



WORK OF ABUL YUSR PAZDAVI “USULU-D-DIN” AND ITS PLACE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING OF MOTURIDISM

Sodikov Jurabek Sobirboyevich

International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, PhD, Acting Associate Professor
of the Islamic Studies and Study of Islamic Civilization ICESCO Chair

Email: jurabeksodiq@gmail.com.

Abstract

This article explores the life and scholarly activity of one of the renowned scholars of Transoxiana, Abu al-Yusr Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn ibn ‘Abd al-Karim ibn Musa al-Pazdawi. It provides an overview of his teachers, prominent students, and academic legacy, with a particular focus on his seminal theological work Usul al-Din. The article highlights the thematic content and distinct characteristics of the work, demonstrating how al-Pazdawi addressed doctrinal issues from a Maturidite perspective. Furthermore, it examines his views on the legitimacy and importance of studying the science of kalām. Selected theological issues raised in Usul al-Din are analyzed, and their relevance to contemporary thought is illustrated through specific examples. The text also investigates al-Pazdawi’s position toward another prominent figure of Ahl al-Sunna, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash‘ari, and his followers, with references to passages in which al-Pazdawi comments on them.

Keywords: Al-Pazdawi, Usul al-Din, Samarqand school of kalām, Hans Peter, Ahl al-Haqq, jawhar, ‘arād, tadbīr.

Introduction

Following Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, one of the key figures who contributed to the development of the Maturidite doctrine was Abu al-Yusr Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn ibn ‘Abd al-Karim ibn Musa al-Pazdawi. He was born in 421/1030 and was considered the leading authority of the Hanafis in his time



after his illustrious elder brother Abu al-‘Ushr ‘Ali al-Pazdawī (d. 482/1089). He received his initial education from his father, Abu al-Hasan Muhammad al-Pazdawī. His great-grandfather, ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Musa al-Pazdawī, had been a disciple of Abu Mansur al-Maturīdī (Ahmad Sa’d Damanhuri, 2018:134 –135). This familial background gave him a direct connection to the Samarqand school of kalām.

Abu al-Yusr al-Pazdawī studied under several notable Hanafī scholars of his era, including Isma‘il ibn ‘Abd al-Sadiq, Abu Ya‘qub Yusuf ibn Mansur, Ya‘qub ibn Yusuf ibn Muhammad al-Naysaburi, and Shaykh Abu al-Khattab. In the field of tafsir, he drew upon the interpretations of Ishaq ibn Ibrahim al-Hanzali, ‘Abd ibn Humayd al-Keshi, and especially the exegesis of Abu Mansur al-Maturīdī. In hadith, he relied heavily on canonical collections, particularly Sunan Abi Dawud. Among his most prominent students were Abu al-Mu‘in al-Nasafī, the author of Tabsirat al-Adillah, and Abu Hafs Najm al-Din ‘Umar al-Nasafī (d. 537/1142), the author of al-‘Aqa’id al-Nasafīyyah. His son Qadi Abu al-Ma‘ali Ahmad, ‘Uthman ibn ‘Ali al-Poykandi, and Ahmad ibn Nasr al-Bukhari also studied with him. Other notable disciples include Rukn al-A‘imma ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Muhammad al-Sana’i (or Sabo’i) al-Madani, Muhammad ibn Tahir al-Samarqandi, and ‘Abd Allah ibn Muhammad al-Hulami (Oqilov S., 2012:87). In his work al-Qand fi Dhikr ‘Ulama’ Samarqand, Abu Hafs ‘Umar al-Nasafī wrote: “Abu al-Yusr was, without doubt, the Imam of all Imams; students came from distant lands to study under him. He authored numerous works in both usul and furu‘. He was appointed as the qadi of Samarqand and for a time dictated hadith.”

According to sources, Abu al-Yusr al-Pazdawī passed away in Bukhara in the year 493/1100 at the age of 69 (‘Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi, h. 1324:188). He played a significant role in the development and propagation of the Hanafī school and the Maturidite theological tradition in Transoxiana, especially in Bukhara.

The scholarly efforts of Abu al-Yusr al-Pazdawī, along with those of his students such as Abu al-Mu‘in al-Nasafī (d. 1115), Najm al-Din ‘Umar al-Nasafī (1069–1142), ‘Ala’ al-Din al-Samarqandi (d. 1143), Nur al-Din al-Sabuni (d. 1184), and Ibrahim al-Saffar (d. 1139), helped spread the Maturidite creed beyond



Transoxiana to regions such as Khurasan and Iraq, countering various heterodox doctrines.

