



RESEARCH ON THE REFORMS CARRIED OUT TO RESTORE THE SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL HERITAGE OF SUFI SCHOLARS IN THE INDEPENDENCE YEARS UZBEKISTAN

Khatamov Tokhir Abdumutalovich,
PhD, Associate Professor at the "Chair for the Study of Islamic History and Source Studies IRCICA" at the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan
Email: tokhirkhatamov@gmail.com

Abstract

This article explores the process of studying and restoring the centuries-old scientific and educational heritage of Sufi schools in Central Asia during the reforms carried out in Uzbekistan. The primary reason for focusing on the reforms of the independence years is that the Republic of Uzbekistan achieved independence after breaking free from colonial chains in the second half of the 20th century. As history shows, states that achieve independence tend to pay primary attention to restoring their history, religion, language, and culture. In the process of the systematic and gradual restoration of our national values, the national-legal foundation plays an important role. In this regard, the decrees and decisions issued by the President and government in the early years of independence, along with their scientific-historical and socio-cultural significance, have been analyzed. The priority tasks outlined in the decrees and decisions, as well as the importance of the work that needs to be done according to plans and programs, have been highlighted.

Keywords: Reforms, decrees, decisions, Islam, Sufism, scholars, Naqshbandiya, tariqat, sheikh, mysticism, scientific school, scientific research.

Introduction

In the early years of independence, many reforms were carried out by our government to restore our history, particularly in reviving the scientific and educational heritage of Sufism. An essential step in this direction was the formation of a legal framework to restore the intellectual legacy of Sufi scholars. One of the initial positive steps in this regard was the Resolution No. 497 of the Cabinet of



Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated October 28, 1992, titled "On preparing for and holding the 675th anniversary of the birth of Bahauddin Naqshband" (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan Decree, 1992: <https://lex.uz/docs/508432>). Based on this resolution, a scientific conference on "Naqshbandi teachings and their global significance" was held in September 1993 with the participation of the Bukhara regional administration, the Committee for Religious Affairs, the Muslim Board of Central Asia, and the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan. The task was set to translate and publish a monograph on "Naqshbandi teaching and its world significance," as well as to translate and comment on works related to the Naqshbandi teachings by Abdurahman Jami's "Nafahot ul-uns" and Ali Safi's "Rashohat ayn ul-hayot" (Navro'zova G., 2009: 2-5).

The Bukhara regional administration was tasked with organizing events to restore the name of Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband in Bukhara city and Qasri Arifon village, where he was born.

Moreover, the President of Uzbekistan issued Decree No. PF-667 on September 27, 1993, which awarded honorary titles to individuals and craftsmen who demonstrated exemplary efforts in the construction and restoration work of the Bahauddin Naqshband Memorial Complex (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan Decree, 1993: <https://www.lex.uz/uz/docs/2381742>).

MAIN PART

Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband's immense legacy in the Islamic world and his efforts to foster the development of the perfect human being have been recognized by many Eastern and Muslim nations (Khatamov T., 2022: 12 <http://www.t-science.org/arxivDOI/2022/06-110/06-110-3.html>). As a result, the growing number of visitors to the Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband shrine made it a priority to establish a central Naqshbandi Memorial Complex since the early years of independence.

In this context, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan issued Resolution No. 244 on May 27, 2004, on the establishment of the Bahauddin Naqshband Memorial Complex Center (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan Decree, 2004: <https://www.lex.uz/ru/docs/302377>). The resolution outlined the task of preserving and enhancing the Naqshbandi and Abdukhaliq



Ghijduvani memorial complexes, developing the infrastructure, and increasing their recognition globally. It also emphasized organizing pilgrimages for both local and foreign visitors and ensuring all necessary conditions for this process.

Additionally, the resolution stressed the importance of studying the scientific and philosophical legacy of Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband and his teachers, promoting humanitarian values such as honesty, purity, and spiritual perfection, and utilizing their teachings to foster the spirit of hard work and creativity among the youth.

Although this decree was later annulled by the Cabinet of Ministers' Decree No. 87, dated February 22, 2021 (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan Decree, 2021: <https://lex.uz/ru/docs/5300195>), it played a critical role as a legal basis for the preservation and maintenance of the Naqshbandi memorial complexes to this day.

