, leaves, appearance, then what comes out of it."* The word "intelligible" means that through our senses we feel and know a subject, have a notion of a subject. Making something intelligible means that have a concrete idea of it.

So, if we perceive and find out how a plant is, we can understand what a plant is. And the 'how' of the plant has two aspects: how it manifests itself in time and develops (where it comes from and what emerges from it) and how it manifests itself in space.

The "how" of the plant in time can be divided into stages: Germination, roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, seeds.

How a plant is manifested in space and spreads, is the subject of this chapter.

We observe a plant first with our eyes. The roots as invisible part we can't see. The germ is also somewhat hidden.

In the following I will try to describe the method of perception as followed by Murshid step by step.

He says: "Then consider how the trees keep together. One tree, and yet its branches and its fruits and its flowers all turn in different directions. Every branch takes a different direction, and yet all keep together. What is it that directs the vigor and the strength of one branch and not the others in that direction, for they are all attached to the same tree-stem? Is it not that life-current which runs through it that directs their ways? As long as it runs through a tree it produces fruit and flowers.

We fix our gaze so alternately on the center of the plant, on the axis, and on the periphery. We scan the whole plant in relation to its center with our eyes.

Murshid describes the way of mystical looking as follows: *"Whatis the tree? There is one stem; the leaves spring from it, change their color, and drop off. But at the same time the life of the whole tree*

depends on the root and stem, and any damage done to either of these affects every branch and bough, every part of the tree."

When we let our gaze wander from the Center outward, we see how an impulse spreads into space. It's always the same principle, which expresses in different forms.

"A tree with fruit and flowers and so many leaves and branches has yet one central part of its being: its stem. The life of the stem is the life of the whole tree. It is not so much that the fruits and other forms appear upon the tree as that the stem itself is repeated over and over again. Every branch is a stem to smaller branches. This again shows how the light which we call life takes a main channel for its expression, and spreads through all the different organs, the small channels or boughs."

The branches as a repetition of the stem, that is easy to understand. But the other organs of the plant? Can we imagine the leaves as a repetition of the stem? That the stem is repeated in the flowers? The fruits as a repetition of the stem? How the stem repeats itself in the seed? Truly a way of looking that traces all manifestations and transformations back to their centre.

The being that repeats itself here in various forms, is in the mystical point of view always the same being. Without leaves, flowers, fruits it would not be able to understand that it exists. Through this variety, so Murshid, is recognized: "I am one".

He draws attention to the fact, that diversity is infinitely vast: *"No two roses, even of the same stem, are exactly alike; no two leaves are identical."*

Murshid Inayat Khan compares the plant with the human being: *"We see it in man's form. There is the spine which is the stem. The breath runs through the center of man's body, although the hands and legs and face and various organs have different directions. This central life is more important than any other part of man."*

This "I am one" of the plant has its center in the stem and its periphery in an infinite unfolding of symptoms, variations and transformations.

Each leaf says at the same time "I'm different" and "I am the same". Without distinction no equality. Without equality there is no difference. The "I am one" is the merging of equality and difference.

Murshid: *"each human individual is remote, unexplored, and unknown. Nevertheless, just as we call a whole variety of flowers by the name of rose, so we may vaguely generalize and divide into varieties."*

Generalizing means abstracting common principles. To detect in a plant individual the family of plants, means to refrain from the individual, to remove from the differences. We are moving away from the differentiation in the creation toward the original principle. The word principle is connected to the word "first" , the center.

"The whole of manifestation is the expression of that spirit of the Logos", Murshid said.

Logos means Word. In this context, it means "Word at the beginning". Before that, there was nothing at all: Silence, the absolute in itself. In the Bible it says: In the beginning was the word. From this sound at the beginning differentiated the nature kingdoms as principles of creation. Names are differentiations of the "Word at the beginning". The creation emerged from a sound world. The various plant species originated from the General plant logos. From the primordial "Rose" came forth an endless variety and number of roses-like plants. Each of these plants reminds us more or less of the rose. They invoke in us the memory of the Rose Logos, the sound of the rose principle.

The world of primordial sounds is sometimes perceived as spheres of primordial light (the "Nur" of the Sufis). Light and sound are one at the beginning. We are in the spheres of the angels, of the highest heavens. Every ray of this primordial light is an Angel or a soul, so Murshid. *"The ray, attracted by the energy upon earth, proceeds from the spiritual sphere towards manifestation, and projects from itself waves of activity; and as the unseen life of the ray develops into a seen form, these waves or vibrations of activity turn into atoms that pass successively through the five elements. The ray thus manifests as energy that seizes its subjects."* The soul of the plant collects atoms on his way to manifestation.

What atoms collect the soul of a plant and which not, can you ask yourself. How comes, that some souls on the way toward incarnation take the forms of roses and other forms of lilies? How does a soul in the heaven of plants choose the properties that suit to it? What are the principles of attraction, which determine the journey of the soul?

"Dad, why exist both roses and lilies?"

Children are still in a position to ask the important questions. How comes that plant species differ from each other?

Murshid deals with children's issues and gives surprising answers: "varieties, distinguishable from each other in their general attitude towards the opposite sex."

Imagine: The whole vegetable Kingdom as a result of the play between the male and female! Relationship and difference! Attraction and distance! Lover and beloved! Just questions and answers, search and find, approach and avoid! From the smallest differences between the leaves on the same plant to the enormous variety of species worldwide. The differentiation takes place as a result of the interaction between the male and the female principle in all realms of nature. The Sufis call these two principles of life, love and beauty. Murshid: "Actually one sees marriages which illustrate both these ideas. The first may be seen operating in the vegetable kingdom; it may be traced in the position of two leaves on the same stem, one balancing the other and responding to the other."

So we get on the track of the why and how of differences in the plant world. We see how they spread in space in a continuous moving forward and correcting themselves. Alternating appears on the branch left and right a leaf. The leaves compensate for each other in their polarity. In spiral shapes, more and more pairs of leaves, branches left and right. Always branching further, always more pairings.

Murshid: *“What is it that directs the vigor and the strength of one branch and not the others in that direction, for they are all attached to the same tree-stem? Is it not that life-current which runs through it that directs their ways?”*

Whether and to what extent a branch extends in a particular direction, is due to the branches on the opposite side of the plant. It is a matter of balance between male and female impulse and response. We had just seen it. Balance is for the Sufis the third principle of life. It is the love principle together with lover and beloved. It is the harmony aspect together with love and beauty. For the spreading out in space not only the rhythmic alternation between male and female aspects of the plant are necessary, but also the capacity to feel and decide, what fits into the space available and what is possible. A plant senses its way into space. It occupies space or leaves room for its neighbors.

One could say that the plant is breathing itself into space. Interestingly, the image of two human lungs is very similar to the picture of a tree crown. But plants don't breathe like humans. They breathe the other way around: CO₂ on the inhalation and oxygen out. They breathe with the chlorophyll of their leaves and also the branches, trunk, roots and flowers breathe. So they show in their own way the concept of breathing, such as Murshid uses it, quite clearly. *“We ordinarily think of the breath as that little air that we feel coming and going through our nostrils; but we do not think of it as that vast current that goes through everything, that current which comes from the Consciousness and goes as far as the external being, the physical world.”* We find here an explanation for the breathing completely different from the usual : *“this prana, which means breath - the central breath - attracts from space all the different elements which are there, as the herbs, plants, flowers, and fruits all attract from space the same element which they represent. All these elements are attracted by the breath”.*

At the plant, it is easier to see than at our selves, how it breathes its innermost essence into the space. This innermost does not lie in the physical realm, but in the invisible.

“For the mystic breath is that current which carries the air out and brings the air in. The air is perceptible, not the current; the current is imperceptible. It is a kind of ethereal magnetism, a finer kind of electricity, the current of which goes in and comes out, putting the air into action. This is what the mystic calls Nafs, which means the self. Breath is the self... Also Atman means the soul, and in German the same word is used for breath. This shows that if there is any trace of the soul, it is to be found in breath.”

If I should try to tell in my own words, what the soul of the plant is, I would say that the soul is this “something” that breathes its being in and out, into existence and out of existence. I would call it a “something” because it exists and lives. It is a single being, but more can not be said about it. All the rest gradually becomes visible in the course of its life. So, honestly speaking, all these words like soul, self, breath, nafs, existence, I, life, being are in the end of little use to explain this “something”. In Murshid's quotation above the soul is described as the source of life energy. But there are other quotations from his works, which describe the soul as the source of consciousness. So the soul is at the same time that part of a living being that feels, that it exist. The soul is a “something” that moves and searches its way between the expression of life energy and consciousness as the reflection of it. The polarity between life energy and consciousness can also be defined as the polarity between spirit

and matter. Soul is the longing for the meeting between spirit and matter. The Sufis call this longing "ishq"

In pure spirit there are no peculiarities or different qualities. Pure spirit is perfect. Only if spirit leaves the perfection and can be discerned, it can materialise. So soul is this "something" that helps spirit to materialise. At the same time soul is something that helps matter to become conscious of its spiritual perfection. Murshid calls matter in its undefined state capacity or vacuum. Murshid: "Capacity is matter. It is not merely matter in the everyday sense of the word, for in reality all that is perceptible is matter. It is substance; even if it is the finest substance it is still a substance. That which is above substance is spirit. Spirit is the absence of matter even in its finest condition. Spirit is beyond that, and thus the finest capacity will still be a substance.

Pure spirit is thus defined as the absolute absence of matter.

Murshid explains the birth of soul from the encounter of spirit (not matter) with substance. At the same time this meeting between the two is caused by soul. Soul is a desire which brings the two together. Substance is undefined matter. It is the pure capacity to become something That's why Murshid calls it a vacuum. It does not exist in itself, but it allows existence. By recording and understanding impulses from spirit it makes possible their materialization.

The strange thing is that we usually say: Vacuum is the absence of any matter. In our terms it is the emptiness or nothingness.

Now we had already seen, that the term "Nothing" in Murshid's language is used already for the description of the pure spirit. It is not surprising, therefore, that Murshid says: "In fact, vacuum is everything and all things."

So between the nothingness of spirit and the all of matter the world with all the different creatures comes into existence.

The single beings individualize in the encounter between spirit and vacuum. If spirit puts its imprint on the vacuum, different "selves" come into being. When substance absorbs spirit, limitless different individual existences appear.

In the plant this "I exist" becomes visible in shoots, branches, stem. Plants have a Nafs or ego. They breathe themselves so to say into the space and occupy their place. They fill the room with their presence and if they are healthy, they are busy expanding for quite a while, without holding back.

The Sufis call this phenomenon "Kibria". Murshid: "Through every being this spirit is manifested in the form of vanity, pride, or conceit..... Had it not been for this spirit working in every being as the central theme of life, no good or bad would have existed in the world, nor would there have been great or small.

Before a plant is flowering (creating beauty), bears fruits (feeding others), forms seeds (devotes itself to the essential), it must expand and consolidate its personality.

Murshid: *"Very often when I speak of the development of personality, people ask me 'What about annihilation?' But it depends on what form of annihilation they mean. One can only be a spendthrift if one has wealth; one cannot annihilate what one does not possess. When an individual has no personality he can annihilate nothing; there must be something first. If a person started in life with self effacement he would never become a self. What would he efface? Effacing comes afterwards. First he must be a self, a real self that is worth being. "*

So, the phenomenon of selfishness has definitely its positive sides. Murshid sums it up nicely: *"The egoist is selfish, and selfish men can produce cruelty and dishonesty. But there is another side to it, and that is pride and independence and indifference, which give him contentment.."*

So we find in Sufism an affirmation of the ego which is quite unusual for the common spiritual schools.

Murshid: *"Kibria.... divine vanity... is God's satisfaction in the manifestation which He wanted to create."*

In the plant kingdom God is pleased about the infinite variety of forms and how they spread out in the world and flaunt.

To the Sufis the branches and leaves bear witness of God's joy in creation:

"Every stem becomes Thy reed, every leaf becomes Thy finger, Beloved, when Thou playest Thy flute in the wilderness."

"... the moving of the graceful branches of the tree, with the blowing of the wind and the fluttering of leaves... that is the consciousness that wants to emerge; through trees and rocks, water and plants it wants to unfold itself, to express itself.... Every living being tries to make itself audible and intelligible; it wants to communicate..."

Murshid notes that if you trace the development of creation backward, the characteristics of the egos become milder.

Humans have the biggest ego. They are able to grossest injustice.

Animals do not have the tendency to disregard boundaries like humans. They don't have the same capacity of vanity.

Plants have, so Murshid, qualities that humans first have to conquer with a lot of effort: Gentleness, mildness, friendliness.

When our daughter in school went through a period with much stress, criticism, disappointment and high demands, she came home and announced that she wanted to be a gardener. She had had

enough of people, and wanted to have to do only with plants. She was right. In the plant kingdom, we can study an ability, which is the highest value for the Sufis: the talent of reconciliation. Plants live in habitats. They enter into symbiosis with each other. There is an intricate system of give and take in a plant community. A plant occupies a certain position and another fits with it, without denying their own identity. Some plants are looking for each other, others stay away from each other. Plant companionship is a science that has given valuable advice on planting combinations especially in ecological agriculture. One can perceive one thing in particular in the plant kingdom: There are no plants that are superior to others. Each plant has its own capabilities. The concept of the so-called weeds had to be overcome in organic farming. Weeds in reality don't exist. There are only herbs that are useful to us, and those that we don't want to see on the field. The solution, to destroy all that is undesirable with herbicides, presents itself increasingly as wrong. The balance in nature is being destroyed that way.

Instead we have to learn to reconcile with the weeds. They have their own reasons to appear on our fields and our human task is comparable to that of a king conscious of his duty: *"The ordinary mind could not conceive of the reason behind. The one who is responsible for his subjects, as a king, he understood rightly, like a gardener who knows which plant to rear and which tree had better be cut out of the garden."* Or our human task in the garden can be compared to that of a diplomat: *"Conciliation needs not only goodwill but wisdom. The talent of the diplomat consists in bringing about such results as are desirable with mutual agreement. Disagreement is easy; it is agreement that is difficult, for it needs a wider outlook which is the true sign of spirituality. Narrowness of outlook makes man's vision small; the person with a narrow outlook cannot easily agree with another. There is always a meeting ground for two people, however much they differ in thought; but the meeting-ground may be far off, and when that is so a man is not always willing to take the trouble to go so far in order to come to an agreement. Very often this is due to his lack of patience. What generally happens is that each wants the other to meet him at the place where he is standing; there is no desire on either part to move from the spot."* Humans can learn a lot about the topic of conciliation from the plants.

Plants, so Murshid, are friendly. This means that they are at the same time aware of themselves and of the others. Plants are highly sensitive to the concerns and intentions of their neighbors, which can be other plants, or animals or humans.

It is known that indoor plants respond to love and sympathy from their human roommate. They thrive better when the atmosphere is harmonious. They perceive in what frame of mind are the humans in the house are.

Murshid: *"even the plants in times of sorrow begin to die and the flowers to fade, while during times of happiness they grow and flourish. The reason why plants and animals can perceive the vibrations and know of coming events while man is ignorant of them, is because he has blinded himself with egotism."*

Plants are not so tightly closed in inside their individuality that they insulate themselves from their environment. They live in resonance with themselves and their surroundings. They know that only living beings who are in contact with their environment can ultimately survive.

Why is it so difficult to be friend for human beings? When we observe the plants, it seems to be the simplest thing there is!

Murshid: *"The reason is that there is something in ourselves which is always against our being friendly. It is the self, the ego, which the Sufi calls Nafs. As long as this ego is standing and lives, a man cannot claim to be anybody's friend. And when he is not somebody else's friend he is not even his own friend, for one learns friendship by being a friend to another. A selfish man may seem to be a friend to himself, but it is on the surface, not in reality. He has not yet learned how to be a friend to another, so he cannot be a friend to himself."*

It is reported that Murshid suddenly stopped talking during a lecture in Europe. When he was then asked what had happened, he replied that somewhere in the world a disaster would plunged many people in a severe condition. The next day was in the paper, that an earthquake had shaken Japan.

The idea of compassion gets to a whole new meaning like that. It is a natural response to the suffering of our environment. We can study at the plants, as they are constantly in contact with what's happening in their environment. Compassion comes without effort at the moment in which we free ourselves from the prison of our selfpity.

In that moment we become aware of hurting and being hurt at the same time.

Some plants protect themselves with thorns. With their spines they say no. They delimit themselves against unwanted influences and defend their own interests. A sensible and healthy function of self-assertion.

The difference between plants and humans is that we humans strongly identify with our spines. Murshid: *"Every moment of the day and night we are up against something that our Nafs rebels against; and if we took that opportunity to crush it, to put it down, in some years' time our personality would become a rose."*

In fact, one can perceive that before a plant develops blossoms, it reduced its growth on the level of branches, leaves and thorns. The assertiveness in space is taken back and a different new life form comes into being: the flower.

We humans are so identified with our life struggle that we miss the chance to blossom. Murshid calls this an addiction. The question is not to stop taking care of our interests. It is a matter of distinguishing what our ego needs and what not.

Murshid: *"One should distinguish what is the right of the ego and what is not its right. The ego has a tendency to want what it needs and also what it does not need. The first is its natural appetite and the second is greed." The training of the ego is not necessarily a sad life of renunciation, nor is it necessarily the life of a hermit. The training is to be wise in life, and to understand what we desire and why we desire it and what effect will follow, what we can afford and what we cannot afford. It is also to understand desire from the point of view of justice, to know whether it is right and just..... The ideal life is the life of balance, not necessarily the life of renunciation. Renunciation must not be practiced for the sake of renunciation, but it must be practiced if it is necessary for balance. Verily,*

balance is the ideal life.” “To eat to live and not to live to eat” was one of the favorite sayings of my mother. She tried to teach us contentment by a regime of partly renunciation at the meals. Grown up in the dutch calvinist culture and having gone through hunger in World War 2 her attitude was right. But a child needs to find out himself, where appetite starts and where it ends. It needs freedom to experience with food. Later in life, at the table with my italian wife and friends, I discovered the joy to live to eat. In the freedom to move from one side of the medal to the other lies the greatest satisfaction. Another aspect of contentment is to be found in food justice. Who made this food for me? Who paid this food of mine? How was the life of the plants and animals that are being prepared for my nourishment. Fairness to all beings makes the meal taste better.

To become like the plants means constantly exploring, what we need and what needs our environment. Murshid calls this attitude meditation: *"To the Sufi, pure meditation includes more than going into one's room only; any act of life which is done with dependence upon Allah or which makes us aware of Him, whether in reading or studying or working or contemplation or prayer or meditation or any duty of everyday life, all may become part of a universal meditation which marks every breath and every heartbeat in life."*

As a summary for this chapter a saying from Murshid Inayat Khan:

"The gardener uses roses in the flower-bed and thorns in making the hedge."

The thinking of the plants

Murshid Inayat Khan: *"Wherever there is a body there is a mind; even the tree has a mind. Luther Burbank once said to me in support of this argument, 'You should watch the tendency of a plant, what is its inclination; for if you do not watch it the plant will not grow fully. I treat them as living beings. They speak to me, and I to them'."*

In the previous chapter, we had seen how the duality of light and shadow is the basis of all forms and beings. In mutual exchange form the visible and invisible sides of creation with each other more and more Akasha's or Asmans, as Murshid calls these "molds", in which Spirit can materialise.

You could call it also potentialities.

Concerning the development of a plant one could imagine, that interaction between the visible and the invisible parts of the plant rhythmically grow, with emphasis on the visible part (leaves, branches) and root growth comes in the second place.

Murshid: *"It is said in the Bible that first the earth was created and then, after the earth, the heavens, which means that the body was finished first and then the mind. An infant is born, so to speak, with a vision of mind, a skeleton of mind, and then the flesh and skin are put on it."*

Right on from birth, a living being has a thinking capacity. The plant brings from prenatal life the ability to think and the general characteristics of his thinking. In life before birth, the plant soul goes

through the subtle realms of angels and jinns and collects the fundamentals of its thinking body. So it comes to the world not only with body properties inherited from the parents, but also with thinking essentials. A plant brings his character (inclination in Burbank's words) with him. From the outset of earthly life it is "Dandelion" by its very nature and brings the experiences of all dandelions of the world of all times with it.

The outcome of the experiences that the plant makes on earth, is the forming of its thinking. Plant thinking is nourished from the experience of the senses. Recently I read how in biological research was lately discovered that plants can smell. It is also clear that plants feel or grope their way into their habitat. They feel, where space is available for them and adapt to the possibilities. There are also studies showing that a necktie "sees", where she can cling to as next.

Plants experience the world with their senses. They smell, hear, see, touch, taste.

So, the thinking of the plant is enriched by the experience. In a plant the senses lie more in the leaves, stems and branches. The thinking has its physical fundament in the root area.

Murshid says about the function of the brain: "The brain is not mind, just as the piece of flesh in the breast is not the heart. Only, feeling is felt more deeply in the breast, and thought is made more clear in the brain.

Afer making this clear, Murshid elaborates on the various aspects of mind. He describes five different functions. I will now try to show how these five aspects have their own validity in the plant kingdom.

The first aspect is imagination.

Murshid: *"When the mind is given a free hand to do as it likes it dances as it were, and out of its gestures a picture is created..... Imagination is the free flow of the mind, when the mind is allowed to work by itself and bring out the beauty and harmony it contains."*

So we could say that a plant dreams itself into being. The plant creates itself in the dance of the imagination. It has a natural ability of what humans have to learn again with a lot of effort: to follow their imaginations and to put these into action.

Using the power of the imagination the plant is constantly in touch with its ideal and brings this ideal to realisation in the material level.

The second aspect of plant thinking is the memory. The function of memory is not creative, but receptive. Murshid: *"Its work is to receive impressions and to gather them together."*

A good example can be found in the celandine. It is one of Murshid favorite flowers. Early in spring when the other plants and shrubs still remain in their winter sleep, it appears with bright yellow flowers. The power to skip the stage of forming leaves and to blossom immediately it becomes from its root tubers. There, it has saved all the experiences of the last year and can form flowers so to say out of the blue.

Plants have a more or less pronounced memory function in the root zone. Everything they experience is held there. And we should always bear in mind that the physical root cells don't make up the whole story. The memory lies not solely in the roots, but in the subtle range of plant thinking. In the tubers and bulbs and root thickenings physical energy is stored, in thinking the memory from the previous year.

And not only the memory of its own past. Murshid indicates that in the memory exist deeper levels, where plants are in contact with the past of the whole species and ultimately with the whole universe.

The third aspect of mind is the power of concentration. A plant cannot be talked out of its target. Celandine strives persistently to manifest celandine. And the rose cannot be talked out of its way to be rose. Plants have a for our understanding tremendous concentration. They are able to focus entirely on a single concept and do not get distracted. With enormous willpower they think themselves into creation.

The fourth aspect of mind is called reasoning by Murshid. It is a plant's ability to think over and make decisions. Murshid: *"This is a mathematical faculty, a faculty which weighs and measures and sees angles, whether they are right or wrong."*

The constantly changing circumstances, whether it be climate change or influences of other living beings, require from a plant continuous decisions.

Completely without fail the plant acts on the one hand in response to the circumstances, on the other hand following their imagination. In Holland, the dandelion makes larger leaves than in the Allgäu mountains. There they are more jagged. Ideal and reality are matched to each other. Also, the dandelion leaves on an Allgäuer skim meadow are different from those on a fertilized lawn. And then there's the phenomenon that no single leaf is exactly like another.

Therefore, we can determine that individual decisions are made in the plant Kingdom. Plants have an individuality.

One may wonder what the difference is between plant thinking and human thinking.

Perhaps the most important difference is that man has the ability to put into perspective his own individuality. We humans are able to take the attitude and decisions of others into consideration and not only to react to the effects of the environment.

Murshid: *"When one rises above what is called reason one reaches that reason which is at the same time contradictory. This also explains the attitude of Christ. When a criminal was taken to him he had no other attitude towards him but that of the forgiver. He saw no evil there. That is looking from a higher reason."*

The reader may accept my apologies for this excursion into the realm of humanity In this chapter we want to explore the peculiarities of plant mind and not our own peculiarities..

In this connotation Murshid tells an anecdote from his own biography: *"When first I became initiated at the hands of my spiritual teacher in India I was as eager as any man could be to assimilate, to grasp, as much as I could. Day after day I was in the presence of my Murshid, but not once did he speak on spiritual matters. Sometimes he spoke about herbs and plants, at other times about milk and butter. I went there every day for six months to see if I could hear anything about spiritual things. After six months the teacher spoke to me one day about the two parts of a personality, the outer and the inner. And I was overenthusiastic; the moment he began I took out a notebook and pencil. But as soon as I did this my teacher changed the subject and spoke about other things."*

Through the impression of the various aspects of the plant being on our souls arises, without that we need to do something, in our heart a clarity not only about plants, but at the same time about our own being.

As a fifth aspect of mind, we find in Murshid's lectures a mental organ, which he calls feeling. It is the central aspect of the mind without which thinking can be not alive. So, there is no contradiction between on the one hand the intellectual side and on the other hand sentimentality in Sufism. *"Neither can the thinking power be nurtured, nor the faculty of reasoning be sustained, without a continual outflow of feeling."*

"The heart quality is something which sustains the whole of life."

In the center of intelligence lies the heart. The actual vitality of the plant is centered in the heart. The heart is the center of vitality and as such the center of mind.

In humans, this 'feeling' shows in lust for life, confidence and fearlessness. *"All virtues such as sincerity, respect, thoughtfulness, consideration, appreciation, all these qualities come through heart-quality."*

The heart as the center of a living being has again a centre in the eyes of the Sufis: dignity. This is perhaps surprising. Dignity we would probably not have defined as the central organ of a living being. Murshid sees the dignity as the basis of any life par excellence. To explain this, he tells an anecdote: *"Once when I was in Nepal I wanted a servant. I sent for one, and he was of the warrior caste, the Kshatrias, brave fighters in the mountains. And when I asked what work he wanted to do, he said, 'Any work you like, anything you like.' I said, 'What about the pay?' 'Anything you will give', he answered. I was greatly amused to find a man willing to do any work I gave him and to accept any pay I offered. 'Well,' I said, 'then there is no condition to be made?' He said, 'One. You will never say a cross word to me.' He was ready to accept any money, willing to do any work, but not humiliation."*

In our time, we discover that the dignity of the animals should be respected. There are worthy and unworthy forms for animal keeping. Out of disgust with the despicable mass animal production people are increasingly committed to vegetarian or vegan diet. The next discovery will probably be that plants also have their own dignity. A vegan way of life without appreciation of the plants in their individuality, pride and feelings is not a solution. In the fields around our towns, for example, the corn plant is humiliated and abused, so that we can generate power through biogas.

Who is the corn plant? What does she want? What does she need? How badly can we treat her? Where did she come from, where is she going?

These are the questions we should ask the plants. Hazrat Inayat Khan shows the way. He asks the plant what they want and why. Lets look at his communication with some species from the vegetable kingdom

Almond

Description

Prunus dulcis

Prunus amygdalus

Popular lat: *amandula*, influenced by lat. *amandus*, lovely.

The almond tree is a plant species of the genus *Prunus* in the Rose family (*Rosaceae*). It grows as a delicate, densely branched tree or shrub, reaching heights of 2 to 8 meters.

To guard against severe frost, almond trees always hold enough buds in hand and thus exhibit caution, vigilance and self-preservation. As the first flowering tree it marks the awakening of nature, the hoped for birth and rebirth.

From March to April, before the emergence of the first leaves, the five petalled blossoms open up

In the southern countries, their buds already push through in late December. Four weeks later they stand in full bloom.

The fruit ripens from July to August. An interesting phenomenon that occurs evat times is that two nuts can grow simultaneously in the same shell.

Origin

Wild occurences are found from the Levant through north and east Anatolia, the south Caucasuses, north Iraq and Iran to South Turkemenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Its natural habitat is bushes on sunny slopes in stony soils at an altitude of 700 to 1700m.

The almond tree has been cultivated for 4000 years. Today, it is planted primarily in California and in the Mediterranean, but also in Pakistan and Iran. Yet, the almond also ripens in Germany in wine-growing regions where it was probably introduced together with wine by the Romans.

There is a distinction to be made between the sweet almond and the bitter almond. Sweet almonds have a cinnamon-brown, rough skin. Bitter almonds are not suitable for direct human consumption as they contain amygdalin, a cyanide-producing glycoside.

Health

Epidemiological studies suggest that regular intake of almonds and nuts can help to reduce the rate of mortality due to cardiovascular disease. The consumption of just 20g almonds a day can halve the risk of heart disease and they are noted for their cholesterol lowering effect. Furthermore, almonds contain a very high amount of folic acid which is especially important during pregnancy.

Mythology

In Greek mythology the almond tree was created from the male genitalia of the androgynous mother goddess Cybele (also Amydale) or the testicles of Attis, who castrated himself out of fervent love for his mother. In tears, Cybele then buried her beloved's "sexual organs".

During the people of Israel's stay in the desert and when they grumbled against the priestly privileges of Aaron and his tribe of Levi, the Lord commanded each of the tribes to take a rod, to provide them with names and to keep them overnight in the tabernacle. On the next morning the rod of Aaron had turned green, the blossom had budded and almonds had ripened.

In a vision, the prophet Jeremiah saw the creative Word of God in a flowering almond tree and the Lord spoke to him : «You saweth correctly; for I watch over my Word, that it may be carried out » (Jeremiah 1,11f).

In Romania and in some Slavic countries, newlyweds are showered in almond nuts for a happy and successful marriage.

Murshid

"When and why was the difference of sex produced in manifestation?", Murshid wonders. He finds the answer in the almond thus placing himself in the cross-cultural traditions described above, wherein the almond represents the tree which unlocks for us the riddle of male-female sexuality.

« If there are two kernels in the shell of an almond, we see that one has formed the other from itself. This is why it is said that Eve was formed from Adam's rib. »

Elsewhere he says *"Where there are two kernels in one shell the female form has been formed from the male. »*

These statements, thus expressed, could give the impression that Murshid ascribes hegemony to men over women and takes a position in the "battle of the sexes", one which is rejected as sexist in the women's emancipation movement.

But if we look more closely, we find in addition to those quotes others which are quite different:

« One cannot say that the soul of woman or the soul of man was made first, as the soul is neither male nor female. When the soul reaches the point where the distinction of sex arises, it is first male; then if it wishes to become finer, it becomes female. »

Looked at in this way, one might think that the woman is a higher human development and has a greater freedom than man. Thus, the exact opposite as before.

In reality, the male and female principle are considered as equals to one another in the Sufi teachings.

The sexual dynamic exists at the cradle of creation and permeates this from the finest to the most material level:

- on the plane of consciousness where it emerges as dynamic force or intelligence

The male principle as initiator/driving force with the ability to understand as a counterpart to this.

In Sufism, these two contrasting principles are called Zat and Sifat, creativity and response.

- then on the plane of the abstract as sound or light,

Sound and light as two sides of the same coin.

- In man this manifests as influence and in woman as beauty.

Power as a male phenomenon and beauty (elsewhere, Murshid says wisdom) as female counterpart.

Force cannot exist without beauty, and wisdom without power is nothing. Equal, they keep each other in balance.

- In the spiritual plane it manifests as expression and response.

Thus the whole universe appears as a dialogue between male and female, which are inextricably linked with one another. The almond reveals this in microcosm: in a small shell sometimes two cores in interaction with one another. The growing with and against one another would be unthinkable without the shell. The dynamic between the sexes is only possible because they are embedded together in one mould.

« In reality there are not two, but one. In order to produce this world, the one Being had to turn Himself into two, and the two had to be different. »

What happens in the shell of almond nuts when two kernels develop together ?

We have seen how the two sexes are challenged, complemented and evolve in a dynamic equilibrium in their mutual roles. Murshid then inevitably comes to the theme of twin souls. Ultimately, we wish to not only understand nature and creation, but above all, our human relationship with the opposite sex. Our longing for a partner, who corresponds to us in every way, who makes us harmoniously whole and is the perfect match. The destined perfect lover, the unique one who was already promised us in heaven and for whom we have waited for so long. The almond forms in the plant world the prototype for such a love relationship.

In Sufi teachings, there are a series of „disappointments“ in the clarifications to the meaning of this romantic longing.

“One sometimes calls men and women who love each other very much two parts of one soul; but this can only be said in the sense that we are all parts of one soul. Between man and woman there can be affinities of the angel plane, of the jinn plane and of the physical plane; many different ties and affinities attract them to each other. »

There are different types of attraction. A man-woman relationship can come about through an attraction from the emotional world (Angel realm), from the world of thoughts (Djinn realm), or from the physical world. Each soul is different in its affections on the different levels. No soul is the same as another soul on all levels. In other words, there is no perfect match on all levels and there is never only one partner.

« the ray on its course towards manifestation the impression of the male and female is made upon it. It may have great creative forces and yet appear as woman because of this impression, or it may be of feminine quality and appear as man because of the impression it has received. When the soul reaches the physical plane, its sex depends upon the parents, upon the planets, and upon the time. »

A soul is therefore never formed purely male or female. It can assume different sexual characteristics on different levels. The resulting human beings can carry within them great tension.

« It need not only be human beings that find their twin soul; even the animals and the birds, even the lower creatures can find it--and much sooner than human beings, because human beings are so absorbed in themselves. »

The following story speaks to this: A woman came to the master and told of her problems with her search for the perfect man. She had already been looking for so many years, had been disappointed many times and had to leave potential partners because they were not just right. Finally, she then found the right man. "Well, then congratulations", said the master, "but what could possibly be the problem now?" She sighed, "He is searching for the perfect woman".

Although it seems almost impossible to find our soul twin and to live with them, Murshid shows there is a way:

"Then there are twin souls of another kind which belong to the earth, the world, the human sphere. The nature of these twin souls is different; they must develop to become twin souls. And what develops them is the situation in life that brings them together; they are drawn to each other by providence, and circumstances cause them to meet. As they develop they become twin souls, just as in one shell one can sometimes find two almonds. The shell has been the situation, the circumstances, the mold which has brought them together in order to go through life tolerantly. There is a lesson to be learnt from this: that each of those two almond kernels has a curve, some part of it is removed, is gone, in order to let the other grow. If the two almonds had pushed one another they would never have grown. It was done by reciprocity; it was as if they said, 'I will let you grow,' 'I will let you grow too,' 'Some part of my being will be held in check,' 'We shall grow as one almond.' But when that conception is not there, then there is no chance of growing together; that is the lesson which mankind has to learn. »

Summary

In summary, we can say that the almond essence helps to:

- find harmony in a man-woman relationship
- reconcile the male and female parts in our own being
- moderate the discrepancies between traits on the different levels
- synchronise body, thoughts, emotions
- exercise restraint
- to refrain out of love
- to take out of love
- experience sexuality as a cosmic gift
- remove tension around sexuality

Ya Hafiz

Becoming mindful, considerate, respectful and cherishing deeply in our heart.

Apple

The cultivated apple (*Malus domestica*) is a widely recognised species of the apple genus in the rose family (Rosaceae).

Etymology

The English word “apple” comes from the Indo-European root, which apart from apple can also mean any type of fruit, “eyeball”, “ball”, or anything round.

The Latin word “malus” most likely comes from the Greek „melea“, apple.

Description

The cultivated apple is a deciduous tree standing between approximately 8 and 15 meters high with a wide overhanging crown. In fact, this growth form is rarely observed, as the individual varieties often display widely diverging plant height, or because the shape does not develop due to pruning.

The five-petaled flowers are, in some varieties, semi-double or double, mostly shallow cup-shaped, often fragrant and normally have a diameter of 2-5 centimetres. The five petals are white or slightly pink, whereas in bud form always distinctly reddish.

The apple blossoms in May and June with the flowering of the apple marking the beginning of mid spring. The apple blossom is a typical bee flower.

Apple fruits are the connate product of five inwardly opening follicles. From the carpels, a parchment-like core develops.

Origin

According to current conjecture, the cultivated apple is a cultivar which came about through the crossing of the still occurring wild crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*) with the Asian wild apple (*Malus sieversii*) and oriental apple (*Malus orientalis*).

Botanists have demonstrated that apples of the size familiar to us were not found in early Greece, Israel and in Egyptian civilization. Crab apples were already in Italy by the early Neolithic period and in northern Europe since the early Stone Age.

Plinius (24-79 a.d.) had by then already described thirty varieties of apples together with their exact horticultural propagation techniques. This knowledge possibly originated in the Persian Empire.

Apple fruit growing as we know it today was introduced to central Europe by the Romans. They began by selectively breeding and brought the art of grafting and cloning to their colonies and provinces. The apple has been grown in central Europe since the 6th century, while from the 16th century it became a traded commodity.

In 1880, there were more than 20,000 apple varieties worldwide in cultivation, with over 2,300 of those in Prussia alone.

Today, there are only about 1,500 varieties in Germany, however only 60 of these are of any economic importance. There is now a significant danger that many varieties may become irrevocably lost to oblivion. This is also because an apple tree's lifespan of 100 years is, relatively speaking, not very long (in comparison: Linden trees can live up to 2,000 years).

Usage

The Celtic and Teutonic peoples were already processed the, likely small and hard fruits of their native apple. They overcooked the fruit into a mush in order to obtain cider. Fermenting the juice together with honey produced a mead.

In addition, its high sugar content nectar is an important yield for bees in honey production.

The cultivated apple has paramount significance in pomiculture. The reason for this lies with the fact that of all native fruit species it is the most diverse in its application. As a result, the overwhelming majority of cultivated forms stem from the apple, and in our parts it is, quite simply, the archetypal fruit.

As a medicinal plant, the apple appears in an ancient Babylonian text from the 8th century b.c. which enumerates the plants of the King Mardukapaliddina's medicinal herb garden. Medieval medicine also writes of the apple's assorted healing effects.

Modern research states that regular consumption of apples reduces the risk of developing cardiovascular disease, asthma and pulmonary dysfunctions, diabetes mellitus and cancer.

Symbolism

FAUST (*dancing with the young witch*)

A lovely dream once came to me:
Where I beheld an apple-tree,
Two fairest apples there did shine;
They tempted me, and I did climb.

FAIR YOUNG WITCH

Apples were desired by you,
Since first in Paradise they grew;
And I am moved with joy, to know
That such within my garden grow.

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

As ancient symbol of the earth, the apple has from the beginning been, on the one hand, associated as a sign for the female principle and goddess of love, seduction, sexuality, female beauty and fertility. On the other hand, or beyond this, eternal love, wisdom, mastery over life and death, salvation.

In the Babylonian culture, it was Ishtar who was worshipped with the symbol of the apple

For the Greeks, the apple belonged to Aphrodite, Hera, and Gaia. The Meliaden are the apple tree nymphs and normally associated with Aphrodite. On Cyprus, the goddess of love has a temple dedicated to her. There, “[I]n the middle of the countryside, shimmers a tree, reddish leaved; reddish gold rustling in the branches”(Ovid, *Metamorphoses*). Here, Aphrodite plucked her famous golden apple. The cycle of legends surrounding the hero Hercules was very popular in the Hellenistic culture. One of his tests was for him to procure a few golden apples of the Hesperides. Hera had received this magnificent tree from Gaia, mother earth, as a wedding gift. She planted it in a divine garden on the slopes of the Atlas mountains, where Atlas had to bear the pillars of heaven. She ordered his beautiful radiant daughters, the three Hesperides, to guard the tree. However, they enjoyed the delicious fruit and made themselves a joyful spring. As a result, Hera then commanded the dragon, Ladon, to wrap himself around the tree to protect the precious apples: “... the scaly dragon with a piercing gaze, the guardian of the golden, shining apples in the garden of Hesperides, who wound himself around the tree trunk in giant rings” (Lukrez, *Von der Natur*)

A thing or fact which leads to a confrontation is referred to as „an apple of discord“. In Greek mythology there is the Golden Apple of Eris, the goddess of strife and discord. All the Olympic gods were invited to a wedding except Eris. In revenge she throws an apple inscribed „the most beautiful“ amongst the gods to cause quarrels and disputes. Paris, a Trojan king’s son, must make the decision and he chooses Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and not Hera as the most beautiful, which then leads to the Trojan war.

In German mythology, the goddess Iduna bestowed the gods with eternal youth with apples from her garden, Asgard. In the fairy tale of Frau Holle, the protagonists encounter an apple tree that hung full of apples. It called to them: “Oh shake me, oh shake me, we apples are all ripe.” While the positive heroine complies with the tree’s wish and was rewarded for her diligence, the negative heroine passed heedlessly by and was punished.

Especially among the Celts, apples had always the reputation of possessing magical powers, bestowing eternal youth and overcoming death. Thus, they became a symbol of spiritual wisdom and the sacredness of fruit. In Celtic mythology there is a place, Avalon, the land of apples. This island lies to the west in the direction of the sunset and is the Celtic otherworld, an intermediate world, a realm of eternally young gods and happy people.

In the Christian tradition, apple trees or a container with harvested fruits occasionally feature in representations of the Holy Family. This alludes to the wonderful fertility of Mary or Anna.

In Europe, the most widely known myth is that of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, which is related in the Bible. In this tale, the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, which Adam and Eve illicitly eat to become like gods, is the trigger for their expulsion from paradise.

Although the Bible mentions only „fruit“, the idea that it was an apple has taken root in the western world. A Latin play on words seems to be the source for this: Apple is called “malus”, a different word “malum” means “evil”. For example, the link between the devil and the apple in the Eastern Orthodox Church, where Greek is the liturgical language, is not to be found.

The western church had great difficulty in stamping out the ancient symbol of the apple. Thus, Charlemagne destroyed on religious grounds a painting of the goddess Freya in Magdeburg, in which she held three myrtle crowned apples in her left hand. The link between the apple and female sexuality is, however, not consistent in the Roman Church. As the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, the apple symbolises wisdom, whereas Christ is often represented by an apple, in this case symbolising salvation.

In the Ottoman tradition, the description „golden apple“ was a synonym for an as yet unconquered but compelling target for capture, such as Constantinople and later it applied to Vienna. As major power centers of their time, these cities were primary goals for the expanding Ottoman empire.

In Hebraic, apple means “fragrant”. A plant’s fragrance is an expression of its life, just as breathing and speaking is for humans. By drawing parallels between fragrance and speech, the apple has also become a symbol for words. “A just, timely spoken word is like a golden apple!” (Solomon)

Murshid

We have seen how the world’s religious traditions offer a bewildering variety of meanings and uses for the apple. The Sufi teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan offer a deeper understanding of the spiritual essence of the apple, whereby many of the preceding mythological associations fall into place together with their biological characteristics.

Murshid often refers to the plant kingdom to explain otherwise difficult spiritual concepts. In this way, he takes the apple in order to make the Chakras more readily accessible:

there are five centers of inner perception. These centers are seats of the intuitive faculties. Two among them are of great importance: the heart and the head. The head without the heart shows dry intellect. The heart without the head represents an unbalanced condition.

The centers may be likened to the space that one finds in the apple. It is an Akasha, an accommodation, where not only scent, touch, hearing and sight are perceived, but even the thought and feeling of another; the condition in the atmosphere, the pleasure and displeasure of one's fellow-man are perceived, and if the sense of perception is keener, then even past, present and future are revealed. When man does not perceive in this way it does not mean that it is foreign to his nature; it only means that the soul has not developed that power of perception in his body. The absence of such free perception naturally causes depression and confusion, for the soul longs for a keen perception; and it feels confused, and at times agitated, owing to a lack of a fuller perception, as the person who is blind feels nervous agitation, because the inner longing is to see,

Murshid succinctly describes here the whole topic, encountered through the symbolism of the apple.

- Man longs for an all encompassing inner perception. This is the restlessness which, for example, drives Heracles to seek the apples of Hesperides
- The soul inherently has such a perception but this was lost in the body. Through our incarnation, the otherworld, Avalan, is seemingly unattainable.
- In the apple, Eve offers Adam a symbol of hope, that the lost inner life can be recovered. Likewise, Iduna offers apples to the gods, so they can make a fresh start each time to achieve their goals.
- All five senses have their seat in a center, which Murshid defines as Akasha or a vacuum. They are inverse spaces, just as in the core of an apple, five spaces open inwards.
- In these centers, the entire cosmos is reflected in its smell, consistence, colour, sound and taste. In the apple’s core, all experiences of the past and all faculties for the future are recorded.
- The individual centres are only able to produce a complete perception together. Only the head centre or heart centre are unbalanced. In an apple, the centres are positioned in a circle

The physical body is made of matter, its substance is matter; but the centers of perception are of still finer matter, and though they are located in the physical body, no nourishment can reach them, except that which is drawn through the breath, the fine substance which is not even visible. In the language of the mystics it is called Nur, which means light.

- In the different religious traditions, mythical apples are usually shining and golden. They are perceived as luminous.
- The opening and nourishing of the centres takes place via the breath. The Sufis awake their centres through breathing exercises and inner worlds of light emerge.

The body which covers the soul keeps it blind by depriving it of its freedom of expression in keener perception. It is like a captivity for the soul. When the centers of the body are awakened and at work, then the soul experiences life more clearly, and naturally clouds which give depression clear away. The soul begins to look forward to life with hope, with trust, and with courage; and thus attains that power and understanding which is needed in the struggle for Life.

- The loss of paradise which the soul suffers through acceptance of a body is not irrecoverable. The apple shows the way in physicality through to the soul. The fairy tale of Frau Holle teaches us that apples want to be picked. The Ottomans called cities which were to be conquered, golden apples. Full of courage and hope, Greek heroes, celtic knights and muslim warriors, headed west toward Avalon, the land of apples.
- The opening of the Akashas is revealed in two aspects: in the development of power and understanding. There are two trees in paradise: the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. In the esoteric science of the chakras there are two energy flows which connect the centres with each other: Ida and Pingala. For the Sufis, Jelal as male strength on one side and Jemal as female beauty on the other. As the distinguishing of beauty also leads to conflict, we must take into account that the development of strength also leads to abuse of power. The apple represents both: female beauty and worldly power.

There is nothing for which a man will so blindly sacrifice all he possesses as for the woman he loves. He can be seen discarding his standards of thought and understanding, his family and friends, and his position for the sake of her whom he loves. And one feels that Adam must gladly have left paradise, if Eve did but smile and say it was her pleasure to walk on earth.

- The apple which the goddess of love offers us, whether she is named Aphrodite or Freya, is accepted with joy because it contains the chance to fulfill the meaning of life.

In this light, it can be understood that Murshid heralds a religious paradigm shift with the words:

Hail to my exile from the Garden of Eden to the earth! If I had not fallen, I should not have had the opportunity of probing the depths of life.

And, of course, as one of the five centres, waking the sexual chakras is not a taboo for Murshid: *man's life can never be complete without woman, and this is the error that lies at the root of the ideal of celibacy.*

It is as undesirable, according to the Sufi's point of view, to kill the bodily desires by absolute or partial renunciation, as to over-indulge them and enslave one's life to them. The Sufi means to possess the desires. Not to be possessed by them.

- Now it becomes clearer why Christ is depicted as an apple. In the perfection which Christ realized as a man, he is one with all of creation and with God the father. The circle is complete.

Medication

We have found that the essence of the apple is always helpful:

- If we open ourselves, to discover our inner life
- If we want to awaken our chakras
- If we want to move out of the depression of meaninglessness
- If we need strength and courage, to seek the goal of our soul
- If we want to allow ourselves to fully love the opposite sex
- If we want to regain the right to sexual pleasure
- If we have become slaves to our needs and want to regain freedom
- If we want to trust our intuition
- If we are ready to give up the perfection of solitude for the imperfection and the joy of earthly life.

Ya Wadud

The constant embrace of the affectionate loving universe.

Divine love's most intimate manifestation

The way we learn to love Allah is by learning how to love, and human beings especially learn how to love by learning how to be intimate.

Sexual intimacy

It consciously uses the densest elements of a situation as an inner impetus to turn toward God. This transformative quality is also found in Ya Tawwab

Forgiveness that enables you to turn away from grudges and perceived individual defects, toward the perfection of Allah. It comes with the realization that the divine beloved is always turning toward you, continually offering a gaze of deep forgiveness and endless compassion.

Bamboo

Description

Bambuseae

The name comes from Malaysian

Tree and shrub-like grasses with mostly upright woody or branching stalks, commonly branched, often meters long stems, airy, delicate foliage, grass-like leaves and sometimes huge panicles. The bamboo cane was already known in antiquity under the greek name, Kalamos Indikos; or latin, harundo Indica.

Most bamboo species die after flowering and bearing fruit. They bloom in sync periodically, depending on the type, every 12 to 120 years. Because the plants flower at the same time in any area, this plant die-off can affect up to a large region.

Bamboo is naturally found in Asia, North and South America as well as Australia. In China alone, there are 500 varieties of Bambuseae, with a further 100 varieties in Japan. They are most prevalent in the tropics and subtropics, though some varieties grow well in colder areas. Even in the Himalayas, some varieties grow up to 3800m above sea level.

Cultural Significance

Bamboos have been assigned various symbolic meanings. For example: in China, it is a symbol for a long life; in India, a symbol for friendship. In Japan, bamboo also has a positive connotation. Bamboo grows very straight and, due to its fresh green color, serves as a symbol of purity. In some Asian cultures it is assumed that origins of humanity emerged from the bamboo cane. In Malaysia, there is a legend of a man who, after dreaming, finds a beautiful woman inside a bamboo cane he cuts back. A Japanese fable tells of a moon princess who as a baby was found inside a glowing bamboo cane.

Importance as a crop

Worldwide, bamboo covers a surface area of approx. 37 million hectares, of which some six million is in China and nine million in India. Especially in Asia, it has great ecological, economic and cultural importance; bamboo and its various applications form the basis of livelihood for circa 1.5 billion people. The usage ranges from food source, construction material, textiles, and organic materials to plant extracts in the production of cosmetics and toiletries. Bamboo is also even used as a fuel. Historically, in China, most paper was made from the pulp of young bamboo shoots. The bamboo grain itself is edible. Tea produced from it contains carbohydrates, dietary fiber, proteins, fats, minerals, and vitamins. It is said to help prevent migraines. Thanks to the hollow cavity, bamboo is extremely light and elastic. Houses are traditionally built from this tough, light and very hard wood. In earthquake-prone areas, bamboo houses have proven significantly more durable than brick houses against tremors.

Musical instruments are produced from bamboo in many regions worldwide. In Indonesia, there is the Angklung, an existing bamboo Idiophon and numerous asian slit drums are made from bamboo. Bamboo pieces struck against one another are used in the music of New Guinea. The Japanese Shakuhachi and Indonesian Bansuri are renowned bamboo flutes. Stringed instruments made from bamboo range from simple african and asian monochords much as the earlier vietmanese [Đàn bầu](#), to bamboo zithers with between 20 and 50 strings.

Murshid

Hazrat Inayat Khan was in his early years a celebrated Vina player in all of India. About his Instrument he says:

The Vina is the oldest instrument in the world - not, of course, in its present form, but in its original form. It is the mother instrument of all instruments in the East, and it is chiefly used for concentration and meditation.

The first vina, an invention of Mahadeva, was a bamboo with gourds attached to it. Guts were used, veins of animals, and all things that could be found in the jungle. When the Rishis went into the jungle for their yoga practices, the wish for companionship led them to take first a bamboo and a piece of gut, then to fasten two gourds to the bamboo. This was called the rudra vina, and on this the Rishis played.

It had only one string, because the Rishis thought that the one sound - and not a variety - could help their concentration.

When we follow Murshid in his description of the great master Shiva, we can sense the majesty of this king of mysticism:

The Lord of Yogis, Shiva, whose name is also Mahadeva gave to the world his lifelong experiences in the practice of yoga. He is worshipped in India as a godhead, and his literature is considered holy scripture. He was a very great master of breathing, and an ascetic. He lived in the mountains, where he sat and breathed the fresh air of the wide horizons of the East, and practiced mantras: words or phrases which change the whole being of man.

There he wanted to make some experiments on himself of higher exaltation by the help of music. What he could do in the forest was to cut a piece of bamboo. In this way he made his first vina, and he practiced upon it in the solitude.

For a mystic it is a fact, that sound is the beginning of the any language:

There is a tradition that the first language in the world consisted of music; after that a language of words came into being.

The bamboo is a plant that has a body open to sound. The reason is that it is empty inside:

Tone manifests more clearly through a sonorous body than through a solid one, the former being open to vibrations, while the latter is closed. All things which give a clear sound show life, while solid bodies choked up with substance seem dead. Resonance is the reserving of tone; in other words it is the rebound of tone which produces an echo.

The vina is especially constructed to concentrate the vibrations; as it gives a faint sound, audible to the player only, it is used in meditation.

Among the different Sufi orders in the world the school of Moinuddin Chishti is most oriented toward music as a means of meditation. The International Sufi Order, founded by Hazrat Inayat Khan is in direct lineage with the Chishti Order

Therefore the Sufis, especially those of the Chishti school of ancient times, have taken music as a source of their meditation.

There is nothing in this world that can help one spiritually more than music. Meditation prepares, but music is the highest for touching perfection.

Medication

In summary, we know that bamboo essence helps us

- To tune in to straight simplicity

- To perceive the reflection of our soul at highest level as sound
- To overcome solitude
- To purify our being and alleviate it
- To transcend the boundary between outer and inner worlds during meditation
- To experience the ecstasy of existence
- To experience the birth of our vibrational body of sound

Ya Sami:

in You I hear everything. I am sound and I live inside sound. I am clinking and ringing, inside me it is sounding

Banana

The Bananas (*Musa*) are a plant genus in the banana family (Musaceae). There are about 100 species in the genus.

Etymology

The word banana reached German via Spanish and Latin. It most likely originates from Wolof, a language of Senegal. Centuries later, the banana received its scientific name when the botanist Carl von Linné classified world flora in 1753. He named the banana using the Arabic-Persian term *mūz* „musa paradisiaca“ (for cooking banana) or „musa sapientium“ for edible banana.

Musa species and cultivars are not trees but evergreen perennial plants. Underground they have a rhizome sprouting from the offshoots.

They can grow from a half a meter up to 10 meters tall.

The inflorescence normally hangs above. It features many green, brown or red-violet leaves which gradually fall off. On the underside of each upper leaf several flowers are found. At the base of the inflorescence, the flowers are female, while at the end of the inflorescence there are male flowers. The yellow flowers dry up and develop into the fruits. The banana turns upwards and then grows in this direction, so that the flower buds grow towards the sun. This is the reason that the banana is curved. The plant continues to flower while the fruits develop.

Useage

The fruit flesh of the dessert banana which prevails in European shops is mealy and sweet. In the countries of origin, the green to red plantain is an important nutritional source. Their whitish-yellow flesh is boiled as well as baked or grilled. Furthermore, banana leaves or banana hearts are used as vegetables in south-east Asian cooking, and banana leaves are also often used to wrap food or as a kind of serving tray.

In Indonesia where the fibrous banana, [Abacá](#), is common, the so-called manila hemp fibres are converted into nets, ropes and yarns.

Bananas are cultivated in approx. 120 countries around the world, primarily in developing countries and ranks fourth worldwide among agricultural crops after wheat, rice and maize. Small farmers provide 85 percent of world banana production. Between 400 and 500 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America are dependent on the banana as a part of their diet.

On a typical banana farm in south-east Uganda up to 30 different varieties of banana can grow, depending on whether they are needed as a staple food, raw or cooked, for market or ceremonies or for their hemp-like fibre.

History

The banana comes originally from the south-east Asian islands. The banana then came to Africa either through the Arabs or with the Austronesian immigrants who settled Madagascar from today's Indonesia and are also responsible for bringing rice to Madagascar

The earliest mention in European literature dates from 1284. Brunetto Latini called the banana, Pomme de paradis - paradise fruit, in allusion to the fruit first eaten by Eve.

From the Canary Islands, where the Spanish had planted them, they came to America. In 1502, Portuguese colonists founded the first plantations in the Caribbean and Central America. The first bananas arrived to Great Britain imported from Bermuda in 1633.

All banana cultivation is susceptible to a number of diseases. However, in the industrial banana plantations where production is based on a single variety, the bananas are most susceptible to fungus and other organisms which cause disease and which continuously develop new defenses against chemical pesticides. This means that, long term, it will be increasingly difficult to keep these diseases under control. It is estimated that in approx. 10 years, circa 2022, it will no longer be possible to grow the current export banana variety. An alternative is not yet available. The search is complicated by the fact that most cultivated banana varieties are not fruit producing.

Importance

The banana was a type of ironic symbol for German reunification. Buying bananas signified demonstrative participation in the previously denied consumer choice of the west.