Although al-Pazdawī authored many works during his lifetime, only a few have survived to the present day, including:

- Usul al-Din;
- Ta‘liqat;
- Murattab;
- Waqi‘at;
- Mabsut;

Sharh al-Ajrumiyyah (on Arabic grammar) (Abdullah ‘Abd al-Hamid Sa‘ad, 2007:81).

His contribution to Hanafi jurisprudence is also significant. He authored Waqi‘at and Mabsut in this field, and wrote a gloss (Murattab) on Muhammad al-Shaybani’s al-Jami‘ al-Saghir.

Main Part

The theological work Usul al-Din by the scholar Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī was first studied and critically edited by the German orientalist Hans Peter, based on a manuscript held in Ankara (Khodja Ismail Said Library, No. 1261). Soon after, Hans Peter defended his doctoral dissertation on this work (University of Bonn, 1952) and published Usul al-Din in 1963. Later, the book was translated into Turkish by Sharafuddin Gülsük and published in Istanbul in 1980 under the title The Creed of Ahl al-Sunna.

The author writes: “I completed this book in the month of Jumada al-Awwal in the year 481 AH (August 1088 CE). At that time, the Seljuk ruler Malikshah (1072–1092) had besieged Khāqān Ahmad ibn Khidr in Samarkand. The people, witnessing the power of both sides, were overcome with fear. O Allah, deliver Your servants from this calamity” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī, 2003:265).

By the end of the 11th century, theological debates between the Hanafis of Transoxiana and the Ash‘arites had become particularly prominent. This circumstance also contributed to the growing remembrance of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī as the most influential Hanafi theologian. In particular, when Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī mentions al-Māturīdī in his Usul al-Din, he offers him brief



praise, yet devotes greater attention to highlighting the achievements of his life. In almost every theological issue addressed in the work, the influence of al-Māturīdī's viewpoints and methods of argumentation is clearly evident.

One such theological issue discussed in the book concerns the reason for God's creation of the universe. On this matter, the following position is presented:

“The Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā‘a state that God created the world for what He willed, and that creation can occur without being caused by any external purpose or reason. According to the Mu‘tazilites, creation without a purposeful reason is unacceptable, and God cannot act without wisdom. In their view, divine acts must contain benefit for others. They argue: ‘God is Wise, and the Wise One acts only for a beneficial purpose.’ This principle forms the foundation of all their theological positions. They further insist that God cannot will misguidance, disbelief, or rebellion for any individual, and that He must always act in the best interest of His servants – what they refer to as al-aslah (that which is most beneficial for their afterlife). Consequently, they conclude that it is impermissible for God to inflict punishment or suffering on anyone without a just cause or benefit. Even regarding children and animals, they allow for pain only if it leads to some future reward.

In contrast, the view of the Ahl al-Ḥaqq (People of Truth) is that God does whatever He wills and judges as He pleases. No one has the right to question the Creator, claim ownership over Him, or impose limitations upon Him. He is Wise, and according to our understanding, a Wise Being does not necessarily act with a purpose that benefits Himself or others. Rather, the Wise is one whose every act is inherently wise. God may test His servants with hardship – even if they have committed no crime, such as in the case of children who have not reached maturity or those of unsound mind. Even if God rewards them for their suffering, these trials offer no worldly benefit. Benefit, by definition, is a blessing received without pain. Causing pain and then granting a reward is both a harm and, from another angle, a benefit. God may create a person knowing he will become a disbeliever in the future. This too is a harm, with no benefit to anyone. Similarly, the creation of Iblīs and his continued existence until the Day of Judgment provides no benefit – only harm. Yet God acts thus in accordance with divine wisdom known only to Him” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī, 2003:134).



The doctrine of divine oneness (tawḥīd) presented in the work also clearly reflects the teachings of the Māturīdī school. Maturidi's Refutation of Dualism and Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdawī's Use of His Theology.