Furthermore, the Cabinet of Ministers issued Resolution No. 112 on April 3, 1995, concerning the organization of the second international wrestling tournament dedicated to the memory of Al-Hakim at-Termizi (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan Decree, 1995: <https://lex.uz/docs/1659823>). This initiative aimed to promote national traditions and values, and to develop wrestling as a sport, by organizing the international tournament every two years in honor of Al-Hakim at-Termizi. The winner was to be awarded a special prize from the President of Uzbekistan, and the expenses were to be covered by the local budget of Surkhandarya province.

The decision to hold the international wrestling tournament in honor of Al-Hakim at-Termizi was later annulled in February 2021, and we find this decision to be a justified approach. While there are no objections to promoting national wrestling, there are certain considerations regarding the choice of dedicating this tournament to Al-Hakim at-Termizi's memory:

1. Al-Hakim at-Termizi is one of Islam's greatest scholars, leaving behind numerous works on Islamic law and mysticism.
2. Al-Hakim at-Termizi is a prominent Sufi scholar who wrote extensively on Sufi knowledge and related ideas.
3. There is currently no evidence that Al-Hakim at-Termizi himself practiced wrestling or wrote any works related to the sport.
4. During the early years of independence, various national awards, competitions, and charity organizations were named after scholars and Sufi masters to revive their



legacies. The decision to name the international tournament after Al-Hakim at-Termizi might reflect such efforts.

In conclusion, we can view the government's new approach as positive, considering the direct or indirect relevance of such initiatives in promoting and developing the legacies of our scholars.

On July 13, 2001, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 300 “On the publication of the photo album “Immortal historical monuments of the Islamic world in Uzbekistan” (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2001: <https://lex.uz/docs/1676> The document expired on February 22, 2021) determined the publication of a photo album about historical monuments of the Islamic world in Uzbekistan in Uzbek, English and Arabic. In preparing the album, the main attention was paid to the restoration and repair of our historical and cultural monuments, which were mercilessly destroyed during the former colonial period and enjoyed great respect in the Islamic world, the improvement of blessed shrines, and the dissemination of the ideas of goodness, peace, brotherhood, and cooperation in the Islamic religion to our people. As is known, some of the shrines in our country consist of the chambers, mausoleums and complexes of Sufi scholars, and in publishing this photo album, many images related to the schools of tariqat were included. We can say that the inclusion of historical monuments is a positive development.

In accordance with Appendix 3 to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 364 dated August 22, 2003 “On providing social support and benefits for further improving spiritual and educational educational work and activities in the field of religion” (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2003: <https://lex.uz/docs>), a number of shrines of Sufi scholars were transferred to the management of the Muslim Administration of Uzbekistan for use on the basis of “Agreements on Use and Protection” concluded with the “Inspections for the Preservation and Use of Cultural Monuments”. In particular,

1. “Hakim Termiziy” shrine - Surkhandarya region, Termiz district, Kuhna Termiz village
2. “Sheikh Khovandi Tohur” shrine - Tashkent city, Shayhontohur district, Shayhontohur narrow street.



3. “Sufi Olloyor” shrine – Surkhandarya region, Altynsay district, Katta Vakhshivor village.

4. “Zangiota” complex – Tashkent region, Zangiota district, Zangiota village.

5. “Pakhlavon Mahmud” shrine – Khorezm region, Khiva city, Ichan Kala complex

We can say that the transfer of the “Sufi Olloyor” and “Pakhlavon Mahmud” shrines and the “Zangiota” complex to the management of the Muslim Department of Uzbekistan is another stage of the reforms being carried out in this direction.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 423 of December 4, 2003 “On the Celebration of the 900th Anniversary of the Birth of Abdukhaliq Gijduvani” (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2003: <https://lex.uz/docs/1679238> The document expired on February 22, 2021) established the holding of a special event in October 2003 with the participation of the international organization UNESCO in connection with the 900th anniversary of the birth of Abdukhaliq Gijduvani, one of the founders of the Khojagon (Naqshbandi) doctrine in the teachings of Sufism. One aspect that we should especially emphasize in this resolution is the decision of the 31st session of the UNESCO General Conference to participate in the celebration of the 900th anniversary of the birth of Abdukhaliq Gijduvani.

