

THE CORE AND CONTOURS OF A SUFI BROTHERHOOD

The origins of the Naqshbandiyya lie in the mystical tradition of the Great Masters – the Khwajagan – which flourished during the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries in the oases of Central Asia. From there it spread westward to Anatolia, eastward to what is now Chinese Turkistan, and southward to the Indian subcontinent. Here at the beginning of the seventeenth century it gave rise to its major offshoot, the Mujaddidiyya, which produced its own missionaries. These carried the message to the Turkish and Arab lands, as well as back to Central Asia. In the early nineteenth century the Khalidi offshoot of the Mujaddidiyya was established in the Ottoman Empire and further extended the geographical boundaries of the brotherhood to such remote areas as the Caucasus and Indonesia, and later to Western Europe and North America. The Naqshbandi tradition looms large at the background of such diverse modern Islamic movements as the Jadidi trend in the Muslim lands under Russian rule, the Ulama Council in colonial and postcolonial India, and the Salvation Party in Turkey.¹

Several figures stand out in the vast and ramified Naqshbandi lineage, each epitomizing one phase in its trajectory. The earliest is ‘Abdulkhaliq Ghijduwani, who at the turn of the thirteenth century introduced eight principles and a silent form of *dhikr* (rite of recollection) into the proto-Naqshbandi trend of the Khwajagan, thereby setting it on a distinct path. Most consequential among these principles in the public arena was *khalwat dar anjuman* (solitude in the crowd), a paradox implying that the spiritual master should involve himself in the social and political affairs of his community. Next is ‘Ubaydullah Ahrar, with whom in the second half of the fifteenth century the Naqshbandi brotherhood was consolidated and became enmeshed in politics. Ahrar employed especially the spiritual practice of *suhba* (accompanying the master) to rally his followers around him.

Then, in the seventeenth century, comes the founder of the Mujaddidiyya, Ahmad Sirhindi, who developed the idea of renewal of the millennium (*tajdid al-alf*) as an intellectual basis for the orthodox and activist proclivities of the brotherhood. Sirhindi’s orthodoxy was epitomized in his assertion that on the Day of Judgment people would be asked about their adherence to the

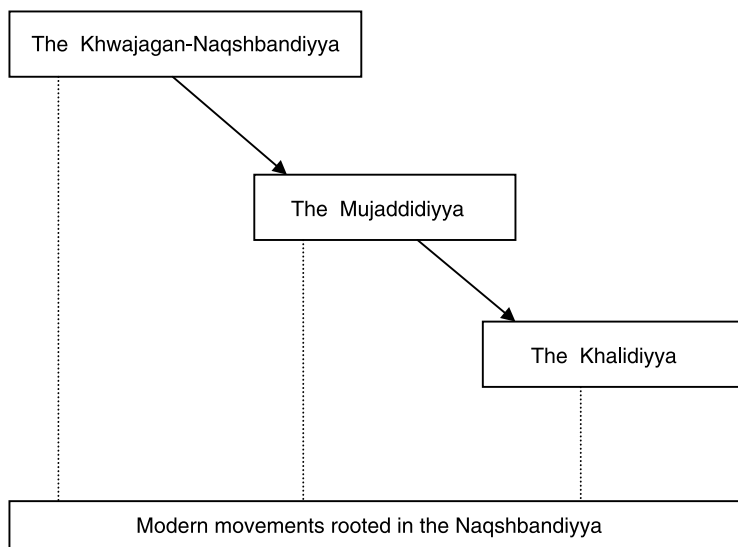


Figure 1.1 The Naqshbandiyya and its offshoots

shari‘a rather than about their mystical affiliation. He was followed in the early nineteenth century by the founder of the Khalidiyya, Khalid al-Shahrizuri (also al-Baghdadi), who sought to galvanize his offshoot into an effective socio-religious movement to implement these tenets through a concentrated form of *rabita* (binding the heart with the master) and intensive *khalwa* (seclusion). Modern thinkers with roots in the Naqshbandi tradition include such eminent figures as Shah Waliullah, the hadith scholar of Delhi, Bediüzzaman Sa‘id Nursi, the modernist philosopher from eastern Turkey, and Muhammad Rashid Rida, the fundamentalist propagandist based in Cairo. These may be regarded as seeking, each in his own peculiar way, to reestablish the balance between the two elements of orthodoxy and activism in the face of the radically altered environment of modernity.

Along with these, many other masters feature in the following pages, from Baha’uddin Naqshband, the eponym of the brotherhood, who added three principles to its spiritual path, to Nazim al-Haqqani, the most active Naqshbandi master on the contemporary global scene. Each of these Naqshbandi and Naqshbandi-related masters creatively adapted the tradition he had inherited from his predecessors to the particular circumstances in which he lived and worked: Ghijduwani reacted to the threat posed by the Turkish and Mongol nomads to the sedentary population of the Bukhara oasis; Naqshband sought to renew his legacy once Muslim rule was restored in the region; Ahrar contended with the havoc generated by the rapid disintegration of Timurid rule in central Asia; Sirhindi set out against the syncretistic

religion adopted by the Mughal court in India; Khalid responded to the weakening of the Ottoman government and the rising threat from the West; Waliullah, Nursi, and Rida each stood up to the cultural challenges of modernity as they perceived them; and Haqqani accommodates the Sufi path to the current realities of globalization.

One should never forget, however, that the teachings of these masters could not strike root, nor indeed were they preserved in the collective memory of their communities, without the backing of the innumerable lesser masters and deputies and the multitude of disciples and adherents who throughout the ages recognized and loved them as saints, flocked to their lodges, spread their call far and wide, and thus kept the Naqshbandi tradition alive in their deeds and in their hearts.

The mystical path

The formation, spread, and adaptation of the Naqshbandiyya is part of the larger story of the institutionalization and popularization of the mystical aspect of Islam. The Islamic term denoting a Sufi brotherhood, or any of its offshoots, is *tariqa*, which literally means path or method. From the earliest days *tariqa* was the most widely used metaphor for the Sufi quest. It branched off from another path, that of the Law – *shari'a* (lit. the way to the water, and by extension the straight path) – and led, by God's willing, to realization in the Divine or Truth – *haqiqa*. As an orthodox brotherhood, the Naqshbandiyya emphasizes that the follower of the path must always adhere to the injunctions of the Law and it denounces Sufis who claim to be no longer bound by them since they have reached the goal. The inner relationship between *shari'a*, *tariqa* and *haqiqa* is vividly expressed by the renowned early nineteenth-century Hanafi jurist Ibn 'Abidin, who was affiliated to the Khalidi branch of the Naqshbandiyya:

The *tariqa* and the *shari'a* necessitate each other, since the path to God consists of an external aspect and an internal aspect. Its externality is the *shari'a* and the *tariqa* and its internality is the *haqiqa*. The internality of the *haqiqa* in the *shari'a* and the *tariqa* is like the internality of butter in milk. It is impossible to reveal the butter in the milk without churning it. The aim of the three – the *shari'a*, the *tariqa*, and the *haqiqa* – is to fulfill the state of servitude to God.²

In describing their experiences along the path, the early Sufis identified different stations through which they had to pass. These were divided in their expositions into two major types: stages (sing. *maqam*), like renunciation, poverty, and trust in God, which one reaches and maintains by one's own strivings, and states (sing. *hal*), like vision and certainty, which come and go

without control. The last stations on the path are the two complementary states of love (*mahabba*) and gnosis (*ma'rifa*). They lead to annihilation in God (*fana'*) and subsistence in Him (*baqa'*) in full realization of the divine unity (*tawhid*). Intoxicated mystics have always rejoiced in the bliss of the annihilation of their self in the One, while sober mystics like the Naqshbandis put the stress on their subsistence in order to return to this world and guide others on the same journey.

The main instrument for advancement on the mystical path is *dhikr* – the constant recollection of God – founded on Qur'anic injunctions such as this: "O believers, remember God oft, and give Him glory at the dawn and in the evening."³ Meditation on the One through *dhikr* is most intense during periods of seclusion (*khalwa*), when the external senses are shut and the heart is prepared to receive the divine gift. Along with the usual slow and painstaking following of the path (*suluk*), Sufis recognize the possibility of being suddenly and instantly attracted by God (*jadhbah*).⁴ As we shall see, in the Naqshbandi tradition seclusion is performed in the crowd and divine attraction precedes the following of the path.

The various features of the Sufi path were consolidated and systematized from the tenth century on, partly in response to the collapse of the central authority of the 'Abbasid Caliphate and the consequent onset of political insecurity.⁵ Externalization of the inner experience facilitated the spread of Sufism among the masses and enabled it to provide an alternative basis for social order. One aspect in this development was the urge to demonstrate the fundamental orthodoxy of the Sufi tenets, culminating in the comprehensive work of the celebrated theologian and mystic Ghazali. Such endeavors helped make Sufism acceptable to the religious scholars ('*ulama'*) and integrated it into the main body of religious knowledge.⁶

Another aspect was the elaboration of a theory of sainthood. This postulated a hierarchy of "friends of God" (*awliya'*, sing. *wali*), modeled on the example of Prophet Muhammad and topped by the pole of the age (*qutb*) and "the seal of saints" – the greatest Sufi of all ages. The terminology was introduced into Sufi discourse in the ninth century and was fully elucidated three centuries later by Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi, the Greatest Master, who claimed the title of seal for himself. Ibn 'Arabi's comprehensive synthesis of the mystical sciences of his day was to form the common heritage underlying the distinctive paths of the various Sufi brotherhoods, including the Naqshbandiyya.⁷ Following him Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, the eponymous founder of the Mevlevi brotherhood ("the whirling dervishes"), gave the Sufi vision a profound poetical expression in his unforgettable couplets.⁸

Most significant for the formation of the Sufi brotherhoods, however, was the institutionalization of the master-disciple bond. From earliest times Sufis recognized that spiritual aspirants (sing. *murid*) need an accomplished guide (Ara. *murshid*, Per. *pir*) to direct them through the different stations and point out for them the way to union with God. They were also aware of the

dangers of deceit, pride, and self-destruction that threaten to lead followers astray not only from the *tariqa* but even from the *shari'a*, and therefore they attributed absolute authority to the spiritual guide. The central role of the Sufi master in the process was grounded in the Prophetic saying (hadith) that “the shaykh in his group is like the Prophet among his people”; his authority was epitomized in the complementary saying that “the adept to his shaykh is like a corpse in the hands of a corpse-washer.”⁹ Naqshbandis in particular practice as part of their *dhikr* a form of concentration on the great masters in their spiritual chain back to the Prophet in order to be blessed by them and to strengthen their souls. This ritual, known as *khatm al-khwajagan*, includes, according to the early twentieth-century Egyptian-based Naqshbandi master Muhammad Amin al-Kurdi, the following supplication:

Praise be to God, who in the light of His beauty illuminated the hearts of the knowers (*arifiyin*) and in the awe of His majesty burned the heart of the desirers (*ashiqiyin*) and in the subtlety of His providence built the innermost of the attainers (*wasiliyin*). Prayer and peace be on His best creature, our master Muhammad, and on his family and companions. Oh God, proclaim and bring the reward for what we read and the light of what we recited, after accepting it from us, with grace and beneficence, to the spirit of our master and healer of hearts and delight, the elected Muhammad, and to the spirits of all the prophets and messengers, God's prayers and peace upon them all, and to the spirits of all masters in the lineages of the exalted brotherhoods. . . especially to the spirit of the great pole and famous authority, the possessor of luminous effluence who formulated this *khatm*, Mawlana 'Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghijduwani; and to the spirit of the leader of the path and succor of the universe, the possessor of the flowing effluence and streaming light, the noble master Muhammad known as Shah Naqshband al-Husayni al-Hasani al-Uwaysi al-Bukhari, may God sanctify his lofty innermost; and to the spirit of the pole of saints and proof of the pure ones, the combiner of formal and mental perfections Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Dihlawi [of the Mujaddidiyya], may God sanctify his lofty innermost; and to the spirit of the traveler in God, the bowing and prostrating, the possessor of the two wings in the inner and outer sciences Diya' al-Din, our master Shaykh Khalid, may God sanctify his lofty innermost . . .¹⁰

Manuals of Sufi conduct which circulated in the tenth and eleventh centuries helped turn the small groups of spiritual masters and disciples hitherto gathering in privacy into more formal associations with wider social appeal. This was followed in the twelfth century by the appearance of Sufi brotherhoods encompassing networks of masters who related to common

eponymous founders.¹¹ The masters of each brotherhood elaborated distinct spiritual methods and disciplinary practices. Many of them set up lodges (sing. Ara. *zawiya*, Tur. *tekke*, Per. *khanqah*) to cater to the spiritual as well as material needs of various levels of society, and they attracted the support of local rulers.¹² In the following centuries the influence of organized Sufism increasingly grew, spreading from its initial centers in the cities of Iraq and Persia to all corners of the Muslim world.¹³ Brotherhoods of various size and appeal – from the local to the global – covered the Muslim world, some of the most widespread and enduring among them being the all-present Qadiriyya, the Shadhiliyya in North and West Africa, the Rifa‘iyya in the eastern Arab world, the Shi‘ite Ni‘matullahiyya in Iran, and the Naqshbandiyya in Central Asia, India, and Turkey.