Imam Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, in his theological arguments against the dualistic beliefs held by adherents of Manichaeism, bases the knowledge of God's existence and His oneness on three fundamental sources: (1) sound transmitted reports (naql) and revelations; (2) rational inquiry (dalālat al-'aql); and (3) perceptual impressions received through the senses. Māturīdī justifies the necessity of both revelation and reasoning in understanding God's oneness as follows:

1. According to authentic reports, it is only the One God who has revealed Himself through divine revelation. There has never been any prophet or sign that has confirmed the existence of another deity or conveyed any message from such a being.
2. Had there been any other deity, it would have risen in opposition to the One who proclaimed His own oneness and would have attempted to block the descent of the revelation affirming unity. The fact that this never occurred proves that the Creator is One.
3. Our reasoning cannot comprehend the idea of two creators. If we were to assume the existence of two gods, it would be natural for one to override or conceal the acts of the other.
4. The universe is composed of many diverse and even opposing elements. Their harmonious function indicates a single divine will at work (Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, 2023:221–225). From these reflections, it can be concluded that all cosmic processes – such as the change of seasons, the movements of the Sun, Moon, and stars – take place according to a unified and orderly system (tadbīr). Such a centralized and coherent order can only be maintained under the leadership of one sovereign being.

From the arguments presented by Māturīdī, the following two key conclusions can be drawn:

5. The scholar puts forward the doctrine of tadbīr, meaning that the universe is governed through divine order and a preordained plan. God's actions are



purposeful and directed toward a higher end. Thus, these actions cannot be attributed to competing deities, but rather to the One and Only God.

6. If there were multiple gods, they would inevitably compete with one another, and such rivalry would hinder the creativity in the process of creation. Therefore, God is One, and He alone rules over all creation. Māturīdī's reflections elaborate on the meanings of the following verses from the Qur'an:

"If there had been within [the heavens and earth] gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined. So exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe" and

"Say [O Muhammad], 'If there had been other gods with Him – as they say – then they would have sought a way to the Owner of the Throne'" (Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī, 2023:222).

Following Māturīdī, Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī also frequently refers to him. Notably, he places special emphasis on Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, utilizing its method and distinct features in a more concise and systematically refined manner in his own work.

Discussion

The scholar [Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī] organized his book into ninety-six theological issues (masā'il). The first of these discusses the ruling on studying and teaching kalām (Islamic theology), while the final one addresses opposing schools of thought that differ from the Māturīdī tradition. In the introduction to Usul al-Din, Abū al-Yusr offers the following commentary on previous books written about the science of monotheism (tawḥīd):

"I reviewed the earlier books written on the science of tawḥīd. Some of them belonged to philosophers such as Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq al-Kindī (d. 260/873) and Abū Ḥāmid Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Isfīzārī (d. 515/1121). These philosophical works on kalām are far removed from the correct path and the true religion, and it is impermissible to consider them authoritative. Indeed, these works lead people to ruin. For this reason, no one should keep or study them. Although these books claim to be about tawḥīd, they are filled with heretical beliefs (shirk). Thus, our predecessors never preserved any of these books in their possession".



“I have also studied many works of the Mu‘tazilite representatives such as Abu ‘Ali al-Jubba‘ī (d. 303/915), al-Ka‘bī (d. 319/931), and Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām (d. 232/846). However, it is not permissible to preserve or make use of their books, since doing so may cause doubt in a person, weaken their creed, and lead to attributing innovation (bid‘a) to someone who is upon the correct path. The earlier scholars (mutaqaddimūn) did not keep any of their books in their possession” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdawī, 2003:13).

Following this, the scholar also expressed his view on the works of Imām al-Ash‘arī: “I have become acquainted with nearly two hundred works on this discipline authored by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī (d. 324/936) and others. Among his writings, the most comprehensive is al-Mujaz al-Kabīr. In truth, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī wrote numerous books in an attempt to rectify the doctrines of the Mu‘tazilite school, since he was originally a follower of the Mu‘tazila. Later, Allah, the Exalted, made clear to him the deviation of the Mu‘tazilites, so he repented from their creed and authored several books refuting their doctrines. The companions (aṣḥāb) of Imām al-Shāfi‘ī followed him in the theological matters (‘aqīda) which he clarified. The Shāfi‘ī scholars composed many works in accordance with the Ash‘arī creed. Nevertheless, some of our companions from Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a stated that Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī erred in certain theological matters, such as the distinction between takwīn (divine origination) and mukawwan (created beings), among others. Whoever is aware of the issues in which Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī erred and understands his mistakes, will not be harmed by looking into his books or keeping them in their possession. Many of our companions preserved his books and the leading figures of Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a benefited from his works” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdawī, 2003:13–14).

Al-Pazdawī’s view of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī influenced the subsequent Māturīdī authors, who, in their works, composed special treatises highlighting the nuanced differences between Māturīdism and Ash‘arism. As a result, those adhering to the Māturīdī creed, being aware of these differences, were also able to benefit freely from Ash‘arī sources.

