

CULTIVATING ZIRAAT

Cultivating Ziraat Schedule 2024: <https://inayatiyyaziraat.org/event-announcements/>

Ziraat website: <https://inayatiyyaziraat.org/>

Session 4 – Symbology in Ziraat

15 June 2024 – presenter Aziza Barker

LINK [Session 4 Recording](#) Passcode: SHMm#X9Y

Ziraat Lodge – Opening, Greetings & Salutations Ritual

Introduction from Aziza – speaking from the Coahuiltecan and Lipan Apache land in the Rio Grande Valley on the US/ Mexico Gulf Coast.

Today’s presentation is compiled from teachings on symbolism from Hazrat Inayat Khan and Pir Vilayat as well as material specifically from the Ziraat Teaching Booklet. I offer my gratitude to Dan Duggan, a long time Ziraat friend and Experienced Farmer who collaborated with me on parts of this presentation.

There will be three short meditations and a piece of music. We hope this class inspires you to explore symbols in Ziraat for yourself.

Farming Symbology

In the Ottoman Turkish language Ziraat means agriculture or cultivation.

Ziraat was created by Hazrat Inayat Khan in the latter part of his life and was further developed by his murids and continues being developed by all of us here, whether this is your first time or not.

We’re all contributing to Ziraat!

Murshid used the symbology of the plough in terms of farming, because that was the method of the time and as a symbol, the plough continues to have relevance today. The teachings may be experienced from different perspectives today, we need to use our wisdom and inspiration to look at the context and perspective as we read the Ziraat Lessons.

There are many examples of symbology in the Lessons in the [Ziraat Teaching booklet](#), and today I will talk about three -- the Sun, the Moon and Ploughing.

Contemplation of Symbols offers an opportunity for inspiration, creativity, enlightenment and ultimately our own engagement with the Earth and our divine connection to this beautiful planet.

A story about Murshid as young boy – seeking advice from his father because “he could not reconcile himself to continue praying to the God whom he knew not”. The wise guidance offered by his father is so appropriate for this lesson on Symbology.

“God is in you and you are in God. As the bubble is in the ocean and the bubble is a part of the ocean and yet not separate from the ocean. For a moment it has appeared as a bubble, then it will return to that from which it has risen. So is the relation between [human] and God.

... If this be rightly interpreted, it will mean that God is the very depth of your own being.”

Quote from [Life and Teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan](#) – by Wahiduddin

A. What is symbolism?

Murshid describes Symbolism as an “Ocean in a Drop”

The wise have given lessons to the world in different forms suited to the evolution of the people at a particular time. And the first and most original form of education that the wise gave to the world has been symbolical. This method of teaching has been valued in all ages and will always have its importance.

... The secret of symbols is revealed to the souls who see through life. Whose glance penetrates through objects. It requires intuition, even something deeper than intuition – insight – to read symbols. To the one to whom the symbols speak of their nature and of their secret each symbol is a living manuscript in itself.

Symbolism is the best way of learning the mysteries of life, and the best way of leaving ideas behind which will keep for ages after the teacher has passed. It is speaking without speaking, it is writing without writing. The symbol may be said to be an ocean in a drop. - Gatha Papers I Naqsh Bandi Symbology

https://wahiduddin.net/mv2/XIII/XIII_7.htm

Pir Vilayat says; *What if your picture of the Universe is not the universe at all? What if nature is truly a living sacred manuscript, offering you moment-by-moment signs and symbols, the language of a far greater Reality.*

Quote from the prologue of [An Emerald Earth](#): by Kainat Norton & Moinuddin Smith.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary: defines symbolism as, “the art of expression by symbols” and “A thing that represents or stands for something else, especially a material object representing something abstract.”

B. How do we utilize symbolism in Ziraat? (~11:35)

In session 1 we heard - Hazrat Inayat Khan used agriculture and nature symbolically, in the tradition of the mystery schools, to guide initiates on the spiritual path.

In Ziraat the symbols may strike a unique chord with each individual. A person may choose to:

- work with symbols by reading and meditating on the [Ziraat Teachings](#) in the booklet or website.
- delve into the [resources on the Ziraat website](#)
- participate in lodges,
- one may feel called to receive the initiation as a Worker, and be a companion on the Ziraat path.

In session 2, the Ziraat Lodge and the Cycles of Ziraat were introduced. The stages or stations of farming with their actions, watchwords and symbols are an important part of the Worker’s concentration. We encourage you to contemplate these symbols. There is a wonderful article by Wali Via, [The Cycle of Ziraat](#), which offers an overview of the stages of farming. (Look for other material on the Ziraat website: ziraatinayatiyya.org.)

Watchwords and Symbols

Ploughing	Harrowing	Sowing	Reaping	Threshing	Garnering
TOIL	COURAGE	HOPE	JOY	STRENGTH	THANKS-GIVING
					

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In session 3, Attuning to Nature – we connected with the essence of the elements and the world around us. We embody the symbols of the elements with the [Salutations](#) at the beginning and end of the Lodge.

Dan Duggan says ... “looking at the question of how we utilize the symbols of Ziraat, for me one of the best ways is to actually have or use these symbols. For example, I once used a large scythe to clear a field. It was tiring and a lot of work until I realized the balance points of holding it and the best rhythm moving out from my core utilizing what may be called the balance point or the suspension of an arc - the kamal points. “

C. Contemplations on the symbols of the Sun and the Moon (~18:00)

[The Ziraat Dialogue](#) -- points to the rhythm and the polarity of the sun and moon.