The orientalist–fundamentalist paradigm in Sufi studies

The wide dissemination and considerable influence that the Naqshbandiyya, and other Sufi brotherhoods, have enjoyed throughout the ages run counter to the still widely held view that following a formative or classical period Islam entered into a prolonged period of decline. This view was advanced within the framework of two distinctly modern paradigms. One is the Orientalist paradigm which, by essentializing Islam as the (inferior) Other, helped justify the Western colonial enterprise and continues to inform Western policy makers and Islamic “experts” today; the other is the Islamic fundamentalist paradigm, which depicts latter-day Muslim tradition as a deviation from the exemplary model of the forefathers and a principal obstacle to the renewal of Islamic vigor in the face of the West and the Westernized Muslims. For A. J. Arberry, a major representative of the Orientalist tradition in Sufi studies, the very emergence of the brotherhoods marked the beginning of the decline of Sufism:

The age of Ibn Farid, Ibn ‘Arabi and Rumi [in the thirteenth century] represents the climax of Sufi achievement, both theoretically and artistically. Thereafter, although through the numerous and ever multiplying Religious Orders the influence of Sufi thought and practice became constantly more widespread, and though sultans and princes did not disdain to lend the movement their patronage and personal adherence . . . the signs of decay appear more and more clearly, and abuse and scandal assail and threaten to destroy its fair reputation.¹⁴

The distinct bias in this statement toward the “classical” personal form of Sufi piety and the concomitant downgrading of the social and political import of “post-classical” organized Sufism is reproduced in J. Spencer Trimingham’s *Sufi Orders of Islam*, the most comprehensive treatment of the

subject to date. Trimingham constructed a tripartite scheme of Sufi historiography, which somewhat delays its perceived era of decline. Consequent to the formative period, he distinguishes between a *tariqa* phase, when initiatory lines were formed and the authority of the master over his disciples was consolidated, and the *ta'ifa* phase in which the brotherhoods were fully institutionalized and the master became an object of popular personal cult. The *tariqas* began to form in the wake of the Sunni triumph over the Shi'ite dynasties in Baghdad and Cairo during the twelfth century, and their organization was crystallized as *ta'ifas* in the fifteenth century, with the growth of Muslim empires in Persia, Anatolia, India, and North Africa. According to Trimingham, in the last phase, which continues to this day,

The orders became hierarchical institutions and their officials approached nearer to a clergy class more than any other in Islam, whilst the *zawiya* was the equivalent of a local church. The sheikh ceased to teach directly but delegated authority both to teach and initiate to representatives (*khulafa'*, sing. *khalifa*). A special cult surrounded the shaykh's person, associated with the power emanating from the founder-saint of the *ta'ifa*; he became an intermediary between God and man. If we characterize the first stage, as affecting the individual, as surrender to God, and the second as surrender to rule, then this stage may be described as surrender to a person possessing *baraka* (spiritual power), though of course embracing the other stages.¹⁵

A similar picture of corruption and decline emerges from the writings of Islamic fundamentalists, though obviously for totally different reasons. For 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, an early representative of the Salafi trend in the Arab world, which advocated a return to the example of the pious forefathers of Islam at the expense of latter-day tradition, the various manifestations of Sufism in his day were nothing but deviation and unbelief:

One has no choice but to declare that the state of the great majority of Muslims, except in the Arabian Peninsula, is in every respect similar to the state of unbelievers. . . Some of them have exchanged the idols for tombs. They build over them mosques and shrines, install lights and hang veils, and then circumambulate them, kiss and touch their pillars, shout out the names of those interred in times of distress, and offer sacrifices to others than God . . . Some people assemble to worship God by *dhikr*, a recollection that is sullied by the singing of songs of praise and excessive veneration of latter-day poets in a way that the Prophet forbade even for his own noble self . . . A group of them were not satisfied with the bright Law and invented injunctions which they called esoteric sciences, the science

of Truth, or the science of Sufism. This is a science that the Prophet's companions and followers and those living in the early centuries of Islam knew nothing about . . . And among them are people who have turned the religion of God into a plaything. They sing, dance, beat tambourines and drums, wear green and red, play with fire and weapons, scorpions and snakes, and in this way deceive the common people and scare the stupid ones.¹⁶

Opposition to the popular aspect of Sufism has never been absent from the Muslim public arena. Its two landmarks in the middle period of Islam were the strictures of the Hanbali theologian Ahmad ibn Taymiyya in the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century, shortly after the formation of the brotherhoods, and the puritan Wahhabi movement of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when Sufism became almost all-pervasive.¹⁷ Criticism of unorthodox practices associated with popular Sufism, however, was mostly articulated from within the Sufi tradition itself, as the case of the Naqshbandiyya amply demonstrates. But Islamic fundamentalists like Kawakibi went far beyond that. Wishing to appropriate the rationalist-scientific discourse of the West, they came to question the central tenets of the Sufi tradition, particularly the esoteric sciences and the master-disciple bond. The most radical among the fundamentalists rejected Sufism *in toto* as sheer heresy and a foreign import.¹⁸

A convenient point to examine the validity of both the Orientalist and fundamentalist paradigms is the period just preceding the advent of modernity. Studies of revival and reform movements in Islam during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have shown that the ultra-orthodox Wahhabiyya was rather the exception, while the great majority of these movements were actually Sufi. Their activities were known long before Tringham, and it has become customary to describe them under the common label of Neo-Sufism. John O. Voll and Nehemia Levtzion included among the characteristic innovations of the pre-modern revival thinkers and movements a new emphasis on the study of hadith, a shift from a pantheistic interpretation of Ibn 'Arabi's teaching to a new interest in the transcendental approach of Ghazali, stricter compliance with the precepts of the shari'a, greater involvement in politics and society, and consolidation of the structural organization of the brotherhoods. Prominent among the pre-modern Sufi brotherhoods were the Khalwatiyya in Egypt, the African brotherhoods that emanated from the Shadhili Sufi scholar Ahmad ibn Idris and, last but not least, the Naqshbandiyya in India and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹

More recent scholarship, informed by the insights of R. S. O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, has seriously questioned both the common framework and the innovative thrust implied by the term "neo-Sufism." Basing themselves on evidence from the western Islamic world, O'Fahey and Radtke were only prepared to admit that during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries

there were some “organizational innovations of certain Sufi brotherhoods in specific regions of the Muslim world.”²⁰ Of course, this criticism was in no way meant to diminish the importance of the Sufi aspect of Islam in the pre-modern period. On the contrary, the thrust of the critics’ argument was that the characteristics attributed to Sufism in that phase – an orthodox bent, veneration of the Prophet, and sociopolitical activism – were eventually part of the rich and variegated Sufi experience also in the previous generations, down to the very formation of the brotherhoods in the twelfth century.

Moreover, it is my contention that Sufism continues to play an important role even in the modern era. The unprecedented challenge of secularized authoritarian state structures, Western-inspired rationalist discourse, and Islamic fundamentalist critique since the second half of the nineteenth century have undoubtedly led to a perceptible decline in the traditional forms of Sufism. Yet by the latter part of the twentieth century it had become clear that many Sufi masters had managed to adapt to the new circumstances, especially by allying with one or another of their adversaries, as well as by skillful use of the modern means of communication. On the other hand, a close examination of modern Islamic movements and thinkers reveals that many of them, Kawakibi included, had roots in the Sufi brotherhoods and appropriated elements from the spiritual and activist Sufi traditions. One thus can chart a spectrum of modern Islamic organizations, spanning from moribund Sufi brotherhoods through adaptive branches and fundamentalist movements that acknowledge their Sufi connection to radical Islamist vanguards that totally reject Sufism. The Naqshbandiyya and its Mujaddidi and Khalidi offshoots have a considerable share in the first three types, and are among the most adamant opponents of the last.²¹

Naqshbandi identity and continuity

In latter-day Islamic history the signification of the term *tariqa* was extended from the inner spiritual path or method (*suluk*), the essence of the Sufi quest, to include the socio-religious organization through which this path was externalized, institutionalized, and popularized. In Western languages this mode of organization is commonly rendered as “Sufi order,” despite the general acknowledgment that the term connotes the Christian monastic orders.²² Such a rendering obscures the nature, and ambiguities, of the internal bonds and external boundaries that together determine the identity of a *tariqa* on the one hand, and of the ideological mechanisms that define its continuity over time on the other.

To convey these aspects of latter-day Sufism, I prefer to use the two complementary terms of “brotherhood” and “line(age),” which respectively articulate its spatial and temporal dimensions. Brotherhood refers to a group of followers who are united around their master, and by extension with their entire *tariqa*, but also, in line with the Qur’anic injunction that “The

believers indeed are brothers,”²³ with the Muslim community at large. Though admittedly gender-biased, this concept does reflect the dominance of men in organized Sufism while leaving room for less visible sisterhoods. The second term points to the chain of spiritual transmission (*silsila*) through which such masters are related to their forebears in the *tariqa*, and also, by its projection back to the Prophet, to the overall Muslim history.

Organized Sufism, it follows, embraces more than the terms “brotherhood” and “lineage” separately would suggest. In its broadest sense *tariqa* is best rendered as “tradition” which, in agreement with Marilyn Robinson Waldman, I treat “as process – as a modality of change, as *a* way, but not *the* way, in which any society can cope with universal problems of human existence, such as legitimacy, authority, and change itself.”²⁴ Dialectically transcending “brotherhood” and “lineage” in space-time, the term “tradition” helps us better to grasp the impact of the various branches of the Naqshbandiyya on the course of Muslim religious and socio-political history in which it was enmeshed, and more clearly to perceive the persistence of Naqshbandi elements among modern post-Naqshbandi thinkers and popular associations.

Two additional remarks concerning the term “tradition” are in place here. First, from my point of view “tradition” and “modernity” not only do not exclude each other, an assertion that has become a platitude in academic circles;²⁵ in the sense I use it to describe the Naqshbandi experience, “tradition” actually encompasses its modern manifestations and transformations. Second, in line with Timothy Mitchell’s observation that “there was no analytic separation in this [pre-modern Islamic] approach between writing and politics, or between theory and practice,”²⁶ I consider the literature produced by members of the Naqshbandi brotherhood a constitutive part of its tradition rather than its mere representation. This amounts to an attempt to follow the “objective” history of the Naqshbandiyya “from within,” as an accumulative “way” of spiritual knowledge and action.

