

Bismillahi-r-rahmani-r-rahim

SPEECH OF MAWLANA SHEIKH IBRAHIM

On the occasion of the European Hawliya 2002 at Schnede (Aug. 8, 2002)

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Majesty, preeminent over what they ascribe! And peace onto the Messengers! And all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.¹

My brothers and sisters of Germany and neighboring countries! I greet you with the best greeting to the occasion of yesterday evening, the blessed evening for which we came out of different countries in order to meet for an exchange of ideas. We will talk about any problems in the Tariqa, or any concerns involving the Tariqa. If there should be any difficulties concerning the responsible parties in any of the countries, we will talk about that.

Question²: What are the tasks of the Murshid³?

First, and above all, the Tariqa is Awrad. That is the only way to rescue the son of Adam from losing his way. It is the way that enables him, in this life, to fulfill his duty toward the Prophet s.a.w.s.

Man was created to adore and praise God, have polite and good interactions with others. The Murshid was assigned to the people who are new to Islam. He must be of fine characteristics, not dry, not domineering. If the Murshid is smart, he has learned from the qualities of the Saints, and/or the courtesies of Mawlana Sheikh⁴

In this way he enlarges the establishment of the Tariqa Burhaniya Disuqiya. In any case, he must adopt a positive way of confronting problems with patience, and resolving the issues step by step. A hard and heavy heart and harshness towards the people will only divide them. We do not want anyone to be driven off the vicinity of Sidi Ibrahim al Disuqi.

There is an advantage for you [the Murshid]⁵, when Allah leads a person through you. Good deeds are credited to you by the Sheikhs, and there is some benefit to you in what he [a well-taught Murid] reads. "If Allah through you guides one person, this is better for you than all one could possess and better than the world and what it contains" (Hadith of the Prophet s.a.w.s.). So you can imagine how enormous the blessing is, if one leads two or three persons in the right way!

The Murshid must be smart and have insight and an understanding for the people who come to him. It may be that someone has lost his mother or father, or has a different sort of problem common around here, like being an alcoholic, a drug abuser, or a criminal. With diligence in reading Awrad for that person, you [the Murshid] can eventually lead him to experience the love of the Tariqa. In time we will have him join us. If he should still make a mistake or two, we will forgive him. Thus we enlarge the establishment of the Prophet s.a.w.s. and Mawlana Sheikh. He will be a member of the Tariqa.

¹ Qur'an Sura 37:180/181/182

² The following are answers from Mawlana Sheikh Ibrahim to a written list of questions he was presented with.

³ "Murshid" refers to the chairman of the Irshad committee.

⁴ "Mawlana Sheikh" or "Sheikh" always refers to Mawlana Sheikh Muhammad Uthman.

⁵ The notes in brackets [...] are provided by the translators.

For example, if a woman came to us, saying she wanted to take Tariqa but not Islam. You would never send her away. You give her Awrad, and she would read the foundation, Al Asas: 100x: Bi-smi-llahi-r-rahmani-r-rahim, 100x: Astaghfiru-llaha-l-azim-huwa-t-tawwabu-r-rahim, 100x: La ilaha illa-llah – which is the first part of the Shahada. Then 300x: Ya dayim, and by the end 100x: Allahumma salli ala Sayyidina Muhammadin wa alihi wa sallim – which is the second part of the Shahada, and this is Islam.

After some time that woman might return and ask you to give her Islam. You might then reply: “You already entered Islam, without being aware of it!” You should, however, then recite the Shahada with her again, even though she already had entered Islam through Al Asas. Nothing should keep people from the vicinity of Mawlana Sheikh, and everyone should stay within it as long as possible.

The Murshid throws his net to “fish” for people. This way the foundation, the establishment of the Tariqa will be enlarged. We have lived with this establishment for many years now, we learned much from our Sheikhs, and we have witnessed what qualities are to be achieved through our dedication to Awrad.

For the Murshid it is important to avoid a particular mistake which very many people commit; he is not a dictator, nor is he the Sheikh of the Tariqa. He is not higher than Mawlana. He is a servant – and what a delightful opportunity for him to serve the Tariqa and by his efforts to win people.

At the end of the day he might ask himself what he did that day, and about the mistakes he made. If someone wronged him, he shall forgive him. He is wise to seek pardons for himself, even if he carries no guilt. He shall portray the beautiful qualities of the Sheikhs, for in this way, and because of his big heart, people will hold the Tariqa dear.

Wherein does his task exist?

He leads the people out of the darkness into the vicinity of Sidi Ibrahim al Qarashi-d-Disuqi. That is a very large task. So the Sheikhs will be satisfied with him. But often the opposite occurs; he takes himself to be important and steps up as a ruler. Slowly that will remove him from the Tariqa. This has happened to us before. There were some Sheikhs in the Tariqa, which were enlightened and were able to see everything, on the street, at home, in their sleep. Nevertheless they got lost, because the “love for power”⁶ grew within them.

