

Research Article

Writing Style And Methodology Of Abu Mansur Motirudi`S Works

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Abstract

It Is Well Known That The Maturidi Doctrine Is One Of The Two Main Schools Of Islamic Theology. Undoubtedly, The Influence Of The Works Of Abu Mansur Maturidi On The Popularity And Recognition Of This School Was Great. There Are Two Surviving Works By Moturidi. The One Is “Kitab At-Tawhid”, A Book Dedicated To The Beliefs Of The Ahl As-Sunnah. The Other Is “Ta’vilot Ahli-S-Sunnah”, An Interpretation, Explanation And Commentary Of Quran. In This Commentary, As Well, The Verses Of The Quran Are Interpreted Mainly From The Point Of View Of *Aqidah* (Creed). These Two Works Served As The Cornerstone (Basis) Of The Maturidi School Of Theology. Therefore, The Study Of The Maturidi Doctrine, Its Specific Aspects Begins With The Study Of Imam Maturidi`S Works. In Order To Understand And Comprehend The Essence Of A Work, It Is Important To Know The Writing Style And Methodology Of It.

Keywords: Maturidi, Aqidah, Style, Methodology, Tafseer, Theology, Aqli, Naqli

Introduction

While The Theologian Puts Forward To Substantiate The Sunni Faith In All Its Aspects, He Provides Solid Evidence On Every Doctrinal Issue In Sunni Theology. U. Rudolf Says Of Kitab At-Tawhid: “This Work Is Not Limited To Summarizing The Basic Tenets Of Faith And Giving Them Appropriate Definitions. Its Purpose Was To Investigate The Whole Islamic Theology And To Show That It Should Be Recognized As A Holistic System Of Indisputable Evidences.”

The Same Can Be Said Of “Ta’vilot Ahli-S-Sunnah”. The Great Scholar Pays Great Attention To Proving The Teachings Of The Sunnah In All Aspects, Both **Naqli** (Revelation Knowledge) And **Aqli** (Human Knowledge). Although Rudolf Takes A Critical Approach To Maturidi And His Teaching, He Acknowledges The Scholar’s Ability In Providing With Evidence.

The Style Of Debate And Denial Plays A Central Role In The Legacy Of The Scholar. The Main Reason For This Was The Desire To Resolve The Ideological Differences That Were The Root Cause Of All The Problems In The Islamic World And To Unite All Muslims In The Ahl As-Sunnah.

Material And Methods

Even In The Time Of Moturidi, There Were Strong Debates And Arguments On Aqidah And Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) Issues In Mawarounnahr. This Process, Certainly, Influenced On The Work Of The Theologian.

Abu Zahra Narrates On The History Of Mawarounnahr: “This Country Was A Place Of Debates And Arguments In Fiqh And Method. Fiqh Debates Took Place Between The Hanafis And The Shafi’is. Such Gatherings Inspired Mosques With Debates.

In Fact, The Roots Of These Events Go Back A Long Way, To The Time Of The Companions. Shortly After The Death Of The Prophet Muhammad (Peace And Blessings Of Allaah Be Upon Him), Conflicts And

Disagreements Arose Over The Issue Of The Khilafah And On Issues Beyond The Comprehension Of The Human Mind.

The Topics That Caused A Lot Of Controversy Were: The Issue Of Faith And Its Requirements, The Debate Over Whether Or Not To Fit Deeds Into Faith, The Issue Of Kufr (Disbelief) And Shirk (Associating Other With Allah In His Divinity Or Worship), The Question Of Whether The Names And Qualities Of Allah Are Qadim (Eternal) Or Hodis (Created), And The Issue Of Human Will And Fate, The Issue The Condition Of The Sinful Muslim At The End, The Question Of Whether The Quran Is Created Or Not, And So On.

