

Dancing in Poland



This trip came out quite differently as foreseen. Every day had its moments of *awwal* (the wazifa for sacred surprise), so we renamed it our *Awwal Camp*. Literally until the last moment we did not know how many people would attend the Camp, as the organizer kept being vague. When we started, we counted a small group of 9:

Fateah (Scotland), Anya (Kaliningrad), Marek (the organizer), Helen the interpreter, Ma'gosha, Isabelle and Halina from Poland and us two. Isabella had to go to hospital halfway, around the same time that Zuleicha, the wife of Marek, joined us. With three part-time visitors, we reached a total of thirteen people. To our disappointment

not one person from Shabda's workshop attended the camp. Hayat (Krakow) and Azimath (Warsaw), the proposed two Polish on staff with Salik and his wife, both canceled at a late moment. On our request, Salik wrote a paragraph on this:

We want to explain that on workshop with Shabda were people from the Sufi Order but also many people who first time had a contact with spiritual dances.

We had not people from Shabda workshop because probably they had different plans for holidays. Also if they spend money and time for one camp with dancing may be they wanted to go on other interesting workshops or simply for holidays. Some come for Shabda only because they knew that he is Pir. Some of them recognize that dancing is not what they want to do in the future. Some want to come for dancing in other time. And we hope they will come.

with love Suleika and Salik

We had our difficult moments – as you can imagine, with such a small circle for such a long time – but in these circumstances it pays to lead together, one helping the other in difficult moments.

Also the venue was wonderful. The place was loving, the acoustics of the dance room was superb, the spaciousness of the outside tent (for the walks) was a welcome change and the food (by Krishna adept Pjotr) was exquisite.

In the end we all had a great camp. Unanimously we all renamed it a 'retreat', and a deep, very personal and intimate one indeed. The dances and the walks helped us getting to know each other and ourselves on a deeper level and people were not shy in sharing the intimate changes, especially with the walks.



All dances went very well (dancing in a moon with Wali dancing in the circle while playing) and people really got it. This was also true for the walks, that we shared on three successive days, leading the group into the element walks (once thoroughly plus twice repeated in different styles with and without guitar), all planetary walks (except for Uranus and Pluto) in different ways and even Tassawuri Murshid SAM. The morning meditations also went great (with all attending) and the feedback sessions (twice) were very rewarding as well, with people having a chance to lead a second dance.

All in all we did a lot and we feel the people got a lot out of it also.

Kaliningrad Anya as an extra bonus received guitar lessons every day and got well on her way to mastering the basic chords and strums.



We invited Fateah to help us leading the dances, but as she had tripped and fallen at the airport, she only as able to lead some dances in the second half of the week.

Lessons learned

1. Sometimes it is good not to know how many people are coming (for we wouldn't have want to miss this Camp!)
2. You can actually have a camp with so few people and come home filled and tired but not exhausted
3. Small makes intimate.
4. A Camp is not always a good start for outreach (but then: we didn't know this would be outreach!)

Feedback

Q: How was the experience of the Dances at the Camp for you?

A: It was very "building", clarifying and healing. I went for the camp in extremely difficult time in my life. I was scared and almost without life energy. I left much stronger, calm, full of love, cured. The power of what happened during the camp was still working after long time after camp's end.

Q: What did you learn about the Dances, the founder Samuel Lewis and his background in Sufism?

A: Hm... much more difficult question. I learned that dances are danced to bring peace to ourselves, between people and to whole world. I learned that the most important value is unity and love. I learned that it is important to let go what has pasted and make a space and acceptance for new coming. I learned not to fight. I learned that Samuel Lewis was a teacher and "inventor" of the dance. I learned that dances weren't danced before him and that they are still different branches of Sufism where dancing is not done. Samuel Lewis started to dance quiet late in his life. I learned that he was charismatic teacher and chose the path of Sufism which basis of his own feeling of right and wrong which is the most difficult and dangerous one. I learned that dances came from different religions, and traditions and all are about praising the One, love, healing.

