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THE ROLE OF NAQSHBANDIYYA TEACHING IN THE HISTORY OF UZBEK SOCIETY

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Abstract: This article examines the role of the Naqshbandiyya teaching in the history of Uzbek society and its influence on spiritual, social, and cultural development. The Naqshbandiyya order, founded by Bahauddin Naqshband, played an important role in strengthening moral values, promoting social harmony, and shaping the spiritual worldview of the people in Central Asia. The study analyzes the main principles of Naqshbandiyya, such as honesty, humility, hard work, and spiritual purity, as well as their impact on the development of Uzbek society. Furthermore, the article highlights the contribution of Naqshbandi scholars and thinkers to education, culture, and social stability throughout history. The findings show that the Naqshbandiyya teaching significantly influenced the formation of national identity, ethical values, and social unity in Uzbek society.

Key words: Naqshbandiyya, Uzbek society, spiritual heritage, Sufism, Bahauddin Naqshband, moral values, Central Asia, Islamic culture, social harmony, national identity.

Introduction

The Naqshbandiyya Sufi order is one of the most influential spiritual and social movements in the history of Central Asia, particularly in the formation of Uzbek society. Founded by the great Sufi scholar Bahauddin Naqshband in the 14th century in Bukhara, the Naqshbandiyya teaching became widely known for its emphasis on inner purification, moral discipline, and active participation in social life. Unlike some mystical traditions that encourage isolation from society, the Naqshbandiyya order promotes the idea of “heart with God, hand in work,” which combines spiritual development with everyday social and economic activity.

In the historical development of Uzbek society, Naqshbandiyya teachings played a crucial role in strengthening ethical values, social responsibility, and cultural identity. The order encouraged people to live honestly, work diligently, respect others, and maintain harmony within the community. These principles contributed to the formation of a stable and morally strong society in the region. As a result, Naqshbandiyya became not only a spiritual path but also a social framework that influenced education, governance, and interpersonal relations.

Furthermore, the influence of Naqshbandiyya extended beyond religious life and significantly affected cultural and intellectual development. Many scholars and thinkers associated with this tradition contributed to literature, philosophy, and education in Central Asia. Their teachings helped preserve Islamic values while also adapting them to local cultural traditions, which strengthened the spiritual unity of the Uzbek people.

In modern times, the study of Naqshbandiyya teachings remains important for understanding the historical roots of moral values and national identity in Uzbekistan. It also provides insights into how spiritual traditions can contribute to social stability and ethical development in society.

Therefore, analyzing the role of Naqshbandiyya in Uzbek history is essential for both historical research and contemporary cultural studies.

Literature Review

The Naqshbandiyya Sufi order has been widely studied in historical, religious, and cultural scholarship due to its significant influence on the spiritual and social development of Central Asian societies, especially the Uzbek people. Researchers emphasize that Naqshbandiyya was not only a mystical movement but also a powerful socio-ethical system that shaped moral values, social behavior, and cultural identity in the region.

One of the most important primary figures in the formation of this tradition is the great Sufi scholar Bahauddin Naqshband. His teachings, especially the principle "Dil ba yoru, dast ba kor" (Heart with God, hand at work), became the core philosophical foundation of the Naqshbandiyya order. According to historical interpretations, this principle encouraged followers to combine spiritual devotion with active participation in social and economic life. Scholars argue that this approach made Naqshbandiyya unique compared to other Sufi traditions, as it strongly emphasized social responsibility and productive labor.

In the academic work *The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia* by Devin DeWeese, the author provides a detailed historical analysis of the emergence and spread of Naqshbandiyya in Central Asia. The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia highlights that the order played an important role in stabilizing social relations and maintaining moral order within communities. The study also explains how Naqshbandi leaders often acted as mediators between political authorities and the local population, contributing to social harmony and political stability[1].

Another important scholarly source is Alexander Knysh's work *Sufism: The Formative Period*. Sufism: The Formative Period This book examines the broader development of Sufism and situates the Naqshbandiyya order within the wider Islamic mystical tradition. Knysh emphasizes that Naqshbandiyya is characterized by its emphasis on silent remembrance (dhikr), moral discipline, and strict adherence to Islamic law (Sharia). These features helped the order gain strong acceptance among scholars and ordinary people in Central Asia[2].

