

Activity Report 2020 Nekbakht Foundation

1. New edition of Hazrat Inayat Khan's biography

After having been out of print for many years, a new edition of the biography of Inayat Khan has been published. The project consisted of two planned releases, one for the European market, which was completed in the reporting year, and one for the American market, which will be printed in 2021. Both will have a run of 500. Many mureeds who have never had the opportunity to read the biography can now fill in many gaps in their knowledge of the life of their Murshid. The European edition can be ordered at € 45 per copy with Zubin van de Besselaar (josjezubin@gmail.com) and via bookshops (ISBN 978.90.8840.213.5).

2. Complete Works 1926 III

Many hours have been devoted to the transcribing of the shorthand notes or older text files into the English text of the lectures that Inayat Khan gave in the latter part of 1926. This project of publishing all lectures that have been taken down in shorthand from 1922 onward is nearing its completion (expected in 2021) and 1926III will be the last volume of the current series. For earlier works, see elsewhere in this report.

3. Facsimile editions

Two facsimile reprints have been published: *Sufi (a quarterly magazine 1915-1920)* and *Sufism (a quarterly magazine 1921 – 1924)*. Both were published with a run of 150 copies each. The books can be ordered for € 10 per copy with Zubin van de Besselaar (josjezubin@gmail.com)

4. Financial restructuring

In late spring, a financial restructuring was completed in order to improve transparency of our target spending. All assets, including the securities portfolio, have been transferred from the Nekbakht Fund (a second Nekbakht initiative foundation) to the Nekbakht Foundation. This was done by means of a donation. The underlying rationale for this was that the Nekbakht Foundation, as opposed to the Nekbakht Fund, is an ANBI certified organisation, which means that it is a public benefit institution. This entails certain tax exemptions. The change ensures that all ANBI-related expenditures are concentrated in the Foundation. The Fund itself will remain in existence.

5. Board changes

By the end of February, secretary Jos van den Heuvel announced he would leave the Board. In the spring, his successor Fuat Kartal, after a short tenure, handed in his resignation for personal reasons. He was replaced by Martin van der Graaff. At the same time, Kadir Troelstra joined the Board. In December, Wali van der Putt left the Board after an impressive 41 years of service, including several years as chairman. However, he will remain available in the background as an advisor. An outreach to the Dutch Sufi world, including an announcement in the periodical Soefi Gedachtes, led to Pieter Jan Lont being appointed as a new Board member as of February 2021.

Overall, the Board has been rejuvenated and looks forward to meeting new challenges.

6. Exploitation of real estate in Suresnes

The Foundation owns three buildings in Suresnes, one of which is used as an archive and the place where most activities are carried out and/or coordinated. Plans for renovation of the archive are under development. For the other two houses, plans have been made to (partially) rent them out for short-term leases. This will leave open options to make use of these buildings as a part of the Sufi Suresnes project (see later). For a short-term lease, several adaptations to the houses need to be made. Progress has been slow due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. Sufi Suresnes

Several organisations devoted to maintaining the sufi legacy of Hazrat Inayat Khan have started an initiative called Sufi Suresnes. Basically, it consists of plans that are being made to turn Fazal Manzil, across the street from the Nekbakht Biographical Department, into a place of pilgrimage and study in Suresnes for all those inspired by Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan (MHK). A number of foundations based both in France and in the Netherlands are involved in this challenging endeavour. Some initial meetings have been conducted, mostly by Zoom, to achieve agreement on a letter of intent that is envisaged to be signed by all organisations involved. The next step will be the creation of a financial underpinning of the developing plans which, among other activities, includes a refurbishment of Fazal Manzil. In the report year, Nekbakht has contributed financially to an emergency repair of the roof.

8. General Data protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Nekbakht Foundation has to comply with the GDPR, which became effective on 25 May 2018. The review of personal data processed by the Foundation is an ongoing concern. A board member has been made responsible for GDPR issues and a GDPR dossier, as required by the Regulation is gradually being expanded. The scan of GDPR-relevant activities of the Foundation has revealed that the website is currently not fully compliant. Therefore, a revamp of the site has been started, and an external company has been entrusted with the creation of a modernized website infrastructure that is not only fully GDPR compliant, but will also facilitate easier access to archival data.

9. Website and newsletter

The website is an important showcase for the Nekbakht activities. It provides access to a significant proportion of the works of Inayat Khan. It also is a source of historic photographs and documents. Furthermore, it serves as a point of entry to the Archives, where questions or requests can be emailed to the Archivist or by visiting in person, for conducting your own research. Pre Covid-19 days the Archives would hold open house days during large gatherings of groups at Fazal Manzil.

Last but not least, the website informs a wide audience on newly published books on the life and works of Hazrat Inayat Khan and his contemporaries and/or successors. The number of website visitors has grown slightly. Unique page views rose from 5882 in 2019 to 6218 in 2020. Also, circulation of the quarterly newsletter rose to nearly 600.

10. Future publication projects

There are several projects in various stages of completion, such as a translation of “Die Mitte der Religionen” by Figl. The translation itself has been completed in the reporting year, but the search for a publisher is still ongoing. Also, the Board is considering publication of lectures by Inayat Khan given before 1922, as a follow up to the period of 1922 to 1926 of the Complete Works. In addition, the Nekbakht foundation is also one of the sponsors of the biography of Shaikh-al-Maschaikh Mahmood Khan Youskine, which will hopefully be published in 2021.

11. The archive

Much work has been done on cataloguing material, translation of historic press cuttings and facilitating database queries. Catalogues of the photographs, books, press cuttings, information by country are now available in pdf form to facilitate easier and more focused answers to research questions. The Foundation donated a considerable number of books to various Inayati organisations in 2020.

12. Editorial Committee

The editorial committee has been restructured in the reporting year, now being headed by Kadir Troelstra. Wali van der Putt remains as an adviser. Wali van de Zwan has started as a new member. The committee will advise the Board on future publications in line with the area of interest of the Nekbakht Foundation.

13. The invaluable workers for the cause.

Apart from Anne Louise (Qahira) Wirgman, who works for the Foundation on a free-lance basis, and who is the first port of call for all Biographical Department activities, many workers, partly volunteers and partly paid via hourly rates, enable the organisation to function. Here we should name in alphabetical order Den Anderson, Alex Dijk, Jos van den Heuvel, Ian Kingston, Saiqa Latif, Dagmar Asmani Müller-Mobashery, Sandeep Patel, Hind Wakach, Joanna Watt, Claire Wery, and Wali van der Zwan.

14. Financial report

A detailed financial report will be issued separately. For now, it can be said that the Foundation continues to operate on a sound financial footing enabling it to continue financing promising developments in line with its articles of incorporation.

15. In conclusion

The year 2020 has been hectic but also very fruitful. In spite of COVID-19 complications, the Board has been rejuvenated, much maintenance work on operations and maintenance planning for real estate has been carried out and many other plans are waiting to materialize in 2021.

N.B.: Developments up to end February 2021 have been included