

**INFLUENCE OF BAHAUDDIN NAQSHBANDI'S TEACHINGS ON THE SOCIAL AND  
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUKHARA EMIRATE IN THE VIEWS OF  
ENGLISH-SPEAKING AUTHORS (XIX CENTURY)**

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**Abstract:** The article studies the influence of Bahauddin Naqshbandi doctrine on the social and spiritual development of Bukhara emirate in the 19th century, considering the views of English-speaking authors. The main focus is on the role of the Naqshbandiya doctrine in shaping the spiritual and cultural aspects of Emirati life, drawing on the works of English-speaking orientalist, travellers and historical sources.

**Keywords:** Sufism, Sufi saint, the teaching of "Naqshbandiya", Sufi dervishes, English-speaking authors, historiography, travellers, orientalist, Bukhara emirate, social, spiritual and cultural life.

**Introduction**

The Naqshbandi doctrine is one of the most influential Sufi orders, having played a significant role in the social, spiritual and cultural development of Muslim societies, particularly in Central Asia and, notably, in the Bukhara emirate. Bahauddin Naqshband, the founder of this order, laid the foundations of a philosophy and practices that have exerted, and continue to exert, a profound influence on the religious and social life of the regions where this teaching is widespread.

In the 19th century, the Bukhara emirate was one of the centers for the dissemination and influence of the Naqshbandi doctrine, which attracted the attention of numerous researchers and travelers, including English-speaking ones. The purpose of this article is to examine the influence of Bahauddin Naqshband's teachings on the spiritual development of the Bukhara emirate in the 19th century through the prism of the views of English-speaking authors. The article seeks to analyze how English-speaking researchers and travelers perceived and assessed the role of Naqshband and his Sufi order, the Naqshbandiya, in the social, cultural and spiritual life of Bukhara. Particular attention is devoted to identifying the key aspects of Naqshband's teachings, their significance for the local population, as well as the extent of the dissemination and influence of his philosophy on the social and religious practices of the time.

**Methods**

To achieve the stated objective, the article employs the following research methods: analysis of historical sources, content analysis of English-language works, and a historical-cultural approach. The present study will provide a deeper understanding of how the Naqshbandi doctrine shaped the social, spiritual and cultural foundations of the Bukhara emirate and how this was reflected in the works of English-speaking authors of the 19th century.

**Main findings**

Muhammad ibn Muhammad Bahauddin Naqshband al-Bukhari (also known as Khojayi Buzruk) [8, 88] was an eminent saint and the founder of the Naqshbandi order. He was born and died in the village of Qasr-i Hinduvar near Bukhara (1318–1389), which was later renamed Qasr-i Orifon in honor of Bahauddin Naqshband. He performed the Hajj to Mecca twice [3, 2]. The people of Central Asia, and Bukhara in particular, inherited from this great Sufi saint a profound

spiritual and cultural doctrine that played a key role in the development and strengthening of the Islamic religion not only in Central Asia but also across the Muslim world. In this regard, it may be noted that the teaching of Baha-ud-Din Naqshband, known as Khwajagan–Naqshbandiya, exerted a significant influence on the spiritual development of the Bukhara emirate. This Sufi movement became one of the most important religious traditions of the region, leaving a deep imprint on the social, spiritual and cultural life of Bukhara and its surroundings.

The Khwajagan–Naqshbandiya teaching, refined by Bahauddin Naqshband, later spread throughout the Central Asian region and gradually began to expand its ranks of followers. The Naqshbandi tariqa eventually became the most widespread spiritual brotherhood operating in Central Asia, India, Turkey, and Iran. Among its adherents were such prominent figures as Jami, Tawakkul Khan, Alisher Navoi, and Shahabiddin Marjani. Its distinctive influence served as a spiritual support for the state, and in particular as a moral banner for the rulers of the Bukhara emirate, long after the death of His Holiness Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband. His tomb became a site of veneration not only for his disciples and followers of his teaching but also a place of pilgrimage for the entire Muslim world.

The study of the path of this Sufi doctrine, as well as the examination of its content, essence, and characteristics, is also of considerable importance in regulating certain aspects of contemporary social life. Although the religious, spiritual, and educational teachings of Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband have been extensively researched on the basis of local and Russian sources, investigating his place in the social and religious life of the Bukhara emirate through works created in the English language and analyzing the extent to which he is represented in the writings of English-speaking travelers who visited the Bukhara emirate, also has practical significance. This is because incorporating this body of sources into such research is a relevant task that presents itself as a necessary undertaking in the fields of historiography and source studies.