As one of the oldest cultivated plants of mankind, the banana is like no other fruit in all of creation's delights of the senses. In many cultures it is considered a sign of fertility and prosperity.

In Sri Lanka it is said that Eve did not seduce Adam with an apple, but with a banana.

In Indian legend it was the forbidden fruit and reserved for only the Brahmin caste.

In the Koran, the banana is one of the trees of paradise where there are fruits for all in abundance.

What might the banana mean for a future culture? What promise does it hold for us?

Murshid commented on the image of paradise in the Koran as follows:

The early scriptures were given at a time when the evolution of the world was such that people were eager for whatever material comfort was obtainable. If it had been at this time, something else would have been promised.

What promise would be fitting for our times? This question poses the enquiry, how might the message previously delivered by the masters and prophets, look like in this day and age? Murshid refers here to an essential difference in religious practice:

But in the time of man's maturity, of the whole world's maturity, such things are no longer called by these names, and yet the work is needed.

Today, we no longer need an all-binding and fixed image of paradise. More than ever, we need a vision of a way of being on earth in community that is sustainable. Not the authority of the ambassador vouching for its legitimacy, but rather recognisable verifiability. Murshid: *now the world can recognize, sooner or later, what is right and what is wrong.*

And the building blocks for such a vision are already to hand. If we gather the information already understood about banana cultivation, then the banana can once again be the focus of a new vision of paradise. And the vision is remarkably similar to that of the Koran. The following quotations are from Surah 56: „The inevitable event/revolution“ (Al-Wáqeah).

- It is already clear that an ecological awareness is necessary for a healthy life on earth. Exploitation of natural resources without consideration to the whole inevitably leads to disaster. (“When the earth is shaken violently, and the mountains are smashed to pieces”)
- Western civilisation’s endeavours to make banana consumption available for all through the lowest possible prices has failed. Admittedly, in Germany the annual consumption of bananas per capita is 13kg. In contrast lies the abject poverty of the workers on the plantations and the ecological destruction of entire regions. The fruit needs a revaluation, which does justice to its name, *Musa sapientium*. Only cultivated and enjoyed in wisdom (lat. *Sapientia*) can they bring happiness. (“They are the ones brought closer (to God) in the gardens of pleasure”)
- Today, bananas are grown in monoculture plantations of sometimes over 1000 hectares. In such operations, nothing except bananas plants grow. And that is in stark contrast to the rain forest which had to give way to the bananas. In any coming garden of paradise, the natural diversity of flora will be restored. The term “weed” will lose its old meaning. No longer will everything prickly or with other undesirable properties be exterminated with herbicides. The banana requires “companion plants”. (“(They will be) among thornless lote trees and clustered bananas”)
- A new awareness will arise, that plants are given by God. The attempts to develop new varieties through gene manipulation and cloning have failed. Cultivation will be performed in cooperation with nature. (“Have you observed what ye sow? Was it ye, who made it grow, or were We the grower?”)
- The massive application of fungicides, usually sprayed by aircraft, (“in the midst of scorching winds and scalding water. And in the shadows of black smoke”), will be discarded as a deadly mistaken way. Ecological farming methods may yield smaller harvests but they will offer sustainable economies.
- The waterways that bubble through the plantations will support life again. (“With cups and ewers and bowls(filled) from flowing spring. No headache shall they suffer, nor shall they be intoxicated”). Today, contaminated water leaving the banana fields forms a threatening poison to all life, even outside the plantations and in the sea. Quite simply, it causes sickness.

- The animal life of today suffers greatly from the industrial cultivation of bananas. An atmosphere distinctly inimical to life reigns on the plantations. Drinking the milk from nearby cows would be hazardous. Bees can barely produce honey. They carry the genetic defects from various chemicals. See turtles die from the enormous amounts of plastic waste from the plantations. In the banana cultivation of the future there will be a place for the animals. Cows could graze under the trees and bees visit the flowers which are no wrapped in plastic bags. Thus the land of milk and honey will flow. Chickens will be able to range free. („And the meat of fowl, that they may desire“).
- Women are not welcome on the plantations in the banana republics because they can become pregnant. In the vision of the future, women and men will work their land together again. („And fair maidens with beautiful eyes, like unto hidden pearls. And noble wives. Beloved, equal in age“)
- Free time is more and more restricted. Holidays don't exist in the banana plantations of large corporations. Trade unions are banned or boycotted. In the new age, people will not only work, but have time for socialising and sharing. („On interwoven couches, reclining on them, facing each other“)
- At the moment thousands of workers become sterile through their contact with chemical pesticides. It is high time that the banana may once again be considered the plant of fertility. A new generation will grow, which shall do much in a completely different way. („That We may bring others in your place and develop ye again into a state ye know not“)
- Children are not even safe in school from the poisonous airplanes. In the plantations they are not unwanted. They barely have a chance to live a carefree childhood. This cannot continue! Where children are at risk, no healthy food can grow. („Youths of perpetual youngness will await you“)
- The fruits for export grow in plastic bags soaked with chemicals. No worker can be tempted to eat those bananas. Actually, nobody should eat them. An upside-down world that will be “flipped” in the new age. („And fruit in abundance, not limited, nor forbidden“)
- The three globally active major corporations which dominate the world market for export bananas do everything possible to cover up the environmental sins committed during cultivation. Even certifications with nice sounding names such as “Rainforest Alliance” are used to gloss over the chemical bludgeon and social clearcutting for the western consumers. In the coming garden of paradise, such hollow words will be stopped because people must no longer be lead behind the light. („They will hear no idle chatter or sinful speech there. Only the saying, “Peace, Peace”“).

The banana and all of nature suffers terribly from our consumer and profit drives. When will we put and end to them? When can the banana live in paradise? The situation is desperate.

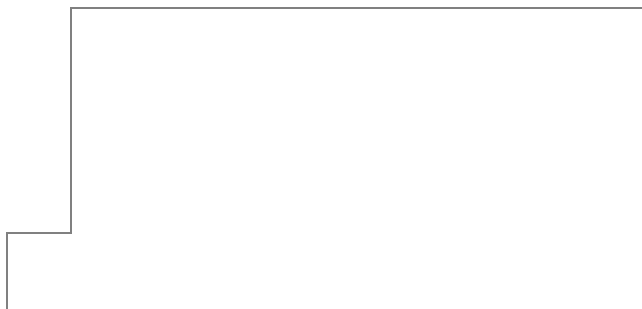
Murshid: When someone finds that there is no justice to be found in life, or beauty is lacking, or wisdom is not to be found anywhere, and goodness is rare, then he begins to think that justice must exist somewhere; all beauty, wisdom, goodness must be found somewhere, and that is in paradise. He thinks, 'It exists somewhere. I shall find it one day; if not in this life, I shall find it in the hereafter; but there is a day when the fulfillment of my hope, my desire, will come.' This person lives; and this person lives to see his desire fulfilled. For in reality the lack that one finds in a person, in a thing, in an affair, in a condition, will not always remain. For all will be perfect, all must be perfect; it is a matter of time. And it is towards that perfection that we are all striving, and the whole universe is working towards the same goal. It is in that perfection that the thinkers and the great ones of all times have seen their paradise, because through man it is God who desires. Therefore it is not the desire of man; it is the desire of God, and has its fulfillment.

The Prophet Mohammed saw a future in a visionary state, one that he was certain would come to be. And the attitude of his wife Khaditya played no small part in this realization. She is reported to say: *Before the declaration of the Divine Message, Mohammed had visions in different forms which he told me, and exactly the same thing or something similar to what the symbols of his vision related happened."*

Medication

Banana Essence helps us:

- not to despair
- to adhere to our vision of paradise
- to strengthen our faith in a better future
- to bring consumption and physical satisfaction in harmony with the divine
- to bridge the dichotomy between "the call" and "work-life-balance".
- to loosen our desperate clinging to material things
- to lose our fear of peace
- to break down our fear of loss of dominance over nature
- not to talk, rather to do
- to believe in others and strengthen their vision



Cactus

Prickly Pear Cactus

Opuntia Vulgar

Etymology

The botanical family of the cactuses was first given the latin name 'cactus' during the 16th century, when the opuntias were the first of the American cactus plants to appear in the Mediterranean and spread particularly across Sicily.

Vegetal characteristics

Cactuses are perennial shrubs. Almost all species are stem succulents, which means that the branches swell in order to store water. Photosynthesis also takes place in the branches. The leaves have mostly transformed into spines.

Cactuses can come in many different sizes. Some of them can become up to 15 metres tall, yet the diameter of the smallest cactus barely reaches a centimetre.

Most often the flowers are quite big and with small-growing species frequently bigger than the plant body. Depending on which pollinators the cactuses have adapted to such as butterflies, bats, hummingbirds or bees the flowers are open during the night or the day. Usually they open wide. The berry like, often succulent fruits, which display very eye-catching colours when ripe, attract birds, ants, mice and bats who contribute to dissemination of the seeds.

Dissemination

The natural habitat of cactuses is limited to the American continent.

There their range stretches from southern Canada all the way to Patagonia. Cactuses colonize a wide variety of habitats from lowland plains to high mountain regions, from tropical rainforests to steppes, semi-deserts and deserts. What all these habitats have in common is the fact that the water needed to survive is not available all year around but only during particular seasons.

Evolutionary history

Cactus plants are deemed a relatively young plant family. They are only a few million years old and no fossilized findings of them have been made. During this geologically speaking short period cactuses have quickly developed into extremely specialized plants. The ancestors of the cactuses found today were originally herbaceous plants, who were forced to recede to places that were not irrigated very well and only received water irregularly because they could not withstand the competition for the sites that benefitted from a regular abundance of water. Over many generations they adapted to the fact that water was only available periodically and developed the ability

- to store the water needed for their survival in their body
- to transfer photosynthesis from their leaves to their branches
- to reduce their leaves in number and size
- to transform their leaves into spines, which create shade for the plant, fend off herbivores and absorb water (also from fog) and create windless zones (reduce air flow) around the plantbody, which reduce evaporation
- to reduce the leaves' pores (stomata) in number and size to minimize water loss through transpiration (evaporation)
- to reduce evaporation by growing a waxy layer
- to develop poisonous substances as a defence against herbivores

Uses

In Aztec imagery cactuses are depicted quite frequently. They were of great ritual importance – on them human sacrifices were offered.

Tenochtitlan, the modern day Mexico City, means Place of the Holy Cactus. Mexico's national emblem has remained an eagle, a snake and a cactus until today. Also the commercial exploitation of cactuses goes back to the ancient Aztecs. The north American Natives use the alkaloids contained

in some cactuses for their rituals. From the spines of some cactuses they fabricate fishing hooks. Nowadays cactuses are mainly used to provide food (jam, fruit, vegetables) and especially as a host plant for the cochennille louse from which the red colouring for Campari and good quality lip sticks is obtained. Especially in South America column cactuses which have died off provide valuable wood for construction.

Murshid

“Cactus, why are you fringed with thorns?”

--I am the tongue of the malicious- man.

Cactus, why is your stem so thorny?

--I am the hand of the evil -doer.

Cactus, why have you thorns on your leaf also?

--I am the heart of the wicked - who take pleasure in hurting others.”

We don't know with which cactus variety Murshid had this conversation. Maybe it's not that important to know. The whole plant family speaks the same language:

“I am in my words and my acts and feelings the same in the plant realm as what you call 'evil ' in the human realm.”

But the cactus does not answer in the Tana of Murshid, that it resembles the human evildoer with its spines. Here we see expressed, how the Sufis experience nature, namely as a part of themselves. Therefore the plant realm is not only seen as a world that provides material for allegories or for symbolical reflections.

The various plants rather express their being in the same diversity as human beings with all their differences. For the Sufis this diversity also seems to include evil . So evil is classified as a natural phenomena.

In other writings it becomes even more clear how Murshid sees the plant realm. All different plants are for him special elaborations of one basic idea. He calls this 'the symbolical tree'. Here we find the same concept which Goethe calls 'the primal plant'.

In Goethe's words: “The variability of the plant shapes, which I have long since been following on its peculiar course, awakened more and more the idea in me: the shapes of the plants which surround us were not initially determined and fixed, rather they were given a fortunate mobility and suppleness along with their willful generic and specific tenacity so they can comply with the multitude of conditions which act on them across the globe and subsequently form and transform themselves. Here one must consider the differences of the soil; amply nourished by the moistness of the valleys, withered by the dryness of the caves, protected from frost and heat in every degree, or inescapably exposed to both, the family can transform into a species, the species into a variety which can then change endlessly through different conditions; and nonetheless the plant abides self-contained in its realm, even if it leans on the neighbourly rock and the mobile life on both sides. The most distant are decidedly related, they can be compared without effort. How they can be gathered under one single term became clear to me by and by and it became more clear that this view could

be enlivened in a more elevated manner: a demand which I envisioned under the material form of a primal plant.' (Goethe, 1817)

Here we encounter in the work of the great German poet the same spirit of unity, which also permeates the life and work of Hazrat Inayat Khan. Essentially all is One, not just the plant realm, but all of creation: ' ...

For this (symbolical) tree is this whole universe, the miniature of which is one's own self,

So Murshid goes one step further here than Goethe. The primal plant is the likeness of the whole universe, in the same way as the Self is for man. The primal plant and the human Self are one and the same on different evolutionary levels of creation. This clearly shows two things in a new way: Firstly it becomes clear, how it is possible for man to communicate with plants. The Self, which lives deep inside man is the same as the primal plant, which exists in the depths of every plant. Secondly it rudimentally illustrates the essence of evil. Namely outside of Unity evil does not exist in the plant realm. 'Evil' plants are just as much derivations of the symbolical tree as 'good' plants.

if you ask for the pears, there are pears, if one asked for a cactus, there is a cactus, if you ask for the rose there will be the rose and its thorns together. And it is the lack of knowledge of this great secret hidden in the heart of the universe which is the only tragedy of life.

I remember how Pir Vilayat, my beloved Sufi teacher, did not permit himself to answer questions about the essence of good and evil. We were allowed to ask anything we liked, but we could not expect any philosophical statements about the devil.

This attitude we also find with his father '....

Evil is an ever-floating thing--sometimes here, sometimes there. So evil in man is just a cloud; it comes and goes; and if we trust in his goodness, the clouds will disappear.

When we return to the plant realm and examine cactuses more closely we notice that spines are a metamorphosis of the leaves. Why does the cactus transform its leaves into spines?

Murshid describes this process as an act of concentration:'...

The entire universe in all its activity has been created through the concentration of God. Every being in the world is occupied consciously or unconsciously in some act of concentration. Good and evil are alike the result of concentration. The stronger the concentration, the greater the result; lack of concentration is the cause of failure in all things. For this world and the other, for material as well as spiritual progress, concentration is most essential.

Why has the cactus focused its concentration on developing spines and doing evil with them?

Murshid is speaking about plants as well as human beings when he says:'.....

In the form of anger, passion, greed, or stubbornness one sees evil, and also in the form of deceit and treachery. But the root of evil is one, and that is selfishness.

We know about cactuses that they have developed spines in order to survive in hostile environments. The desire to live, to protect oneself and the ability to survive are positive traits, which an organism needs to exist.

From the point of view of the Sufis the same goes for man. He develops evil traits when he has to confront his environment. The cause is always his instinct of self-preservation. In itself it is not bad but it can turn evil. In regard to plants one could claim that they cannot really be evil as they don't know what they are doing. They are simply selfish and develop in a way that is unpleasant for their surroundings.

But what about human beings? Murshid:'....

we must first understand where evil ends and where good begins. It has never been possible even for a deep thinker to draw a line between good and evil. What distinction do we then find, from this point of view, between good and evil, if we look at it closely? None but the difference of degree and difference of point of view. What seems good to one person to another does not..

With plants it is not possible to differentiate between selfishness and the will to survive. All different plants are manifestations of the primal plant and in this regard all plant behaviour is 'plantworthy'. Thus there are no good or bad plants. There are just some that we like better and some we like less or not at all. So what is the difference between egoism and healthy self-assertion in human beings? In principle it is no different from how it is with plants. But then again it is. Sufism does not offer an easy solution here. All human beings-without exception carry the divine light in themselves. So one could ask oneself why one should label something as wrong or as sin. Sufism has nothing in common with nihilism though. The ability to differentiate between good and bad does exist, namely in every individual human being. And as every human being judges differently, is good and bad different for everyone.

Murshid'.....

It depends upon the standards of each one's evolution; it depends on the goal or ideal which each one has placed before him. That is why the Prophet said, 'The religion of each person is peculiar to himself'. It is a great fault on our part when we accuse another person of an untrue or false belief, an untrue or false religion. We do not know that perhaps he has a religion which is suited to himself. His evolution or attainment in life, his temperament, his standard of morals are different;

This is why the Sufis recommend occupying oneself with the so called evil around us as little as possible, and to express ones own spirituality instead.

To live according to the standards which we think are right poses enough of a challenge. There is no need to look upon others.

But we are part of the whole and we are created in such a way that we resonate with our surroundings. And here the message which Murshid calls the message of Love, Harmony and Beauty becomes important.

Love

Love is the force, which melts all evil. Evil is a state of lack. It develops in isolation. The moment it comes into contact with love it starts to falter.

Murshid says: '....

All evil and sin come from the lack of love.

In an embrace-it doesn't have to be a physical one- we counteract evil with something which disarms it.

Murshid: " *Pity the wicked one for his evil doing, for he can do no better.*

Love means to suffer with others. In our culture pity maybe has a bit of a stale aftertaste. Murshid shows us how simple it really is and gives us a fresh recipe for evoking compassion:'

Compassion comes by the thought, "I cannot expect of a person what he is unable to think or do as I expect it of him."Every person is a certain plant, not the same plant. Yes, we may be fond of roses, but every plant does not give roses. If we want roses we must only seek the rose plant. If it is not the rose plant, we must not be disappointed that it is not the rose plant. The plant that does not give roses is not the rose plant. In this way we can correct ourselves of our own disappointment, instead of demanding roses of a tree which is not a rose tree.

Our loves makes it possible to be considerate. Murshid notes that '....

Consideration cannot be taught; it must come by itself

The source it springs from is called love by the Sufis. And the form it takes cannot be defined in binding principles. We can leave on a quest to find situations which generate gentleness in us. We can feel our longing. We can experience within ourselves how our love searches for ways to express itself. We can allow love to express itself.

This morning, after having cut tiles with my flex outside in the snow, I came into the house and met my wife. I answered in a way which matched the coldness and the tiles but was much too coarse for my wife.

Being considerate then means:

- Observe. What is my affect on the people close to me. By being so rough I had hurt my wife. She clearly signalled this to me.
- Self- analysis. I discover that I had brought my adaption to the snow and the sharp machines back inside into a situation where it was not appropriate at all.
- Pain. The pain in others is also a pain in oneself. I had hurt my beloved . This hurt me too and I felt the pain of it.
- Apology. When I was aware of the fact that I was sorry, I was able to say as much. My wife then remarked, that she was therefore able to let go of the reflex to close herself to me .

Only if we keep observing our behaviour and examine, review and correct it are we treading the path of love. Only like this can we be different from the cactus and can we truly become human beings. Love keeps pushing us to become human beings. It is God's deep desire to lead us from our limitations. Love cannot bear it when we get stuck in inappropriate behaviour.

Beauty

Murshid: *What is really good? The answer is, there is no such thing as good or evil; there is beauty. That which is beautiful, we call good. That which is ugly compared with the beautiful, we call evil, whether it is manner, custom, idea, thought or action. This shows that this whole phenomenon of the universe is the phenomenon of beauty. Every soul has an inclination to admire beauty, to seek for beauty, to love beauty, and to develop beauty; even God loves beauty.*

We are not very different from cactuses. We carry spines because somewhere on our life's path we decided that they were the right answer to the dangers and threats posed by our environment. In the world of humans we call this morals and habits. If we keep wanting to prick even if a completely different behaviour is asked of us, we are ugly. After a long walk through a nature reserve my friend and I had gone home to her place. She invited me in. Still filled with the beauty we had just experienced together in the forest and thrilled by the opportunity to see her home, I stepped inside. Only after I had sat down and she had served the tea, did I see to my horror that her white wool carpet was completely smudgy. I had forgotten to take my shoes off outside. At that time I was working as a gardener. My shoes were always dirty. My own living room was organized around this fact. I had followed my habit and felt ashamed of my inattentiveness.

We saw that cactuses adapted in a relatively short period of time in regards to evolution to adverse conditions and developed spines. In previous chapters I had reported about Murshid's friend Luther Burbank.

In just a few years this botanist was able to cultivate cactuses without spines.

"While I was conducting experiments to make 'spineless' cacti," he continued, "I often talked to the plants to create a vibration of love. 'You have nothing to fear,' I would tell them. 'You don't need your defensive thorns. I will protect you.' Gradually the useful plant of the desert emerged in a thornless variety."

Harmony

After the elaborations on love and beauty one might be led to believe, that consideration, gentleness, compassion are social graces which the Sufis prescribe. 'No', says Murshid then, it's not as easy as that.

The manner of wisdom and tenderness cannot be made into principles to which people should be restricted. A brush cannot take the place of a knife, and therefore everyone has to use every manner and action according to the situation.

Pir Vilayat, Murshid's oldest son, reports how when WW2 broke out, he and his sister Noor-un-Nisa pondered together what was demanded of them under these circumstances. How to deal with the

Nazi spectre? With which attitude should they oppose this evil? Both these young people struggled with themselves and took the decision that Noor would join the English secret service and Vilayat would sign up with the navy. Noor-un-Nisa's story ends in the concentration camp Dachau where she was beaten to death.

Sometimes one has to commit all ones' forces to a fight, then gentleness is not enough. But Murshid gives us a teaching, aimed at helping us when we are choosing which course of action to take.

In numerous places in his collected works he refers to Jesus Christ's statement: 'Resist not evil'.

"Resist not evil" does not mean: receive evil into yourself. "Resist not evil" only means: do not send back the inharmony that comes to you, just as a person playing tennis would send back the ball with his racket. But at the same time it does not suggest that you should receive the ball with open hands.

Here we come upon a very sensitive point in our being. As organisms we are not very different from plants: we react to stimuli from our environment and adapt to them.

Murshid: We are vehicles or instruments that respond. If we respond to goodness, goodness becomes our property. If we respond to evil, then evil becomes our property. If we respond to love, then love becomes our possession. If we respond to hatred, hatred becomes our life.

Unser Kontakt mit der uns umringenden Welt ist so, dass es einen ununterbrochenen mechanischen Austausch gibt; jeden Moment in unserem Leben nehmen wir Teil an allem, was unsere Sinne uns aufnehmen lassen. Deswegen nimmt ein Mensch, der nach Fehler bei anderen Ausschau hält, der nach dem Bösen sucht, unbewusst teil an allen Bösen, auch wenn er kein böser Mensch ist. Einmal betrogen erwartet jemand immer das Gleiche; sogar bei jemand der ehrlich ist, sucht er nach Betrug, weil er diesen Eindruck in sich selber festhält.“

Man's contact with the outer world is such that there is a continual mechanical interchange going on; every moment of his life he is partaking of all that his senses allow him to receive. Therefore very often the man who is looking for faults in others, who is looking for evil, even though he may not be a wicked person, is yet partaking unknowingly of all that is evil. Once deceived, a person is always on the look-out; even with someone who is honest he will look for deceit, as he holds that impression within himself.

A mechanical exchange is the way plants behave. We human beings have the same nature. But unlike plants, nature has given us an additional ability: we can freely choose how we want to react. However this ability is often underdeveloped. Our body sends signals to our thinking mind which mentally processes these signals and gives the body instructions on how to act. These instructions originate in our experience and our convictions.

One example:

One day when my son was still small, he came to me and punched me right between my legs. This was very painful. I reacted by slapping him in the face. He fled into the garden and hid. Immediately I felt a great sadness. I looked for him and apologized. Even today I greatly regret my reaction. Looking back, I am sure that for a tiny moment after the punch I would have had the opportunity to decide differently. I was not obliged to react mechanically. I had the choice. I did not make use of this

moment. The reason for this was my thinking, drawing on my previous experiences and convictions. I referred to the idea, that a box on the ears was justified in this situation. This idea had formed in me, when I was occasionally slapped during childhood. In me a conviction took shape, that one shouldn't put up with everything and has the right to strike out when being jostled by someone.

Murshid describes this thus:

all sin, evil, and wrong is what is forced from the body on the mind and from the mind on the soul; and all that is virtuous, good, and right is that which comes from the soul to the mind and from the mind to the body. This is the real meaning of the words in Christ's prayer, 'Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven'. It means in other words, heaven. 'What Thou thinkest in the soul the mind should obey, and what Thou thinkest in the mind the body should obey'

So heaven is not an idea or a thought. Heaven is this little moment, when we are free in our choice. Heaven is the human ability not to react. When we listen to our soul, we are able to follow Christ's call to: 'Resist not evil'. This is spirituality from a Sufi perspective. Every time we give our soul the chance to be heard during a confrontation, we create the harmony of the Sufis. Always submitting and adapting to the situation to hold the peace is not meant by this. Meant is the mastery, which grows, when we don't react but rather find refuge in the contentment of our soul and form our actions from here. Murshid: ' (true) resistance is practice of contentment.

Prescription

The cactus essence helps us to:

- listen to our soul when dealing with the thorns of others in our daily lives
- try to understand / find empathy for people who prick us
- not react mechanically when we are pricked
- to become instruments for the creation of beauty in the midst of the challenges (widrigkeiten) of life
- become aware of our own thorns
- take responsibility for our own engrained patterns
- offer resistance without betraying/abandoning one's own harmony

Ya Nafi

Please wash my eyes clear of blindness,

Ya Darr

And show me the place, where I can wash away my impurities.

Celandine

Botany

English: Celandine, Figwort, Pilewort.

German: Scharbockskraut, Feigwurz.

Latin: *Chelidonium minus* or *Ranunculus ficaria*.

Its occurrence spans across Europe and Western Asia. In North America, it has been imported.

A low-growing perennial plant with dark green, heart-shaped leaves. In the summer heat, the leaves ail and then soon disappear. The star-shaped flowers are yellow and are transformed into white as they get older. The flowers consist of 7 to 12 petals. As a harbinger of spring, it blooms as a first plant immediately when the snow is gone. Flowering period from March to May. Since it is so early, she can grow there, where later trees and bushes cast their shadows. The flowers are strongly oriented towards sun, weather and time of day. They close before the rain comes and also on sunny days they do not open before 9:00, and 17:00 they close for the night.

You would think that the flowers are used to draw insects. The radiant petals carry also honey bags. But the flowers can tolerate colder days than the insects, with the result that few flowers are fertilized and produce seed. The reproduction of the plant takes place mainly through the root tubers. Through these the plant winters and is difficult to combat as a garden weed. But she is hardly a competitor to other garden plants. The early awakening is possible due to the supplies in the tubers, which rest throughout the summer and fall and then quickly produce leaves and flowers in the spring.

Etymology

Celandine and *Chelidonium* come from Latin: *Chelidonia* means swallow. At the beginning of my research, I was the opinion that Murshid talks about the *Chelidonium majus*, well-known in the naturopathy. This plant is called traditionally eye herb or light herb. According to Dioscorides, the swallow heals their young of blindness with this herb. *Chelidonium majus* is however not small and bright. She is associated with the family of the *Papaveraceae*. The *Chelidonium minus* is in traditional medicine rather insignificant. It belongs to the *Ranunculus* family and has nothing to do with the above attributions. It appears long before the swallows come back in the spring and is withdrawing into its roots long before the swallows leave us again. Why both plants are called *Chelidonium*, is unclear.

The name *Ranunculus* comes from the Latin "rana": Frog. The reason for this name is that the plant likes moist places.

The name Pilewort ("hemorrhoid root") comes from the medieval doctrine of signature. The tubers look like hemorrhoids. The name "ficaria" refers to the similarity of the tubers with figs.

The German name Scharbockskraut comes from the previous use of the first early leaves, which are full of vitamin C. Scharbock is probably a corruption of the Dutch "Scheurbuik", scurvy, the belly disease of seafarers, which long have missed fresh veges.

Use in modern naturopathy

The description of the flower essence can be found at Gurudas:

"Celandine manifests one characteristic, which is the ability to transfer information... It effects the throat chakra, the nadis in the throat chakra, and the thyroid.... This is an exceptional remedy for singers and lecturers for articulation and for receiving information."

Occurrence in literature

The famous English poet William Wordsworth dedicated some poems to the celandine in the years 1802 - 1803. In one, 'To the Small Celandine' I stumbled upon a phenomenon that I have experienced in a similar way.

"Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low,
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know..."

Always in my garden, I had dedicated the plant never any attention, until Murshid Inayat Khan pointed on it.

Murshid

In the Tanas, Murshid referred to a total of 14 flowers and one of them is the celandine.

" Celandine, what is your meaning? --I am a little light of the earth."

I believe that Murshid specifically wants to draw our attention on a flower, that otherwise escapes our attention.

What does mean "a little light of the earth"?

What is a light of the earth?

What are the small, what the great lights of the earth?

These are the questions we need to ask ourselves if we want to understand Inayat Khan's statement.

When we crawl his collected works, we find only one point where he talks about a "light of the earth": in case of the celandine. And a quote from the Koran often cited by Murshid comes next: "God is the light of the heavens and the earth."

Murshid: *"if the Creator is the light of the heavens and of the earth, if the Creator Himself is light, then the, whole creation is His light also."* Perhaps we should add "principally". Because as a whole the world is quite dark, dense and hard. There is enough reason for depression and a heavy heart. The night is dark. Life pulls us down. It takes away what is dear to us: Our health, our lovers, our friends, our work.

But Celandine, a little light of the earth, calls us to shake of this severity. Celandine lifts us, if we want to look at all.

Murshid tells us to look at it.

When we look, we see a gleaming golden earth star overflowing with luminosity. Celandine is one of those creatures who have the task to remind us of our light-heritage. In the mineral kingdom and the animal kingdom there are similar creatures. We can think of the diamond or the dove. And in the human Kingdom, there are the avatars that embody the light of the earth.

Murshid: *"When Jesus Christ is represented as saying, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,' it is not meant that either the name or the visible person of Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega, but the Master-spirit within. It was this spirit which proclaimed this, moved by its realization of past, present, and future life, confident of its eternity. It is the same spirit which spoke through Krishna, saying, 'We appear on earth when Dharma is corrupted,' which was long before the coming of Christ. During his divine absorption Mohammad said, 'I existed even before this creation and shall remain after its assimilation.' In the holy traditions it is said, 'We have created thee of Our light and from thy light We have created the universe.' This is not said of the external person of Mohammad as known by this name. It refers to the spirit which spoke through all the blessed tongues and yet remained formless, nameless, birthless and deathless."*

Celandine does on a small scale, what the avatars do in large cycles: remember us of our divine light origin. It does it, when the winter, the time of darkness, death, starvation and the lack of light and food, is over. Then, it comes with a message: There comes a new time; a new Earth is created.

In its appearance characteristics, the celandine resembles on a small scale in an amazing way the embodiments of Christ:

- It draws its strength from previous cycles of creation and provides for an appearance in the next cycle.
- It announces itself exactly when the dark period loses its grip on the nature.

- It offers comfort and food to the hungry.
- Her beams have little individual importance. It doesn't bloom for procreation. It is not looking for a partner. It is a male and female in one.
- It develops hardly leaves and stalks. It blooms immediately when the snow is gone and the growth stops when other plants celebrate the summer and go into the fullness. It doesn't grow old.
- It is very much in line with the light of the Sun and of the day.
- Most people do not see it. Most people do not know its names. Her name changes.
- It shows the heavenly light on Earth.
- It speaks the word, which may otherwise be spoken by hardly any being: "I am the light of the earth".
- It embodies largest modesty: "A little light of the earth".

Ya Nur

O you, who are the light of all lights, how wonderful you show in the Celandine how you are the light in each soul and enlighten every pore of our bodies. You come when Dharma is in decay, and speak the word.

Medication

The celandine helps

to identify with the light of Christ

to know at the darkest moment that soon blossoms will appear

to stock up a ration for hard times

to experience oneself more as a human being, than as a man or a woman

to discover the secret of blasting in an impersonal way

to turn toward the light

to embody modesty

to renounce to heaven to be better able to distribute light on Earth

Cherry

The sour cherry (*Prunus cerasus*) is a species of the rose family. It is used as a fruit tree.

Etymology

German: Kirsche; Dutch: Kers Latin: cerasus. Greek kerasos. Armenian keras. The Roman scientist Pliny lists several cultivars. In his opinion a cultural form of cherry should have been brought from Pontus in Asia minor, which was rich in cherries, in 74 BC by L. Licinius Lucullus to Italy.

Features

The cherry can grow as a Bush, shrub, or tree and reaches heights of 1 up to 10 meters. As a tree, it has a loose, rounded Crown. Its branches are held out and hang over often. The bark is reddish brown, shiny and has large lenticels.

The leaves are elliptic ovate and usually pointed; its surface is shiny and slightly leathery. The blossoms of the cherry are two to four arranged in seated umbels. The flowers appear in the same moment as the leaves. The petals are white, the stamens are yellow. The flowering period extends from April to May. The seed inside the fruit is hard like a stone and not digestible.

Dissemination

The sour cherry is cultivated almost in the entire northern hemisphere as a fruit tree. In the North it is cultivated in Finland until the 63rd, and in Norway up to 68 latitude. In the Alps we can find it in altitudes up to 1800 meters.

In beekeeping, due to the sugar content of its nectar it is an estimated plant.

Symbolism

The radiant white of the flowers signals purity and innocence, heralds of spring, youth and tender love. The cherry blossom is for example in Japan one of the most important symbols and the Cherry Blossom Festival is almost sacred. The juicy, but little nutritious fruits, however, quickly advanced in

the field of erotic and lost innocence. Cherry mouth stands for the female Sexapeal. "Eating cherries" means in China to have sexual intercourse.

Health benefits

The red purple plant pigments can help to relieve inflammation and pain. Also, sour cherries are said to be able to reduce the value of uric acid in the body. So they can be used in the treatment of gout arthritis and other inflammatory diseases. Another study suggests that sour cherries contribute to the reduction of oxidative stress. Also, sour cherries are one of the few sources of natural melatonin. Melatonin is produced in the human body in the pineal gland and regulates the sleep-wake cycle. Accordingly, a deficiency can lead to insomnia. Also, sour cherry juice can reduce soreness resulting from unusual sports load. In addition, sour cherries appear to have a positive effect on bone density and thus help prevent osteoporosis.

The flower essence "Cherry" strengthens the fundamental energy levels. You are encouraged to be untroubled and relaxed.

Murshid

Cherry stands in the teaching of Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan for one of four basic patterns in psychology. Elsewhere, he calls this pattern after the date. In the back of this book I describe the importance of the four types in the meditation practice. *"There are some who have built a character just like a cherry: outwardly soft, but inside there is hard stone."* As opposed to the walnut type these people are looking for satisfying their desire in the outside world. The dervishes ramble about in the world, driven by their spiritual quest. They don't protect themselves. They join many religious communities, go through severe tests, and every time they move on, because they have not found yet.

"A church, a temple or a Ka'ba stone,

Qur'an or Bible or a martyr's bone,

All these and more my heart can tolerate,

Since my religion now is Love alone". (Abul Ala).

This poem quoted by Murshid describes the way of the cherry type. He is the spiritual seeker driven by love, who does not stop until he finds that he himself is love. At that point, the oneness of the cherry people is actually overcome. It turns out that the unknown, hard core inside is called love.

Also in relationship to the other sex, the Cherry is the opposite of the walnut. Many lovers pass by. All get a chance. The Cherry person knows the art to win people for itself. It has outspoken preferences, which are constantly changing.

Murshid describes the feminine form of this type as Shankani:

"Her heart is gained in a moment if her passion is touched; and she changes easily from one lover to another. Men are her preoccupation; but the love of any one man does not impress her deeply, nor could she for her part hold any man for ever. She is forward in expressing herself, and she is emotional."

Normally one would consider this type as the opposite of spiritual. She has no good reputation and is known as superficial. Her appetites are the only thing that drives her. The Sufis see the path of the cherry character as a onesided, but full-fledged method to enlightenment. The more pronounced the experience of her own desires and drives becomes, the greater the readiness for acceptance and real devotion can grow.

The danger in this way is resignation and ultimately laziness. Murshid: "(You) might think that it is passiveness, but it is laziness, when one has to do something, if one thinks somebody will come and do it. As in India there is a saying that a man was lying under the cherry tree--and some ripe cherries were falling near him--but he was lying. There was a man who came from a distance, and he called out, "Please come here. Will you please put this cherry in my mouth?"

Nobody likes to be called lazy, but the willingness to let that happen what is unavoidable is a spiritual virtue. No passivity no meditation, so Murshid: *"A balance in repose and activity is necessary, as too much weight on the side of repose leads to idleness, and even sickness, whereas an unbalanced activity results in nervousness, and frequently in a mental or physical breakdown."*

As a teenager, one of our daughters had a phase wherein she left everything around. When I demanded from her too vigorously to carry out her tasks, she just withdrew. Once it happened that in the bathroom everything laid around. I got angry and called her lazy! Today I am sorry about that. She was not lazy. As a teenager, she had an enormous need to feel inside herself, what all actually happened to her inside. And that is not little in the case of teenagers. Murshid indicates that this inactivity is vital: *"Nowadays in education people think so much about the different intellectual attainments the child will need in life, and so little about the repose which is so very necessary for a child."*

Last night I chatted with an old friend. He told me about all the things he had undertaken in his life: He buildet houses, travelled, endured much stress in his work as a banker. Now he's doing less and less. He reads and listens to music. He said that now his soul is growing. Murshid: *"It is one kind of repose when a person retires from the activity of everyday life and finds himself alone in his room. He draws a breath of thankfulness as he feels, after all his interesting or tiresome experiences, 'At last I am by myself'. It is not an ordinary feeling, for there is a far deeper feeling behind it; it expresses the certainty that there is nothing to distract his mind and nothing which demands his action. At that moment his soul has a glimpse of relief, the pleasure of which is inexpressible"*.

Relaxation and laziness lie very close together. The cherry invites you to take your pleasure seriously. In English, it is called lazy "lazy". On German "lax". The word lazy is related to the word "lascivious". We find the cherry motif as icon in Marilyn Monroe, or among men in Mick Jagger. Cherry doesn't take us away from the lowlands, but can bring us deep down inside us at the level of the bone in contact with our true self.

Ya Azim

Every twist and turn, in each falling in love, I can feel your boundless presence in my bones.

Medication

Cherry essence helps us

to take our desire seriously and to express it clearly

to search without regard of loss or public opinion

To honor pleasure as divine sign

not to get stuck in laziness

To chance partners or faith as often as we need

to relax

to meditate

Daisy**Etymology**

Latin: Bellis Perennis: Bellis probably from Latin bellus: pretty, Perennis: ongoing throughout the year.

English: Daisy, Bruisewort, Eye of the Day.

German: Gänseblümchen, Augenblümchen, Himmelsblume, Maiblume, Marienblümchen, Maßliebchen, Mondscheinblume, Morgenblume, Osterblume, Regenblume, Sonnenblümchen, Tausendschön.

Description

The daisy is a member of the family of Asteraceae. Because it grows on almost every lawn, it is one of the most well known species in Central Europe.

Leaves standing together in a dense leaf canopy cover the earth so close that nothing can grow beneath. Each leaf rosette produces from March until November continuously 5 to 15 cm long

inflorescence tops with detached floral baskets. What looks like a single flower to a layman, is actually a collection of flowers. We have to do with a basket-shaped inflorescence, consisting of more than one hundred flowers. Due to the heliotropism the basket turns always towards the sun and closes at night and in bad weather.

Occurrence

The genus of daisies comprises about 15 species that have their main distribution in the Mediterranean. Only *Bellis perennis* is to be found also in Central Europe and Northern Europe because through the creation of vast meadows and pastures in prehistoric times a wide spread towards the north was made possible. It came to the frequent occurrence of this plant only with the introduction of lawns in parks and gardens. This type later was settled by humans in North and South America, along the Pacific coast, Madeira and New Zealand.

Preferred sites are meadows, lawns and gardens on a nutrient-rich surface; a periodic cut is necessary because the grasses and wildflowers otherwise overgrow the low growing daisies.

Symbolism

The basic meanings of the Daisy are unbridled power its small size, resistance, childlike innocence, purity, modesty, suffering; maternal, chivalrous and constant love.

The flower in the middle ages came to unexpected glory, as by the French King Louis IX (1214-1270) it was together with the lily inducted into his coat of arms.

A very old 16-leaved form is found as most common element on the Ishtar Gate in Berlin as a sign of the Mesopotamian goddess.

In the Christian tradition represents daisy a multitude of qualities: Maria as a loving mother, Maria Magdalena as loving sinner, Archangel Michael as the guardian of the threshold, Christ as the resurrecting principle.

On Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" a nymph offers the goddess a coat, richly embroidered with *Bellis*.

Their often red flower borders or flower bases reminded of bloody tears. The Roman writer Pliny recorded that the flower arised from the tears of the stolen Helena.

"Miss modesty" it is called in England.

Use as a food plant

The young leaves from inside of the rosette taste best. Also the flowers are edible. The buds and the only half-open flowers taste pleasantly nutty, the open flowers, however, slightly bitter.

Use as a medicinal herb on the physical level

The flowers contain saponins, essential oils, tannins and mucilage. In addition, it was proved to contain the Apigenin-7 glucoside Cosmosiin. Because of the blood cleaning effect of Daisy, traditionally it was used as a remedy for skin diseases and liver disease. Due to the above ingredients, it also draining, is suitable as spring spa and as a remedy against rheumatism. A tincture made from the whole plant, including the root is used in phytotherapy. Earlier, the Daisy had the reputation, to heal fresh wounds. The English name Bruisewort is referring to this application.

Use at the psychological level:

Gurudas describes the Daisy as the means in phytotherapy, to find back the joy that is typical for children. Children have different ways to feel joy in the world. When playing it seems, they lived in a world that belongs only to them. Later in life, it is salutary to put us in this state. It is a place where we experience our self less mentally, more connected with the life force, which underlies our incarnation. We put ourselves back to a non-verbal level. If people are stiff and have problems with movement and flexibility, the childlike state is very therapeutic. Children focus rather on the process than on the result.

As a flower essence, Gurudas describes the flower as an aid to the spiritualization of the intellect. I experience this in my literary work. After I have collected material about the Daisy from various authors and from different sources, it is the task to discover a red thread. This is not intellectual, but intuitive work. The statements by Murshid Inayat Khan are the Guide. Understanding becomes easier. A single image is created from a variety of information.

Murshid

In the Tanas from Gayan, Vadan, Nirtan, Murshid describes how the Daisy talks with him. He receives 5 answers to 5 questions:

1) *" Little daisies, why do you keep so close to earth? --Because earth is the home of all mortal beings."*

2) *"Little daisies, what gospel do you preach? --Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."*

3) *"Little daisies, for what are you here? --To reflect heaven on earth."*

4) *"Little daisies, what is your daily duty? --To console the hearts that are trodden upon."*

5) *"Little daisies, what are you doing here in the church- yard? --We worship God by bowing at the feet of His creatures."*

to 1.)

What is repeated in all five sequences, is the finding that daisies are small. Murshid elaborates on the question question, what is the value of the small. We have seen how the Daisy grows there, where all other plants are continuously grazed or mowed. They manage this by their characteristic to stay with their leaves as close as possible to the earth. They stay as close as possible to the bottom and bloom

repeatedly throughout the year from March to November. They are not picky. The only thing of importance is to be alive and to be there where all other living beings are too. They don't stand out, do not differ from other creatures in their self-assessment. The big questions about the meaning of life they just answer like my daughter some time ago: Asking her about her opinion concerning the current political debate at a European level, she replied that it was too complicated to her, and that she would rather continue to weed in the garden.

Murshid uses the word "Home". Elsewhere, he refers to fact that the ideal of the home in the history of mankind move in ever further distance: *"The ideal of a home in ancient times was quite different. The home of each man was a palace for him. It might have been a home of straw, reeds, bamboo, brick, earth, or marble, but everyone's home was a palace.... They did not think that because another person had a home of marble they should not marry unless they had a home of marble too; that they should wait all their lives until they had a marble home. And this attitude is destroying the happiness of the world. It is spreading discontent; and lack of money, without any real reason, is felt more keenly. What must come as a result of this is the desire to match the money from the hands of others. All the different ways of improving the economic conditions of the world will not prove satisfactory as long as man does not look at the spiritual ideal as something greater and more worth while, forgetting for a moment the things of the earth."*

The Daisy shows us not to take too important our material life, if we want to live on earth. This wonderful paradox really is the paradigm for the new time. It is important to life on earth. Also human life is important. And we can secure life by not taking it too important.

Murshid: *"There is no condition, rank or wealth that can secure man's life. What is it that makes him think he is something when he is really nothing? If he can only think of what is nothing, he will realize that what was, is, and shall be is one Being, God."*

to 2.)

"Little daisies, what gospel do you preach? --Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Murshid refers here, as so often, to the sermon of the moun of Jesus. The "Murshid of Murshids," as Hazrat Inayat Khan referred to Jesus Christ, applies in his sermon the children. Murshid steps into this tradition and asks the small ones what is their message. The answer: so you want to be able to live on the earth you should develop gentleness. Gentle human beings can exist, like the daisies find their place. They grow where other plants have been mowed again and again. When the human ego has been shattered a thousand times, a form of existence comes into being that is no longer subject to this destruction.

Today this message is relevant than ever before. The question which actually arises for humanity, is how we can continue to exist on the planet at all. Human existence is threatened in a complex way by climate change, the exploitation to the point of exhaustion of metals and minerals, and the destruction of countless plant and animal species. Daisy answers: become like us and file your hardness and rigidity. We human keep on believing until today that we do not belong to nature. We put ourselves outside and thus on the sidelines. If we want to inherit the Earth, we must give up this attitude and take our place in the large structure.

The message is not only an action statement for any future human life on earth. It is also an announcement. The meek, those who have filed their hardenings are the earth's heir. This will be so and as determination it brings an overwhelming childlike joy. But what sounds so simple is a long way. Meekness, friendliness, humility are not properties, which appear desirable on the first hand, but when we look deeper into it we agree with Murshid who says: "We always admire a person who shows gentleness in his movements, in sitting, walking, in his voice or words, in his thought; we admire it consciously or unconsciously. There is always a charm in gentleness, and yet man neglects it when the time comes to practice it. That which should come first comes last. And this is no wonder, because friendliness is the result of an internal process, for which a lifetime is not enough. Gentleness is reflected in someone who has wrestled with himself. Meekness requires enormous strength and courage. "Kindness is the essence of personal magnetism," Murshid said.

We want to be attractive? We want to shine? Then there is paradoxically in the end only one way: the development of gentleness.

3.)

"Little daisies, for what are you here? -- to reflect heaven on earth"

We all know that unreflected rays are hardly tolerable. The light of the Sun irritates. We can not look directly into the Sun. Mellow light is produced when sunlight is reflected by the moon. The Daisy shows this moon ability by the way how a hundred yellow flower rays are imbedded in a double wreath of white flower leaves. What looks like a single flower to a layman, is in fact a Bill blossom (Pseudanthium).

Murshid: " Our eyes naturally always enjoy softness of color rather than striking tones, because of the aggressive power in the latter which our eyes cannot bear. We experience the same thing with the sun and moon. We do not like to look at the sun, and in India we enjoy the moonlight nights so much, we wish the moon shone every night. Why? Because it is mild; it shows meekness. Our power is the power of light; our strength of speech, thought, and action is of the same kind and the same nature as the light of the sun and moon respectively. If the light is too strong, it irritates; if it is mild, it soothes. So if we treat everyone with gentleness, our personality is always welcome wherever we are. The same gentleness in our speech will always give us success, and we will always have friends. If only we had control over our words; if only our words were always of that meek nature!

Should we allow others then to treat us badly? Should we let us be trampled on the head? Kindness at any price? No, says Murshid. *"Since the world always oppresses the good, tramples upon the meek, and robs the generous, what conduct of life would be best? There are three courses. The first is renunciation. This is the way of the saints and sages: to follow the ideal and to accept whatever troubles and sorrows and ill-treatment. The second way is selfishness: to be more selfish than all the rest of the world. The third way is the greatest and the most difficult: it is to have all responsibilities, all the cares of life, to have friends and all, to be as unselfish, as good as possible, and just selfish enough not to be trampled upon."*

Isn't it amazing how Murshid represents here an attitude that exactly fits to the depiction on the ancient Mesopotamian Ishtar Gate, which is to visit in Berlin? Up and down you can see single daisies

and strung together in garlands. And in between walk the lions. What have lions to do, so one might, with daisies. On closer inspection, it becomes clear that the two represent a polarity. The daisy is the symbol of innocence. The lion was the symbol of aggression. In the first place, so Murshid, stands the task to master oneself, our passions, our anger. He calls this the inner lion. The outer lion is only allowed to rage when daisy and inner lion, gentleness and self-control, both have been fully developed in man: *"In order to be the lion of God you must be a lion within, towards yourself. Then you are brave enough to stand against any evil, any power, because there is no guilt, there is no weakness. Great humility is needed for this way."*

4.)

"Little daisies, what is your daily duty? To console the hearts that are trodden upon."

We had already seen that, in the traditional herbal medicine, daisy finds application in case of infringement. But how to heal wounded hearts?

Murshid: *"we should know how to treat the wounded not physically only but spiritually. For this the first thing needed is sympathy."*

Let us look what happens if a Sufi student sits in front of his Sufi guide to tell her his story. He enters the room, sits down, and takes his notebook out of his pocket. So much went wrong in his life. So much is hard to endure. Why, asks the student, have I lost my partner? Why my children leave me? Why am I bullied in my job? Why do I have pain everywhere again? Why was my father a monster? Why didn't my mother understand me at all? And why all this at the same time? The suffering becomes a space wherein it may be because the teacher knows what is suffering. The daisy has the tendency to transform from white into the red in the wreath of Bill flowers. The ancient Greeks linked this color conversion to the tears of Helena, who cried because she was raped.

The Sufi guide gets tears into her eyes. The student wonders. And then it becomes clear that his teacher knows his sufferings, because she herself has suffered a lot. How many times was the daisy mowed? How many times it lost the most important thing it possessed? How often it had to start afresh?

There is a deep sadness, because the pain is infinitely great. And then suddenly The guide starts to laugh. What is this now? We just made clear was that everything has been a disaster!

Murshid: *"in some way pity, sentiment, and the sympathy that she already had turn into smiles and laughter. It is like something which is turned inside out. The pity and the shedding of tears which were at first outside, are now inside; and outside is the smile and the laughter. Thus both exist at the same time: laughter or a smile on the lips, and pity in the heart. When (she) is laughing her heart is crying at the same time; this is her nature."*

But at that point it does not remain. As a next step, past, present and future are becoming clear. The "why" melts away. Somehow, not rational, but more intuitive it is clear why it was like it was. It becomes apparent, how the divine element works in all forms, in all names and so the student begins to recognize the beloved in all forms and names, friend and foe.

Next, the path that leads into the future becomes clear. The daisy knows something and is able to do something that otherwise barely a flower can do: it can always again produce a flower. In early spring, when the snow has just melted and in the latest autumn, when on a sunny day ground frost is melted the small flowers open up suddenly.

Murshid: *"There are two different attitudes that people adopt while going through this struggle of life. One struggles along bravely through life; the other becomes disappointed, heart-broken, before arriving at his destination. As soon as a man loses the courage to go through the struggle of life, the burden of the whole world falls upon his head. But he who goes on struggling through life, he alone makes his way. The one whose patience is exhausted, the one who has fallen in this struggle, is trodden upon by those who walk through life. Even bravery and courage are not sufficient to go through the struggle of life; there is something else which must be studied and understood."*

to 5.)

"Little daisies, what are you doing here in the churchyard? We worship God by bowing at the feet of His creatures".

Who can worship, can bow down. The greater our capacity of glorification, the deeper we can bow. The higher the ideal, the more glorious moment of worship.

Murshid: *"man is different from the animals only to the extent of his idealizing. This is greater than art, greater than religion, greater than anything; and it is the source of great joy. Before we can enjoy life we must become delicate, sensitive, and evolved. When this is attained a person experiences a kind of joy in bowing his head such as is not experienced by ordinary people."*

Ya Khafid

You bring us down by Your love. You throw us down out of pity. You defeat us out of caring. You make sure that we are small enough to slip through the eye of the needle. You care that we can give a home with walls and a roof to the boundless.

Ya Mudhill

You show us that the lower world is the home of our egos. You open our eyes so that finally we can see and love ourselves itself down here. Our life is down here.

You take from us our shame, humiliation, and shadow. It's wonderful to kneel with the head on the ground.

Ya Muizz

A Sufi told the one staring at him with disgust: "you're looking down at me with contempt. Yes, I agree; I am despicable. But can you show me a second contemptuous creature like me?"

Medication

The essence of Daisy helps us

to be small

to live on the Earth

not starting to lift, but to be where one is.

to be at home

to belong to nature

to discover our inner lion

To transform suffering into a smile

Dandelion

Etymology and botany

Lat: Taraxacum officinale

The family name, Taraxacum, derives from the Greek taraxos (disorder) and akos (remedy). So the plant is a remedy that brings chaos in order.

The English name Dandelion is similar to German: Löwenzahn and French: Dent de Lion; all meaning "Tooth of a Lion"

The main flowering period of the yolk colored flowers is from April to June although even in the Alps one could discover single dandelion flowers nearly all year around, except when snow covers the ground The dandelion is very active and has spread almost everywhere on earth. As a despised weed, it is hardly to get rid of. Its life force is so great that my former neighbor who set himself the goal to expel the dandelions from his garden was sometimes almost desperate.

Naturopathy

It is used in naturopathy to strengthen and boost the vitality. It acts mainly on the liver, the seat of life energy and cleans up with physical and mental blockages and resistances.

It is described as a flower essence by Gurudas:

The plant causes greater courage and strength for the future. The life force, which dandelion represents, affects also the muscle system and eases the tension throughout the body.

Symbolism

In the Christian symbolism, it is portrayed as an attribute of Christ as light of the world.

In various stages of development, he stands for the successive stations in the life of Christ. From the bud as a baby to the dissemination of the message in the seed.

Murshid

Murshid also brings the dandelion in conjunction with the light and with the stars in all the heavens:

"Little Dandelions, what are you doing here?"

"We reflect on earth the stars in the heavens."

I want to present here but how the dandelion not only in its prime, but also in roots, leaves and seeds represents life in all its layers of being and reflects so the lights out of all heavens. This means that in my view Murshid in this Tana not only refers to the sky as visible firmament, but to the various heavens as metaphysical levels of the universe. In the transcript of a lecture by Hazrat Inayat Khan is mentioned "Choudatabaq". Chouda means fourteen and Baq means garden in his native Urdu language. According to the view of Hazrat Inayat Khan there are 7 stages in creation with each time a manifestation and a corresponding heaven. This makes a total of 14. Murshid calls these externalising and internalising movements of God revelation and turning-inside. My Sufi-friend and Indologist Birgit Mayer König explained this as follows: "The process of "revelation" and "looking within" reminds me of the cosmology of the Shivaites of Kashmir, who postulate a process of unfolding towards the outside (= evolution, manifestation) and a process of developing inner awareness (= involution). The interplay of these two movements is described as play (lila) of Lord Shiva. God wanted to experience Himself in the diversity and turned Himself outwards and thereby created the visible world. On the other hand He wanted to see Himself and turned inward, pulled together His force, focused."

The first three levels in the evolution of those of the Moon, the planets and the stars. In my book "The Holy Book of Nature" I dedicated a chapter to this. Murshid: *"Taking the whole universe as one whole, there is also a system of government, as there is a system of government in the sky; there is the sun; then there is the moon, which is directly focused to the sun; and there are the principal planets, which surround it; and there are the stars. And on the model of the heaven the inner and outer governments of the earth are arranged."*

The next four stages of creation are the minerals, plants, animals and people in the teachings of Murshid.

So there is a total of 7 levels of consciousness according to this model in Sufism. And each light appears brighter. Murshid: *"The first three manifestations in the physical existence form the Heaven of the sun, moon, and stars; the light of the sun shines in the moon, and the same light illuminates the*

whole planetary system. The last four manifestations are the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms."

They are steps in terms of successive stages in the evolution of the universe. In this respect, they come after each other in the development of time. But there are also levels of creation, which all together at the same time make up a living organism on earth. Every creature finds its place in the creation by its own special relationship to all 7 levels of consciousness. All levels of consciousness exist for every creature as heavens, but the creatures have different levels of incarnation. What this means is that some awareness levels they cannot express in matter.

