

## Darshan

by Gawery Voûte

*[Taken from handwritten notes of Gawery Voûte - from the 1970's - presumably used before reading a text of Hazrat Inayat Khan during a class that Gawery gave. Translated from Dutch, still to be checked.]*

The mentality of modern man has quickly moved away from the appreciation - let alone admiration - of a great figure, in whatever field of life it may occur. Since a very gifted person is as fallible as everyone else, one does not easily give oneself to a personality, but much more to an idea or slogan, which seems less prone to immediate criticism. After all, a person is much more debatable than an idea. What one tends to forget, however, is that every idea, yes, every achievement originates from the thinking and feeling of a person. Behind everything lies the human personality in the same way as a composer is hidden in his composition.

Perhaps this attitude, which shuns personality cult, has contributed to the fact that nowadays few major personalities are emerging, especially in society at large. Certainly other factors also play a part in this, but they fall outside the scope of this chapter<sup>1</sup>, which puts the human personality at the centre, on the basis of an ability to recognize the spirit as master of body and mind. Such recognition can only be real if it is supported by a living proof and not by a vague theory. This is a very natural matter in the East. The ordinary human being has an extra sense, which not only makes him susceptible to, but is also attracted by, 'outstanding' figures, who by their spiritual realisation work as a lighthouse whose rays of light reach them in their night of ignorance. In the radiance of such spiritual personalities they are taken up by simply and quietly sitting down with them. This Darshan (silent communication) helps them no longer keep their own small light under the bushel, but to lift it to light their own path. In our West this extra sense is awakening today. That is why many young people are looking for masters. But the Westerner has not kept and refined this ability for centuries, like people of the Orient, and that is why he behaves in this often as an immature child who can hardly distinguish the real and false masters. For the quietly contemplating person, these symptoms are a warning not to marvel at 'would be' eastern mysticism.

After this introduction we are now approaching the Darshan that students of Murshid Inayat Khan experienced during the summer school in Suresnes. For some time outside of their ordinary daily lives, they daily inhaled Darshan, whether they were in his direct physical presence or not. The vibration of being there was comparable to a transposed piece of music on a much higher note, the fundamental tone that was struck by Murshid. Everyone was constantly touched by it at all levels of his being, so that one was lifted to the limit of his ability but also faced with his own shortcomings. In doing so, we were aware that Murshid did not only measure our deepest desire but also our human failure better than ourselves. When he spoke to his mureeds, he played the gamut of their hidden possibilities and inadequacies, and always focused on the divine primal tone with which he, as he once said, lifted us above our situation with one hand. A rare privilege we experienced when we were allowed a personal interview with Murshid. If we were able to experience Darshan in that short span of time, we were very blessed. In that silence he allowed the divine Life, present in us as a seed, to flow in so that it would keep us embedded in the holy stream until our last breath. Therefore, one moment in the presence of

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Gawery was talking about a text by Hazrat Inayat Khan which was read by her after this introduction.

the Master is more valuable than years of study, even then meditation. Yet Murshid highly recommended study of his teachings and meditation, especially when the mureed is able to perform them as a Darshan, that is, in communion with the Master. Then the Darshan is enriched by that level of consciousness that is brought about by true knowledge and purity of realization. Murshid awakened this process of spiritual development in those who were around him as his mureeds; but also for times to come the vibration of the Sufi Message continues to pass on the possibilities to Darshan with him to those who open up to it.