If The History Of Islam Is Studied, One Can See That There Have Been Constant Debates And Discussions On Many Similar Issues. It Is Also Known From History That Such Contraventions Sometimes Led To Bloody Conflicts. Sunni Scholars Have Been Working Tirelessly To Solve Such Religious Problems. As A Result, The Influence Of Sects And Currents In The Islamic World And Their Damage Decreased. Abu Mansur Maturidi, One Of The Scholars Of Mawarounnahr, Also Made A Significant Contribution To The Formation Of An Independent School In The Knowledge Of The Aqidah And To The Liberation Of The Entire Islamic World From Sectarianism.

Maturidi`S Greatest Contribution, No Doubt, Was That He Gave A Detailed, Both Naqli, And Aqli Argument To The Claim Of The Various Sects That Had Come Against The Ahl As-Sunnah In Their Time. For Example, He Wrote A Rebuttal To The Works Of The Mu'tazila Leaders, Who Were Of Great Concern In The Muslim World At The Time, And Defeated Them In Every Way In The Field Of Science.

In Order To Better Understand The Scientific Personality Of Imam Maturidi, It Is Necessary To Pay Close Attention To The Methods And Techniques He Used. Moturidi Uses A More Assuring Approach In Expressing His Views And Rejecting Conflicting Opinions. As Can Be Seen In The Following Chapters, He Placed Great Emphasis On Intelligence And Knowledge In Addition To Stories To Convince His Interlocutors. Therefore, While He Presents Relevant Evidence, He Supports His Views With Intelligence And Logic, As Well As With Sociological And Historical Evidence.

Results

The Scholar Was Impartial In Refuting The Misguided Sects, First Studying The Claims Of The Claimant Sects, Then The Qur'an, The Sunnah, And Then The Intellectual, Logical, And Philosophical Arguments As The Scientific Basis. In Scientific Debates, It Is Important To Emphasize The Qualities Of The Scholar, Such As Objectivity, Respect For Human Opinion, And The Ability To Scientifically Substantiate His Views.

Moturidi Divides The Means Of Attaining Knowledge (Ma`Rifa) And Understanding The Truths Of Existence Into Three Types And Cites Them In His Works As Evidence For His Thoughts And Views:

- Intuitive Knowledge (عيان),
- Naqli (Revelation) Knowledge (أخبار),
- Consideration (نظر).

A Detailed Study Of Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi`S Method Of Interpretation Shows That He Did Not Place Aqli Knowledge Above Naqli In Any Way, But Resorted To Logical Arguments To Support The Ahl As-Sunnah When Naqli Evidence Was *Mutashabih* (Similar, Flexible) Or Lacked In Strictness.

Moreover, In The Interpretation Of A Verse, The Clarification Of The Vague Was Completed Only If There Was A Scientific Interest, Otherwise Its Exact Knowledge Was Referred To Allah And The Debate Was Abandoned. For Example, He Does Not Confirm Or Argue With Any Of The Commentators On The Type Of Tree That Caused The Expulsion Of Adam (May Peace Be Upon Him) And His Wife From Jannah In Verse 35 Of Surat Al-Baqara. But He Expresses His Attitude To This Controversial Subject As Follows:

“It Is Not Permissible To Say A Word About Its Essence Without A Revelation. There Is No Revelation (I.E. Verse) Related To Its Interpretation. Hence, It Is Inappropriate To Firmly Affirm Any Of These Views”.

On This Basis, Imam Moturidi Avoids Conjectural Ideas When Talking About A Religious Group Or Sect. If There Is No Clear Information, It Cites All Of The Available Ideas And Information And Leaves The Conclusion To The Reader. This Prevents The Tentative Information From Being Accepted As A Scientific Fact. For Example, In His Commentary On The Sabaes, He Says:

“There Is Disagreement About The Sabaes. Some Said, “The Sabaes Are People Who Worship Angels And Recite The Tawrat.” “They Are Worshipers Of The Heavenly Bodies; They Were A Group Between Pagans And Christians, Or They Were A People Between Jews And Pagans. ” There Are Also Opinions That “They Followed The Belief Of The Zindik, They Think That There Are Two Gods.” Since They Do Not Have A Book That Has Survived Up Until Now, We Have No Definite Knowledge About Them.

