

The Importance of Education in The Tarikat of Naqshbandiya

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Abstract: This article describes the Naqshbandi tarikat widespread in Central Asia and the stages of maturity in it. The author talks about the levels of spiritual development of the Naqshbandis and their founders. Naqshbandiya shows the essence of the call for social activity and the encouragement of honest work. It also analyzes how important sect morals are in modern youth culture.

Keywords: Irfan, Tasawwuf, Urafa, Sufi, Hikmat, Journeying and Initiation, Lust

Introduction

The main goal of Sufism is to ensure the spiritual perfection of an individual and elevate them to the highest levels of moral development. Achieving this state is considered essential through various methods in different Sufi orders. The foundation of Islam, similarly, is based on embodying high moral conduct. Among the Sufi orders widespread in Central Asia, the Naqshbandi order stands out for its clear stages of spiritual development, which encourage labor, community, and unity.

Regarding the stages of Sufism, one of the classical mystics, Abu Qasim al-Qushayri, expressed the following: "To ascend from one station to another, one must first fulfill the difficulties and requirements of the current station. Whoever lacks contentment will not find reliance, and whoever lacks abstinence will not find asceticism." Through this definition, Abu Qasim al-Qushayri emphasizes that the process of spiritual education is gradual, and one must fully master one stage before progressing to the next.

Methodology

By the 12th and 13th centuries, distinctive, unconventional practices began to emerge in the Sufi orders and communities. The search for "ecstasy" (jazba), wandering aimlessly from city to city, losing one's mind and becoming "mad," indulging in the sensation of world-renunciation, seeking seclusion, and living off charity, became more prevalent. These symptoms of spiritual disorder were becoming widespread. From the time the Khwajagan-Naqshbandi order came into being, it actively introduced reforms into the Sufi way of life.

The foundational ideas of the Khwajagan order were expressed through short slogans ("rashha" – plural "rashahot," Arabic for droplet, or bead). Through these slogans, the theoreticians of the order aimed to increase the social activism of the Sufis. Yusuf Hamadani, who brought the Khwajagan order to Transoxiana, developed the first four "rashha" of the order. In particular, in his work *Maqomoti Yusuf Hamadoni*, he wrote: "Hush dar dam" (Awareness in every breath), "Nazar bar qadam" (Look at every step), "Safar dar watan" (Journey in one's homeland), "Khilwat dar anjuman" (Solitude in a crowd). These slogans, though now interpreted in a more simplified and practical manner, contained revolutionary ideas for Sufi life at the time. In essence, these "rashhas" highlighted the position of the Khwajagan order compared to other Sufi orders.

- "Hush dar dam" (maintaining one's intellect and consciousness with every breath) – this position reflects the purest Islamic perspective, where the Quran, hadith, and sources of Sharia consistently express a negative stance toward ignorance or unconsciousness. Madness and insanity were never considered virtues. The repeated Quranic phrase "... so that you may use your intellect" is not without reason. Imam Ghazali, in his work *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, also dedicates a chapter to the issue of intellect, listing hadiths related to the virtue of reason.
- As for Yusuf Hamadani, Abdulkhaliq Ghijduvani describes him as follows: "He had memorized seven hundred books on Tafsir, hadith, fiqh, usul, fur'u, and kalam, and had conversed with two hundred and thirteen shaykhs... When a new moon appeared, he would summon the leaders of Samarkand and engage them in debates about Islamic jurisprudence... He would also teach students in the madrasa". It can be said that in this "rashha," Yusuf Hamadani set an example by embodying it in his own life.
- "Nazar bar qadam" (to look at one's feet while walking) – In the context of the Sufis of that era, the slogan "the desire for a beautiful face" had become a prominent issue. Some Qalandars and dervishes would not avoid gazing at non-mahrams, and observing any beautiful thing among them was interpreted as contemplating God's manifestations. Yusuf Hamadani responded to this situation by introducing the concept of "nazar bar qadam" into the Khwajagan order. This is in harmony with Islamic teachings and is based on the Quranic verse: "Tell the believing men to lower their gaze".
- "Safar dar watan" (to consider oneself a traveler in one's own land) – During a period when contemporary Sufis were traveling from city to city, viewing wandering as a distinctive feature of Sufism, the Khwajagan order advocated for settling down. This

demonstrated the order's firm and uncompromising stance against aimless wandering. The reason is that, by moving from place to place, Qalandars become dependent on others, forced to live on charity. This contradicts the order's demand for self-sufficiency and earning one's own livelihood.