They thought they knew more than the Sheikhs, and that Tariqa could not go on without them. In the end, they seemed to have forgotten who brought them to enlightenment. They had received it because the Sheikhs were supporting them in the beginning and supporting them in their tasks. However, they became so arrogant, that even in their dreams they sometimes saw the Sheikh as small, and viewed themselves as mighty. Yes, Iblis and one’s egos work to enlarge one’s self image. Then one takes a step backwards. A meter leads to a mile, and at some point one finds oneself outside the circle, after serving right in the center of it.

Actually, I could think that I am the most important person in the Tariqa, yet I always say that I hope the Sheikhs are satisfied with me, every second. I always say: “I hope the Sheikhs are satisfied with our outward and our internal concerns.” One should win their satisfaction, because they have the power, the strength. They have your life and your death in their hands, and they can make you lose your mind. After all one will regret, but it is then too late.

⁶ Mawlana uses the Arabic word *hub ar-riasa* which carries a very negative meaning; an approximate translation could be “love for power” or “affliction with the lover for power”.

If the great Sheikh is upset with you, there is no one bigger to turn to. You left his order, you broke the law – the law that he has imposed; and he knows. (“This world will not come to an end, until my Tariqa has spread from the east to the west” – statement of Sidi Ibrahim ad-Disuqi) One takes himself to be important and then constructs barriers. Some people might fear you, and you won’t be apt to take good advices.

Mawlana Sheikh Muhammad Uthman on the other hand, time and again asked the people around him for advice, even when he did not need it; for he was connected with the Prophet s.a.w.s., like the oil with the olive. One never knew whether Mawlana was here, or with the Prophet s.a.w.s., or perhaps with Sidi Ibrahim. They were always with him. Mawlana could not go anywhere without the Prophet s.a.w.s.

Mawlana was tested very heavily about his earnings. In contrast to other men of this world, Mawlana did not enjoy the sweetness of this life. He endured much, very many illnesses and trials, all for the Tariqa. Beware the one, who does not choose the straight path. He’ll experience doors closing for him. Far removed, he will get lazy and lazier, until he finally will be on the outside, cursing the Tariqa. His faith will fade.

The Sheikhs could use even a stone and lend it the power to lead the caravan. The one we name as Murshid gets our support. We know why we named him. He supposed to be noted and accepted, so that he can fulfill his tasks as a Murshid, or as a delegate in the administration. To avoid disturbances it is important to respect and support the chairperson. He is not better than all of you, but he was chosen for a certain reason. For instance: his age, his dedication, or his capacities as an administrator. The essential matter is that he leads the caravan into the safe haven. The Sheikhs say: don’t be authoritarian and not to place yourself in the foreground, be glad to be accepted as a little servant; for the rights of a servant are never lost.

Watch how I do it. I cannot state that I am the Sheikh of the Tariqa, and mistreat people. Observe how you find it in Khartoum, or when I come to Germany. At most all I need are four square meters for sitting, I eat and drink normally with the people, because I want the establishment of Tariqa to grow in Europe – the Europe that was lost, that develops only in the world of technology, but overslept in the world of religion. Now the people are returning to religion, after they recognize something is missing in what they are doing. They come to Islam through refinement, the readiness to forgive, and exercising the ability to love. To the Islam wherein a person can change completely (to the positive) by reciting *dhikr* with one’s tongue, until it finally travels from the tongue into the heart. “The heart is a lump of flesh. If it is healthy, the whole body is healthy, and if it is bad the whole body is bad.”⁷

If one folds it apart, it is larger than city of Berlin. If the heart makes four times *dhikr*, it is better than uttering *dhikr* 6,666 times with the tongue. And the heart continues the *dhikr* whether the person is awake or asleep. One hears all, although being asleep.

To avoid emerging disturbances, it is important to accept the Murshid whether he is German or French. We have to listen to him, so he more easily can fulfill his tasks. But deliberation is Sunna, and the Murshid should be smart and sit down with the people, to ask for advice, and find a solution all can be satisfied with.

Yet at the end, I want to say: the cause of the problems lies in the laziness toward reading Awrad. The Awrad readings are big, and everyone should try to divide his or her time to complete Awrad. They take you to ‘*ala ‘iliyin*.⁸

⁷ Hadith #6 in Al-Nawawi: Forty Hadith. London 1979, p. 32

⁸ „High place” in heaven, see Qur’an 83:18 ff.

Question: Who has the permission to give the Qasam⁹?