In the works of late 19th- and early 20th-century historians such as Ahmad Donish, Mirzo Abdulazim Somi, Muhammad Ali Baljuvani, Sadridin Ayni, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Musa Saidjanov, there are accounts connected with the pilgrimage sites of the oasis, including the shrine of Bahauddin Naqshband and certain rituals performed by pilgrims during their visits. Likewise, in the works of this period by Russian authors such as I.L.Yavorsky, V.Krestovsky, D.N.Logofet, and V.V.Bartold, some information is recorded regarding one of the oasis's pilgrimage sites, the mausoleum of Baha-ud-Din Naqshband. Moreover, in the scholarly studies of V.A.Shishkin, O.A.Sukhareva, and L.I.Rempel, attention is given to the names of Bukhara's sacred places (mazars) and their geographical locations [4, 26–31].

The study of the spiritual heritage of Bahauddin Naqshband has undergone a long and far-reaching development, during which a considerable body of works by both Eastern and Western authors emerged, describing the essence and distinctive features of the Sufi order. English-speaking travelers who visited the Bukhara emirate, especially those who went to the mausoleum of Bahauddin Naqshband, often described the influence of his teachings and their significance for the local population. Among such travelers, the following authors should be included: Mir Izzatullah [7], Alexander Burnes [1], Joseph Wolff [6], Arminius Vambery [2], Eugene Schuyler [5], among others.

If we consider these authors and their works in chronological order, the first work, more precisely, a narrative or travel diary, written during the period when the Bukhara emirate still

existed, can be regarded as the work of Mir Izzatullah, entitled “Ahvali Safari Bukhara” (The Account of the Journey to Bukhara), composed after his journey to the Bukhara emirate in 1812–1813. Mir Izzatullah, the first representative of Great Britain to visit the Bukhara emirate, described the location and significance of the shrine of Bahauddin Naqshband: “Bukhara and its surroundings are rich in the graves of saints and sacred places, among which are the tombs of Sayyid Amir Kulal and Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshband, the location of the latter being in the direction of the Mazar gate, at a distance of 4–5 miles from the city. The tomb of Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshband is merely a grave over which no building has been erected. Along the road are gardens and villages. On Wednesdays, a large fair is held here, where horses, donkeys, and goods of all kinds are sold, and to the northwest of the tomb is an open-air mosque. Every Wednesday morning, emir Said Haydar proceeds on foot to the tomb of Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshband, where he offers prayers, distributes alms, and then returns to Bukhara on horseback” [7, 61, 57–58, 66].

From this fact, we can confidently say that the rulers of the Bukhara emirate, out of respect for this great Sufi saint, made his teachings a central tradition in the socio-spiritual life of Bukhara.

In particular, among the works of the first half of the 19th century that provide valuable information about the teachings of Bahauddin Naqshband himself and his role in the social and spiritual life of the Bukhara emirate, special mention should be made of the work of the East India Company officer Alexander Burnes, published in London in 1834. In the first volume of Alexander Burnes’ work, the author relates that, on his journey from Bukhara to Samarkand, he visited the burial place of one of the greatest Sufi saints in Asia, Bahauddin Naqshband, renowned during the era of Amir Timur. The author particularly emphasized that a second pilgrimage to his tomb was considered equivalent to visiting Mecca itself. Alexander Burnes provided detailed information about his trip to the holy site with his companions and about the surrounding area. Once a week, near the place where the saint is buried, a fair is held, and the people of Bukhara come on donkeys to pay their respects. The ruler of Bukhara, emir Said Nasrullah, before ascending to the throne, solemnly vowed to this saint that, if the saint interceded on his behalf, he would visit the shrine every week and as many times per year travel there on foot from the city of Bukhara. His Majesty, Alexander Burnes notes, appears to have kept his word, when they encountered his baggage on the way there, he was praying and spending the night in rest.