More than any of the other major Sufi brotherhoods in Islam, the identity and continuity of the Naqshbandiyya seem to rest on a firm foundation. At the core of Naqshbandi doctrine and practice lie the eleven principles (*kalimat-i qudsiyya*, lit. sacred words) attributed to its early founders, ‘Abdulkhaliq Ghijduwani and Baha’uddin Naqshband, and a distinct form of silent *dhikr*. To these were added during the course of time other “canonized” texts and rituals, particularly the collection of letters (*Maktubat*) of Ahmad Sirhindi and spiritual practices such as *suhba*, *khalwa* and *rabita* in the specific uses to which they were put by ‘Ubaydullah Ahrar, Khalid al-Shahrizuri, and other lesser figures. Although none of these texts and rituals remained uncontested by rivals or affiliates of the brotherhood, they constituted the discursive field of orthodoxy and activism around which the Naqshbandi tradition revolved.²⁷

This firm foundation ensured that throughout its history, the Mujaddidi

and Khalidi offshoots and their numerous localized branches and sub-branches would remain within the overall Naqshbandi fold. These offshoots and branches shared in the Naqshbandi sense of distinction, their leaders often reiterating the postulate that theirs is the shortest way to attain spiritual perfection and the claim to belong to the spiritual chain of Abu Bakr, the immediate heir of the Prophet. Thereby they distinguished themselves from most other Sufi brotherhoods, which consider 'Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law and the fourth Caliph, as the principal transmitter of esoteric knowledge in Islam.²⁸ Of course, one should not infer hence that every single Naqshbandi, by his mere affiliation to the brotherhood, was a living embodiment of orthodoxy and activism. It is my argument, however, that in times of political and social upheaval it was particularly members of the Naqshbandiyya that rose to the task, conceived new ideas for religious reform and renewal, and formed socio-religious revivalist movements to rectify the situation.

Still, as with other Sufi brotherhoods the identity of the Naqshbandiyya is largely imaginary. This is true not merely in Benedict Anderson's sense concerning the nation, namely that most Naqshbandis "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them."²⁹ No less significant is the fact that the inner cohesion of the Naqshbandiyya has always been weak while its boundaries to other brotherhoods and with the larger Muslim community have never been clearly demarcated. This state of affairs, which is inherent in the loose structure of the *tariqa* organization in general, is accentuated in the Naqshbandi case by the paradoxical nature of the very principles that define its specific identity.

Within the bounds of the Naqshbandi brotherhood, the activist attitude which the principle of "solitude in the crowd" entails necessitated alertness to prevailing social and political circumstances. As these differed considerably according to place and time, so did the readings and applications of the principle. They ranged from community work in colonial India, for example, through cooperation with governments, either Islamic such as the Hamidian regime in the late Ottoman era or secular like the Ba'th regime in contemporary Syria, to resistance and rebellion as in the Jihad movements against the Russian conquest of Chechnya or against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Factional struggles over leadership and resources in the brotherhood could likewise generate disagreements over doctrinal points or the right course of action. Such were the cases of the conflict between the older Naqshbandiyya and the Mujaddidiyya in the Haramayn in the seventeenth century and of the "old teaching" and "new teaching" factions in the Chinese Naqshbandiyya.

The orthodox stress on the shari'a could be similarly interpreted in a variety of ways in the overall Muslim space. Some, like 'Abd al-Rahman Jami in Timurid Herat, stressed the attachment of the Naqshbandiyya to the common orthodox Sufi edifice, normally on the basis of Ibn 'Arabi's teaching.

Others, mostly belonging to the ulama class, for example, Ahmad al-Qushashi and Ibrahim al-Kurani in seventeenth-century Medina, joined in the religious scholars' critique of "unlawful" Sufi practices. On the other hand, in one instance in the second half of the nineteenth century a Mujaddidi lineage from the rural periphery of Lucknow in northern India was passed to the Hindu environment; it has not only survived there to this day, but has also been transplanted into the contemporary globalized scene. Finally, there were those modern Naqshbandis for whom, to some extent or other, the mystical path was superseded by modernist and fundamentalist readings of Islam. Prominent among these are the Nur movement among the Turkish peoples and the Salafis in the Arab world.

In between the overarching Muslim arena and the inner-brotherhood scene(s), the Naqshbandi self-characterization as the shortest path to attain spiritual perfection was likewise translated into various kinds of relationships with other brotherhoods. Depending on real relations of power and influence on the one hand, and on the extent of both sides' commitment to the orthodox creed on the other, these spanned from hegemony to conflict to cooperation and actual merger. Thus, by the sixteenth century the original Naqshbandiyya was able to incorporate within its fold the other indigenous mystical traditions of Central Asia – the Kubrawiyya and Yasawiyya – as well as some of their rituals.

Less confident in India, from its very inception the Mujaddidiyya juxtaposed itself to the established brotherhoods of the subcontinent – including the popular Chishtiyya – while presenting itself as the most competent to fight Mughal syncretism. The Khalidiyya, during its own initial phase, induced the modernizing Ottoman administration to ban the heterodox Bektashis and close their lodges. Subsequently some Khalidi branches, notably in Kurdistan and Indonesia, sought to bolster their position by aligning with more prestigious Qadiriyya lineages. Among modern Naqshbandi-related movements the entire form of *tariqa* organization was either relegated to a secondary role or abandoned altogether.

The continuity of the Naqshbandiyya over time may also be taken as largely invented. "Invented tradition" is defined by Hobsbawm and Ranger as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."³⁰ Such practices are evident in the apocryphal projection of the Naqshbandi chain of transmission back to the Prophet, a feature shared by practically all Sufi brotherhoods, as well as in the peculiar occurrence of loopholes in the proto-Naqshbandi chain, which are portrayed as special cases of "spiritual transmission."

Far beyond that, however, "invention" is a constant feature of the Naqshbandi tradition. It may be gauged from the wide gap between the linear presentation of the trajectory of the brotherhood as it appears in its

genealogical tree (*shajara*) and its actual history, which has been checkered by recurrent conflicts over leadership and material resources and over teachings and rituals. The Sufi *silsila*, not unlike the chains of transmission of the hadith on which it was ultimately modeled, was devised to bridge such discontinuities. They allow succeeding masters to shape and reshape their ancestry in line with the requirement of legitimacy (*isnad*), as well as to discredit rival masters. Such a construction was again especially potent in the Naqshbandi brotherhood, in which every modification on the path was measured against its foundational basis.

Accordingly, there is no indication in the Naqshbandi chain of transmission of the successive establishment of the Mujaddidi and Khalidi offshoots. Also overlooked are more subtle changes in the modalities of the transmission itself. A turning point in this respect was reached in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when hereditary succession, a common custom among most Sufi brotherhoods but explicitly denounced by the founders of the Naqshbandiyya, was now accepted as the rule. This development was paralleled by the emergence of the lodge as the locus of Naqshbandi spiritual life, a practice that likewise had been proscribed in the early days of the brotherhood. Both modifications reflected transformations in the wider world of organized Sufism during this period, most notably the spread of the custom to augment multiple chains of transmission as a source of enhanced spiritual prestige. Another turning point was reached in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries when those Naqshbandi masters who abandoned the *tariqa* form of organization were also ready to do away with their lineage in favor of new modes of legitimacy such as rationalist discourse, state backing, or populist appeal.

The picture of the Naqshbandiyya that thus emerges is of a fairly loose network of masters and disciples in their lodges, who share a set of foundational principles and practices while constantly modifying and reinterpreting them according to changing circumstance and personal preference. Such a flexible and open-ended structure, which informs both ritual and modes of organization, allows not only wide divergence within the system, but also spilling over to the broader environment. Thus, the silent form of *dhikr*, generally recognized as the mainstay of the Naqshbandi ritual, was often accompanied by vocal forms of recollection, while in more recent times it sometimes came to resemble a religious lesson or preaching, as I witnessed in the Ismail Agha mosque in Istanbul. Similarly, exceptionally charismatic masters were able hierarchically to structure their *tariqa* and provide it with considerable economic and political leverage. As the case of the Hindu Mujaddidi branch in India and the quietist approach of numerous Naqshbandi branches all over the Muslim world indicate, such flexibility and open-endedness do not exclude even the two central pillars of the Naqshbandi tradition, its orthodoxy and its activism.

LOCAL BEGINNINGS IN THE OASES OF INNER ASIA (THIRTEENTH TO SIXTEENTH CENTURIES)

The Naqshbandiyya derives its name from Baha'uddin Naqshband, the epithet of the fourteenth-century spiritual master Muhammad al-Uwaysi of Bukhara. It is a combination of the Persian words *naqsh* and *band*, meaning impressing the divine name Allah and fixing it to the heart. Like in many other Sufi brotherhoods, though, it was the disciples of the eponym, foremost among them the charismatic 'Ala'uddin 'Attar and the scholarly Muhammad Parsa, and to some extent, the younger Ya'qub Charkhi, who actually laid the foundations of the new path while evoking the name of the master as a source of legitimization.

The Naqshbandiyya traces its beginnings farther back to the Khwajagan, the spiritual masters of Central Asia, and is embedded in their tradition. The legendary founder of this tradition at the turn of the thirteenth century was 'Abdulkhaliq from the small town of Ghijduwan in the Bukhara oasis. To Ghijduwani were attributed the introduction of a silent form of *dhikr* and the formulation of eight principles (*kalimat-i qudsiyya*), which specified the character and spiritual methods of his lineage as against the incipient Yasawiyya brotherhood and in opposition to the organizational forms that Central Asian Sufism was then taking in general. Ghijduwani as well as Ahmad Yasawi are described in the Naqshbandi sources as disciples of Yusuf al-Hamadani, the first *khwaja* in their chain of transmission. The links chosen for this apocryphal chain going back to the Prophet Muhammad, and the relations between them, symbolize the particular traits of the Khwajagan-Naqshbandi spiritual path.

Under Chaghatay Mongol rule (thirteenth to mid-fourteenth century) the Khwajagan came to represent a low-profile widely diffused current comprising a multiplicity of local groups engaging in divergent practices and rituals. Some of them survived to as late as the sixteenth century. One group was the line of Khwaja Baha'uddin, who after the restoration of Muslim rule in Bukhara evoked by way of "spiritual transmission" the legacy of Ghijduwani while supplementing it with three principles of his own. During the time of his disciples, coinciding with the reign of Timur

Lang (1370–1405) and his successors, the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiyya spread to other urban centers of Transoxiana, where it appealed primarily to the culturally Iranian (Tajik) artisans. In the following generation it established a presence in the major Timurid cities of Balkh and especially the capital Herat. In the second half of the fifteenth century ‘Ubaydullah Ahrar gave the Naqshbandiyya a more solid organizational shape from his base in Samarqand, while the scholarly literati ‘Abdurrahman Jami and ‘Ali Shir Nava’i thrived in Herat under the wing of the court.

Scholarly research on the Central Asian Naqshbandiyya has surged since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. Special efforts have been exerted since then by numerous scholars to locate, catalogue and publish original manuscripts, most notably biographies of Baha’uddin Naqshaband and the works of Muhammad Parsa. Most of these manuscripts are deposited in the al-Biruni Institute in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This endeavor, along with the original researches conducted on the basis of the rediscovered sources, actually amount to a dismantling of the ideological edifice of the “official” Naqshbandi chain of transmission to make way for a more critical assessment of the role of the brotherhood in Transoxianan politics and society of the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.