At this point also was to be noted that there is of course no clear separation between the heavens and that there are also not seven. There are intermediate subdivisions, etc. Pir Vilayat often said: "The map is not the landscape". The terms of the 7 levels of consciousness and the corresponding heavens are intended as an overview. The reality of nature is infinitely more beautiful.

Murshid asked the dandelions to explain their activities. What are you doing there exactly and what are your motives? The answer is written down by the master in his Gayan, Vardan, Nirtan. So it cannot be misunderstood, like could be the case in stenographed lectures. The plants answer that they reflect the effect of the stars in the various heavens here on Earth.

Doing

We had already noted that Murshid speaks of doing at the dandelion. So let's look at the work, the activity of Dandelion. Normally we don't assume, that plants do something, but at the most, that they are experiencing something. We consider them passive creatures, because they do not move from the spot. Murshid alerts us to the fact, that the dandelions actively shape their lives in the way that they implement impulses from the heavens on earth. So they form a bridge between earth and heavens. When I say "form", I actually mean giving form. So it is not to be understood in a figurative sense. Dandelions are not merely poetic symbols of this bridge, but they embody it. It is not just an idea but a living figure. It is not an image, but a movement.

Mirroring

For Murshid, in humans the mirroring organ par excellence is the heart: *"The heart is a receptacle on earth of the Divine Spirit, and when it holds the Divine Spirit, it soars heavenward It is the heart which responds to the spirit of God..... the heart is between soul and body, a medium between spirit and matter."*

So the human heart can do two things: It can receive the heavenly, and implement it on Earth.

If we follow Murshid and assume that a plant has body and soul, and that one needs an organ between the invisible and the materialized, we must ask ourselves of course whether the plant has a heart. On the question of whether plants can feel, in 1924 the botanist R.H. Francé researched in his book "The soul of the plant". He came to the conclusion that the plant has no sense organs as such, but that she can perceive just as diverse, as animals and humans can do. Concluding we can say that

the perception of the celestial impetus by a plant should be possible. In the chapter on the elements in "The Holy Book of nature", you will find more about the 5 senses in Sufism.

The stars

Perhaps you have noticed that I just quoted Murshid speaking about mirroring of the divine spirit and not of the mirroring the stars. I tell you why I mean that this is authorized. Murshid explains the Sufi emblem of the winged heart in various contexts. "The star in the heart of the crescent represents the divine spark which is reflected in the human heart as love".

The terms "divine spirit", "star" and "divine sparks" are used alternately by Murshid for a light that is not visible in the firmament. Of course, Murshid uses the word "star" also for the visible sky lights, sometimes for planets and stars together. When he describes various forms of stars, he means light forms, which both move down to the manifestation as away from the creation: *"For when the light comes, it has five points; when it returns, it has four, the former suggesting creation, the latter annihilation."*

In the heavens

The word heaven creates confusion, because it means both airspace and outer space, surrounding planet Earth (there are clouds in the sky and planets in heaven), as also the invisible worlds, which are located metaphysically before and after matter (there's Peter at the heavenly gates and there are larger and smaller angel in heaven). Murshid speaks of heavens in the plural, and I think that he thus means all heavens, both the visible as the invisible. In his lectures we can find a compressed sketch of seven realms of heaven and seven realms of earth. It is not easy to elaborate on these encrypted informations. You'd probably need a complete revelation experience and this is granted only to the real great ones.

I beg you pardon, if I could not order everything correctly. How the dandelion reflects the invisible light from seven heavens and the visible light from seven earths in its shape, one could imagine as follows:

First heaven

The mirroring of the only being

"In the first plane there is no other but the only existing One, free of form and matter." Strictly spoken at this stage we can't even postulate a heaven as opposed to an earth. On the first plane there is no state of consciousness, as presented by the heavens in different gradations. It is an "all or nothing".

This state before consciousness is to be found in the seed of dandelion. The seed is a "fast nothing", where everything is included. The whole past of the single Dandelion and the future rests in it. The properties that apply to all dandelions are contained in it. But none of this is visible. Nothing is active. It lies so to speak outside of creation. It's much larger and richer than the individual dandelion, because it all that has to do with all dandelions, and furthermore contains also all that has to do with

all plants, links with the other kingdoms of nature and the life principles at all. And at the same time the single dandelion seed cannot not found. In the seed stage the dandelion has retreated in the "One".

Second heaven

The reflection of primordial sound

"Then the innate quality of consciousness shines forth, conscious of its own existence and conscious of being". The Only Being brings forth out of itself a Counterpart, which reflects it. What happens when the seed germinates? In unexplainable manner, an emotion arises in the seed. How does something set itself in movement that was previously perfect in peace with itself? The Sufis say: It is "ishq", the longing to know itself. So the beginning of this longing starts in the second heaven long before it comes to the physical existence. The germination impulse arises from the fact that a direction is possible. A direction becomes possible, if there is a counterpart. Murshid: *"The activity of the consciousness has two aspects, motion and stillness, which causes two distinct things, the expressive power and the faculty of response .From the highest to the lowest plane of existence and in the life of all things and beings we see these two forces working unceasingly, each being for the other, and in the experience of expression and response lies the joy of both; in other words, the satisfaction of the consciousness. The sun expresses, the moon responds; the voice expresses, the ear responds. All the dual aspects in life, such as male and female, show these two aspects..."*

The germination of the dandelion starts in the second heaven when an attraction between the primordial sun and the primordial moon sets the creation in motion. The very first principle of the Moon is the ability of listening and replying. The moon makes the sound of the sun perceivable. Without moon, so Murshid, the sun would simply explode. Growth would be unthinkable. Through this quality from the second heaven, which wakes up in the seed, the earthly Sun is able to let grow the dandelion in conjunction with the growing moon.

In the ancient traditions, the ability of listening is represented by angels. Murshid: *" the beings of this Heaven are described as spending their lives in listening to the Sound of the Abstract, which is Divine Music..... "* May be it's hard at first hand to understand what angels have to do with dandelions. The dandelion has like all other beings, a sound body, which originated in the heaven where the angels live. The reflection from this level is the reflection of divine music. Prior to its incarnation on Earth, the dandelion participated to this music and as inhabitant of Earth, he wears this angel music still inside itself. If we want to approach this music, it helps to put us in the mood of a dandelion. The world of sound has in first instance to do with feelings, not with ideas. In its angel identity, the dandelion sings its song as it perceives it from the divine music.

Third heaven

The reflection of primordial light

In the next heaven, consciousness becomes visible. What first was sound becomes light now, but still in the abstract field.

Murshid quoted the Sufi master Shams Tabriz about this level of consciousness: *"When the sun-faced One had arisen, each atom of the two worlds arose. When the light of His face sent its shadow, by this shadow various names became. The things, what were they? The pictures of the names. The atoms, what were they? He, in reality."*

Notice first that the light casts a shadow. The darkness is so to speak born out of the light. In this polarity between day and night the pictures emerge. In case of the dandelion the germ developed in this light dark polarity. On the one hand, a cotyledon is aiming high at the light, on the other hand, the germ developed downward as root towards the darkness. The beginning of the materialized plant is there.

Where the area of the names rather belongs to the Angel world - is it about sound - the area of shapes and images that belong to the name, is part of the world of light.

Murshid: *"Into this Heaven each ray has projected itself from the spiritual plane in diverse forms, under the influence of the five elements already produced by activity, 'Ishq. This state of being may be described as a negative state.it is the realm of ideas.and those beings who inhabit it.....have been called Djinn, or Peri, in tradition. The occupation of the jinns is to imagine, reason, and think."*

With negative state, Murshid Inayat Khan means something like the negative of a photo. Here radiate the blueprints of the forms towards the Earth. The dandelion-figure lives here, surrounded by other idea-beings and mentally builds a picture of its name.

Mirror of the planets

Murshid: *"The soul before coming on earth passes through the sun, the moon and the planets. Taking the whole universe as one whole, there is also a system of government, as there is a system of government in the sky; there is the sun; then there is the moon, which is directly focused to the sun; and there are the principal planets, which surround it; and there are the stars. And on the model of the heaven the inner and outer governments of the earth are arranged."*

The botanical name of dandelion, *Taraxacum*, indicates that this plant has a special relationship with the order of the universe. It is a perfect example of a living organism, that in a very fine way perceives day and night, the day of the week, months, seasons and follows them with force.

The Jinns, female and male, get their orientation from the five great rulers: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury. These are the lights that are mirrored in this heaven. The Jinns create single characters out of the great cosmic dynamics between the 5 elements. They search their place and find ways, principles, according to which they can visualize the song of their soul. The colors come into play as expressions of light.

In case of the dandelion, one must conclude that a real all-round plant is being created. Mercury gets its way, as the dandelion develops an amazing talent to respond to different climatic conditions: In the mountains, the leaves are stocky and concise, in the lowlands they are much bigger and formless. When it rains, the flowers will not open.

The Venus impulse shows itself in the enormous amounts of nectar, with which the flowers attract her counterpart from the insect world.

Mars is most strongly represented in my view: The force with which the plant claimed its place, is most visible at the root, which energetically bores deep into the Earth. This energy is evident also in the reddish flower stalks. As a traditional remedy the juice of the plant is used in particular, if liver problems occur. As you know, the liver is the Energy Center at all. There, the will to live is located in the body. It is not casual that Murshid speaks about the doing of Dandelion. They are active. The name "Dandelion" fits very well with this energy. The tooth of a lion is something aggressive.

The influence of Jupiter shows in the way how the plant in time and space takes its place, where it rules and can let its influence work. The lion is the King of the animals. On the meadows in the Allgäu region, there is a time in spring wherein the dandelion flower dominates everything. All fields are yellow.

Saturn is expressed in a strict adherence to the rhythms of nature: The flowers open from 9 to 12 in the morning. Then they close. This opening and closing is mainly dependent on the intensity of the light. Therefore, the time is somewhat adapted depending on the season and part of the world.

So, we see how the soul of the dandelion in the world of Djinn cloaks itself with the influences of planets and is preparing for the life on Earth. Its earthly genius is an expression of its light body. The word jinn means genius.

Fourth heaven

The mirroring of the mineral Kingdom

Murshid again gives an overview of the whole process of creation: *"The distinct vibrations, coming from the plane of the Abstract, grow perceptible with every step towards manifestation. For example, the vibrations of thought are more material than the vibrations of feeling; and as the vibrations pass through each plane they develop as atoms, in order to proceed forth; and therefore with every step in development they become objectively more visible and concrete. They materialize through gas and liquid; they become atoms that pass through the mineral, and then through the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and appear on the surface as life."*

All plants build on experience, which creation has made in the mineral Kingdom. The souls of the plants go on their way to the manifestation through the heaven of the mineral Kingdom, wherein all these experiences and conditions are stored, before they appear as plants. In the awareness state of minerals, the square in all variations is brought to expression. When we humans die, we leave the Pentagon and go back to the square. Also the hexagon exists in various ways in the mineral Kingdom. All forms of Silicon have a hexagonal crystal structure. The dandelion soul picks up the ability of silicon to be sensitive to influences. In the book 'The soul of the stones' I reported in detail on Silicon. The rock crystal which reflects the heart of Christ is the King of Silicon. Dandelion uses this light to represent openness to environmental influences and impacts from space in its essence. The Dutch herbalist and mystic Mellie Uyldert says that dandelion frees the heart.

On the other hand, the dandelion has a strong relationship with Potassium. The name Kalium of this metal was derived from the Arabic al-qalya, plant ashes. It is a mineral that plays a key role in the preservation of life mineral through a number of metabolic processes and in its purest form reacts very fierce with a number of other chemicals. You can see dandelion's healthy relationship to potassium in its strong root-growth. The fierceness can also be traced. A high Potassium content means a strong bond with the Earth. It is so to say a counterpoint to the Silicon.

Amazingly the dandelion goes through significant changes of its chemical components in the course of the year: In spring, the plant has most salts, the September root contains the most Taraxin, the root in the March gives must juice, the August root contains the most inulin and the October root the most Laevulin.

Fifth heaven

The mirroring of the plant Kingdom

The Queen in heaven of the plant Kingdom is a Deva. This Angel stands for everything that makes the plant Kingdom into something very special. Murshid: *"Where, in nature, there is a beautiful and peaceful feeling, it is said that a Deva is living there. The soul of a Deva is creative of beauty and peace. The part of the Deva in the scheme of life is loving, forgiving, and serving God and humanity. The word divine has its origin in Sanskrit. It is from Deva, which means the same--divine. And yet the root of this word means light."*

Plants differ from other creatures by their incredible devotion. They renounce to the possibility to move on their own strength somewhere else and are so completely available. The dandelion is a such a servant in the history of mankind. In the past, pharmacists sent their employees in nature to collect the juice of the plant.

Dealing with water is a specialty of the plant. The dandelion is full of juice. If we pick a stem, the Milky substance comes to the fore. Their leaf rosette is designed in a way that it absorbs the water and leads it directly to the root. Another indication of the cooperation between light and dark.

Sixth heaven

The mirroring of the Animal Kingdom

Perhaps you wonder now that the plant should have something to do with the Animal Kingdom. If that were not so, the dandelion would not provide so much honey in the flower. It is designed with a relationship to the Animal Kingdom, even so although the animal kingdom in the development of the cosmos was created after the plant Kingdom, when we follow Murshid. The plant has therefore anticipated in a disposition. Therefore, she knew what the future would bring. She has so to say waited on the emergence of animals. The plant Kingdom can be divided into two groups. In the chapters about the lily and the onion I go into it, that these plants tend towards the mineral Kingdom as examples of the first group with its hexagonal form and already participate in the retreat from creation. The other group shows with pentagonal shapes in direction of the animal kingdom and wants to indicate that they want to go forward in creation.

The dandelion flower stretches forward toward the next stage of creation with its 100 or more individual pentagonal florets. A multitude of bees bring in nectar and pollen.

Plants renounce to independent organs for the various senses and vital functions for the most part. Animals develop them. Murshid draws attention to this phenomenon. He calls this the emergence of ever larger inner cavities, Akasha's, the further creation progresses. The dandelion shows some of this ability in the intermediate stage between flower and seed. After the flower is withered, it closes again and a bud for the second time, but not for a next flower, but for the seed ball.

Seventh heaven

The reflection of the stars and of the human kingdom

"The divine light has shone upon the mineral and vegetable kingdoms; and there too it has shown its phenomena, although its full radiance has been reached only in man. It can be seen in the developed intelligence, and this can be observed in the cosmic system as well as in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms. It is the light of the sun which shines upon the moon and the planets; each star is but a reflection of the same light; thus the whole cosmic system is illuminated by the sun alone."

After the previous explanations, perhaps we can understand what Hazrat Inayat Khan here means when he says that the stars are reflections of the Sun. When he speaks here of Sun, he means the Sun which appeared at the beginning of creation. Today's physical Sun emerged from this primordial sun in addition to 1000 other suns, the stars. Thus we can understand his statement then that *"the sun is not the origin of the whole solar system."*

The dandelion turns towards the stars when its seed ball opens up. The botanist Lippert describes this as follows: "As a second flowering comes into being the star-beamed fruit button with the many fine feathercrowns. A true coronation of its development. Doesn't appear to us this beam-ordered construction as a ball composed of finest crystal formations, a miniature image of the star-beamed cosmos? A second highlight in its development is reached, which surpasses the first in its power of form and its perfection." The dandelion turns to the stars when its seed ball opens up. Look at this gorgeous globe! In all conceivable directions, the dandelion offers its seed and holds together all stars in a structure. And then the seeds of the dandelion fly, each one somewhere else, to reflect the seven heavens in a new world. The seventh heaven too, although only in the approach. The heaven of the human nature-kingdom is promised and the dandelion knows it. We humans have the responsibility to build this heaven. We are having a hard time with it. Murshid explains this difficulty: *"Every step towards manifestation is through the activity of the Spirit in matter and by means of matter. Therefore every successive plane is more radiant than the plane that precedes it, since the spirit has penetrated further. This is also the very reason and cause of delusion; for with each step towards fuller manifestation the vision has become more concrete, and correspondingly, those inner planes, which are long-lasting and yet dim in comparison with the picture of the objective world, become lost to view."*

With deception or delusion, Murshid means the phenomenon that we creatures forget where we come from or go to. We humans are the most exposed to this memory loss. We are so impressed by

ourselves, by everything we can and want to, and should, that we don't come to the point to create the corresponding heaven which belongs to us. The dandelion reminds us that we carry seven heavens inside us.

We are as humans the ideal of creation, but only then, when we have done our homework.

Allah hu Akbar

O you, how You incorporate overwhelmingly all levels of being! How you bring inside and outside, up and down in fourteen gardens in harmony with each other!

Medication

We can summarize that the essence of the dandelion helps

to reflect the levels of being in their entirety

to reflect both powerfully the longing of God for embodiment

as also to reflect quite sensitively the cosmos in all its branches

to prepare the heaven, which should be created by us humans

to tune in to the whole of the cosmos

to embody the seven heavens and seven earths our nature

Date

Etymology

LAT: Phoenix dactylifera.

The word date can be deduced from the old Egyptian of dqr 'fruit, fruit tree'. In the greek language "daktylos" means finger. The word "palm" comes from the Latin palma 'flat hand'. The Greeks called the date palm, which did not grow in their country, phoinix. With this word, they called the Phoenicians and the mythical bird Phoenix as well. It was probably the Phoenicians that brought the tree from its homeland of Mesopotamia and planted it in many Mediterranean coastal cities.

Occurrence and use

The date palm is a type of palm native to the old world. Characteristic are the lower leaves of the leaflets converted to thorns. The inflorescences are placed in between the leaves and are simply

branched. Male and female inflorescences are similar to each other. Palmtrees grow up to thirty metres in height and become up to three hundred years old. Almost never they are bent or uprooted by storms. The special strength of the trunks lies in their growth, which is opposite to our forest trees, whose oldest hardest wooden is at its core. The Palms have their strength on the periphery and relatively soft tissue inside. The high elasticity and tensile strength results from the structure of its bark as cylindrical tube. To grow in prosperity they need sandy soil over wet underground. Palm trees are evergreens. In their year-long growth, new leaves emerge upwards and the old leaves die off and hang down.

The Arabs say: "The king of the oases dips its feet in the water and stretches his head in the fire of heaven." Also the great botanist Linnaeus called them "Prinzipes" (princes). Unbranched the trunk towers up high. The leaf crown rises annually to one more floor. Something primally and simple has the Palm compared to the trees in our forests with their ramifications. The splendid leaf crown of palms is often blended out of huge feathery or fan-shaped leaves.

The date palm is probably the first supplier of fruit cultivated by humans. Originally, it probably comes from Mesopotamia and worshipped there 8000 years ago. Galen said the best Palm trees come from Jericho, the city that also was called Palmyra, "Date city".

Today the genus is spread from the Atlantic islands off Africa across Africa including Madagascar, in the North Crete, from southern Turkey over the near and Middle East, India until Hong Kong and the Northern Philippines, in the South-East to the Malay Peninsula and north Sumatra.

By their seemingly infinite versatility of use, the Palm trees as a large family of plants became the nutritional trees of tropical people in absolute. Where the earth forces proliferate, the forces of the sun and with them the forces of the whole cosmos are sucked in powerfully, there is the place of formation the palms. There are Palm varieties, which offers food from their trunk, such as sago palms. In the case of sugar, honey and wine palms the juice is extracted. Fruits of palms are e.g. dates, coconuts. The young shoots of the heart are eaten of some palm varieties. The palm trees provide the material for the construction of houses, for many device. The leaves provide the material for roofing. From the solid, hard, tough fibres of the leaves or fruits material for ropes, ropes, mats is being won.

Symbolism

For the peoples of Mesopotamia, as well as for the Egyptians, the date palm "the queen of trees" - was a cosmic tree, a tree of life. Date seeds were found in Egyptian tombs. For the Egyptians, the date palm was the sacred tree of the sun god Re. The sacred bird of Re was Benu, the soul bird of the Sun God.

Among the Greeks, the date palm was equated with the bird Phoenix, because she also had the property to renew itself from itself. Then as now the date palm tree was propagated by shoots that grew at the root. When a tree died, so grew out of the dying wood - like a Phönix from its ashes - a new Palm. In this symbolic sense of immortality, also the palm depictions on Greek gravestones are to be interpreted.

Aristotle and Plutarch saw in the power of the Palm the reason that he became a symbol of victory. He always stands straight without writhing or bending.

The date palm was interpreted as anthropomorphic being. The dates were called in Greek "dactylos", finger; the leaves were called "palma", palm.

The song of songs of Solomon says:

"Slim like a date palm tree

is your growth and your breasts

same her full panicles.

I want to get onto the palm,

to pick her sweet fruit."

In the Christian tradition the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem is called Palm Sunday. As a sign of his kingship, the people cheered him and spread palm branches. In Israel, the palm was considered as the symbol for the independence and the victorious King. Therefore, the entry in this way for the Romans presented a special provocation.

The many Christian saints carry the palm jewelry, on the one hand as a sign of the victory of their faith, on the other hand of the peace, this belief brings to the people.

In the Qur'an, it is under a palm tree, that Maria (by the way, the only female saint in the Qur'an) gives the life to her son:

Surah 19 - Maria

So, she received him and withdrew with him to a remote place.

And the contractions came over her at the trunk of a Palm tree. She said: "O that I would be dead before and forgotten and lost."

And somebody under her called: "Don't be worried; your Lord has given rise under you a little current;

And just shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you, so fresh ripe dates will fall upon you.

So eat and drink and be with cool eyes."

Murshid

" Palm-tree, what do your outstretched hands signify? --I raise my hands heavenward when I pray, and then I pass the blessing on to the earth."

In this picture from Murshid, the Palm is an entity that mediates between heaven and earth. On the one hand, it has the ability to stretch the hands way out towards the sun and get there in contact with the spiritual. On the other hand, it is able to transfer all the richness of heaven on to the earth. In this process, so teach the Sufis, it is inevitable that after each creation a dying follows. And again and again a new germination of fresh energy. The two tasks of the Sufis are praying and realizing. When dervishes meet, they greet each other with "O, King!". If you alternately pray and work, you are in full possession of your life. You are the king/queen of creation. Proudly you straighten up. A tremendous satisfaction arises from productivity. Here should be mentioned also Benedict of Nursia and the Christian Benedictine order, whose rule "ora et labora", "pray and work", in the middle ages became the starting point of western monasticism. Till today many religious communities live after that rule.

The Palm is for Murshid the prime example of the miracle that the word of God can become flesh. In the plant world carbon is the carrier and the mediating tool of the spiritual. In palm trees you can see most clearly how the spiritual manifests in a physical manifestation and is solidified there. Palm trees bring a wealth of gifts from the spirit world on earth and its sacrifice is its stiffening. They can not be bent and are trapped in themselves so to speak. Murshid draws attention to that such proud being is exposed to a danger: *"The palm-tree that grows straight up cannot harmonize with other trees whose trunks are not so straight and strong."* In this respect, the date tree is the opposite of the oak, which as we describe in this book, are in intense communication with the forces that surround him. So the date tree is limited in its grandeur. But, as Murshid says, "the oak tree will produce no dates". This only the date palm can do.

A palm tree is very attractive. It magnetically attracts people by his majesty and generosity. But then those who come closer, discover that the tree has a very hard shell. He is tight and unapproachable. Murshid Inayat Khan: *"There are many good people, but they are not always harmonious. There are many true people, but their truth is not always comforting. They may utter a truth which is like a slap in the face to someone. They are just like the palm-tree, straight and righteous, yet at the same time not in harmony. A harmonious person can bend, is pliable; he can meet others. There is no doubt that in order to harmonize one has to make sacrifices, one has to bend to people one does not want to bend to; one has to be more pliable than one is by nature."* That's why the date tree stands alone in the end. There is no possibility for proximity. Murshid: *"There are many true people, but their truth is not always comforting. They may utter a truth which is like a slap in the face to someone. They are just like the palm-tree, straight and righteous, yet at the same time not in harmony"*.

Ya Razzaq

O you, whose prayer nourishes all of us without exception every day.

Ya Qayyum

O you! You stay, beyond any existence. You're beyond coming and going.

Medication

The essence of the date palm can help us

To learn to pray

To realize ideals

to embody the Divine on earth

to straighten up in our full power and beauty

to rejuvenate ourselves

to get up. "Die before death and resurrect now!"

Regeneration

to be a blessing for our environment

Contra indications:

Danger of arrogance and self-righteousness

the risk of rigidity and aloofness

Being a provocation, being unbearable

Gorse

Lat: *Ulex europaeus*, *genista*; Engl.: Gorse, Broom; German: Ginster; Dutch: Gaspeldoorn.

Botany

He wears about two centimeters long, isolated, yellow flowers from April until July. The yellow flowers look like lanterns and are similar to those of some clover plants as they are of the same plant family. The pollinators are mainly bumblebees. The seeds of the stinging Spanish broom are located in a up to 15 mm long, hairy legume and are highly toxic particularly due to the content of up to 1 percent Cystin. The thin spiny twigs are green summer and winter. They show 5 sharp edges on the branches and along the 5 folds stand the buds or the large yellow flowers and the few leaves.

The gorse forms a high fire risk especially in the hot summer months, because it contains two to four percent flammable oils in the green branches. With its many branches and large, sharp thorns, it prevents animals from eating his flowers. Branches and thorns can form an impenetrable thicket, where dead shrubs can accumulate.

In France and southern England, gorse was used especially by bakers in their furnaces as fuel. When it is burned, it gives much ash rich in alkali, which is also used for washing. The ash is an excellent fertilizer. The shoots form a very nutrient rich food, and if they are well squeezed, horses like them a lot. About cows it is told that they give a good milk, fed only by broom.

Its occurrence is Atlantic, along the entire West coast of Europe.

Murshid Inayat Khan has for sure witnessing gorse in the Dutch dunes. Maybe also in England and on the French coast. When I visited my Sufi teacher Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan at his retreat in the Pyrenees, the gorse has flourishing everywhere. There I got an answer to a burning question. I got the words to open the mountain as Aladin got the necessary impetus by his magic lamp.

An other broom species, the germanica, can be found in Central and Eastern Europe. The "tinctoria" almost in all of Europe. When writing this chapter, I live in the Italian Marques and am surrounded by gorse.

Brought by English settlers to New Zealand to be used as a hedge plant it became a widespread invasive neophyte.

Etymology

The different types of broom were known to botanists before Linnaeus under the Latin name of Genista. The meaning of this word is unclear. Linnaeus returned to the gorse the name "Ulex", which Pliny gave him. The meaning of this word is unclear. There is the story that the famous Swedish botanist Linnaeus fell on his knees the first time he saw in his country the broom and thanked Heaven, that He has created such a beautiful flower.

Symbolism

The roots are edible, but palatable only when you have a big appetite. "Their food is the root of broom" (job, 30.3-4). The roots live in symbiosis with bacteria and fungi, which fix nitrogen. The presence of broom on longer term leads to a decisive improvement of soil quality for subsequent planting. The two gorses most common in the Arab world, Genista aspalathoides and Dyer's Greenweed Genista tinctoria became an icon of lovesickness. An Arabic proverb says; "He put Gadhakohlen in my heart".

It's remarkable how this plant, which is satisfied with few and grows on otherwise non-usable roadsides and slopes, plays her part in symbolism. When Fulke, the Duke of Anjou, in anticipation of a battle camped on the heath, he saw the broom. He placed a bouquet on his helmet and thus led his army to victory. Since then this English royal family is called Plantagenet: planta genista. An other

Duke of Anjou, Gottfried, took down after his crusade the proud, exuberant feather bush from his helmet and replaced it with broom branches as a sign of his humble devotion to the Christian Church.

Curative effects

Gorse became known as one of the so-called Bach flowers. Dr. Edward Bach in "The twelve healers and other remedies" about the "gorse" typology: "Very great hopelessness, they have given up belief that more can be done for them. Under persuasion or to please others they may try different treatments, at the same time assuring those around that there is so little hope of relief"

Deep inside, the confrontation with the own fate is stagnating. One hardly dares to hope for a change in his situation. Depressed, resigned, mentally tired one has no longer the strength to try yet another run. Elisabeth Sellin in "Blüte und Stein": "That we often reach the edge of the despair in difficult situations is caused by our static view of the world. We don't normally see things in the flow of their development, but as a fixed image."

Murshid

*"Beautiful gorse-bushes, what are you here for? --We are little lanterns on your path.
But where do you get your prickly thorns from? --Flowers from above, thorns from below."*

What makes us to humans from the perspective of the Sufis, is that we are on the way. We don't know who we are; we are in search of it. Images, ideologies, concepts, traditions in the end do not help to locate the next route. Where should we turn? And then finally a lantern appears on the dark path. A sign that we are on the right track. A hint on where to go. Sufis call this phenomenon the spirit of guidance: a light that reminds us of our inborn direction. Murshid in the following quote describes how Angels help us at the very beginning of our life to get started on the road and give us a direction: *"The life of the souls in the angelic heavens is incomparably longer than the life of those in the sphere of the jinns. They have no more desires, no more ambitions, no more strivings; only aspiration to reach farther, to experience greater happiness, and to get closer to that light which is now within their sight. They fly around this light like the moth around the lantern; the 'magic lantern', which is the seeking of all souls, is now within their horizon. Nothing has a greater attraction for them than this light which is continually burning before them. They live and move and have their being in this divine light. Have they anything to offer to the souls going towards manifestation? Yes, their feelings. In what way do they offer them? Souls coming from the source and going towards the earth are tuned by them, are set to a certain rhythm. It is this offering which determines the path they tread in the future. The Sufis call that day of tuning Azal; the day when the plan was first designed of the life of that particular soul."* Whenever we lost the trail in life, this means, that we have removed ourselves from the angelic attunement. We have lost contact with our vital rhythm and attitude to life. When Hazrat Inayat Khan speaks of a plan of life, he doesn't mean a picture or an agenda. We chase all kinds of images and concepts. These arise in the sphere of the Djinn, the world of thought. As long as these plans are in accordance with our 'tuning' from the sphere of angels, life flows. If not, we gradually or suddenly get stuck, and we need to search.

This mystical search is represented in a very interesting way in thousand and one nights by the story of Aladdin and the magic lamp. Murshid: "Aladdin could only win the princess if he first obtained the

lamp which she desired. He goes out into the world but cannot find the lamp there, so he goes into the forest where he meets someone who is able to show him the way to reach it. But this man cannot himself give it to him, which means that emotion by itself does not suffice to bring it. Aladdin is told to go to a certain mountain and repeat certain words which will cause the side of the mountain to open. He does this, and the mountain opens, but when he is within the cave he begins to suffocate because there is no air. Nevertheless, persevering, he penetrates farther into the mountain and in time he comes upon the lantern. Aladdin, who held the hand of the Princess, was told that he should first install to get the daughter, the magic lantern.

Now, we can go back to the broom and sort out the components into a context.

What is most important to us (our beloved) is difficult to achieve. But out of lovesickness, we assume the challenge to take the troubles on us. We start on our way. Broom gives the strength to accept a challenge, which we normally would shy away from.

Our search brings us in the most difficult circumstances. It takes us through Earth, water, fire, air and aether. Each one is connected with a dying and a resurrection.

Broom sticks. The branches have 5 sharp edges; the tips are thorny. Gorse inaugurates us into the blows of fate in all forms. He leads us through a struggle with all the elements, through all seasons.

The result is that we have become friendly.

Broom provides good food for livestock, if it is squeezed. After burning, the ashes is a valuable fertilizer. Dissolved in water these can be used as soap.

The tour through the elements has opened the heart of the searcher.

The last examination is by the fifth element, the aether. We leave the ordinary world of the four elements and enter an inner world. There, too, we are put to the test.

The bright yellow broom flower, described as golden forms a wonderful fabric. It is spreading upwards and downwards with a pair of petals that remind of wings. It bends forward and backwards and thus develops a flower, that takes the whole space. At the same time it looks as if the whole thing is in motion. And if we follow this movement, we are led into an invisible Interior.

Finally, we find the Lantern. No more obstacles between lover and beloved.

In the inner world of the gorse flower, we come into contact with the Angel sphere. There we can be tuned anew. We find back our direction in life.

Only who found the light in the heart, is worthy to be United with the beloved. His heart is open and shines. The spirit of guidance can show us the direction.

Finally a quote by Murshid Inayat Khan, which is not easy to understand, but very good to ponder upon: *"If we imagine this heart as a lantern, then the light in the lantern makes it the spirit. We call*

the heart a lantern when we do not think of the light, but when there is a light then we forget the word lantern, and we call it light. When we call the heart spirit it does not mean spirit void of heart, as it does not mean light without lantern, but light in the lantern."

Medication

Gorse essence helps us

to tune in to the spirit of guidance

to overcome adversity

to develop inner life

to awake our soul

to tune in to the sphere of the angels

to discover the light in the heart

as guidance during the initiation in the elements

to find our way

Grass

Gramineae

Botany

The family of grasses is of all groups of plants the most important for humanity. Wheat, barley, oats, rye, rice developed from the grasses. The less-developed varieties are used as feed for dairy cattle. Huge areas on earth with savannas, steppes, tundra are covered completely and exclusively with grasses.

From the moment that a grass has firmly taken root in the ground, it keeps it strongly together. The appearance of the grass type is entirely composed of single lines. The narrow leaf detaches late from the knotty stem, it includes the stem quite a while before it departs. It refrains from the formation of a petiole. Above, in the top of the shoot, it comes to the flower formation. Only here occurs a certain diversification.

The individual grass flower is inconspicuous. It shows no colour, calyx or corolla. The inflorescence consists of a large number of these simple flowers, which, because they lack the hull, are openly exposed to the wind. The air absorbs the pollen as clouds in its breath.

You will find not one poisonous plant among the 4000 species of Gramineae. Grasses are not imaginative. A vertical line, much more is not there. They renounce on the playful handling of powers and qualities. The beautiful appearance does not matter. They are extremely unsophisticated. Grasses develop in infinite communities and yet they show the principle of separation in their simplicity.

Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan: *"the development of grass is collective, and yet it shows singleness. Singleness can be noticed among animals and birds, but individuality is found among men."* Grass in his erection is a precursor to the human upright posture. In its vertical position it forbodes human individuality.

Murshid elaborates at length on the nature of the vertical line:

"The upright line suggests the One, therefore also the number one is represented by an upright line."

"The upright line also suggests straightforwardness, for it is straight upward."

"The upright line also suggests firmness, for it is steady. The upright line also suggests life, for it stands."

"The upright line is the first line, and all forms and figures are nothing but the change of direction of that line "

"The upright line is the form of Alif, the Arabic A, and the name Allah in Arabic writing begins with Alif."

Murshid tells the story of Bullah Shah, the great saint of the Punjab, who was sent away from school because he was still exercising on the Alif as all other children mastered the whole alphabet already. The teachers decided that he was disabled. The parents tried private lessons. Without success. Finally, the child decided to go into the wilderness. When it had discovered the Alif in the grass, it had no longer difficulties, step by step to recognize the One in all beings. Bullah Shah returned to the village, went to his teacher, and announced that he has finished his homework. Prompted by the teacher, he writes the Alif at the wall which splits into two parts.

Naturopathy

In this light, one can easily understand that Dr Bach prescribed the flower essence Wild Oat, a wild grass species, in cases where other remedies had no effect, or where it was difficult to decide what remedies should be prescribed.

Ya Awwal

You're the first without the second. You're the first one without previous. You're unique.

Medication

Grass will help if you can no longer see the forest for the trees

Grass helps to go your way, even if others might consider it as crazy.

Grass strengthens your individual peculiarity

Grass enables to consistently pursue your goal

Grass confirms your own intuition, even if everything argues against it

Incense

Boswellia sacra

Etymology

Boswellia has been named after John Boswell, a Scottish botanist of the 18th century.

Sacra comes from the Latin *sacer*, sacred. Not only the product of the tree but the tree itself was regarded as sacred.

The word "incense" has to do with burning. The aroma of the incense substance is released by burning.

Botany

The frankincense trees grow in dry, hot areas in a belt of East Africa through Arabia to India. We have to do here with small highly branched trees with thick branches and a paper-like bark, from which root after giving it a cut escapes on the hottest days a milky substance, which dries in the air and gives an hardened yellow resin after three months, called tears. On the Somali coast, the trees grow without soil directly on the bare rock, whereupon they were fixed with a mixture of limestone and mortar.

The leaves are grooved, soft and hairy on both sides. With the hair, the trees capture the dew in the air. The small star-shaped, white or pale pink flowers are five-leaved, the fruits in triangular capsules.

History and religion

In ancient times, medicine and religion were closely linked. Traces of it can be found even today in the language: If something heals, it is sacred.

Frankincense was as valuable as gold. One grain of gold against a grain of incense. The extraction of incense was very time-consuming and labour-intensive. The transport was also troublesome. It had to be brought through the desert with incense caravans to the respective coasts through a very predatory environment.

India

Incense has been used in Ayurveda medicine for 5000 years. The dry extract of the resin is added to oils and powders.

Israel

For the ceremonial incense, the Jews use a mixture of four compounds, one of them being incense. These spices were kept in a large room in the House of God in Jerusalem.

Pure incense was used at the sacrifice of flesh and was offered every Sabbath with the ritual bread.

Babylon

According to Herodotus up to 1000 talents of incense were sacrificed every year during the Festival of Bel on the main altar of the Temple in Babylon.

Persia

The same classical Greek historian reported, that the Arabs brought to Darius, the Persian ruler, each year 1000 talents of incense as taxes. The Parsees in Western India, who follow until today the doctrine of the Persian Prophet Zoroaster, use in their daily ritual incense.

Egypt

Notes on use of incense were found in 3500 years old texts from the Nile Valley. The Egyptians used incense for the good smell of the air, for ointments, and for the treatment of wounds. Three thousand years ago, there were already solid trade routes, on which the precious resin was brought from Somalia and Ethiopia, or from India and the countries at the Red Sea to Egypt.

Greece

Incense was sacrificed also to the Greek gods, although other resins were used too.

Rome

The later Roman Empire was a large purchaser of incense. Hippocrates and other Greek-Roman doctors used it for wound cleansing, against diseases of the respiratory tract and for digestive problems. Also incense was used in religious ceremonies, public events and in the budget. The Roman historian Plinius mentioned incense as an antidote to Hemlock poisoning.

China

In China the remedy was used against leprosy.

Christianity

In the West one knows incense especially from use in the Catholic Church. It is part of different rituals, for example during the Tridentine Mass. Even much more it is used in the ceremonies of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Incense has been used as medicine in medieval Europe. The great healer Hildegard von Bingen describes the remedy.

Islam

In the 10th century prescribed the famous Persian physician and Sufi Abu Ali Sina, celebrated in Europe as Avicenna, incense against tumors, nausea, dysentery and fever. Also, he recommended the internal application of frankincense resin beads to "strengthen the spirit and the mind".

Naturopathy

Ancient medical scriptures describe the healing powers for rheumatic diseases, chronic bronchitis, asthma, intestinal inflammation and skin diseases.

In the Middle Ages one tried to drive out the plague with incense - not quite wrong thanks to its germicidal properties. In ancient times, one still didn't know the pathogens, but apparently observed that incense steam can have a healing effect.

In 1850 incense was still to be found for inner and outer use, but in 1870 only for external use in pharmacological books. After 1875, incense fell into oblivion.

In recent years, Western medicine is newly discovering incense. Meanwhile, several scientific working groups deal in Germany with its medical effect. It could already be proved, that incense helps at chronic inflammation - for example in the gastrointestinal tract and joints, the chronic Polyarthritits, Rheumatoid and so on. In atopic dermatitis too, brain tumors and Multiple Sclerosis, incense preparations could relieve symptoms.

From Iran, the country where previously Avicenna worked, came results of a study with animals, wherein the hint of the great medieval masters of healing was picked up that incense causes an increase in learning- and memory performance.

Also, it is believed that incense has an effect against all diseases, which have to do with fear. A psychosomatic application.

Murshid

In the teachings of Murshid Inayat Khan incense gets the place it deserves. It appears both as a remedy and as a means of sanctifying. As always in the teachings of Murshid there is no fundamental distinction between effects on the space surrounding us, our own physics, our mental constitution, our way of thinking and the spirit world. Existence, visible and invisible, forms a unit. At all levels, those of the body, heart and soul alike, the remedy can be used.

Room treatment

"incense burning... takes away the dampness of the place and gives a facility to the free and deep inhaling and exhaling of breath."

Healing

In case of medical treatments, it is recommended to burn incense in the treatment room.

Remembrance of the dead

"Both Hindus and Mohammedans use incense in the prayers and offerings for the dead. The prayer and good wish that is made for the dead reaches them much more quickly in this way, through the ether."

Spiritual practice

"As a rule in the presence of dervishes a wood fire and incense burn continually."

Murshid explains this practice as follows: *"incense, rising through the breath, touch the heart, making it capable of spiritual exaltation."*

The resin of the frankincense tree, in Latin called sacra, holy, brings us close to the holy. There are some passages in the works of Hazrat Inayat Khan, where the use is mentioned:

"There incense was burning, and this that he was doing was something sacred to him."

" the beautiful fragrance of the incense burning, made her so comfortable."

"By breathing before fire, the Sufi purifies his breath by that element. Therefore, incense is burnt in religious places..."

Till here the general notes on the use of incense in Murshid Inayat Khan's works.

Conversation with the incense

In the Tanas he dedicates himself to the tree in a lengthy section in five parts. There he elaborates on the nature of the plant. Murshid would like to better understand how the plant plays its healing and sanctifying role, and he asks it.

1.)

"Incense, what were you whispering at the church service? --No prayer can reach God unless it arises from a glowing heart."

Each of us knows religious services, which seem to be only automatically handled. The prescribed rituals are performed, without to convey a meaning. Imagine how in the middle of a happening like this the Sufi poet Hafiz bursts in with the words: *"Pious friends, you would forget your dignity if you would hear the song which came from my glowing heart."* (cited by Murshid)

The incense whispers what Hafiz exclaims: Holy is not stiff and inhibited. God hears no compulsory rituals. Holy is a heart that glows.

"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."

2.

"Incense, what did you preach at the church? --He who endureth pain in the cause of others must rise from the mortal world to the spheres of immortality."

The frankincense tree is practicing what is preached in all the religions. He is suffering for others. He is carved and tapped. His life juice comes out, drying in the hot sun and is collected to be used elsewhere on glowing charcoal as a delicious fragrance. With its help, it is easier for spiritual believers to allow their souls to rise from the purely material up to the eternal. It becomes a joy.

3.)

"Incense, what does your perfume signify? --My perfume is the evidence of my self- sacrifice."

The term self-sacrifice is misunderstood in many cases. Often we give up what is important to us, because we don't trust ourselves, or because the step seems too big. Or we renounce, because the values in us and around us keep us from what we are longing for. Then we suffer because we haven't remained faithful to our ideal.

The frankincense tree devotes itself to its love with all its heart and lifeblood. It doesn't give up its ideal. Murshid: *"It is not always that one has to sacrifice what one possesses; but one has to sacrifice what one is."*

The point is to sacrifice what we mean, that we are. This so-called self stands in the way of our happiness. Hazrat Inayat Khan likes to refer to the Beatifications of Jesus Christ: *"if you begin to practice any of them or all of them, you will find it is nothing but self-sacrifice, self- denial, erasing the self, while cultivating the thought of gentleness, the thought of meekness, the thought of mildness."*

It is interesting that here not suffering is in the foreground, but bliss. Murshid: *" Sacrifice gives no pain; it only gives pleasure."*

"We can sacrifice our anger when anger comes upon us. We can sacrifice our pride. We can bow to those who think little of us. There are many sacrifices that do not cost one penny. We can give some of our time if we cannot afford a great generosity. We can give our patience to those who need our patience. To those who want some liberty - very well, we can give liberty. I think all this is worthwhile sacrifice: we should do it."

4.)

"Incense, tell me what mortal is veiled in your nature? --When my heart endures the test of fire, my hidden quality becomes manifest."

When our hearts come into contact with the fire, our first impulse is to protect ourselves. We are trying to prevent the injury of the heart. If we instead would dominate this impulse, the fire gets the chance to reveal the scent of our true nature. The Sufis call the one who mastered the art of self-discipline, Lauwama. Murshid describes someone like that as follows: *"A person who wants to talk back, but thinks that it would perhaps be better if he did not; a person who would like to hit back, but at the same time thinks, 'Better let it go this time', shows that he is not acting mechanically but by exerting his will. Even when he does exactly the same as the other he shows he has a will; his action is directed by his will."*

5.)

"Incense, tell me the secret of your being. --I am the heart of the lover of God, whose deep sigh rises upward, spreading its perfume all around."

Medication

Essence of frankincense is used to

to be heard by God in prayer

To experience joy in the giving up of the individual self

to bring our heart to glow

to make visible our true qualities

to emanate fragrance

Jasmin

Botany, etymology, usage

Jasminum officinale

Jasmin is a climber with dark green leaves and star-shaped flowers. The botanical home of jasmine stretches from Iran to Kashmir and China. The word Jasmin goes back to the Arabic "Yasamin", which in turn was derived from the Persian word "Yasman". Its etymological meaning is unclear.

In Ghazipur on the Ganges, perfumed hair oil is traditionally produced with Jasmin.

Since the 16th century, the plant with about 40 varieties is located in gardens in middle and southern Europe. She is very sensitive to frost.

For the perfume industry in Europe, *Jasminum grandiflorum*, the Spanish or Catalan Jasmin, is being cultivated

Naturopathy

Gurudas describes the flower essence of Jasmine: "Jasmin increases the Tantric function and the ability to discover God in sexuality. The fear and the guilt associated with sexuality are alleviated."

I was lucky enough to sit in the garden of my parents in-laws in Italy under a blossoming Jasmine Pergola these days. Can you imagine what an enticing scent emanates from these flowers? Jasmine is a pronounced fragrance flower.

Smell, the sense of smell, nose are for the Sufis associated with the element of fire. And fire represents passion, love, transformation of love.

Murshid

Here Hazrat Inayat Khan adds some insights from Indian tradition: *"In India, among Hindus as well as among Mussulmans, there is a custom at weddings of veiling the faces of bride and bridegroom with a veil of jasmine flowers... and after the conclusion of the marriage ceremony they are unveiled. Now, the meaning of this veil of flowers is that a new phase of life begins for them."* So, one could say: The face of the spouse is covered by a veil of aroma.

The latest research findings show, what prominent role scent plays in the election of the beloved. We select a sexual partner after different fragrance criteria than a partner for friendship. Passion is mainly steered by the nose. We are looking for a partner that we like to smell.

The face of the chosen one will only become visible gradually. At the first instance, it is veiled behind the scent. No wonder, then, that the choice of a marriage partner prepares us so many problems these days. The reason is clear: our ideals of beauty are oriented to socially accepted images of beauty. Body odor is frowned upon and is covered if possible. Also, it has been demonstrated that women who take the pill, smell different and prefer other partner smells than women who have dropped off the pill.

How should we choose without fail in such circumstances? Especially when we have no experience! So, at this important passage in life, we are often disoriented.

Jasmine helps at this point. It reinforces the ability to follow our nose at searching and finding a sexual partner. Otherwise, a decision is nearly impossible. *"When you want a rose and after attaining the rose you wish you had chosen a jasmine; after attaining the jasmine, you cry, "Oh, why did I choose this flower? Why not the other?" . . . and when they are both before you, you have lost the power to choose either the one or the other."* Many could be a possibility, all of them have advantages and disadvantages. How should I make a selection? It is only after the wedding that other aspects of the partner appear from behind the veil.

Murshid describes this succinctly: *"One should not expect the rose-bush to produce jasmine. Every person is like a certain plant, but not the same plant. We may be fond of roses, but every plant does not bear roses; if we want roses we should seek only the plant on which roses grow, and we must not be disappointed if what we find is not the rose plant. In this way we can correct our own deception."*

We have chosen a partner for a specific purpose in life. And then we discover that this partner does not meet many other wishes. Here another principle for marriage appears to be very important: the tolerance. We are urged to stand by our choice of a partner.

Murshid: *"Compassion comes by the thought, "I cannot expect of a person what he is unable to think or do as I expect it of him." It is simply like this, to feel that the pear tree must give roses, and the rose tree must give jasmine. Every person is a certain plant, not the same plant..... In this way we can correct ourselves of our own disappointment, instead of demanding roses of a tree which is not a rose tree."*

However, that doesn't mean we have to like then forever just this plant.

Murshid: *"Every step one takes in evolution changes one's ideal.... if you love a jasmine today, it is possible that in your next step in evolution you may have grown above it and you love a rose. And it is not necessary that you should keep to the jasmine when your evolution brings you to the love for the rose -- thus one is kept from progressing. Contentment is a great virtue, but it is a virtue only when you have mastered the thing and risen above it."* Does Murshid speak here of men-women relationships and does he mean, that it is ok to change partners, when our taste changes? I don't think so. I only know of one exception where he says that it is better to divorce than to keep on living together in a continuous fight. To have mastered our jasmine task means in our context to have discovered all the sides of sexuality, the beauty and the difficulties and to have grown beyond. Then we can dedicate ourselves to other realms of our being. If we give ourselves satisfied before we reach this mastery, it will weaken us.

The desire to follow our nose, the standing to our decisions, the mastery of marriage: all topics that have to do with willpower and reaching our goal. So it may not surprise that Murshid adds a note, that Jasmine helps in case of blood diseases. Anaemia is an obstacle for an energetic following of wishes.

Ya Qadir

O You! Your desire is the only power of the universe. You're the lover and the power that love gives us. Your urge gives us the goal in life. Your possibilities are endless. In you lies the strength and the confidence, to win the beloved. Within you lies the ability to do exactly the right thing.

Medication

The essence of jasmine helps us

to follow our nose

to foster an accurate choice

to strengthen the blood as carrier of the will

to provides a secure link between man and woman

to allow tolerance

Lily

Etymology

Latin: *Lilium candidum* L.

Greek: Leirion. Coptic: Hleli. Basque: Lili. Hamitic languages: ilili.

Originally the word "Lily" probably means "flower". Safely it can be traced back to the Eastern Mediterranean area, where the Madonna Lily was the first famous ornamental plant.

The species name *candidum* means "bright white".

Description

Madonna lilies are perennial, herbaceous plants, the growth sizes between 50 and 130 centimeters. The onion seated immediately below the earth's surface is broadly oval and white; the scales are numerous and broad ovate. The strong, smooth stem has a hue of violet, and green towards the end. The spirally arranged numerous leaves are shiny and hairless, lanceolate, getting up to 8 centimeters long and upwards ovate and shorter. In autumn the plants develop as their winter form a down-to-earth rosette of leaves and at the same time new roots.

The inflorescence is a cluster from two to twelve strong fragrant flowers. They are pure white, can have a hue of yellow green at the tips. The flowering period is May to June.

The pollen is golden yellow. The light green, clubbed stylus is 35-50 mm long. The ovary is approximately cylindrical and green.

Dissemination

Only a few locations of the Madonna lily is considered to be originally wild, the majority of all occurrences is considered naturalized origin through the long culture in the Mediterranean region. Probably the Madonna Lily comes from the forested areas of the Eastern Mediterranean until after Syria, the few surviving wild populations in Macedonia, Israel and the Lebanon gross mark this area. Sporadically it occurs also in the whole Mediterranean area, up to the Canary Islands.

Cultural history

In ancient Egypt we find depicted on a 4,500 year-old stone sarcophagus and on a King's throne from the same period *Lilium candidum* as bas-relief. The lily was symbol of the Empire, of dignity and wisdom. Henceforth, many royal scepters were crowned with lilies, sign of law, order, power.

Representations of the white flowering Lily come from the Palace of Knossos in Minoan Crete. Ritual spaces were covered with Lily frescoes and probably represented dream worlds in which one could enter through the rituals there.

Even Atlantis is associated with lilies. They found ceramic on the island of Santorini, which shows the same Lily pictures as pottery of the Minoan culture on Crete. From these similarities, scientists conclude on the simultaneous existence of the Minoan culture on Crete and Santorini, believed to be the remains of Atlantis.

In the Bible, lilies are mentioned several times. Susanna (Hebrew "Shushan" = "the lily") was portrayed long before Maria with the lily as a symbol of purity and beauty.

The flower of Hera, Queen of the gods in the ancient Greece was the lily. As the Heracles baby sucked at the divine breast of Hera his superhuman powers arose immediately. He sucked so strong that part of the divine mother's milk pured into the universe and emerged as the milky way. A drop fell on the Earth. Where he moistened it, the first Lily appeared. When Aphrodite saw the pure white flowers, she became jealous and let grow in the centre the white chalice a huge obscene stamp, the "penis of a donkey". Therefore, the plant of the chaste marriage guardian Hera became a symbol of the lascivious adulteress Aphrodite.

In Germanic traditions, it was dedicated to Thor, in the Celtic to Oberon and the elves.

In Christianity, the Madonna Lily got her name due to her brilliant white color as a symbol of purity. As a concession to the innocende the flower is mostly portrayed without a stamp and stamens. Most frequently she appears on paintings with the subject of the annunciation. In art the Archangel Gabriel is often depicted as a female Angel, often with a white lily in the hand; this is a symbol of the virginity of Mary.

Male and female symbol

Beuchert summarizes the meaning of the lilies symbol in a long list. It stands for: The Saints, chastity. Virginity. Election. Hope. Purity. Noble disposition. Beauty, love, light. Grace and forgiveness. Abandoned innocence. Death.

One would say almost too much of the good. We can distinguish the characteristic of the lily a bit better, if we determine that both male and feminine qualities are connected with her. On the one hand, we have seen that the lily in the ancient Egypt represented the light and the male principle. On the other hand the flower was dedicated by the Greeks and Romans to female divinities, Hera and Juno as a sign of their nourishing care as well as Artemis and Diana as a sign of their virginity. According to Christian mythology she emerged from Eve's tears after her expulsion from the garden of Eden. In Christian art the lily is associated closely with the Virgin Mary which symbolizes chastity, but Joseph also appears occasionally with a stick covered by blooming lilies. Christ is depicted as judge of the world, sometimes with a lily in his mouth: In this case, the flower represents mercy.

Many male Christian Saints who were not martyrs, and almost all martyrs are associated with the lily.

In Byzantium and the early France the lily became an emblem of the Royal houses.

The Fleur de lys (Bourbon Lily) is a sign of perfection, light and life, and has traditionally been the symbol of the King of France. According to legend, Clovis, the merovingian king of the franks converted to Christianity in 496 a.d., whereupon an Angel presented him a golden Lily as a symbol of his purification.

Lilies as medicinal plants

Lilies are used against chronic cough, blood disorders, and insomnia.

In the ancient Greece pain-relieving ointments were prepared from the lily. It was also used against menstrual problems, burns, and tension. Until today the juice of the plants is classified as astringent to the healing of damaged or irritated tissue in various folk medicines. Already Pliny the elder has drawn attention to this usage, but also Dioscorides and Hildegard von Bingen recommended use in case of superficial skinn injuries and illnesses.

The Madonna lily is described as modern flower essence for people who are worried about the consequences of their everyday activities and the future and who fear not to have their destiny in hand. Such people are nervous, often chewing on their fingernails, or other behaviour disorder.

Murshid

Only a few flowers became symbols solely by their aura of majestic beauty. In very rare cases, the measure of beauty can reach a limit perceived by the viewers as heavenly, which gives them the sensation of understanding the divine. At the plants, this is the case with the Lotus, the roses and the lilies.

Lotus stands at a quiet spot at the top of the flowers. It represents the incomparable in the plant world, like the diamond in the mineral kingdom. Just as in the human Kingdom the Christ, so the Lotus is the embodiment of perfection in the plant Kingdom.

And in the second place comes the opposing pair of rose and lily. In my book 'The soul of the stones' is described a similar contrast between the ruby and the sapphire. Of the two the rose represents the aspect of Jelal, embodying Mastery. The lily stands for the aspect of Jemal which includes Holiness. The two are completely different and so there are two Queens in the plant kingdom, the lily and the rose.

So then says Murshid: *"When you wish to think of a rose, a lily must not come in your thought"*.

The world of plants lies between mineral and animal world. It is divided into two parts. The half which the monocots tends towards minerals and the other half with the dicotyledons tends to the animal world. The queen of monocot plants is the lily; that of the dicotyledons the rose. Where the last group is characterized by the Pentagon, the hexagon is typical for the first. The blossoms of the lily are hexagonal, so as almost all snowflakes and for example the glimmering flakes in gneiss and granite.