Q: Same for the Walks.

A: Hmm. Walks: they are different types of walks, connected with various elements and planets. We can use them to have a contact with various types of energy needed in various situations in our lives. We can also observe our relationship with various energies by walking elements or planets. "Invented" also by Samuel Lewis I suppose.

Q: Would you like to do something with the dances in future (like leading, following training, deepening)?

A: I would like dances to be present in Poland because I would like people here to have chance of taking part in such an experience. I would like to participate in dances in the future (as a member, not a leader)

Q: Do you have any plans or ideas to share on how to continue with the Dances in Poland?

A: I had some and I contacted you with all the people I know (or not, but had contacts to) and I do hope it will succeed some day.

Malgorzata Niedzwiedz
talent search manager

Dear Arienne and Wali,

Thank you very much for your letter and your constant care about quality of your work for others. I did notice it already during your program and this E-mail is the next confirmation for it. Well, what can I write to you. Surely I would like to lead some dances in future and I will do it in future.

When I started to write this letter I reminded your quotation of Samuel Lewis that walks were the basics of the dance. When I started to contemplate it I only have to agree. It is like a kind of alphabet of movements. Most often when we walk or dance we are not conscious of this natural expression of our nature, actually so easy to notice when we focus on it. On one way it is fine

way of learning more about our nature, knowing ourselves better, knowing what kind of energy is prevailing in us now and which we maybe need for some time.

On the other hand it is really good basics to notice this "walks" elements in dances which we may lead for others, or dance for others to build specific atmosphere or create special energy. I believe that we intuitionally just do and express everything really perfectly but this walk, elements, planets... theory gives us some more information, inspiration...

I lacked slightly bigger amount of "free dance" but this was my need. Actually I am now more in the period of my life that I find what I need inside and try to express some of these findings "outside". Spontaneous dance is for me beautiful way of expression and also of being at the same time The dancer and the dance. This is somehow like yoga state - everything is unified together and is experienced as complete harmony and expressed as complete beauty. All the best on your Path,

Hannah

At last I have experience of dance like a practice, which I can use in my daily life. But for the first, I brought my experience from daily life, some my feels and expecting to dance, and then I saw, that the dance became alive, and the border between dance and daily life has disappeared. It was the main exploration and it gave me a new vision of my relation to the dance... I found the way I can try to lead dance and express my experience of dance. And at the same time it also help me in my daily life... what is very important... and also the Walks are great to use they. And it was very interesting to study them and to recognize some qualities in myself and to give them the names, what is very useful for understanding and for work with them.

And I hope, all this experience will help me to go deep in dance, as I wanted very much. I can only add that what I felt and feel about my experience is more then I can say, it changed a lot for me, what is very important... but when I try to write about it, it looks so simple and usual...

Love, Anya.

POLISH CAMP Summer 2006

This year Polish Sufi Camp was guided by Wali and Ariënne from Holland.

About 20 people wanted to take a part. Some day before the camp we received information that more of them changed plans and they did not come. Anyway, we organized the camp for these people who could come.

Because there were not so many of us Wali and Ariënne could gave so much attention to everybody. They initiated a very deep spiritual process important for each of person. That was a joy, love and understanding, but main result off these days was the feeling of unity on many levels.

We started to see our partners, our lives, and our problems from different perspective. Also our thinking about other religions, organizations, nations started to be full off tolerance and peace.

We believe that this special and unique workshop was very important. We started to spread the message of Samuel Luis as we do it with the knowledge of Hazrat Inayat Khan and Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan.

For the future we have a plan to make a trip arranging two days workshops in some places of Poland. People that enjoyed the camp want to help in it. That is a god way to present the Sufi Dances in different parts of Poland.

We are very thankful that Wali and Ariënne agreed to guide this camp putting so much effort and attention and doing it on very high level. Also we want to thanks Oneness for supporting the Camp with their money. Without this help it could not have been done.

With love Zuleika and Salik