The Qasam are the Awrad after the “normal” Awrad. One gets appointed with Qasam after one has received the *heart dhikr* and was active in Tariqa, and visiting the Zawiyah for at least five years. The Qasam is a secret; however the Awrad book as a whole is far from being inferior. One gains a lot if one is hard working in Awrad. One will be protected and will obtain the love and closeness towards the family of the Prophet s.a.w.s, and it will help you with your *heart dhikr*. One is obligated to read the Qasam regularly, at least seventy times. Because it travels, we do not give it as a gift to one person. In other words, if you read it so often that the angels came down, Mawlana will possibly give you another Qasam and take away the older, because one may not simultaneously read two Qasams. It is the Murshid who will give the permission to read the Qasam. He needs to be certain that the person he wants to give Qasam to is diligently reading Awrad, including Al-Hizbu-s-Saifi at least seven times a day.

Question: Are women permitted to make Muraqaba?

Naturally Muraqaba is forbidden for women because of their fine souls. They should not make Muraqaba, nor should they read any extra Salat-adh-Dhatiya. The late wife of Jamal-as-Sanhuri tried to introduce the Muraqaba. The Sheikhs are concerned for the women because their soul will then travel to Medina again and again. “Then the faith longs itself back to Medina, like the snake to its den” (Hadith). The Muraqaba can cause the soul of the women to travel to Medina and never return, so that the woman is no longer in the position to master her daily life. Perhaps her husband will call, “Fatima! Fatima!” but she will not be able to answer because her spirit is not present.

Here in Germany they suppose that women and men are the same, that there is no difference. I do not know, it has happened after some women in Egypt talked to Mawlana, over and over asking permission to make Muraqaba and Adh-dhatiya. Mawlana carries the consequences. Nevertheless the Salat-adh-Dhatiya and the Muraqaba cause this [the calling of the soul].

I know a woman named Saiyda Alauwiya who reads Al-barhatiya (a type of Qasam). She has sent the angels of this Qasam to Halfa in order for them to prepare for the reception of Saiyda Alauwiya. We cannot use her as a role model.

For me, until new instructions arrive, this question about Muraqaba is difficult. For it is really so: if the woman closes her eyes she sees the Sheikh, he travels with her. It could happen that as a test he once could appear very large and scary. She could be calling her husband for help and it could be that he is not home. What then?

There are also other dangers. For example, it is dangerous to recite Salat-al-Annasiya (“Allahumma salli ala Sayyidina Muhammadin...”) without the Sheikh’s permission, and a specific number he has permitted. It can also become dangerous to pick certain verses out of the Quran. We only have As-Samadiya and Ayat al-Kursi. The Sheikh instituted it this way, and we do it the way he told us. He carries the consequences. However, they [the Sheikhs] told us that to ensure that we do not forget the Quran, we are supposed to read from Sura Al-Baqara through the end of the thirtieth part¹⁰, distributed over thirty days. Otherwise, respectively two parts daily over fifteen days.

One gives what one reads to the Prophet s.a.w.s because he is more generous than we are. In return he gives us credit. Remember, they [the Sheikhs] did not choose, for example: Sura Al-

⁹ Qasam = Oath; this is a special Awrad which only very diligent men get appointed with.

¹⁰ That means to read the Qur’an from beginning to end.

Qari'a to improve our income, or Sura Al-Rahman in order to marry. You only read it when the Sheikh gives it to you.

That means you may not choose to exercise something out of the Quran, which is not contained in the Awrad of the Tariqa Burhaniya, without the permission of the Sheikhs, except for Ayat al-Kursi. And this only if there is reason for it, and it was discussed with the Murshid. The stage in which you read the Sura As-Samadiya is a stage that unites you with the Prophet s.a.w.s.

To be specific, if you proceed to choose something [without the Sheikhs], you enter the world of the Majadhib (fools). One makes nonsense, loses his intellect, pours oil on his head, forgets his livelihood, his children, and spends his life on the streets. Such Majdhub has a task, but he is not a saint (*wali*).

Therefore, one does not choose any of the verses. The prayers for the Prophet s.a.w.s are all contained in the Awrad. But if the Sheikh gives something to you, he carries the responsibility, and you should continue to read it, because he is the one who protects you. If someone leaves the Tariqa, the devil receives him with open arms. The wolf eats the lamb that separates itself from the flock. Therefore, we must comply with the Awrad, which was given to us by the Sheikhs, without leaving anything out. It is no problem to double the Awrad, but with the numbers you have received. One can read the Qasam twice, but with the numbers that one has received. If one has finished his "normal" Awrad and still has time, one can read it again, except for the Al-Hizbu-s-Saifi, which is supposed to be read no more than nine times.