Walafrid Strabo (809-849) wrote in his "Hortulus" that the rose symbolizes Christus' dying: By his death he gave colour to the rose. He compared the lily with the purity of His life.

Grohmann points to something similar in medieval European painting: "As long as the birth of Jesus was only announced, i.e. as long as Jesus is still a cosmic being, the announcing Angel carries the lily in his hand. When the child is then born, i.e. it has taken on a worldly body, it is the rose instead of the lily."

Murshid Inayat Khan: *"In this way we see there are really two journeys. There is the journey from the goal to the life in the world, and there is the journey from the life in the world to the goal. And both journeys are natural. As it is natural to go forth from the eternal goal, so it is necessary to go from the changing life to the life which is unchangeable."*

Let me clarify right away, that both journeys represent directions of life. So, we're not talking of a contrast of life and death. For the journey away from the variables we don't have to die. As the Sufis say: Die before the death and resurrect now!

Murshid: *"We live far away from nature, we have made our artificial world to live in; and that is why we require an art to free ourselves from it. I do not mean to say that we must abandon life, or that we must not have anything to do with life in order to be mystics, but we have to practice that art which enables us to get in touch with reality."*

What is meant by reality in this case? The world behind the colors. Murshid: *"The further we go, so the more our disputes and arguments cease. They fade away until there is no color left in them; and when all the color has gone, the white light comes which is the light of God."* They fade, until no more color is left in them. When all color is gone, comes the white light, which is the light of God.

For the Sufi poet Jelal-ud-din Attar, the petals of the lily are tongues which are not audible out of reverence for the presence of God:

"The lily wants to praise You with all tongues

O Lord, and therefore has the head raised.

But funny! Her praise is silent; she is mute despite her ten tongues!

Completely speechless with ten tongues is the Lily

Because in this garden, who could talk here?"

The lily lifts us high over the earthly to the heavenly.

Not for nothing the highest angels in the Christian tradition are shown dressed in white with white wings and a golden harp. They sing God's praises, and their joy is to know God in his highest State.

So is the *Lilium candidum* the symbol for greatest possible closeness to the ideal.

Murshid: *"The angelic quality manifests in the spiritual man when he has withdrawn himself from the world, when he has centered his mind on the cosmos, and when his consciousness is no longer an individual consciousness. By that time he has become God-conscious."*

For the Sufis, the color white is connected to the water element. Murshid: *"The water element is green, which may be seen in the water of the sea and in the effect of the rainfall on the trees and plants. Yet water in its pure state is white, which may be seen in clouds, in pure streams, and in snow."*

In addition, we can say that the lily has the properties of pure water in overwhelming beauty.

In a prayer from the nature meditations, the master brings an offering to the over all revered, or like the Sufis say to the beloved:

*"In the white lilies I bring Thee
An offering of my open heart."*

Wear this prayer from the nature meditations by Hazrat Inayat Khan in your heart for a while. At the exhalation you say the first part, during the inhalation the second. The heart unfolds as a beautiful white lily. As a help, you could place such a flower on the table in front of you of course. You look at it on the exhalation, you close your eyes during the inhalation phase.

You will then get a glimpse how your heart must be entirely virginal white before it can meet the beloved. A flower is the offering of a plant to the higher asking for attention and fertilization. Of all flowers the white ones offer the greatest possibility to the higher to take influence, because no own ideas are in play. The personal opinions and attitudes play their part in the above defined journey of

the master. They are indispensable during the "Download" into life. On the opposite journey, that of the Saints, it is necessary to let these beliefs go. Likes and dislikes prevent rapprochement with the beloved. We cannot help but to excuse us, because on the journey of the master mistakes are being made and we hurt people.

Murshid: *"asking pardon is just like purifying the heart and washing it white."*

Slowly we are able now to understand why Murshid prescribes white lilies *"for nervous young people with an emotional nature who have not found themselves."*

There are feelings in all colors: Red for anger is perhaps most known. In my publication "The Holy Book of nature", this has been described in the chapter on the elements. As teens and young adults, we believe that we are our feelings. Searching for ourselves we identify with different emotions in the hope of finding something, that suits us. This search makes nervous.

Murshid: *" There is also the teaching of Christ, "seek ye the kingdom of God first, and all things will be added." What does that mean? It means that we are to focus the heart upon that spiritual ideal which is the perfection of truth; let that reality be reproduced in the heart, so that in its turn it may sing the song of reality..... When the heart partakes of the divine outlook and divine attitude and divine love, then it expresses them externally, either as an action in the outer world, as a manner, as a glance."*

There's still an other note by Murshid about the way how the lilies show themselves in the world. Here he refers to the teachings of Christ: *"... there is a kind of dependence, known better by the ancient peoples. In this world, in this age of materialism and commercialism, this dependence seems to have disappeared. It is dependence upon the unknown. Jesus Christ said, "Consider the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they spin; yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these."..... It seems that the creatures who do not worry for their supply, to their mouth their food is conveyed. Man's struggle, it seems, for his supply is greater than that of all other living beings in the lower creation. But what makes it so? It is not God, it is man himself, who is selfish, and who is unfair to his brother, absorbed in his own interests in life."*

Why is this attitude of trust in God in conjunction with the lilies?

If we investigate the botanical characteristics, we come to amazing discoveries. In the following analysis, the studies of Herbert Grohmann again were a great help.

The lily has accommodated its onion under the earth. You might think that because of this it should be considered as earthly and root related. Far away! It clearly demarcates itself from the mineralising hardening tendencies of the soil. Its onion is very watery. It lives most of the year under the earth, without becoming a part of the earth. When germinating in spring, it drives lush leaves and stately blossoms in a relatively short time, while most other plants need much longer, because they are much more dependent on the life rhythms of the earth. The lily behaves quite independently of the earthly laws. It follows the Sufi phrase "Be in the world, but not of the world".

It is very modest in its leaf and stem development. Unlike many other plants, particularly in the Group of dicotyledons, it takes very little space for itself. It is not branched in the environment and as time for its visible appearance, it chooses the early spring, where it must not compete with other plants. Rather than to stretch out horizontally, it stretches to the height and cut off the bulk of their leaves from their actual tasks - the assimilation of the light. Instead, she uses them as a storage organ. The onion is recalculated leaf mass.

And for what does it store food? Not to save energy for more growth and safety, but to be able to shoot up in the spring with surprising speed and to get to the flower. Everything at the lily is in the character of flowering. Flowering is her selfless life purpose.

Murshid: "Saving certainly is a consideration, but there is a limit to it. In some cases saving is wise, but in many other cases it is avarice.....From the practical point of view this consideration is necessary, and the philosophy of Omar Khayyam, to forget about tomorrow, only means to give up the extra worry and anxiety about tomorrow, as one also learns from the teachings of Christ, where he points to the lilies of the field. This teaching should not make a man careless, especially in the conditions of life today, but it should relieve a man who has nothing to save from the worry and anxiety about tomorrow."

Ya Quddus

O you, who cleanse us of all that clings to us. You lift us out of the concerns and worries. In You is the security that we have nothing to lose and just win if we approach eternity.

Medication

Essence of lilies reveals an unearthly beauty

It helps us to focus on our true self

It raises us from practical material orientation

it cleans our hearts for the encounter with the beloved

It lifts us from emotional entanglements

It helps us to follow the needs of the soul for holiness

It frees us from the limits of individuality

It teaches us to trust in our living on the unknown

fear and worry for tomorrow disappear

We find back our dependence on God

Lotus

The Lotus (*Nelumbo*) is the sole genus in the family of the Lotus (*Nelumbonaceae*).

The genus contains only two species: The Indian Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) and the American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*). Because Murshid Inayat Khan came from India and also the traditional symbolism refers to the Asian Lotus, we're talking just about the Indian Lotus.

The Tiger Lotus or white Egyptian Lotus is a species in the genus of water lilies (*Nymphaea*) just as the Blue Lotus Flower and is not related to the real Lotus.

Etymology

The name "Lotus" stands for a confusing variety of edible plants. Linaeus classifies the legumes under this term. Probably the only reason why the waterplant is so called, is the edibility of its roots and seeds.

Description

The Lotus is a perennial aquatic plant. From their rhizomes, several new shield-shaped leaves are formed each year. The special feature of the leaves of the Lotus is that they are liquid-repellent, so that, for example, water simply rolls off. As a result, the leaves remain clean, and no fungi or other organisms may form on them, which could harm the plant (Lotus effect). In contrast, the leaves of the water lily are completely wetted by water.

The large flowers are hermaphroditic, with many free carpels. Pollination is done by beetles. Unlike at the water lilies, the flowers are a notch above the water surface.

Symbolism

Hinduism

The Lotus blooms in the morning in swampy waters, that is why this plant in Asia stands for purity, resurrection, and perfect beauty. The Lotus symbolizes the creation of life from the silt of the primeval waters. From the navel of Vishnu rises the Lotus and is the seat of Brahma, the creator. Psychic centers in the body, connected with the rising of Shakti are often portrayed as lotuses. Rooted in the mud, the Lotus Flower promises purity and the unfolding of consciousness.

What the importance this flower is given in Indian culture, is reflected in tradition, that during the Indian rebellion from 1857 Lotus was passed among the insurrectionists from hand to hand to spread the news of the revolt and to move the Indians to take part.

Tao

Its symbolism in China is particularly diverse. There, the Lotus flower is also the symbol of a good marriage. Specifically, the Red Lotus flower is a symbol of the vagina. In Taoism, the Lotus is attribute of the immortal He Xiangu.

Buddhism

Buddhas are shown often sitting on lotus flowers or rising as flame from it. Even Tara, the mother of the Buddhas is associated with the Lotus. In Buddhism, the Lotus is one of the eight treasures and is a symbol for the run of the times. The development of the people seen from Buddha's point-of-view, is rendered as follows:

“Because as in a pond with blue, red and white lotus flowers some blue red and white lotus flowers that are created and grown in the water, have not come out over the water, but continued to grow sunk below the water surface;

Several red, blue and white lotus flowers, which are created and grown in the water, are at the same level with the water;

Several red, blue and white lotus flowers at last, that are created and grown in the water, stand out above the water, untouched by the water:

“Quite so saw the exalted one with his Buddha-eye overlooking the world beings stained with few pollution and those with much pollution; beings with sharp senses and those with dull senses, beings of good nature and such with bad nature, beings easy to teach and those hard to teach; and those wo lived there refraining from sinn and keeping an eye on the otherwordly world.”

With the wheel, the open lotus flower forms a chakra, the spiritual wheel of existence, and it serves as a meditation symbol in the form of the mandala. Eight petals represent the points of the compass and the universal harmony. Thousand petals describe the spiritual revelation, while the closed Lotus Blossom symbolises a potential. The unity of bliss and emptiness, the aim of Tantric practice, is called mani padme (jewel in the Lotus) - Buddha in the heart of the Lotus.

Bahá ' í faith

The shape of the Lotus Flower was taken up in the Bahá ' í faith as a symbol of purity: Their first house of worship in India, a religious building for the followers of all religions, is modeled after the shape of a Lotus Flower.

Naturopathy

In therapy with flower essences, the essence of the Lotus is known as equivalent to the philosopher's stone. In the book "The soul of the stones", I have explained this phenomenon in the chapter on the diamond. As the universal essence for body, heart and soul, it dynamises and reinforces other remedies. Its main sphere of activity is our crown chakra. This is the spiritual centre over our head, where all physical, mental and spiritual energies unite together. The crown center is responsible that

ultimately all the chakras in our body, not only of us individuals, but also by all of humanity and all of creation, can be brought in a harmony. This condition is called enlightenment. The pattern of the Lotus flower with her "thousand" petals is similar to the state of the crown chakra in highest vibration.

The essence of the Lotus helps to harmonize physical and spiritual aspects. Practical thinking and spirituality must not stand in contrast. The essence cleans the whole system from toxins and speeds up the healing on all levels of the human organism.

Murshid

"Before the righteous soul,

Servant of God, even the angels bend;

His lotus feet the long-desired goal

Where weary pilgrims find their journeys end..... "

The righteous man of whom Murshid Inayat Khan speaks, is the God-conscious. That the angels bow for him is connected with the imagination that in comparison with the divine light that is reflected in him, even the light of the angels fades. It is called a pure white light, also the light of truth.

The Lotus Flower, which we are discussing, is the pure white. In the plant Kingdom, it is the reflection of the divine light, nothing can be compared with it.

Now to the question what Murshid means with lotus feet: That searchers want to sit at the feet of the master, makes sense. Me myself have once felt an irresistible desire to touch the feet of the master. But how should one imagine Lotus feet? Likely Buddhists have their idea. For me this picture is new.

The remarkable thing is that the Lotus represents not only the highest of creation, but also the basis of creation and the creation as a whole.

As Murshid was asked if he was the head of the Sufi order, he responded: No, I'm the feet. Somehow he didn't want to be maneuvered into a position, where he resides just "up there". Most clearly the important role of the 'bottom' is expressed in the following section from Murshid: *"The lotus spoken of by mystics in various Eastern cults is the root of the human body; if the body is pictured as a wheel, not round but oval, and a line drawn through the center, one end of which was in the center of the brain, and the other end in the lower part of the body (in the center), the lotus part would be called a glowing fire and the head a globe upon it. This fire is blown by Shaghal, and the flame rising from it illuminates the globe -- the head."* Shaghal is a breathing technic of the Sufis.

Murshid gives also an example from the Hindu tradition, wherein the Lotus is represented as a basis for the divine: *"The goddess of Vishnu is Lakshmi who is standing on a lotus"*

The Sufis have as a guideline to "die before the death". The ones who has realised this motto, has overcome their desires. That's why Murshid describes Vishnu as sitting on a Lotus. *"The lotus represents desire: every petal is a desire. Sitting upon the lotus means that the desire is under him instead of being above his head."* The interesting thing is the great appreciation of Murshid for this Lotus. One might have expected perhaps that the world of desire and instincts is stamped as inferior. But no, it is part of the divine life:

"The first life that existed was the life of God, and from that all manifestation branched out. It is a manifold expression of one life; one flower blooming as so many petals, one breath expressing itself as so many words. The sacred idea attached to the lotus flower is expressive of this same philosophy...."

It seems to me that the term of the Lotus feet represents the master's ability to walk across the water. The Lotus loves the water; it is at home in the water, and yet it does not get wet.

Ya Nur-Ya Zahur

Your glory and magnificence is the pure white of truth

Medication

The essence of Lotus helps

to honor our wishes and needs as divine heritage

and at the same time to overcome our desires

to spark our passion

and to have the power to transform this energy into light

Mistletoe

Etymology

The botanical name of the mistletoe is *viscum album*, after the Latin word "viscum" for glue or adhesive (comp. viscosity) A glue made from the sticky mistletoe berries served the catching of birds. "Album", white, because the berries are white in contrast to the oak mistletoe berries, which are yellow.

The German name "Mistel" is related to "Mist", crap. The mistletoe be disseminated via the crap of birds from tree to tree.

Description and distribution

Mistletoes are hemiparasitic evergreens, which grow on trees or shrubs. Their branches up to about 20 cm long develop forked. Mistletoe doesn't like earth, it can not even root in the ground, but only on a living branch. Despite the winter cold and darkness, it retains its leathery, green leaf garb and has so largely emancipated from the annual rhythm of the Sun. It behaves as if it has nothing to do with the seasons. Flowering in February/March and the fruits in November and December are also against the norm. All plants are looking for the light that controls their metabolism, but mistletoe bushes develop even under a dense canopy and become visible for the viewer mostly only in autumn, when the leaves fell.

The male or female flowers are inconspicuous, 1 to 3 mm in diameter and greenish-yellow. White berries occur after pollination by insects. There are several seeds in them. The uniqueness of the mistletoe fruits and seeds is that no seed coat is formed. Instead, a sticky layer from Viscin is formed. This has two functions in the spreading of the seeds: It is slippery, so the fruit quickly passes through the digestive tract of birds. Secondly the Viscin is very sticky and glues the seeds on the branches of the host trees. Birds spread the seeds, by either eating only the pulp and strip off the sticky seeds of other plants or eat the whole fruit and excrete the undigested seeds again.

It takes up to three years before the seed is nestled in the tree and a seedling can emerge. Germination produces a microscopically small tube through which the seedling can penetrate into the host plant. From the living wood of the tree, the plant takes and selects, what it needs for its growth: They found two times more potassium and five times more phosphate in the wood of mistletoe than in the wood of the host tree.

Mistletoe can be found in the tropical, subtropical and temperate zones worldwide. The number of recognized species varies depending on the author.

There are only a few species of plants that live epidendrisch; especially in Central and Northern Europe, Mistletoe is the only one that basically grows as a half parasite on trees. All other plants turn with their roots towards Earth's gravity -geotropy- - a principle according to which the mistletoe does not live. Its roots are not even clearly visible when you open the host plant.

Cultural history

Sumer

In ancient Sumer mistletoe was dedicated to the goddess of love Mylittades . What woman devoted herself to her service, the temple prostitution, positioned herself in Mylittades' sanctuary underneath a mistletoe and offered herself to the first man who demanded this favor.

Greece

The Greek poet Homer points out that the mistletoe "discloses the eyes of death".

Roman

In Virgil's Aeneid, the Trojan hero must obtain a golden bough of mistletoe. He opened bravely the gates of the underworld and led out again from its dangers. Even the Messenger of the gods Mercury took this forked branch, when he led the souls of the dead to their new sanctuary, where time and space come to an end.

In Roman mythology traces of the mistletoe remained because the land of the Po Valley was inhabited by the Celts for centuries.

The only authentic historical text about the mistletoe cult of Druids comes from Pliny the elder (24 - 70 BC): "They think, a potion made from the mistletoe effects that infertile animals procreate, and that the plant was a remedy against all poison."

Ovidius refers to the chants of the Druids: "Ad Viscum Druidae cantare solebant."

Celts

The Druids in ancient Gaul, as reported by Melly Uydert, started of in the new year, 6 days after full moon in the last month of winter, into the woods to cut the Mare branches as a holy cure with a golden sickle from the oak and caught them in a towel. The golden bough of mistletoe was seen as a sex organ of the male thought oak and announced creativity, new life and rebirth.

According to the Celtic tradition a mistletoe is hung above the door threshold until today in the Anglo-Saxon countries at Christmas. Who is located under this mistletoe, is free from all social conventions -as the mistletoe itself -. It is located in an "intermediate place" where the impossible can be made possible. If a man and a woman randomly under the mistletoe meet, they kiss each other - whoever they are - and caress.

So the mistletoe with its fruits is always a symbol of hope for blessings and fertility. The Druids were allowed to harvest them only with a golden sickle: Only gold, sacred symbol of eternal light, seemed capable of cutting the magic plant, without destroying its forces.

For the Anglican Church the mistletoe is till today a pagan symbol which is why it's not allowed to decorate churches with mistletoe.

Germanic tribes

For the Celts the mistletoe was never a negative symbol. Unlike in Germanic mythology. In the Edda, a serious fateful role is attached to the mistletoe in the battle between the gods. The black god Loki kills the light god Baldur, the son of Odin and Frigg, by spanning on the bow of Hödr, the blind brother of Balder, a mistletoe and letting him aim on Baldur. Mistletoes are Baldur's "Achilles heel". Frigg had taken an the oath from things and beings in the heavens and on the Earth to do no harm to her son Baldur, the radiant darling of the gods. Everyone believed him to be invulnerable now. But Frigg has forgotten the small inconspicuous mistletoe east from Wallhalls Gate.

Christianity

In Brittany, where mistletoe grows so profusely, the plant is called Herbe de la Croix, because according to an ancient tradition the cross was made from its wood. Here we can see how the killing of Balder is built into the Christian symbolism of the crucifixion.

But without a cross no resurrection and immortality.

Curative effects

Despite all suppression of the "magic plant" by Christianity, in the people the knowledge of the officinal properties of viscum album was preserved.

Traditionally, the mistletoe is used to cure epilepsy (morbus sacer: holy illness). The patient enters in a different form of consciousness during an epileptic attack. The visions, which appear to him there, are comparable to the revelations of the prophets. Probably epileptics unconsciously search for the bliss of these states of consciousness, but they occur in an uncontrolled manner and thus become the burden for the parties concerned.

The mistletoe will bring back the soul from the vision of paradise. The active ingredient of Nervine acts antispasmodic. Mistletoe tea and mistletoe drops slow down the heart rate and expand the arteries. A high dosage of the plant and its berries would however increase the cramps. Children were afflicted by varicose conditions, after they had eaten the berries uninhibited.

Mistletoe was considered making fertile. The harmonisation of contraction and relaxation is achieved.

Rudolf Steiner has rediscovered the mistletoe for cancer therapy. Wolfdieter Storl points out that according to the ancient doctrine of signature, it is quite conclusive, that this noxious plant has its counterpart in cancerous growths. According to Storl science discovered in mistletoe not only a tumor resistant protein, but at the same time its stimulating effect on the immune system.

A higher life expectancy of cancer patients treated with Mistletoe was statistically proven, although other sources state that these anti carcinogenic effect in many studies has been refuted.

Mellie Uylert explained the effect of mistletoe in cancer as follows: "The sick patient is someone who secretly rebels against the pattern of his destiny and his life sometimes. Certain body cells take over this rebellion, escape from the blueprint of the body and go their own way. The creative forces, which are hindered by fate to speak out, start to develop unrestrained in the body".

As modern flower essence, mistletoe drops are applied to go through radical changes. They promote the physical and mental transformation.

Murshid

In the Gathas, Murshid devotes a chapter on the legend of Baldur:

"The Scandinavian myth tells that Balder, the god of youth, beauty, kindness and gentleness, was pursued by enemies who wanted to kill him. For his protection a spell had been cast upon all the trees of the forest and every plant that has a root in the ground and grows upward to heaven, that no weapon wrought from any of them should have power to harm him. But in this charm, the mistletoe had been forgotten, which has no root in the ground, and from its wood an arrow was made, with which Balder was hit and wounded to death.

Its interpretation is an answer to the question which often arises in an intelligent mind. "Why were godlike people treated cruelly, continually, through all periods of the world's history, and how could any person in the world think of causing harm to those who attracted the sympathy of almost every soul they met on the earth?"

Their adherents spread their teachings and the beauty of their life and character among all, wise and foolish, kind and cruel. They all became more or less impressed by what they learned of the godly souls, even those whose soul had not yet risen to human evolution, who only live like trees and plants, living and yet dreaming, unaware of life, except their own activity.

But the one who could not be impressed by this spell, whom, even had the spell been cast upon him, it could not have reached, and had it reached only with great difficulty, is the godless, who is like the mistletoe, living without any root. The mourning for this is continued, in memory of the death of that god. In reality it is celebrating the birth of what was born from him, it was divine knowledge."

Murshid explains by means of the legend of Baldur a mysterious, fear making, grief causing, but natural process. In the Sufi tradition this process is connected with three wazaif or mantrams: Ya Basit, ya Qabid, ya Wasi.

Ya Basit

The aspect of God, which expands.

Expansion is often reason for great joy. The enlarging of influence, the extension of ownership, the extension of time that is available, the spreading of the message of the prophets, the expansion of consciousness.

More food, more music, more flowers, more success, more understanding, more beauty. The ecstasy of the expansion is contagious and lifts all beings. We forget ourselves and find God's presence. We begin to shine, we feel light.

An enormous attraction emanates from such radiant beings. The Sufi master Rumi describes what happened to him: "Everyone was drawn to me to become my friend, but no one knew what it was that drew him."

Everything and everyone receives ecstasy from such a person and falls in love with him.

Ya Qabid

The aspect of God, which pulls together.

Limitation often causes grief for the lost and fear of the future.

After the highest ecstasy follows the fall into our limited ego. After freedom follows being tied and a limitation of consciousness.

Al Qabid is sober and manages to resist to any magic. It is the ability not to partake or to take. It is an attitude that allows no matter what happens not to be involved. Al Qabid has no roots in the same soil and doesn't go by the same light. It is not true to the common cause and therefore it can betray the vision without having a bad conscience.

Physically, contraction and expansion continually alternate. Like many other natural rhythms, we find the alternation between Al Basit and Al Qabid in the rhythm of the heart and lungs. Most of us know the nostalgia for ecstasy and abandoning the blind captive inside our selves. On the other hand, there is also the fear of falling in love and a reluctance to lose ourselves.

The alternating effect of al Basit and al Qabid can be seen in the social reality of our society. Here as an example the story of a client from my consulting practice. A manager is called as CEO of a larger organization to overcome a deadlock. Great hope is put into him, although some people say that it is a "suicide mission". He wins the heart of his bosses, many employees, as well as those of members and supporters. An organization divided in itself is melded into a single unit. New energy is created. He stimulates new projects, a fresh appearance attracts more attention. Even an ancient ideal is filled with new life: a merger with a competing organization with identical visions. At the meeting between the executives and selected staff confidence is created that it could work out. More and more often people sing in the workforce. New songs are rehearsed in the lunch breaks.

Then a financial crisis comes in between. The Organization almost goes bankrupt. Big cuts are necessary, old patterns of behavior concerning money and budgeting must be called into question. Old braids going down. Some employees are fired willy-nilly. Inevitable conflicts occur in the team. The CEO gets increasingly difficulties with his "right hand". Not that this person positions himself directly as opponent. Rather, he eludes the development where ever possible. In the end the financial crisis is overcome by joined forces. All are relieved and proud. Great gratitude to the CEO.

Next, a new board of directors is elected. An important person who till that moment had accompanied the various processes in a skeptical way, becomes the new chairman.

Then the incredible happened: The "right hand" of the CEO forces the new board to a decision: either he would go or the CEO is dismissed. After necessary consultations the choice falls on the last alternative. The reason: after so much inspiring leadership an administrator for a calmer waters would be enough. Board of directors and staff say goodbye to the CEO with tears in their eyes. He leaves the organization and experiences at home, how it feels, when the magic of al Basit suddenly drops away and al Qabid comes to the fore. He falls back into his limited self and painfully he notes that the organisation continues with success on the course prepared by him, but without his person. A deep grievance of the ego, where indeed person and task were so closely linked. Thrown back on

his own, the fired CEO experienced anger, sadness and loneliness. In the team that lost to him, people don't sing no longer. Some employees leave the organization because they can not work together with the new leadership.

Ya Wasi

But, as Murshid says, in reality is the death of the "god" a celebration of the birth of something new inside him: "Divine knowledge."

A transcendent reality comes into being which no longer is affected by a change between al Basit and al Qabid. A verse in the Quran says that the mercy of Allah is so wide (wasi), that it includes everything. It is so wide that it includes the opposite.

Al Wasi is the name of this realization, which stands beyond the opposites of expansion and contraction. It is a limitless embrace of all states.

Medication

The essence of the mistletoe helps

to digest an end with horror

to preserve our independence in the middle of unlimited commitment

to put an end to a period with a single blow

to take our destiny in the hands

not to avoid limitation out of fear and dislike

to put the party to an end

to dare to undertake something unexpectedly radically new

to shatter the ideal

Mustard

Latin: Brassica nigra. Black mustard is a variety from the family of Brassicaceae.

Etymology

Brassica is Latin for cabbage. Nigra means black.

Botany

The black mustard is an annual herbaceous plant that reaches up to 2 metres in height.

It has four green sepals and four yellow petals. Flowering time: April to June.

The fruit is a pod containing seven to eleven spherical, dark brown, grey, or black seeds from about 1.2 to 2 mm diameter. The grains are odorless, but develop a piercingly sharp flavor when chewed.

The seeds of black mustard contain about

30% fatty oil with a high content of unsaturated fatty acids. Its use as a food is typical and widely used in Indian cuisine.

Dissemination

The black mustard is native to the Mediterranean, but since time immemorial cultivated. It needs plenty of sunlight and likes warm and moist soil. The biblical parable of the mustard seed probably refers to the black mustard.

History

Mustard was appreciated already before 3000 years in China as a condiment. It came through Asia minor to Greece, where it was known as a remedy in the 4th century BC. The first recorded recipe for making mustard was written in the 1st century AD by the roman Columella. In the 8th century Mustard was mentioned in a manuscript from Charlemagne for the first time in Central Europe and spreaded from Arabic plantations in Spain to the European tables as an important spice. Before the wide availability of pepper and later also Chili, mustard and horseradish were the only sharp spices available to European cooks - so they were widespread.

Naturopathy

The grounded seeds mixed in lukewarm water were considered an old home remedy for external application. It has anti-inflammatory, anti-spasmodic and analgesic effects, should however not remain long in contact with the skin, because there is a risk of skin irritation.

Edward Bach, the father of the flower essences, prescribes mustard (he refers to *Sinapis arvensis*, a wild relative of the black mustard) for those who occasionally suffer from depressed mood. It's like a dark cloud would overshadow them and take away the joy in life.

Murshid

"The Bible says that faith like a grain of mustard can remove mountains."

At this point, it is important to figure out what actually is the meaning of the word faith when used by Murshid. Faith is a frequently misused word. In the religions it was used to get people to accept the beliefs of others and refrain from independent convictions. With the Sufis, beliefs are not

a prerequisite for membership. There are no dogmas in the Sufi order. And yet highest value is placed on faith, in Arabic "Iman".

Murshid talks about his own life to explain the meaning of faith:

"I remember the blessing my spiritual teacher, my murshid, used to give me every time I parted from him. And that blessing was, 'May your Iman be strengthened'. At that time I had not thought about the word Iman; on the contrary I thought as a young man, is my faith so weak that my teacher requires it to be stronger? I would have preferred it if he had said, may you become illuminated, or may your powers be great, or may your influence spread, or may you rise higher and higher, or become perfect. But this simple thing, may your faith be strengthened, what did it mean? I did not criticize but I pondered and pondered upon the subject. And in the end I came to realize that no blessing is more valuable and important than this. For every attached to a conviction. Where there is no conviction there is nothing. The secret of healing, the mystery of evolving, the power of all attainments, and the way to spiritual realization, all come from the strengthening of that belief which is a conviction, so that nothing can ever change it."

Faith occupies so to speak the first most position, before all other goals in life. Faith is a spiritual 'substance', which enables to have goals, or even lust for life.

Murshid: *"Belief, therefore, is the food of the believer; it is the sustenance of his faith. It is on belief that he lives, not on food and water."*

So we cannot get believe from someone else. Faith is present in every human being at its core. It is the passion and the desire that inspire any action. It is as much as lust for life and trust. Everyone brings this simple faith from birth. Murshid: "When the conditions in life go against, and everything stands in opposition, it is most difficult for one to have a hopeful attitude in life. Outwardly, the conditions stand against belief, inwardly the reason supports the conditions, for reason is a slave to all that stands before it. Therefore, if under such circumstances an optimistic person no longer shows optimism, he is not to be blamed. No doubt the one who, in spite of all conditions, against and in spite of his reason, helpless to find a way, still strikes the path of hope, is much more advanced than the pessimistic soul; for he whether he knows or does not know, is holding the rope which is attached to Heaven and which is the only source of safety. This rope is the faith and trust in the greatness and power of God which is within.

The mustard seed is a symbol of dynamic, positive, vital life force.

What has this seed, so tiny, that allows him to this role? Already in medieval alchemy was the herb with its sulfur coloured flower highly estimated as a sulfur plant. "Sulfur" is the opposite of "Sal" for the alchemists. Sulphur is warm, Sal cold. The sulfuric is flammable. It has the tendency to be volatility and is opposed to gravity. The third principle of the life for the alchemists is "Mercury", which mediates between the two poles of hot and cold. It is considered in connection with water. In the Sufi terminology, these three principles are called "love, harmony and beauty".

All cabbage varieties have a special affinity for sulfur. You can smell it while cooking them. The fragrance or stench is caused by the sulfur in the essential oils. In mustard the accumulation of sulfur

compounds is to be found in the seed. Zerling draws attention to the fact, that the further north you go, the proportion of the cabbage-plants (Brassicaceae) is greater. On Svalbard they account for one-fifth of all species.

Why do cabbages have better chances, when the climate becomes colder? Because of their affinity with the sulfur. The growth process is dependent on the activity of protein. And this needs heat. Sulfur is the inherent warmth in the mustard seeds. It accelerates the growth processes.

As the sulfur in the mustard seed, so the faith in the people. There are situations where we are tested so hard, that depression assails us and no further life seems possible. All around us and in us is dark and cold. Murshid: *"when faith is attained to a certain degree it will grow as a plant. When belief is complete it turns into faith."*

So, the principle of mustard can heal our souls and not just that: *"Cure is brought about by faith in all cases, whether it be a sudden cure or whatever may be the nature and character of the case. Faith speeds the condition; so great as the faith is, so quick the time of healing. Without faith even medicine cannot help. No treatment can give good results where faith is lacking. Faith is the first remedy; everything else comes afterwards."*

Ya Iman

You encourage me and help me to live on my own.

Medication

Mustard essence helps

to rediscover our lust for life

To trigger healing

To chase away depressions

To find the power to achieve our goal in life

Neem

Latin: Azadirachta indica.

German: Niem, Paternoster.

English: Neem, Margosa, Indian-lilac.

French: Margosier.

Botany

The Neem is a fast-growing evergreen tree, which on average reaches heights of between 15 and 20 meters. It can be up to 200 years old. Under unfavourable conditions, the tree loses its leaves to protect themselves from drying out. The crown is widely branched and rounded to oval with dense leaf growth. At free-standing trees, the diameter of the Crown can quite match his height.

The pinnate leaves are a total 20-40 cm long and consist of 31 feather like leaves, each 3 to 8 cm long. Young leaves often have a reddish to purple coloration.

The neem tree is monoecious, so every tree develops both male and female flowers. 150 to 250 white and fragrant flowers are located on a panicle up to 25 cm long.

After four years, a neem tree bears first fruits. After ten years, he delivers up to 50 kg of fruits and thus its full yield. The hairless fruit is olive-shaped with a stone. The fruit skin is thin, the pulp yellowish-white and bittersweet in the taste.

Dissemination

The Neem originally came from India, Pakistan and Burma. The Neem is dependent on a tropical and subtropical climate. By humans the tree was exported to the whole Asian, the African, American and Australian continents, as well as on the islands of the Pacific.

Use in medicine

Even though the tree is examined for decades, many of its agents are yet to be fully explored. Neem contains over 100 different chemical ingredients which are also differently composed in the root, bark, leaves and fruits. Azadirachtin is a particularly important ingredient. This component is extracted from the Neem Oil, which is pressed from the seeds. Other important ingredients are Kaunas and Meliantriol, Nimbin and Nimbodin.

Indian doctors prescribe Neem products since 2000 years against anemia, high blood pressure, hepatitis, ulcers, leprosy, hives, thyroid diseases and digestive disorders. Neem is used as a cure for head lice and in the dental and oral hygiene, and should assist in diabetes mellitus and cancer and reduce cholesterol levels. Likewise, Neemprodukts in India are used for centuries as a spermicide, and used in abortion. Indian researchers have confirmed these effects.

The oil of Neemtrees is also used in the combating of dust mites.

As a flower essence Neem is used for the heart. It makes mind-oriented people more loving, intuitive, lenient and more tolerant. For people, who have a hard time to concentrate. Helps when an examination is imminent.

Use in agriculture

In agriculture and gardening the seeds and the oil are used as fertilizer, as well as to combat and for the prevention against insects, mites, nematodes and fungi. While one observes resistances in insects against chemical sprays, no resistance can be expected at Neem-solutions.

Murshid

"I remember my teacher at school telling us that the leaves of the Nim tree had great healing qualities. That did not interest me very much, but what did interest me, as he told us also, was that these leaves were so bitter than one could not drink a brew of them. And the first thing I did was to gather some of these leaves, and nobody understood why I did it; but I made a tea of them and drank it, and to my great satisfaction I did not even make a face! For four or five days I continued this and then I forgot all about it. It is fighting against all that one cannot do that gives one mastery. But generally one does not do that; one fights against things that prevent one from getting what one wants. Man should fight only with himself, fight against the tendency of rejecting; this would lead him to mastery. As a general principle in life there is no use in forcing anything, but if we want to train ourselves, that is another thing. It is a process, not a principle."

Ya Aziz

Your bitterness makes me sweet.

Medication

Neem essence supports in the process

to accept the unacceptable

to overcome the idea about what you like and what not

to gain championship

to break down the self-imposed limits of our egos

Oak

The oaks (*Quercus*) are a genus of plants in the family of the beech family (*Fagaceae*).

Etymology

The German name "Eiche" is related to the Latin *esca* suggesting that oak fruit formerly was important for the nutrition of pigs as well as humans. In the Celtic language, *Duir*, apart from being the oak, also simply means tree. The word appears again in "Door" (sancr. *dwr*), because the doors of the farms, the posts and the thresholds were built from the hard durable wood of oak. The old Celtic word for Druid is *Druwides*, which can be easily disassembled into two segments: *dru* and *wid*. The prefix comes from the Indo-European root *dru* with the meaning of "truth" as well as "strength" or "tree". In the *Gwinon*, a Celtic manuscript from the 12th century, it says: "Masculin guardians of

the gate is their name in all languages." The Persian word Dervish, another word for sufi, contains the same root. Dervishes are people who are at home on the threshold between the outside world and inner world.

Description

Oak species grow in North America, Mexico, Caribbean Islands, Central America, South America only in Colombia, in Eurasia and North Africa. Quercus is the most important deciduous tree genus in the northern hemisphere.

In Central Europe are the English oaks (*Quercus robur* L.) after the beech the most common deciduous tree species. They need for their growth more light than the European Beech and make open crowns, where up to 1000 species of insects find a habitat. Their leaves are serrated and rounded.

The oldest oak tree in Europe should be the one in Bad Blumau (Styria). It was mentioned already in the year 990 for the first time and is estimated to be about 1200 years. His circumference is 8.75 meters. According to other sources the oldest oak in Europe should be an oak in Bulgaria in the town of Granit with 1640 years. The oldest oak tree of in Germany is the Femeiche in Raesfeld-Erle, which is estimated at up to 1500 years

Originally from the Eastern North America the red oak is grown in Central Europe only since 100 years ago. You can find the red oak in Central Europe in parks and botanical gardens. Red Oaks are distinguished by pointed leaves.

The male flowers of oaks are in drooping catkins. The female flowers contain usually three carpels and stamp.

To distinguish the different types of oak is easiest through the comparison of their fruits, the Acorn. The Acorn is a type of nut. It matures in the first or second year after pollination. Each nut fruit is surrounded by a fruit Cup.

Religion and mythology

The oak is a sacred tree in the old religions, myths and legends. All Indo-European peoples connect the oak with the more masculine qualities such as strength, martial courage, righteousness and strength of will. Also it is seen as tree of the Great Goddess, particularly in its nourishing, protective, maternal aspect.

For the Vedic Indians, before they moved to India, the oak was the world tree, the world pillar supporting the sky that he doesn't fall down on the earth.

In the Jewish scriptures, 8th century BC: "You love your holy oak and lovingly surround them with hedges. From the idols worshipped there you expect new vitality. It will be a bitter disappointment for you! ", JES 1.29"

Oaks are extremely rare in the today's Greece. But in ancient times there was a different climate in the Eastern Mediterranean. The ancient Greece was still densely forested. The worship of the oak went so far that it was believed that the humans descended from the oak trees. The oak Oracle of Dodona was dedicated to Zeus. The prophetesses of Dodona were called Pleiades or "Pigeons". According to Plato these "Doves" received the messages of God in ecstasy. Herodotus found out origin and significance of the tree oracle during his visit in Dodona by a raptured Pléiade: "Two black doves once flew from the Egyptian Thebes, and one had flown to Libya, the other to Dodona; it settled on an oak and talked like a human: "In this place you should set up an Oracle of Zeus."

In China, the oak represents masculine strength as well as weakness, because she unlike the willow or bamboo in the storm remains rigid and breaks more than to bend under the pressure.

The tree was dedicated to Jupiter by the Romans. At the Roman writer Quintus Ennius (239 - 169 BC) there is the earliest literary evidence for the Latin name of the tree, 'quercus'. Ovid described the sacred Grove of Ceres, the goddess of grain, and her sacred tree: "There was a huge oak, its core wood was rich in annual rings, she alone was already a forest. Her middle was surrounded by priests binding, plaques and flower threads, which hailed the fulfilled vows. Often the Dryads were dancing under it festive dances, often they took each other at the hand and measured as the extent of the trunk, and the wood was fifteen cubits large. Yes, the remaining forest was so deep under this oak tree as the grass under the forest." (Metamorphosis)

For the Celts, the oak is dedicated to the ruler of the sky and weather God Taranis. Pliny the elder; the Roman historian reported: "The Druids hold nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree, on which it grows, if it is only an oak. They choose the oak groves to stay and do not sacrifice without the leaves of this tree, so that they could have received their name "Druid" from the Greek word (drys = Oak)." To break the power of the Gallic Druids, Julius Caesar ordered his legions to cut the holy trees in a forest near Marseille. The soldiers, intimidated by the majestic grandeur of the forests, refused. Then Caesar took the axe himself and did the first blow, to show them that they didn't have to fear divine vengeance.

The Saxons worshipped Irminsul. It is believed that this goddess was a hollow oak. Also is the oak in the Germanic Donar or Thor (etymologically related to Dru) dedicated to the god of the thunderstorm. The Thunder God was responsible for the weather, the fertility of arable, man and beast, for male sexuality and for justice. It was part of the power politics of the church to cut the holy oaks. St. Boniface cut down the oak of Thor at Geismar in the year 723, the to prove to the gentiles that their God is powerless and cannot even protect his tree. For a long time the Christian missionaries led a fierce battle against the heathen trees, "against the inner and outer jungle". In 755, angry Frisians knocked St Boniface, as he wanted to wipe out a tree sanctuary in Dokum.

In recent history, we find the oak leaves as a party badge of the NSDAP. Today the beret badge of the German armed forces is surrounded by oak leaves. The front of the Deutsche mark and the back of the German euro cent show oak leaves. The English declare the oak to the "most English tree of all trees". It is the same tree as the "german" oak.

Use

The wood is valuable hardwood and especially historically served the house and ship building. Oak has a high resistance to rotting. It is rarely attacked by worms.

Naturopathy

All parts of oak, especially unripe acorns are poisonous because of contained tanning agents and can lead to gastrointestinal symptoms .

In folk medicine, oak bark has been used to heal sores in the mouth and mucous membranes. Dried and ground it can be used both externally and as a tea.

Also the leaves are astringent, diuretic, antiseptic, and antipyretic. As a flower essence Oak belongs to the classical remedies of Dr Edward Bach. He prescribed the essence for beaten down and exhausted warriors, who nevertheless bravely carry on and never give up. Healing leads to enduring stability. One overcomes the adversities of life with courage and perseverance.

In anthroposophic medicine the oak is used to support the "I" and astral body to shape and penetrate the physical and to stop uncontrolled growth in the etheric body.

Murshid

"The oak tree will not produce dates"

The "No" or "not" plays a cardinal role in Sufism. The spiritual practice of Zikr is the daily bread for the students. In many different variations a Zikr is a reminder that that "there is no God but God": "La illaha ill Allah hu" in Arabic.

"There is no God", "La illaha" say the Sufis. It is extremely important, to start on the spiritual path as an atheist. It's extremely liberating to break with the old petrified religion. All we thought to be God is null and void. God is not what we think so far. Spirituality means leaving the concepts, throwing overboard all sacred cows. No, the oak tree bears no dates. It is important to admit that. No, the oak tree is not everything. The oak is not all. No.

"There is only God", "ill Allah hu" the Sufis say. This statement can only be made after in the negation we got rid of the existing God. Only then something can appear, unencumbered by the past, which can be called God. The Sufis say "except that there is no God there is only God". Except that the oak tree bears no dates, there's the oak tree, and how glorious he is! He represents a whole world, gives food to countless living beings, and makes life possible under his crown.

The oak was rightly the God of the Celts and the Germans. He represented everything, what is valuable and beautiful in life. He was sacred. To cut him was near to the destruction of the world.

But time for the negation was ripe. Definitely, cutting the oak trees in the name of Jesus Christ was for many a liberation. The old religion was replaced. Something new had to be. Whether this kind of violent liberation is actually productive, may be doubted. The Sufi master Inayat Khan time and again stressed that he had not come to found a new religion. At the same time, he has worked with all his

might for a revival of religiosity. The cutting of an oak tree, to put a sign, in a certain way is similar to the blowing up of the Buddha statues by the Taliban. It is an act of violence. It is power politics, to force the cutting of a forest with the help of an army. Boniface was canonized for his actions. He has laid the foundations for Christianity in Northern Europe. We Dutch children were taught in school that our ancestors have loaded a disgrace on ourselves to have killed the Saints at Dockum in Friesland. In Dockum stand a monument for Saint Boniface. But the tide of history turns again. At that time, churches were built as a replacement for trees. Instead of the living forest, Western Christianity installed as ideal the image of the "Holy City", a stone Citadel surrounded by solid walls. Today, the tree is newly discovered. The city has reached its limits. Today, some Dutch wonders whether the disgruntled Friesians, who slew Boniface, don't deserve a monument in Dockum as well. I doubt it. The wheel of violence must not necessarily be continued. The Nazis had tried to rehabilitate the oak by a counterforce that is unparalleled in cruelty.

The sanctity of nature needs supporters and fighters, but no Islamists or "Saints" that today out of revenge destroy skyscrapers as a symbol of urban western culture.

The oak stands for justice. Under her crown justice was spoken: what is right, what is wrong. It stands for strength and provides protection against the forces of chaos. What is the strength of oak? His ability to handle the negation. How does he do that? By his willingness to break. In the Alps, where I live, the farmers are reluctant in planting oaks in their forests because under the enormous snow mass these trees can not bend but break. In the Italian Marche region, where many oak trees grow, I've seen how after an ice storm the branches of the oak trees became so heavy that some cracked and fell off. It doesn't matter for the oak. That is his style to handle the adversities of life. They show us in their own way what it means, "to die before death and resurrect right away", as the Sufis say. When we study the botany of an oak, what strikes us at first in her Phenomenology, is how he spreads out into space. With tremendous force, he occupies the space which is available. The way to spread is angular and square. If we look carefully, we discover from where this particular way comes from. Again and again the growth momentum is stopped by an invisible hand and the tree changes the direction of its development in response. He tears around the rudder. No bends, but corners. The oak has a distinctive way to change direction. He switches between vertical and horizontal in a sometimes bizarre manner and can reach this way an incredibly old age.

This switching between vertical and horizontal is impressively described by Murshid:

"The vertical line is the sign of God, and the horizontal line is the world. The vertical line represents heaven, the horizontal line earth. The horizontal line represents this world, the vertical line that world, the next world. The vertical line conveys the meaning Yes, the horizontal line the meaning No. The vertical line denotes life, the horizontal line death. The vertical line represents strength, the horizontal line powerlessness. The vertical line spirit, the horizontal line matter. The vertical line the masculine, the horizontal line the feminine. The vertical line the sun, the horizontal line the moon. The vertical line the day, the horizontal line the night. The vertical line the positive, the horizontal line the negative. The vertical line power, the horizontal line beauty. The vertical line God, the horizontal line man.

Lippert drew my attention to the fact, that the oak has a special relationship with lime in nature. He is able to absorb a significant amount of lime and to excrete it in bark and wood. The bark of a 15

years old oak contains 78.73% lime, the bark of a 50 years old oak even 93.96% lime in the ashes. Although the oak grows frequently on soils with very few lime. There he has a detoxifying effect on soil life and creates brown, fertile soil free from acidity.

In the world of minerals, the vertical, luminous, positive is represented by silicium. The horizontal, dark, negative by lime. You can read more about these two forms of mineral in my book "The soul of the stones". The oak has a pronounced talent to move between these two poles. He has no fear of contact with the negative at all. Nobody can take away from him the courage to continue to grow. Another interesting phenomenon in the biology of the oak is his affinity to the astringent. His leaves, fruit and bark are full of tannins. The chemico biological effect is conservative. It restrains unchecked proliferation of bacteria and fungi. Life shrinks under the influence of tannins.

For Pelikan the oak in its gnarled life form is "Herald of the power struggle of the relentlessly and repeatedly renewing life that again and again is mutilated and therefore cannot simply develop straight. How would this oak life proliferate widely if not this dampening down opposition force would be incorporated into him. This hands down the its growth of strong mineralization, it can be combined with the earthy, heavy; it creates hard, heavy wood, thick bark. It takes sixty, eighty years, until the tree will open its first flowers to the air realm."

Ya Jabbar

Whenever I'm going broke, you come with your strength and heal my bones.

Medication

The oak essence helps

to deal with the "no" of the person

to say No in time

to speak justice

to cut off old braids

to tear the rudder around

to develop stability and strength

to offer a microcosm for countless creatures.

not to get involved with excessive beauty ideals.

to be broken and continue to live

Olive

The olive tree (*Olea europaea*), is a medium-sized, in its old days often gnarled tree in the genus of oil trees (*Olea*). It is since the 4. Millennium BC cultivated as a crop.

Etymology and occurrence

French: huile. Italian: olio. Greek: Elaiva. Armenian: Ewl. Egyptian: Tet-t. Ursemitisch: Seitu. Arabic: zeitun. Spanish: aceite.

The culture of the olive tree was known long before its first mention in Homer in Greece and the Aegean Islands, also in the Near East, Asia minor and North Africa.

In research the theory was long maintained that the olive had been brought by humans in the Mediterranean region. Fossil finds of leaf marks on the Greek island of Santorini. from *Olea europaea* refute this thesis. The leaves were included by the ash deposits of the volcano Thera during an outbreak 54000 years ago.

There are in the Mediterranean alone over 1,000 varieties of olive trees. Depending on the climate and soil the olive tree has evolved over hundreds of years differently; some olive tree varieties are limited to single villages.

Olive tree plantations occupy 8.6 million acres of space on the world where 17.3 million tons of olives are harvested annually. Spain is the biggest olive producer. The four most important countries (Spain, Italy, Greece and Syria) create approximately 80% of the world production of olive.

As demand for olive oil has increased steadily in northern countries, the cultivation of olive trees was significantly increased. In many regions of the main producers, the olive tree is the base of the rural economy.

Botany

The olive tree is indescribable for me. The first time I came in Greece to an olive grove, my breath stopped. Ancient fabrics, each has an individuality, much intermediate space so that each one can take its place. All together in an at the same time serene and cheerful atmosphere. Supported by the dignity of the ancient world. Cheerful because of the special light that prevails in such a planting. How many generations of farmers will have plowed each year the earth so that the few water only is available to the olives? Human existence appears as a marginal phenomenon at these venerable figures. They say the olive serves the people with their oil and their wood. The reverse seems exactly right: Man serves the olive tree from father to son, from mother to daughter. The oldest olive tree in Europe should be about 2000 years old and stands in the city of Bar in Montenegro.

Becoming of age the stem is separated into pieces. It looks more like a rock than like a plant. But still young and fresh green branches drive out of it every spring.

The short-stalked, elliptical leaves are dark dark green and shiny. The shiny silver-colored underside of the leaves has little hairs, which reduce the water evaporation of the tree. The olive tree loses all loses all its leaves at any time of the year, but more years-old leaves are thrown off regardless of the season. The buds on shoots of the previous spring open in May to small, white yellowish, slightly fragrant flowers. End of July the elliptical stone fruits have reached a size of two to three centimetres. The maturation of the fruit requires the long summer drought. The tree offers its complete life forces to the formation and maturation of the fruit, because he continues to grow only slowly during this time, and during the harvest season, from late autumn until late winter stops its sprouting and growth.

The olive tree does not exhaust itself in growth. He gives his full concentration on the development of the fruit. That's why he can become so ancient. There are probably still some of the trees, which were testimonies of the passion in the garden of Gethsemane.

In winter, the trees are being cut so that they remain small to be better harvested. The olive tree has powerful and far-reaching roots, up to six meters deep down. Each main root can be associated with a particular main branch; if this branch is removed, the entire root section degenerates in the ground.

Cultural history

The history of the olive tree dates back to ancient times. First archaeological finds of olive cores are over 9000 years old, these are from olives collected by people from wild olive trees. When the wild form was cultivated into the fertile garden olive, is unknown. However, archaeological findings indicate that this happened around 4000 BC in Crete and Syria.

Egypt

In Egypt olives were planted at the Mediterranean coast, in the oases Bahrija, Dachla, Karga and Siwa, as well as in the Sinai. The first mention dates from the 18th dynasty. Leaves of the olive tree have been found in the tomb of the Pharaoh Tutankhamun.

The Old Testament

According to the Bible Noah sent out a dove after the flood. She returned with an olive branch in its beak: the Earth was greening again, life was back. So got Noah, the progenitor of the Hamites, Semites and Indo-Europeans before landing in Armenia knowledge of the existence of the wild olive-tree, which in its eastward spreading reached up to the Crimea and in the Caucasus.

According to the Old Testament, the oiltree was promised to the Jews in the promised land. The immigrant children of Israel already found there the olive tree. The Kings David and Solomon encouraged its cultivation. The oil was used to dining, with offerings, as fuel oil and for the ointments of the hair and of the whole human body.

The tree was praised in his humble servitude:

"Once the trees decided to anoint a King for themselves, and said to the olive tree:" 'Be our King.'
The olive tree said to them: ' I shall give up my fat with which one pays tribute to gods and men and go to surge above the other trees? ' (Book of judges, 9, 8-9)

The Greeks

The oil extracted from the fruit was an almost indispensable natural product in the Greek world as cooking oil as well as anointing oil, and as lamp oil. People ascribed to the anointing oil large life-sustaining forces. Especially in winter, people oiled their bodies up every day to regulate the heat balance. Homer's time used the wood of the wild olive-tree in Greece because of his great strength for the manufacture of axe handles.

The marriage bed of Odysseus and Penelope was built on and around an olive tree. The marriage between the two was considered indestructible.

The Greeks thanked Athena for the gift of the first oiltree and it was once considered an unthinkable sin to cut down olive trees. Who inflicted damage to olive trees, was severely punished, not only by human judges, but also by the gods.

It is also interesting that the Caduceus, the staff of the healers and doctors, was derived from the garb of Bacchus, which consisted of woven olive branches. Through contact with this rod, Bacchus gave the earthly eloquence.

The Romans

In the 6th century BC, the cultivated olive tree came to Italy. As already in Greece, a wreath of woven olive branches was the highest award for the citizens who deserved it by serving the state. The olive branch was the symbol of peace, and defeated, asking for peace, wore olive branches in the hands.

Christianity

Princes, kings and priests were anointed at the inauguration with olive oil, spiked with balsamic. It was considered a symbol of divine dignity and authority. The "last rites", the death sacrament of the Catholic Church, can be seen in this context.

Jesus communicated with his Father in the olive grove of Gethsemane shortly before his crucifixion. He prayed that the Cup may pass by at him. His forces were diminishing. Could he reach the crucifixion at all yet? Therefore, the olive tree had to stand at his side as a support.

Islam

Olive oil, which brought light into the dark seasons, was often perceived as a spiritual light, a symbol of strength and clarity of God.

In the Quran we read:

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the Earth. Its light is equal to a niche, in which a lamp is located: The lamp... lighted by a blessed olive tree, which is neither East nor West, whose oil would almost glow even if the fire not touched it." (Surah 24:35 "The light")

A wonderful Surah, because it tells me that in reality Islam is not necessarily an aggressive religion, neither from East nor from the West, but bright out of itself.

Curative effect

A calming and sleep-enhancing effect is attributed to the leaves. They should strengthen the immune system and lower cholesterol levels. The oil is healthy due to the high proportion of monounsaturated fatty acids and has a positive effect on the cardiovascular system and fat metabolism. It reduces the risk of diabetes mellitus or cancer. Extra virgin olive oil has anti-inflammatory properties.

Dr. Edward Bach, the spiritual father of the flower essences, found the olive blossom as a means for a State, what we would call today "Burn-out". We have pushed it so far, or we have suffered so much, that nothing is left over. Daily life becomes a burden without any joy. We are exhausted and tired. Arrived at the point, olive helps to regenerate us. The ability to focus on our inner guidance, rather than on everything that pops up around us, is promoted.

Gurudas describes how we can discover in this tree the ability to concentrate our energy and to use it purposeful. Olive does that in a correct, warm loving manner, without harming others. There is a feeling of profound subconscious peace.

Murshid

From his wealth of experience with religious traditions, Murshid Inayat Khan brings us a whole number of examples for the anointment.