The shrine has no buildings that require detailed description, it is a square elevated platform with a fine mosque and a large madrasa nearby. Every pilgrim circumambulates it, kissing inscriptions that indicate its age and date. It is richly endowed, and the descendants of Bahauddin Naqshband act as its guardians. They entered the sacred place without any ceremony, leaving their shoes outside. They were also taken to a holy man who looked after it, who served them cinnamon tea and offered to slaughter a sheep for their entertainment. However, he had so many illnesses, real or imagined, that after spending two hours with him, they were glad to take their leave.

He questioned them in detail about the name of the saint (Bahauddin Naqshband) and whether his fame and beneficence had spread to India and Europe. This was nothing more than an expression of Asian courtesy, affirming his reputation, for indeed, Bahauddin Naqshband is celebrated throughout the Islamic world, and pilgrims from Bukhara are known in Mecca by the name “Naqshbandi”. Alexander Burnes also noted that this great shrine, like most such places he

had seen in his travels, was adorned with the horns of rams sacrificed at the site, said to symbolize strength [1, 318–319].

It should be noted that Alexander Burnes' valuable observations, namely, that the Naqshbandiya teachings of Bahauddin Naqshband and the sacred place where his tomb is located were known not only in the Bukhara emirate but throughout Asia, attracting many pilgrims as visitors, indicate that both the rulers and the people of the Bukhara emirate treated Khoja with great respect and were devoted to him in resolving many problems and everyday matters. These accounts are important for the study of the influence of the teachings of this great Sufi saint on the social, spiritual and cultural development of the Bukhara emirate.

An important source on the history of the Bukhara emirate is the work of the English-speaking traveler Joseph Wolff, in which one can find some information about Bahauddin Naqshband, one of the great figures who made Bukhara famous as a center of the Islamic religion. Joseph Wolff noted that the great patron of Bukhara had lived several centuries earlier and was, as the dervishes explained, "drunk with love for God," wandering naked through the streets of Bukhara. Bahauddin Naqshband, however, was held in the highest esteem by the emir of Bukhara. Probably, here the author made an error in claiming that Bahauddin Naqshband walked naked through the streets of Bukhara, since in those times it was considered improper to inquire too closely about anything in Bukhara, such behavior could be taken as espionage, and foreigners in particular had to be cautious and vigilant while staying in the emirate. Therefore, the author could not clarify such delicate details regarding the character and life of the great Sufi saint. At present, pilgrims still appeal to him, and the ruler of Kunduz, despite his deep hostility toward the emir of Bukhara, sends an annual donation of rice to Bahauddin Naqshband in Bukhara [6, 211].

The most famous historian, linguist, orientalist, pilgrim, and traveler to have visited the Bukhara emirate in 1863 under the guise of a Muslim pilgrim was the Hungarian scholar Arminius Vambery, who provides important information on the Naqshbandiya teachings and the shrine of Bahauddin Naqshband. Arminius Vambery visited Bukhara and described his encounters with Sufi teachers and his pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Bahauddin Naqshband. He emphasized the spiritual influence of Naqshbandi teachings on people and the role of this tradition in shaping religious worldviews. As a specialist well-versed in Islam, Arminius Vambery offered his conclusions and observations on virtually everything connected with the teachings of Bahauddin Naqshband. In particular, the author described a gathering of dervish followers and reciters of the Naqshbandiya order, where they recited surahs from the Holy Qur'an both in verse and in prose, and performed heroic scenes of famous warriors and prophets. This scene, which took place opposite the mosque and khanaqah of Nadir Divanbegi, greatly impressed Arminius Vambery, after which he sought to describe the teachings in detail. Having witnessed various dervish rituals and met many representatives of the Naqshbandiya Sufi order, he concluded that the primary center for its followers was the city of Bukhara [2, 173–174].

