



BOĶĀRĪ, AMĪR AĦMAD

BOĶĀRĪ, AMĪR AĦMAD (d. 922/1516), a Sufi instrumental in establishing the Naqšbandī order in Turkey. He was born in Bukhara of Hosaynid lineage, the grandson of K̄vāja Maḥmūd Enjīr Faġnawī, who preceded the founder of the Naqšbandī order, K̄vāja Bahā'-al-Dīn Naqšband, by four links in the initiatic chain. He first embarked on the Sufi path under the guidance of the celebrated K̄vāja 'Obayd-Allāh Aḥrār (q.v.) in Samarqand, but was formally initiated by a disciple (*morīd*) of Aḥrār, Mollā 'Abd-Allāh Elāhī from Simav in Anatolia. When Elāhī left Samarqand to return to Anatolia, Boḳārī decided to accompany him, leaving Transoxiana forever. Elāhī settled initially in his native city of Simav, and Boḳārī served him there in a variety of menial capacities as well as that of prayer leader. At one point he took leave of his master to perform the *ḥajj*. Carrying only a Qur'ān and a copy of Rūmī's *Maṭnawī*, he traveled by way of Jerusalem where he spent some time living in a *madrassa* and earning his living as a scribe. After performing the *ḥajj*, he stayed for about a year in Mecca, engaging in various ascetic practices until he was summoned back to Simav in 866/1461. Soon thereafter Elāhī moved first to Istanbul and then to Vardar Yenicesi in Rumelia, and Boḳārī fell heir to his following in Simav. Despite his dislike for the commotion of the capital, Boḳārī was persuaded to move there in 896/1490-91. He took up residence near the mosque of Sultan Moḥammad Fāteḥ, but the press of *morīds* soon obliged him to build a series of hospices. Most of his followers were members of the learned class, *qāzīs* and *modarresīn*, and it can be said, indeed, that Boḳārī inaugurated the close link with the formal religious establishment that was to be typical for the Naqšbandī order in Turkey. He died in 922/1516, at the age of seventy-three,



and was buried in the courtyard of the first hospice he established. The tomb still stands and is the object of pious visitation.

His main successors were Maĥmūd Lāmē'ī Ćelebī of Bursa, famous as a poet and translator of works from Persian, especially the writings of 'Abd-al-Raĥmān Jāmī; Ħakīm Ćelebī, and his son-in-law, Shaikh Maĥmūd Ćelebī, who took his place at the main Naqšbandī hospice in Istanbul.

It is said that BoĶārī's main emphasis was on constant silent invocation of the divine name and meticulous observation of the *sonna*; he gave little importance to formal learning (despite the nature of his following) and often made mistakes in Arabic. Nonetheless, two works attributed to him survive: an untitled treatise that sets forth the general principles of the Naqšbandī path and shows acceptance of the doctrine of *waĥdat al-wojūd*, and a collection of glosses on difficult lines in the *Maṭnawī*.

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