He describes the oil sacrifice to Hanuman, the monkey God from the Hindu tradition: *"The idol of Hanuman is suggestive of primitive nature in man, and in the pouring of oil in the service of Hanuman there is a lesson for the worshipper to learn. However great your evolution may be, regard and consideration for the primitive nature is necessary, for all adjusts itself in the wider scheme of nature. ...Life becomes difficult without regard and consideration for the primitive nature. By resentment one partakes of it, by rebelling against it one gives fuel to that fire. One should soften it in oneself and in another by wisdom, patience, and gentleness.*

You can watch the same tradition at Indian weddings, where head, shoulders, arms and hands, knees and feet of the bride and groom are oiled. Murshid said that this is *"a psychical suggestion to the bride and bridegroom that the hands and feet of each shall be ready to serve the other, and that they shall not show themselves stiff, one to the other, that if there were any hardness in their nature it should be softened, since harmony is the blessing of a home. It teaches that forgiveness is required for becoming friends and keeping friendship; as one's mate is not so flexible and docile as one's own imagination conceives."*

From his beloved Russia, where he had lived for some years Murshid told the example of the oiling of the Tsar on the day of his coronation: *"The anointing of the forehead of the king signifies that he should have an easy expression, not frowning brows and a puckered face, but a smiling forehead, as the Persian phrase is. Poor and rich, all must come to the king in their troubles and difficulties, and his glance must comfort them and bring them ease."* *"The great lesson one can learn from this custom is that the great education in life is to soften one's feelings, one's thoughts, words and actions, that they may give ease to ourselves and that we may create an atmosphere of ease that may benefit all who come in contact with us."*

To better understand what actually means an anointing, it is revealing to trace in the vegetable Kingdom the role of the oil.

At the beginning of plant life stands the water. To germinate, or to make visible from the invisible, the plant combines water and earth. Only towards the end of its life the plant begins to deal with oil. In all seeds one can find oil. Most of the time only in the germ (E.g. wheat germ). Some plants have oil in the whole seeds. The almond is an example. And then there are plants that are so very oil-oriented, that they also produce oily fruit pulp. So the olive.

So, as water makes possible the incarnation, oil makes possible the return to the soul world. The fire element becomes prevalent. The plant connects to the heat. It needs the heat for the formation of the fruit and it embodies the warmth in the oil. The olive is a pronounced heat plant. In the second half of the year it no longer cares about growth of branches and leaves, but concentrates fully on its fruits and seeds. The next life is prepared and wrapped in the fruit. In the seed is hidden the essence or quintessence.

Murshid calls us humans often the seed of God: *"The whole of manifestation is just like a tree sprung from the divine root. Nature is like its stem and all the aspects of nature are like the branches, the leaves, the fruit, and the flower; and from this tree again the same seed is produced, the human soul, which was the first cause of the tree. This seed is the spirit of man, and as God comprehends the whole universe within Himself, being one, so man contains within himself the whole universe as His miniature."*

So we can understand better, what Murshid means when he says in the Vadan: *"My heart, hold closely the oil which keeps the light burning."*

The oil in us is a kind of substance, which is produced in a period of our lives, where our soul awakens. The only thing that is still of interest, is to receive the inner light. This has to do with age but mainly with the maturity of a person. Murshid became 45 years old. I am 65 and just starting better to understand what Hazrat Inayat Khan meant with oil.

This inner oil must be treasured. To explain this concept Murshid told the parable of the 10 virgins, which Jesus Christ left us: *"The purpose of the life of an individual is to perfect the light in him, which is his very being. Whatever may be the qualification of a person, whatever be his resources, position and rank, if the light within him is not brilliant, he cannot fulfil the purpose of his life. The foolish ones did not keep oil in their lamps, the wise virgins kept it. The wise ones, therefore, answered the*

purpose on the day which was promised and the foolish ones repented. The wise soul collected all material in order to make his light more brilliant for that day which was the day of the promise. The foolish soul wasted it, and found it absent at the time it was needed."

Ya Sabur

"*The oil on the way of love is patience.*" (Hazrat Inayat Khan)

Medication

Consideration of the primitive human nature

Wisdom, patience and kindness

Forgiveness for the shortcomings of the partner

A smiling forehead

To oppose the concerns and difficulties with consolation and reassurance

To give relaxation

to protect the oil for the inner light

To receive enlightenment

Onion

Etymology

Botanical name: *Allium cepa*

French: onion; Dutch: ui. Etymologically probably from the Latin unus, one, or unio (Perle).

Italian: Cipolla; German: Zwiebel. Etymologically from the Latin word "cepula".

Botany

The typical onion is only found among the monocots. The bulbous plants are numerous in the family of Liliaceen and Amaryllideen. Lily, Tulip and hyacinth, grape hyacinth, Szilla, milk - and gold star, etc, finally all Leek species, among which also the onion, are familiar bulb-bearing Liliaceae.

Stem and leaves

The Onion is a perennial herbaceous plant, which however usually will be held in culture only one or two years. Its stem is squished in the first year to a flat, disc-shaped structure. From this fabric arises a rosette of 10 to 15 hollow, Crescent-shaped leaves. At the upper end, they are green and assimilate the light. At the base, they encircle each other, thicken and form a storage organ. Later the aboveground plant dies, the bulbous body is left over. The whole could be considered as steim, which can be on its own and is completely closed toward the environment.

In its appearance the onion could be compared with a flower bud. The rosette, which would appear at a horizontal cut, is typical for the flowering area.

Even though the bulb body is mostly housed under the ground, it is not at all root related. It remains a watery body without showing the hardened tendencies typical for roots.

Withdrawn within this structure vegetative life rescues itself across the disgrace of climatic conditions. Then it germinates and drives lush leaves in a relatively short time, because these are much less than other plants subject to the life rhythms of the whole earth.

Gerbert Grohmann describes the differences between monocots with their strip leaves and dicotyledons with their network leaves convincingly in his work "Die Pflanze". In the monocotyledons the simplicity of the leaves corresponds to that of the flowering area, whereas at the dicotyledons not at all, because here much more complicated conditions prevail in the leaf area. At the dicotyledons we meet in leaf and flower with two fundamentally different independent and autonomous systems.

In the strip leaves several in principle equivalent nerves run parallel or arching, side by side, without branching out. The networkleaves have usually a graduated branched system of major and minor nerves with at least one distinct midrib.

They form a branching system where primary and secondary strands are organised into a whole with its own rules, like in the animal world.

The strip leaves form solely a juxtaposition of individual stems. They are in their organisation more similar to the inorganic world of kristalls.

Vegetative propagation

Because each single onion skin is a leaf, it wears also a bud. Through these it can renew itself vegetatively. Around the parent bulb appear the child bulbs.

Flowers

In the second year of its life the onion can build a 20-120 cm long hollow shaft. At its peak appears a spherical Umbel of 20 to 100 individual flowers. The flower petals are white or purple with green middle nerves.

As a Monokotyledone flower they are based on the principle of the six-star. The six-star or hexagram consists of two equilateral triangles that penetrate each other. Following the line of one, you can't come over to the other. At the five-star or pentagram, the form of Dikotyledone flowers, however, you can start where ever you want, and you will need to pass the whole line to return to the starting point. So, the five-star proves already purely geometrically as a coherent whole, which can not be said of the six-star. For this reason, already in the old times one saw the pentagram as a symbol of the microcosm, the hexagram as a symbol of the macrocosm. In the formation of the microcosmic world forces are put together in a way that they produce a small, closed (individualized) world of its own. The most perfect microcosmic being is man. In the inorganic formations, minerals in the broadest sense of the word only individual forces reveal themselves. Their connection is only to be found in the macrocosmos. The onions are in their design macrocosmic formations.

Ingredients

Characteristic is the sulfur-containing amino acid Isoalliin, which in cutting the onion cause crying and stinks.

The garden onion is hard to digest for raw consumption. The taste is extremely bitter. Cooked it tastes rather sweet.

Most bulb plants are poisonous for humans. Onions are almost the only exception.

Sulphur is a substance that occurs in nature, where reproductive processes like metabolism, protein formation, acceleration of life processes prevail. So in the vegetable kingdom mainly in the area of flowering.

In medieval Alchemy, the sulphur process is one of the three basic principles. In the book 'The soul of the stones' I gave more details on it, how the Sufis understand the processes in nature as a combination of three "divine powers": Love, Harmony and Beauty. In Alchemy, these principles are called Sulfur, Mercury and Sal.

Sal was the name of the form of existence, which is stripped from the so-called imponderables (light and heat). The opposite condition is the sulphuric. Its essence is, that the imponderables are still included. It has the tendency to volatilization and negation of form. Light is immaterial, it has neither shape nor weight. The heat dissolves solid forms and drives them apart.

Mercury works mainly through the water. It combines and balances out, it lives in the rhythm between top and bottom, shape and disintegration, it is the carrier of all transformation processes both of the forms and of the substances. No chemical conversions run without leaving traces of moisture.

In the plant world, the mercury principle is dominant on the level of the leaves. In the root zone, we recognize all tendencies which we flagged up as salt principle. Hardening is strongest there. The task of the roots is to connect the plant with the salty mineral Earth around. Opposed to this the principle of the sulfur is typical in the flower field. Here there is no compression, but loosening up, spraying around. The further we get upwards at the plant, the more she refines, yes she prepares to dissolve...

Also fragrance is nothing else than a solution process, because the substantiality of the perfume is so refined that it is almost to the limit of the immaterial.

Origin and spread

The onion does exist only as cultivated plant. There are no known wild populations, nor could be identified another wild *Allium* type as a direct ancestor so far. The nearest wild relatives are native to Iran and Turkmenistan.

History

The Onion is one of the oldest cultivated plants of humanity at all and cultivated for more than 5000 years as a medicinal, spice and vegetable plant. Among the ancient Egyptians, onions were offered to the gods as sacrifice, were a kind of payment for workers employed in the construction of the pyramids and were given to the dead as a way ration for the journey into the hereafter. Of this the onion remains found in the tomb of Tutankhamun bear witness. An over 4000-year-old Sumerian Cuneiform script contains information on cucumber and onion fields and in the code of Hammurabi bread and onion rations were established for the poor.

In the third millennium before Christ the plant had conquered already the Mediterranean area. For less well-of Romans onions were in particular the basic foodstuff. Roman legionaries spread the "cepula" in Central Europe. Here, they have become one of the most widespread vegetables. From about the 15th century people in Holland began to selectively breed various varieties.

Application as a remedy

In the middle ages, the onion was propagated as a protection against the plague.

An old folk remedy in case of flue is to lay half an onion next to the bed. The defence system is aroused this way. The respiratory system is freed of mucus.

The onion is traditionally used as a carminative; it strengthens the heart and rebuild weakened sexual power after an illness.

The flower essence "Onion" is described by Cochrane as a remedy for women who suffer from violence in the family or childhood sexual abuse. The remedy promotes introspection and awareness of repressed emotions in psychotherapy. Emotionally it liberates and helps "to let go". For narrow-minded people with one-sided views, who criticize others because of their opinions and habits. Promotes tolerance, compassion and the ability to listen. Helps in case of viral infections and fever.

Gurudas describes the onion remedy as an aid in removing barriers, which our mind builds around us to protect us. Another function is to facilitate emotional states by crying. Generally, the ability to love is increased.

Murshid

There are various places in the collected works, wherein Murshid arrives on the topic of our likes and dislikes. Usually, we consider the peculiarities of our character as correct. We have a particular taste: Please with cream and sugar; please without garlic. We have a certain way of dressing: Please no tie and no green things. But in any case cotton; wool I can't stand. We have a certain taste in reading: Science fiction in no way; thrillers are OK as long as they do not come from England; non-fiction books are boring, I read only novels. We know what we can and can't do. We have an opinion about policy: 'Communists eat children' I heard recently in Italy. We have firm judgments about ethnic groups, immigrants, man - / wife roles, employers and worker roles, sexuality, religion etcetera. In addition, we have pattern from early childhood. In the first three years of our lives, we set our standard of living. And then there's still all that we may bring from previous lives on Earth.

All these attitudes and opinions form our character and our body. They make us viable and give us orientation. They allow us to select in normal daily life and to decide about good and bad. Till this character is shaped, it takes quite a while. At the end we are "grown ups". The forming process of the individual is then more or less complete, and we are proud to be, as we are, or not, because we have short legs and no hair on the chest. We think to know who we are. Our 'ego' is finished.

And then it may happen that someone suddenly experiences these outlines of his person as small and uncomfortable Or someone finds that the existing strategies in tackling life no longer count but even make sick. It may happen that all medicine, with which you are familiar, no longer works. The defined contours of our egos become unbearable. We feel tired, unhappy, sick. We find out that we do not really live! Then, the time is ripe for a reversal. We had tried so far always to continue our success strategies and to refine them, so nothing remains now to us as moving backward. Our laboriously-constructed ego is not enough for us to be happy. We realize that we may have built a life, but that something essential is missing. This missing something called Hazrat Inayat Khan "Spirituality"; what is already there, he sometimes calls "Materialism". Lets look at a sequence, wherein he discusses this topic with people from the healing professions: "A person who is material, who is struggling for himself from morning to evening, who is looking for his own benefit, who is in trouble and bitter, who is in the midst of fighting and is fighting himself- he cannot heal. The healer must be free, free to sympathize, free to love his fellowman even more than himself."

The problem is that we do not know or remember how much we fight this way. Because our character is just so. We are used to it. Murshid urges us to be free. With freedom he means being free from patterns. As long as we are guided by our character, we allow some feelings and others not, we allow some thoughts and others not, we make some movements and others not. We had a certain freedom of this established character in our childhood and to be free we should go back there: *"in the spiritual path a person goes backwards, he experiences youth again, for spirituality gives health to the mind and to the body, it being the real life. He experiences vigor, strength, aspiration, enthusiasm, energy, and a living spirit that makes him feel youthful, whatever be his age. Then he becomes as a little child, eager to play, ready to laugh, happy among children; he shows in his personality childlike traits, especially that look one sees in children, where there is no worry, anxiety, or bitter feeling against anyone, where there is a desire to be friendly with all, where there is no pride or conceit, but readiness to associate with anybody, whatever be his class or caste, nation or race. So the spiritual person becomes like a child. The tendency to tears, the readiness for laughter, all these are found in the spiritual person."*

This man on the spiritual path allows himself again to make experiences, which he does not know. He has the chance to respond differently to experiences than he was accustomed. He can bring forces and talents to the fore, which his character so far had given no chance, but which are part of his nature. Basically, the person who is on the spiritual path, needs a re-parenting, as it is called in the transactional analysis.

Murshid: "From morning till evening in the life of a child there are a thousand things happening; so many times it falls, and so many times it hurts itself, and so many times it has to swallow a bitter pill; and every time that it is not inclined to go through something that is good for it to go through, one should give it courage and strength and a word of encouragement or of advice, appreciating its endurance. In this way it will develop the enduring faculty."

If you were lucky as a child, parents were there that helped you to overcome the difficulties on your own. If you're even more lucky, you will find a 'Guide' or spiritual facilitator later in life, who can inspire one to act outside of the capabilities taught-in. Or you are lucky enough to find a doctor who prescribes just the right bitter pill.

Murshid takes the onion as a symbol for everything that is bitter in the following section: *"A person says: "Bitter onion, it is too bitter, I cannot stand it." He is in a fever; the doctor says he must have it. He dreads having it; at the same time he cannot help it. Therefore the way of Shiva was always to work against one's weaknesses. He counted them as weaknesses, not as nature. "Nature, all is my nature. But what I cannot have, that I make foreign to my nature; if I have separated it, there comes a time perhaps which I become so weak that I cannot help having it." Shiva is pictured with a cobra round his neck; out of death he has made a necklace; it is no more a death to him. One can go to extremes. But still it is a law that must be studied and known. The only mystery it teaches is not to consider anything in nature as foreign to one's nature. If it was not in us one would not know it. By this one overcomes all the destruction which is the source of fear and pain and disappointment."*

Why would the doctor prescribe an onion? In order the bitter in us is met by bitterness. We could compare it to a vaccination. The toxin is present in us. It is part of us. It waits until we meet it. Maybe we're not even aware of it, because we avoid to look at it since childhood. We are afraid of this aspect of our nature. Not necessarily from our own experience, but more probably as a heritage. An approach to avoid the bitter is shown to us in the original family.

Murshid: "Fear comes also by being too cautious for one's health, morals and reputation; also by being too considerate of the feelings of those one loves, and too regardful of those under whose influence one is; also by taking too much to heart what others say. Fear very often remains in the heart of man in the guise of virtues, and very often a timid one is taken for a righteous one. But the timorous well-doer is worse than a fearless sinner."

An example from my own life is perhaps useful at this point. As a young man, I became a student of the a great Sufi master. Nothing was more important to me than to search his proximity and to serve him. I worked for him and made so to say career in his organization. My life made sense. My efforts were appreciated. I gave myself completely and did not look at all on my own finances, but I considered that to be exactly the right thing on the spiritual path.

And then a terrible thing happened. The master replaced me without consultation or explanation from now on after with another person. I was been ignored in the worst way and completely perplexed. I lacked any power to ask him about the reasons for my dismissal. I thought that something like that could not be. Didn't I serve him with full commitment? Never was mentioned, that something in my work had been wrong. Nothing else was left to me than to leave.

You, dear reader, will perhaps say I there probably got into the wrong hands and that I was now free after all and no longer abused. So responded some of my best friends. But I slowly discovered that my love for the Master had not really been affected by the process. In my heart he was as close as ever. In the outer life, there was no connection. What I describe in a few words here, was in fact a process of many years. In my professional life, I experienced similar incidents such as the above mentioned "dismissal", in both directions: as victim and as perpetrator. I noted that the bitterness that arose in me at such incidents brought me away from life and made me unhappy. I could give though every time a new twist to my life. And I understood that the master had inoculated me. That the pain was inflicted on me by a so dearly beloved person, in hindsight was a blessing, because so there was no way to avoid actually to drink out the cup of bitter poison. I couldn't help but otherwise I would have lost my love. The master had freed me from the fear to lose my love. Nothing in the world can take from me my love.

Murshid sends us this way: *"Resignation is a quality of saintly souls. It is bitter in taste, but sweet in result. Whatever be the power and position of a person, he always has to meet with a more powerful will, in whatever form it may manifest itself, which in truth is divine will. By standing against the divine will one may break oneself, but by being resigned to the divine will one makes a way. For resignation is the manner of water: if anything is standing in its way it takes another course and runs along. It yet makes its way so as to meet the ocean in the end. Such is the way of the saintly souls who tread the path of resignation and yet keep self-will alive. That will has the power to make its way. A person who is resigned by nature becomes in the end a consolation to the self and a happiness for others. Resignation is not necessarily weakness, or laziness, or cowardice, or lack of enthusiasm. Resignation is only the expression of mastery over oneself."*

We had seen that the spiritual path runs backwards. Elsewhere Murshid Inayat describes Khan this way back as a walk through the world of animals, plants and minerals. Every natural realm corresponds to a very different kind of consciousness. At the plants, we can go through the school of "resignation". In the world of plant beings, the onion is a phenomenon in terms of dealing with bitterness. We have already seen that a large amount of sulphur is to be found in the onion. This substance has its actual activity field in the flowering. There, he ensures the acceleration in reproduction. In the flower, the sulphur principle leads to smell and attraction. It establishes the connection with the higher world of animals. The onion plant shows us that we do not have to be afraid to allow this connection to higher worlds until into our bottom. By the enormous water content in the bulb, quite untypical for a plant part that is in the Earth it is able to incorporate sulphur all the way down. The water gives it the ability to obey to the will of sulfur. As a Monokotyledone it is better suited to foreign influences because it is less pronounced in its individuality than the Dikotyledone. It is still so to say younger and therefore more able, not to stick to the own ego, when it comes to admitting something unknown.

Ya Warith

O you, beloved master, you have freed me from myself. You have directed my fire on One. Only the light of what I really am remained. I could leave smoke and odour of sulfur and hell behind me. You have not allowed me to stay where I was. You beat me my ambitions out of my hands. You've turned yourself against me and now I am free.

Medication

The essence of the onion helps

to break up the boundaries of the small ego

to resolve petrifications in the character

to open up for new

to overcome fear of the unknown

to make unprejudiced like a child

To increase the ability to incorporate powerful impulses or even overpowering shots

Orchid

Botany

The family of the Orchids is one of the youngest in the plant world, but still infinitely much older than people. Botanist described them as the "most intelligent plants". This intelligence they owe to their great ability to adapt to the different living conditions.

In their variety of shapes with more than 20,000 species the largest family of the flowering plants, on all continents, in all climate zones to be found, the single Orchid is often a rarity and is thereby one of the precious gifts of nature. Orchids are flowering artist. To vary their possibilities appears inexhaustible.

Colors: Intense red, bright scarlet, vermilion, getting down to the black-red; Yellow, orange. But also noble white, pink, light blue, flavored and purple, even greenish tones can be found. Fragrances: All the nuances of the odor spectrum, good and bad scents. Sweet, even stunning; Jasmin - rose -, bluebell -, tuberose -, orange -, vanille -, elderberry-like they smell, but also like a buck or even putrefying.

Forms: Lip -, shoe -, cone -, cup - or trumpet-shaped hollow fabrics.

It is striking that the number of shapes of the flowers is extended as a result of the reduction to only one stamen. The male aspect in the flower is reduced, the female finds more and more variations in elaborate cavities.

These fabrics can often move during flowering. They show in the beginning upward, later they show down. A flower for example with hollow shoe-like lower lip in the opening of the flower first shows this form as bizarre helmet. By the onset torsion of the ovary, the helmet becomes a shoe.

A further peculiarity is the imitation of manifestations from the animal world. There are orchids that mimic truthfully not only the form but also the fragrance of a bee so that the male bees try to copulate with flowers. In this way, the bee takes the pollen from flower to flower.

In the evolution of creation, the world of plants approaches in the orchid the animal-world with its enormous flexibility.

Traditionally the roots have also found special attention. At the European varieties are often found two tubers that look like testicles. One is plump and thick, the other dried up. In the following year this dry bulb has disappeared, the bulging bulb from last year dried up and a new healthy tuber appears. In this way the Orchid moves every year around 2-3 cm.

All of them have very numerous, but unusually fine seeds. A single *Anguloa ruckeri* produces 3.9 million seeds a year. If all of them would germinate and grow, in appropriate climatic conditions in a few years all the world could be covered by these large orchids.

Naming

The Greeks called the Orchid "Cosmossandalon" = world sandal. They thought they were the favorite flowers of the goddess Demeter, who travels in orchid shoes around the world giving fertility.

In German-speaking countries we find in analogy the names Marienschuh and Herrgottschuh (shoe of Mary, shoe of the Lord).

The connection with the erotic is found in more than fifty erotic German names, including priest testicles, boys herb, marriage root, erotic root.

In the Greek mythology Orchis was the prurient son of a satyr and a nymph. During a feast in honour of Priapus, God of fertility, he raped one of the priestesses of Bacchus. Then he was torn into pieces during the bacchanal. At the request of the father, the gods transformed his mutilated body into the orchid.

Use

It is reported that the women of Thessaly used the soft bulb mixed with goat's milk, to arouse lust, and the dry bulb to restrain the lust.

In Greece and the Arab Spanish lands orchids were cultivated until well into the 19th century, to win from the dried, lumpy thickened root tubers "Salep", a food and a remedy to revive of joie de vivre and sensual passion.

Salep was also prepared in Western and Central Europe. In the streets of London Salep was sold as a warm drink in the winter months until the second world. The tubers were mostly imported from the Middle East. However, Orchid for the preparation of Salep was harvested also in Germany. The root tubers of orchis spp. and Seraias spp. are rich in starch and mucilage. In addition, they contain 15% proteins, nitrogen compounds and mineral salts (calcium, phosphorus). The mucus has irritation-mitigating effects. Directly aphrodisiac substances were not identified so far.

Orchid was investigated in Findhorn as flower essence: "Spotted Orchid"-types hang on old things of the past. Often, they have the feeling to be stuck and not to be able to move forward. The spotted orchid flower essence brings inspiration and creativity.

Murshid

"Orchid, what do your petals represent? --Graceful movements of the dance. What does your dance express? --The earth paying homage to heaven."

For Murshid, the orchid is the plant of the dance.

The role of the dance with the Sufis deserves our attention. Inside the great world religions there are seldom mystics that like to dance. Traditionally, dance stands rather in contrast to meditation.

Dance is the form of expression, creativity and spontaneity, in which the body is most emphasized. Dance is life-affirming. Dance releases creative energy. Dance can symbolize the courtship of a sexual partner.

In Islam, there is a dance ban. In this regard, Islam is similar to the Orthodox Protestantism. The Prophet drew the attention of his students away from diversity towards unity, concentration, to the narrow path away from distraction and seduction.

The Sufis discovered that, if you consistently go the way of the Prophet, the soul begins to dance again and consequently the body too. The polarity between stillness and movement is overcome in the Sufi mysticism. Hazrat Inayat Khan: *"There is a tradition in Islam, where music, dancing and all amusements and light occupations are strictly prohibited, that on one occasion - it being a holiday - the Prophet called his wife Ayesha to look at the dance and listen to the music of some street musicians. In the meantime his great Khalif happened to come by and was shocked at seeing the Prophet, who had prohibited such things, himself permitting music in front of his house. When he stopped the music of the street players, pointing out to them that this was the house of the Prophet, Prophet Muhammed requested that they might continue, saying that it was a holiday, and: 'There is no heart that does not move with the motion of rhythm'"* It is probably not coincidental that in this Hadith the wife of the Prophet is brought in touch with music and dance.

In the Hindu tradition, there is a similar division between man and woman. The masculine principle is the oneness behind the creation: the impersonal. And the female principle the divine diversity in creation: the individual.

Murshid: *"The traditions of the Hindus have as a most sacred record the mystical legend of their Lord Sri Krishna dancing with the gopis. The story relates how Krishna, the charming youthful Lord of the Hindus, was moving among the dwelling of the cowherds, and every maiden, attracted by his beauty and charm, asked him to dance with her on the night of the full moon. On the night of the full moon there assembled sixteen hundred gopis, and the miracle of Krishna was performed when he appeared as a separate Krishna to each gopi, and all of them danced with their beloved Lord at one and the same time."*

Why did the Gopis want to dance with Krishna? From where comes the impulse to dance?

Murshid: *"Where does the dance come from? It all comes from the natural spiritual life which is within. When that spiritual life springs forth, it lightens all the burdens that man has. It makes his life smooth, floating on the ocean of life. The faculty of appreciation makes one light."*

Admiration, falling in love, adoration are spiritual impulses that make us light. There is no dance without feeling light. Murshid: *"In the traditions of the Sufis Raqs, the sacred dance of spiritual ecstasy which even now is prevalent among the Sufis of the East, is traced to the time when contemplation of the Creator impressed the wonderful reality of His vision so deeply on the heart of Jelal-ud-Din Rumi that he became entirely absorbed in the whole and single immanence of nature, and took a rhythmic turn which caused the skirt of his garment to form a circle, and the movements of his hands and neck made a circle."*

The naturalness of this phenomenon is underlined by Murshid: *"A bird like the peacock, when conscious of his beauty and the beauty of the forest around him, expresses his joy in dance. Dance arouses passion and emotion in all living creatures."* Dance expresses passion and emotion in all living beings."

So we're back at the flowers.

The Orchid represents for Murshid "Saqi", the divine donor and giver, who offers the wine of life to all. Among the Greeks, that is Demeter, the goddess of life, fertility and food

Beauty: In the form, line and color, feeling, in consultation

"The orchid gives artistry"

Esteem of the Higher: the appreciation of the "You"

Movement: Dance as a last, "youngest" expression of individual creativity

Ecstasy: becoming physically one with the Divine

Sacred Sexuality: Tantra as a form of sexuality, where to be still and to move are in harmony

Murshid indicates that orchids help when one is ill due to negative mental influences. This is hopefully easier to understand after my remarks. Orchids are according to the origin of their name the transformation of pleasure at a higher level. In Greek mythology Orchis rapes a nymph and was transformed into a flower as a consequence. After having become an Orchid he succeeds to express beauty and to unite himself with the Higher (in case of the plants the animal world). We humans are encouraged to overcome our animal nature and to become like the flowers. At the plant level we succeed in things, which is otherwise difficult: To get involved with our opposite and to remain at the same time ourselves instead of being stuck in the dichotomy of either losing ourselves and being overwhelmed or raped, or to lose our opposite and to follow just our own impulses like the satyr.

Ya Khaliq

O you, from whose source continuously springs creation. You create without beginning, without interruption, and without end. All gush from your imagination. You dance and never stand still.

Medication

The essence of Orchid

gives sense of art

makes a dance out of life

helps to move continuously towards the higher

gives power to distinguish ourselves from negative mental influences

puts into ecstasy

Pine

Latin: *pinus sylvestris*. German: Waldkiefer, Föhre. English: Scots pine, fir, spruce

Botany

The Pine is a light-loving conifer with open crown. It belongs to the genus "Pinus" in the Pinaceae family. Pine trees can reach heights up to over 50 m and ages up to 1000 years old. Their evergreen needle leaves are particularly long compared with other conifer species. The pine species mostly are monoecious: they bear male and female cones on the same tree. The short-lived male rod flowers, which together with the female flowers appear in May or June, produce huge amounts of yellow pollen, called a "rain of sulfur". This dust covers everything and give yellow color to the pools and puddles. When they have finally reached and fertilized a female plant, the cones take two years to reach maturity.

All pine trees provide resin, which can be tapped. The turpentine derived is a good solvent for other resins, waxes, greases, rubber, sulphur and phosphorus. Pine oil is used for relief of the respiratory tract because of the aromatic fragrance. As a nerve tonic of spruce, fir, mountain pine a bath is known to help in case of cold and hardening diseases.

Etymology

The word fir is represented in almost all Germanic languages, such as English fir is language related to forestry and forest. In many regions, the firs are the only trees around. In the old Germanic vocabulary stood the same word for fir and man: Firaha.

The Latin name pinus is derived from pix = tree resin

Dissemination and cultivation

Pine species are found mainly in the northern hemisphere. They are the most important species of forestry worldwide, because they form straight cylindrical trunks without branches and give large amounts of timber. Mostly undemanding and well-growing, they are often used in Central Europe in place of native tree species for reforestation after forest destruction and deforestation. Pine trees are grown in wood plantations in the tropics and subtropics. Also in the Mediterranean region and in Japan are large areas with pine stock.

Symbolism

Already the ancient Egyptians put as a symbol of the renewal of life pine cones in their graves, although Egypt does not have pine trees. For the Celts, the fir was the first tree of the new light. He was consecrated to the newborn sun child of the great mother. In unconscious reminiscence we still put up the crib with the Christ child under a pine or fir.

The pine crown stretched out as a roof was viewed soon after the introduction of Christianity as a symbol of the Christian Church that protects its believers. Unfortunately later Christianity was also a great enemy to the pine. Saint Martin let not far from Autun in a sacred forest dedicated to the old religion cut a pine, to break the influence of the prevailing Celtic religion. Especially in Korea and Japan, a special symbolic meaning is ascribed to the pines: They stand there for strength, durability, and patient persistence. That's why pines in these countries are very often to be found in carefully crafted forms in temples and gardens. In China, the fir is a symbol of longevity, stability and self-discipline. The Taoists that had their hermitages mostly high in the mountains, where they constantly reasserted their life force in confrontation with nature, ate the seeds of the cones and hoped to achieve immortality by these seeds. The fruit of the evergreen pine stands for immortality. The pine cone was an important symbol of fertility in the ancient world. Because of its spiral-like shape it was often associated with dynamic and cosmic power. In the mythology of Cybele and Attis, originally Asian deities, pine cones have been equated with the male phallus and symbolized male fertility. The phallic symbols were offered to the goddess Cybele to bring to new life Attis, the dead God, and thereby to revive nature in spring.

Murshid

"There is the beauty of the pine tree, a beauty of straightness and uprightness; and again there is the beauty of the sweeping branches of the willow."

For Murshid Inayat Khan the pine is most clearly representing the "jela" or male side, the willow the "jema" or female side in the duality of creation. The needle tree has something sublime in its simplicity. The priority lies in the vertical, the trunk. Never loses the basic shape itself into ramifications.

The towering pine represents the spiritual for Murshid. Thus he connects to the same tradition as for example the Celts.

"The vertical line represents the sky, the horizontal line the Earth." Old pine trees connect us by their height with the sky. In the thousands of years old redwoods we find exemplars competitive with the highest church towers on earth.

"The horizontal line represents this world, the vertical line that world, the next world.

Pine trees give us a taste of eternity. With their evergreen needles, they seem to be not included in the seasons.

"The vertical line conveys the meaning Yes, the horizontal line the meaning No." Pine trees represent an unshakeable optimism. Thoroughly permeated by resin, this promotes the human heat organization and thus a positive feeling in the people. The ego stands on its own feet.

"The vertical line the masculine, the horizontal line the feminine."

The upright cones of pine trees are traditionally associated with male fertility. The straight stems as well.

There is a dialogue in four sets between pine and man in the Tanas by Hazrat Inayat Khan. In the first it says:

"Pine-trees, what are you? --We are the phantoms of sages who preferred vigil in the forest solitude to life in the world."

Murshid does not write that the pines are similar to the wise men, but that they actually are the spirits of forest hermits. If we take this statement literally, this would mean that the spirit of a wise would begin a life after human life as pine. The question whether Murshid really meant that, will probably never really be resolved. I mean however, that this idea definitely would be worthy of a Sufi. In the Sufi teachings, the concept of reincarnation is represented, however in relativized form. The soul is born again and again, because it represents a part of the cosmos. But for each new birth, it gets a new individuality according to its needs. So I could imagine, that a soul which has entered into a life as a human being, becomes a tree in a next life. Not as a punishment. Not because one has done something wrong. That would be foreign to the Sufi teachings. But because this is attractive for

the soul. The sage who retires into the forest for his spiritual development, gradually becomes like the trees. And if he feels as a mystic the call to free themselves from the ever rotating wheel of day and night, he would feel drawn most to the pines, which themselves have emancipated a good piece from the changing of seasons. To come back as pine in a next life, to be able to fully concentrate on the being of the pine, could be an interesting task if it is out of free choice. Especially as it says in the next set of Tanas:

"Pine-trees, what do your branches signify? --Hands stretched out from heaven to bless the earth."

Could there be a better task for a sage than continuously transmit the blessing of heaven on to earth with his hands? The pine stand perfectly straight up and absorbs cosmic energy in itself to be passed down with its branches. If possible we should sit under a pine when we want to come into contact with the divine in nature. The ability to work together with the nature kingdoms is being increased. The result is a greater awareness of the nature and of the objectives and purposes of the spirits of nature. An ability to exchange love with these beings develops.

"Pine-trees, for what are you made? --We are temples erected for the worshippers of God in nature."

Those who worship God in nature, are in the European tradition pejoratively called animists and are classified as primitive. Only those who go to the Church, are the real believers. As we have seen above, in the past spiritual authorities have cut down the pines, to "civilize" or to "christianize" the people. Murshid heralds a paradigm shift now. He announces the possibility to find the divine in nature, and not just in the man made churches, temples, and mosques, as part of a new world culture. For those, who attracted to mysticism in the woods, there is the pine, which is most able to take over the function of the sanctuary.

"Pine-trees, tell me your life's secret. --We are the shadows of souls on the cross, awaiting patiently the hour of their liberation."

Endurance is a quality of the pines. They take time to mature. Before the seeds are released in the freedom, the maturity period lasts up to three years. Even the elephant doesn't take so long for its pregnancy.

Wise souls who have taken a cross, do this with joy and with patience. It is an honor and the fulfillment of the meaning of life and therefore it is not in the foreground to rid oneself as quickly as possible from this cross.

The founder of flower therapy Edward Bach describes the psychological state of those, which are inclined but not yet ripe to wear a cross: They work hard and suffer a lot under the errors that they ascribe to themselves. Sometimes others are guilty, but even then they will take the responsibility on themselves. The potential of these people is to take over the burdens of others, but only if it makes sense. This ability has the pine tree.

Ya Kabir

Oh You, your Temple is space and time.

Medication

The essence of pine trees helps us

to resurrect

to stand up straight

to turn to the spiritual

to orient ourselves to the Everlasting

to develop a positive attitude to life

to develop male power

to give space to our mystical side in nature

to be a blessing for our environment

to take up our cross with dignity

Pomegranate

Punica granatum

Because the genus *Punica* doesn't show affinities to other plants, it alone forms the subfamily of the *Punicoideae*.

The name pomegranate consists of pome=apple plus granatus = lgrainy, full of seeds. In Latin he got the name *Punica*, since the Phoenicians from Carthage, "Punians", spread this plant in the Mediterranean.

Dissemination

The spreading area of the pomegranate is located in the Western and Middle Asia; home of the tree stretches from Turkey through the Caucasus, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan east to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In the Mediterranean region and the Middle East the pomegranate has been cultivated for centuries. In India, it is grown as a spice. But also in the Far East the pomegranate occurs. In Indonesia, it is known as delima.

In the course of Spanish colonialism the pomegranate reached the Caribbean and Latin America. The Caribbean island of Grenada has been named after him.

Description

The pomegranate is growing as a deciduous small tree; he reaches up to five meters in height, can be up to three metres wide and several hundred years old. The bark is reddish-brown to grey. The young branches are often Tetragonal. He wears shiny, leathery leaves and in spring and summer large bell-shaped flowers.

Their color ranges from orange-red to pale yellow. The form of the fruit is similar to the apple, at first green, later orange-red. It has a diameter of up to about 10 centimeters and is divided into many compartments, where many up to 15 millimeters wide angular seeds are located, which are each surrounded by a glassy, juicy, deep red to pale pink seed coat. In total, about 400 seeds are included in the fruit.

The fruits are harvested in the months September to December. The shell of the fruit hardens increasingly over the course of time.

Use

Skin and juice of the pomegranate have been dyes for oriental carpets for centuries.

Grenadine syrup (syrup that was once exclusively made of pomegranates of the Caribbean island of Grenada) gives its fruity taste and its red coloring to various cocktails.

Pomegranates and the pomegranate juice squeezed from the whole fruit are widely used worldwide, especially in the Mediterranean, in the Middle East, in the United States. Through fermentation of the juice pomegranate wine can be produced and is exported mainly from Armenia and Israel.

In cosmetics the essential unsaturated fatty acids from the pomegranate seeds, which positively affect the regeneration and the appearance of the skin, are being used. This application is especially due to the rare punicic acid, found in this concentration in no other fruit. It promotes the creation of cells and so regeneration of the skin tissue. The skin becomes smooth again and receives a lively beautiful appearance.

Medical importance

Pomegranate juice is also fermented for medicinal purposes. Then through fermentation the bioactivity and bioavailability of polyphenols contained in pomegranate is increased. Scientific studies show that pomegranate could have a positive effect on cardiovascular disease, cancer and arthritis.

The health-promoting effects of Pomegranate are due to the antioxidants. He has 3-4 times the antioxidant power of red wine or green tea.

In a scientific study growth inhibition could be determined in Pomegranate juice against breast cancer cells, without affecting the growth of healthy cells. Leukemia cells either rebuild into healthy cells, or die. In addition, the spread of the tumor is inhibited. In the late stages of prostate cancer, Pomegranate juice can have a positive effect on the cell structure.

In a study of patients with coronary heart disease, the daily gift of the juice of the pomegranate significantly increased the blood flow to the heart muscle. Deposits in the carotid artery decreased by 35%.

In addition, recent chemical investigations of the pomegranate should give evidence, why just this tree was considered as a "Tree of life" or "Tree of knowledge". The root bark contains 15% DMT, a neurotransmitter that could lead to perfect knowledge.

Symbolism

The "sdh"-wine derived from pomegranates was considered the ancient Egypt as an aphrodisiac, especially in the ecstatic cult of Hathor, the goddess of love. Fruits and petals were found in tombs and sacrificial places.

In the ancient Greece the pomegranate was attributed to the gods of the underworld, Hades and Persephone. The underworld God Hades abducted Persephone from her mother Demeter and took her to the underworld. Zeus, the father of the gods, decided that the girl should return to their mother, if she haven't eaten in the underworld. Shortly before her return, Hades put six pomegranate seeds into her mouth. Because she had eaten something now in the underworld, she had to govern a third of the year in the underworld with Hades and was allowed to spend the other two-thirds with her mother Demeter.

In another ancient story the dispute between the three Greek goddesses Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite, who was the most beautiful of them was ended by the Trojan Paris by presenting a pomegranate to Aphrodite.

Zeus sent a pomegranate to the nuptial Hera, so it was widely used as the symbol of the nuptial night, not of the feeling of the heart, but of the purely sensual love. According to Cypriot legend Aphrodite, who came from the Orient, has planted the first pomegranate tree on Cyprus. Why is he sacred to the goddess of love? If you look at the bud, which is about to open, it has an almost a naturalistic model of a penis. The goddess is often represented with a pomegranate fruit in one hand and with a pomegranate blossom in the other. Fruit and flower represent the two poles of sexuality, female and male, which are united by the goddess.

In the Gilgamesh epic, the hero departs into the world, in search of his immortal ancestor Utnapishtim, who lives at the mouth of the rivers. His goal is to get informed about the "plant of life", prototype of the Avestan "Haoma" by which man can be saved from death. Iranian Parsians

dribble the juice of the pomegranate in the mouth of their dead for this reason. The sacred Haoma drink of the Parsians contained pomegranate according to the Avesta. The famous "Apple from the tree of knowledge," the forbidden fruit was not an apple, but a pomegranate.

In the Bible, the pomegranate is regarded as one of the significant seven fruits blessing the promised land Israel. Pomegranates were part of the Ephod (liturgical robe) of the Pontiff, whose manufacturing was commanded to the Israelites by God. The pillars in front of Solomon's temple were decorated with two rows of pomegranates. The first King of Israel, Saul, lived for a while under a pomegranate tree. In the song of Solomon, it is referred about the beauty of the beloved:

Your cheeks behind the veil

shimmer reddish like the disc

of an apple from a pomegranate tree.

According to Jewish tradition, the pomegranate should contain 613 seeds, as many as the laws contained in the Old Testament. The Bible, the Torah and the Babylonian Talmud paid homage to the pomegranate as a symbol of fertility and wealth.

In Christian symbolic language the pomegranate stands for the community of believers. It symbolizes also the creation being in God's hand or in the hands of Providence. On medieval panel paintings the Christ child plays with the pomegranate, given to him by his mother.

The fruit is also mentioned in the Qur'an: In Sura 6, humanity is called to look at the pomegranate fruit and other fruits in their growth: "Verily, herein are signs for a people who believe." Also in the 6. Sura: "He is it, that give growth to the gardens, with vine trellises and without vine trellises, and the date palm and grain fields, whose fruits are from different species, and the olive and the pomegranate, similar and dissimilar. Eat of their fruit, if they bear fruit, but thank Him on the day of the harvest and do not exceed the limits. Verily, He does not love the extravagant."

The pomegranate was considered a symbol of power, not just of the priests, but also of the secular rulers. Its red color is not only a symbol of blood, love, war, but also that of the sun, of life, of ruling. The sepals which remain on the fruit and make a "crown", made him a perfect orb or ornament of a royal sceptre. The pomegranate is part of the coat of arms of Spain, where it represents the ancient Kingdom of Granada. In China, the pomegranate due to its many cores is a symbol of fertility and richness of children.

History

A charred pomegranate was found in the early Bronze age strata in Jordan. Colored glass vessels in the form of a pomegranate were produced in the late bronze age on Cyprus and in Egypt. The Uluburun ship found near Kaş in Turkey contained Cypriot stock pots with over 1000 pomegranate seeds. Pomegranates were found as grave goods in a tomb of a senior Egyptian officials from the time of Ramses IV.

In Germany, the pomegranate in the medieval Konstanz is archaeologically proven.

Murshid

Murshid refers in his remarks concerning the pomegranate on the Zoroastrian tradition. He tells that Zarathushtra, the great prophet of the Parsians *"is said to have been born from the Haem-tree. The interpretation of this idea is that the Spirit of Guidance does not come direct from Heaven; he is born from the human family...."*

The Prophet was, even though he was an embodiment of the spirit of guidance, like everyone else a child of nature. Zarathushtra draws in his calling as a Prophet from the same source, as the stones, the plants, the animals and the other humans. *"Zarathushtra's spiritual attainment came first by his communication with nature. He appreciated, adored, and worshipped the sublimity of nature, and he saw wisdom hidden in the whole creation."*

In his teaching to his disciples, he showed the different aspects of nature and asked them what they could perceive behind it. He discussed with his disciples, and did not allow them to override their intellect and perception out of devotion. *"Faith is the lamp which lightens the path, but reason is the globe over it to make its light appear."* Murshid Inayat Khan then goes on to make clear the type of religion Zarathustra was teaching. In a way it is extremely progressiv also for our times because it is a combination of empiricism and devotion: *"The way of worship taught by Zarathushtra was to worship God by offering homage to nature. For nature suggests to the soul the endless and unlimited Being hidden behind it all."* The Prophet saw it as his mission to tell to his students: You come to me looking for guidance. I will show you how the spirit of guidance penetrates and directs the plant kingdom, the instinct of animals and the intuition of the human mind So you can make out for yourself what either inspires you, because it is according your nature and or doesn't fit to you, leads you astray and makes the world ill.

Murshid: *"The Spirit of Guidance in other words may be called the Divine Mind..... The Creator's Mind is made of His own creation. The experience of every soul becomes the experience of the Divine Mind; therefore, the Divine Mind has the knowledge of all beings. It is a storehouse of perfect wisdom. It is the Soul of Christ, and the Spirit of prophecy. Intuition, inspiration, vision, or revelation, all have the Divine Mind as the Source The Prophets of all ages have been the reflections of the Divine Mind on earth."* The works of Hazrat Inayat Khan are rich of teachings, how the Prophets from different cultures worked in the world. For example:

"Nabi is the apostle whose spirit reflects the Spirit of Guidance, called in Sanskrit Bodhisatva, whose work mainly is the giving of the Message in the form of warning, awakening, preaching, teaching, and inspiring those to whom he may be sent. He comes into the lives of those who are meant to be guided along the spiritual path. He is sent to the nations when the nations are meant to change their conditions. He is sent to a community or race to give warnings. He is meant to be a reformer in the times when a reformer is needed. He elevates individuals and bears a Divine Message."

Exactly this is the function of the pomegranate of Haoma tree from which the Prophet was born. It is so to say the father/mother of Prophethood from the world of plants.

We had seen that it is able to push back cell growth, which has left its natural shape and limits and develops into cancer. The same applies not only at the cellular level, but also in the stages of life of the individual and of mankind in general. The pomegranate has the ability to determine the right shape and size and to communicate this.

We also saw that the pomegranate was revered as a tree of knowledge. What is good and what is evil, must continuously be explored anew in the development of humanity and of the individual. It takes the courage of the pomegranate being.

The pomegranate was used by the Greeks to make decisions and to announce them. Deciding means to consider and choose what is right and what is wrong. If a decision is properly made, it is in line with the spirit of guidance. Then, it is the result of a thinking that is in contact with the intuition.

Pomegranates show that the whole of nature is in God's hands. That's what it says in the Koran, and that was the message of Zarathushtra.

Pomegranate helps to keep the relationship in flux between husband and wife. He strengthens the physical sexual attraction and urges us, to look closely what does good and what not. It enables the partners to distinguish themselves from each other and at the same time not to take themselves too seriously. A relationship lives from a continuous critical look at what is right and what is wrong, both in the other and in oneself. Nowhere the emotions go as high as between man and woman and the pomegranate helps us to put the feelings in its proper place.

The pomegranate tree gives us the power to enter the underworld without fear. Even if it is the wrong world, one must spend there 1/3 of the time, so the Greek myth, before to get back to the light. Otherwise we could not distinguish and wouldn't know what is good and bad, what is light and dark.

It helps when you're on the wrong track and you are bogged, to get the lead back and to commit yourself to something real.

Murshid pronounces a warning at the end. *"a pomegranate personality... is hard outside and hard inside. The pomegranate is hard, the skin is hard, the seed inside is hard too." "And the personality who is hard outside and hard inside is isolated in the world. This is no place for him. Everyone will want to keep away from him, and then after some time he will find himself in difficulties."*

That is the danger for the pomegranate personality. We know the stories from the old testament, which tell us how undesired the prophets were. If we are too hard to ourselves and to the people in our surroundings, we will be unpopular and miss the target, which should be to experience the love of and for God.

Reed

Phragmites communis Trin.

The Latin name was probably derived from the Greek phragma, hedge.

Botany

The Reed is a globally common species of grass. There are three subspecies, all of which occur in Europe.

The plant spreads via rhizomes in wet soils, and is up to four metres high. Because of its deep roots it is hard to drive out of wetting fields. Whole reed populations are often only a single plant. Plants, which were estimated to be approximately 8000 years were found in the Danube Delta.

The wettability of leaves is low. Water rolls off in drops, as it can be observed also at Lotus flowers and takes with adherent dirt particles from the surface.

The flower panicle can be up to 50 cm long. The flowering time ranges from July to September.

Use

The young shoots are in some areas used as a vegetable or animal feed, and flour to make bread can be made from the dried roots. In addition to this use, Reed plays mainly a role as a natural building material. Thatch-covered roofs are a well-known example.

To recycle sewage the plant can help through its large leaf surface and its hollow, air-leading stem parts under water.

The plant is also useful because it holds the Earth on riverbanks.

Symbolism

In the Bible it stands for weakness and fragility.

The Prophet Isaiah praises the expected Messiah:

"He won't break the bent reed, and he does not eliminate the smouldering wick". In the New Testament it is reported that the Roman soldiers mocked Christ on the cross by giving him a cane as a scepter in his hand.

Its quiet whisper in the wind stands for loquacity among the Greeks. The barber of King Midas was the only one who knew about the donkey ears of the king hidden under a high cap. The gods had let these grow to the king because he preferred the Pan's flute to Apollo's singing. The Barber told this secret, which he was not allowed to trust to anyone, in a whisper into a hole in the ground. A large reed bush grew on the spot which constantly told how nice the flute of Pan can tone of love and suffering - and that the King has donkey ears.

Murshid

For Hazrat Inayat Khan was a hike in nature like a visit to a concert hall: "Every stem becomes Thy reed, every leaf becomes Thy finger, Beloved, when Thou playest Thy flute in the wilderness."

Sit down at a thatch-covered shore and listen to the sound of whispering straws!

The musician

The flute in its original form was made of reed. Murshid: *"There is a Chinese legend which says that the first music was played on little pieces of reed. The great musician of ancient times who introduced music in China, made holes in a piece of reed at a certain distance from each other, the distance between two fingers; and so the flute of reed came into being. From this came the scale of five notes: one note was the original note produced by the reed, and the four other notes were made by placing the fingers on the holes.*

It was only later that scientists followed with the knowledge of different vibrations, but this scale of five notes comes naturally when a man places his hand on the reed, and a great psychological power seems to be attached to it. It has a great influence on the human nature, and this shows that the power of all things that have been derived directly from nature is much greater than when man has changed, turned and altered them so as to make a new form of art."

The Mystic

The Mystic searches the way back from diversity to unity. In the music this means, to come back from the large number of Ragas to the origin of 5 notes and from 5 notes back to one sound. The Sufi training enables a "listening" to this one sound, "saut-e-sarmad", the sound behind the creation. The Sufi student does not stop until he has found this sound. The engine behind this search is the longing for unity with the beloved.

Murshid: "If (a person) is rich he wants to be famous; if he is famous he wants something else; if he has one thing he strives for another and is never satisfied. It shows that man, outwardly busy in the pursuit of worldly things, is not satisfied but has a constant yearning in his soul for something more; and this keeps him uneasy. Rumi gives a good explanation of this in his Masnavi where he says, 'What is it in the reed flute that appeals to your soul, that goes through you, pierces the heart?' And the answer is: it is the crying of the flute, and the reason of its crying is that it once belonged to a plant from which it was cut apart."

The Prophet

Only having found the root tone, the Mystic is able to make music. This root tone is called the "word", which was lost. The man who has found this word, becomes an instrument for the Divine.

Murshid: *"Krishna is pictured in Hindu symbology with a crown of peacock's feathers, playing the flute. Krishna is the ideal of Divine Love, the God of Love. And the Divine Love expresses itself by entering into man and filling his whole being. Therefore the flute is the human heart, and a heart*

which is made hollow will become a flute for the God of Love to play upon. When the heart is not empty--in other words, when there is no scope in the heart--there is no place for love."

The Reed has the natural ability to sound because it is hollow. And we had also seen that a reed plant is ancient and whole areas of reeds can consist of one plant. So the single reed straw expresses, what the whole plant wants to say. In this way displays the reed in the plant world, what in the world of the human beings the Prophet actually does.

The healer

Another example of the reed-nature in the human Kingdom, thus Murshid, is that of the healer: *"God alone is the Healer; those who minister will only truly heal when they keep this truth always before them, for it is not the solid wood that makes the flute, it is the empty reed."*

The friend

A last example of the nature of reed is found in the friend for Murshid: *"There is a saying in Hindustani, by Seman, on friendship, 'Stand by your friend in his time of need, like the reed on the bank of the river'"*.

Medication

The essence of Reed supports processes related to

being empty

finding the right words

Becoming an instrument of healing

hearing the sound of the universe

being cut off

finding back to the origin

Living friendship

Roses

Latin: rosa. Greek: rhodon. Ancient Greek: vrodon. Armenian: vard. Ancient Iranian: urda. Aramaic: warda. Arabic: ward.

Linguistic and botanical material speak in favour of the hypothesis, that the rose culture has spread with the Indo-Europeans from their original homeland in the Caucasus over the Iran into the Middle East, partly through Phrygia, Thrace and Macedonia to Greece.

It is winter, while I write this chapter. The roses in my garden are buried under a thick layer of snow. On my desk there are catalogues of rose breeders. They advertise with an assortment of over a thousand varieties. As a child my grandfather presented rose catalogs to me in days of bad weather. He showed me how I could cut out the flowers with the scissors. An precision work. This way I put together my own catalog. Certainly a intensive way to get closer to the flower shapes.

Features

The roses are deciduous shrubs. Their shoots are upright and til around four metres high or even climbing. With these curved shoots a Rosebush moves into all corner of the environment. Where the shoots to touch the ground, they form new roots and a 'new' shrub emerges. Kranich describes this phenomenon as follows: "The Rosebush with his sprouting first of all looses itself in the devotion to the environment."

Spines

Root, branches and twigs are covered with spines, which are colloquially called "thorns". They serve a as protection against being devoured by animals, on the other hand to grap their holdings.

Leaves

Usually, a leaf consists of five leaflets.

Inflorescence and flowers

When the sun reaches its highest level in June, the rose Bush fully passes into the phase of flowering.

The rose family form goblets of flowers. It is an organ of transition. The growth phase of the formation of leaves, branches and thorns comes to an end out in it. There are 5 sepals. These are green leaves on the last stage of the simplification from leave to flower. Where they originate on the plant, the upward - and outward rising growth falters.

In the cup the corolla is preparing, in which the plant reveals a new, completely transformed stage of development. In the unrevealed state of their buds roses are specially beautiful.

The color of the 5 petals is usually pink to red or white, rarely yellow. In many cultivated forms the flower is "filled" through conversion of stamens into petals. in the middle of the flower there are many bright yellow stamens, with whose help the plant looses itself into the atmosphere. In the Centre, there are 10 to 50 carpels. They sit on the bottom of the flower cup.

Flower cups

Right underneath the flower the stem is extended. If we cut it here the length after, we discover that it is hollowed out as a pitcher. Inside there is situated a whole number of small ovaries, out of which in autumn the trosehips is built. The formation of fruit is so to say "sunk" into the stem.

Fruits

The fruit of the rose is the rose hip. There is hardly a fruit that contains more vitamin C. The hips are eaten by many animals. The cores pass through the digestive tract without being harmed. Especially birds, but also mice and foxes are important dissimulators. Small mammals and birds also carry of the rose hips, which can then lead to entire groups of new shrub.

Origin and spread

It is not known how many rose varieties exist. The genus of roses ranges between 100 and 250 species of wild rose. Many species are likely to have emerged in the Holocene made eingeläuteten warmer time, which in the Holocene, that approximately 9000 years developed with a massive ecological upheaval and large changes in flora and fauna. Parallel, a change in the diet of people arose, first in the Levant (Middle East), later in China, Central America and other parts of the world. The hunters and gatherers began to grow corn and other crops and to domesticate goats, sheep and other animals. This Neolithic revolution spread gradually in the direction of Europe.

The Roses accompanied the people in this new global agricultural culture and do so to this day. It is the plant that towers above all others and most deeply touches us humans. Through the millennia people saw in it the image of the human soul force that is capable of the greatest deepening and can broaden our soul in the areas of the divine. Their power is that of love.