Question: on the importance of the Dhikr and the Awrad and the "love for power"¹¹

We have answered this question already in the beginning. The most important things are the Awrad. If one is diligent in Awrad we will accompany him. If he is hard working in his Awrad, he will always rise for the Morning Prayer, he will be very good in his relationship with his family, and he will fight the egos, the devil and desires. Mawlana says: "He rescues himself, and with his rescue, he rescues his family." (Qasida)

He spoke in his Qasa'id much about diligence in Awrad. The jinn touch the mad person, but the one who reads Awrad a lot drives the jinn to be mad. The house that such a person enters fills itself, after being empty. The Awrad clothes and decorates you, with beauty and majesty. They clothe you in acceptance, and people love you without you knowing the reason. The more Awrad you read, the more you will have people seeking your company, wanting to sit with you, listening to you, asking for your advice. When you read your Awrad, you are following Mawlana. You might be anxious, but simultaneously you receive the love, and all has to be measured on the scale of the Shari'a. The Awrad are power. They change a person totally. The Awrad are the cause.

The responsible one must be wise and must surround himself with these characteristics, just as Mawlana always did. Although he knew his own opinion was right, one still should listen to another's opinion. He did what the majority wanted, even if it made things more difficult. (I do not like to mention here the names of the participants.) Everyone has to be polished and patient, must always remain in *dhikr*, modest, and a servant for the Tariqa, and never act as a ruler.

The presidency actually does not mean a lot. If it were different, my family would have applied itself to that. But we are not greedy for power. Our standards are normal, our life is

¹¹ See note #6.

normal, our characteristics and relationships with the brothers and sisters, and our love towards them is normal. That is the profit: the love. As you enter the Zawiya and find somebody from the east and another from the west, one from here and others from there; who accomplished this? Sidi Ibrahim gathered them all, and it could be that you would not find anybody in your family who takes as good care of you, and cares so much about you, as you find here.

It could be that the young people drink alcohol, or do something else (against Shari'a law). He who drinks alcohol, or smokes hashish is not supposed to be thrown out of the Tariqa. We should let him heal in peace. We have the medicine. Don't think it is difficult. We do everything to win somebody for the Tariqa, to enlarge our establishment, to lead him or her to the right path. If I find someone who is lost, with no more hope, sad and in despair, I should give him hope and love. I should show him that here he has a family he has not known until now. I should show him the way with the Awrad and with respect. You respect us; we respect you. If you won't respect me, how should I respect you?

What is the difference between the son of Adam who reads Awrad, and a street hustler? You see one is a Gamal Abdal Nasr, another Hitler, another a good for nothing. If he starts to speak, you see whether he is good or bad, whether or not he has a strong personality. Beyond all this, the Awrad and the Muraqaba can change a person internally.

I feel that people are perhaps tired from the work of the day, between the evening and night prayers. However we must make Muraqaba. On the way home you could already start the introduction and the Fawatih, and when you go to bed you do the remainder of it, until you are snoring. This is accepted as Muraqaba. It is that which improves a person.

The "love for power"¹² brings problems. One says to us: "Serve". But do I get a reward, or gifts? – No! The more you serve, the more the Sheikhs love you. You will find the Sheikhs in your home, in your children, at your work and in the street. And they are welcoming you. And for the one who reads Awrad, it is like sitting in a room. If someone would try to attack him with stones from the outside, the walls will defend him. That is how the Awrad work. They protect against each threat.

A small example for this – Al Hizbu-s-Saghir: the father of Sheikh Saleh (may Allah be satisfied with him) was Daifi [member of Tariqa Dayfiyya], but he read Al Hizbu-s-Saghir and called the angels. Once he left the house at three or four in the morning to go to the market to work. He rode along on his donkey on the path through the fields of grain. Suddenly a dog mad with rabies charged out of the field and tried to attack him. He recited the "yuljimuhu..." from Al Hizbu-s-Saghir and continued on his way. The dog stayed quiet. On the way home, he found the dog dead, on that exact same spot.

Doctor Suhaib, the son of Ash-Shafia, was transferred to the district of Al-Obaid. I told him not to go to Kadujli, but that was exactly where they transferred him. As he was traveling with his chauffeur through a dark forest, they spotted four glowing eyes. There were two wolves. The chauffeur reached for his gun and wanted to get out. Doctor Suhaib told him not to, but he did after all. The doctor recited the "yuljimuhu..." and the wolves cleared out of the way, before the chauffeur had the chance to fire his weapon.

This shows to you the advantages of the Awrad. Our Awrad are not simple. They are very high, a very high permission. The permission to the Muraqaba is special, as well as Al Hizbu-s-Saifi, just as I have told you.

¹² See note #6.