The formation of a tradition

Although constructed by disciples and followers, the biography of Baha’uddin Naqshaband¹ shows few spiritual feats of note; nor did he leave behind writings that may reveal any special teachings or a systematic path. Born in 1318 in the village of Qasr Hinduwan (later renamed Qasr ‘Arifan) close by Bukhara, Baha’uddin Muhammad is said to have been adopted as an infant by Khwaja Muhammad Sammasi, who then assigned his future spiritual training to his principal deputy, Khwaja Amir Kulal. Along with this tutor, his immediate predecessor in the Naqshbandi lineage with whom he is said to have spent many years, Baha’uddin attended other spiritual masters, both Khwajagan and Turkish Yasawis. Among the latter was a certain Khalil Ata, allegedly the ruler of Bukhara, under whom, according to one anecdote, Baha’uddin served as executioner. After Khalil’s fall Baha’uddin began cultivating his own circle of disciples. Thereafter he left his native place twice to perform the hajj, and then only once more to journey to Herat, where he had an audience with the ruler. Baha’uddin died in 1389 and was buried in Qasr ‘Arifan. Later he was made the virtual patron saint of Bukhara, and in the sixteenth century his tomb became a center of pilgrimage for Muslims from Central Asia and beyond.

The unique feature in the biography of Baha’uddin Naqshband, and the key to understanding his position as the eponym of the Naqshbandi lineage, lay in his symbolic relation to the founder of the Khwajagan tradition, ‘Abdulkhalik Ghijduwani, from whom he was separated by five links. It is



Plate 2.1 Popular practices at Baha'uddin Naqshband's shrine in Qasr 'Arifan, Bukhara

told that during his discipleship to Kulal, Baha'uddin had a vision of the "spirituality" of Ghijduwani, who urged him strictly to follow the shari'a and instructed him in the method of the silent *dhikr*. Hence his epithet al-Uwaysi, namely a Sufi "who has attained illumination outside the regular mystical path and without the mediation and guidance of a living shaykh."² Following this vision, Baha'uddin added three principles of his own to the eight of the great master, all relating to the *dhikr*.³ Still, despite the resentment of other disciples, he did not leave the circle of Amir Kulal, who was actually present in his vision and even helped him interpret it, but only absented himself whenever the vocal *dhikr* was practiced. Kulal, for his part, is said by the Naqshbandi sources to have continued to hold his disciple in high esteem and ultimately to free him to pursue other masters:

He [Amir Kulal] pointed to his noble chest and said: I have emptied the breasts of gnosis (*'irfan*) for you so that the bird of your spirituality was delivered from the egg of humanity. But, the falcon of your aspiration (*himma*) is flying high. Therefore I give you now the permission to wander around in the land, and if the smell of gnosis reaches your nose from a Turk or a Tajik, seek it from him.⁴

This account is paradoxical in two complementary respects. On the one hand, as graphically illustrated in Figure 2.1, it presents Baha'uddin

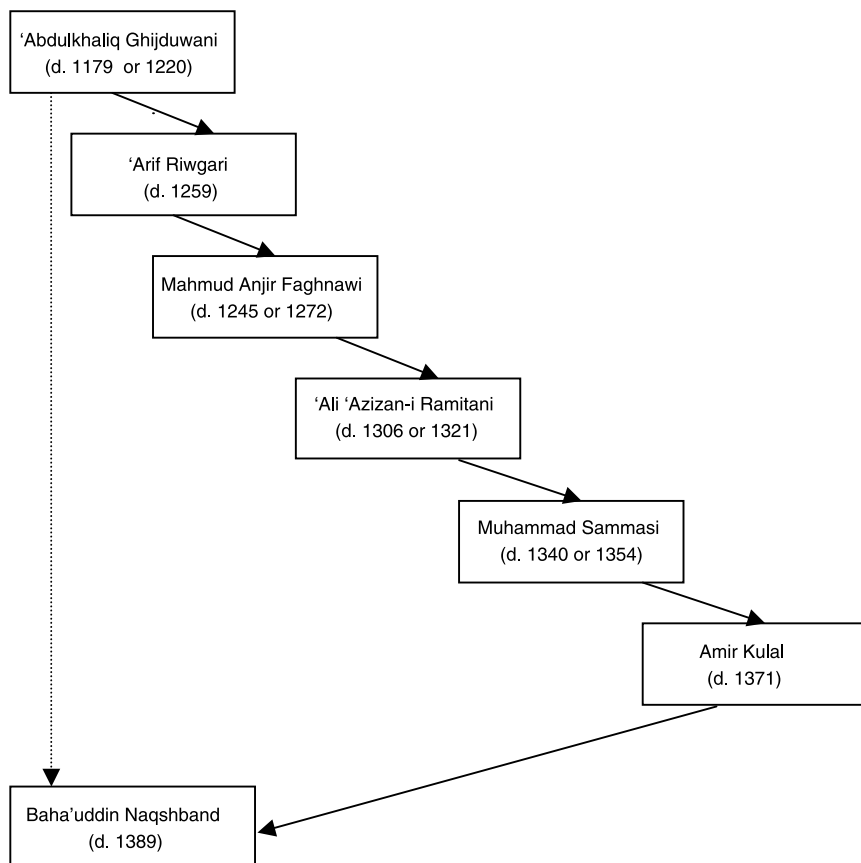


Figure 2.1 The genealogy of Baha'uddin Naqshband

Naqshband in an ambivalent position regarding the Khwajagan tradition, as he continued the line of his forebears yet broke away from them in favor of the “original” path. On the other hand, the “spiritual” initiation resulted in a spell away from the Khwajagan tradition in a “free” search for spiritual enlightenment. These paradoxes should be set against the wider political and social developments of Baha'uddin's time, which witnessed the collapse of the Chaghatay state and the renewal of Muslim rule in Transoxiana and Khurasan. The Khwajagan masters, whose activity had been repressed under the Mongols, could now reassert their spiritual eminence, while the more ambitious among them were seeking to further remold the tradition in accordance with the new opportunities offered by the Timurid government. Such reformist traditionalism was expressed in the portrayal of Baha'uddin as “spiritually initiated” by Ghijduwani, in his implied, though reverent, criticism of the intervening Khwajagan, in his reexamination of the current

practices among the existing traditions, and finally, in the practical innovations he introduced; all these made him the eponym of the Khwajagani path of revival that came to be known after him as the Naqshbandiyya.

The choice of Baha'uddin Naqshband as the epitome of revival within the broader Khwajagan tradition was essentially the achievement of the following generation of his disciples. The leading figures in this group were 'Ala'uddin 'Attar (d. 1400), Baha'uddin's charismatic son-in-law who was recognized as his successor, and Muhammad Parsa (d. 1420), an outstanding religious scholar who provided the intellectual foundation of the new movement, along with Ya'qub Charkhi (d. 1447), a noted alim and mystic in his own right. The Naqshbandi sources are somewhat ambiguous about relations between the three masters, who parted company after Baha'uddin's death, each forming his own circle of disciples. It is particularly evident that Parsa was more important than later Naqshbandi tradition would admit, not only because he too was favored by the master but also because he remained in Bukhara while the others had to establish themselves elsewhere. Be that as it may, Parsa and 'Attar clearly complemented each other in their work of formulating the new tradition. Still, though less impressive than both, it was ultimately Charkhi who came to be regarded as the most important link in the "official" Naqshbandi genealogy, being the spiritual master of Ahrar.⁵

Shams al-Din Muhammad al-Hafizi, nicknamed Parsa (the pious one),⁶ was the founder of the literary tradition of the Naqshbandiyya. Scion of a renowned family of Hanafi ulama of Bukhara, he assembled the sayings of the master in his *Risala-i qudsiyya* (The Treatise of Saintliness) and, perhaps at the instigation of 'Attar, wrote the first hagiography of Baha'uddin, *Anis al-talibin wa-'uddat al-salikin* (The Companion of the Seekers and Provider of the Followers). No less important were Parsa's doctrinal works, foremost among them *Fasl al-khitab li-wasl al-albab* (The Conclusive Judgment in Uniting the Hearts) in which, as its title indicates, he sought to smooth frictions in matters of doctrine and practice through a general mystical synthesis. In this and other works, Parsa also introduced in Central Asia the legacy of the great classical Sufis as well as the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi, and linked the Naqshbandiyya with the mystical traditions of Baghdad and Khurasan. Though shunning politics, he is reported to have sent letters to the Timurid Sultan Shahrukh (1405–1447) on behalf of the Muslim population of the capital Herat. Muhammad Parsa's contribution to the reform of the wider intellectual life of Bukhara becomes clear from the investigation of the "Library of Khwaja Parsa," a family establishment that he augmented with his rich private collection and which survived into the nineteenth century as the public library of Bukhara.⁷

The more practical Muhammad 'Ala'uddin 'Attar was mostly responsible for the perpetuation of the new path of the Naqshbandiyya. Son of a migrant from Khwarazm, the young 'Attar led a severe and ascetic way of life that greatly impressed Baha'uddin, who offered him his daughter's hand

in marriage. Following the path under his father-in-law's guidance, he swiftly rose to the position of chief disciple and was assigned the training of the less advanced adepts. On Baha'uddin's death 'Attar was recognized as his successor by all other disciples, including Parsa. This may have been due to his considerable yet sober spiritual powers, as well as to Parsa's dislike of friction. Before proceeding with our historical narration, however, it is necessary to examine the Khwajagan setting of the early Naqshbandis and the major mystical ideas and practices that emerged from it.

The Khwajagan setting

Among the settled populations of Central Asia, the term *khwajagan* originally referred to the upper stratum of Turkish nobles and *sayyid* families (those claiming descent from the Prophet) in general. Only during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did *khwaja* come to denote exclusively a man of religion, primarily of the mystical type. The later usage, however, was already in vogue in what has sometimes been described as the proto-Naqshbandi phase, the period that stretched from 'Abdulkhaliq Ghijduwani, the legendary founder of the Khwajagan tradition, to Baha'uddin Naqshband. In Central Asia the spiritual descendants of Baha'uddin continued to be described as *khwajagan* long after his death, retaining the designation even after Ahrar gave the brotherhood a more distinct structure. It was probably among the latter's followers in the Iranian and Turkish realms that the term Naqshbandiyya had gradually taken root before it was carried back to Transoxiana in the sixteenth century.⁸

It is not easy to separate the factual details in the biography of 'Abdulkhaliq Ghijduwani from the legends that surround the circumstances of his founding the Khwajagan path. There is some ambiguity even about his lifespan: he died either in 1179 or 1220, though it seems certain that he spent most of his life in the small town of Ghijduwan, some 50 kilometers northeast of Bukhara. According to the *Rashahat*,

He received the silent recollection (*al-dhikr al-qalbi*) in his youth from al-Khidr, peace be upon him, and persisted with the said recollection. Al-Khidr accepted him as a son and commanded him to become absorbed in it and to say in his heart under the water "there is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God." The Khwaja did it. He learned this from him and engaged himself with this there, until all sorts of openings and elevations occurred to him beyond the perception of discernment. The manner of his engagement, his goal, and his utmost perfection were acceptable and desirable from beginning to end among all people. When Khwaja Yusuf al-Hamadani, his secret be hallowed, arrived in Bukhara, Khwaja 'Abdulkhaliq came to visit him and, as he learned that he too is

engaged in the silent *dhikr*, he benefited from his company (*suhba*) and attended him during his stay in Bukhara. Therefore it is said that al-Khidr, peace be upon him, was his master in instruction and inspiration while Khwaja Yusuf was his master in accompaniment.⁹

About his work it is related, for example, that it was al-Khidr, the mysterious patron saint and initiator of travelers,¹⁰ who instructed him in the method of the silent *dhikr*. As Algar maintains, the eight principles that Ghijduwani subsequently bequeathed to the brotherhood, if their attribution to him is indeed correct, should be regarded as a general statement characteristic of Central Asian Sufism of his day, rather than as a defined doctrine. Centuries later, Jami would declare that the point of his work was to urge people to follow the Sunna and refrain from unlawful deviations (*bid'a*).¹¹ The Naqshbandi genealogy describes Ghijduwani as one of four successors of Hamadani (d. 1140), the first spiritual master to whom it accorded the title of *khwaja*.