Although Pazdawī held a profound respect for Imām Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, he approached the scholar’s works with a critical perspective. It was precisely this



critical attitude that led to the composition of *Usūl al-Dīn*, as he expressed in the following way:

“I found a book on the science of *tawḥīd* written in accordance with the creed of *Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a* by the Shaykh Imām Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī al-Samarqandī. He was one of the leading figures of *Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a* and was a man of miraculous virtue. My father, Shaykh Imām –may Allah have mercy on him –narrated to me stories about his miracles from his grandfather, Shaykh Imām al-Zāhid ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Mūsā –may Allah have mercy on him. Our grandfather (‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Mūsā) thoroughly studied the books of our scholars, including the contents of *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* and *Ta’wīlāt al-Qur’ān*. However, in the work *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* by Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī, there is some ambiguity and prolixity in meaning, as well as complexity in structure. Were it not for these aspects, we would have sufficed with it alone” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī, 2003:14).

At the end of his introduction, the author states that he decided to compose a concise book which would explicate the creed of *Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a* in relation to the discipline of *kalām*. He concludes the introduction with supplications, expressing that anyone who firmly adheres to what is presented in this book will remain steadfast on the path of *Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a*, which is the way of the Prophet (peace be upon him), his companions, and the pious predecessors (*salaf al-ṣāliḥ*).

Afterward, Pazdāwī briefly outlines the various views among the scholars concerning the study and teaching of *kalām* and the writing of books in this field: “Scholars have differed regarding the permissibility of studying, teaching, and writing books on *kalām*. Some have considered all of this permissible. This is the view of the majority of *mutakallimūn* from *Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a*, the *Ash‘arīs*, and the *Mu‘tazilites*. Other scholars have deemed it impermissible. This is the view held by most of the traditionists (*muḥaddithūn*)”.

The science of *kalām*, which has been a subject of scholarly disagreement regarding its study, teaching, and the writing of books on it, is concerned with explaining the foundational matters of religion. Learning the fundamentals of religion (‘*aqīdah*) is an individual obligation (*farḍ ‘ayn*) upon every person. Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allah have mercy on him) also studied this science and engaged



in debates with the Mu‘tazilites and representatives of other deviant sects. During the early period of his scholarly activity, he taught the science of kalām to his students and authored books on the subject. Some of his works have reached us, while others were destroyed by the deviant sects. Among the works that have survived are Kitāb al-‘Ālim wa-l-Muta‘allim and Kitāb al-Fiqh al-Akbar. In the former, it is stated that there is no harm in studying this science (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī, 2003:15).

In Kitāb al-‘Ālim wa-l-Muta‘allim, the following is mentioned on this issue: The student (Abū Muqātil al-Samarqandī) says: “I have seen a group of people who say, ‘Do not enter into these paths, for the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not follow them. So, follow in their footsteps.’” The scholar (Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, may Allah have mercy on him) responds: “Tell such people: if I had been in the place of the Companions, I would have done as they did, refraining from engaging with these groups. However, my circumstances are not like theirs. In our time, various sectarian groups have emerged that accuse us and consider our blood lawful. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish who is in error and who holds the correct belief. The Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not have enemies before them [of this nature], and so they were not compelled to take up arms. But in our time, opponents have appeared who rise against us, and thus, we must struggle against them – that is, we must refute their falsehoods through the science of kalām” (Abū Ḥanīfa, h. 1368:9).

Accordingly, al-Pazdāwī analyzes the views of earlier scholars on the science of kalām and presents his own perspective as follows: “In our region, many jurists and imams have prohibited people from openly studying, teaching, and debating kalām. As a result, some deviant sects have emerged. In this matter, we follow Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allah have mercy on him), for he is our imam and guide in both the fundamentals (uṣūl) and the branches (furū‘) of the religion.”

Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī expresses his view regarding the study of theological matters without evidence in the following way: “There are necessary conditions and principles for studying theological matters without detailed evidence, especially in our time. If a person finds some matters of tawḥīd unclear, then the unaided statements of the imams will not suffice. Rather, the person must study the issue along with its evidences. Likewise, if a non-Muslim (dhimmī) seeking



to enter Islam requests proofs for the foundational tenets of the religion, these must be explained. This indicates that the study of kalām is permissible and, in fact, a communal obligation (farḍ kifāyah). Whoever wishes to study this science should not learn it from just anyone, but rather from a scholar of Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a who is recognized as an expert in this field” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī, 2003:16).

