

# HISTORICAL FEATURES OF THE FORMATION OF THE NAQSHBANDI-MUJADDIDI ORDER

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**Abstract:** The article describes the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century, which was marked as a new period in the development of the Naqshbandi order when the branch of the tariqah Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi emerged. Moreover, it has investigated the specific role of Ahmad Sirhindi Farooqi Rabbani (1564-1624), who lived in Sirhind, India in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, who was one of the theorists of the order and whose name is mentioned in a series of orders that are currently in use in our country.

**Key words:** Sufism, Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order, Central Asia, letters, Sharia, sheikh.

In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi branch emerged as a branch of the Naqshbandi order. The Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi sheikhs had a great influence on the socio-political, religious, and cultural life of Central Asia and India. Among the people of Central Asia, India, Turkey and many other countries, they tried to strengthen the Islamic religion, and the teachings of Sufism, to unite them around a single idea and thereby to end the ideological disunity.

Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order's founder Ahmad Sirhindi reviewed the teachings of the Naqshbandi order based on Sharia criteria and cleaned it of various wrong beliefs and practices. His main contribution was to adapt Sufism and tariqah to the Sunni matlab, and to purge it of some heresies and superstitions that appeared in the later period. Ahmad Sirhindi is also known by such honorable names as "Imam Rabbani" and "Mujaddidi alfi sani"[1:10]. Ahmad Sirhindi was first recognized as "Mujaddidi alfi sani" namely, the mujaddidi of the second millennium by Abdulhakim Siyolkuti (died in 1656), who was one of the great scholars of India and who honored his personality. Ahmad Sirhindi's name was also the reason why the Naqshbandi order is called "Mujaddidiya".

The Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order has softened, moderated, and adapted the rules of mysticism that used to be in practice before to everyday life. This ensured the wider introduction of Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi into the broad masses of the population and played an important role in the socio-political, spiritual and cultural life of the peoples of Central Asia and the Middle East. The Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order was not limited to a specific region, but was widespread throughout the Muslim world, in particular, in India, Afghanistan, Kashgar, Kashmir, and the large centers of Transoxiana, such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, Kokand, Shahrizabz, Namangan.

Ahmad Sirhindi's activity in the order periods back to the first quarter of the 17th century. During this period, India was under the rule of Baburi Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbarshah (1551-1605) and Nuriddin Muhammad Jahangirshah (1605-1627). The relationship between Ahmad Sirhindi and these rulers would sometimes be tense and sometimes close [2:13]. The

research reveals the Ahmad Sirhindi's opposition to the policy of religious syncretism of Akbarshah. Ahmad Sirhindi expressed his ideas and teachings with the help of his works. The scholar was in close contact with famous public officials, politicians, great scholars and mystics of his time. He wrote letters to them from India and sought to solve complex problems on various topics, newly discovered philosophical, mystical, and ideological problems. Letters addressed to the scholars of Transoxiana, where the Naqshbandi order was formed, have a special place in these correspondences. Ahmad Sirhindi's works have been a source of spirituality and a program for Sufis for centuries.

The scholar's work "Maktubat" was written in Persian language, and it is considered as a comprehensive work in terms of content. The collection consists of 535 letters and has been translated into Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, English and Turkic languages because of their importance. The volume of the letters of the work varies, some from a few lines, some to more than a few dozen pages depending on the scope and importance of the topic. The work includes issues of aqidah, Sharia, Sufism, tariqah, truth, and enlightenment. Ahmad Sirhindi's "Maktubat" was analyzed in the following four areas:

- Letters sent on aqidah and jurisprudential issues 31%;
- Letters on mystical views 40%;
- Letters on the acclaim of the Naqshbandi order 4%;
- It was found that 25% of the letters were sent on spiritual and moral issues.

However, this division does not fully reflect the directions of his letters. This is because there are many cases when these directions are mixed in the letters of a scholar. In some cases, one letter covered several directions, even all four of them. This analysis was developed based on the main content of each letter.

Ahmad Sirhindi's letters have been compiled into a book by his students. Particularly, the first volume of the "Maktubat" was compiled in 1616 by one of the companions of Ahmad Sirhindi, Yormuhammad Jadid Badakhshi at-Talaqani. The second volume of the "Maktubat" was compiled in 1619 by his caliph Mavlana Abdulhay Hisari. The third volume was compiled in 1622 by another caliph, Khwaja Muhammad Hashim Kishmi Burhanpuri [3:229].

The first volume consists of 313 letters, the number which refers to the number of sahabahs that took part in the Battle of Badr. The second volume consists of 99 letters as a reference to the 99 names of Allah. The third volume is called "Ma'rifatul Haqa'iq" (to know the Truth), and it consists of 123 letters. Ahmad Sirhindi sent a total of 149 letters in Central Asian Badakhshan, Balkh, Bukhara, Imkana, Khorezm, Khotan, Kabul, Kulob and Samarkand. 144 of the letters sent to these regions were written to specific persons that were given the titles of mir, sheikh, khoja, haji, sayyid, sayyid naqib sheikh, mullah, khoja mufti, who have political, scientific, spiritual and social influence and impact in the society. Ahmad Sirhindi sent more letters to Central Asian cities such as Badakhshan, Kabul, Bukhara, and Kulob compared to other regions. The letters sent to Bukhara focus on the issues related to Sharia, tariqah, the strength of the people of Islam, the acquisition of knowledge, lust, superstitions and ways to achieve happiness. If so, the letters sent to Samarkand focus on the importance of Sufism, love, following Shariat, and zikr. It can be seen from the letters which are sent to Central Asia that during this period, heresies and superstitions, as well as violations of Sharia law were on the rise in the region. In this situation, Ahmad Sirhindi's letters helped to correctly analyze the Islamic aqidahs and to give correct solutions to issues related to the Sharia and the tariqah.



After Ahmad Sirhindi, the Naqshbandi order came to be known as the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi, that is, “renovator” or “renewed”. The scholar always tried to preserve the prestige of the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order. During his work in the tariqah, Sirhindi later established madrasahs and khanaqahs to promote his teachings. Sharia, usul, fiqh, kalam, and mysticism were taught in depth in these centers. As a result of such activities, the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order spread widely among the Sunni population.

Ahmad Sirhindi sent letters to Sheikh Mavlana Muhammad Siddiq Keshmi, Sheikh Tahir Badakhshani, Khoja Muhammad Hashim Keshmi, and Badriddin Sirhindi, the people that played an important role in the introduction and spread of the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order in Transoxiana. The letters cover mysticism and its essence, the role of education in human life, the heresies and superstitions that were entering the teachings of mysticism, their prevention, and the contribution of teachings in the propagation of the Naqshbandi order. Meanwhile, the meaning of such concepts in mysticism as “truth”, “enlightenment”, “kashf”, “istidlal”, “anger”, “annihilation” and “subsistence” are explained based on the verses and hadiths in Qur’an.

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