Also, in accordance with Appendix 2 to the resolution, the plan of measures for its preparation and implementation focuses on a number of works, including the renovation, improvement and construction of the Abdukhaliq Gijduvani complex, holding an international scientific and practical conference on the topic "Abdukhalig Gijduvani and Sufism" (International Conference Materials, 2003:3-48), organizing special television and radio broadcasts on the topics of "Oriental Conversations", "Naqshbandi Wisdoms" and "Sufism", repairing and improving the shrines of Abdukhaliq Gijduvani's disciples (Sufi Choyan, Khoja Langar), compiling a list of works in Arabic and Persian belonging to the scholar and written about him, translating them into Uzbek and publishing them, studying the history and culture of the period in which he lived and worked, and obtaining new scientific information about this period. In order to collect, tasks related to conducting archaeological excavations in the Gijduvan and Gishti mounds and those responsible for ensuring their implementation were separately determined.

Resolution No. 143 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 25, 2004 “On the Celebration of the 600th Anniversary of the Birth of Khoja



Ahror Vali” (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2003: <https://lex.uz/docs/1688736> The document expired on February 22, 2021) to study the manuscript sources of Khoja Ahror Vali’s works based on a broad, objective interpretation and approach, to collect and publish modern research on the life and work of the scholar (Nematullo Mukhamedov, Lazizakhon Alidjanova, 2020:1242), to hold a republican scientific and practical conference in Samarkand on the topic “The Place of Khoja Ahror Vali in the History and Spirituality of Central Asia” (Materials of the Republic Conference, 2004), to organize a republican scientific and practical conference in Samarkand on the topic “The Place of Khoja Ahror Vali in the History and Spirituality of Central Asia” (Materials of the Republic Conference, 2004), to organize a republican scientific and practical conference in Samarkand district, A number of tasks, such as the repair of the complex and the beautification of its surroundings, were strengthened on the basis of this decision. Also, a historical-documentary film dedicated to the life and activities of Khoja Ahror Vali in the history and spirituality of Central Asia was shot (Mustaqillik.uz, 2022:1 <http://mustaqillik.uz/uz/events/view/150>).

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-6165 dated February 9, 2021 “On measures for the further development of domestic and pilgrimage tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan” (Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2021: <https://lex.uz/docs/5283956>), the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 100 dated February 24, 2021 “On additional measures for the development of domestic and pilgrimage tourism” (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2021: <https://lex.uz/docs/5315060> \ This document is currently being amended). In accordance with this resolution, it is envisaged to further improve the conditions for local and foreign tourists visiting the shrines of Sufi scholars, improve organizational and legal work, and provide benefits. In particular, the task of identifying the source of funds for the repair of 36 km of internal roads in the direction of the “Seven Pir” shrines in the Bukhara region, with the subsequent allocation of 90.5 billion soums, with the condition that they will be reimbursed from local budget funds, and the repair of internal roads will be completed by August 1, 2021. In addition, the Regulation on the procedure for reimbursement of part of the travel expenses incurred in the direction of domestic tourism from the Republican budget of the Republic of Uzbekistan was approved.



In order to promote and promote the scientific and educational heritage of Sufi sheikhs and shrines in the media space, the task of developing a multimedia program called “The Seven Pirs of the Order” to be placed in info kiosks in the “Seven Pir” complexes in the Bukhara region, and developing films about the shrines, which will be translated into foreign languages and widely promoted, was set.

In particular, the documentary film “Suzuk Ota” was produced in Uzbek in 2019, and later it was noted that the full film and episodes were translated and commercials were produced in English, Turkish, Kazakh, Russian, and Indonesian. This documentary film won the prize at the “V Turkic World Documentary Film Festival” held in the Republic of Turkey in 2020. In addition, in accordance with Appendix 5 to this resolution, the following films about Sufi scholars were also produced:

1. Documentary film “Naqshbandi” (2018, in Uzbek) in English, Turkish, Indonesian, Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, Persian, French, Russian, Malay;
2. Documentary film “Najmiddin Kubro” (1995, in Uzbek) in Arabic, Persian, English, and Russian;
3. Documentary film “Khoja Ahmad Yasawi” (2004, in Uzbek) in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, English, Russian;
4. Documentary film “Pahlavon Mahmud” (2019, in Uzbek) in English, Turkish, Indonesian, Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, Russian, Persian, French, Malay;
5. Feature film “Pahlavon Mahmud” (in Uzbek) in Persian, Urdu, English, Russian, Hindi;
6. Documentary film “Amir Temur and Ahmad Yasawi Mausoleum” (in Uzbek) in Turkish, Persian, English, Russian;
7. Documentary film “Sultan Uwais Qaraniy” (in Uzbek) in English, Russian;
8. Documentary film “Altin Silsila” about the Naqshbandi pirs (in Uzbek) in Turkish, English, Russian.

