

## Zikr of Love

C F G C

La il- la- -ha il- -la 'ishq

Am Dm G C G Bb G

'ishq 'ishq Al- -lah Ma'- -bud Lil- -lah -bud lil- lah - -

Words

traditional

Music & Dance

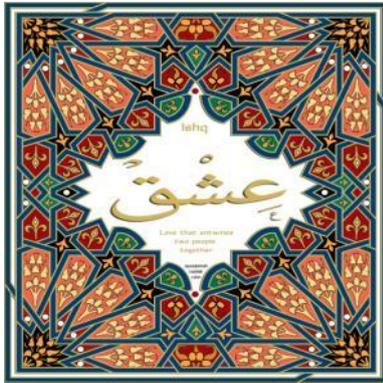
Wali & Ariënne van der Zwan

La ilaha illa 'ishq

There is no God but Love

'Ishq Allah ma'abud Lillah

God is Love, Lover and Beloved



Hazrat Inayat Khan calls *'Ishq Allah ma'abud Lillah* the creed of Sufism and translates it as God is Love, Lover and Beloved, although a more literal translation would be 'Love is God, loving-kindness is God.

Tracing back Inayat Khan as a contemporary exponent of the path of Love (*madhhab-i-'ishq*), we meet the Persian Sufi poet Fakhr al-dīn Ibrāhīm 'Irāqī (thirteenth century) as the first to use *'ishq* in the Islamic creed, saying *la ilaha illa 'ishq*: there is no god but Love.

'Iraqi traveled to India, where he was of paramount influence to Indo-Persian Sufi poetry. He later traveled to Turkey and met with Rumi.

Like Rumi, 'Iraqi was deeply influenced by the teachings of Ahmad Ghazali, the brother of the more famous Imam Ghazali and writer of *Sawanih*. In this treaty on the trinity of Love (Love, Lover and Beloved), Ahmad Ghazali (eleventh century) declared *'ishq* not a Quality of the One, but the Essence and pointed the direction of spiritual growth towards the level of loverhood (*'ashiqi*) en belovedness (*ma'shuqi*) into the essence of Love (*dhat* or *zat 'ishq*).

'Iraqi followed this school of Love and fused its teachings with the more analytical school of Ibn 'Arabi and his strict monotheism, leading to monism ('only God exists'). 'Iraqi's main theme was love revealed through the medium of human beauty. When 'Iraqi died he was buried near Ibn 'Arabi's tomb. In his *lama'at* (Divine Flashes, his most famous work), he wrote:

*Love is the only thing existing in the world  
lover, beloved and love are one  
union and separation no longer pertain.*

Inayat Khan mentions 'Iraqi several times. In 'The smiling Forehead', he calls him 'the great Persian poet'.

Looking at this ancestry on the Path of Love, Inayat Khan's 'God is Love, Lover and Beloved' can be seen as a deep realization of the ultimate truth and essence of Love. This realization is clearly felt in one of Inayat Khan's poems:

*I bowed my head low in humility,  
and on my knees I begged of love,  
'Disclose to me, I pray thee, O love, thy secret.'  
She took me gently by my arms and lifted me above the earth,  
and spoke softly in my ear,  
'My dear one,  
thou thyself art love, art lover,  
and thyself art the beloved  
whom thou hast adored.'*

*Inayat Khan, Vadan*

Murshid Sam, in his *Perfection of the Heart*, follows his teacher Inayat Khan and says:

'It would not be wrong to say that *Ishq* is God Himself, as Creator, as Actor, as Doer... *Ishq* is beyond conception and comprehension, without realization.

Sangatha 2

How to understand *Ishq*. Everyone belongs to *Ishq*; when one seeks to know *Ishq*, possess *Ishq*, it is gone. Infants love, angels love. There are then no questions and answers. When your heart is open, you are one with *Ishq*. *Ishq* expresses itself through you, *Ishq* is your very being.

Sangatha 3

For more on this, see our booklet '*The Art of Remembrance and the Stations of the Soul, Zikr and Nafs with the Sufis and Beyond*' (also available in German).

## Dance description

1. La ilaha
  2. Illa 'ishq
- Repeat
3. 'Ishq Allah
  4. Ma'abud Lillah
  5. 'Ishq Allah
  6. Ma'abud Lillah

Partner Dance. Dance starts with all holding hands, facing circle.

1. Step out with left, right on I-, left on -LA, right on -HA, lowering arms in a gesture of surrendering.
  2. Step in with right in same rhythm and foot pattern, raising arms
- Repeat 1. and 2.
3. Take hands with partner in butterfly hold, opening the heart area, as a symbol of the heart with wings while making a half turn clockwise.
  4. Bow to each other in Mevlevi position (left hand on right shoulder, right arm crossing left arm with hand on left shoulder) on MA'ABUD, coming up in same position on LILLAH.
  5. In same position, circle faces center, sidestepping to the right on 'ISHQ, back to the left on ALLAH.
  6. Two side steps to the right, gradually letting go of Mevlevi hold, opening arms and heart area, ending holding hands in the circle.