Once there was in al Ta'if [a neighborhood in Khartoum] a high-rise that was occupied by jinn. The owners got a man named al Burai in order to drive out the jinn from there. Al Burai distributed papers with certain verses of the Quran in this building. The jinn came and burned the papers. The owners went and brought back Yakut from the mountain Jabal al-Awliya. He came into the house and recited something. However it still did not help. Thereupon the owners got a man from Falata [Nigerians, which earlier migrated into Sudan and worked with black magic]. He was not able to help either. Later a brother by the name of Adal Mahmud came, to report to us about this case. I said: "Go! Lawandi, and one more." We brought salt and read on it. I told them to get a broom and wrap it up on the upper end with a cloth, moisten it with the brine and then spray the walls of the house with it. They did as they were told.

Can you believe it? Earlier the jinn had prevented the children from going to school, by causing them to have diarrhea, they caused the cars of inhabitants of the building to run without drivers in them. The jinn had also begun to burn apartments. They took mattresses and stuffed them into closets and then set them on fire. They filled water tanks and emptied them again, and burned the water-pumps. Yet after the brothers had sprayed everything with the saltwater the jinn burnt. I told the owners if you could see things, you would have seen a hand here, and an ear there and a head somewhere else. They were completely torn up. See, that is the advantage of Al Hizbu-s-Saifi. What black magic and al Yakut could not accomplish, the benefit of this little reading did.

Question: on the sessions/meetings

They met and parted. They met once again and parted. Without obtaining any result, they fought. As I mentioned earlier, this is the result of the "love for power".¹³

On gathering, what is important to keep in mind when we meet for a certain thing is that you came not to talk about something that concerns you personally? You came to talk about concerns of the Tariqa – the Tariqa which belongs to Sidi Ibrahim, and he has chosen his responsible persons.

What do you fight about, and why? Why is there disagreement? As we speak about a subject which concerns the Tariqa, or the administration of it, or the service to it, why would there be arguments? Always remain democratic and tolerant. One should observe what the majority wants and accept it. If we are seven, and four of us say yes, then the remaining three should say yes as well.

The voice of the chairperson may only count double if the group is undecided. Inside of the Tariqa, we must use our intellect and not our emotions. Justice must rule over emotions. You may not orient yourself to your selfish greed. You may not announce that you are actually the chairperson, and whatever you say must be followed.

Because it concerns the service to the Tariqa, you must restrain yourself, hold back, and even withdraw from the meeting if necessary. Don't dare to be the one who gets in the way of our wish to spread the Tariqa in this country. Those who are on the path, come because of Allah, and not because of the family of the chairperson or the responsible. The responsible is not the best. He is only responsible toward the Tariqa.

Moreover: if a committee meets repeatedly because of a chairperson who needs to force his way on them, and they do not come to an agreement; the participants need to tell him not to handle them in such matter, and that you are not accomplishing anything this way.

¹³ See note #6.

Furthermore, you would like for him to leave his position and remain your brother without the extra tasks. You would like to get someone who can unite with you and who can make good decisions, which are of benefit to the brothers and sisters in the Tariqa.

We are not a company. The meaning for us is Tariqa, and to serve Tariqa. One does not earn a salary, or become promoted, and you don't get a company car. The only thing one receives is the satisfaction from the Sheikhs. Nothing is better to receive than that. Where does one find something better? The Sheikhs are the ones that rescue you. They are the ones who deliver you out of Hell into Paradise, out of the darkness into joy and into the light. Yes, all is in their hand.

And so, [whenever such people stand in the way] many want to quit and resign from the committee. That is a mistake. Today one might go, and tomorrow someone else. Who will stay to serve the Tariqa? That would constitute their resigning from sowing the seeds that Mawlana had sown, the seeds of Sidi Ibrahim. That is very dangerous. Whatever your professional level, or career stage, age or intellect, such is not of interest to us. If we appoint a stone to serve the Tariqa, it must rise immediately, without delay, and serve. This is how I select the people that lead committees, so that they will solve problems, and reach good decisions. That is the way they can serve the Tariqa. The power hungry prevent development. And those who prevent us as such are worse than the Wahabis. Through the Sheikhs, disaster will meet with these people.

We don't want to decide. I almost came to a decision, but this is not our country. You are European, and we have to be patient, gentle and enduring. The responsible ones over here have great challenges in fulfilling these principles. They should know however, that people have put themselves together for the function of the Tariqa in this country. Each time there was a problem, they got together and decided on doing something good, and then published it.

Moreover we want the committees to be "refreshed" with two women.¹⁴ As fair of women as possible, who gathered much life experience and became good people, to give balance to its composition. Thereby the sisters should know that they have representation in the committee. There can be a committee without women. There also can be a female Murshid. But there are no women in the High Committee.

I'm saying the right person needs to be in the right place. There might be four or five people sitting together, and it happens to be a woman who shares an opinion which is correct and of benefit to us. The women are not to be excluded; it is important to include them in the committees.