The genus has originated in the mountains of Central and Southwest Asia, so geographically roughly where also agriculture has emerged: in the valleys of the Euphrates/Tigris and Indus, which are fed from these mountains. As light-seeking plants the wild roses were limited in densely wooded areas to rocky slopes and gravel fields. Through extensive wood-harvesting, man promoted the propagation of roses from the mountains out in the valleys. So, most rose-rich plant communities were caused by humans, as a companion of human culture.

The frequent occurrence of natural spontaneous hybrids is a sign that the rose even develops further. However, this development is been reversed in recent decades through intensification of agriculture, soil sealing and the abandonment of extensive uses of grasslands. Many species of wild rose are now endangered or threatened by extinction. Is the rose leaving us now, after she accompanied us so many thousands of years as a good friend? If you look at the catalogs of the breeder, you get an opposite impression. Countless new creations from breeding, where different types are constantly crossed, populate the gardens of the world. In the 19th century, as the encyclopedic approach was still in fashion, a researcher came to a number of over 4000 different types of roses. Now, science has stopped holding high a claim on completeness. The number of rose variations today all over the world for sure is a multiple of this number.

Persia

Already in the early period of their encounter with humans, the rose became a symbol for love, beauty, pleasing charm and serene joy of life. The role played by the roses in many cultures, takes its beginnings probably in Persia. Across the Altai Mountains, they came there from the Caucasus. Records were found in the tombs of the Kings of Urduk, according to which King Sargon (2684 - 2630 BC) had brought vines, figs, and roses as part of his conquests in a military campaign. Since then, there are rose gardens (Gulistane), in which particularly roses with filled and heavily scented flowers were cultivated in Persia. Here, probably the rose oil extraction has its origins. Both Hafez and Saadi, both Sufi poets, who have given to the rose its place in the world literature come from Shiraz, the center of rose culture. Rumi, an another great Sufi master who has sung the praise of the rose in his works, came from Afghanistan, a country that is geographically closer to the cradle of friendship between man and rose.

China

In China, the beginning of rose culture probably lies in the time of the legendary ruler of Chin-Nun (2737 - 2697 BC). Confucius described large Royal rose gardens in Beijing.

Greece

To Greece, the rose culture probably came across Asia minor and Thrace. In the Iliad, Homer reports of rose-garlanded weapons and rosenfingered dawns. He describes how Aphrodite anoints the corpse of Hector with rose oil. Many Greek poets glorified the rose after him. Sappho (6. Century BC), that all of her life was an admirer of Aphrodite, called the rose "Queen of flowers". It was believed that the Rose was originally only pure white. The Greek poets say that the blood of Eros or of Aphrodite, which trickled from a foot injury, was absorbed by the rose petals that so received their red color and its heavenly scent.

The wild rose (*Rosa canina*) - which sprung from the tears of Aphrodite as she mourned the loss of Adonis, - spreads not only the scent of Aphrodite ("scent of Venus"), it is also a popular folk remedy.

Egypt

In Egypt the roses had the reputation to be a universal remedy. To meet this need, the coveted roses products had to be imported. There were complete rose gardens, where rose oil and rose water were produced on Greek Islands, Crete, and Cyprus. The Egyptians dedicated the flowers to Harpocrates, the God of silence, the God who kept the secrets.

Rome

In the Roman Empire, the cult of roses reached another Golden Age. In the imperial period, roses were drawn in glass houses and imported from Egypt.

Islam

In Islam, especially the white roses are a sacred symbol. So, Saladin had 1187 the Dome of the Rock cleaned with rose water from the impurities of the Christian faith after his conquest of Jerusalem.

While in many other cultures to honor special guests the ground is sprinkled with rose petals, no devout Muslim would ever step on a rose flower. He would bent over and lift it in awe, because it means more than just a "flower" to him. For him, because of the direct connection to the Prophet purifying spirit forces emanate from the roses. At Muhammad's night of Ascension, his sweat drops fell to Earth, and from these arose the white roses.

The rose is also a common maconic symbol in the Islamic cultural area and can be found at many buildings from the middle ages, for example at the Alhambra in Granada. This symbol is preserved in Freemasonry.

Europe

In Central Europe, the Celts and Germanic peoples knew only the five-petalled wild roses, which were sanctified to the maternal goddess of love Frigg or Freya. Wild roses were also seen in connection with fighting, blood, death. The wound by a sword was named "Rose". Roses were planted on victim sites and graves. In the East of Switzerland and in Allgäu, Bavaria, till today secluded cemeteries are known as rose garden.

Cultivated roses entered Central Europe with the Roman legions.

In the medieval monastery gardens, the Rose was first drawn as a medicinal plant. This was the Apothecary Rose, *Rosa gallica 'officinalis'*. The imaginary world of the medieval church had taken over numerous attributes of the old love and mother goddesses. Since the rose became the flower of Marie, it was the icon of the adored woman, the unattainable goddess of love, as well as the woman with all her erotic and sensual charisma.

Especially the troubadours used it gladly and often as a symbol of the Sacred Virgin, as well as one of the revered earthly beauty.

Around Jesus Christ also rose mysticism came into being in medieval Europe. The famous Christmas Carol "It's sprung a Ros" suggests the origin of Jesus from the rose. In prayers and songs Mary was called "Rose without thorns" or "Rosa mystica".

The Oriental Garden Roses were imported by the Arabs, Turks and Crusaders to Western and Northern Europe. Only in the Renaissance and after the Reformation the new culture roses were increasingly cultivated in Europe, where they became the basis of the European garden culture. The cultivation in Bulgaria for the production of rose oil in large scale goes back to the time around 1700.

Hazrat Inayat Khan und die Rose

Von allen Blumen und Pflanzen spielt die Rose in den Lehren des Meisters die weitaus wichtigste Rolle. Es gibt in den gesammelten Werken ca. 110 Stellen, worin von Rosen die Rede ist. Zum Vergleich: es gibt 6 Stellen über die Lilie, 2 über die Sonnenblume und 1 über die Tulpe.

Er stellt sich so in eine Tradition, die tausende von Jahren zurück geht und seinen Ursprung an den Flüssen aus den Zentralasiatischen Bergen hat. Seine eigene Familie kam vor Jahrhunderten aus Afghanistan nach Indien. Die Mogul-Herrscher haben in ihrer indischen Gartenkultur die Liebe für die Rosen, die sie aus ihren Heimatländern in Zentralasien mitbrachten, zum Ausdruck gebracht. Der persische Sufismus mit seinem reichen Erbe an Rosen-Poesie verschmolz in dieser Zeit mit der indischen Kultur.

Im Nirtan sagt Murschid: „Die Rose bringt Duft, Farbe und schöne Form hervor; so bekundet auch die Seele beim Entfalten Persönlichkeit, Atmosphäre und veredeltes Wesen.“ Nirtan 124

Wir stoßen hier auf einen Schlüsselbegriff im Sufismus: die Entwicklung der Persönlichkeit. Sufis aus allen Zeiten haben der Kunst der Persönlichkeit den größten Wert beigemessen.

Was wird damit gemeint? Auf den Punkt gebracht: „Gott manifestierte Sich Selbst als Mensch und in der Entwicklung vom Individuum zur Person entfaltet Er/Sie sich als Seele. Darin liegt die Erfüllung des Lebenszwecks.“

In diesem einen Satz von Murschid liegt eine ganze Auffassung des Lebens in komprimierter Form vor. Lasst uns im Detail schauen, was die Begriffe bedeuten.

Nicht jeder Mensch ist eine Persönlichkeit, sagt Murschid.

Zuerst ist nämlich der Mensch damit beschäftigt, eine Individualität zu werden. In der Sprache der Pflanzen: er nimmt Schritt für Schritt seinen Lebensraum ein. Sonnendurchflutet sollte der für die Rose sein. Sie mag es nicht schattig, nicht zu nass und nicht zu karg. Ihre Äste sprießen hervor, ihre Blätter füllen den Raum, sie schützt sich mit ihren Dornen gegen Feinde und heftet sich an andere Gewächse um besser wachsen zu können, jede einzelne Pflanze auf ihrer Art.

Viele Menschen bleiben ein Leben lang in diesem Lebensabschnitt stecken. Sie beschäftigen sich ohne Ende mit Ästen, Blättern, Dornen. Sie verteidigen ihren Besitz, kämpfen mit ihren Konkurrenten und nehmen so viel Platz wie möglich ein.

Die Botschaft der Sufis ist nun, dass, nachdem wir unsere Individualität entwickelt haben, noch eine andere Aufgabe auf die Menschen wartet.

Murschid erzählt über den Sufi-Dichter Saadi aus der persischen Rosenstadt Schiras:

„In einfacher Sprache hat er versucht, uns Menschen eine Hilfestellung bei der Entwicklung unserer Persönlichkeit in Richtung einer Blüte-Qualität zu geben; Hilfe bei dem Trainieren der Persönlichkeit, welche dazu bestimmt ist eine Blume zu werden.... Sein ganzes Lebenswerk bestand darin, zu erklären wie der Mensch sich in eine Blume verwandeln kann. Er nannte seine Bücher „Gulistan“, was Blumenbeet oder Rosengarten bedeutet, und „Bustan“, einen Platz voller verschiedenster Düfte... Auf dieser Art hat er versucht, den Menschen zu erklären, wie das Herz in eine Blume verwandelt werden kann. In Wirklichkeit ist es eine Blume, es ist dazu gemacht, Blume zu sein, es ist dazu gemacht, seinen Duft zu verbreiten.“

Auch das Werk von Khwaja Shams-ud-din Mohammed Hafiz, einem weiteren berühmten Sufi-Meister und Dichter aus Schiras, wird von Murschid mit großer Wertschätzung beschrieben:

„Es war die Mission von Hafiz, gegenüber der religiösen Welt, welche zu Fanatismus tendiert, die Anwesenheit von Gott zum Ausdruck zu bringen, welche nicht nur im Himmel gefunden werden kann, aber auf Erden gefunden werden sollte. Sehr oft hat der religiöse Glaube an Gott und an das Jenseits den Menschen im Schlaf festgehalten. Man wartet auf die Stunde und den kommenden Tag, an dem man im Angesicht seines Herrn sein wird und man ist sicher, dass dieser Tag nicht vor dem Tod kommen wird. Und deswegen erwartet man seinen Tod, in der Hoffnung, dass man im Jenseits Gott sehen wird, weil der Himmel der Platz ist, wo Gott gefunden werden kann.... Und man denkt, dass es nur einen bestimmten Platz gibt, welcher ein heiliger Platz für den Gottesdienst ist, und das ist die Kirche, und, dass woanders Gott nicht gefunden werden kann. Es war die Mission von Hafiz, diese Idee weg zu nehmen und den Menschen von dem Himmel direkt neben ihm bewusst zu machen und dem Menschen zu erzählen, dass alles, was er im Jenseits als Belohnung erwartet, auch hier zu haben ist, wenn er ein volleres Leben lebt.“

Mit dem vollen Leben wird ein Leben gemeint, worin die Sehnsucht, zu lieben, vollkommen in unseren Herzen aufgeblüht ist.

Wenn es denn so etwas wie das Göttliche im Menschen gibt, dann ist es seine Fähigkeit, zu lieben. Wenn Gott irgendwo gefunden werden kann, dann im Herzen des Menschen. Wenn sich in unseren Herzen die Liebe entfaltet, wird Gott in uns geboren. Diese Öffnung des menschlichen Herzens ist die gleiche, wie wenn an einer Pflanze eine Blütenknospe aufgeht.

Ein großes Wagnis, so Hafiz, weil die Gesetzmäßigkeiten, die bei der Entwicklung der Äste, Blätter und Dornen gelten und die da heißen „die Rechte des Individuums“, „Besitz“, „Gerechtigkeit“, „Geben und Nehmen“, „Auge um Auge“ nicht gelten. Wo bisher in der Pflanze die volle Aufmerksamkeit auf der Entwicklung des Ichs gelegen hat, dreht sich in der Blüte die Aufmerksamkeit um 180° und richtet sich auf das Du. Eine noch nicht dagewesene Qualität entsteht so. In der Hinwendung auf die/den Geliebte(n) wird es uns möglich, eine neue Substanz zu entwickeln, eine unserer Seele würdige Substanz, die da heißt: Liebe.

Murschid: „Wo es Liebe gibt, geht es nicht um Fairness. Das Gesetz ist der Liebe untergeordnet.... Der Irrtum heutzutage ist, dass wir das Gesetz höher schätzen als die Liebe. Wir sehen nicht ein, dass das göttliche Prinzip, welches Liebe ist, über dem Gesetz steht. Der Mensch macht Gott zu einem Richter, Der an das Gesetz gebunden ist, Der nicht nach seinem Willen handeln kann, sondern nach dem, was in Seinem Buch geschrieben steht. Gott ist nicht Gerechtigkeit. Gerechtigkeit ist seine Natur, aber Liebe ist mächtiger. Die Menschen messen ihren Handlungen und Ergebnissen so viel Gewicht bei. Sie wissen nicht, dass über Handlung und Ergebnis ein Gesetz steht, welche das Feuer der Hölle verzehren kann, welche bestimmen kann, dass wenn die ganze Welt in einer Flut der Vernichtung untergehen würde, die Macht der Liebe größer ist als jegliche andere Macht.“

Die Sufis aus Schiras hatten entdeckt, dass die Rose die Blume ist, die am überzeugendsten diese Transformation zum Ausdruck bringt. Bedingungslos, ohne einen Gedanken daran zu verlieren, ob es sich lohnen wird, zu blühen, entscheidet sich die Pflanze, sich selber in ihrer vollen Schönheit zu

zeigen. Die Pflanze geht dabei in das volle Risiko. Die Schönheit ist gar nicht mal Ziel der Pflanze. Das Einzige was gilt, ist sich dem Gegenüber hin zu wenden. Die Schönheit, die dabei entsteht, ist die Folge davon.

„Die Rose produziert Duft, Farbe und schöne Struktur; so zeigt die Seele bei ihrer Entfaltung Persönlichkeit, Atmosphäre und verfeinertes Benehmen.“

In einer Rosenblüte wird wunderbar sichtbar, wie die Pflanze sich aus der Stufe des Wachstums mit der Farbe Grün emanzipiert und in eine neue Stufe mit völlig neuen Eigenschaften auftritt: die Blüte mit den bis dahin nicht dagewesenen Farben von Schneeweiß über Rosa und Rot bis ins Violett.

Die Kelchblätter sind sozusagen in der Blume noch eine Erinnerung aus dem vorangegangenen Lebensabschnitt. Bei den grünen Kelchblättern ist das alte Prinzip des grünen Wachstums auf ein Minimum zurückgefahren. Das Ego im Sinne von einem sich kümmern um die eigenen Belange, ist zwar immer noch vertreten, aber völlig im Dienst der neuen Existenzweise: die Kelchblätter schützen die Knospe.

In dieser Knospe reift etwas heran, das die Natur auf verwandelte Art und Weise in allen ihren Aspekten zeigen wird. Wo vorher die Sonne der Pflanze die Fähigkeit gegeben hat, mit seiner grünen Farbe das Licht zu absorbieren, so reflektiert die Blume die Sonne in ihrem weißen Feuer, mit dem Rosa und Rot wiederspiegelt sie Sonnenaufgänge und mit dem Purpur das Licht des Abends.

So wie vorher die Luft die Pflanze umweht hat und in dem Sauerstoff-Austausch das Wachstum ermöglicht hat, so spiegelt jetzt die Rose mit ihrem betörenden Duft das Luftelement in einer noch nie dagewesene Qualität. Letztens habe ich erlebt, wie eine einzige Rose de Resht aus Persien ein enormes Gewächshaus mit ihrem Geruch erfüllte.

Wo in der vorangegangenen Stufe die Pflanze das Wasser aus dem Boden oder aus der Atmosphäre aufgenommen hat, so zeigt sie in der Rosenblüte, welche Konsistenz die Integration dieses Wassers in den Zellen bewirken kann: nichts ist feiner und schöner in seiner Substanz als das Blütenblatt einer Rose, außer vielleicht die Wangen der Geliebten.

Die Rosenpflanze bekennt sich klar zur Zahl Fünf.

Wir hatten gesehen, wie das grüne Rosenblatt aus meist fünf Fiederblättchen aufgebaut ist. In der Struktur der Blüte zeigt die Rose die Fünferzahl in der Form eines perfekten Mandalas. Man spürt die innewohnende gestaltende Kraft welche diese Form zum Ausdruck bringt und im Gleichgewicht hält. Die Zahl Fünf existiert in der Welt der Mineralien, die Urwelt der Konstruktionen, nicht. Erst in der Pflanzenwelt erscheint die Fünf gelegentlich. Und in der Rosenblüte erreicht sie die Perfektion, die auch der menschlichen Urform zugrunde liegt.

Murshid: „Wenn man einen Prototyp des menschlichen Geistes aufmalen möchte, kann man es darstellen als Sonne in der Mitte und fünf Strahlen, die in die Umgebung schießen, einer gerade hoch, zwei seitlings in die Höhe, zwei nach unten. Und es ist diese Form welche den fünfzackigen Stern ausmacht.“

Ein einziges Bild der Schönheit ist die Rose;

was gleicht ihr in Erd- und Himmelsreichen?

Der vollen Rose gleicht an Pracht die Sonne,

und alle Blättlein siehst du Monden gleichen.

Der Sonne Lichtrad ist in ihr gerundet,

und hundert Monde rollen dran als Speichen.

Die Sonne, die aus Monden wuchs, die Rose,

dem Herzensfreund will ich die Rose reichen

Rumi

So the 5 elements of Sun, air, water, space and fertile soil interact to enable the flourishing of the rose, and so they are reflected in the rose in a quality which expresses their true being.

"The soul that develops its personality is like a fine flower with its color, fragrance and tenderness."

In my study of Murshids works it gradually became clear to me that the roses are described by three categories: sometimes because of their scent, or according to their colour, or following their various manifestations in form.

In the next three sections, I will describe a total of 11 different roses. An overall view on the art of love with a variety of aspects is the result. We smell, touch, see and taste the roses.

Fragrance

In the Vadan Murshid says:

"The blowing rose brings to me Thy perfume, Beloved, which moves my heart to ecstasy."

Smelling the world brings us from all our senses the closest to experience oneness. Smell is the oldest sense experience. Murshid: *"When the soul is born on earth,...it first becomes interested in breathing the air of the world, then in hearing the sounds, and then in seeing the objects before it; then in touching them, and then its taste develops."*

If we close our eyes and dive into a fragrance, an intimacy which can be exceeded by no other sense perception is created. The beloved wants to be smelled. We want to breathe deeply the scent of our beloved partner. By nothing you can absorb deeper someone as by the breath. Never beauty comes closer to us than by inhalation of the fragrance. *"My heart is moved to ecstasy,"* Murshid said. Do you know how it feels, when the beauty of the fragrance touches our heart? How the fragrance enchants our heart?

One way how Murshid discerns materialism from spirituality, is that the one, who can enjoy the scent, is spiritual. The sensual person is the spiritual person, because his senses are sensitive and not jaded.

Rose de Resht

"It is Thy sweetness, Beloved, which I enjoy in the sweet fragrance of the rose."

A spiritual person who has experienced the Rose de Resht in fully deployed fragrance, understands how the whole power of creation flows down with an inexhaustible, overwhelming energy.

Rose has something male in the way, how it permeates an environment and takes it for himself.

Rose has some feminine in the way as it gives unconditionally without restraint.

How can a small flower produce such a smell? Where does this power come from?

Murshid points here on a surprising law: *"Gratefulness in the character is like fragrance in the flower. A person, however learned and qualified in his life's work, in whom gratitude is absent, is devoid of that beauty of character which makes personality fragrant."* An amazing observation. The scent of a flower is the "Thank you" of the plant for everything it received. And as all gardeners know, it is not little, what a rose needs. Murshid: *"The sun, air, water, space, and fertile soil are necessary for the rose to bloom"*.

Ya Basit

The scent of your personality leads me beyond myself and brings me into ecstasy.

Medication

To learn to breath

To develop spirituality

To learn to love

To show gratitude

to follow your nose

Color

"The rose brings forth fragrance, color, and beautiful structure; so the soul, with its unfoldment, shows personality, atmosphere, and refined manner".

In the next sections, I'll provide the specific quality of 5 different rose colors in conjunction with personality development after Hazrat Inayat Khan's statements.

Pink Rose

Rosa canina, wild rose

Pink is the archetypal color of roses. This wild rose grows on sunny forest edges, hedgerows and rocky slopes. We find it also in many gardens. The light pink or deep pink flowers open with five large heart-shaped petals between June and August.

This morning, when I was working at my desk at this chapter, the new day announced itself on the eastern horizon over the hills with a strip of deep pink, which further expanded. It was to an incomparable pink glow, at the same time bright and mysterious, warm and mild. It was as if the heaven blossomed. The night was over. The darkness was ousted. The light showed up in all shades of pink and said: Embrace the day, he is good and rich and friendly.

Hazrat Inayat Khan:

"In the pink rose I see

Thy divine love and compassion."

"My heart turns into a pink rose

In Thy divine love."

We are all loved without exception. God loves us. And the strange thing is that we have no idea or forget it again and again. If we could open up to the love that is offered to us from all sides, we would feel it: around us and in us. Love surrounds us and penetrates us and feeds us. It doesn't matter what we do or don't. Our errors or merits play no role at all. It's like in the morning red: it's there for everyone.

Most clearly, we can study this flow of love in a loving mother. Perhaps you have wondered sometimes, how a mother takes a small child who is behaving terribly, is jealous and obnoxious, in the arms. Murshid: *"She is ready to understand, she is ready to forgive. So we see mercy and compassion going out as love, a stream of love which can purify all the evil actions of years. Then, if a human being can actually forgive, can God not forgive? Many of the dogmatic religions have taken away the love element which is predominant, which makes God Sovereign. And they make a God who is limited, who is bound by the book, and Who cannot show His compassion."* The great masters of humanity were all full of love. Murshid: *"And those great souls who have brought the message of God to humanity from time to time - Buddha, Krishna, Jesus Christ, Moses, Abraham, Zarathusthra - they were well known as most learned men. And what they learned, they learned from the love principle,*

what they knew was compassion, forgiveness, sympathy, and tolerance; that attitude of appreciation; that opening of the heart to humanity. What they taught was love, a simple Truth."

Murshid said in this context about the Prophet Mohammed: *"The Prophet's manner was so gentle with people that one day (every day when he used to go to offer his prayers in the mosque a woman who was very antagonistic wished to throw garbage on the Prophet, every day, and he used to shake the dust off his robe; he never looked back, he never stopped) but one day the dust was not thrown on him. That day he went to the house and knocked at the door, and the man came and said, "Is your wife very well?" The man looked at the Prophet, and said, "She has been so bad and so unkind against you, and called you so many names, how have you come?" "I have never taken any notice of it, only today I thought she has not appeared; is she well?" That was his manner with his enemies."*

Love is so simple and at the same time surprising. It is like the pink rose. The Queen of flowers shows in simple and warming ways what is the first and the last principle. There are many manifestations of the rose, but the principle of Roses is Rosa. That may sound trite, but about this natural simplicity Murshid teaches: *"Man's inclination is love. If he is cold, it is because he is longing for love; if he is warm, it is because love is alive. If one is suffering from depression, is yearning or sorrowing, it is because the love principle is not alive, The only life, the very source of inspiration, salvation and liberation, is love."*

As a small child I had low temperature for a time. My mother was desperate. No doctor, no medicine could help. I was always thin and I froze. When she no longer knew, she sent me to my grandmother. And this woman has cured me. And do you know how? She took me on her lap, pressed me to her warm chest and fed me. In retrospect, I don't know which of the two women had more love inside themselves. For my mother it was for sure an enormous overcoming to give me away and to admit, that she no longer knew what to do. But her love was greater than her pride. It's called mercy.

The gentle influence of the Pink Rose brings a child back to life. It is the power of the middle. It leads back to growth, because inside the rose a well being exists that decreases the refrigeration of the existence. Murshid: *"But even when its petals have dropped there is still a form of life left, for even in the dry leaves of the rose there is a fragrance, and from the dried rose-leaves an effective medicine can be made. This medicine has a certain action on the blood and it also nourishes the intestines; it is most purifying. In ancient Greek medicine the rose was used in many ways. It is very cooling, it cools the blood as well as being very strengthening."*

The pink rose is medicine in the truest sense. It is the prototype of a "remedy". It brings back a people in its middle. Extreme heat (weakness) or extreme cold (fever) are resolved.

This is true for children who are hard pressed to cope with the life on Earth, as well as for dying, be hard pressed to move away from life. Murshid: *"For a person who fears death, who is restless and in despair on his sickbed, pink roses..."*

Except for birth and death the pink rose helps as an intermediary on the third large threshold, marriage, too. In classical Greek mythology, these "inauguration" is brought in connection with roses. In the story "The golden ass" by Apuleius, an immature young man is transformed into a donkey and

can only find back to his true form after he has eaten roses. What does it mean? He can be only become man, if he has dared to marry a woman.

Murshid refers to this source, when it comes to the Greek mystery schools. And of course, he reported the Indian tradition: *"On the last day of the wedding both bride and bridegroom are veiled with a low-flowing veil made of jasmine flowers and trimmed with roses, and after the conclusion of the marriage ceremony they are unveiled. Now, the meaning of this veil of flowers is that a new phase of life begins for them."*

The Sufis leave no doubt to it that in the male-female relationship life finds its fulfillment, because there the full development of the principle of love is possible.

Dr. Edward Bach, the English physician who developed the flower remedies, prescribed the pink rose for people who cringe before the threshold of life and get stuck. The remedy causes you dare to come out from a negative state of resignation and happily surrender to the inner laws of life.

Murshid: *"Very often by learning philosophy and by looking at this world with pessimistic thought, people have renounced the world and have called it material and false; they have left this world and gone to the forest and desert or to a cave, and have taught the principle of self-denial and renunciation. This was not the way of Hafiz. He said life is like journeying over the sea and coming to a new port, and before landing a man becomes frightened and says, 'But perhaps I shall be attacked, or the place will attract me so much that I shall not be able to go back to where I came from.' But he does not know why he has started on that journey; he has certainly not undertaken it in order to go back again without landing somewhere. The attitude of Hafiz is to land there, to risk it. If it turns out to be an attractive place, he is ready to be won; if it will crush him, he is ready to be crushed. This is a daring attitude: not to run away from this false world, but to discover glimpses of the truth in this false world and to find God's purpose in this maze."*

Ya Rahim

Your love was with me on my way from the beginning until today.

Your love will animate me in my further steps and you will help me on the next threshold, because you love me until the end.

*"My heart turns into a pink rose
in Thy divine love."*

Medication

The essence of the pink rose helps

to embrace life

to let oneself be embraced

to believe in love

to get married

the warm the others

to love

Red Rose

"In the red rose I see

Thy heart bleeding over the corruption of humanity."

Every human being on the spiritual path knows the feeling that the environment hurts one. In German, there's even a special word for this feeling. It is called "Weltschmerz". It must not be, that you directly get hurt. It is rather the thoughtlessness and rudeness of fellow human beings that continuously makes pain. In the Christian religion this state of vulnerability is represented by the figure of Christ on the cross, with the crown of thorns. In my homeland, the Allgäu, a cross stands at many intersections. Initially this seemed strange to me. Why should be pointed all the time everywhere on the suffering, so I wondered. Today, I understand these crosses as consolation. They tell me: "Look how the master of humanity is dealing with injuries."

Inayat Khan: *"When a man's attitude has become a loving attitude, a tendency to serve, to forgive, to tolerate, to have reverence for all, good and bad, young and old, then he begins his journey. To explain what path it is there is no better symbol than the cross. No one without courage, strength of will, and patience can follow this path. When a person has to live among people of every different kind, he must make his own character soft as a rose, make it even finer so that no one can be hurt by the thorns.(...). The thorns can hurt the rose, but the rose cannot tear the thorns. Think what the life of the rose between two thorns must be!"*

So this state of vulnerability is the companion of all those who walk the spiritual path. Because, if we stop to isolate us in front of feeling, we open our hearts and feel more and more the effects of our own actions and thoughts and the impact of the influences of our fellow human beings. Murshid: *"Human personality is very delicate. The more living the heart the more sensitive it is; that which causes sensitivity is the love element in the heart, and love is God. The person whose heart is not sensitive is without feeling; his heart is not living, but dead. In that case the divine spirit is buried in his heart."* We have all learned to protect our hearts. Our character shows in a variety of ways, how many possibilities man has to keep away unpleasant experiences. In the course of our growth, we develop strategies to be able to endure life. We insulate our heart. But deep within each of us lives the longing to experience more of life.

The heart needs our ability to protect ourselves. The rose needs thorns. But if these mechanisms become a jail, we feel apart from life. The evolution of creation, so Murshid, is ultimately a process of enlargement: *"In proportion as the heart becomes more free of this limitation, naturally it becomes*

larger; because the capacity of one's heart (...) is unimaginably great. (...) If the heart of man were expanded, it would accommodate the whole universe in it, just like a drop in the ocean. The heart can be so large that it can hold the whole universe--all. And the heart that can hold all, can see the reflection from all; because the whole process of evolution is getting larger."

The bleeding of heart thus becomes a sign that man has gone through the cross in his development. If we say yes to feeling, this also includes to accept unpleasant feelings. The amazing thing is that when you're in love, the pain in the heart is welcome. It is a sign of the opening towards the beloved. When the longing for the beloved becomes dominating, we will gladly take the pain in purchase. It seems a minor matter, or even proof that we approach our love. Murshid on this topic: *"The wound in his heart is as a rose to the lover, the soreness in it is its bloom."*

Perhaps you know the phenomenon, that when you're in love and walk through the streets of the city, in people's faces the beloved becomes visible, in the steps of the passers of the way to walk of the anticipated? In our search for the beloved, people who surround us turn into aspects of her/him. Our desire for the beloved makes him/her visible in all that surrounds us. Perhaps you would say that this state is a kind of self-deception. Falling in love would give one a kind of sense deception. But Murshid describes this experience as the goal of religion at all. *"If anybody asks you, "What is Sufism? What religion is it?", you may answer, "Sufism is the religion of the heart, the religion in which the most important thing is to seek God in the heart of mankind."*

To open our hearts also means to become susceptible to suffering. The further we open, the more we experience also suffering. Our own suffering, the suffering of the ones next to us, the suffering of humanity, the suffering of nature. Murshid had opened up to the whole of creation, when he said: *"O nature sublime, in thy silence I hear thy mournful cry."* It's hard to hear this cry. We have the tendency to shield ourselves. It is hardly bearable, the suffering of the creatures. As a teenager, I did not understand how it can be that the neighbors in the street did not react, as the birch trees on the side of the road died one after another.

*"Oh, turn my heart red
Like Thy lovely red rose"*

Ya Rahman

You give your love without holding back, without fear to overspend, without ulterior motive, without restraint, without fear of hurting yourself. You persuade us and thus heal us from all wounds.

Medication

Red Rose essence supports us

to be with open hearts in the world

To accept pain and injuries as the price for the opening of the heart

to feel the pain of ourselves, our fellow human beings and nature

Yellow rose

Rosa foetida

It's not such a long time that yellow roses live with us Westerners. Only in recent history, roses in yellow colour have been imported from China to Europe. It seems to me, we were be enriched with this flower to a special mental attitude, which can perhaps be described as centeredness. This attitude I got to know impressively in Japan.

Everyone knows how much life on earth requires very strong feet. Spiritually interested people are often faced with the challenge to implement the values and visions, which we discover in meditation in daily life.

Continuity and perseverance are no new qualities. In the days in which I write this chapter, two men working on the repair of our terrace on the first floor. Without getting distracted they carry up concrete, consider solutions to arising problems together, ensure their safety. Their work is a single model of endurance, strength and rhythm. It is perfectly clear that nothing stands in the way for a successful conclusion. They started something and will take it to a good end.

My situation looks very different. Since 1999, I am here to collecting the passages in the writing of Hazrat Inayat Khan, where flowers are mentioned. To arrange the collected material is a completely different activity than to create a summary from this collection. The representation of a flower and the reproduction of Murshid's vision requires dreams, time of meditation. You must be relaxed and open for new insights, otherwise it is not possible to grasp really what Murshid has indicated in one or two sentences. In the Ziraat papers, Murshid describes how we should follow the course of the Sun, so that we can meet the work in all its aspects. At sunrise, there are other tasks to be done than at sunset. Also the Lunar rhythm should be given prominence. The following up of the natural rhythms gives me a kind of anchor, which I desperately need for the completion of my project.

I would say that this kind of rooting is most closely connected with the earth element. The other elements of water, fire and air are available for light, sound and movement: Areas, which are usually more closely associated with spirituality. Mental agility, enlightenment, ecstasy in music are subjects, that Sufis are known about. Of course here we have the danger of are losing ourselves and chaos. Sensitivity and fine perception can easily turn into nervousness. Only someone who shows stability from the beginning to the end is truly convincing.

Hazrat Inayat Khan in the nature meditations: **einfügen** "For nervous people that are physically and mentally unstable, yellow flowers." Since yellow is the color of the earth element, I first once assumed that stability is reached through a connection with this element. It is clear that a funky man needs grounding. However, Murshid says then elsewhere: **einfügen** "Yellow flowers give charisma". This puts us to another track. Earth normally has little common with light and radiance. But Murshid has a vision of the life on Earth, which at the same time has a fixed anchorage and is sunoriented.

Of all flowers the rose shines probably the most. Its attractiveness is the highest.

Murshid:

*"In the yellow rose I see
Thy divine light".*

The yellow rose represents a unique mysterious connection between Earth and Sun. And this connection manifests itself in an ability to keep spirituality in balance with everyday life. It empowers us to realise our highest ideals, even if the way lasts a lifetime.

Murshid: *"It is wonderful to watch a flower when it is still a bud and to see how it grows every day, how it vibrates differently every moment of the day until it comes to such a culmination that it begins to radiate, reflecting the sun."*

Ya Matin

In you, I experience the wonderful power that emerges from the interaction between Earth and Sun. You give me the endurance and the rhythmic step, so that I can reach my goal.

Medication

With the help of the essence of the yellow rose, we develop

Stability

Continuity

Centeredness

Integration into the rhythms of the Sun

Magnetism and attractiveness

Cream rose

*"In the cream rose I see
Thy wisdom".*

Wisdom, so Murshid, is created in a process that we can compare with making butter. We are thrown back and forth in the butter churn until the creamy butter separates from the buttermilk. Before Hazrat Inayat Khan learned anything about spirituality learned from Hazrat Abu Hashim Madani Khan his teacher gave him daily for 6 months a lesson about plants, herbs, milk and butter.

The Zikr, the “royal” exercise of the Sufis, mimics the process of making butter in some way. The wheel of life confronts us continuously with new events, which trigger emotions in us. First, we believe in our attitudes and assessments. But the constant spin makes it ultimately impossible adhere to our judgments and we realise that reality is quite different from what we thought. The churn of life forces us to look at ourselves. Murshid: *“Wisdom is not necessarily a knowledge of names and forms; wisdom is the sum total of that knowledge which one gains both from within and without..... The one who knows does not need to argue; he knows; and he is so satisfied with this knowledge that he does not have that hunger which is felt by the person who argues.”*

That is the reason, so Murshid, why in the Indian legends, Krishna as a child is represented with a tendency to the butter-stealing: *“Wisdom is the butter of the whole life..... He was stealing it; which means, wherever he found wisdom he learned it, from everybody's experience he benefited.”*

With the help of examples from the Buddhist tradition Inayat Khan explains, what wisdom is: *“Buddha was the title of Gautama. He was called Buddha because his spirit expressed the meaning of the word Buddh. The word Buddh in Sanskrit means 'reason'.... Reason in its essence is of a liquid form: it is the cream of intelligence. When it is crystallized, it becomes rigid. Very often intellectuality explains a knowledge formed by reasons, most of them of rigid character. The fine reason is subtle; the finer the reason, the less it can be explained in words.”*

In the cream-colored rose the originally passionate color, either red or yellow, has faded.

Murshid: *“Man's atmosphere explains the condition of his soul. The further we go, so the more our disputes and arguments cease. They fade away until there is no color left in them; and when all the color has gone, the white light comes which is the light of God.”*

Ya Rauf

With your quiet friendly love you show me what it means to be human with all my heart.

Medication

The essence of the cream coloured rose helps

Questioning prejudgements

Distancing ourselves from our emotions

Pulling back from controversy

Developing friendliness

Gaining wisdom

White Rose

*"In the white rose I see
Thy divine love and compassion".*

Probably you remember an experiment in school during physics teaching: A circle is rotated fast with all colors of the rainbow and the color white appears. I can't remember the explanation of the teacher, but the mystery has been with me since then. If you mix all the colors together, appears black. But bringing all the colors together in fast motion, white will appear. White is the color of pure water. Pure water is water in its original state. If you want to see it, you must remove the other elements. This happens, as far as I understand, at the moment, where the circle with colours is quickly turned. The spinning Dervishes from the Sufi order of Maulana Rumi do just that in their dance. Inayat Khan: *"Sufism may be related to the word Suf which means purity. This purity is attained by purifying the soul from all foreign attributes that it has acquired, thereby discovering its real nature and character.Sufism is the analyzing of the self, the self which has for the moment become a mixture of three things, of body, mind, and soul. By separating the outer garments of the soul the Sufi discovers the real nature and character of the soul, and in this discovery lies the secret of the whole life."*

If you now think that throwing off the outer hull is the purpose of Sufism, you have recognized only half. Nirvana, which is without color, a pure white world, is aspired for; but not for its own sake. I remember a retreat with Pir Vilayat. We worked many days to put down all covers, with which we have dressed ourselves. Not just Sufi exercises were used, but also Christian and Buddhist practices. Then came the day of Samadhi, the pure emptiness. A Sufi term is Ya Haqq, truth without comparison. If you were lucky as a student, you would see a 'Glimps' of it. And hardly did we reach this highest state, the master said: "So, ladies and gentlemen, that was Samadhi, now we go on".

Where should it continue after this point? In any case, what comes after is highly interesting for the Sufis. It says in the quote above, that there is the secret is hidden and the true nature of the soul can be discovered. What it is, can not be described, but it is not like before. There is no adjustment to any social practices. There is no chasing after ideals. There is no rebellion against such external and internal constraints either.

For the development of the soul, Murshid recommends white flowers. Maybe it becomes gradually clear, why. The white colour allows to be, as we really are. Murshid describes this condition as follows: *"And then follows that ideal stage of the soul's unfoldment; when the world with all its limitations and people with all their faults, they are all tolerated, they are all forgiven, there is a continual expansion of sympathy and love, which continues to expand, just like a little pool of water expanding and turning into an ocean. To that soul, then, the world is not attractive nor tempting nor is it wonderful nor futile, it is most beautiful."*

Ya Haqq

Please, take me to the place where I can see myself without a mirror.

Ya Hayy

You give me the freedom to be who I really am.

Medication

The essence of the white rose causes

the separation of foreign parts out of the pure substance

Concentration on our soul or our angelic being

Letting go of the attachment to body and thinking

New birth

Development of personality in freedom

Beautiful shape

In the next sections, I'll provide according to Murshid Inayat Khan's instructions the specific quality of different stages of roses in connection to our spiritual development.

Rose Bush

"Rose-bush, what are you, friend or foe? --I am both, for my flowers are the caress of a friend and my thorns the sting of a foe."

True rose lovers love just as well the branches, leaves and thorns as the flowers. This is not self-evident. Murshid tells here a typical Sufi story: *"Once a mystic, walking in a garden, noticed a particularly beautiful rose. Attracted by its beauty he exclaimed, 'Praise be to God!' and went and kissed it. His disciples, who were walking behind him, then each picked a flower and kissed it fifty times. The gardener was annoyed and came towards them grumbling, but they said that they had only followed the example of their teacher. The teacher kept silent. But when they had gone a little farther they saw a smith at work, and a hot iron was glowing in the fire. The teacher approached, spoke the same words, 'Praise be to God!' and took the hot iron and kissed it. He asked the disciples, 'Why do you not follow me in this?' But none of them dared to do it."*

This morning I woke up from a dream. I met with my colleague and worst opponent in the clinic specialised on addiction many years ago. He found my methods impossible and agreed basically with nothing of what I did. Regularly, he yelled at me in his bursts of anger, and as he could then take his chance, he engaged himself in endeavours that I was fired. We met again in the dream. I called him my best friend and I asked him why we had never seen again. His response was that I had never searched for him.

When I woke up, I was first perplexed. Should I contact him? Was that the message of the dream? After a few moments I remembered that the colleague had died years ago. I myself was the figure in the dream, at that time my enemy and now my best friend, respectively. The dream told about an inner transformation, wherein that which one has despised most of himself, becomes part of one.

The Sufis call this process Nafs Kushi, the grinding of the ego. How does this grinding work? Murshid: *"When the self says, 'O no, I must not be treated like this', then we say, 'What does it matter?' When the self says, 'He ought to have done this, she ought to have said that,' we say, 'What does it matter, either this way or that way? Every person is what he is; you cannot change him, but you can change yourself'. That is the grinding."*

"When a thorn shows itself and you grind it as soon as you notice it, that same thorn by being crushed will turn into a rose... "

Ya Muntaqim

If you bite me, I sting you, so is the law.

Ya Afuw

In the pure forgiveness, there is no law.

Ya Mani

You're my castle, impenetrably against enemy attacks.

Ya Muti

I accept whatever you're giving me.

Medication

Rosebush essence helps us

to stand for our rights, when it is the case

to give up our rights, when it is the case

to distinguish between justice and forgiveness

Rosebud

"My lips hold the prayer in them as the rosebud holds fragrance in its heart."

"Little rosebud, what do you hold between your hands? --The secret of my beauty."

"Rosebud, what didst thou do all night? --With folded hands I was praying to heaven to open my heart."

Before a living organism can show a new level of existence, it must withdraw. A period of contemplation and search takes place. Where previously answers to the needs of the environment were easily given, now questions and uncertainties prevail. The old identity is no longer satisfying, a new one is not there yet. In this transition period a natural longing after internalization occurs.

Such a being

- likes the night more than the day, because at night the pressure of life necessities decreases and more freedom for withdrawal is given.
- folds the hands with the palms together in front of the heart. The hands just have no other use
- shrouds itself, draws a veil over the head, because it has to show nothing and does not want to be seen
- kneels down, because it does not know where its feet should go
- is silent, closes mouth and eyes, rolls its tongue upwards and its eyes backward. The need to say something or to see is lost
- realizes that it doesn't know no more; it feels only longing for a new opening
- searches for a contact with something bigger or better outside. The Sufis call this "outside" the beloved.

The entire alignment of this being is directed to the "You". It ceases to be engaged with the usual self. Not even the reflection on its condition is of any relevance. His or her attention is directed on what the "Other" wants, what creation is waiting for. You don't know no more what is your self. The only thing you feel is the longing for closeness to the "beloved". Murshid Inayat Khan: *"And there is a ... stage, when someone is more concerned with another person's wish and desire, and less with himself, when his whole heart is seeking for what he can do for another. In his thought the other person comes first and he comes afterwards. That is the beginning of turning into the rose. It is only a rosebud, but then in the (next) stage this rosebud blooms in the person who entirely forgets himself....."*

The terms 'Other' and 'Self' are of course full of contradictions. The Sufis prefer to speak of individuality and personality. Murshid explained the difference between the two terms as follows: *"On the earthplane the personality develops out of the individuality. The soul is an individual from the moment it is born upon the earth in the worldly sense of the word; but it becomes a person as it grows. For personality is the development of individuality, and in personality.....is born that spirit which is the re-birth of the soul. The first birth is the birth of man, the second birth is the birth of God."*

The bud stage, so we could say, is the stage of pregnancy of the rose. In the bud, a being is secretly prepared, which is unprecedented and provides an incomparable beauty compared to the plant.

By this development is not to be understood that we are attempting to comply with certain standards imposed from the outside. Murshid: *"The art of personality is not a qualification; it is the purpose for which man was created. Through this art man not only satisfies himself but also pleases God."*

To underline this, for a change once the words of other Indian master: "The rebel knows no reaction, he knows action. Action means yes. The rebel creates; he gives birth to himself. He becomes a new man, he heralds a new age (...) Not against anybody – it is simply a growth, just like a rosebush is growing. Do you think it is growing against the rocks? (...) It is growing, not as a reaction; it is growing because growth is its nature. It is growing to blossom, to bring its potential to actuality. It is a process of actualization." (Osho, "From Bondage to freedom", chap.37, 1985)

Hazrat Inayat Khan: *"Is it mannerism, putting on different airs of expression, a special politeness, a society rhythm? Not at all; it is falsehood, which people adopt by being unnatural and acting unnaturally. Instead of giving a better impression of themselves, they give a worse impression. The art of personality expresses itself spontaneously. One need not act in a certain way, one need not put on something: it is the expression of oneself which shows the art of personality."*

In the bud stage, the point is to turn inside. This means distancing oneself from the manner which was previously practiced. The old ways how to get along in society, is no longer of interest to the bud. Inside the bud is a new appearance being prepared which will show who it truly is.

Ya Batin

In Your inner world lies my secret without any concessions toward the outer world.

Ya Halim

Inside I'm dreaming Your dream of a loving universe, outwardly I am shy and cautious.

Ya-Mujib

I'm sure that your dream becomes a reality, I just don't know when and how.

Medication

Essence of rose buds will help

to go for prayer

to devote ourselves to our dreams

to pull back in

to prepare a new level of being

to trust to let go of the old, without having something new there yet

Rose in bloom

Then, the moment has come that the bud opens, something becomes visible, what the whole creation has been waiting for.

"O rosebud, thy blooming gives me the impression of my Beloved's countenance."

The opening of the flower with the countless petals is the climax in the life of a rose. Murshid calls this opening *"the blowing rose"* what means as much as the exploding rose. What was long hidden inside breaks out. The Sufis say that finally the beloved reveals her face. How could that be? The beloved is a person, and the rose a flower. Murshid: *"in the rose you can see man's face indistinctly."*

So we're not using a poetic or symbolic comparison, but an apparition of the human face in the rose. Where does the similarity between face and rose come from? It is the aspect of angels in the creation, which becomes visible in the human face and in the flower. There is something very delicate and vulnerable. Nowhere man can be hurt, as in his face. The petals show a such subtlety in its structure, as it does not occur in other parts of plants. Murshid: *"Man may retain angelic qualities even in his life on the earth as a human being; and it is the angelic quality which can be traced in some souls who show innocence and sympathy in their lives. This is not necessarily weakness; it only shows the delicacy of a flower in the personality, together with fragrance."*

"Rose, in thy petals I see the rosy cheeks of my Beloved."

Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan distinguished between face and the "Antlitz", which is so much as the face behind the face. In the Antlitz something becomes visible what is hidden behind matter. A glimmer of a mystery becomes visible.

"I see Thy mystery hidden, Beloved, under the petals of the flower."

However, there's a moment where the essence of the rose fully materializes. There is nothing more that is not visible. Everything is there, nothing is held back. Nothing of what appears, is a reminder of something else. The beauty of the rose flower is incomparable. The beloved is finally here and except her nothing exists.

"In the blooming rose I see the charm of Thy lovely countenance."

Unfortunately, this moment is of short duration. Murshid: *"It is wonderful to watch a flower when it is still a bud and to see how it grows every day, how it vibrates differently every moment of the day until it comes to such a culmination that it begins to radiate, reflecting the sun. Besides its color and*

form we can see something living in the flower, something sparkling. It can best be seen when the flower is still on the plant. And then, when it has reached its culmination, it begins gradually to fade, and that again is according to the law of vibrations."

"In the smiles of the rose, Beloved, I see Thy joy at my homecoming."

Ya Zahir

Your physical appearance is a miracle and climax of the whole creation.

Ya Latif

Nothing is as delicate and refined as you.

Medication

The essence of the rose in full bloom helps us

to show our vulnerable beauty

to shine

to smile

to hold nothing back

Rose heart

Rosa Rubrifolia or Rosa glauca, Pike-rose

"My heart, gather thyself together as the rose holds its petals."

The original Wild Roses have an irrepressible power. Often in impossible places, they show how one can live and show its beauty. These Wild Roses struggle their way through.

Their flowers show big hearts. In the case of cultivated roses these often have become completely invisible in favor of more petals. Located in the heart of roses are the carpels. As we have seen, they are located on the ground of the flower cup.

The hypanthium, which later will be the hip, is a cavity. The plant develops an interior, where the experiences of the flower are stored. There arises as the result of individual plant life the seed. All properties of the plant are laid down in the seeds. Why is this seed born in a cavity? Murshid explains this phenomena with the interaction between mind and matter. A cavity or "Vacuum" in Murshids

language comes into being inside a living creature, where the spirit is stronger than the substance. At the moment, wherein the plant begins to mould the hypanthium, the plant begins to spiritualize. To the point she was busy in materializing. In the heart of the flower, this inversion takes place. Where previously the goal of the plant was to move into the environment, now she starts to take the environment into itself. The result is an Interior that is imperceptible for the normal senses. Awareness is created as a result of a shift in the balance of power between mind and matter. Murshid: *"The difference between the nature of vacuum and the nature of substance is that vacuum is knowing."*

This knowledge is created by spiritualizing, in which the limit of the individual existence is repealed. The individual rose plant, which had taken on substance in the world, more or less managed as a rose. In the vacuum this limited experience is absorbed into the perfection of the very essence of Roses.

The "organ" of the plant, where the transition between the individual rose existence and the eternal principle of roses takes place, is located in the heart of the flower. The carpels form a bridge between the visible and the invisible world. The interesting thing is, that in case of the rose or the formation of the cavity the stem is enlarged. When you cut the thickening lengthwise, you discover that it is hollowed out as a pitcher. Whereas most other flowers form the containment of the seed in the former flower in the rose this act of sublimating sinks down into the body. The "stem force" which ensured that the plant steadily grew into the environment, is ousted by a "flower power" that takes the environment into itself. In this act the substance is imbued with the spiritual.

In Rosa Glauca this spiritual "flower power" is particularly pronounced. It already shows as a red color in the leaves, stems and thorns. The red of the flower shows in advance in the foliage.

This spiritual flower power is probably meant by Murshid, when he says:

*"Empower my heart that I may pull myself together
Like the heart of the rose controlling its petals".*

The power to control himself, is a spiritual force. It is just a force that follows the laws of the substance.

Murshid Inayat Khan: *"And when a person says, 'I will not occupy this position, I will not eat this, I hate it, I despise it, I cannot bear it, I cannot look at it, I cannot endure it, I cannot stand it,' these are all little thorns." "Every time that we notice its pinprick.... we should crush it and say, 'What are you? Are you not thorns, are you not the cause of unhappiness for others and myself as well? I do not want to see my own being in such a form, in the form of thorns! I want my being to be turned into a rose, that I may bring happiness, pleasure, and comfort to others.' If there is anything needed in spiritual teaching, in seeking truth, in self-realization, it is the refinement of the ego. For the same ego which begins by being our worst enemy, will in the end, if developed and cultivated and refined, become our best friend."*

A process takes place in the rose flower, which is also possible in the personality development of human beings. While in the growth phase a living being responds to irritation from the outside by

countermeasures, this same creature in the flowering phase begins to take the experiences simply into itself. It has stopped reacting. This attitude in human beings is called kindness. It's an attitude in life, which was unthinkable in the previous phase. Why would you not defend yourselves and not react to annoyances? There's really only one reason for that: Because it makes no more sense! There comes a moment where this natural reaction is not rewarding no more. In case of the rose plant this new attitude is revealed in the bloom. Also in humans arises at some point the need to proceed in their development. One discovers that so far one has just responded and that one didn't act. With acting is meant here, to show ourselves independent from the necessities. Both rose and people have the ability to free themselves from the legalities of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth'.
 Murshid: *"It is mainly gentleness which is the basis of all refinement. But where does it come from? It comes from consideration, and it is practiced by self-control."*

The enigmatic, now, is that the power for this transformation towards friendliness is born out of itself. Yes, it's also a feat of strength. It takes discipline and lots of awareness. But this mastery is born from the desire for beauty in the encounter. It draws its strength from the love affair: To beautify ourselves for the beloved. Murshid summarizes once more this wonderful process, where friendship and mastery unite in love: *"„No doubt one learns gentleness by consideration. One must learn to think before saying or doing. Besides one must not forget the idea of beauty. One must know that it is not enough simply to say or do, but that it is necessary to say or do everything beautifully."*

"a heart which is holding in itself and reflecting the rose, will find roses everywhere. Roses will be attracted to that heart, roses will be produced from it and for it. As this reflection becomes stronger, so it becomes creative of the phenomenon of roses."

Ya Wali

In Your presence, my Master, I'm lifted and protected against violations by the powerful. So close to you nothing can happen to me. You have everything in Your hand, You're full of love, You're my friend.

Ya Jami

You're holding together all my different aspects in the unit in my heart.

Medication

The essence of rose heart helps

to master the transition between the life stages of ego development and ego refinement

to be powerfully centered in the heart

to experience pleasure in refraining

to create beauty

Faded rose

"Roseflower, why are your lips drooping? --I am thinking over my glorious past."

After the peak of flowering is over, the flower starts mourning. It lets her petals hang down. It will never have again the beauty that it used to have. It is time to say goodbye. Only the memory remains of her beautiful face. The faded rose lives in the past. And there she discovers amazing things. The further it penetrates into the past, the more becomes clear that nothing remains and everything is lost. And yet: Again and again the flower is born. Where does it come from?

"Everything shall perish except the face of Allah." (Qur'an quoted by Murshid)

This verse gives information about what remains from the face of the rose: nothing personal. But a face remains.

But from where come all the faces? Murshid shows how in fact the past of the rose is a glorious past. It was created and is formed again and again from the face of Christ. Is not man the end result of a long evolution? How can man stand at the beginning? Murshid: *"Jesus Christ is represented as saying, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,'It is the same spirit which spoke through Krishna, saying, 'We appear on earth when Dharma is corrupted,'During his divine absorption Mohammad said, 'I existed even before this creation and shall remain after its assimilation.' In the holy traditions it is said, 'We have created thee of Our light and from thy light We have created the universe.'"*

The Rose queen of the flowers has a special relation to the light of Christ. This is the reason why the flowered out rose withdraws into this light and finds that her past was glorious. She forgets her single rose-existence and is taken home by the light.

Ya Dhul jelaal wal 'Ikram

Oh you, Christ, Alpha and Omega, your face was at the beginning of creation and will be the last, that remains. Help me to remember so that I have part of your glory and become aware of my Royal heritage.

Medication

The essence of the withered rose can be of help in

Processing of loss

Getting older

Awareness of divine descent

Rose seeds

Murshid Inayat Khan: *"...in the essence of the seed of the rose there is the rose itself, its fragrance, form and beauty. Although in the seed it is not manifest, at the same time it is there in essence. The one who tunes himself not only to the external but also to the inner being and to the essence of all things, gets an insight into the essence of the Whole Being, and therefore he can find and enjoy that fragrance and flower which he sees in the rose, to the same extent even in the seed."*

"Every word once it is spoken, every deed that is done, every sentiment felt is recorded somewhere; it has not gone, it is not lost. We do not see it because it is not always recorded on the ground. If a seed is sown in the ground, it is recorded in the ground; it comes out in big letters, proving 'I am an apple-tree', 'I am a rose-bush'. But when something is thrown into space, space does not lose it either. It has received it and it holds it; and it shows it to those who can build a capacity round the space and get its reflection in that capacity."

Ya Malik

Even if I lost everything and nothing of me is left over, you hold me in your hands.

Ya Qayyum

Your nature overwinters in seed outside of time and space.

Medication

The essence of the rose seeds helps

to perceive the echo of things inside

to build the ability, to contact the world inside

to connect to the essence of things

to discover that nothing is lost

Production of the rose essences

*"The divine spark in me is as a drop from Thine ocean;
Let me preserve it as the rose preserves the dewdrop."*

As I reflected on this quote from the nature meditations within the framework of this book, new insights arose. Murshid gives the indication to concentrate on the breathing during the recitation. Inhalation: **einfügen** The divine spark... Exhalation: Let him keep me... During the inhalation phase, the drop pulls itself from the everywhere present moisture in the environment as clearly limited individuality together. At the exhalation the rose takes care of the dew. She wants to keep it. There is probably a kind of consciousness in the rose, that this dew is precious and demands attention.