Of the three other alleged successors the most important was Ahmad al-Yasawi (d. 1167), eponym of the Yasawiyya brotherhood, from which later also sprang the Bektashiyya.¹² It is often claimed that there was a division of interests between the lines of these two masters, Ghijduwani's followers working mostly in the urban centers in which the Iranian culture was dominant, while those of Yasawi addressed the Turkic elements in the steppe. It is also generally recognized that such a distinction cannot be carried too far; we



Plate 2.2 'Abdulkhaliq's tomb, Ghijduwan

have seen that even in the case of Baha'uddin Naqshband Turkish teachers were no less conspicuous in his education than cultural Iranian ones. This may testify to a measure of amiable cooperation as well as a growing tension between the two groups, a duality symbolized in the genealogically constructed positions of Yasawi and Ghijduwani as successors of the same master but originators of distinct ways. Devin DeWeese tends to stress the conflictual aspect in the relationship. In his view, from its very beginning the Khwajagan Naqshbandiyya was a Sufi "reformist" current which, partly to distinguish and legitimize itself, expressed criticism of "popular" practices of established Central Asian Sufism, in which the Yasawiyya naturally had a part.¹³

Moreover, contrary to the linear presentation of the "official" Naqshbandi lineage, it seems more appropriate to treat the Khwajagan from Ghijduwani onwards as a diffuse current, "a bundle or cluster of interrelated local and regional traditions." These traditions were embodied in what Jürgen Paul has defined as "collateral lines," each featuring a distinct ancestry and differentiating itself by certain practices. Some of the groupings claimed descent from Ghijduwani, while others referred to other "founders", for example, 'Abdallah Baraki and Hasan Andaki, the two remaining successors of Hamadani, or to various communal figures. Khwajagan groupings formed and disbanded in quick succession in the Bukhara oasis during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, consonant with the fortunes of the masters. Furthermore, the status of each *khwaja* was less secure than was customary among the Sufi brotherhoods: his disciples were always free to leave for another master or even to follow the path on their own, while he lost all authority over them when they completed their training. Conducting a spiritual center (*khanqah*) was also frowned upon.

This was essentially the situation of Baha'uddin Naqshband in Qasr 'Arifan. He was one among several Khwajagan working in the city of Bukhara, while other masters were active in the surrounding villages. Among the latter was the Kulali group, which referred to his erstwhile preceptor, Amir Kulal. According to the latter's hagiography, it was his son Hamza rather than Baha'uddin who was recognized as successor. The two contenders may thus be regarded as the founders of two collateral lines, whose chief difference was the form of *dhikr* they practiced.¹⁴

The volatility of the Khwajagan current was exacerbated by the destruction of Bukhara by the Mongols, who stormed Central Asia in 1220, the year of Ghijduwani's death, or perhaps a generation after him. The havoc resulted in the weakening of the "learned" brand of Islam in the cities of the oasis, but also in the flourishing of the more popular forms of Sufism in the small towns and villages. This situation seems to have affected the Khwajagan themselves, who abandoned most of Ghijduwani's principles. In the early fourteenth century 'Ali 'Azizan-i Ramitani, the link immediately preceding Sammasi in the proto-Naqshbandi lineage, left Bukhara and established himself in the neighboring region of Khwarazm. With Baba

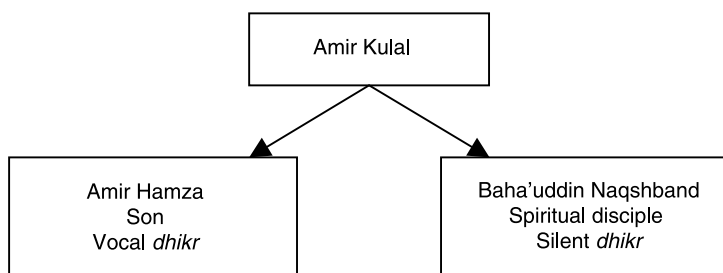


Figure 2.2 The emergence of the Naqshbandiyya as a collateral line

Sammasi, and following him Amir Kulal, the center of activity of this line returned to the Bukhara countryside where, in opposition to the prevalent popular practices, they appealed to the more articulate artisans of Iranian stock.¹⁵ Following the reinstitution of Muslim rule in Central Asia by the Timurids, Baha'uddin Naqshband, and still more his disciples, re-established the “reformist” tradition of the Khwajagan in the city of Bukhara, before their successors carried it farther, to Herat and Samarqand.

The proto-Khwajagani lineage

Forging a *silsila* is a never-ending project, which masters of every generation “imagine” according to their particular tradition, outlook, and need of legitimacy. The process begins with the very formation of the brotherhood and may cease only if it disappears from the scene. As with the hadith literature, however, legitimization requires that the chain of transmission stretch back from the founder(s) to the model of all correct Muslim belief and practice, the Prophet Muhammad. In the case of the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiyya, the backward projection of the chain of transmission was gradual. The initial phase discussed above was the work of Baha'uddin's disciples, the actual founders of the Naqshbandiyya brotherhood, who extended their lineage back from their master to Ghijduwani, the alleged originator of the Khwajagan current. Their successors, whose efforts were consolidated in the *Rashahat*, continued the construction from Ghijduwani all the way back to Muhammad. Though obviously spurious, the proto-Khwajagani chain of initiation (as represented in Figure 2.4) is revealing in two major respects. First, through the symbolic value of the specific figures chosen as its links, it represents the basic ideology of the early Naqshbandiyya; second, taken as a whole the peculiarities of the chain of transmission point to the complex and often contradictory historical process through which it was constituted.

Contrary to the established convention, the proto-Khwajagani lineage actually has three distinct chains of transmission rather than one.¹⁶ This multiplicity of lineages, which supplied Naqshbandi masters with a measure of freedom of choice, may reflect either the manifold character of the

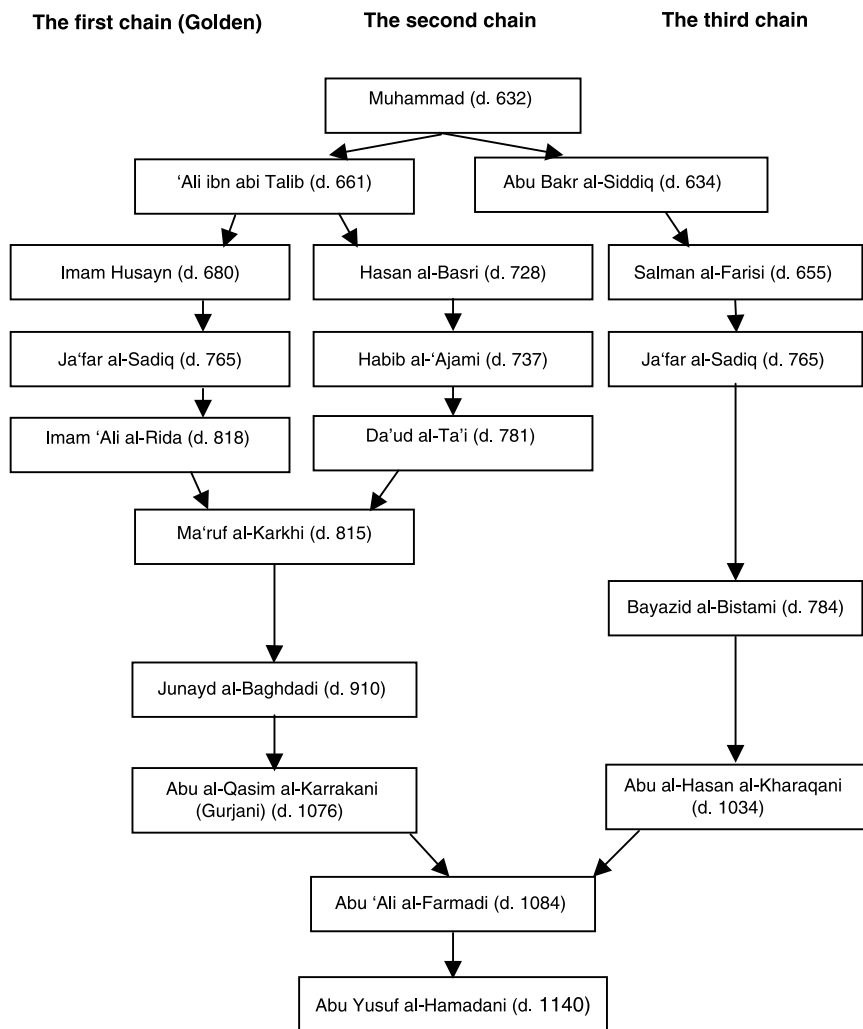


Figure 2.3 Main links in the proto-Khwajagani genealogical tree

Khvajagan current or successive strands in its evolution. Two of the chains conform to most other brotherhoods in going back to the Prophet through 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, his cousin and fourth Caliph to whom, according to Sufi tradition, he transmitted esoteric wisdom. The first chain, generally referred to as the Golden Chain, then passes from 'Ali's son Husayn through to the eighth Imam, 'Ali al-Rida, before converging with the second chain in Ma'ruf al-Karkhi, a leading Sufi of the early Baghdad school.¹⁷ The other 'Alid lineage reaches Karkhi through Hasan al-Basri, "the archetype proto-Sufi," and his followers in Basra and Kufa.¹⁸ This double ascription

enhanced Naqshbandi legitimization by combining the prestige of the Prophet's family with that of the precursors of the Sufi trend. It may also reflect the fuzzy boundaries between the Sunni and Shi'i creeds before the rise of the Safavids in Iran made the Naqshbandiyya hostile to Shi'ism.

In the third proto-Khwajagani lineage the first link after the Prophet is Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, the first Caliph. The selection of the immediate political, and arguably spiritual, successor of Muhammad implied not merely a sense of distinction but eventually a claim of precedence over the other Sufi brotherhoods, which normally boast an 'Alid ancestry. The Bakri line both underlies the strict Sunni orthodox attitude that the Naqshbandiyya had espoused from its very beginning and reinforced its rejection of Shi'ism. Finally, in the Qur'anic story of the Prophet's hiding with a companion, generally recognized as Abu Bakr, in a cave during their flight from Mecca to Medina (*hijra*), the Naqshbandis find the legitimacy for the silent form of *dhikr* which set them apart from all other brotherhoods. The next link in this line is Salman al-Farisi, who signifies the connection between the Iranian and Arab worlds, and who in addition is regarded as the patron saint of small artisans, the original mainstay of the Khwajagan in the Bukhara oasis, and of the common people at large.¹⁹ Perhaps to retain some of the prestige deriving from the Prophet's family, the Bakri line also incorporates the sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq.