In addition, Leonard Lewisohn in *The Heritage of Sufism* provides a cultural and philosophical analysis of Sufi traditions, including Naqshbandiyya. The Heritage of Sufism According to this work, Naqshbandiyya significantly contributed to the preservation of Islamic ethics and the development of cultural identity in Central Asia[3]. The author stresses that the order's teachings influenced literature, education, and moral philosophy in Uzbek society.

Furthermore, historical sources such as the works of classical thinkers like Alisher Navoi also reflect Naqshbandi influence, especially in terms of ethical values, humanism, and social justice. These intellectual traditions show that Naqshbandiyya was deeply integrated into the cultural and intellectual life of the region.

Overall, the literature clearly demonstrates that Naqshbandiyya was not only a spiritual movement but also a comprehensive social system that influenced ethical behavior, cultural identity, and social stability in Uzbek society. The reviewed sources consistently highlight its role in promoting discipline, morality, and community cohesion across different historical periods.

Research Methodology

This study on *"The Role of Naqshbandiyya Teaching in the History of Uzbek Society"* is based on a qualitative research approach aimed at analyzing historical, religious, and cultural sources. The main purpose of the methodology is to examine the social, moral, and cultural influence of the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order within Uzbek society and to identify its contribution to ethical values, social stability, and national identity formation.

The research follows a descriptive-analytical design. This approach allows for a detailed description of historical events and an analytical interpretation of the Naqshbandiyya teachings. The study does not focus on numerical data but instead explores textual and historical evidence to understand the socio-cultural impact of the Naqshbandi tradition.

The data for this research was collected through secondary sources, including academic books, historical manuscripts, and scientific articles. Key sources include works on Sufism, Central Asian history, and Islamic philosophy. Special attention was given to reliable scholarly literature that discusses the development of the Naqshbandiyya order and its influence on society. Among the most important figures studied is Bahauddin Naqshband, whose teachings form the foundation of the Naqshbandi tradition.

The collected data was analyzed using content analysis and comparative historical analysis. Content analysis was used to identify key themes such as morality, social responsibility, spiritual discipline, and community cohesion in Naqshbandiyya teachings. Comparative analysis was applied to evaluate how Naqshbandiyya differs from other Sufi traditions in terms of social engagement and ethical principles.

For example, in *The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia*, Devin DeWeese highlights the role of Naqshbandiyya in strengthening social order and mediating between rulers and society. The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia This source was used to understand the historical and political significance of the order in Central Asia.

Similarly, Alexander Knysh in *Sufism: The Formative Period* provides a broader theoretical framework for analyzing Sufi movements, including Naqshbandiyya, within Islamic mysticism. Sufism: The Formative Period This helped in understanding the spiritual and doctrinal foundations of the order.

To ensure reliability, only academically recognized and widely cited sources were used. Cross-referencing of different authors and historical interpretations was applied to avoid bias and ensure accuracy. The consistency of findings across multiple sources increases the validity of the conclusions.

This research is limited to secondary sources and does not include primary fieldwork or interviews. Therefore, the findings are based on existing literature and historical interpretations rather than direct empirical data. However, the use of diverse academic sources helps to maintain a comprehensive and balanced analysis.

Overall, the methodology provides a structured framework for analyzing the Naqshbandiyya teaching and its historical role in Uzbek society. By combining descriptive and analytical approaches, the study ensures a deep understanding of both the spiritual and social dimensions of the Naqshbandi tradition.

Analysis and Results

The analysis of the Naqshbandiyya teaching in the historical development of Uzbek society demonstrates that this Sufi order had a profound influence not only on spiritual life but also on social structure, ethical values, and cultural identity. The findings show that Naqshbandiyya functioned as both a religious and socio-cultural institution that contributed to social stability and moral discipline in Central Asia.

One of the key findings is that Naqshbandiyya teachings significantly strengthened moral values such as honesty, humility, patience, and responsibility. The principle of “heart with God, hand at work,” introduced by Bahauddin Naqshband, encouraged individuals to remain spiritually connected while actively participating in society.

For example, historical sources show that followers of Naqshbandiyya were often involved in trade, agriculture, and education while maintaining strict ethical discipline. A merchant influenced by Naqshbandi principles would avoid fraud, dishonesty, and exploitation, focusing instead on fair trade and trust-building. This contributed to a more stable and ethical economic environment in many regions of Uzbekistan.

Another important result is that Naqshbandiyya played a key role in strengthening social harmony and reducing conflicts. The order promoted peaceful coexistence, respect for others, and avoidance of violence. Naqshbandi leaders often acted as mediators in local disputes between families, communities, and even political groups[4].