Murshid compares this process in the plant Kingdom with to an operation with us humans. At the exhalation, we relax and go up into the environment, at the inhalation, we concentrate and charge ourselves. *" the highest relaxation ...is to relax the whole being: body in repose, mind at rest, heart at peace. It is that experience which may be called Nirwana... In that condition each person becomes for the time as a drop that is assimilated or submerged in its origin. And being submerged for one moment means that all that belongs to the origin is attracted by this drop, because the origin is the essence of all. The drop has taken from its origin everything it has in life. It is newly charged and has become illumined again."*

Everything that makes up the rose focuses in the dew drops. The water that is concentrated there was previously spread over the whole rose. It was in the rose and around the rose. It has touched the colour and the shape and the scent and the skin and the juices of the rose. It has registered the inhalation and exhalation of the rose. It has recorded the influences that affect the rose.

The ability of the water to absorb the essence of things, was explored and made visible in detail recently by scientists such as Masaru Emoto. I had the opportunity to visit the exhibition "World in a drop" at the University of Stuttgart. The researcher Minnie Hein showed me under a powerful microscope how the universe manifests itself in a drop.

Murshid Inayat Khan was in full awareness about the absorption capacity of the water and the special properties of the drop. I give you here are some statements from him again:

"Water is the most responsive substance; it partakes of the color and effect of everything."

"Water especially, which is a most invigorating substance, partakes of life from the breath."

"We can best understand a universe in man first by comparing a drop of water with the sea. The water has the same tendency of responding to the air, whether it be in the ocean, the sea, in a river, or in a glass of water. Even in the glass of water it responds to the air, and if there were room there would be waves. In the river there are waves, in the sea there are bigger waves, in the ocean they rise much higher still. The same tonic, properties, that doctors find in the water of the sea we can find in the drop of water."

The essence of the rose is contained in the dew drops. When Murshid says that the whole ocean is included in a drop, that can be only the essence. Yes, everything off the rose is contained in the dew drop, namely in a highly concentrated form. In the quote from the nature meditations, this concentrate is called spark. It is the same light as the Sun in its essence.

The alchemists, who come from the same cultural space as the old Sufis and devoted to chemistry to better understand their own internal processes, were always attempting to distill the essence of things. Murshid: *"Alchemists at one time used a process by which they extracted the essence of flowers in such a way that one drop of it spread its perfume for miles around. That art seems to have been lost; yet what we can learn from it is that in everything that exists there is a spirit, and that spirit has all the qualities which the outside of that thing shows least."*

The discovery, which doctor Edward Bach made twenty years after Murshids going, in the thirties of the last century, was clearly in the line of the alchemists. He developed an amazingly simple method to capture the essence of flowers and make it available to our spiritual development. The Bach flower drops are now available at any pharmacy. The amazing thing is that he took drops of dew from the flowers of his choice in the experimental phase of his remedies. A complex method that is almost impossible with some plants. Probably that's why again he left this method.

With roses this dew drop method is feasible though. It seems that roses in comparison to other plants are especially keen, to preserve their essence and to provide it. The drop in the early morning, made available by the flower, is such a gift. Therefore, it was not a difficult decision for me to create the United nature rose essences on the basis of dew drops. The amazing beauty of the phenomenon rewards a thousand times the effort.

Saffron

Etymology

Crocus sativus

Hebrew: Garcom. Latin: Crocus. Greek: Krokos. Arabic/Persian: za'farān.

Botany

Saffron is a perennial species of crocus. In contrast to our native species of crocus, the saffron starts growing and flowers in the autumn and lasts for the rest of the year as bulb in the ground. The red stamp is harvested from the violet flowers as a spice. This species is a cultural form of the wild plant *crocus cartwrightianus*. The cultivated form is infertile and can be only vegetatively propagated by division of the tubers. Botanically, the Saffron crocus is unique in the plant world. Just in the female, receiving part of the flower, it gathers all its essential active ingredients: fragrance, color, taste, essential oils, glycosides, psychotropic drugs, remedies for women's diseases and toxins. To win one kilogram of stamps a plucker takes a day and a half and needs until about 200,000 flowers. Therefore, Saffron is one of the most expensive spices.

Cultivation

Saffron is cultivated in Iran, Kashmir, Morocco, Turkey and in Europe in France, Spain, Greece, Italy. 200 tonnes of Saffron are produced approximately per year, of which 90% comes from Iran.

Use

Saffron tastes bitter tart hot and colors dishes intense golden yellow. Saffron has been used as a dye. Already Pliny mentions saffron as colorant. Saffron is prepared for homeopathic applications.

History and symbolism

Persia

Saffron yellow shoes were part of the clothing of the Persian Kings.

From the wild collection, saffron was exported to India since time immemorial from Persia and Kashmir.

In writings from the 10th century, it is mentioned that saffron was cultivated in Derbena and Ispahan in Persia.

India

Hazrat Inayat Khan: *"India, the land of mysticism and philosophy, has symbolism in all its customs. Even in the marriage ceremony everything that is done as a custom or rite is symbolical. Both bride and bridegroom wear saffron-colored garments for the ten days that the wedding ceremony lasts; Saffron color, in the East, is considered to be the color of all sorts of good luck. It is the imperial sign. Love-letters are written in saffron color. The invitations for the wedding are written in this color, for this color represents light. Light in heaven and gold on earth, both are yellow. Therefore yellow is preferred to all other colors to be the omen on some good occasion in life."*

Israel

Saffron is mentioned in the Bible in the song of Solomon.

Crete, Greece and Phoenicia

Already at the time of the Cretan Mycenaean culture, saffron was an important object of trade, desired as dye for Royal robes, and as seasoning.

Greek myths and poems bear witness to an extraordinary admiration for the color and the smell of saffron. Gods and goddesses, heroes and nymphs dressed in saffron-colored robes. In a tale from Greek mythology, Zeus is reported sleeping on a bed of saffron.

Homer: "Eos in saffron robes, rose from Oceanus floods, to bring the light of the day to gods and mortals."

Also the Phoenicians used saffron for healing and spicing. They probably received it from the Indians.

Rome

Rich Romans sprinkled saffron on their wedding beds.

Medieval Europe

Traditionally it had a reputation to stimulate the sensual desire of women.

The best saffron comes from Spain, where the culture in the middle ages was introduced by the Arabs.

The famous physician and Sufi Avicenna (his Persian name was Abu Sina) refers in his "Canon" to its therapeutic use. Since then saffron in Europe bears the Arabic name.

Murshid

In the nature meditations, Murshid Inayat Khan gives some hints about the effect that saffron made on him. These are meditations. The italic part on the inhalation, the other half on the exhalation.

*"In saffron shineth
the light of Thy majesty"*

The master finds Divine majesty in nature: *"Immensity of space, thou showest to me the majesty of His presence."*

Sufis are not satisfied with a concept of God, neither with an idea of God. They are looking for the presence of God, which also can be visible in his glory and dignity in the human beings who manage to resist all influences that pull them down and pull them away from their ideal. *"So one should not be surprised at the custom of the dervishes, who sometimes in their assemblies, sitting on the ground under the shade of a tree or beside a river, without a mat and without proper clothes, yet address one another as 'Your Majesty the King' or 'Your Majesty the Emperor'."*

*"Saffron is the color
of Thy kingly grandeur".*

Murshid loved saffron-colored robes. From the reports of his contemporaries, we can see what dignity he exuded. He says about himself: *"each person's rhythm is peculiar to himself. Once a pupil who accompanied me on my walk, in spite of all his kindness and pleasure in accompanying me, felt a great discomfort at times because he could not walk as slowly as I did. Being simple and frank, he expressed this to me. And in answer I said, 'It is a majestic walk.'"*

*"In saffron I feel
Thy passionate love."*

What now could be the connection between passionate love and majesty? How can it be that passion is mentioned in the same breath with dignity? Murshid: *"When the life-force acts in the soul it is love, when it acts in the heart it is emotion, and when in the body it is passion. Therefore the most loving person is the most emotional, and the most emotional is the most passionate, according to the plane of which he is most conscious."*

In my opinion, it is one of the greatest achievements of Hazrat Inayat Khan, that he bridged the gap between passion and spirituality. For him a separation between spirituality and physicality doesn't exist. He sees no need or benefit in the repression of sexual love with all resulting perversions in our society. On the contrary, he sees the fascination between man and woman as important step for the realization of the divine on all planes of existence. *"Religious man, wherever found and whatever teacher he followed, has nevertheless been prone to look at contact with woman with contempt, with the thought of there being something unholy in the passionate love of woman. Indeed it is a question whether the libertine has actually debased woman as much as the religious man, who believes that to hold himself aloof from any woman with contempt and to strangle his love within him, will be for his own spiritual benefit. And is it possible to debase woman and the position of woman in the scheme of life without debasing man and the whole of life?"*

If we only see a value in spirituality, man and life itself loses his Majesty.

*"Saffron brings
enchantment and heavenly joy to my heart."*

Ya Dhul Jamil Wál Ikram

O Queen, it is your majestic physicality that ignites passionate love in me.

Ya Majid

Majesty!

Ya Hu

Your presence in body, heart and soul is my joy and ecstasy.

Medication

The essence of Saffron

opens our senses for the Majesty of the divine nature

evokes passionate love and pays tribute to it

provides men and women as equal to each other

makes us to kings and queens, no matter where we are

leads to joy and ecstasy

Sundew

Latin: *Drosera rotundifolia*; English: Round-leaved sundew.

The genus of sundew (*Drosera*) forms with its nearly 200 species the second largest genus of carnivorous plants. The leaves of the plants with adhesive glands, which enable it to catch prey and so to thrive in nutrient-poor areas are characteristic.

The genus is widespread throughout the world, the main distribution areas are Australia, South America and South Africa.

Etymology

The botanical name comes from the Greek "drosos" for "Dew". The English name is a translation of the earlier botanical name "Ros solis". All of these names derive from the shiny appearance of the numerous gland secretion droplets at the tip of the tentacles, which are reminiscent of morning dew.

Botany

Roots

The root system is weak. It serves mainly the anchoring of the plant in the ground and to absorb water; for the supply of nutrients, the roots are almost meaningless.

Glandular tentacles

All sundews are characterized by their tentacles occupied with sticky secretions on the leaves, that can be moved. The shimmering of the drop attracts insects, which then stick to the secretions. Then the tentacles in the immediate area around the prey tilt in the direction of the prey. The trapped animals are either killed by exhaustion or choked in the tenacious secretions. Meanwhile, the tentacle secrete enzymes that now slowly decompose the prey and release the nutrients contained therein. So dissolved nutrients are then absorbed by the glands on the leaf surface and used for the growth process.

Flowers, fruits and seeds

The flowers of the sundew are on very long inflorescences above the plant, so that possible pollinator insects are not caught by the leaves. The flowers individually open and bloom usually only briefly. Especially the intensity of the Sun is crucial for the opening of the flower; so the

inflorescences are "heliotrope", they go after the Sun. The simple five-pointed flowers are extremely small (less than 1.5 cm).

Capsule fruit with many small seeds are formed in the ovary. Many species of sundew are self-pollinating; often, large amounts of seeds are produced.

Dissemination

The areas of the genus extend overall from Canada in the North to New Zealand in the South. The main distribution areas are Australia with nearly 50% of all species, South America with twenty to thirty species, as well as southern Africa. Some species occur over a large area in Eurasia and North America; but these areas are to be considered as a rather peripheral region of the genus, as well as the extreme Arctic occurrence.

In Europe, there are only three types: The round-leaved sundew (*D. rotundifolia*), the long-leaved sundew (*D. anglica*) and the medium-sized sundew (*D. intermedia*).

Sundew grows typically in seasonally wet areas with nutrient-poor, acidic soils and plenty of Sun, for example in bogs, heaths, marshes. Many forms are growing with Sphagnum moss, which take away nutrients from the underground and at the same time make it acid, thus hindering the growth of potential competitors.

Drosera species are protected in most European countries. In Central Europe the use of habitats through drainage and peat extraction was over a long time the main threat. Through the enhanced legal protection of moors, as well as efforts for its restoration, the decline of the sundew could be slowed.

In two of the three main areas, in South Africa and Australia, the natural habitats of sundew are subject to high degree of pressure by the people. Also by the droughts, which goes on in parts of Australia already more than ten years as a result of global warming, locations are lost.

Just the species to be found only in extremely closely circumscribed locations are subject to the collection of wild plants, the greatest risk of total loss. *Drosera madagascariensis* is considered endangered in Madagascar due to largescale annual collection of 10-200 million plants for marketing purposes.

Use

Already in the 12th century, the herbs were described by an Italian doctor from the school of Salerno as medicinal herbs for irritable coughs. As cough remedy it is used in 200-300 approved preparations of medicine even today, mostly in combination with other active ingredients. Furthermore sundew was used to strengthen the heart and as an aphrodisiac, but also for the treatment of sunburn and against freckles.

Drosera has been prescribed as a cure for aging. As a plant extract, it came to use with arterio-sclerosis.

Gurudas describes the effect of the plant on the dealing with negative thought forms in an impressive manner. "When it captures an insect, there is a gradual absorption. It is not an instantaneous or rapid motion. The individual absorbs the lesson behind the negative thoughtform. As a result, the thought form is gradually understood; it is not just released. The message behind it is absorbed by the individual. The symbolism here is simply that insects, especially the smaller ones that can be particularly irritating or troublesome without being directly harmful, are those that the plant works with most easily. And these are the insects that often hold the most difficult negative thought forms for individuals. This is not so much because they are difficult to understand. These negative thought forms can affect levels of judgment, misunderstanding of others, misapplication of speech, and inability to forgive. So how they slowly absorb an insect without immediate or rapid motion, the plants can liberate us people from negative thought forms.

Sundew is described as a flower essence. This should bring about the merger with the origin of life, prevent the identification with the ego, the self merging with the divine will. Helps to give up the resistance to change and to detach from the familiar.

Murshid

"Sun-dew, why is it that every insect dies instantly when it kisses you? --I like him so much that I devour him.

Sun-dew, where did you learn this philosophy? --Once upon a time a voice said to me, "I am the love and I am the life, and whosoever cometh to me, I embrace him and turn him into my own being."

A carnivorous plant has nothing friendly about it at first glance. So far we had talked in this book about plants as modest, sensitive beings. For us humans, plants are signposts to an attitude in life that will appear, if we let the animal world with their ruthless instincts behind us. The flowers and trees emit something quiet. They are happy with themselves and their place on Earth. They have nowhere to go. The irrepressible appetite for meat as not properly fitting into this picture. Gone seems all selflessness. What to say about our affinity to a vegan lifestyle if also plants eat animals?

It seems to me that Murshid presents this plant to us, to clear some misconceptions about spirituality out of the way. Yesterday, I had accompanied my father-in-law in the Catholic mass. As a child of a free thinking protestant mother and an atheist father, I experience there all sorts of interesting things. This time, it was mainly the communion that fascinated me. Christ has invited us to "eat him". He loves us and that's why he offers us to devour him. When a plant eats an animal, it pulls a creature that is higher on the development ladder, in a reverse direction. The fast world of moving ideas is digested and absorbed in a slowdown, which ultimately leads us to the world of minerals. There, everything has fallen silent. Everything is waiting and it doesn't matter. The stone is simply available. "Down to earth" one could say.

Elsewhere, Murshid told about this movement: *"There is almost too much that a soul has to do on the earth; there is also much that it has to accomplish in the spirit world or plane of the jinns. But there is much less to be done in the heaven of the angels; for as the soul proceeds forward, so its burden becomes lighter. The only condition of proceeding forward and drawing closer to the goal is that of throwing away the heavy burden which the soul has taken upon itself throughout its journey."*

The world of the Jinns is the world of the thoughts, winged ideas, brilliant ideas. It is our task to catch this world and digest it. The sundew does this. Murshid describes the activity of the plant as an act of love. If the lover comes flying and is attracted to the shiny pearls of the sundew and wants to kiss it, he gets absorbed fully by it. At this point, I would like to insert a passage, wherein Murshid describes the love of a young woman to her lover: *"Then follows a full awakening; and her glance falling on her lover is as an arrow; it pierces through his heart. Her kiss thrills him to the depth of his being, and her embrace holds intense joy for him. She is frank, sincere, and open; courageously she responds to him, desiring even to express her own emotions, as she gallantly faces the truth she has discovered. And thus comes the culmination of youth, where abides the fulfillment of love."*

We are encouraged fully to go up in sexuality. There man and woman can receive a first glimpse of how much love creation is capable. But only if we don't stop halfway, but fully embrace life. Or, if it is more, one hug can be.

Murshid: *"What the ascetics, denied in their absence because they're scared, to be seduced or deceived, he/it has embraced Sufi in recognition of all beauty; by the unseen until, by the spirit to matter, all names and forms are nothing but the symbol of God, and thus he worships them in all aspects, high and low, good and bad."*

Medication

Sonnentau-essence helps us

to fully embrace creation

to discover our love in the appetite and the sexuality.

to discover love as a principle of life everywhere

to feed us from love

Sunflower

The sunflower, *Helianthus annuus*, is a species in the genus of *Helianthus* in the family of the Asteraceae.

Just as at the other plants from that family such as dandelion, daisy and arnica, one will notice a special intensity of flowering at the sunflower. Many small flowers closely drawn together are densely packed in the composite flower. They have been counted: At a diameter of the disc by 14 centimeters, there were 1116 flowers, surrounded by 48 ray florets which with their rich yellow surround the plethora of disc florets as a corona.

In many plants the seed formation will take place after the bloom off. Sunflowers bloom in the second half of the year, when in nature subsides the natural flowering and ripening is the most important process. The sunflower seeds appear already during flowering. In the seed formation life frees itself from all external influences. It becomes independent during ripening through focusing entirely on itself.

At first the flowers show a living relationship with the Sun and turn following its daily course. That is why the French call the sunflower *tournesol*, the Italians *girasol*. The peculiarity of the plant always to turn to the sunlight is called heliotropism. On sunny days, the bud tracks the Sun on their journey along the sky from East to West, while returning at night or at dawn on its East-facing position. This movement goes out at the peak of the flowering. Now, the many flower baskets in a sunflower field all show towards the Southeast, in the direction of the sun rising in the morning.

Etymology

The botanical name for sunflower, *Helianthus annuus*, is derived from the Greek words *helios* (Sun) and *anthos* (flower). *Annuus* derives from the word for "year", and refers to the annual growing season.

Origin, diffusion, and use

The wild sunflower had a large distribution area stretching from Northern to Central America. Archaeological findings show that the sunflower was cultivated around 2500 BC in the area of the Mississippi River, and also in Mexico City. Francisco Pizarro watched Incas, which worshipped the sunflower as the image of God. Illustrations as well as seeds of sunflower were brought in 1552 by Spanish navigators from America to Europe, where it was first grown as an ornamental plant.

The sunflower has a variety of economic uses. The seeds are rich in high-quality oil. The leaves are used as cattle feed, the stems contain a fiber; the lightest material at all on the world that is suitable for papermaking. The flowers contain yellow color.

Main growing areas today are China, the United States, Russia, the Ukraine and the rest of Europe. It is also grown in India.

The plant has the ability to grow in one year up to 4 meters high. With its taproot, which can reach a depth of nearly 80 centimeters under favorable soil conditions in 12 days, it absorbs large amounts of water. It was used in this property in the Netherlands, to put wet areas dry.

Symbolism

In Peru, the Aztecs was worshiped the flower highly. In their Sun temples the priestesses were crowned with sunflowers and wore them in their hands. The early Spanish conquerors found numerous sunflowers made of pure gold in these temples.

The name Helianthus comes from Greek mythology and is recorded in a poem by Ovid: Once the girl Clytia fell in love with the God of light Apollo. But he spurned Clytia. She then sat down naked on a rock, ate and drank nothing and during nine days looked up to Apollo, as he drove his chariot across the sky. Then, her heartache turned into yellow and brown colours: She is turned into a "Sunflower" which turned its flower always towards the Sun (Apollo's chariot).

In our time, the sunflower is the symbol of the German Green Party, as well as internationally of other ecologically-oriented parties.

Murshid

"Sunflower, what are you? --I am the eye of the seeker who searches for the light."

Who is this light seeker, which appears as a sunflower? For the Sufis seeking the light is the only reason that exists for us and all other beings. The goal of life is enlightenment. In humans, there are two categories: Those who are without noticing, or so to speak backwards, pulled toward the light, and those who follow the way toward the light with their face forward. A person of the last category, thus Murshid, enjoys *"at every step each experience it has met with, and rejoicing at every moment of this journey in approaching nearer to the goal. What does this soul, conscious of its progress towards the goal, realize? It realizes with every veil it has thrown off a greater power, an increased inspiration, until it arrives at a stage...., when it realizes that error which it had known, and yet not known fully; the error it made in identifying itself with its reflection, with its shadow...."*

The seeker of the light eventually discovers that what he is looking for, was looking for him all the time. This puzzle is repeatedly found in Sufism. The searcher is the one that is searched for. The lover is the beloved. The sunflower is looking for the light, so that the light can find the sunflower.

Murshid: *"It is like the sun looking at the sunflower and thinking, 'I am the sunflower', forgetting at that moment that the sunflower is only its footprint."*

The sunflower is looking for the light, so that the light ultimately can find out its own identity .

Until then the light-seeker rambles through the world of reflections. He thinks at each next level: "that's me", only to discover that he was caught again in an idea. It is a reflection, not the reality. Until he reaches the point of enlightenment where he says: *"It is I who was, if there were any. What I had thought to be myself was not myself, but was my experience. I am all that there is, and it is myself who will be, whoever there will be. It is I who am the source, the traveller, and the goal of this existence. 'Verily truth is all the religion there is; and it is truth which will save.' "*

Exactly what the sunflower would say if it would finally understand that anything it ever absorbed, was always the Sun; from a thousand different angles and perspectives. Each flower an eye, each seed storing a life experience. Each time from one perspective only, each time the basis for a whole sunflower.

Murshid brings this capability in connection with the eye. Of course perceives the sunflower also with roots, stems and leaves. Of course the plant feels, tastes, smells, hears and sees. But it sees the light

with the eye. And the very special thing with sunflower is, that its eye is actually more than 1000 eyes. 1000 eyes come in their perception already pretty close to the truth, I'd say.

What is the eye, what does it, and how? Murshid: *"The size of the eyes is so small, and they can accommodate such a large horizon. Where is it accommodated? It is accommodated within. .. It is a dimension which cannot be measured, but which is accommodating, which is an accommodation. The accommodation of the eye is not a recognized dimension, yet it is a dimension."*

The gate between inner and outer light is the eye, to be more precise the pupil, which is in the centre of the iris, which in turn is in the center of the eye. Murshid: *"the pupil signifies the dot. At the same time the dot means zero, meaning nothing. It is nothing and it is everything, and the dot expresses the symbol of nothing being everything and everything being nothing."*

The iris in case of the sunflower is formed by the petals, the pupil by the seeds in the center of the flower.

Ya Basir

Your eye sees everything at the same time and every detail. You can see what's coming, what was, what is. You true clairvoyant!

Ya Aliyy

You're above it all, You exalted being. In You I understand transcendence. You are of the highest.

Medication

In summary we can say that the essence of the sunflower can help us

to encounter with open eyes the light and not to get stuck on the path. Confusions and complications are brought to light.

to spiritualize our perception and especially our view

to straighten up in our full size. To improve spine and posture

to be at the same time great and in service for the next generation. To develop a harmonious sense of self

to experience sunrise as a daily recurring chance for enlightenment

to see inner light

to connect exterior and interior light to each other

to wake up the inner life

Tulip

The tulips (Lat. *Tulipa*) are a genus of plants in the lily family (Liliaceae) with about 150 species and many hybrid varieties.

Naming

The ancient writers of Greece and Rome did not mention the tulips, although some species exist in the Mediterranean area.

The name comes from the Turkish word “tülband” and the Persian word “dūband” and originally referred to a turban in these languages. The origin of this word can be traced back to Sanskrit tuula, cotton. Probably the meaning transfer of the term took place due to the color and shape similarity of tulips to the usual turban towels of wealthy Ottomans. In written language the tulips were called “lalé” in Turkish as well as in Persian.

The first European description dates from 1554 by the Imperial ambassador at the Court of Suleiman I in Istanbul.

Botany

Tulips species grow as perennial, herbaceous plants and can reach a height of 10 to 70 cm depending on the type.

In their onions, they survive the winter. In the autumn life gradually concentrates in the onion, i.e. separates itself out of the context of the world circuit and turns inward. The onion is bud. The future flower is there already.

Soon after the beginning of spring their leaves break forth from the ground. The sprout grows up quite rapidly. The green flower bud, carried up by the stem, will appear between the leaves. Here, the impressive transformation into the bright red, yellow, or white flower unfolds on warmer days.

Also the leaves do not reach out to the sides, but strive upwards.

While many other plants develop an inflorescence, in the tulip only the final flower is formed. Usually six petals surround a wide, deep interior, directed upward. Upright the tulip opens up towards the rays of the Sun and closes its cup at sunset.

History and today's dissemination area

The area of origin of tulips is where China and Tibet, in one of the most inhospitable places on Earth, meet Russia and Afghanistan. Almost half of the one hundred and twenty wild Tulip species grow in this inhospitable area.

By Turkmen nomads who populated these desolate areas, spread the flower in the territories conquered by them. But not only, because when in the 10th and 12th centuries wandering Turks appeared in the Middle East, tulips grew already in the gardens of the Persians. Since the 9th century the tulip appears in the old Persian literature.

Around 1352, the Ottomans had crossed the Dardanelles, and the Turkish horsemen were on European soil. The Turkish dynasty crossed Europe as far as the gates of Vienna. The seat of government was the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. This was built like an onion in 4 rings: In the outer area the public administration, behind that the seat of Government, then the harem, and in the center the gardens, only accessible to the Sultan. Approx. 1000 gardeners took care especially of the queen of flowers: the Tulip. Within a few decades after the conquest, the Ottoman Sultan could enjoy more than sixty private gardens along the Bosphorus and the Marmara Sea. It was this wealth of green, which made Istanbul different from all other European cities in the eyes of its visitors. The Ottoman gardens tried to impress not with geometric precision, but to seduce the eye with visions of abundance.

Following Turkish story makes clear why gardens occupy a high priority. When Hasan Efendi, a famous holy dervish, preached one day in front of the crowd, one of his listeners handed him a note. It included the question, whether any Muslim could be sure, to come in paradise when he died. After Hasan had finished his sermon, he asked whether a gardener was among those present. When one got up from the Assembly, Haider pointed to him and said: "This man will come in paradise". Immediately the dervish was surrounded by a crowd, who wanted to know what the gardener had done, that secured him a place in paradise. But Hasan said that he had cited only from the Hadith - the oral sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, where it says that people will do in their lives after death, what have made them most joy on Earth. And because all flowers belong to heaven, gardeners would arrive certainly in paradise, to continue their work there.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the succession in the Ottoman dynasty went on to Ahmet III, the greatest tulip enthusiast known by history. The Sultan was so infatuated with this flower that his reign was standing entirely under the sign of the tulip: Lale devri, "Tulip era". Centuries-long efforts till Ahmets times had led to an amazing array of tulips. One of the official price lists mentioned more than eight-hundred-and-twenty varieties and new varieties were produced during his whole reign. But at the same time decayed the great empire of the Ottomans at this time.

From Turkey, the garden Tulip came to Central and Western Europe around the middle of the 16th century. Towards the end of the 16th century, Holland became a center of tulips-breeding. A variety of types was created, including those with double flowers or flamed colour flowers. The demand broke all records within a short time. More and more companies resorted to special Tulip varieties while speculation soon pushed prices to astronomical heights. On specialised Tulip exchanges one could even buy and sell varieties, which didn't even exist yet. Very modern! The Tulip Mania coincided with the high time of the Dutch golden age, the short period during which the Republic of the United Netherlands was not only economically leading, but also experienced an amazing cultural

blooming. Rembrandt, Vermeer and Rubens had lived through the Tulip fever and many of the greatest Dutch artists painted these exotic flowers. In 1637 it was the crash of Tulip exchanges, which rocked half of Europe. Within a few days, the country's richest citizens lost their entire fortune. The bewilderment, how a people, which was decried throughout Europe as moralistic and especially in money matters as extremely economical, could apparently completely forget itself in an inexplicable passion for tulips, the so-called "Tulipomania", ebbed even long after.

Till today, over 80% of the world's Tulip production comes from the Netherlands. Here, over 1200 varieties are cultivated on 9200 ha.

The habitat of wild tulips ranges from North Africa through Europe till Central Asia; a centre of biodiversity is located in the South-Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey, Afghanistan, Turkistan (Caucasus).

Symbolism

Basic meanings in symbolism: Happiness and its impermanence on Earth, fertile life, perfect beauty, and love as the secret of the eternal.

For the Turkmen nomads who had survived another icy winter, the first tulips meant more than just beautiful patches of colour in the wilderness. They represented life and fertility and were the first signs of the approaching spring.

Like the rose in the West was the Tulip in Persia the symbol of perfect love, of immortal infatuation, of excessive affirmation of life and of impermanence. The oldest mentioning comes from Omar Khayyâm (1045 - 1122), Persian scientist and libertine Sufi poet:

"As the tulip for her morning sup
Of heavenly vintage lifts her chalice up
Do you, devoutly do the like till heav'n
To earth invert you like an empty cup."

Hafiz, approx. 1320-1389, which was perhaps the most famous Sufi poet, in Germany known above all by the West Eastern Divan of Goethe.

A poem by Hafiz, where joy of life keeps the balance with grief about the transience:

"Perhaps the tulip know the fickleness
Of Fortune's smile, for on her stalk's green shaft
She bears a wine cup through the wilderness"

The Tulip was the symbol of the ruler of the Ottoman Empire and its capital, Constantinople. "Dream of happiness", "Mystery of the eternal", or "Elixir of love" Turkish Tulip breeder named their magnificent cultures.

Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (born 1207 in Balkh, now Afghanistan; died 1273 in Konya, today Turkey) was a Turkish mystic and Sufi teacher. Today he is revered throughout the Middle East and his poems are translated into all languages. At Rumi's times Anatolia was in the Islamic world referred to as Rum ([Eastern] Rome, based on the former Byzantine Empire), hence the nickname Rumi. From him comes the one-liner "The Tulip remained silent".

The Tulip was regarded as a symbol of immortal love and many myths and legends have grown up around it. A Persian history, told by the famous Sufi poet Nizami, is about how a prince name Farhad fell in deep love to a virgin named Shirin. When he learned that his beloved had been killed (what later turned out not to be true), he took an axe and taken by unutterable grief cut his own womb. Blood dripped from his wounds on the barren ground, and from each drop of blood, a scarlet Tulip blossomed, emblematic of his sincere love.

Of all flowers in a Muslim garden the Tulip was considered the Tulip the holiest. For the Ottomans, it had great symbolic significance, and was seen in the literal sense as the flower of God. In the Arabic script the letters from which "lale", the Turkish word for Tulip, is composed, are the same the letters of the word "Allah" .

In the 14th century the Ottomans had chosen this holiest of all flowers to protect against misfortune. And because the religious ban on pictorial representation of living things still showed its effect, the Tulip was not embroidered on banners or coats, but tucked away on the underware. Example of this is the Tulip shirt of Sultan Beyazid. During thirteen years Beyazid expanded his dominions, smashed down the resistance of the Christians in the Balkans and defeated the Persians in the East. Then, in 1402, a ruler which surpassed him in strength and cruelty, faced him in Ankara: Tamerlan. The tulip ruler was defeated and found no mercy.

Murshid

Also Hazrat Inayat Khan comes to speak several times on the story of Shirin and Farhad.

Shirin, the daughter of a poor man, has been kidnapped and brought to the King. He was immediately thrilled by her and did everything to please her to wake up in her the willingness to marry him, but every effort had the opposite effect. To his great disappointment, Shirin was not receptive to his love. Her ideal was to big to be impressed by the richness and the power of the king. To postpone a marriage, she set the condition that he break a channel through the mountains as a wedding gift: a project for many years. Thousands of workers were hired.

One of the masons, Farhad, saw Shirin visiting the construction site and fell on the spot in love with her. He went to her and declared his love.

Murshid: *"Love overlooks the difference of position of the lover and the beloved, and the height that the lover has to climb."*

The testimony of his love and his word of devotion: "I love you" was what Shirin has always sought and had found nowhere. Shirin replied: "Do you love me? Then break a path through this mountain".

Murshid: *"Gold has a test to go through."*

Farhad says immediately: "Yes, Shirin, whatever you want."

Farhad has only his own power to do this impossible task. At every stroke he called the name of his beloved. His strokes get hundredfold force through love.

Murshid: *"There is nothing too hard for the lover to do for the beloved."*

With his pick he breaks the rock and with his strokes he achieves a miracle. In a few days he manages, what an army of workers would have needed years for.

Murshid: *"Man's power is the strength of his body, but love's power is the might of God."*

Since she had met Farhad, Shirin had refused herself to the king with the words: "There is an other lover, who is undergoing a test and until I don't know the result, I think it is better to refrain from a marriage."

The King was very worried to lose the race. He had brought through a servant the message to Farhad, that Shirin had died. With "Shirin" on his lips Farhad put an end to his life then.

Shirin, who had the good fortune to have found a lover like Farhad, was not fortunate enough to see him again.

Murshid: *"The higher powers separate two hearts that come together."*

When she arrived in the mountains, Farhad had already died. She heard the voice of Farhad in the blow of the wind, in the flowing of water, in the rocks, in the trees, which called her: "Shirin Shirin." The whole atmosphere of the place kept her soul with the magnetism of love, which Farhad had spread. She fell down due to the great loss which her loving heart could no longer bear, and she screamed: "Farhad, I come too to be with you."

Murshid: *"The fate of the lover is a great disappointment in the sight of the world, but it is the greatest satisfaction in the eyes of the wise."*

During my work on this chapter of the tulips, I had two dreams.

In one dream, I was madly in love. But my great love was married. I managed to convince her of my love. She was there for me. I had won her. And then she had to go along with the other man.

In the second dream, I worked in a therapeutic group. Group dynamics were confusing and intense. But after I had been long silent, I found the words which aptly described the situation and solved the problems at once.

Then I was confronted with the lack of understanding of the colleagues and the rejection of the Boss. I had to leave my therapist job.

In these two dreams, an aspect of the tulip being becomes very clear. Both in my relationship as in the professional situation, I reached the highest satisfaction. In both cases I could express my truth fully. However, what had been achieved, did not last. Immediately after the climax the relationship or employment were put to an end.

We have seen how Beyazid, Ottoman Sultan, conquered half the world in its tulip shirt in a short time, then to be destroyed. He was very successful, to lose everything then.

We have seen how the Dutch became a world power economically and culturally, put their entire wealth in the Tulip and lost everything.

We have also seen how Farhad stroked his path through the mountains, conquered the heart of Shirin and died. His blood drops became tulips.

The perfect beauty of the tulip flares up shortly and then disappears. The higher power, be it secular or spiritual, allows it no longer.

Was it not worth it then? Should we not throw everything in the pan driven out of love? Yes, says Murshid, that is exactly what is needed at this time. Only the strong passion that is born out of love can move mountains. *"Everyone wishes to think with the brain, to work with the head, but not with the heart. One can neither imagine and create beautiful art, nor think and make wonderful things, nor can one keep in one's memory something beautiful, nor retain thoughts in concentration, if there is no feeling at the back of it."*

"To realize the power of feeling and to express it is a great opportunity which life offers; but a still greater opportunity of life is to free oneself from the captivity of limitations. Every man is a captive in some form or other; his life is limited in some form or other; but one could get above this limitation by realizing the latent power and inspiration of the soul."

The tulip has the power to find its place to grow on rocky ground. The miracle of the tulip flower in the spring is the way in which the tulip shows how it has overcome the limitations.

Murshid asked the tulip in the Tana's, why she talks to him:

"Tulip, why have you opened your lips? To tell you what I have learned in the silence."

Her flower is the language of the tulip. From where comes her word? Out of the silence.

When we study the tulip, we see that the "tulip word" takes a long time to develop. Already inside the onion it is laid out and waits in silence. When spring comes, the "word bud" rises on a stem to the height. Through the soil and the space above the soil. Until finally, it opens turned toward the sky and speaks.

"What did you learn?" asks Murshid and the tulip answers:

"To make of myself an empty cup."

The Tulip shows us the art of expressing what lies in our deepest essence. It doesn't communicate impressions or experiences from everyday life. It is not dependent on popularity or social recognition. It is not helped by favorable circumstances. It turns inside and brings the cup of her soul up. There, the cup is filled with wine. Wine is the term for Ecstasy in the Sufi literature. Just shortly lives this moment. But it is the highest which a living being can reach.

The tulip has two types of power. First of all, she has the ability to completely concentrate on its goal. It does not doubt and is completely sure of itself. For this reason, Murshid prescribes nervous people who are physically and mentally unstable, yellow tulips.

Secondly, it has the power to lift itself up from the most adverse circumstances. Hardly a plant manages on such rocky ground not to lose heart and just to go forward in its development. An inner will power gives the strength to stand by the severity of today's life.

For this reason, Murshid prescribes people to whom fail the energy to get up every morning, the red tulip.

Ya Matin

Your consistency is unwavering.

Ya Aziz

You know what you are worth.

Medication

The yellow tulip essence helps us

to focus on our truth

to build on our soul strength

to keep silence, as long as the moment has not yet arrived

To preserve patience and hope

to offer the result of our effort just to the heaven

The red tulip essence helps us

to build on our soul strength

to draw from our interior will power

to keep silence, as long as the moment has not yet arrived

To preserve patience and hope

to create the impossible

no to expect earthly reward

to taste the ecstasy of achieving our goals

Vine

Etymology

Latin: *Vitis vinifera*.

Vitis is from a semantic point of view closely related to the Latin *Vinum*, wine.

The Proto-Indo-European word "Ueit" means bending, twisting.

The Grapevine is a species in the genus of *Vitis*. It is primarily native to the Mediterranean region, Central Europe and Southwest Asia.

The Arab wayn, the Latin *vinum*, the Greek *óinos* are related to each other, without concluding from what language it originated. Presumably, a connection to the Georgian word "ghwino" can be drawn. The German word *Wein*, the old German *wîn* or *winam*, the French term *vin* and the English term *wine* are all borrowed from the Latin word *vinum*.

Features

The vine is a climbing shrub and can become 10 to 20 metres high! It has a deep Rhizome and a woody stem. Its brownish bark dissolves in vertical stripes.

The round, heart shaped leaves are usually 5-lobed.

The wine forms its shape by the fact that it is spreading in the horizontal. In spiral playful movements, it connects through the environment with its tendrils. It does not have a form on its own, as for example a Cypress has. A rampant shrub of wine, a vine which is not cut or more clearly even a wild wine (*Vitis sylvestris*), can adjacent trees overgrow so strongly within a few years, that these have no chance and die. This winter I liberated fruit trees in Italy from wine vegetation. The tendrils grab firmly with small "fingers" on branches and twigs and the liberation of the fruit tree was a strenuous affair, because the wine has fully taken hold.

The cultivation of wine needs therefore a rigorous annual cut in the winter. Most of the meter long branches from the old year are cut back and only about 3 pieces may remain but heavily abbreviated. Often another cut will take place during the year. The growing power of the grape vine is so diverted away from the production of branches toward the production of the fruits.

The slightly fragrant flowers are arranged in composite, dense panicles. The petals are about 5 mm long, yellow-green and drop off early, just as the calyx leaves. The flowering period is from June to August.

The berries are juicy and compared to other fruits, seed plays a minor role. The wine plant is a master of the art to produce sugar during the assimilation process in the fruit. This sugar is then not available for a next generation during the germination of the seed, but molds in the form of yeast spores sit on the skin of the berries and wait to destroy the fruit by triggering of a natural fermentation. The wine-grower must use quite a bit of effort and spray products, to prevent the attack of the mold so that the sugar in the grapes later can be transformed in the winemaker-controlled fermentation into alcohol.

The alcohol then paralyzes the life that formed it, and finally kills the fungi. Pelican indicates that the yeast develops a very paradoxical life process: it brings itself to the end.

Bach flower "Vine"

Dr. Edward Bach prescribes the flower essence for such people who are very competent and successful, but who are on the other hand so convinced of themselves, that they think that, what is consistent for them, also applies to others.

History

Zoroastrian roots

In ancient times, the wine-growing had a considerable attention and spread. Wine was already since the 6th Millennium BC operated in the Near East. Armenia, as well as the present-day Georgia are considered to be the countries of the botanical origin of the wine. These countries accounted for the north-eastern part of the great Persian cultural area until the mid-19th century. The area is mentioned in the Avesta as Airyana Vaejah, and is the homeland of Zoroaster. From the word Airyana, the word Iran was formed in modern times.

Murshid says: *"In the ancient religion of the Zoroastrians, Jarni Jamsshyd, the bowl of wine from which "Jamsshyd drank deep," is a historical fact."*

Jamshid is a mythological figure in the Iranian cultural tradition. In folklore, he is described as fourth and greatest King of the Pishdadischen dynasty. In the Avesta, he appears as Yima Kshaeta, the brilliant Yima, who possessed a magical Cup with seven rings, which was filled with the elixir of immortality. On behalf of Ahura Mazda, he founded a Kingdom wherein the soil was nourished and all creatures were doing well. To do this, he took away from the Daevas, demonic servants of Ahriman, their wealth and their herds.

He reigned for seven hundred years. In this prehistoric period, he once saved his people from a major disaster. Ahura Mazda ordered him to create an underground space of 3 km in diameter and to house there except the people from all animals a male and a female. His reign came to an end, because he had forgotten in the course of time, that he had built his empire on behalf of the Almighty Creator. The opposing forces destroyed him and a dark time started.

In an apocryphe narrative, it is reported who King Jamshid discovered the wine: One of the women of his harem was desperate because the King had banished her from the Kingdom. She wanted to commit suicide and found a barrel labeled "Toxic". It contained remains of grapes and after she had been drinking this "poison", she discovered that the result was quite enjoyable and that her mood was lifted. She brought their discovery to the King, who was so impressed of the new beverage, that he took her back as his woman and issued a decree, wherein the entire grape harvest in his country was determined for the production of wine.

Actually, there is archaeological evidence that the early Persian Kings knew wine and also exported it.

Ancient mythology

Wine was and is an integral part of ritual practices in different cultures. The ecstasy that can be found in the wine for was seen as something that can create closeness to a deity.

In the ancient Egypt it was Osiris, in Babylonia it was Gilgamesh, representing the wine and the enjoyment of wine.

The wine was an object of religious veneration and symbol of the culture in ancient Greece. It stood at the Centre of cults and mysteries of Dionysus. This Greek God gave the wine to the people. He brought a hose of wine in the house of the plant breeder Icarius, which he inaugurated in cultivating vineyards and wine. A tradition states that he should have brought the wine from India. Murshid Inayat Khan: *"Among the Hindus, Shiva considered wine sacred."*

In the epic of the Odyssey, Odysseus got imprisoned in the cavity of the one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus. The situation seems hopeless, but Odysseus produces fresh fermenting wine from wine grapes, which he offers to the giant. Sunk into a wine rush, Odysseus manages to blind him and can save himself and his companions.

The Romans worshipped as the God of wine Bacchus. The production of wine was marked by religious standards: Priests set the days of the beginning of the harvest. Even the port of vines was a religious duty. The wine was also an important part of religious festivals in ancient Rome, for example at the women's Festival of the Bona Dea, Goddess of female fertility.

Jewish and Christian religion

A messianic significance is given to the wine in the Jewish and Christian religion.

God himself donated the vine to the people after the deluge and Noah worked as a winemaker. In the book of Psalms wine stands for the joy of life; for Solomon it is medicine for the suffering, but also an intoxicant that has to be dealt with with caution. The people of Israel is compared to a vineyard; Jesus describes the connection to his successors such as those between grape vine and grapes. The work of the Holy Spirit is compared with fermenting new wine.

The wine symbolizes the feast. It lets the people feel the glory of creation.

In the Christian religion, the wine in the sacrament of the Eucharist is the element for the blood of Christ. So, Christianity has especially promoted the development and distribution of wine cultivation and wine culture.

In the Jewish religion, Kosher wine belongs to the rituals of Kiddush on Shabbat, the Passover, and the wedding.

Islam

As we know from the pre-and early Islamic poetry, wine and alcoholic beverages were estimated among the pre-Islamic Arabs; drunkards however were outlawed. Also in the early days of Islam, the wine was apparently still not flatly condemned. Date-, grape-, honey-wine, and alcoholic drinks from wheat, barley and millet were well known in early Islamic times in the entire Arab world, wine cellars have been gladly visited and games of chance were played.

In an early text, the Koran explicitly calls the "vines" as God's creation: "It is He who descends from the clouds the water... So that he can let grow the corn, and the olive trees, the date palms and the vines..." (16,10-11). Not only fruit (see chapter on the banana) and meat are promised to the believers in paradise, but also "flows of water, milk, wine and honey" (47,15).

Murshid: " And in Islam, though wine is forbidden on earth, yet in Heaven it is allowed. Haussi Kaussar, the sacred fountain of Heaven, about which there is so much spoken in Islam, is a fountain of wine."

Later, the Qur'an first sentenced an excess of intoxicating beverage: Sure 4.43 warns against prayer in drunken state, and some early Quranic commentators report that the Prophet's companions held drunken revelry and then in the ritual prayer made mistakes. Sure 2,219 still admits that wine and game can sometimes have some benefit, but that the sins are greater than the benefits. After Sure 5.90-91, the last revealed on the subject of alcohol in the year 626, are "wine, gambling, sacrificial stones and lotteric arrows... an abomination and Satan's work!", because, so the reasoning, "Satan will create through wine and gambling only enmity and hatred between you and deter you from the remembrance of God and the prayer."

This strict wine ban was relaxed in practice already by the first Caliph. Today the vineyards of Iran occupy the sixth place of the world production. However, there is little Iranian wine on the international market. For religious reasons, mainly grapes and raisins are produced. The wine variety "Shiraz" (after the Iranian town of Shiraz) comes today mainly from Australia, but is one of the oldest in the world.

Drink feasts were held in secret in the Islamic Middle ages. In drinking halls, protected from the curious eyes one could get drunk after strict etiquette. The court budget of the Abbasites had a special post for the maintenance of the drinking companions of the Caliph. To a perfect feast belonged also a Saqi, a tavern servant. He was characterized by impeccable manners, wit and education.

Numerous Sufi mystics have the intoxication by the love of God in the ecstasy positively compared with the intoxication caused by alcohol, e.g. the famous Persian Sufi poet Hafez of Shiraz (ca. 1320-1389):

“Saki, it dawns; fill the Cup with wine;

But fast! The world does not stop in the circuit.

And until it expires completely in ruin,

my ruin should be based on rosy wine.

I know of no scruples, no remorse

So fill me my mug always anew !

O Hafez! good wine is virtuous,

So always stick to his virtue!”

Since the poet already during childhood had memorized the entire Koran, he received the title of "Hafez" (the one who can memorize the Koran). It is known that Hafiz began a 40-day meditative vigil with 60 years, at the end of which he experienced an expansion of consciousness. He is therefore hardly a rebellious drinker, but rather a serious spiritual master. It is typical of the great Persian Sufi poets, that they are faithful to the mysterious connection between the inner and outer being. A separation between heaven and earth is intolerable and unacceptable for them. Wine and Ecstasy belong together, even if they are not the same (see more on Persian Sufi poetry in the chapter on Roses).

In this context following quotation by Murshid: *"Although the bowl that was given to the Prophet in the Miraj, the authorities of Islam say, was filled with milk, yet I doubt it. I should not be surprised if it were not the invention of the authorities, to keep the faithful followers away from wine. For it is natural that the followers should like to begin drinking the wine on earth, which the Prophet drank in heaven."*

In India during the Mughal period (1526-1858) the court language was Persian, on the one hand due to the great interest of the Moguls in Persian literature, on the other hand because Persian was the Lingua Franca in much of Near- and Central Asia in the 16th century.

Urdu, a mixture of Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and Indo-Aryan elements developed as popular language. Urdu is still used in Persian Arabic script by many Muslims in India and Pakistan, and was the mother tongue of Hazrat Inayat Khan.

Sufism flourished on the Indian continent under Emperor Akbar. Religious tolerance became the state policy. The culture of music had great interest in the court. The grandfather of Murshid, Maula Bakhsh, led a very prestigious academy of music in this tradition.

During the reign of Mughal Emperor Jahangir, Akbar's successor, there was relative peace with the Persian neighbor empire. In those times, vines were introduced from Persia, which were intended for cultivation.

Murshid

Murshid Inayat Khan stands in this Persian Sufitradition: *"But if the following of Islam is understood to mean the obligatory adherence to a certain rite; if being a Mohammedan means conforming to certain restrictions, how can the Sufi be placed in that category, seeing that the Sufi is beyond all limitations of this kind? So far from not accepting the Qur'an, the Sufi recognizes scriptures which others disregard. But the Sufi does not follow any special book. The shining ones, such as 'Attar, Shams-e-Tabrez, Rumi, Sa'di, and Hafiz, have expressed their free thought with a complete liberty of language. To a Sufi, revelation is the inherent property of every soul. There is an unceasing flow of the divine stream, which has neither beginning nor end."*

The regular cut of the vine is essential so that grapes can be harvested. If the wine is not cut, the plant uses most energy for the growth of the branches. Only a rigorous cut leads to large grapes. Without it, the grapes would remain quite small. Either overgrows the vine the host tree or man defeats the uninhibited rampant overtaking and harvests grapes. Murshid on this topic: *"What is desirable is for us to know what soberness is, and after knowing what soberness is, then to take any wine we may choose. The tavern is there; wines are there. There are two men: one who is the master of wine, the other who is the slave of wine; the first drinks wine, but wine drinks up the other. The one whom wine drinks up is mortal; he who drinks wine becomes immortal."*

I personally find it difficult to write about this polarity between the sober and the drunk because I can not so clearly say of myself, that I am the master of wine. I love to be drunk; to forget myself; to lose myself; just to feel my beloved; to leave myself behind me; to forget me and my life. I am longing for that, and I'm looking for it. For me, it's hard to imagine that I would have to learn to be sober, before having discovered the wine. But perhaps we all must first learn to stand on our own two feet before we can let us fall. So, I can understand that parents don't give their children any wine. Children should only grow and become someone before they lose themselves. This way it is also understandable that religions order bans. They probably serve the purpose, that we can grow in a protected space before the outgrown ego is exposed to the danger of the dissolving. But without the risk of the dissolution, a human life would be but strangely bland and boring!

I remember the first time I was really plastered. On holiday with friends at the sea. Maybe I was 18 years old and wanted to throw off the shackles. What restraints at all was not so clear to me. The main thing was rushing with full commitment into the unknown. A great event! But most impressive

was the morning after. In each of my fibers, I felt a deep aversion to this drink. That was pure sobriety. An unforgettable unique condition. I knew that I would do that never again. And since then I never really got drunk again.

There are also people "*whom wine drinks up*", as Murshid calls it. My neighbor is sometimes picked up by the road. Then he didn't managed the way home. His home is no longer the house where he lived with his wife and children and in-laws. There, he was kicked out because he drinks. Since then he lives opposite. He has not managed to start a new life. He is stuck. The wine has got him fully in the handle. At first drinking was a help to escape the grip of everyday life, today it is a new prison.

The grape is the most attractive fruit for Murshid. About the essence of the grape and its counterpart in the human Kingdom, he says: "*the one whose personality is soft outside and soft inside will naturally be most magnetic*".

Perhaps you also know that: Alcoholics are often warm, engaging personalities. It's easy to get closer to them. They seem open and friendly. They mostly have also a direct access to the their feelings. Crying and laughing are close. The only problem is that they are being drunk by the wine instead of drinking the wine. They end up bad. I saw many examples in my working years in drug-clinics.

The pomegranate is the opposite of the grape for Murshid. He describes this psychological type in the following words: "*The pomegranate is hard, the skin is hard, the seed inside is hard too... The personality who is hard outside and hard inside is isolated in the world. This is no place for him. Everyone will want to keep away from him, and then after some time he will find himself in difficulties.*"

Someone is described here, which has the ability to shield itself from the outside. The environment has no effect on him. Also towards himself he closes himself. His feelings and inclinations have no power over him. So, you would think that this man is the master of his own destiny. In absolute sobriety, he remains unaffected by any harmful effects. But he is in danger, to feel alone because he locks himself in his individuality or in the status quo.

For Sufis loneliness can't be an end in itself. A retreat or seclusion is an instrument to penetrate deeper into inner worlds, by shielding oneself against the outer world. But ultimately, this is not the meaning of life. Sufis want to experience life to the full. Sufis are thirsty and life is wine. Sufis seek encounters with the opposite because ecstasy can be found there. "*One more cup, Beloved, that I may entirely lose myself*" says Murshid in the Vadan.

It is the beloved, which offers the next ecstatic experience. When we look up Ecstasy in the vocabulary, we find: enthusiasm, delusion, delight, euphoria, obsession, intoxication, rapture, zeal, exaltation, arousal, ardour, swash.

Elsewhere, Murshid says: "*I drink the wine of Thy divine presence and lose myself in its intoxication.*"

Sufism is a school where drinking is the main training target? Encounter with the divine beloved. Where can I find the right wine?

Murshid: *"earthly pleasures are mere shadows of that joy which belongs to the heaven of the angels, and the joy of the sphere of the jinn is like wine that has touched the lips but has never been drunk. That wine one drinks on arriving at the heaven of the angels. In the Sufi terminology that bowl of wine is called Jam-e Kauthir."*

Should we search for the Holy Grail, the Holy Chalice in which the sacrament is contained? The Knights in the middle ages did that. Murshid Inayat Khan helps us out of the dream: *"the Jam [drinking glass] of mystery stolen from Jamsheyd will serve no better than an earthen bowl. ...it is not something that can be stolen, nor anything to be bought. It is revelation, which has new offspring at every moment, which can never be stolen by a thief."*

So what is the wine of the Sufis? What is the wine Hafiz speaks about in his songs? This question is being discussed since then. Yes, it's wine. Yes, it's ice cream. Yes, there are drugs, which can cause ecstasy. Yes, it is the encounter with a beautiful woman or man. Yes, it is the encounter with the inner lover. Yes, it is the discovery of a flower. It's all that brings us closer to the beloved. It is every encounter, every drink, every experience that causes delight and euphoria inside us . Murshid calls this the spirit of beauty. But it's never what you already know. If one is honest, nothing can be repeated. Routine is impossible.

There are highlights: Murshid describes such an ultimate state: *'The soul floats above the physical and mental plane without any special effort on man's part, which shows its calm and peaceful state; a dreamy look comes into his eyes and his countenance becomes radiant; he experiences the unearthly joy and rapture of wajad or ecstasy. When ecstasy overwhelms him he is neither conscious of the physical existence nor of the mental. This is the heavenly wine to which all Sufi poets refer, which is totally unlike the momentary intoxications of this mortal plane. A heavenly bliss then springs in the heart of a Sufi, his mind is purified from sin, his body from all impurities, and a pathway is opened for him towards the world unseen.'*

And after such a State, my master once said: "Ladies and gentlemen, this was a Samadhi, now we continue!" Another time, in the middle of a heart-breaking singing in the choir, when the tears rolled on my cheeks, he looked at me and in that moment, I was completely sober.

Murshid: *"The higher intoxication cannot be compared with the lower intoxication of this world, but it is still intoxication. What is joy? What is fear? What is anger? What is passion? What is the feeling of attachment, and what is the feeling of detachment? All these have the effect of wine, all produce intoxication. Understanding this mystery, the Sufis have rounded their culture upon the principle of intoxication. They call this intoxication Hal, and Hal means' literally condition or state."*

So, come to the mystic and sit with him, when you get tired of all these other drugs which you used in vain. Come and take a glass of wine with him!

Ya Khafid

Oh You, you cover and dress me with your own coat. First, I'm trying to prevent you to. I don't want to be separated from the heavens. But your coat but helps me to bow down. My head on the ground, I discover an inner space, where I find your glorious light.

Ya Rafi

You raise me from Ecstasy to Ecstasy. You allow me to lose myself, to find me then again in a consciousness, that haven't been there before. Ever higher You pull me, that my search can't become an addiction and the ecstasy not self-serving. You want me to be free and discover that height is closeness.

Medication

Vine essence helps

to go into a new exciting experience

to find ourselves back before the experience is routine and becomes an addiction

to receive the sacrament

to search the Grail

to enjoy life to the fullest

to experience the highest height

to experience the deepest depth

Walnut

Latin: *Juglans regia*;

Botany

The walnut tree can become 15 to 25 meters high. It can reach an age of 150 to 160 years. The tree forms a deep rooting tap root system and when it has the chance to develop freely a wide crown. Its bark is smooth in the youth and ash, in age develops a deeply fissured bark.