The next links in the proto-Khwajagani genealogical tree show a clear rupture between the united 'Alid line and the parallel Bakri line. The first passes through leading figures in the Baghdad school of the ninth and tenth centuries, in which classical Sufism was consolidated, including the towering figure of al-Junayd, the master of sobriety who features in most Sufi lineages. The latter line, by contrast, leaps by way of "spiritual initiation" to Bayazid al-Bistami, the ninth-century archetype of spiritual intoxication, and from him to the illiterate eleventh-century Abu al-Hasan al-Kharaqani. So by a kind of inversion it was now the 'Alid line that came to represent the Sunni orthodox strain of the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiyya, while the Bakri line expresses its mystical feats. The Uwaysi type of "spiritual transmission" of Bistami and Kharaqani served to vindicate Baha'uddin's claim to have been initiated by the "spirituality" of Ghijduwani, as well as his wider doctrine that a Sufi can awaken the "spiritual presence" of a deceased master by directing himself to him (*tawajjuh*). This doctrine allowed Baha'uddin to relate himself to yet another important Sufi who had been obliterated from the lineage system, al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. ca. 908), one of the early exponents of the theory of sainthood.²⁰

More important still, Bistami, and probably Kharaqani as well, were outstanding representatives of the Malamati tradition which had been in vogue in Khurasan. The Malamatiyya, which traced its origins to Abu Bakr and Salman al-Farisi, advised its adherents to conceal their piety and behave outwardly in a way that invited blame (*malama*) to ensure their sincerity.²¹ It

seems, therefore, that not only did the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiyya appropriate a Malamati genealogical tree, but also that it might have owed to this trend the paradoxical character of its own basic tenets: the silent form of *dhikr* and the cardinal principles of traveling in the home (*safar dar watan*) and solitude in the crowd (*khalwat dar anjuman*), as well as its initial propensity to mistrust miraculous deeds and avoid wearing distinctive garb or living in hospices.²² The Malamatis' reference to the Qura'nic verse (24, 37) "men whom neither commerce nor trafficking diverts from the remembrance of God" must have resonated through the urban circles in Bukhara, especially those of the bazaar.²³

All three proto-Khwajagani lines finally converged in Abu 'Ali al-Farmadi, a seminal figure in the formation of early organized Sufism. Farmadi studied with Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri (d. 1074), author of the widely read *Risala fi 'ilm al-tasawwuf*, and taught the noted Sufi scholar Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111), as well as his younger brother Ahmad (d. 1126) from whom several Sufi lineages were to be derived.²⁴ In the Naqshbandi genealogy he is the immediate link before Yusuf al-Hamadani, whom Ghijduwani claimed as his own spiritual master. According to the version attributed to the latter Hamadani, a descendent of Abu Hanifa, kept a spiritual connection with his Sufi teacher even after his death and at his instigation moved from Iran to Samarqand. Here, not without the intervention of al-Khidr, he was joined by Ghijduwani and his other three deputies. Madelung is certainly right in maintaining that this biography is "simple and pure fiction," since Ghijduwani probably had never met Hamadani and the latter was actually a Shafi'i.²⁵ Yet it was exactly the "invention" of Hamadani, and through him the entire lineage, that heralded the emergence of the new path of the Khwajagan. Through the constructed master the paradoxical intoxication of the Malamati tradition could be joined to the sobriety of the Junaydi line within a more profoundly orthodox mystical synthesis. The legitimacy of the Khwajagan was then sealed by embedding the new synthesis in the native Hanafism of Transoxiana.

The foundational base

The constitutive event of the Naqshbandiyya brotherhood was Baha'uddin Naqshband's adoption of the silent *dhikr* from the "spirituality" of 'Abdulkhaliq Ghijduwani. This led to his refusal to take part in the sessions of vocal *dhikr* performed by his master, Amir Kulal, and consequently to the establishment of his own distinct group. The vocal *dhikr* (public recollection – *dhikr jahri*, uttered by the tongue – *dhikr al-lisan*) is the common practice among the Sufi brotherhoods, and normally includes mystical music and dance. By Baha'uddin's time it had become the prevalent practice also among the Khwajagan, despite their ascription to Ghijduwani. The reintroduction of the vocal *dhikr* was attributed to Mahmud Anjir Faghnavi,



Plate 2.3 Abu al-Hasan al-Kharaqani's mosque in Kars

the link preceding ‘Ali ‘Aziz al-Ramitani in the proto-Naqshbandi chain of transmission (see Figure 2.1). To silence critics Faghnavi maintained that his master, ‘Arif Riwgari, who was a direct disciple of Ghijduwani, had condoned the practice before his death, “in order to call people to God.”²⁶ The deviation was challenged by other disciples of Ghijduwani under the leadership of Awliya’-yi Kabir, in a controversy that had clear social undertones, as Awliya’ and his followers lived in the city of Bukhara whereas Faghnavi was based in the countryside. It continued unabated down to Baha’uddin’s time, opinions ranging from permitting performance of the vocal *dhikr* under restrictive terms to total disregard of the silent *dhikr*.

Following Baha’uddin, the silent *dhikr* (hidden recollection – *dhikr khafi*, whispered in the heart – *dhikr al-qalb*) became the dominant practice in the Naqshbandiyya, a distinguishing feature of its overall orthodox and sober character. This, however, did not prevent practical disagreements among successive Naqshbandi masters, particularly about the attitude to be taken toward the vocal *dhikr*. The debate started already with Baha’uddin’s learned disciples, Muhammad Parsa and Ya’qub Charkhi. Parsa, in line with his general “ecumenical” approach, made way for the vocal *dhikr* besides the more elevated silent one.²⁷ He described it as appropriate for beginners, who should internalize it while advancing on the path. On the other hand, Parsa stressed that the vocal *dhikr* must not be performed as a means to gain fame or material benefits, as probably was often the case. Charkhi took a more radical approach, rejecting the vocal *dhikr* altogether. He claimed that Baha’uddin proscribed it and that it has no basis in the Qur’an and the Sunna. This position was to receive the sanction of his influential disciple Ahrar.²⁸

Along with the silent *dhikr*, Baha’uddin also accepted Ghijduwani’s set of eight principles that broadly defined the spiritual path of the Khwajagan, supplementing them with three principles of his own. The eleven “sacred words” (*kalimat-i qudsiyya*) basically refer to the mystical exercises of the brotherhood, although some of them bear broader social and political repercussions. The eleven principles are as follows:

1. Yad kard – recollection
2. Baz gasht – return
3. Nigah dasht – watchfulness
4. Yad dasht – remembrance
5. Hosh dar dam – awareness in breathing
6. Nazar bar qadam – watching the steps
7. Safar dar watan – travelling in the home
8. khalwat dar anjuman – solitude in the crowd
9. wuquf-i zamani – awareness of time
10. wuquf-i ‘adadi – awareness of multiplicity
11. wuquf-i qalbi – awareness of the heart

This set of principles represents four layers in the formation of the Naqshbandi ideology. The first four principles refer to the foundations of the *dhikr*, which the Naqshbandiyya shares with all other Sufi brotherhoods. According to the nineteenth-century Damascene Muhammad al-Khani, they include the constant recollection of the unitary formula “There is no god but God”; returning to consciousness through phrases such as “My God, Thou art my goal and Thy satisfaction is my desire”; watching over the heart against distracting thoughts; and remembering which signifies the ever presence of the heart with God. Then come two principles – awareness in breathing and keeping watch on the steps – which allude to an Indian influence on the Naqshbandiyya.²⁹ Khani explains them as the means to keep the heart from distraction when, respectively, the breath enters the body and the eyes look at the world.³⁰

The next group of two principles – traveling in the home and solitude in the crowd – are the most consequential in terms of their contribution to the social and political evolution of the Naqshbandiyya. Both reveal a sense of mystical superiority and are paradoxical in nature, a fact that betrays their Malamati origin.³¹ The latter of the two in particular is emphasized in the *Rashahat*: “Khwaja Baha’uddin Naqshbandi was asked: on what is your way founded? He said in his reply: on this phrase, namely solitude in the crowd, which means to be outwardly with the creatures and inwardly with the Creator . . . God’s word [in the Qur’an]: men whom neither commerce nor trafficking diverts them from remembrance of God, indicates to this state.”³² This principle is opposed to another common Sufi practice, the seclusion (*khalwa*) of the adept in an isolated place in order to conquer the lower soul (*nafs*) and ward off worldly thoughts, which the Naqshbandiyya describes as befitting weak souls. Conversely, seclusion in the crowd enabled craftsmen and traders, the mainstay of the early Naqshbandiyya, to join the brotherhood without giving up their occupation. Finally, the principles of *safar dar watan* and *khalwat dar anjuman* could be interpreted as encouraging Naqshbandis to be involved in the world as part of their mystical vocation.

The final three principles, those attributed to Baha’uddin himself, were designed to increase the *dhikr* performer’s awareness of himself, of the world around him, and of the constant presence of God. Practically they entail a daily moral self-examination, which emphasized the orthodox character of the brotherhood; keeping account of the number of utterances of the unitary formula, which helps to control the breath and is usually done by using beads; and, most importantly, permanent concentration on the movements of the heart to ensure its purity and permanent attention to God:³³

Awareness of the heart (*wuquf qalbi*) has two meanings. One of them is that the heart of the recollecting be present with the Lord (*al-Haqq*) be He praised and exalted; in this meaning it is like *yad dasht*

(remembrance) . . . The second is that the recollecting be aware to his heart, namely that during the *dhikr* he be directed toward the piece of flesh of pineal shape which is figuratively called the heart and is situated in the left side parallel to the left breast, causing it to be engaged in *dhikr* and not leave it neglectful and oblivious to its meaning.³⁴

As against seclusion, and therefore as a practical application of the two principles of traveling in the home and solitude in the crowd, the Naqshbandiyya preferred the method of *suhba*, accompanying a perfect master. Through companionship the master could not only teach his disciples but also convey to them directly his spiritual qualities and attributes. *Suhba* is described in the Naqshbandi sources as the most elevated and effective method to reach God. Along with it, the founders of the Naqshbandi tradition introduced the complementary method of *rabita*, which has received a great deal of scholarly attention, including a full-length treatise by Meier, primarily because of the central place it later came to hold in the Khalidiyya. Literally meaning binding, *rabita* refers to the technique of keeping the image of the perfect master in the disciple's heart, whether he is present or absent. As Chodkiewicz explains, it is reciprocated by the practice of *tawajjuh*, which requires the master to direct his heart toward the disciple. Forming a bond of love, the often interchangeable concepts of *rabita* and *tawajjuh* point to the intermediary position of the master, whose image is likened to a mirror reflecting the Prophet and serves as the conduit to the effusion of Divine lights.³⁵ On the practical level they allowed charismatic masters to increase their influence over their disciples and to expand the sphere of their spiritual authority, while leaving them time for other pursuits. *Rabita* had been first adopted by 'Attar and passed through Charkhi to Ahrar.³⁶ It was also given a collective form in *khatm al-Khwajagan*, the concluding prayer of the *dhikr*, in which the links of the Naqshbandi lineage, from the immediate master to the Prophet, are enumerated and blessed.³⁷

The incorporation of these mystical practices within the new synthesis of the Naqshbandiyya brotherhood was accompanied right from the start by an "intellectual" streak. This was primarily the achievement of Muhammad Parsa, who, through his writings, introduced into the Khwajagan tradition numerous classical Sufi authors such as Ghazali, Qushayri, and Hujwiri. Above all, he proved an ardent follower of al-Shaykh al-Akbar Ibn 'Arabi, although, perhaps to avoid the polemics raging around his teachings, he hardly mentioned him by name. Parsa assiduously studied the works of Ibn 'Arabi – a commentary on the most controversial among them, *Fusus al-hikam* (The Bezels of Wisdom) is attributed to him – and fully espoused the central concept associated with him, *wahdat al-wujud* (the unity of being), seeing no contradiction between this principle and strict adherence to the

example of the Prophet and to the shari'a.³⁸ Undoubtedly he drew inspiration from the Greatest Master's comprehensive theosophical enterprise for his own endeavor to integrate the major orthodox mystical traditions and practices of Central Asia within the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiyya.