About the three steps in the Awrad

When a newcomer joins us he receives Al-Istighfar ("Astaghfirullah..."), 70,000 times. Al-Istighfar is actually the water, sponge and soap which washes away the old sins.

After the Istighfar we give At-Tahlil, denial and affirmation: "La ilaha illa-llah" One has to take one's time and fulfill this stage. Following is the Al-Mufrad, which is the *dhikr* "Allah". When you pronounce the "Allah", you have to pronounce the Alif, then two Lam and the Ha.

¹⁴ During the speech, Mawlana was made aware by his listeners, that in Germany more women than men are in the Tariqa, as well as at part in the committees. Over the duration of the speech Mawlana specified as follows: The percentage of women in the committee should neither be equal, nor should it be more to the percentage of the men.

[The second Lam is doubled with the Shadda, which means that one actually says the Lam three times, so the heart will receive it.]

If someone should decide that he wants to read this quickly, to be able to finish, and pronounce, “Allahallahallah” [Mawlana speaking quickly], he will pronounce one less Lam. Instead of reciting sixty-six, there will remain only thirty-six – because one Lam counts as 30, the Ha for 5 and Alif for 1; so he did not make his *dhikr* correctly. One has to take his time and put effort into the correct pronunciation. One Sheikh commented to say this: “If you did not appeal to Allah with the exact *dhikr*, you did not appeal to him, and you actually did not make your *dhikr*.”

Question: How do I test whether or not I am doing the *heart dhikr*?

For these tests the Murid must have reached the stage of the *heart dhikr*. *Heart dhikr* and the observation of the heart is that what helps the person. One puts the tongue at the gum. The diligence leads the heart to make *dhikr*. At first the *heart dhikr* is like standing on swampy ground, and trying to lift your foot out of the mud. Such is the *heart dhikr* in the beginning.

To mention “Allah”, four times with your heart, is better than saying it 6,666 times with your tongue. One observes the heart while walking, working and sleeping. If people are talking inside the room while you are asleep, you will be able to hear them.

Once your heart makes *dhikr*, you should never read Awrad, or books and newspapers with your eyes only, but rather always with your tongue. This is to ensure that your heart is not prevented from making Awrad. The heart should be exclusively for the Awrad. After, you will begin to change internally. One should test one’s *heart dhikr* continuously; while walking, sitting, working etc.

As we said earlier: The heart is very large, larger yet than the city of Hamburg. “The heart is a lump of flesh. If it is healthy, the whole body is healthy, and if it is bad the whole body is bad.”¹⁵

Question: What are the tests of the *heart dhikr*? How can one recognize whether one has it?

You observe and try to listen while you are walking, sitting, working and sleeping. You will be listening with your heart, while people are talking. If one has *heart dhikr*, one’s entire body is filled with light.

Question: How can I [as a Murshid] lead the Murid with *heart dhikr*? How can I observe him?

The person with *heart dhikr* should observe himself. The best way for that is with the Muraqaba. In silence you’ll take all thoughts out of your head and start to make *dhikr*. You start to concentrate on your heart, and then slowly, very slowly you then stay with your heart.

Dhikr of the heart starts with hard work in Awrad. The Awrad, and the diligent reading of Al Hizbu-s-Safi, sets the Murid free from his egos, the devil, and his desires. It is imperative for the Murid to be hard working in reading *dhikr* with his tongue and to be sure that the tongue lies against the gum. You should not make a sound while making *dhikr*, especially during

¹⁵ Hadith #6 in Al-Nawawi: Forty Hadith. London 1979, p. 32

Muraqaba. You meditate slowly; you meditate and meditate, without becoming lazy. One should constantly observe if the heart is making Awrad.

Once the heart is making *dhikr* for a long time it will become your leader. For example: You want to go to the bookstore, and your heart is telling you that it will be closed. After going to find out for yourself, you find the store closed. Or while you planning on visiting a friend, your heart tells you that he is not home. This is how your heart will become your leader. Hard work will lead you to this kind of results.

Question: Should you give young people Awrad after they reached puberty?

The answer to that question is no. After puberty, surely the parents have already missed many opportunities. By the time the child is seven or ten, it is obligated to make its prayers. That's when you should give Awrad. Through the Awrad the child will be well kept and safe. The Awrad is the way to the love of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.s and his family. Through the Awrad one gets removed from all bad things. I said that at least they should memorize the Adh-Dhatiya by heart. This prayer works a lot in them.

Moreover you should give them gifts. The church distributes presents, and we should do that similarly. We should give gifts for them to come to like Sufism. The Awrad are important and there is specific Awrad for students, which means they should not wait until they are young adults. If you wait until puberty, you might already have lost your son. He might already found a girlfriend and experienced diverse things, because you left him to Satan. If the children from early on read their Awrad well, it will protect them from bad influences ahead of time.

