



Naqshbandi Haqqani Sufi Order of America

Building Bridges Towards Justice, Peace and Understanding



Imam Abdul Haqq (Peter) Sazonoff

National Director

Born in 1947, Abdul Haqq grew up in Chicago with the American name of 'Peter'. From the time he was a young man, he felt drawn to the mysteries of the spiritual world that lay within him. He pursued his formal education [in Journalism] at Southern Illinois University and later at Roosevelt University in Chicago, but felt unfulfilled by his collegiate experience. After school, he married and ran a successful business while raising his family but still he felt that his life was incomplete. He determined to find someone who could guide him to his true calling, and thereby enable him to gain a real understanding of the deeper mysteries of life. After much reading and traveling and meeting with different teachers and groups he finally met the famous Sufi Master [*Mawlana Shaykh Muhammad Nazim Adil Al-Haqqani*](#), from Cyprus. His first encounter with Shaykh Nazim was cathartic. Abdul Haqq at once saw his spiritual mentor and his key to fathoming the unknown.

“He was able to impart a deep sense of inner peace to me and for the first time to awaken my hope for genuine spiritual fulfillment. Shaykh Nazim once told me that, ‘Every spiritual master was assigned his disciples in the world of spirits, in which all of us existed together before we began our lives here on this earth.’ He further said that, ‘every shepherd knows his flock and every follower recognizes his master in some basic instinctual way. Without this recognition, the conscience can never be satisfied that it has found its true home.’ He taught me that, ‘The faculty of conscience, which is not to be confused with emotion, is instilled or woven into the fabric of every individual personality by its Designer and if heeded will guide its owner to the Truth.’ He cautioned me that, ‘Sometimes we put such a heavy load on our conscience that it becomes difficult to heed its warnings, but none the less it is there for those who take the trouble to consult it.’”

Thus, at that first meeting with Mawlana Shaykh Nazim in 1978, Peter Sazonoff was initiated into both the religion of Islam and the [*Naqshbandi Haqqani Sufi Order*](#), and was given the name of “Abdul Haqq” or Servant of the Truth. In 1991, Shaykh Nazim placed Abdul Haqq under the care of his deputy and son-in-law, [*Mawlana Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani*](#), to

continue his training in the finer points of the [Naqshbandi](#) way. In 1993, he was appointed caretaker of the *Naqshbandi Spiritual Retreat Center* in Fenton, Michigan. In 1998, Abdul Haqq underwent, at the order of his master, the traditional Naqshbandi forty-day seclusion for arduous training on the subtle aspects of spiritual life. In the spring of 1999, Abdul Haqq was part of a team sent by the international relief agency, *American Muslim Assistance* [AMA], to provide assistance to survivors of the genocide in Kosova, and the disastrous earthquake in Western Turkey. He has been a frequent contributor of feature articles to [The Muslim Magazine](#), and has traveled extensively to gather material of interest from around the Islamic world.

Today, Imam Abdul Haqq continues his spiritual training under the guidance of Shaykh Nazim and Shaykh Hisham, and speaks at their behest to interested groups about Islam, the Naqshbandi Sufi Way, and the spiritual dilemma that confronts contemporary people.

Currently serving as National Director of the Naqshandi Haqqani Sufi Order of America www.naqshbandi.org, Imam Abdul Haqq has recently presented traditional Islamic teachings on Oprah Winfrey's "Islam 101," and has also appeared on CNN and has been interviewed by numerous radio stations and newspapers. He has lectured and presented at many centers of higher learning, including Univ. of Chicago, Univ. of Illinois, DePaul Univ, Univ. of Michigan, Michigan State Univ., Western Michigan Univ., Univ. of British Columbia in Vancouver, Univ. of Victoria, Univ. of California at San Diego, McGill Univ. and Dawson College in Montreal, as well as at numerous churches, synagogues, temples, and spiritual centers of diverse faiths and philosophies.

"It is my hope, or rather my intention, to remove first from my heart, and then, if Allah [God] wills, from the hearts of people, the oppression of egoism and inordinate love of this temporary life, and replace that false love with the love of Allah [God] Almighty and all of His Blessed and Noble Prophets, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad, peace be upon them, and with the love of awliya [holy people; saints]. I pray that Allah [God] Almighty will grant us the immense blessing to be successful in this endeavor, and to be able to follow his beloved ones - to be with them in this life and in the hereafter. No one can do this for himself - it is only the favor of our Lord. The Aftermath of September 11th has fostered an historic rebirth of interest in spirituality among the American people. Many believe that we are witnessing the fulfillment of the holy tradition that, 'At the end of time, the sun will rise in the West!' May our Lord make it so, and make us to be among those so favored as to participate in that blessed renewal!"