Among Parsa's peers 'Attar seems to have adopted a reverential attitude toward Ibn 'Arabi, whereas Charkhi was more interested in the ideas expressed in the mystical poetry of Rumi. Ahrar, for his part, was well acquainted with Ibn 'Arabi's teaching, though he held that its secrets were dangerous and should not be divulged to the uninitiated. A somewhat contrary approach was taken by Jami, the foremost representative of the Ibn 'Arabi school among the early Naqshbandiyya. Jami dedicated many of his works to explaining the teachings of the Greatest Master and took an active part in the debates they sparked in Herat. His poetry was particularly effective in diffusing Ibn 'Arabi's theosophical concepts in the Iranian world, but also in Central Asia, the Ottoman Empire, and India.³⁹

As befitting a living mystical tradition, none of the foundational principles and practices of the Naqshbandiyya were fixed and unequivocal. The three-fold structure of its lineage, the relation between the silent and vocal forms of *dhikr*, the four deposits of its "sacred words," and the alternatives of *suhba* and *rabita* gave Naqshbandi masters throughout the ages considerable freedom to dismantle and rebuild its path according to the needs of their personality, place, and time. Thus, emphasizing its 'Alid lineages, incorporation of the vocal *dhikr*, and a preference for principles such as *yad kard* and *nigah dasht* would demonstrate the common ground between the Naqshbandiyya and other Sufi brotherhoods. By contrast, dwelling on the Bakri lineage, exclusive use of the silent *dhikr*, and emphasis on the Malamati principles of *safar dar watan* and *khalwat dar anjuman* implied a reformist attitude, which might be directed against more popular brotherhoods, but also against a deviant state. In times of total crisis they could also occasionally lead to the opposite attitude of antinomian drifting away from society. Together, these foundational principles and practices formed the discursive field within which, and at times against which, Naqshbandi history was to revolve.

Dissemination in central Asia

The emergence of the Naqshbandiyya also marked the spread of the Khwajagan tradition beyond Bukhara. This expansion too was attributed to Baha'uddin Naqshband, who is reported to have won disciples in Khurasan on his way to the hajj. It began in earnest, however, with 'Ala'uddin 'Attar, his foremost deputy, who for unspecified reasons moved to the region of Chaghaniyan, today's Denau in south Uzbekistan, where he died a decade after the master. He left behind ten successors, among them his son, Baha'uddin's grandson, Hasan-i 'Attar, the celebrated theologian Sayyid

Sharif al-Jurjani, and Nizamuddin Khamush, whose line led to the Naqshbandi circle of Herat.⁴⁰ ‘Attar’s departure from Bukhara was followed by that of Ya‘qub Charkhi, who wandered farther east, to the mountainous regions between Badakhshan and Hisar (in today’s northeast Afghanistan and Tajikistan respectively).

In the next generation, when family succession crept into Naqshbandi practice, the brotherhood reached the major cities of the Timurid state. Parsa’s son Abu al-Nasr left Bukhara to settle in Balkh (north Afghanistan), where for generations his descendents held the paramount position of *Shaykhülislam*. Abu al-Nasr is said to have “exaggerated in concealing his path to such a degree that no one knew that he belonged to the people of this way.”⁴¹ ‘Attar’s son Hasan moved to the capital Herat, “where he distinguished himself in the quality of his spiritual effluence (*tasarruf*) in all the lands of Transoxiana and Khurasan. Everyone who came to kiss his hand and foot became absent from himself.”⁴²

Herat in the fifteenth century became a major center of religion and culture under the patronage of the court. As implied in reference to the city in the biographies of both Baha’uddin and Muhammad Parsa, it had acquired a special attraction for the Naqshbandis at the first half of that century, not least due to the clash with the less than orthodox governor of Transoxiana, Ulugh Beg. Still, the brotherhood established itself firmly in Herat only after the arrival on the scene of Sa’duddin Kashghari, the charismatic disciple of Khamush, whose influence superseded that of ‘Attar’s direct descendents and other Naqshbandi masters already present in the city.⁴³

The son of an itinerant merchant from Kashghar, Sa’duddin completed his religious studies before going to Bukhara in search of an appropriate spiritual master. He spent several years with Nizamuddin Khamush, and then set out for the hajj, but apparently stopped on the way and settled in Herat. He took up residence near the central mosque and soon attracted a large following, including members of the cultural and literary elite of the city, as well as artisans of lower strata. Several of Sa’duddin’s discourses were recorded in the *Rashahat*, showing him familiar with the terminology of Ibn ‘Arabi. Otherwise, he was described as being in a near-constant state of ecstatic rapture which, apparently like his master Khamush (the silent one), caused him to fall in silence. After his death in 1456, Sa’duddin Kashghari’s tomb acquired great sanctity; it was rebuilt in the eighteenth century by Ahmad Shah Durrani, founder of the modern Afghan state.⁴⁴

The absence of detailed research on the cultural milieu of Herat in the second half of the fifteenth century makes it difficult to gauge what exactly attracted figures of the caliber of ‘Abdurrahman Jami (1414–1492) to Kashghari. There is no doubt, however, that Jami was deeply devoted to his master, as is testified in the pages he allotted him in his celebrated hagiographical collection *Nafahat al-uns* (Breaths of Intimacy), which includes an important

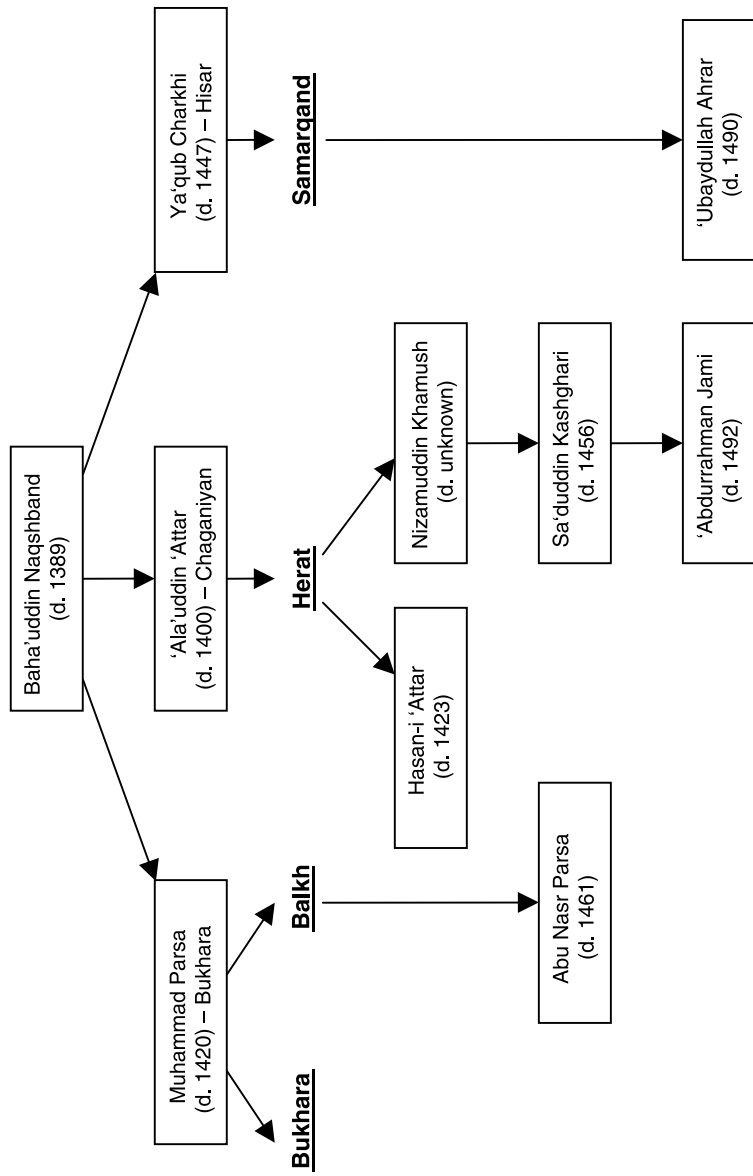


Figure 2.4 The spread of the Naqshbandiyya in central Asia

account of the early Naqshbandiyya, as well as in his profuse poetry. This is what he has to say about their first encounter:

The first time that I came to the service of our master Sa‘duddin in the congregational mosque, I sat at his feet. As was his habit, he was repeatedly absent [in God], and I thought he was sleepy. I said: If you take rest for a moment it will be better. He smiled and said: Don’t you think that I have any business other than sleeping?⁴⁵

Kashghari was also responsible for the initiation into the brotherhood of ‘Ali Shir Nava’i (1441–1501), the famous Timurid minister who is considered the virtual founder of Chagathay Turkish literature. Under Nava’i’s auspices the Naqshbandiyya was granted rich endowments (*awqaf*) and its influence reached the ruler. The Naqshbandi affiliation by no means exhausted Jami’s religious and poetic activity, which included Qur’an exegesis, hadith studies, and commentaries on Sufi works, particularly those of the Ibn ‘Arabi school. On Kashghari’s death ‘Abdurrahman Jami declined to take on the leadership, a step which may have contributed to the fading out of this Naqshbandi line.⁴⁶ The task of consolidating the brotherhood within the general Khwajagan tradition fell to his contemporary and colleague in Samarqand, ‘Ubaydullah Ahrar.

NOTES

1 THE CORE AND CONTOURS OF A SUFI BROTHERHOOD

- 1 The most comprehensive overview of the Naqshbandiyya to date is Hamid Algar, "A Brief History of the Naqshbandi Order," in *Naqshbandis*, 3–44.
- 2 Muhammad Amin ibn 'Abidin, *Radd al-muhtar 'ala al-durr al-mukhtar sharh tanwir al-absar fi fiqh madhhab al-imam al-a'zam Abi Hanifa al-Nu'man* (8 vols., 1966–1969), 3: 295.
- 3 Qur'an 33: 41–42. All Qur'an citations follow the translation of A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (New York and London, 1955).
- 4 Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 1975), 98–148.
- 5 Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (3 vols., Chicago and London, 1974), 2: 201–254.
- 6 Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (2nd ed., Chicago, 1979), 137–140.
- 7 Michel Chodkiewicz, *An Ocean without Shore: Ibn 'Arabi, The Book, and the Law* (Albany NY, 1993); idem, *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabi* (Cambridge, 1993).
- 8 Among his many translations, see especially William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love: Spiritual Teachings of Rumi* (Albany, 1983).
- 9 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 101ff.
- 10 Muhammad Amin al-Kurdi, *Tanwir al-qulub fi mu'amalat 'ulum al-ghuyub* (Beirut, 1994), 451–452.
- 11 See the classical work of J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (London, 1971). The book was reissued with a new foreword by John O. Voll in 1998.
- 12 For a recent account of the major founders of Sufi brotherhoods see Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History* (Leiden, 2000), 179–244.
- 13 Carl W. Ernst, *Sufism: An Essential Introduction to the Philosophy and Practice of the Mystical Tradition of Islam* (Boston, 1997), 120–146.
- 14 A.J. Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London, 1950), 119.
- 15 Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, 71–72.
- 16 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, *Umm al-Qura* (Cairo, 1899), 75–78.
- 17 A collection devoted to this subject is, Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke (eds.), *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics* (Leiden, 1999). See especially, Th. Emil Homerlin, "Sufis and their detractors in Mamluk Egypt. A Survey of the Protagonists and Institutional Settings," 225–247; and Esther Peskes, "The Wahhabiyya and Sufism in the Eighteenth Century," 145–161.
- 18 Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufis and Anti-Sufis: The Defence, Rethinking and Rejection of Sufism in the Modern World* (Richmond, Surrey, 1999).