The Awrad alone are not difficult. You can get a cassette recorder and tape for your son or daughter what they supposed to read. They can listen through headphones until falling asleep, and the Awrad will make them fall asleep, like a lullaby. As long as they hear the Awrad, they will be protected from bad dreams and nightmares. The child will learn it by heart, and will be protected by it.

Often German children sit in school, looking at the teacher without understanding anything. In their minds they might be at home, thinking about problems between their mother and father. Therefore they are not able to receive any of what the teacher is saying. If Awrad is given to them they will be consoled, it will strengthen their faith and they will be able to fight their egos, the devil and their desires. Then, the children happily follow the right path. In addition the Awrad will help them obey their parents, to perform their prayers regularly, to respect people, in short, follow the Shari'a.

If you give something bad to someone, like alcohol, for example, you provide a negative influence. When we give someone Awrad, he'll also be influenced, to the positive. This is very important. If your child grows up without Awrad, he will not obey you. By the time the child will reach shoulder height of the adults, it will deny religion and Awrad, and anything else. This subject is very important. Awrad over the cassette recorder is helpful.

On Irshad for women

It has to be a "Muhrim", which means the husband, father, or brother of the women, who gives Awrad to her. However he must know what to give to her, and what not to give. Therefore we are in the production of writing two books at the same time. One of Irshad for women, and one for the men, in order not to get any parts confused with each other. The Awrad are too important.

Question: What if the woman has no “Muhrim”?

Then she needs to ask a female Murshid. It must be either a woman, or a close relative of hers.

Question: At what time are young people permitted to begin Muraqaba? Should newcomers start with the Istighfar or with the at-Tahlil?

Normally everybody starts at the beginning, which means with Istighfar, since their probability of having already committed a sin is about a hundred percent. Here [in Europe] it isn't easy. Istighfar is not a simple sentence.

The entire Asas isn't simple; every part of it has a profound meaning. Al Basmallah, Al Istighfar, all of it. We have to start at the beginning. If we encounter someone of the holy family, who is walking the straight path, we won't give him the Istighfar, but rather immediately the At-Tahlil. Otherwise everybody should start with the Istighfar. I say: “Astaghfiru-llaha-l-azhim huwa-t-tauwabu-r-rahim” (I ask Almighty Allah for forgiveness, and he is the Relenting, Most Merciful.) That is a must.

Question: Do you also give 70,000 to the young people?

There are 70,000, which are 500 a day.

One has committed a sin and is in the first stage, then a second sin and a third. To sin is normal here [in Europe]. Young people over here need something stronger than temptation. That would be diligence in Awrad, and the amount of Sura As-Samadiya, and Adh-Dhatiya. One needs to tell them to come to the Zawiya. They need to be with you so they'll remove themselves from bad friends and become hard working in Awrad. The youth need to know that the devil is stronger than them; nevertheless our Awrad is stronger still, if you read it with full confidence. Mawlana has said: “Read your Awrad, and drink alcohol.”¹⁶ The stronger will conquer the weaker force. So, with faith, youth will change internally with the reading of Istighfar.

They need to read it 70,000 times, and they need to stay away from bad company. They will be rescued, if they are here with their brothers and sisters.

The subject is delicate. The devil even went up to the saints, for example after a meal, and handed them the water to wash their hands. The saints recognize if the devil finds a way to them, however the children do not. I am trying to emphasize to you, that the devil is dangerous. Therefore we have to try to give Awrad to the children while they are little, so as teenagers they won't run with bad company.

Question: Are the men permitted to become Murshid to the women?

Yes, as we already said earlier, the husband of a woman, or her father or brother, or her maternal / paternal uncle. [Muhrim = close relative]

Question: Even if her husband is Egyptian and her mother is German?

¹⁶ Mawlana said this sentence, as someone with an alcohol problem came to him, wanting to take Tariqa.

Could it be that they are stubborn here in Germany? But religion is the good advice. It should actually be that if a woman has accepted him as her husband, and lives together with him for years, she should also listen to him in the matter of her Irshad. Or one takes her to the responsible female Murshid of her region.

What is Irshad? Irshad is only then necessary if there is an existing reason; to control ones Awwad, or if someone became “mikashkish” by reading something the wrong way. This situation would call for going to the Murshid (male/female). In this situation, a woman should listen to her woman Murshid, in case she does not listen to her husband. To a “Mikashkisha” you should give Al-Hizbu-l-Kabir, because it stables and strengthens the delicate soul. “Mikashkisha” means for example: one screams in the Hadra, or weeps immediately at listening to Qasaid, or reading Quran. Al-Hizbu-l-Kabir is good for that.