What is arising for you in this dialogue?

Contemplate how the movement of the sun and moon create the rhythm of activity and response in your life.

- What is dawning for you right now? What has reached its zenith?
- What is at that balance point of perfection, “high noon” or the top of the arc? -as in Dan’s story
- What is subsiding - moving towards sunset, the cooling of the night?
- How many of us use the waxing energy of the moon to begin work, and the waning moon, cooling energy, to rest from work?

Questions / Comments (~ 21:55)

- What is the Ziraat Dialogue used for? – and is it always in a Lodge?
Wali’s response is on the recording.
- Interpreting the language of Ziraat and the Dialogue via a “Mystical App”

Practice - Rising of the Moon (Nature Meditation)

Let my soul advance towards Thee, as the rising moon progresses towards fullness.

- Inhaling say aloud: *Let my soul advance towards Thee*
- Exhaling say aloud: *as the moon progresses to fullness.* (Repeat both slowly 2x aloud)
- (Fikr) Repeat in silence 3-5x on the breath in your own rhythm
- (Fikr Assir) for 2-3 breaths – sit with the atmosphere of the practice, any images that came up for you.

Teachings on the Sun (~ 30:00)

“Light has the greatest attraction for the human soul. The symbol of the sun is present in many cultures, often a prophet, master, savior has a sun around their head. A deeper study of the sun suggests the four directions of lines that are formed round the sun. It is this sign that is the origin of the symbol of the cross.”

Gatha Papers I Naqsh Bandi: Symbology

Meditation Practice: Five-Pointed Star

Our sun is a star and our bodies reflect the symbolic shape of a star. Standing or lying comfortably with arms & legs relaxed, sense the head, arms and legs as 5 points of a star - connected through the spine.

- Extend radiance along the spine to the soles of the feet, to the palms of the hands, to the middle of the forehead. Sense the vertical and horizontal converging in the heart, the middle of the chest.
- Experience the radiance of our hearts as your own luminosity, illuminating and magnetizing the entire body.
- When you are ready open your eyes. Notice your surroundings. (Maybe it’s more distinct, clear, vibrant ...)

Another Nature Meditation – set to Music. These words are a popular Dance of Universal Peace – embodying the relationship of the moon reflecting the light of the sun and the sacred relationship to our own hearts.

*“Let my heart reflect thy light Lord as the moon reflects the light of the sun in love, always in love.
Hu Allah, Allah Hu Allah, Hu Allah, Allah HUUUU”*

Keruna- a Belgian women’s polyphonic acapella choir (~ 4 mins – relax and listen / sing along)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHoVS7i7Ukk>

Working with our Hearts - [Ziraat Lesson #1](#) – Symbology of the Plough. (~39:18)

- Ploughing has been around for thousands of years in one manner or another to cultivate food for sustenance by different cultures around the globe.
- Ploughing has its own symbolic connotations; to plough through something, being slow & steady, methodical, careful, specific.
- The hint is that spiritual work takes steadfastness, strength, perseverance, taking care and attention.
- Even if we have a pot in our home and wish to plant a seed, we hope it will grow. – so, there's hope in ploughing; we hope it will produce a plant - vegetable or flower.
- All that takes skill and effort.

The plough in use during Hazrat Inayat Khan's time had a **specific shape with a large and small wheel.**

- the symbol of the plough represents Prana, the active and responsive power of the breath
- **“both attached to the axle, meaning that both work in the body.**
- the large wheel representing the active power of the breath and small wheel representing the responsive power of breath.
- These form the rhythm - **“which is the Cause behind every action.”**
- The blade attached to the plow represents Willpower.
- The plough as a representation of the human being who has all these qualities of action and repose that form the balance and rhythm of life.
...and so, in the life of a human being it is harmony and evenness of these forces (which we call Jelal and Jemal) which help the continuity of harmony and balance in life.

Ziraat [Lesson 2](#) - Cultivating the Mind (~42:25)

On one side, by the responsive or Jemal attitude that is for thinking and reading about the value and purpose of one's mind, one cultivates the ground within oneself. By the active attitude or Jelal attitude that is the power of one's mind, one is able to accomplish one's work.

One's own self is the plough; understanding and power are the two wheels of the plough. With this plough, one works on the soil of the mind ... making it softer and smoother, until ready to sow the seed.”

Breath Practice:

- Imagine something that requires a lot of activity & requires physical strength,
- Now think of a something very soothing, peaceful, maybe rocking a child,
- Watch our cycle of inhaling, that moment at the top when we're suspended and then exhaling and that moment at the end of the out breath before it turns back to an inhalation.

We have covered a small part of Murshid's teaching on symbology and shared several practices.

Questions / Comments

Close the Lodge – Salutations in silence and closing phrases.

Let us depart knowing ourselves the willing workers of the Sovereign of the Farm, in whose service is perfect freedom.

Homework Practices: Link to pdf of [Nature Meditations](#)

- Contemplate the symbols / watchwords for each stage of farming in Ziraat - or questions from the Dialogue.
- Repeat the Nature Meditation we did on Rising Moon or choose one from the list below –
 - Sunrise: Raise my soul towards Thee with the rise of the sun.
 - Sunset: Let me unite with Thee at the sunset.
 - Dark night: Through the darkness of night my soul seeks for Thee

Next Week: Addressing the Eco-Crisis and Seeding the New Epoch