- 19 See Nehemia Levtzion and John O. Voll (eds.), *Eighteenth Century Renewal and Reform Movements in Islam* (Syracuse, 1987).
- 20 See especially, R.S. O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, "Neo-Sufism Reconsidered," *Der Islam* 70 (1993), 52–87.
- 21 Itzhak Weismann, "Sufi Fundamentalism in India and the Middle East," in Martin van Bruinessen and Julia Howell (eds.), *Sufism and the 'Modern' in Islam*. (London and New York, 2007), 115–128.
- 22 For a critique of this use, see Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism* (London, 1989), 59.
- 23 Qur'an 49: 10.
- 24 Marilyn Robinson Waldman, "Tradition as a Modality of Change: Islamic Examples," *History of Religions* 25 (1986), 326.
- 25 Of the vast scholarly literature on "tradition" some of the more important landmarks are S.N. Eisenstadt, *Tradition, Change and Modernity* (New York, 1973); Edward Shils, *Tradition* (Chicago, 1981); Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983).
- 26 Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge and New York, 1988), 136.
- 27 For a preliminary discussion of the question of brotherhood identity, see Hamid Algar, "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History", in *Naqshbandis*, 123–124.
- 28 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 27.
- 29 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (rev. ed., London, 1991), 6.
- 30 Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

2 LOCAL BEGINNINGS IN THE OASES OF INNER ASIA (THIRTEENTH TO SIXTEENTH CENTURIES)

- 1 H. Algar, "Nakshband, Khwaja Baha' al-Din," *EI2* ; idem, "Baha'-al-Din Naqshband," *EIr* 3: 433–435; Marijan Molé, "Autour du Daré Mansour: l'apprentissage mystique de Baha' al-Din Naqshband," *Revue des Études Islamiques* 27 (1959), 35–66.
- 2 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 28–29.
- 3 The eleven principles are enumerated in Chart 2.4.
- 4 *Rashahat*, 50.
- 5 Jürgen Paul, *Doctrine and Organization: The Khwajagan/Naqshbandiya in the First Generation after Baha'uddin* (Halle and Berlin, 1998), 65–66.
- 6 Jürgen Paul, "Muhammad Parsa: Sendschriben über das Gottesgedenken mit Vernehmlicher Stimme" in Anke von Kügelgen, Asirbek Muminov, and Michael Kemper (eds.), *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries* (vol. 3, Berlin, 2000), 5–9.
- 7 Lola Dodkhudoeva, "La bibliothèque de Khwaja Mohammad Parsa," *CAC* 5–6 (1998), 125–146; Ashikber Muminov and Shavasil Ziyadov, "L'horizon intellectuel d'un érudit du XV siècle: nouvelles découvertes sur la bibliothèque de Muhammad Parsa," *CAC* 7 (1999), 77–98.
- 8 Florian Schwarz, "Unser Weg schliesst tausend Wege ein": Derwische und Gesellschaft im islamischen Mittelasien im 16. Jahrhundert (Berlin, 2000), 124–129.
- 9 *Rashahat*, 26.
- 10 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 104–105.
- 11 Hamid Algar, "Brief History," 7–9; K.A. Nizami, "Abd al-Ḳaleq Gojdovani," *EI2*.
- 12 See Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders*, 58–60.

- 13 Devin DeWeese, "The Masha'ikh-i Turk and the Khojagan: Rethinking the Links between the Yasavi and Naqshbandi Sufi Traditions," *JIS* 7 (1996), 180–198.
- 14 Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 53–69.
- 15 Devin DeWeese, "Khojagani Origins and the Critique of Sufism: The Rhetoric of Communal Uniqueness in the *Manaqib* of Khoja 'Ali 'Azizan Ramitani," in de Jong and Radtke, *Sufism Contested*, 492–519.
- 16 Algar, "Brief History," 2–7, apparently following the *Rashahat*, practically ignores the first two 'Alid chains of transmission and focuses on the third, that which returns to Abu Bakr.
- 17 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 53.
- 18 Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism*, 10–13.
- 19 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 28.
- 20 Johan G.J. ter Haar, "The Importance of the Spiritual Guide in the Naqshbandi Order," in Leonard Lewisohn (ed.), *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism* (London and New York, 1992), 311–318; Stéphane Ruspoli, "Réflexions sur la voie spirituelle des Naqshbandis," in *Naqshbandis*, 95–100.
- 21 On this trend see Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism*, 94–99.
- 22 Hamid Algar, "Éléments de provenance malamati dans la tradition primitive Naqshbandi," in Nathalie Claire, Alexandre Popovic and Thierry Zarcone (eds.), *Melamis-Bayramis: études sur trois mouvements mystiques musulmans* (Istanbul, 1998), 27–36.
- 23 Molé, "Daré Mansour," 57–58.
- 24 Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders*, 32–33, 52.
- 25 Wilfred Madelung, "Yusuf al-Hamadani and the Naqshbandiyya," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5–6 (1987–8), 499–509.
- 26 Jürgen Paul, "Maslaq al-'arifin. Ein Dokument zur frühen Geschichte der Hwaḡagan-Naqšbandiya," in Walter Beltz and Sebastian Gunter (eds.), *Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientwissenschaft* 25 (1998), 179–181.
- 27 Paul, "Muhammad Parsa," 17–41.
- 28 Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 18–30; Hamid Algar, "Silent and Vocal Dhikr in the Naqshbandi Order," *Akten des VII Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft* (Göttingen, 1974), 39–43.
- 29 Jürgen Paul, "Influences indiennes sur la Naqshbandiyya d'Asie Centrale?" *CAC* 1–2 (1996), 203–217, refers only to the first of these two principles.
- 30 Muhammad ibn 'Abdallah al-Khani, *al-Bahja al-saniyya fi adab al-tariqa al-'aliyya al-Khalidiyya* (Cairo, 1303/1885), 53–57.
- 31 On traveling in the home see, Thierry Zarcone, "Le 'voyage dans la patrie' (safar dar watan) chez les soufis de l'ordre naqšbandi," in Muhammad Ali Amir-Moezzi (ed.), *Le voyage initiatique en terre d'islam* (Louvain-Paris, 1996), 301–315.
- 32 *Rashahat*, 29. The verse is taken from Qur'an 24: 37.
- 33 Ruspoli, "Réflexions," 101–107.
- 34 *Rashahat*, 32.
- 35 Michel Chodkiewicz, "Quelques aspects des techniques spirituelles dans la *tariqa* Naqshbandiyya," in *Naqshbandis*, 69–82.
- 36 Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 35–43.
- 37 Fritz Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqshbandiyya* (Istanbul, 1994), 188–197.
- 38 Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 45–52.
- 39 Hamid Algar, "Reflections of Ibn 'Arabi in Early Naqshbandi Tradition," *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* 10 (1991), 45–57.
- 40 Hamid Algar, "Boḡari, 'Ala'-Din Mohammad," *Elr* 3: 330.
- 41 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jami, *Nafahat al-uns min muhadarat al-quds* (2 vols., Beirut, 2003), 2: 548.

- 42 Ibid., 2: 549.
- 43 Jürgen Paul, *Die Politische und Soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya in Mittelasien im 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin and New York, 1991), 23–25.
- 44 Hamid Algar, “Sa’d al-Din Kashghari,” *EI2*.
- 45 Jami, *Nafahat al-uns*, 2: 556–557.
- 46 Cl. Huart-[H. Masse], “Djami, Mawlana Nur al-Din ‘Abd al-Rahman,” *EI2*.

3 CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

- 1 The most detailed biography is still that by Jo-Ann Gross, “Khoja Ahrar: A Study of the Perception of Religious Power and Prestige in the Late Timurid Period” (Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 1982). For an updated summary, see Jo-Ann Gross and Asom Urunbaev, *The Letters of Khwaja ‘Ubayd Allah Ahrar and His Associates* (Leiden, 2002), 11–22.
- 2 Jürgen Paul, “Forming a Faction: The Himayat System of Khwaja Ahrar,” *IJMES* 23 (1991), 533–548; also see, Jo-Ann Gross, “The Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh: A Matter of Conflict or Perception?” *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988), 84–104.
- 3 *Rashahat*, 217–218.
- 4 Jo-Ann Gross, “Multiple Roles and Perceptions of a Sufi Shaykh: Symbolic Statement of Political and Religious Authority,” in *Naqshbandis*, 109–121.
- 5 Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 164–244; Asam Urunbaev, “Les lettres auto-graphes de Khwaja ‘Obeydallah Ahrar,” *CAC* 5–6 (1998), 342–346.
- 6 Jo-Ann Gross, “Authority and Miraculous Behavior: Reflections on Karamat Stories of Khwaja ‘Ubaydullah Ahrar,” in Leonard Lewisohn (ed.), *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism* (London and New York, 1992), 159–171.
- 7 *Rashahat*, 227.
- 8 Ibid., 228–229.
- 9 Bakhtiyar Babajanov, “La Naqshbandiyya sous les premiers Sheybanides,” *CAC* 3–4 (1997), 69–90.
- 10 Ibid., 75–80; Schwarz, “Unser Weg,” 134–138.
- 11 Bakhtiyar Babajanov, “Biographies of Makhdum-i A’zam al-Kasani al-Dahbidi, Shaykh of the Sixteenth-Century Naqshbandiya,” *Manuscripta Orientalia* 5, 2 (1999), 3–8.
- 12 Bakhtiyar Babadzanov, “Zahir al-Din Muhammad Mirza Babur et les Shaykh Naqshbandi de Transoxiane,” *CAC* 1–2 (1996), 221–224.
- 13 Jürgen Paul, “La propriété foncière des cheikhs Juybari,” *CAC* 3–4 (1997), 183–202.
- 14 Schwarz, “Unser Weg,” 176–229.
- 15 Bakhtiyar Babajanov, “Mawlana Lutfullah Chusti: An Outline of his Hagiography and Political Activity,” *ZDMG* 149 (1999), 245–270.
- 16 Şerif Mardin, “The Nakşibendi Order in Turkish History,” in Richard Tapper (ed.), *Islam in Modern Turkey* (London, 1991), 127–129.
- 17 Mustafa Kara, “Molla İlahi: Un Précurseur de la Nakşbenidye en Anatolie,” in *Naqshbandis*, 303–329. See also Algar, “Ibn ‘Arabi,” 57–58.
- 18 Dina Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandis in the Ottoman World, 1450–1700* (Albany NY, 2005), 35–60.
- 19 On the Naqshbandiyya in Bursa, see *ibid.*, 202–212.
- 20 Dina Le Gall, “Missionaries, Pilgrims and Refugees: The Early Transmission of the Naqshbandiyya to the Ottoman Lands,” in Hassan Elboudrari (ed.), *Modes de transmission de la culture religieuse en Islam* (Cairo, 1993), 225–240.
- 21 Algar, “Silent and Vocal Dhikr,” 44.
- 22 Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 44–47.

THE NAQSHBANDIYYA

Orthodoxy and activism in a worldwide
Sufi tradition

Itzhak Weismann

To Michel Chodkiewicz

For a life of Scholarship and Devotion

First published 2007
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group,
an informa business*

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2007.

“To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge’s
collection of thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk.”

© 2007 Itzhak Weismann

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or
reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic,
mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter
invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any
information storage or retrieval system, without permission in
writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Weismann, Itzhak.

The Naqshbandiyya : orthodoxy and activism in a worldwide
Sufi tradition / Itzhak Weismann.
p. cm.—(Routledge Sufi series)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Naqshbandiyyah—History. 2. Sufism—History. I. Title.
BP189.7.N35W45 2007
297.4'8—dc22
2006038901

ISBN 0-203-94743-6 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN10: 0-415-32243-X (hbk)
ISBN10: 0-203-94743-6 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-32243-0 (hbk)
ISBN13: 978-0-203-94743-2 (ebk)