Based on the decree, a plan of measures for targeted promotion of the pilgrimage tourism potential of the Republic of Uzbekistan was developed, and in accordance with this plan, the countries that should be promoted, the promoted routes and pilgrimage tourism objects, funds and the expected number of pilgrims were determined. As we noted in the information presented above, part of the pilgrimage objects belong to the mausoleums, inns and complexes of Sufi sheikhs. As a result



of pilgrimage tourism, the names of many Sufi scholars in our region have been revived, and the study of their scientific and educational heritage is being taken to a new level.

In promoting the pilgrimage objects of Sufi sheikhs, promotion in the regions where their teachings are widespread is a priority, because the peoples of the Muslim East are aware of the heritage of our ancestors and have a significant desire to visit our country, where the founders of the schools of tariqa are located.

For example, in Indonesia, the Naqshbandi doctrine is popular, and interest in the "Seven Saints' Shrine" is very high. We can also note that the "Journey to the Homeland of the Nine Saints" project, which is associated with the name of Saint Ibrahim al-Samarkand, who made a great contribution to the spread of Islam in this country, may also be of great interest to representatives of this country.

Also, the availability of opportunities to attract many pilgrims to the shrines of the Naqshbandi saints in countries such as Malaysia, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, and Russia was the main factor in determining the plan of measures to be implemented in these areas as well. Promoting the shrines and mausoleums of the Yassavi order in our country, including the mausoleums of Suzuk-ota and Zangiata located in the city and region of Tashkent, for pilgrims in Turkey also provides great opportunities for the development of pilgrimage tourism (Razzakov G., Rakhimov K., 2020:147)

Based on the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5416 dated April 16, 2018 "On measures to radically improve the activities of the religious and educational sphere" (Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2018: <https://lex.uz/docs/3686277>), a number of reforms were established in order to further increase the effectiveness of activities in the religious and educational sphere, in particular, the decree paid attention to the training of specialists in the direction of Sufism. The International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan was established on the basis of the Tashkent Islamic University under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan under the Office of Muslims of Uzbekistan. The Academy has started accepting students for the full-time, four-year bachelor's degree program 5160100 - Islamic Studies (Creed and Sufism). Students admitted to the Islamic Studies (Creed and Sufism) program are taught subjects such as "Introduction to Sufism",



"Sufism", and "Sufi Interpretations" (See: www.iiiau.uz - Official website of the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan. 2018).

Also, based on the content of the priority tasks set out in the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 25 of January 14, 2019 "On measures to organize and support the activities of the Training Center under the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan" (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019: <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/4157634>) and the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-60 of January 28, 2022 "On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" (Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022: <https://lex.uz/docs/5841063>), a Training Center has been established within the Academy with regional branches in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, Samarkand, Namangan, Surkhandarya regions, which will improve the content of training processes based on modern requirements and continuously improve the professional skills of Chief Imams-Khatibs, as well as the qualifications of representatives of various fields. (See: Official website of the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan. January 28, 2021. <https://www.iiiau.uz/oz/news/98>).

In particular, the Training Center is organizing 4-week (144 hours) and 2-week (72 hours) training courses for regional, city, and district chief imams-khatibs. For listeners, such training courses as "Reflection of humanistic ideas in Sufism", "The role of spiritual education in human development", "Spiritual education: education of the soul and morality in Sufism" have been introduced, which in turn serves to further increase the listeners' knowledge of Sufism.

In order to study the sciences related to Sufism and organize the educational process in the system of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan, on November 30, 2017, by order of the Chairman of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan, a "Scientific School of Sufism" was established at the Mir Arab Higher Madrasah operating in Bukhara, and by order of January 24, 2018, the regulations on the "Scientific School of Sufism" were approved, and the scientific school organized its activities based on this regulation (Khatamov T., 2022:8. <http://www.t-science.org/arxivDOI/2022/06-110/06-110-2.html>). The opening of a Sufism school in Bukhara, where Naqshbandiyyah emerged, is also of historical importance, and shows the relevance of studying the scientific and educational heritage left by our saints who came from this region, and how right the decision was to establish this scientific school.