Question: What if someone we are trying to help with his Awwad rejects it, are we nevertheless responsible for him?

This subject is a problem in Germany. It is difficult in Germany. A Murshid should guide the others. On the other hand, many of the Muridin measure the Murshid by intellectual standards: They compare themselves with him, finding fault in his intellect, age, or status. This is wrong. Leave the baker to baking his bread. You have to ask the man of religion. Ask the knowledgeable ones. It could so happen that the Murshid has more knowledge on Sufism than you do. He might just know the Tariqa well, and everything about it. Perhaps you possess a different knowledge, for instance about computers, which he might not. But the knowledgeable in religion knows what is to be done.

If we find someone to be arrogant and proud, we advise him to be diligent in his Awwad, so he may kill the egos. The egos are following:

- Al-Amara, the ego that prompts the person to bad actions,
- Al-Lauwama, the self accusing ego,
- Al-Mul’hama, the intuitive ego,
- Al-Mut’ma’ina, the calmed ego,
- Al-Radi’a, the complacent ego,
- Al-Mardi’a, the satisfied ego,
- Al-Kamila, the perfect ego.

The killing of the egos is the result of diligently reading Awwad, and following the example of the Shayhks. He, who turns to us, shall throw out all bad, and come to us only to improve, by reading Awwad. And if you are diligent in reading Awwad you will get a “taste”, sense of the good, and will regret the times you spent before Islam. Immediately after declaring the “Shahada”, one feels like a burden has been lifted out of one’s chest. There is a sense of joy and warmth, right after saying: “Ash’hadu an la ilaha illallah wa ash’hadu anna Muhammadun Rasul Allah (s. a. w. s.)”

To the person who rejects the help in Awwad, one should give a copy of the cassette. He can go home and listen to it there. With its help, he can control his pronunciation, also of the Suras or Hadiths. The Awwad are to kill the egos.

Question: About Hadra – is the Murshid permitted to interfere, after Hadra already started, or is he supposed to talk afterwards with the Sheikh of the Hadra?

First of all, you should arrange “Practice Hadras”, in order to teach how to turn and make *dhikr*. The men who know very well how to make *dhikr* should be at the beginning of the rows. The ones who came to us just recently, should stand in the back, so they can learn from the people up front how to turn, how to sit and how to stand.

The “Munshid”, the singer, sings the Qasida. Those who are standing behind him should repeat the refrain loudly and correctly. The one who does the *bust* leads in the rhythm of the singers. This means, if the singer becomes faster, the *bust* must accordingly alter the rhythm to suit to the respective Qasida, and the beat of the singer. As the singer changes the Qasida and the speed, the *bust* should adjust to match the rhythm.

It is important that practices are held outside of Hadra, and before it. This has nothing to do with the Sheikh of the Hadra. It also does not mean for him to abuse his position to pick one and push another. If for example he wants someone else to do the *bust*, he quietly snaps his fingers, which will cause the one to open his eyes. He then should quietly tell him to stand over there, and the other one will step back. The *bust* is the responsible to move everything in the Hadra, without causing interferences and restlessness. Otherwise we don’t really have Hadra, we are only playing.

Question: Is there a Sheikh of the Hadra and a Murshid (who leads the Hadra?)

The *bust* leads the Hadra. He is the one who moves the Hadra. If he is tired, he gets another. The singers also need to know that they have to be in order: first one of them, then the better one, at last the best overall. I’m telling you, but later Sidi Ahmad [Sheikh Sidi Ahmad al Qurafi] will talk with you about it in detail.

The person asking probably means that during the Hadra mistakes happen. Why do they happen? We are not sitting in a café; we are having Hadra. Hadra means the presence of the Sheikhs. Mawlana is there also, he is present. Whenever a singer sings about a certain Sheikh, he too will appear.

Do you still remember my father singing “Marhabba ya marhabba” [Welcome, oh welcome!] anytime the Prophet s.a.w.s. entered the Hadra. Therefore the Hadra is not a game, but rather serious. There are rules to follow, concerning the entering and exiting of the Hadra (Fatiha). One should not leave the Hadra, only if absolutely necessary; for the presents of the *dhikr* are only divided at the end. The sick or disabled who cannot stand in the Hadra, may sit on a chair. Because of the presence of the Sheikhs I ask you for absolute courtesy. There is no room to play with this, as if it was an old tradition that someone invented, with no specific reason. Hadra is a pillar of the Tariqa. Hadra is the big table. It lays out the complete Awrad you read over the last week. If you read it well and persistent you will feel it strongly at Hadra. Concerning the *bust*, only one can do it, not two simultaneously. If the people can’t hear a *bust*, it is better to install a loudspeaker.

[At this point Sheikh Sidi Ahmad starts to talk about Hadra.]