One Of The Contemporary Scholars, Muhammad Fazl Muhammad Abu Jabal, Says The Following About The Role Of Maturidi`S Opinion In The Style Of Tafsiir:

Imam Moturidi Refers To Reason A Lot In His Commentary. The Reason For This, In Short, Is That The Scholar Followed The Representatives Of The "Iraqi School", That Is, The "The School Of Rai'". This School Was Founded By The Great Companion Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (R.A.), After Whom Many Famous Scholars Made This School Popular. The Most Famous Of These Are Abu Hanifa Nu'man And His Two Disciples: Abu Yusuf And Muhammad. They Had A Great Influence On The Intellectual And Scientific Life Of Islamic Civilization. Imam Moturidi Was Also A Representative Of This School, But Also One Of The Leaders Who Formed Its Foundations. However, He Was Not Just A Follower And Imitator, But Had Unique, Distinctive And Innovative Features.

Discussion

It Is Well Known That Many Researchers Who Were Critical Of The Doctrine Of Maturidiyyah Accused The Scholar Of Relying Too Much On Aql, Placing It Over Naqli Knowledge. This Accusation Stemmed From A Deep Ignorance Of The Doctrine Or A One-Sided Study Of It.

Even One Of The Well-Known Scholars, Muhammad Abu Zahra, While Comparing Moturidi And Ash'ari, States That Moturidi Put A Lot Of Emphasis On Aql (Reason, Human Intelligence), Such As:

"However, As A Result Of An In-Depth Study Of The Views Of Maturidi And Ash`Ari, We See That There Is A Difference Between The Views Of These Two Imams On Relying On Aql In Matters Of Belief. There Is No Doubt That Both Of Them Try To Present Intellectual And Logical Arguments In Proving The Beliefs Contained In The Quran. Although They Both Rely On The Quran, One Of Them Gives The Aql Greater "Authority" Over The Other. For Example, In The Ash`Arites, It Is Obligated To Comprehend Allah After Being Called To The True Religion. However, In Maturidiyyah, It Is Obligated To Understand It Intellectually, Even Without Being Called. Maturidi Follows The Path Of Abu Hanifa In This Regard...".

Abu Zahra Tries To Prove His Points With Similar Examples. In Fact, This View Is Widespread In The Arab World, Which Believes In Ash`Arism.

As A Refutation Of This View, Maturidi, In Enumerating The Foundations Of Knowledge In Kitab At-Tawhid, Puts The Reasoning (*Nazar*) Last, As Mentioned Above, And Refutes Those Who Oppose Its Use As Evidence In Religious Matters, Primarily From Naqli Sources. For Example, From The Quran:

"We Will Show Them Our Signs In The Universe And Within Themselves" (Al-Fussilat: 53).

"Do They Not Ever Reflect On Camels—How They Were (Masterfully) Created; And The Sky—How It Was Raised; And The Mountains—How They Were Firmly Set Up; And The Earth—How It Was Levelled Out?!" (Al-Ghashiyah: 17-20).

That Is, Through These Verses, Allah Emphasizes That He Has Called His Servants To Reason, Or Rather, He Has Commanded Them To Do So. In Such Verses, Allah Says, **"Do They Not Ever Reflect (Nazar)?"** It Is Not Surprising That Moturidi Called Aqli Arguments **"Nazar"** (نظر).

In Addition, Abu Mansur Maturidi Himself Fought Hard Against The Mu`Tazilites, Who Preferred Aql To Naql. However, To Prove That Some Sects Of The Mu`Tazilites, Who Considered Reason (Aql) As The Basic Norm, He Had To Resort More To Reason And Logic. This Is Because Often The Evidence That Proves The Falsity Of A Aqli Argument Is Also Aql (Reason).