The leaves are pinnate, with usually 7 leaflets and reach a length of up to 30 centimetres. In the spring it greens even after the oak as the last deciduous tree. She throws early in the autumn. The leaves give off an aromatic scent at the grating.

The ground under the walnut trees is usually not covered. The tree emits inhibitors that prevent that other plants can thrive in competition for the nutrients. The leaves of the walnut tree are especially tannin-rich, they break down slower than other leaves and are shunned by most insects. The

property is also attributed to nut trees to expel flies, so it is often planted in farms next to the rubbish dump.

On a plant, there are both female and male flowers. The male flowers are many together in a flower head, which takes the form of a hanging kitten. The female flowers are in few-flowered inflorescences. Flowering occurs between April and June, while the male flowers appear most four weeks earlier.

Walnut trees begin to bear fruit from the age of 10 to 20 years. In our latitudes, the fruit ripens late September to early October. In California, the harvest takes from the end of August till November. They are ripe, when the green fleshy covering pops open and the nuts loosen from the shell and start to fall to the ground. The seeds in the fruits show their maturity by an expectant brown colour and a cracked shell.

Etymology

The Greek name Dios balanos meant Acorn of Zeus. In the transmission in Latin it turned into Iovis glans, which has the synonymous meaning Acorn of Jupiter or Jupiter's nut. By phonetic transformation, the word Juglans developed.

The name Walnut probably originated from the name "welsh nut". Fact is, that she came from France or Italy to England and Germany. Welsh is from the old English "wealh": foreign. "Welsch" called the Teutons foreign (Latin or Celtic) peoples. Examples are the Walloons in Belgium and the people of Wales in the United Kingdom.

Dissemination

It is believed that the walnut in Syria as well as Western and Southern Anatolia survived the ice age. Its natural distribution it had afterwards in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans and in Near- and Central-Asia. It is found in humid ravine forests of mountains and grows in the Himalayas at elevations up to 3300 m, in the Alps until about 1200 m.

Since Roman times, it is cultivated in large parts of southern, Western and Central Europe. Occasionally it is found wild. In North America it is grown extensively because of their delicious fruits, especially in California.

In Germany the walnut stock has fallen sharply due to excessive clearing in times of war and lack of subsequent planting.

History

Archaeological finds suggest that the walnut is used as food for over 9000 years. First written mentions come from Pliny the elder and Columella. Last described the planting and maintenance of walnut trees in his book on Arboriculture. Plinius in his *Naturalis historia* reported that the Greeks brought the tree in 7th to 5th century before Christ to Europe.

Probably the walnut was brought by the Romans to Germany and England. Walnut trees were grown in the middle ages and the early modern period in many orchards. In 1770, the first nuts were brought by Spanish missionaries in the new world. A commercial use, which has made California today to the world largest exporter of Walnut began with the planting of the first Walnut garden in the year 1867 by the gardener Joseph Sexton in the vicinity of Santa Barbara, California.

Symbolism

The walnut played an important role in the Roman wedding customs. The groom threw them among the guests and spectators. A bright sound on impact is said to predict a similarly happy marriage like that of Jupiter and Juno. The Germans, who took over the practice of the Romans, dedicated the nuts to Freia, the goddess of love and harvest blessings.

In Christianity, there are different meanings. So, the core symbolizes the sweet flesh of Christ, which was previously grown in the shell of Mary's lap. Or the Church was itself symbolized the nuts because they "secretly kept their sweet virtue deep in the heart under a strong shell". Augustine of Hippo saw in the sharp-tasting cover the bitter sufferings of Jesus and in the hard shell the wood of the cross, which enabled him to eternal life. Later Josef was represented at his wedding with Maria with a walnut branch in hand.

Being a symbol of fertility and of the woman, some monks and priests saw in the walnut saw also the sign of lust and sin. So, they warned that on each leave a devil lived, who celebrated love orgies with witches among the trees. Also, the shade of the trees was thought be harmful.

Health benefits

According to the doctrine of signature the walnut has the power to strengthen the brain (it looks like a human brain under the shell).

Walnuts have the highest content of Omega-3 fatty acid among all nut fruits. They are also rich in vitamin E, zinc (an important micronutrient in liver and hair), and potassium (among other things for the heart muscle), they contain a number of other trace elements and vitamins as well. Semi-ripe nuts and leaves harvested in early summer have a content of vitamin C of up to 1 per cent and belong to the vitamin-C richest plants in Central Europe.

Scientific studies found that the fruits have a protective effect against diabetes and high blood pressure. In addition, walnuts seem to counteract not only heart disease but in slowing prostate cancer.

The dried leaves are used as a medicinal drug. They contain abundant tannins, flavonoids, phenolic carboxylic acids, vitamin C, as well as small quantities of essential oil and are externally used for baths, douches and envelopes for skin ailments.

The flower essence is prescribed by doctor Bach for people, that single-mindedly pursue their ideals, but because of the circumstances are tempted to deviate from their ambitions. The remedy helps then to protect them from the beliefs of others.

Murshid

The walnut stands in the psychological teachings of Hazrat Inayat for one of the four basic character types: *"And then there is another personality which is walnut-like. There is a hard shell, hard to penetrate, but when you know the person more it is like breaking the shell, and finding a nut which is soft."*

In Transactional Analysis, established in the 60s by the psychoanalyst Eric Berne, the model of the four psychological types is taken up. In the so-called OK-Square the type "I'm ok, you are not ok," is the equivalent of the walnut personality. In the annex in the back of this book you will find a comprehension on the four types with their respective attitudes. Ostensibly, the walnut is keen to keep all foreign influences away from itself. Other plants are not doing good in its vicinity. Insects keep distance. So, one could say that the tree isolates itself from the environment. The amazing thing is that these measures all help to produce a delicious rich fruit at the end of the season. Murshid: *"The personality who is hard outside and soft inside is repellent at first, but in the end you will become his friend. That is why he does not make so many friends; you can only understand this man when you reach his inner being."*

We have seen above, that the walnut is traditionally associated with both male as well as female sexuality. In his lectures on the relationship between man and woman, the Rasa Shastra, Murshid describes four female forms of sexual relationships. Of these four, the Padmani personality is pronounced Walnut-like: *"When she makes a friend of a man, it is something of a venture or a step, taken as it were out of her own circle; for women are her natural friends, and to them she turns, both out of interest and for protection. In her heart is kept one beloved alone, whom nothing can remove."*

Walnut people undeviatingly keep set on their ideal. If they have decided, they can't be distracted. Nothing can bring them away from the track. My Sufi teacher Pir Vilayat put me on my own track, as he prescribed mental exercises the first time to me. He gave me the Wazifas ya Hadi / ya Wali. Looking back, I was insecure about my journey and easily swayed with 25. Ya Hadi sets us on the path of genuine independent targeting, and the result is ya Wali, an unwavering friendship that can't be replaced by anything, no matter what happens.

For sure my parents had no easy time with me. They were desperate at times, what should become of me. I remember how I quite purposefully completely redesigned the garden to prepare my baccalaureat. All my time and creativity went there. The garden became wonderful. It had a shadow area and a sunny corner. Fruit trees on the south wall and herbs close to the kitchen. A pond with goldfish. But as a matter of fact gardening had nothing to do with high school. My mother tried everything that could help me to concentrate on the subjects of school: Tutoring, special diets, admonitions, punishments. My father became more and more irritated and withdrew from me. The result was that I failed at the high school examination. Gardening had nothing to do with high school. Only in the next year I made then for my degree.

Murshid: *"An effort made to change someone's character does not always meet with success. People who want to develop a certain aspect in another's character frequently produce a kind of confusion in*

his soul, and very often parents and guardians who want to change the character of their son or daughter make a great mistake; they spoil the character instead of making it better.”

Ya Hadi - ya Wali

You're my friend, because nothing can distract you from your goal.

Medication

Walnut essence helps

to protect us from external influences

to overcome uncertainty

to believe in ourselves

undeviatingly to stick to our ideal set

to be ourselves

to survive breaks

to act independently

To invest our energy into our own goal

Water lily

Nymphaea album

Nymphaea is a genus of plants in the *Nymphaeaceae* family. The cosmopolitan genus consists of about forty species. In addition, a large number of varieties was bred.

Botany

Water lilies are mostly perennial aquatic plants. They make up elongated rhizomes, with which they are anchored in the mud of rivers, ponds and lakes.

Two types of leaves are formed: Floating leaves and underwater leaves. The simple leaves are long-stalked, shield-shaped, heart-shaped or arrow-shaped.

The stand-alone flowers often smell. The flower colors range from white through yellow and red to blue. The sepals are usually greenish. There are 6 to 50 free petals. The yellow stamens are meant for pollination by insects. There are night and day-blooming species.

The fruits are fleshy berries that ripen underwater. The mature seeds are up to 5 mm in size. They make swimming bags, by which the seeds during two or three days drive on the water surface, where they are spread by wind and waves. After this time, the swimming bag dissolves, the seeds sink to the bottom and starts with the germination.

Origin

Nymphaea coerulea (sky blue water lily or blue Lotus) and *Nymphaea lotus* (White Egyptian Lily, not to be confused with the related Indian Lotus, *Nelumbo nucifera*) were the most important cultivated flowers in ancient Egypt. They grew wild in ponds and Nile valleys, but were cultivated in all natural and artificial water surfaces.

The white water lily (*Nymphaea alba* L) is found wild in Europe.

Etymology and mythology

The name Lily (Waterlily) and Lotus were interchangeable in mythology.

In Egyptian mythology, Lotus/Lily is the Sun, which rises from the primeval waters. She is closely associated with the youthful God Nefertem. He was a God of good smell and carried the Lotus Blossom as an attribute on the head. The Lotus was the depiction of the sun god Atum at Heliopolis. This god was born out of the primeval lotus, who appeared from the floods alongside the primeval hill.

In Greek mythology Lotis, a daughter of Neptune, turns spontaneously into a Lotus/Lily, when she was beset by a potential lover.

In Roman mythology, the Lotus was attributed to Juno. Because of this the flower was hated by Venus.

The white water lily (*Nymphaea alba*) was called *Herculanum* by the Romans. It was said to be formed from a beautiful nymph. She loved Hercules, but died out of desperation, because he did not approach her. As the root looks like a mace, the plant was named "Hercules Club". Because the nymph had no special name, the water lily was called simply *Nymphaea*.

In the transition from late Antiquity to the middle ages, the white water lily became a "flower of chastity" and served the monks and nuns as to anti-aphrodisiac. The water lily was used in the middle ages as well as love spell and love amulet.

Naturopathy

The effect of the flower essence "Water lily" is connected with the kea ideas of satisfaction, fulfilled sexuality, unconditional love.

"Water-lily-people" are closed and hate to let other people come close. In particular, they avoid any intimacy. They are so shy, that their life is quite painful. The flower essence removes fear and promotes openness. Joy of life and a fulfilling sex life become accessible.

Murshid

Tuning into the image of the water lily, as it appears from mythology and natural medicine, at first I was confused. For what does it stand, the water lily? Does it symbolize chastity, or enjoyment of sexuality? Does it lead away from the lust or provides it assistance? In Greek mythology, the flower is a manifestation of Lotis that wants to avoid the male the man and of Nymphaea, which suffers because her lover is not closer. In a conversation with my wife, I figured the confusing picture. She explained to me that both lewdness and repression are deceptions. Both are based on a lie or one-sided distortion.

The water lily does not take part in the perversions of sexuality and nor in those of spirituality. It has roots that extend deep into the mud and have so their anchoring in the ground. And it goes the long way with its stem up to the flower, that pass through the waters of the lake. Leaves under water, leaves floating on the water, and finally this beautiful flower that reaches out from the water and turns toward the sun. With its seed it returns again to the water, before it can reach the ground as also withered flowers go down and enriche the mud on the ground of the lake.

Very special indeed is how much water is flowing between above and below. All pulses from the bottom are washed until they are above. All pulses from the top are washed until they reach the bottom.

Murshid compares the Lake with a heart: *"then there is the water of a large pool, where water lilies grow, where little fishes swim, where the sun is reflected and where moonlight produces a visible vision, where one would like to sit and look at it, because it expresses to everyone that sees it the liquid nature of the heart, the heart that is not frozen, the heart that has water. It is still, it is calm. It is something that can make one's heart tranquil to sit by its side. You can see in it your reflection, for it is calm, it is tranquil"*.

Thus, we can understand how this plant allows a sovereign dealing with sexuality and spirituality. It is pure in all its impulses, because there is between the upper and the bottom so much calm clear water. The polarities are joined by an enormous reflective heart. So, we can also understand that the plant is called Nymphaea. It has no proper name, but is just a nymph.

In a Tana Murshid brings all of this and more into expression:

" Water-lily, what do you represent by your white garb? --The purity at the heart of this lake."

Ya Kabir

Medication

Sex is possible without losing our innocence

Spirituality is possible without denying our heart

Shyness can turn into beauty

Lust can raise us

Closeness and distance are the game between the lovers

Wheat

Latin: Triticum.

Names and varieties

Words Triticum and grain derive etymologically from lat. tritus: "after threshing". The word Wheat derives from the "white" of the product of this grain, white flour, and the light color of the fruit of wheat.

Following cereals can be found under the heading of wheat:

Triticum aestivum (wheat) **Übersetzung einfügen**

Wheat is the most common type of wheat. When we speak of wheat, we mean mostly this kind. There are a number of varieties that are adapted to different climates.

Winter wheat is sown from the end of September till in December. The harvest takes place in high summer. By the high grain yield winter wheat is superior to all other types of grain. Straw remains chopped on the field, or it is pressed as bedding for the animals to bales and departed. In Germany are sown on over 90% of the wheat acreage varieties of winter wheat.

Spring wheat is sown as early as possible in the spring; it needs no vegetation resting period. Its grain yields are typically well below those of winter wheat. The grains have a more milky structure than winter wheat, but are higher in protein. The summer wheat production represents only 0.8% of the total wheat harvest in Germany.

Triticum durum (durum wheat)

Durum wheat is the only tetraploid species of wheat today still widely cultivated.

Triticum spelta (spelt)

Spelt has a limited cultivation specially as bread cereal. In organic agriculture, it is popular because he needs hardly any plant protection products. Spelt has also more valuable ingredients than wheat and undergoes a well-deserved comeback for some time. It is considered especially with food allergies very compatible and harmonizing for digestion.

Triticum dicoccum (Emmer)

Emmer was historically grown, but today has no economic significance.

Triticum monococcum (Einkorn)

Einkorn **Übersetzung einfügen** is the oldest variety of wheat. It is grown today for scientific reasons, or for illustration purposes, is again available also in health food stores and is used for the production of baked goods and beer.

Gluten, the wheat protein contains all essential amino acids. However, it has taken a low biological value for itself alone. In combination with legumes, however, it produces a total protein with a very high biological valence.

History and distribution

The oldest wheat finds date from the period between 7800 - 5200 BC. Thus, wheat is the second oldest cereal after barley. With its spread to North Africa and Europe, wheat gained basic importance.

(Übersetzung einfügen)For a long period it was less popular than Einkorn, Emmer and barley. Only through the white bread, which came from the 11th century in fashion, wheat was established. The different types of wheat represent the second most cultivated crop of the world after maize (690 million tonnes per year). In the first place comes China with 114 million tonnes per year, then India with 80 Mio.t. Russia follows with 61, United States with 60, France with 38, Canada 26, Germany with 25 million tons.

Murshid

What has wheat to tell us humans in this day and age? What is the reason for its spread across the globe and what role it will play in the new era?

Murshid:

"Wheat-grains, why do you grow so close together? --Unity is our strength; that is why you seek in us your life sustenance. "

Wheat is able to stand together. In this property, so Murshid, he can feed humanity better than other grains. Indeed, the ability to stand close to each other is amazing: up to 500 plants on one square meter can be seeded.

The ability to grow in a confined space and to be able to feed others, is what Murshid Inayat Khan wants to show us when he refers to his conversation with the wheat. To be able to live close together requires a special property or force. Murshid calls this the quality of "Unity" which has two sides. First it means the ability to agree: only if there is agreement, living together in a small space is possible. The ability to agree depends on two factors:

A deep awareness that one is basically equal to the others. As long as you think you are something better or else, you can not fit in. Then you need more space.

Secondly just as deep an awareness that one is unique. Each individual is incomparable, an unprecedented expression of divinity. As long as this awareness is not inherent in one, you can not join together with others.

The second meaning of "Unity" is Oneness. Wheat shows us humans the unit that occurs when equality and uniqueness join together. If we humans want to live together on this planet, we should take an example on the wheat. We should become like a wheat field.

In the nature meditations, Murshid gives us for the consideration of a field with grain the following koan: *"Thou art the life and Thou art life's sustenance."*

In the chapter "Sustainability" to "the Holy Book of nature" I went up in detail on the question of what may be the maintenance of life. The "Sustainer" at the Sufis is the aspect of God who maintains our bodies, hearts and souls. Murshid quoted Jesus Christ: *'Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'*

The grain speaks to us. It is a word of God and as such it feeds us. It feeds our body as bread and it feeds our soul in the divine quality of unity.

As humanity before 10,000 years the wheat raised humanity into a new phase of culture, so the wheat is needed again today. In order that the people can live in abundance and to banish hunger from the world. But this time is expected from us humans, that we become as wheat ourselves. Humanity needs for the next step in its evolution, what the wheat already can: to live in unity.

Murshid: *"the one who lives the inner life, in other words, who lives the life of God, God is in him and he is in God"*.

In the oneness of mankind duality is overcome. The orientation towards matter, so as she was driven to the extreme in the West, loses its dominance. The orientation towards the spirit, as it is worked out in the East in a variety of forms, loses her dominance. Not that the duality disappears, but we are no longer caught by it: *"The whole manifestation is duality, the duality which makes us intelligent, and behind the duality is unity. If we do not rise beyond duality and go towards unity, we do not attain the perfection which is called spirituality."*

This has a variety of consequences for individuals, who seek to live in the unity:

The study of nature leads to the drop of one's personality

"The wise man by studying nature enters into the unity through its variety, and realizes the personality of God by sacrificing his own."

Study has the aim to get to know ourselves. Everything that we explore in nature, is expression of the Self. All differences are an expression of the same source. Like Murshid says, the seeker follows the principle of *"I myself"*. With the Sufis, this principle is called also "lover and beloved". Driven by interest we wander through the world of the differences and are led back to the world of the unit. Once we arrive there we discover that what we felt as different or strange is our selves. At the same time falls what we thought, that we are, out of focus.

Relationship between man and woman

"According to the Vedanta half of the divine body, Ardhangi, is womanhood, proving that unity of both is the complete life."

Sufis consider a cohabitation of man and woman as the most conducive to a harmonious life. However, the harmony is lost in case of lack of love and wisdom between husband and wife. Then it is better to divorce.

Our practical way of life is more important than religion

"To a certain degree we attain to the realization of unity by contemplation, religion, and prayer; but what is most necessary is sincerity in our way of life. What we are is all that really matters; contemplation and meditation help in this, but our manner of life is what is all-important, sincerity in our actions, and living life practically and not in theory."

In our actions, we integrate parts in us which were separated until then. In doing the person realizes itself and shows its realization.

We play many different roles in our lives

"What is the life of a mystic, of a man who has realized God, if it is not playing a part? The part is not one part; it is a thousand parts. He has to play the part of a servant, of a master, of his parents' son, of a friend, of the father of his child, of a neighbor; and yet in his mind he realizes unity. In all capacities he goes on playing the part and yet keeping that feeling of oneness alive. The further one advances on the spiritual path the more one will have to learn to play a part."

Faster and faster the tasks change in our lives. Constantly we are confronted with new ones. A life wherein you can devote yourself to one role only, is the rarity. Jobs, partners, neighbors are constantly shifting. This becomes the norm and the challenge is, not to experience each change as a loss of identity, but as the Kaleidoscope of life, wherein 100 facets of our being come to the fore.

Only one who has discovered the level of unshakeable eternal constancy in the interior can handle such a life.

The loyalty to the truth becomes stronger than the loyalty to the own religion or community.

"the idea of all unity, no separation.... is the opposite of the idea that religion should keep part of humanity separate, saying, 'You do not belong to our church, our mosque, our temple!' It is the opposite of loyalty to this particular sect or community, or to that particular sacred book, to this particular teaching, or to that particular truth. Is not the source of all truth hidden in every man's heart, be he Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or Jew? Is not each part of that life which we call spiritual or divine? To be just this or that is the same as not going further than this or that. The bliss found in solitude is hidden within every human being".

Far flung developments are described here by Murshid. People will find the courage to rise above their own confession of faith. This needs courage, because it always brings loneliness with it too. You lose your hold in the community. Murshid says that in the realization of unity lies the strength to distance oneself from one's own confession of faith.

Innocence follows on intellectualism

"the greater the soul, the greater was his innocence. It is innocence one sees in them, not simplicity. When innocence is developed one has attained spirituality. A man becomes wise after having been intellectual, when he rises above the intellect. Then he sees cause behind cause and understands the way of his enemy."

A rebirth with a tremendous breakthrough of joy followed the stripping off of illusions

"By the time the fifth valley, the Valley of Unity, is reached one has disillusioned one's self, and it is this act which is called in the Bible rebirth; when the soul has emerged from illusion it is the birth of the soul. And how does this birth of the soul express itself? What does one feel? It expresses itself first in a kind of bewilderment together with a great joy."

Ya Muqit

In You there is enough for all together. We sustained and fed by You. Under your protection, we survive.

Medication

the essence of wheat helps people

To stand together

To nourish and maintain others

to put our own individuality into perspective

To bring men and women in harmony

to consider action more important than conviction

to accept the constantly changing tasks in life

to take the loneliness after loss of belonging to a creed or community in purchase and even to enjoy it

To put innocence before easy ways

to destroy illusions

to partake in the joy of rebirth

Willow

Etymology

The Latin name for Willow, Salix, comes from the Indo-European root "salik". (Sufiname "the Wanderer")

The word "Willow" (from the indogerm. Word "uei") means so much as to turn, to twist, to braid. From the same root come also "weak" "wife", "to wind", "wall". The walls of the Celtic houses consisted of willow wattle.

Witch, and wicked are based on the same root as well.

Occurrence, botany, use

The willows grow in cool, damp, marshy valleys and lowlands. There are three to five hundred species of the genus Salix on Earth.

The packed vitality of willow branches is evident, if you put them in spring in the soil, almost every rod makes roots.

To set in rigid forms is not the way of the willow family. The leaf shape varies from the roundish oval of the sallow to the lance form of the white willow

Also the willow is not very strong set in fixed types: in endless crossings they flow into each other to the despair of the systematist.

The twigs, when harvested, stay flexible, because they retain the internal liquidity. Because of the use to bind (to weave baskets, to bind vines and climbing roses) Salix is an extraordinarily useful plants.

People who must live or work in water-rich places where the willow grows, soon suffer from painful rheumatic symptoms. The willow has the strength to resist the influences of cold and wet, that's why a tea made from the bark of this tree helps. Today we know that willow bark contains salicylic acid. It is a natural aspirin and can do anything that aspirin can: Relieve pain, dilute blood, to lower fever.

Dr. Edward Bach, the father of the flower essences, prescribed Willow for those who have suffered disaster and are in trouble to accept this without complaints, because they normally assess the life according to what success it brings. They have the feeling that they don't deserve such a plight.

Mythology

The story of Moses and the wicker basket has her role model in ancient Mesopotamian Literature. It is maintained in tables, which describe the origin of Sargon, the King of Acadia (2340-2284 v.Ch), as follows:

"I am Sargon, the mighty King of Acadia. My mother was a Priestess, I never knew my father... My mother, the Priestess, gave birth to me in secret. She put me in a wicker basket... Let me drift down the river... The river gave birth to me... Akki, the water bearer, has raised me, and adopted me as his son."

According to the narrative in ex 2.1-10 Moses had been suspended after his birth on the banks of the Nile. The daughter of the Pharaoh found him and ordered as a nurse a Hebrew woman -the biological mother of the child. After breastfeeding Pharaoh's daughter took the child as her son and gave him the name of Moses.

Through the ages the fast growing and quickly passing willow was associated with the constantly waxing and waning moon. To the goddess of the moon belongs all fast-growing and again passing, all soft, putrid, pliable, aqueous and susceptible.

The willow belongs to the Greek Europe, the virgin goddess who was deflowered by Zeus in the form of a bull. Europe, "the wide faced one" (full moon) or "the one with the white willow flowers", is pictured sitting on a willow branch and with a wicker basket in hand. Kwan yin, the Chinese goddess of mercy, dispersed with a willow branch the water of life.

Again and again the tree is connected to grief, death, separation and sadness. In ancient times the willow was dedicated to Circe, Hecate, Persephone, all death aspects of the triune goddess of the moon.

Moon, water, willow are all classic symbols of femininity. The main emphasis in the Chinese preference for willow is in its erotic significance. In arts and crafts they are symbols of feminine beauty, gentleness and grace. Through countless Chinese poems weigh flexible "willow-same waists" of the beauties.

Especially the Willow flowers are symbols of frivolity, lack of fortitude and moral weakness among the Chinese. Also in Judaism, the willow lost prestige and were symbol for "the low and ignorant in Israel, which are characterized neither by righteousness, nor knowledge, as the willow has neither taste nor smell".

Murshid

"There is the beauty of the pine tree, a beauty of straightness and uprightness; and again there is the beauty of the sweeping branches of the willow. Or again a curve added to the beauty of steadiness of form sometimes doubles that loveliness."

Murshid used as adjective for willow branches the word "sweeping". The actual meaning of "sweeping" is in detail: Far-reaching, comprehensive, all encompassing, extensive, far, wide, full, across the board, broad. And here we are in the middle of the willow-being. The Willow doesn't want to set in distinct species; it spreads out horizontally, because each branch when touching the ground, makes roots; is more wide than tall; has the property to encompass, at least if it is braided to baskets; it is without claims and grows almost anywhere where there is water.

The Sufis see the creation as an interplay between the male and the female aspect of the divine. They call these Jelal and Jemal. Murshid selects the pine and the willow from the plant Kingdom to illustrate this cosmic pair of opposites.

Straight line and curve are opposites. Together they make up the whole. The whole is not just the sum of the individual parts. The beauty that occurs when the male and the female join, is a new quality. The Sufis call the Union of Jelal and Jemal Kemal, which means as much as the perfection.

To be able to understand the perfection that is sought by all of creation, we must consider both aspects in its contrariety and acknowledge them. Only in the contrast, the essence of the two becomes clear. Whereas the pine tree represents the male, the willow reveals the light and dark sides of the female principle in many details.

Murshid describes the polarity in a number of characteristics:

"The vertical line is the sign of God, and the horizontal line is the world."

We had seen how the Willow spreads into more and more spaces. In the story of Moses, the small child is left to the world in a wicker basket.

"The vertical line represents heaven, the horizontal line earth."

The highest heavenly power is called "Zeus" among the ancient Greeks. He pairs himself with Europe, graced by Willow branches, a mythical creature that represents the marriageable femininity. The name of Europe has maintained its charm until today. Europe's boundaries are hard to define. She is spreading out and attracting many, because her beauty is still irresistible.

"The horizontal line represents this world, the vertical line that world, the next world."

The Willow doesn't care much about principles or laws. She shows herself sometimes with leaves that are round, sometimes with tips and her varieties are endless. She deals playfully with the question of how she should be or how it would be right.

"The vertical line conveys the meaning Yes, the horizontal line the meaning No."

Without the "no" the "yes" can't find itself. Moses can not be raised by the mother. He is suspended in a wicker basket, found by the daughter of the Pharaoh, and passed to the real mother. The mother

is allowed to be the nurse. This is the paradox of the No. The Willow grows there, where this mysterious change takes place. Illogical, but meaningful.

"The vertical line denotes life, the horizontal line death."

The Willow is the tree of the Greek goddesses of the underworld Hecate, Persephone and Circe. She leans down and willingly follows the process of dying. She shows us that we don't need to fight against dying. We can approach the dying. We can go with, as the Willow branch does not resist the movement down. In this surrender a great beauty is hidden. If we learn the art of dying from the willow, we avert misfortune. The Willow shows us how we can drop old patterns.

Phases in life come to an end. Farewell to defined roles is sometimes necessary. If we resist, or do not agree with the end, we give a meaning to dying in the sense of disaster. If we are trying to prevent the natural dying, we play a dangerous game, because we deny a part of ourselves. The result is, that the desire to die can exert a great attraction on us. It pulls us down. We fight so to speak against our own nature.

Murshid: *"Many times a person in a pessimistic mood, in a kind of disturbed condition may wish for death, wish for failure, wish for anything. If he only knew what an effect it has, he would be frightened. Even in pain, if a person could refrain from saying: 'I am in pain', he would do a great deal of good to himself."*

That is what the Willow does. In the form of salicylic acid it helps us to solve the pain, instead of allowing it a permanent place in our system. The Willow allows us to cry. The tears resolve the grief. In the moment where we get angry about death, loss, separation, we define it as bad luck and attach to it a fixed meaning. Murshid: *"If a person who has met with misfortune would even avoid saying: 'I am experiencing misfortune', it would be a great thing."*

The Willow recognizes no established categorization into good and evil. She is the opposite of the so-called right. She helps us not to bite us in our unhappiness. She prevents resentment.

"The vertical line represents strength, the horizontal line powerlessness."

Willow has little capacity to resist, superficially seen. She won't resist. That is her strength. By bending, she will survive. It is the power of dodging, of following the flow. It is the power of water. The dike of rigidity is softened. Other ways to continue show up. A way out of the polarity, either to go with the head through the wall or to resign, emerges.

"The vertical line spirit, the horizontal line matter"

Sufis do not insist that matter is born from spirit. They say that the reverse is just as true. Matter has to do with the Latin word for mater, mother.

The Willow is the maternal principle. She reproduced without inhibition, continuously. Moses begins his earthly life in a wicker basket. It may not correspond to his very essence to the fullest extent, but it is his salvation.

"The vertical line the masculine, the horizontal line the feminine."

Among the Chinese, the female waist is equated with the Willow branch. Murshid tells following story about the role of the beloved in the spiritual development of a man: "A *mureed* (Sufi-student) had been a long time in the service of a spiritual guide, but he could make no progress and was not inspired. He went to the teacher and said, 'I have seen very many mureeds being inspired, but it is my misfortune that I cannot advance at all, and now I must give up hope and leave you.' The teacher advised him to spend the last days of his stay in a house near the Khankah, and every day he sent him very good food and told him to cease the spiritual practices and to lead a comfortable and restful life. On the last day he sent the mureed a basket of fruit by a fair damsel. She set the tray down and immediately went away, though he wished to detain her. Her beauty and charm were so great, and he was now so much disposed to admire and was so much won by them, that he could think of nothing else. Every hour and every minute he longed only to see her again. His longing increased every moment. He forgot to eat, he was full of tears and sighs, finding his heart now warmed and melted by the fire of love. After some time, when the teacher visited the disciple, with one glance he inspired him."

"The vertical line the sun, the horizontal line the moon."

The moon is the constantly changing, the flexible. The sun is always the same. We saw how the Willow in mythology is placed in conjunction with the Moon. The moon has no light of himself, but is essential to the equilibrium in the cosmos. The moon has the round shape, so as the water if it may, makes always round movements. The law of water is: the shortest route from A to B is the curve.

"The vertical line the day, the horizontal line the night. The vertical line the positive, the horizontal line the negative."

The Willow is associated with the witches. Night debauchery, sex with the devil, we have centuries long fought by all means against these "execrable". This bitter struggle against what we reject in our selves, has brought untold suffering to us. The Willow helps us to reconcile us with all parts of our nature, with the spurned and demonized aspects.

"The vertical line power, the horizontal line beauty."

Power and strength are worthless without beauty. Truth has no meaning without beauty. The spirit cannot exist without a convenient form.

"The vertical line God, the horizontal line man." As the human is yearning for the divine, so God longs for man. In the moment where we have accepted the pain and suffering, an exuberant joy arises in us. It is like each cell full of light. This is the joy of God, that he may find himself in us.

Ya Jamil

Medication:

The Willow essence helps us:

- To discover femininity as half of creation;

- To give back to the world or to matter their divinity;
- To yield where it makes no sense to insist;
- To give in to the dying process as part of life;
- Not always just wanting to find, but also to let found ourselves;
- To wander instead to march; To cry;
- To cure depression.

The "United nature remedies"

You will find most of the flowers described in this book as an essence in the assortment of United Nature Remedies (www.unitednature.eu)

The word "remedy" means: cure, elimination of maladministration. The word consists of "Re", which means "back" and "Med", which means "walk, walk off, measure".

Murshid describes the task of man to go the way back to his natural measure. The word meditation has the same word root. Meditation as a maturation of personality leads to wholeness.

The way back takes us according to the Sufi teaching through the animal kingdom, the plant Kingdom, the mineral Kingdom back to the source of the soul, the universe within us. The challenge on the different stages of this journey is to find back the undistorted archetypes of the kingdoms of nature in our being. The natural traits that we find in the animals, flowers and stones, help us to discover ourselves and unite the whole of nature in us.

The "United Nature Remedies" are helpers in this process: They convey the archetypal vibration patterns of flowers and stones, so that we learn not only with our minds, but also with the soul to feel who we are, if we live our true nature. They help us to change our attitudes and to live in harmony with the whole. Flower essences help us in our development at the level of the plants. We had seen how plants 'dream'. They express imagination, emotions, inner movement, development and help us to overcome emotional obstacles.

Alchemy of the manufacture

For the production of a flower essence are mostly flowers, sometimes fruits or other parts of an intact plant used. Many plants are located in our United Nature Garden. In addition, we use flowers from the wild nature, which we discover in the environment or on travel.

In the actual manufacturing process we proceed according to the traditional principles of Alchemy.

The three basic principles of creation, the Sufi call them love, harmony and beauty, in other spagyric traditions sulfur, mercury and salt, are brought in a three unit or triad.

The love - or sulfur principle has to do with heat and light. The Sun is the main carrier. It is the power in creation, which carries and determines the individual shapes and gives rise to new.

The harmony - or mercury principle has to do with flow, with water and life force. The Moon is the main carrier. It is the power in the creation that keeps all beings without distinction in the river of life and energetically nurtured.

The beauty - or salt principle has to do with matter, physicality and incarnation. It is at the same time the starting point and the result of the alchemical work.

The production takes place in two spagyric phases: "Solve" and "Coagule" in the language of the European alchemists, "La illaha illa ' llah" with the Sufis, Crucifixion, and resurrection in the Christian tradition.

In the first phase flowers (beauty, "Salt") with help from Sun (love, "Sulfur") and water (harmony, "Mercury") will be brought in an accelerated process of resolution. In the second phase, the essential of the flower in an elevated, potentised form of existence is strengthened: in the elixir is so to speak the "jinn" banned in the bottle. This way a certain quality from the natural realm is available of personal development.

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Annex

Zikr of the 4 fruit types

Transcription of a meditation during the training group 2011

The wonderful thing with Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan is that meditation for him is not always the same. He teaches various approaches to meditation, meditation styles. The more I immerse myself in his teaching, the more it becomes clear to me, that what he said was addressed to different people. Depending on where he lectured, he has presented the teachings differently, taught another mix, other aspects. I want to show this to you today based on several songs from the anthology "Gayan". Murshid developed a psychological model with 4 basic character types, represented by 4 different fruits. For each character type, it appears to me, that there is one specific meditation exercise, one certain Zikr. The word "one" is not to be understood in the sense of exclusivity. It is meant that certain styles of meditation and Zikr fit to certain "fruit types", and reflect their special attitude to inside and outside, to "I" and "you".

1.)

Let's start with the pomegranate type, which represents the attitude "the world is indifferent to me and I'm indifferent to me". We have already seen that this attitude can have disadvantages, but is a very high state in its perfection, in its maturity. Murshid calls it "Vairāgya" (Sanskrit for indifference, serenity, dispassion, being not attached). Only the great masters have mastered this art of meditation. It is not a meditation, which would be suitable or advisable for everyone. But it is one of the four styles of meditation.

The Zikr of the pomegranate type is the mindfulness of the setting "I detach myself from all the world". Like a creeper we have tendrils on all sides. All tendrils are released at the detaching. We take back our interest in the world, our wishes to the world, our needs. We take our needs to us, out of the world. This is the first half of this Zikr. We take all our tentacles out of the world: we leave the world in peace. We need to, we no longer want to bother the world, we don't necessarily all the time something with which we pollute the world. We take back our interests from the world. We withdraw our mind from the world. I no longer stick my thoughts on the world. I solve my thoughts from the world. I leave the world alone, with my thoughts, with my actions, my desires, my expectations, my ideas, my ideals, my opinions, my feelings. I take myself back, get out of there, take a distance. That was the first half of this Zikr.

During the second half of "illa Allah", we focus the thoughts: "And also I leave myself alone. Not only everything around me. Also myself. "I will no longer offer myself for all, that I have given myself to till now, it doesn't have to be, I leave myself in peace."

This meditation is not a 'no' in distaste, but a 'no' in love: "No, dear self, dear "I", you must no longer suffer under me, I take back my claims on you. Take them out. You can just be, without all, what I expect from you, my dear "I"."

Murshid says:

"Indifference! My most intimate friend, I am sorry I have always to act against thee as thy opponent."

Indifference in this case is a positive expression of the highest good. You could say also 'serenity' – I let myself, I let you. I no longer claim you, I no longer claim me. Indifference - everything is equally

valid--indeed a nice word. If everything has the same validity, it makes no difference. There is more difference between this and that, no difference between outside and inside. It's all valid and equally valid. It has all its place, its validity. This morning, we have seen how the Earth element heals by the fact that it ensures that everything finds its place. Everything is in order, as it is.

In this meditation, the indifference is our 'most ardent friend'. A beautiful verse: Murshid deplored the indifference here because she had such a hard time with him. Yes. The indifference, our very best friend, would like to help us to let the world as it is. Vairāgya. That is what this Zikr is all about.

2.)

Now comes "you Yes, I no": the date. The date type gets a different meditation, an other Zikr from Murshid. Murshid has songs for the date type:

*"If you will go forward to find Us,
We will come forward to receive you"*

Obviously there is a person opposite out there, outside of us. Something comes back, if we turn to him, make us on the journey to him. At the moment, in which we start traveling to him, it starts to come back to us. This response that comes back is called Murshid "God", at least sometimes. You don't have to call it God, you can call it the Beloved. Or they say that what comes back, has no name, it is unspeakable.

Something is missing the date, it doesn't find inside itself what it needs. It looks for it out there. The date is in the search. One sets out to seek this unspeakable, that what is missing in us, heals us, makes us whole. We feel inadequate, limited inside, not right just as we are. That's why we must make us on the way to what complements us. And in the moment in which we set out to it, it comes to us. So is this Zikr.

At the moment that we set out to Him, God comes to us. And so we are healed, supplemented, made whole. The date longs for a supplement, yearns to be whole. We set out on the way, and if we have made this decision, God sets out to us.

In this type of Zikr, a very important lesson is hidden which can be found at many Sufi Masters: there is no guilt at all. At the most, for some of us time has come to set out on the journey, because we got stuck. To the one who admits he broke his vows, he did want to do something, but didn't do it, Rumi responds: "Then come again! Renew your vows!" Therefore Sufis call themselves "people of the path". We have to continue, we need to search.

It also means: For each step we do towards God, in the direction of "You", this "You" or opposite comes three steps towards us. This we see now: For every effort, every action we make, God comes threefold towards us. Feel this triple response. Sufis call this "ar Rahmān" - the divine grace. Three times more than we can ever imagine. Continuously.

3.)

The third type of meditation is differently described in the following verses:

*" O peace-maker, before trying to make peace throughout the world, first make peace within thyself!
"*

" My modesty! Thou art the veil over my vanity."

"The only thing that is made through life is one's own nature."

I suggest to take the last verse. This is an absolute Walnut type statement. A walnut type would say that: Everything you do has only a single purpose, a single goal, namely to form your own nature. Goal of creation is the Interior, your own space, the self. This is the truth for the walnut type. There are three other positions, but for this position this is the truth. It's quite different than before. This is an another Zikr: The only thing created through life is our own nature.

We experience who knows what, countless experiences in a lifetime, i.e. we go through many stages, through many severe tests, easy exams, pleasures, we commit ourselves - but, the only thing that happens with all this, what is ultimately created by this, is our own nature, this inner space, the self.

The question is, on what aspect the emphasis is being laid. compared to the date type the walnut type has the bearing on the opposite aspect. Before we have done the date exercise, now we do the walnut exercise.

The only thing created through life, is the own nature. Every move we make, every circle we draw has one single purpose: to give rise to this self.

Now, we put our hand on the heart and feel this self. Murshid says: *"I searched, but I could not find Thee; I called Thee aloud, standing on the minaret; I rang the temple bell with the rising and setting of the sun; I bathed in the Ganges in vain; I came back from Ka'ba disappointed; I looked for Thee on earth; I searched for Thee in the heaven, my Beloved, but at last I have found Thee hidden as a pearl in the shell of my heart."*

This is the walnut type.

4.)

Now, we turn to the grape type Zikr. Pir Vilayat enjoyed to do this Zikr with us. He called it not "grape zikr", but spoke of the "positive zikr". The whole world is filled with divinity in this Zikr. It is incredibly beautiful - I lose myself into the whole world. I give myself to the whole universe, because it is a delight. The universe is incredible: The stars - Pir Vilayat spoke always of the stars - the sky with stars and planets... We are made of stardust! Pir Vilayat has always stressed that we are absolutely cosmic. We are incredibly vast as part of the whole universe, we're all that. Such a wealth is unbelievable. Throughly cosmic!

The grape says 'yes' to the outside and 'yes' to the inside. In the second part of this zkr we remind us that we are divine. The divine dwells in us. We live in the divine and the divine lives within us. This is the grape zkr. The opposite of the pomegranate Zikr. Now we're everywhere fully partaking

The movements of this Zikr have a positive connotation: both a joyful diving into the whole world as a joyful diving into ourselvesving to meet divinity where ever we go. The divinity is outside of us and within us.

Also here fits a song:

*"Give all you have
and take all that is given to you."*

Everything-that is this Zikr. Give everything you've got and take everything you are given. Once again we make the Zikr with this sentence. On the expiration: give! On the inhalation: Take! And on the stop, the "hū": the friend!

The 4 types of character by Hazrat Inayat Khan

Pomegranate: You no, I no.

Date: You Yes, I no.

Walnut: You no, I Yes.

Grapes: You Yes, I Yes.

Literature references

Hazrat Inayat Khan

all of the master's quotations are from a digital edition of his lectures, with which I work since 1984.

In the internet one can go for the collected works on wahuiduddin.net or on hazrat-inayat-kahn.org.

In printed form exist:

Hazrat Inayat Khan, "the message-volumes", East-West publications. The records of lectures, which the master has given during his travels between 1910 and 1927 in Europe and in the United States.

Hazrat Inayat Khan, "Gayan, Vadan, Nirtan", Sufi Order Publications, 1980.

This is probably the only manuscript that was written by the master personally. Here one finds also the "Tanas", his dialogues with plants.

Hazrat Inayat Khan, "Nature meditations", Sufi Order Publications, 1980.

In this work dictated in 1921, I found plenty of clues about the properties of different flowers.

To the life of Sufi master Hazrat Inayat Khan, there is a series of publications:

From his youngest brother Musharaff Moulamia Khan, who moved with him to the West, is published "Pages in the life of a Sufi", Sufi Publishing Co, 1982. Here we find a poignant impression of the high respect of all life, which was lived in the family and of the tremendous difficulties, to give shape to these noble values in the West.

Some of his students have left behind memories: Sirkar van Stolk reported in "Memories of a sufi sage, Hazrat Inayat Khan" (East-West publications, 1967) about his years as secretary of Murshid, as his students called him and still call him. It was a life with feverish travels and lectures across Europe. He tells about the uplifting and healing power of his master.

His son, Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan has rendered Murshid's life and teachings in the monumental book "The message of our time", Harper and Row, 1978. Who wants to get an overview about the at the same time revolutionary new and ancient aspects in the work of the master, should read this book.

The development of retreats for modern Western people in the solitude of nature was the life's work of Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan. On the homepage of the international Sufi order Germany www.sufiorden.de and on www.zenithinstitute.com for the latest information.

Firos Holterman ten Hove, "Das Heilige Buch der Natur", Heilbronn, 2014:

Here you find a comprehensive representation of the nature teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan, information about publications referring to the understanding of nature and spiritual ecology in universal Sufism.

Below I have put together further titles and authors, which have helped me better to understand the statements made by Hazrat Inayat Khan about plants and to connect with the soul of flowers:

Bach, Dr. Edward, "Bach flower remedies which heal: thoughts on the healing power of plants", Munich 1990.

Background information on the flower essences. "There are twelve mental States, and each of these States is a medicinal plant".

Bach, Dr. Edward, "Heal Thyself, An Explanation of the real cause and cure of disease", saffron without year:

A quote of the discoverer of flower essences: "the universe is God rendered objective; at its birth it is God reborn; "at its close it is God more highly evolved."

Baden, Hans Jürgen, "Die Farbe Gottes", Freiburg 1985:

This Evangelical Minister's quote: "Vegetative dystonia is a state in which we take the herbal element of our nature, the vegetative claims of existence no longer serious. Our senses have become too dull,

they are dead already too far, to make us take part in the life of nature. But such participation is existential, it represents a mystical participation and must be completed every day."

Beuchert, Marianne, "Symbolik der Pflanzen, von Akelei bis Zypresse", Frankfurt am Main 1999:
A book to fall in love with. Full of beautiful pictures. For each plant also a collection of phrases.

Boonacker, A.C., "Weerspiegeling", Lochem, n.d.:

The book of a Dutch botanist from the inheritance of my grandfather's, which has fascinated me as a teenager by statements like: "The leaves of the water lily rest on the water surface. The plant, both leave and flower, forms the image of a "voluntarily tied being".

Burbank, Luther, "Life harvest", Berlin 1929:

An autobiography by the friend of Hazrat Inayat Khan with green fingers.

Clark, Glenn, "the man who speaks with the flowers; The life story of Dr. George Washington Carver verse tells of a friends', Bietigheim, 1969:

"When I touch a flower, so I touch not only a flower, but the whole infinity."

Dash, Mike, "Tulip mania, the craziest speculation of history", Munich 2001:

Exciting details of the first stock exchange crash in history: in the 17th century around the Tulip.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo, "Nature", Diogenes, 1988:

Emerson was one of the great founding fathers of ecology. The book dates back to 1836.

Flensburger booklets, 'Gespräche mit Bäumen 1', 2007:

In this publication from a long series of interviews with nature spirits, you will find inspiring information about incense, willow and walnut.

Francé, R.H., "The soul of the plant", Ullstein/Berlin 1924:

Amazing how at the beginning of the 20th century, in the middle of the formation of a science based on research on dead nature, a scholar allows the plants to have a soul. One of the founders of organic farming!

Genaust, Helmut, "Etymologisches Wörterbuch der botanischen Pflanzennamen", Hamburg 2005:

A wonderful treasure box for those who search for the meaning of names. Also the history of plants as a companion of the human race in different cultures comes to fruition.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang, „Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen“, in „Natur, ein Lesebuch“, Beck'sche Reihe 1991

Grieve, Mrs. M., 'A modern herbal, the dedicial, culinary, cosmetic and economic properties, cultivation and folklore of herbs, grasses, fungi, shrubs and trees with all their modern scientific uses, Penguin 1978:

On 912 pages its title becomes reality!

Grohmann, Gerbert, "Die Pflanze, ein Weg zum Verständnis ihres Wesens", Stuttgart, 1951:

A great scholar, which clearly represents an unprecedented wealth of observations from the plant Kingdom from an anthroposophical point of view. E.G., he writes about the Pentagram in the rose bloom, the special position of the mistletoe in the course of the year, the fall of the lily type of lily in the shape of the Orchid, the defense of the onion as cultivated plant, etc etc. Wonderful!

Gurudas, "flower essences and vibrational healing, San Raphael in 1989:

An important continuation of the work of Dr. Bach. More flower essences are presented. The effect of vibration is explained.

Gurudas, "The Spiritual Properties of Herbs", San Rafael in 1988:

On the psycho spiritual effects of herbs.

Häge, Walter, "Weihrauch",
www.selbsteheilung-online.com

Hansen, Eric, "Orchid fever, the story of a passion", Stuttgart 2002:

You can find here what the Orchid has to do with passion.

Holger Kalweit, "Naturtherapie, Initiationsreise zur Erdmutter", Arun:

A wealth of experience reports of a modern natural Mystic.

Hütter, Aloys P. and Aloys H., "Am Anfang war die Ökologie, Naturverständnis im Alten Testament", Herder, 2004:

An analysis of the sustainable character of the original Jewish religion, which is in strong contrast to earlier Roman, Christian and today's tree evildoers.

Kerner, Elise and Kerner, Imre, "Der Ruf der Rose, Was Pflanzen fühlen und wie sie mit uns kommunizieren", Cologne 1992:

Reports on professors and shamans, aura readers and engineers, biochemists and healers, whose knowledge shows the contours of new findings about the communication with the nature.

Köchlin Florianne, "The dignity of plants", Blueridge Institute; Münchenstein BL, Switzerland, [plant signaling & behavior 4:1, 78-79; January 2009]:

Plant rights are the next topic when we finally have agreed about the rights of animals.

Crane, Ernst Michael, "Die Formensprache der Pflanze, Grundlinien einer kosmologischen Botanik", Stuttgart 1976:

The author offers many examples, how the shapes of plants mirrors the motions of the planets. Just as Hazrat Inayat Khan postulated.

Lippert, Franz, "Vom Nutzen der Kräuter im Landbau", Darmstadt 1973:

A confirmation of Murshids view on the dandelion with many interesting details.

MacLean, Dorothy, "To Hear the Angels Sing, on odyssey of co-creation with the devic Kingdom", Morningtownpress, 1980:

The cofounder of Findhorn describes among other things her spiritual training in the Sufi order and the amazing gardening results as a consequence of her communication with the angels of the plants.

Meyer, Wali Ali, Bilal Hyde, Faisal Muqaddam, Shabda Kahn, "physicians of the heart: ' A Sufi view of the ninety-nine names of Allah", Sufi Ruhaniat international, San Francisco 2011:

The best book on the subject "Wazifa", that I have ever found! A delight!

Pelikan, W., "Heilpflanzenkunde. Der Mensch und die Heilpflanze", Verlag Goetheanum:

Of all anthroposophical authors, Pelican has influenced me the most. Has contributed to the pine and the wine essential informations.

Quarch, Christoph, "Die Natur als inneres Erlebnis", Scheidewege, Jahresschrift für skeptisches Denken, 1993/94:

A representation of the nature philosophy of Ernst Jünger. Quote: "To look at the plants long and without thinking, till by spontaneous generation the Word turns up, that is appropriate for them."

Rätsch, Christian, "Heilkräuter der Antike in Ägypten, Griechenland und Rom. Mythologie und Anwendung einst und heute", Munich 1998:

In a bibliography about the effect of the plants on our psyche Rätsch should not be missed.

Rißmann, Rudolf, „Evolution der Pflanze“, Stuttgart 1969:

In the footsteps of Zarathustra, he describes as a disciple of Rudolf Steiner the development of the plant through the ages. Also the contrast "Horizontal - vertical", which we know from Hazrat Inayat Khan, is botanically explained.

Schimmel, Annemarie "Kleine Paradiese, Blumen und Gärten im Islam", Herder Spektrum, 2001:

A good introduction to the importance of plants in the Islamic cultural area.

Schirmacher, Dr. Christine, "Das Alkoholverbot im Islam",

<http://www.islaminstitut.de/uploads/media/Alkohol.PDF>:

Good background information.

Simonis, W., "Kleines Taschenbuch der bodenheilenden Arzneipflanzen", Darmstadt 1974:

In particular the description of the oak was a help.

Sinoué, Gilbert, "Die Straße nach Isfahan", Munich 1994:

A novel about Avicenna, the most famous doctor of all times.

St. Barbe Baker, Richard, "My life, my trees," Findhornpress 1970,.

The story of a forester, who helped in cooperation with President Roosevelt to plant 26 trillion trees.

"...the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose (Isaiah 35:1)"

Stewart, Ian and Vann Joines, "Die Transaktionsanalyse", Herder 1990:

The concept of Hazrat Inayat Khan of the 4 fruit types was reborn in the sixties in the famous "I am OK, you are OK" from transactional analysis.

Storl, Wolf-Dieter, "Die Pflanzen der Kelten: Heilkunde, Pflanzenzauber, Baumkalender", Munich 2010:

One of the books of the acclaimed Allgäu American, Ethnobotanist and natural Mystic. A sample: "Broom is in the old Celtic Banatlo, in the Welsh Banadl, in the Breton Balan. In the old Chansons de Geste, in which many of the so-called Saracen heroes in fact were Celtic heroes, appears the pagan hero Balan. Although Balan is a Saracen (= Muelman), he has fair hairs, blue eyes and a white horse. He's the perfect Sun hero. His Dominion is described as the other-world: You must pass through a mountain range and exceed a magic bridge."

Storl, Wolf-Dieter, „Das Herz und seine heilenden Pflanzen“, Baden bei Wien and Munich 2009: "The heart, not only pump, but the spiritual center of the human being, needs attention, the Sufis say." Storl shows us which plants can help at that.

Tompkins, Peter and Christopher Bird, "The secret life of plants as living things with character and soul and their reactions in the physical and emotional relationships with humans", Frankfurt am Main 1991:

For me the cult book of the 1970s. I was 24 years old, as this book was released. It confirmed everything I already intuitively knew at the time.

Urbanovsky, Dr. Claudia and Dr. Gwenc'hlan Le Scouezec, "the garden of the Druids, the secret herbal knowledge the Celtic healer", Ullstein 2010:

'Of course' the mistletoe from the point of view of the Breton Celts is described alongside 55 other plants. The reference to the book of hours of Queen Anne de Bretagne (1477-1514) with beautiful images from this forgotten treasure is surprising.

Usteri, Dr. A., "Versuch einer Geisteswissenschaftlichen Einführung in die Botanik", Zurich 1923: As a student of Rudolf Steiner, he further developed the doctrine of metamorphosis of Goethe.

Uyldert, Mellie, 'Lexicon der Geneeskruiden', Amsterdam 1992:

The most famous Dutch herb witch, offers a summary of traditional old knowledge in good plain language .

Walter, Hilma, "Die Pflanzenwelt, Ihre Verwandtschaft zur Erden- und Menschheitsentwicklung", Arlesheim 1971:

Includes a historical consideration about the plant developments in Indian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek/Roman and medieval European culture.

Weber, Andreas, "Alles fühlt", Berlin 2007:

Quoted Lou Andreas Salomé: "one can not look at the leaves and flower heads, without knowing: we are related to them..." Spring says so loudly that we are springs. Because that is the reason of our delight in it."

Wikipedia

To be honest, I love "real" books. But this book would have been much more laborious without Wikipedia. Thank you!

Wordsworth, William, "Selected Poetry", Oxford 1994:

The poet makes it clear that the beloved and the violet are one and the same person.

Biography

"I was born 1949 in Amsterdam. My father, originating from a family of tropical foresters, was later in life social worker. The love of naturopathy and gardening was added from my mother's side.

I grew up in the forests around Apeldoorn. As a child, I had an enlightenment experience in nature. As a teenager, I had two passions: the piano and gardening. I opted for the latter and completed training as a horticultural engineer with focus on biodynamic agriculture. My search for the meaning of human existence led me later to study history at the University of Utrecht. In my diploma thesis I explored the relationship between Jungian psychology and national socialism.

With 25 came the encounter with the Sufi master Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan. Under his guidance, I was able to hear the sound behind the creation. He gave me the task to study of the works of Hazrat Inayat Khan, the great Sufi at the beginning of the 20th century. These researches accompanied me on all stations of life so far, three books are the result of it: "Das Heilige Buch der Natur" und "Die Seele der Blumen" appeared in 2014.

I could expand my psycho-social competence in many roles of life: as the lover, the father, the gardener, the management trainer, the CEO, the social worker and the Sufi teacher.

In 1978 I discovered the flower essences and a few years later I began to make gem elixirs myself too. The manufacture of essences and elixirs is an alchemical work, which you cannot do without dealing with the spiritual areas of your being. The spiritual path has a lot to do with giving up, casting off, saying farewell, and such processes are never easy. On the other hand they are a gift, because what appears to us when we leave our usual ideas, is great."

Source of plant essences

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