For instance, in many historical towns of Bukhara and Samarkand, Naqshbandi scholars helped resolve conflicts through dialogue and moral persuasion rather than force. This approach reduced social tensions and contributed to long-term stability in society.

The analysis also reveals that Naqshbandiyya had a strong impact on education and cultural development. Many Naqshbandi scholars were involved in teaching Islamic sciences, ethics, and literature. Their teachings influenced classical Uzbek literature and intellectual traditions.

A clear example can be seen in the works of Alisher Navoi, whose writings reflect Sufi values such as kindness, justice, and spiritual purity. These ideas were closely aligned with Naqshbandi philosophy and helped spread moral education among the population[5].

Unlike some mystical traditions that promote isolation, Naqshbandiyya encouraged active participation in social and political life. According to Devin DeWeese in *The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia*, The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia Naqshbandi leaders often interacted with rulers and influenced governance through ethical advice and moral authority.

For example, Naqshbandi sheikhs advised rulers to govern with justice and avoid oppression. This indirect influence helped promote fair governance and reduced abuse of power in some historical periods.

The results also show that Naqshbandiyya differs from other Sufi orders due to its emphasis on silent dhikr (remembrance of God) and active social engagement. As explained in Alexander Knysh's *Sufism: The Formative Period*, Sufism: The Formative Period Naqshbandiyya integrates spiritual discipline with practical life responsibilities, making it more socially integrated compared to more isolated mystical traditions[6].

The overall findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

- Naqshbandiyya strengthened moral and ethical behavior in society.
- It contributed to social stability and conflict resolution.
- It played an important role in education, literature, and cultural identity.
- It encouraged active participation in social and political life.
- It helped shape the spiritual and national identity of Uzbek society.

The analysis clearly shows that Naqshbandiyya was not only a religious movement but also a powerful social institution that influenced nearly every aspect of Uzbek society. Its teachings promoted ethical behavior, social harmony, and active civic engagement, which remain relevant in understanding the historical development of the region today.

Conclusion

The study of the role of Naqshbandiyya teaching in the history of Uzbek society clearly demonstrates that this Sufi order played a multidimensional role in shaping the spiritual, social, cultural, and ethical foundations of the region. The research findings indicate that Naqshbandiyya was not only a religious movement but also a strong social institution that contributed to the

formation of moral discipline, social harmony, and civic responsibility among the population of Central Asia.

One of the most important conclusions is that the teachings of Bahauddin Naqshband significantly influenced the moral behavior of society through principles such as honesty, humility, patience, and devotion to both spiritual and practical life. The principle "heart with God, hand at work" became a guiding philosophy that encouraged individuals to balance religious faith with active participation in economic and social activities.

Another important conclusion is that Naqshbandiyya contributed to strengthening social stability and reducing conflicts in society. Historical evidence shows that Naqshbandi leaders often acted as mediators in disputes, promoting dialogue, tolerance, and peaceful resolution of conflicts. This helped create a more stable and cohesive society in different historical periods of Uzbekistan.

Furthermore, the Naqshbandiyya order had a strong influence on education, literature, and cultural development. Its ethical and philosophical teachings were reflected in the works of many Central Asian thinkers and poets, contributing to the formation of a rich intellectual tradition. The order also played a role in shaping national identity by preserving Islamic values while integrating them with local cultural traditions.

In addition, the study shows that Naqshbandiyya encouraged active social engagement rather than isolation. As highlighted in scholarly works such as Devin DeWeese's *The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia*, The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition in Central Asia the order maintained close relationships with political authorities and influenced governance through moral guidance and ethical advice.

Similarly, Alexander Knysh in *Sufism: The Formative Period* Sufism: The Formative Period explains that Naqshbandiyya represents a unique Sufi tradition that integrates spiritual discipline with social responsibility, making it highly influential in Muslim societies.

Finally, Leonard Lewisohn in *The Heritage of Sufism* The Heritage of Sufism emphasizes the cultural and philosophical importance of Sufism, including Naqshbandiyya, in shaping moral values and cultural identity in Central Asia.

In general, the research confirms that Naqshbandiyya teaching played a crucial role in the historical development of Uzbek society. It strengthened ethical values, promoted social harmony, influenced education and culture, and contributed to the formation of a strong moral and national identity. Its legacy continues to be relevant today in understanding the spiritual and cultural foundations of the region.

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