He Who Denies Nazar Has No Proof Other Than Nazar. This Is Proof That Aqli Evidence Is Necessary For The Denial Of Aqli Evidence. In Order To Understand The Wisdom Of Creation And To Understand That It Was Not Done Simply, That Is, Without A Purpose, Nazar (In The Meaning Of Reason) Is Needed. It Is Also Necessary To Reason In Order To Prove Who Created The Universe, Or Whether It Existed Spontaneously, Or Whether It Was Created Later Or Eternal. All This Is Proof That There Is No Other Way For `Ilm (Knowledge) Than Nazar (Reason).

So, The Fact That Moturudi Used A Lot Of Aqli And Logical Arguments Does Not Mean That He Placed Aql Over Naql. Perhaps It Was To Give A Reasonable Rebuttal To Those Who Preferred Aqli Evidence, Or To Support The Naqli Evidence.

"أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ. الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ"

"There Will Certainly Be No Fear For The Close Servants Of Allah, Nor Will They Grieve. They Are Those Who Are Faithful And Are Mindful (Of Him)." (Yunus: 62-63).

In Particular, In His Commentary On The Above Verse, Imam Moturidi Says The Following:

Regarding These Words Of Allah Almighty, The Mu`Tazilites Say: “This Verse Proves That Those Who Commit A Great Sin Are Not Believers. Because When They Became Believers, They Were Surely Friends Of Allah. Had They Been Friends Of Allah, They Would Not Have Had Any Danger Or Concern. Therefore, There Is No Doubt That The Danger And Anxiety Of Those Who Have Sinned Is A Sign That They Are Not Believers. They Have No Friendship Under Faith.”

However, In Our View, The Verse, “**There Will Certainly Be No Fear For The Close Servants Of Allah, Nor Will They Grieve**” Belongs To A Specific Time. Even Those Who Have Committed A Great Sin Should Not Be In Danger Or Anxious At A Certain Time. There Is No Conclusive Evidence In The Verse That There Will Be No Danger Or Anxiety For The Friends Of Allah From Beginning To End. Therefore, Allah`S Words, “**There Will Certainly Be No Fear For The Close Servants Of Allah, Nor Will They Grieve**” Refer To The Fear And Anxiety Of The People Of The World (That Is, The Worldly Life). Because All Their Dangers And Worries Are Focused On The Hereafter. When He Said, “**There Will Certainly Be No Fear For Them, Nor Will They Grieve**”, Jannat Was Probably Meant. Because If They Enter Jannat, They Will Be Safe From Everything That Afflicts Them.

The Scholar Thus Argues With The Mu`Tazilites And Those Who, Like Them, Put Aql And Logic Above All Else In Their Own Style. Thus, On The One Hand, He Wants These Sects To Be Able To See And Realize Their Own Mistakes By Confronting Them With Their Favorite Style And Arguments. On The Other Hand, He Supports The Belief Of The Ahl As-Sunnah With Both Intellectual And Logical Arguments. As A Result Of These Efforts, Moturidi Was Able To Demonstrate In Practice That Ahl As-Sunnah Is Far Superior To The Teachings Of Other Sects In Terms Of Logical Justification.

Conclusion

It Can Be Seen That Maturidi`S Method Of Covering The Aqidah (Creed) Issues In The Quran Was Based On And Defended The Beliefs Formed In The Spirit Of The Hanafi Tradition. Where Necessary, He Enriched Them By Quoting Verses From The Quran. Due To The Nature Of His Time, He Cited Many Contemporary Views And Gave Them Well-Founded Denials. His Commentary Is Characterized By The Greatest Collection Of Ideological Views And Ideas.

The Socio-Political Processes Of The Life The Scholar Lived And The Struggles For The Preservation Of Pure Islamic Faith Also Had A Great Influence On The Formation Of The Style And Methodology Of Writing The Scholar's Works And Gave Great Scientific Value To His Works.

It Is Also Clear From The Above Evidences That Maturidi First Summarized The Views Of Each Movement Separately And Then Gave Them Systematic Refutations. An Analytical Study Of The Rebuttals To The Streams Revealed That The Rebuttals Were Primarily Based On Naqli Evidence, And That The Logical And Aqli Arguments Were Mainly Presented To Support And Interpret These Naqli Evidences.

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