The Sufi Scientific School was determined to provide education mainly in the following areas:

First, to teach in the lessons from books dedicated to the life paths and lifestyles of Sufi sheikhs, in particular, Naqshbandi sheikhs.

Second, to explain the wise words spoken by the teachers of the order as advice and to read books on spiritual education.

Third, to give students lessons in Arabic and Persian, to explain the rules of the language in the process of reading historical sources, and to systematically strengthen their knowledge and skills. Reading historical manuscripts is one of the most important aspects of this.

There are 11 students in the Sufi School, who are religious workers with religious education. It was determined that the scientific school will develop and implement the curriculum and training programs necessary for the educational process.

The following books are taught at the Sufi School:

1. Abu Bakr Kalobodi's book "At-Taarruf li madhhabi ahl al-tasawuf";
2. Abu Hamid Muhammad Ghazali's book "Kimyoi saodat";
3. Khoja Ahmad Yassawi's book "Divani Hikmat";
4. Sufi Allahyor's book "Sabatul ajiziin";
5. Jalaluddin Rumi's book "Masnavi-manavi";
6. Imam Rabbani's book "Maktubot".

Students of the scientific school are given a special certificate (permission) confirming that they have completed a certain work (completing the khatmi kutub). This scientific school also teaches modern Sufism, providing information on new scientific research, publications, and modern sects on Sufism in the 20th-21st centuries. In particular, information on the scientific research of scholars who have made their contribution to the study of the heritage of Sufism in Uzbekistan, such as A. Kayumov, O. Usmon, N. Komilov, H. Islamiy, S. S. Bukhoriy, A. R. Bukhoriy, B. Bobozhov, E. Karimov; Russian scholars O. Akimushkin, E. Bertels, N. Semyonov, A. Khismatullin; Turkish scholars N. Tusun, M. A. Joshon, H. K. Yilmaz; Western orientalists Y. Paul, H. Algar, J. Gross, J. Trimmingham, A. Kügelgen, etc. will also be presented to the audience (See: Official website of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan. November 13, 2017. <http://www.muslim.uz/index.php/news-2016/uzbekistan/item/3979>).



Also, in accordance with the "Roadmap" approved by the Bukhara region governor U. Barnoev for organizing spiritual, educational, scientific, practical and propaganda events to ensure the implementation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. F-4998 dated July 11, 2017 "On preparation and holding of the celebration of the 915th anniversary of the birth of Abdulkholiq Gijduvani and the 700th anniversary of the birth of Bahauddin Naqshband", the Sufi Scientific School has started to hold 30-35-minute "open lessons" on "Naqshbandkhanlik" for local and foreign pilgrims every Thursday in the center of the Bahauddin Naqshband monument complex.

The Sufi Scientific School, together with Sufi scholars Gulchekhra Navruzova, Zoirov Erkin, Halim Turaev, Bobir Namozov, Samad Azimov and a number of other specialists, is translating and commenting on books in Arabic, Persian and German into Uzbek and Russian and preparing them for publication. In particular, a treatise entitled "The Seven Elders of Bukhara" was prepared in cooperation with Bukhara State University and the Sufi Scientific School, a treatise entitled "Bahouddin Naqshband" was prepared by Sufi scholar G. Navruzova under the editorship of H. Yuldashkhodjaev, and a monograph entitled "Abduholiq Gijduvaniy" (Navruzova G. Zoirov E. 2022:204).

It is worth noting that the fact that so many citizens have applied to the Sufi Scientific School for admission to the audience indicates that our people have been thirsting for the heritage of their ancestors for many years, and this situation also indicates the great need for the process of reforms in the field of Sufism to reach new levels, as well as the high interest of our citizens in science and education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can say that a number of reforms aimed at studying the scientific and educational heritage of Sufism in the early years of independence were implemented, including the decrees, resolutions and orders of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the resolutions and orders of the Cabinet of Ministers, and the resolutions and orders of the Department of Muslims of Uzbekistan, which focused on restoring the heritage of Sufism scholars, celebrating their birthdays, translating their works, repairing shrines and mausoleums, and holding various scientific and educational conferences and events.



Another aspect of these decrees, orders, and resolutions is that our youth should be proud of their history and, in setting future goals, be inspired by the heritage of their ancestors and strive for great goals, and attention was paid to aspects such as the restoration of our national history.

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