According to Arminius Vambery, Bahauddin Naqshband gained fame in the Islamic world as an exemplar of asceticism and a saint, founding the religious-Sufi order Naqshbandiya, whose representatives could be found in India, China, Iran, Arabia, and even Turkey. The author stated that the great Sufi saint died in 1388 and that his monastery (complex), mosque, and an entire walled quarter surrounding his tomb were located in the locality of Bahauddin, constructed by Abdulaziz Khan in 1490 [2, 175]. Some incorrect dates can be found in Arminius Vambery's



account, which require detailed analysis, in fact, Bahauddin Naqshband passed away in 1389. The Hungarian orientalist emphasized: “The village of Bahauddin lies two leagues’ ride from Bukhara, and, as we have already mentioned, there is located the tomb of the famous Bahauddin Naqshband, founder of the eponymous order and chief instigator of all those religious extremes that distinguish Eastern Islam from Western. This is not the place to speak of details; we note only that Bahauddin is revered as the national saint of Turkestan, as a second Muhammad. The Bukharans are firmly convinced that the exclamation “Bahauddin balogardon!” — meaning “Bahauddin, the one who averts misfortune” — can save a person from all calamities. Moreover, pilgrims come to this place even from the most remote regions of China. In Bukhara, it is customary to go there once a week, and transport from the city is provided by 300 donkeys standing at the Mazar gate (Darvozayi Mozor), which may be hired for a few sums (pul — a small copper coin)”.

Arminius Vambery described the pilgrimage site with great admiration, noting that the tomb lies in a small garden beside a mosque, accessible only through a courtyard inhabited by the blind and other infirm beggars, whose persistence could shame even their counterparts in Rome and Naples. At the head of the tomb lies the famous Sangi Murad (“Stone of Desire”), worn down and set crooked from the foreheads of pious pilgrims who press against it. On the tomb itself are placed numerous sheep horns, a flag, and a broom that once served for sweeping the sanctuary in Mecca. Many attempts have been made to place all this under a roof, but Bahauddin, like other saints of Turkestan, prefers the open air; every construction erected over it soon collapsed. This, the sheikhs, descendants of the saint, recount, as they take turns guarding the tomb. They unabashedly tell pilgrims that their ancestor had a special connection with the number seven - he was born in the seventh month, knew the Qur’an by heart at the age of seven, and died at the age of seventy. Therefore, the number of offerings and gifts placed on his tomb, which become the property of the sheikh, must be a multiple of seven, but not fewer than seven.

The American traveler and diplomat Eugene Schuyler, who visited Central Asia in the 1870s, describes in his work the influence of Sufi orders, including the Naqshbandiya, on the local population of the Bukhara emirate. He noted that the teachings of Bahauddin Naqshband played a key role in the religious life of Bukhara and were held in deep respect among the people. In addition, in his travel notes on Turkestan and Bukhara, the author referred to the significance of the mausoleum of Bahauddin Naqshband as a place of pilgrimage and spiritual enlightenment. He recorded that the mausoleum, located approximately six miles from the city of Bukhara, was a center of religious activity attracting pilgrims from across the region [5, 108, 113].

### **Conclusion**

Thus, in conclusion, the main aspects of the influence of the Sufi teachings of Bahauddin Naqshband on the spiritual and cultural development of the Bukhara emirate, as reflected in the works of English-language authors, may be summarized as follows:

First, the sources contain accounts of the strengthening of Islamic identity. The Naqshbandi doctrine contributed to consolidating Islamic identity among the population of the Bukhara emirate. It emphasized the importance of spiritual purity, adherence to religious rituals, and moral conduct, thereby fostering the unity of society around shared religious values.

Second, there are descriptions of Sufi practices and rituals. The Sufi practices and rites associated with the Naqshbandiya order were actively disseminated and integrated into daily life.

Dhikr (remembrance of God) and meditation played a significant role in the spiritual life of its adherents.

Third, the narratives also discuss social and cultural integration. The Sufi brotherhoods of Bahauddin Naqshband played an important role in the social and cultural life of the emirate. They provided assistance to the poor, the sick, and those in need, contributing to social stability and mutual support within the Bukhara emirate.

These key functions of the Naqshbandiya Sufi order are reflected in the works of Alexander Burnes, Arminius Vambery, Joseph Wolff, Eugene Schuyler, and other English-language authors of the period under study.

Overall, the figure of Bahauddin Naqshband, his Naqshbandiya doctrine, and his followers exerted a profound influence on the social, spiritual and cultural development of the Bukhara emirate, an influence clearly recorded in the writings of many English-speaking travelers. The mausoleum of Bahauddin Naqshband became both a pilgrimage site and a center of social and spiritual life in Bukhara. Travelers described it as a place where people sought spiritual inspiration and solace. The mausoleum served as a symbol of the emirate's spiritual heritage and continued to play an important role in the religious life of the region.

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