- "Khilwat dar anjuman" (to be inwardly secluded in a crowd) – While the primary characteristics of Sufism were understood to be world-renunciation and seclusion, with followers living in khanaqahs (monasteries) and zawiyas (spiritual retreats), the Khwajagan order reflected the opposite approach, calling for social engagement and living in community without isolation. In fact, living in seclusion often leads to dependency on others for sustenance, which contradicts the Sufi demand for self-sufficiency. Furthermore, individuals who retreat from society and renounce the world may acquire the title of "Sufi" or "ascetic," but such actions may lead to hypocrisy, as the devotion is done for the sake of appearances rather than true sincerity. Bahauddin Naqshband emphasized, "Our way is through conversation. There is fame in seclusion, but in fame, there is calamity. Goodness lies in community." Moreover, such a lifestyle resembles monasticism, which is explicitly rejected in Islam. The Quran states, "As for monasticism, they invented it; We did not prescribe it for them".
- The four "rashhas" mentioned above played a significant role in establishing the position of the Khwajagan order during its formative stages and in demonstrating its stance relative to other Sufi orders. Once the order was firmly established, it became crucial to solidify its practical aspects and develop the theoretical foundations of Sufi practices. To achieve this, Abdulkhaliq Ghijduvani introduced the following four "rashhas":
- "Yod kard" (to remember, to recall) – This reflects the conditions for the practice of "dhikr" (remembrance of God) in Sufism. According to the "rashah," dhikr is performed with both the tongue and the heart, not just through the dry recitation of words. However, dhikr can also be performed without words, purely through the heart. As Bahauddin Naqshband stated, "The purpose of dhikr is for the heart to constantly be present with the love and majesty of Allah, because dhikr removes heedlessness."
- "Boz gasht" (return, to start again) – In the Khwajagan-Naqshbandi dhikr practice, the phrase "La ilaha illallah" (There is no god but Allah) is repeated several times, with the breath held during each recitation. After completing a specific count, the practitioner says, "Ilahi anta maqsudi wa ridhoka matlubi" (O my Lord, You are my goal, and Your pleasure is my desire), and then the count starts again.
- "Nigoht dasht" (to preserve, to guard) – When reciting dhikr, the practitioner must ensure that no foreign thoughts interfere. This entails protecting one's mind from distractions and maintaining focus on the dhikr, keeping one's thoughts unified and undistracted.
- "Yod dasht" (to retain in memory) – Unlike "yod kard," which involves remembering, "yod dasht" implies the act of not forgetting, and maintaining constant awareness of the remembrance without letting it slip from the mind.

- Abdulkhaliq Ghijduvani's introduction of the last two "rashhas" aligns with the teachings of Hakim Tirmidhi, found in his work *Jawab al-Kitab min al-Rai* (Response to the letter from the city of Rai). Hakim Tirmidhi equates "nigoht dasht" with the Arabic word "hifz" (preservation) and "yod dasht" with the term "dhikr," offering a slightly different interpretation. "Hifz" refers to approaching actions with great precision and "guarding" them, ensuring every religious act is performed meticulously and adhering strictly to commands and prohibitions. "Yod dasht," on the other hand, combines remembering and retaining dhikr in the mind.