After presenting these arguments for the permissibility of kalām, al-Pazdāwī proceeds in the subsequent chapters to address nearly all the major theological issues in a systematic manner. He presents these topics in clear and accessible language, supporting them with both transmitted (naqlī) and rational (‘aqlī) proofs in their appropriate contexts. This approach significantly contributed to the widespread acceptance of his work, making it one of the most renowned sources on Māturīdī doctrine. The book also examines, at relevant points, the doctrines of sects opposing the Māturīdī school.

The first chapter addresses theological matters (ilāhiyyāt), comprising thirteen issues. The second chapter discusses prophethood (nubuwwāt), covering three main issues. The third chapter is devoted to the matters of divine decree and predestination (qaḍā’ wa-qadar), and includes nine topics. The fourth chapter, being the shortest, discusses the issues of grave sin and disobedience, and presents two topics. The fifth chapter addresses matters concerning īmān (faith) and islām, comprising sixteen topics. The sixth chapter deals with the topic of khilāfah (caliphate), also presenting sixteen discussions. The seventh chapter covers various miscellaneous subjects and includes twenty-five issues. The eighth chapter discusses sects and schools of thought (madhāhib wa-firaq) and elaborates on ten related topics.

In each new subject, Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī begins by explaining the views of Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā‘a, followed by the opinions of opposing sects. Subsequently, he presents Qur’anic verses and Prophetic traditions used as evidences by Ahl al-Sunna. Rational proofs are also provided, explained in a clear and straightforward manner. Naturally, the arguments of opposing parties are cited as well. Thereafter, al-Pazdāwī states his own perspective and conclusions on the topic at hand. Nearly all the issues in the work are elaborated in this methodical style.



At the end of his *Usūl al-Dīn*, Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī shares some insights about the intellectual and social context of his time in relation to theology. He writes: “In this book, I have only briefly touched upon the topics of *kalām*. The reason, as previously mentioned, is that the majority of the people in our region have turned away from this science. They mostly prefer to engage with jurisprudence (*fiqh*), while those involved in *kalām* are not acknowledged or respected. Instead, they are treated superficially and even avoided. As a result of these factors, theological sciences have remained scarcely disseminated in this land. However, I have studied this discipline so deeply that I believe very few have mastered it as thoroughly as I have. Even if all the groups who have fallen into innovation were to come together to debate me, by the grace of Allah, I could prevail over them all. Furthermore, I have compelled several close disciples of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī in the matters of *takwīn* and *mukawwan*, leaving them speechless and astonished” (Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī, 2003:264).

Based on the above, it may rightly be stated that Abū al-Yusr al-Pazdāwī’s work represents the *Māturīdī* doctrine in a comprehensive and uncompromising manner. He firmly defends this theological school. In one instance, he notes that although Imām al-Ash‘arī had certain errors and shortcomings, he should still be regarded as a theologian worthy of great respect. However, in the controversy concerning the divine attribute of *khalq* (creation), Pazdāwī adopts a critical stance towards al-Ash‘arī. He holds that the attribute of creation is eternal (*qadīm*) and, in defending this view, affirms that Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī likewise maintained the eternity of the divine act of creation.

Analysis

As previously mentioned, Abul Yusr al-Pazdawī dedicates the first issue of his work “*Usul al-Din*” to the topic of learning, teaching, and writing about the science of *Kalam*. Through this, the author lays the scholarly groundwork for the theological topics discussed in the following chapters.

The second issue in the work is devoted to the existence of the reality of both material and spiritual things. In this section, attempts are made to resolve the debates that arose with philosophers using clear and simple examples.



The third issue concerns the factors that help humans comprehend the essence of things. Here, the debates among the Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah, philosophers, the Rafidah, and the Imamiya sect are presented. The Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah believe that understanding the essence of things comes through three means: sensory perception, reliable transmission (khabar), and rational argument. Philosophers, however, argue that essence can be understood only through sensory perception. The Rafidah rely on perception and inspiration, while the Imamiya sect bases its understanding on perception and transmission.

The next issue is devoted to the idea that everything with a form possesses its opposite and counterpart. Although this issue is quite brief – just a few lines – it clearly outlines the view of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah on the matter.

The subsequent topic addresses the sensory organs and related matters. It is stated that the five senses – hearing, sight, taste, smell, and touch – serve as the basis for perception.