This indicates that the theoretical foundations of the Khwajagan order evolved in close connection with the ideas of Yusuf Hamadani, as well as the intellectual legacy of our scholars, including Hakim Tirmidhi. The influence of Hakim Tirmidhi's intellectual contributions is significant in the development of the Naqshbandi order. Furthermore, it is well known that Muhammad Parsa, a prominent disciple of Naqshband, effectively utilized the intellectual inheritance of Hakim Tirmidhi. However, it is likely that the influence of Hakim Tirmidhi on the Khwajagan-Naqshbandi order was significant during the formative period before Bahauddin Naqshband. While Yusuf Hamadani introduced the Khwajagan lineage, the local influences on the order's development should not be overlooked. Thus, studying the "rashah" system is crucial to understanding the traditions established in the Khwajagan-Naqshbandi order before Bahauddin Naqshband. The following "rashhas" introduced by Bahauddin Naqshband hold both practical and theoretical significance

Result and Discussion

Vuqufi zamaniy (strict adherence to time) – This principle emphasizes the importance of performing specific dhikr, wird, and tasks within their designated time and duration. This rule plays a crucial role in establishing discipline among the followers of the order. It is also rooted in Islamic principles, where every obligatory and Sunnah prayer has a designated time. For example, the obligatory prayers must be performed at their appointed time, and if they are performed early, they must be repeated. Likewise, the voluntary prayers, such as Ishraq, Dhuha, Awwabin, and Tahajjud, must be observed within their designated times. Similarly, dhikr and tasks must be performed within specific times, as they are acts of worship.

Vuqufi adadiy (strict adherence to counting) – A practitioner (solik) must always adhere to the counting during the dhikr. This helps the practitioner maintain control over their thoughts and emotions. By adhering to the count, the practitioner can focus better on the dhikr and not lose themselves in distraction or emotional states. Additionally, adhering to the count helps the practitioner follow the principle of "Hush dar dam" (keeping one's mind clear in every breath). By maintaining the count, the practitioner can gather their thoughts and focus without losing themselves to the state of divine intoxication (jazbah). There are also various Hadiths that emphasize the importance of adhering to the count in dhikr.

Vuqufi qalbiy (heart's presence) – This rule is perhaps the most fundamental principle of dhikr. If a practitioner performs dhikr with the proper time and count but their heart is not focused on Allah, they will not be fulfilling the essential requirement of "Nigoht dasht" (guarding the thoughts). For dhikr to be effective, the practitioner's heart must remain focused on Allah and not be distracted by other thoughts. This ensures that the practitioner's heart is always engaged in the remembrance of Allah.

Through these principles, the Khwajagan order, established by Abdulkhaliq Ghijduvani, reached a new level of spiritual and organizational development with the contributions of Bahauddin Naqshband. As a result, the order began to be referred to as Khwajagan-Naqshbandiya in the sources. The great representative of the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiya in the 15th century, Alisher Navoi's mentor and spiritual guide Nuriuddin Abdurahman Jami (1414–1492), is credited with calling the order directly by its name Naqshbandiya for the first time.

These "rashhas" (maxims) originally served as essential guidelines for the proper performance of dhikr, ensuring that the practitioner maintains the correct state of mind and spiritual focus. However, their meanings extend beyond just the practice of dhikr. They serve as principles that guide the practitioner not only during the dhikr but throughout their life. Each of these maxims carries deep symbolic, philosophical, and practical significance, and a Sufi must adhere to them not just during the practice of dhikr but also in their daily life. By following these principles, the practitioner can align their inner state with their spiritual goal, making the practice of dhikr a transformative experience that extends into their entire existence.

Conclusion

The Naqshbandi sect, as an Islamic mystical direction, considers education as the main tool for achieving spiritual perfection. By increasing the educational potential of the members of the sect, they seek to get closer to God and raise their moral and spiritual level. The article emphasized that education in the Naqshbandi sect is not only limited to religious knowledge, but also includes secular knowledge.

Members of the sect are called upon to receive knowledge, to be perfect in their profession, and to benefit society. This suggests that the Naqshbandi sect is focused on spiritual and social development.

In addition, the article also analyzed the educational methods and educational processes of the sect. In the Naqshbandi sect, the teacher-disciple relationship is important, and the teachers not only provide knowledge to the disciples, but also provide them with spiritual guidance. In the educational process, methods such as dhikr, conversation and reading books are used.

In conclusion, education in the Naqshbandi sect is a necessary factor for achieving spiritual maturity, benefiting society and personal development. The attention of the sect to education ensures that it has developed over a long history and is still relevant today.

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