The sixth issue deals with reports (akhbar) and their types. It states that the reports of Allah the Almighty and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are true and cannot be false. The same applies to mutawatir (widely transmitted) reports. However, some Mu'tazilite scholars argue that even mutawatir reports may contain falsehood.

The seventh and eighth issues focus on topics such as “What is knowledge?” and “The diversity of types of knowledge.” First, various views of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah on knowledge are presented, followed by the views of the Mu'tazilites. After examining both sides, a concluding summary is given. Disagreements between the two groups continue regarding the classification of knowledge. The Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah divide knowledge into three types: necessary (daruri), acquired (muktasab), and absolute knowledge. The Mu'tazilites divide knowledge into two types: necessary and acquired (Abul Yusr al-Pazdawi, 2003:22–23).

The next three topics cover the definition of the world (alam), accidents (a'rad), and the created nature of the world. According to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah, the world refers to all created beings. In this regard, Abul Yusr al-Pazdawi follows the path laid out by the scholar Abu Shakur. He considers the world to consist of accidents, bodies, and substances (jawhar). As in previous discussions,



differences between sects are also outlined here. Special attention is given to the Mu'tazila, Qadariyya, and philosophers. Some Mu'tazilite scholars, such as Abu Bakr al-Asam, along with philosophers, deny the existence of accidents and argue that the world consists only of bodies and substances. On the other hand, another Mu'tazilite scholar, Ziraar, who shares views with the Qadariyya, claims that the world consists only of accidents and that accident and body are essentially the same. According to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah, the continuity of accidents (attributes) is impossible. The Mu'tazilites, however, argue that accidents are similar to substances.

The next eleven issues are devoted to theological matters such as the oneness of Allah, His lack of partners, His incomparability, the fact that Allah is not confined to any direction, that He is All-Hearing and All-Seeing, the attributes of Allah, His will (mashi'ah) as inherent in His essence, the fact that every newly created body and act occurs by Allah's will, Allah's speech being eternal, creation and bringing into existence (takwin), the beatific vision (ru'ya) of Allah, and topics such as names, naming (tasmiya), and the named (musamma) (Abul Yusr al-Pazdawi, 2003:31–94).

The next three topics concern issues of prophethood, such as the sending of prophets, the prophethood of Adam (peace be upon him), and refutations against those who deny the prophethood of certain prophets.

Issues 26 through 34 deal with matters related to divine decree (qada) and predestination (qadar). Two issues are dedicated to the topic of major sins and disobedience. Eighteen issues are devoted to the topics of faith (iman) and Islam. Issues 55 through 70 analyze the problems of the caliphate. Afterward, various other scattered topics are addressed. At the end of his work, al-Pazdawi provides information about the sects of the Rafidah, Kharijites, Qadariyya, Mu'tazilites, as well as the Jabariyya, Murji'a, and Mujassimah. He does not conceal his view that discussing the false beliefs of these sects is of no benefit and that it is better not to know them than to know them (Abul Yusr al-Pazdawi, 2003:183–204).

After studying the Mu'tazilite views on divine unity (tawhid), Abul Yusr al-Pazdawi accuses them of violating tawhid in two ways:



1. They acknowledge the eternal existence of something other than Allah – namely, the nonexistent (ma'dum).
2. According to them, Allah becomes the Creator only during the act of creation, the Merciful during the act of showing mercy, and so on. Thus, they allow for the idea that the One and Immutable Allah is subject to change.

Conclusion

In his work *Usul al-Din*, the scholar most frequently mentions Abu Hanifa, followed by Abu Mansur al-Maturidi in terms of name and views. Pazdawi recognized al-Maturidi as one of the leading figures of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah and explained Sunni beliefs based on Maturidi's perspectives. At the same time, he openly criticized Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari, who is considered the second imam of Sunni theology, in certain places. Pazdawi served as a judge in Samarkand for a period. Therefore, the scholar significantly contributed to the widespread dissemination of Maturidi's views in society not only through his writings but also via his official authority.

From the content and essence of the work, it is evident that it was written to reveal the entire doctrine of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah and Maturidism, as well as to counter the influence of *Ahl al-Zaygh wa'l-Bid'ah* – those who have deviated and introduced innovations – in the region of Transoxiana.

Pazdawi's *Usul al-Din* is considered one of the most important sources in the field of theology. The work stands out from others for its concise and straightforward presentation of key issues in the science of kalam (Islamic theology). It presents the theological views of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah with solid evidence and argumentation. Moreover, it provides valuable information about the claims and foundations of various deviant sects.

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