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DIVINE ATTRIBUTES IN THE MATURIDI TEACHINGS AND TRADITIONAL RELIGION BELIEF OF THE KAZAKH NATION: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Divine attributes, or the qualities of God, represent one of the most intricate and significant subjects within the Islamic tradition. It is fair to assert that this significance stems from its direct connection to the Creator. This matter has ignited debates among scholars and stirred controversies among various theological schools. Notably, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and key figures from the Maturidi theological school are integral to this discussion. Their principal adversaries promptly countered the positions of groups like the Mutazila, Jabriya, and Qadaria, providing accurate interpretations and solutions. The article explores the origins and development of these divine attributes, elucidating the concept as understood by influential thinkers from the Kazakh steppe who engaged with religious topics. The works of Abai, Shakarim, Ybyrai, Mashhur Zhusip, and other religious scholars from the XIX-XX centuries played a pivotal role in shaping the traditional religious teachings of the Kazakh populace. These works encompassed theological, religious-legal, and Sufi topics. Being deeply immersed in the social dynamics of their era, these educators possessed a profound understanding of the spiritual matters and effectively communicated these concepts to a broad audience. Their writings and poetry serve as evidence of this engagement. In this article, we aim to evaluate how the findings of Maturidi faith scholars align with the traditional religious wisdom of the Kazakh people. This analysis illustrates that the scholarly and theoretical foundations of traditional Islam, as referenced by Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Kemeluly Tokayev, are grounded in sound theological reasoning.

Key words: Maturidi school of faith, divine, attribute, tradition, religious knowledge.

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Матуридилік ілім мен қазақ халқының дәстүрлі діни танымындағы тәңірлік атрибуттар: салыстырмалы талдау

Тәңірлік атрибуттар, яғни Құдайға тән сипаттар ислам сенім жүйесіндегі күрделі әрі өзектілігін жоймаған маңызды тақырыптардың бірі саналады. Оның өзекті болу себебі тікелей Жаратушымен байланысты болуында десек қателеспейміз. Ғұламалар арасындағы талас-тартыстардың туындауына да әсер етіп, теологиялық сенім мектептері арасындағы қайшылықтар көбіне осы мәселе аясында өрбиді. Әбу Мансур әл-Матуриди және матуриди сенім мектебінің көрнекті өкілдері де бұл тақырыптан тысқары қалған емес. Басты оппоненттері мұғтазила, жабрия, қадария секілді топтардың көзқарастарына дер кезінде жауап беріп, дұрыс шешімдерді ұсынып отырды. Мақалада сипаттардың генезисі мен эволюциясы баяндалып, дін туралы қалам тербеген қазақ даласының ұлы тұлғаларының түсінігіндегі тәңірлік атрибут ұғымы айқындалады. Қазақ халқының дәстүрлі діни танымын қалыптастырған Абай, Шәкәрім, Ыбырай, Мәшһүр Жүсіп және XIX-XX ғасырлардағы өзге де діни ағартушылар еңбектерінде теологиялық, діни-құқықтық, сопылық бағыттағы мәселелер қамтылды. Олар сол кезеңнің тұрмыс-тіршілігімен біте қайнасқан адам ретінде жоғары деңгейде түсінді әрі көпшілік жұрттың деңгейінде жеткізе алды. Шығармалары мен өлең жолдарындағы үзінділер мұны айғақтайды. Біз ұсынған бұл мақалада матуриди сенім мектебі ғұламаларының тұжырымдары қазақ халқының дәстүрлі діни танымымен қаншалықты сабақтасатындығы анықталады. Бұл өз кезегінде Қазақстан Республикасының президенті Қасым-Жомарт Кемелұлы Тоқаевтың атап өткен дәстүрлі исламның ғылыми-теориялық негізі теологиялық тұрғыдан дәйектелгенін көрсетеді.

Түйін сөздер: Матуриди сенім мектебі, тәңірлік, атрибут, дәстүр, діни таным.

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Божественные атрибуты в учениях Матуриды и традиционные религиозные верования казахского народа: сравнительный анализ

Божественные атрибуты, отражающие характеристики Бога, представляют собой одну из самых сложных и значимых тем в исламской теологии. Их важность обусловлена непосредственной связью с Творцом. В этом ключе возникли споры между различными теологическими течениями, что вызвало множество научных дебатов. Абу Мансур аль-Матуриды и ведущие представители его школы активно участвовали в этих обсуждениях. Противостоящие мнения исходили от таких групп, как мутазила, джабрия и кадария, которые предлагали свои аргументированные решения. В данной статье рассматриваются истоки и эволюция божественных атрибутов, а также анализируется это понятие через призму учений известных казахских мыслителей, которые в своих трудах затрагивали и религиозные вопросы. Работы таких просветителей как Абай, Шакарим, Ыбырай и Машхур Жусип охватывают теологические, правовые и суфийские аспекты, способствующие формированию традиционного религиозного мировоззрения казахского народа. Обладая глубоким пониманием своего времени, они могли разъяснять широкой аудитории, что находит отражение в их произведениях. Статья также исследует, как выводы ученых Матуридий сочетаются с традиционными религиозными знаниями казахов, что подтверждает теоретическую основу традиционного ислама, о которой упоминал Президент Казахстана Касым-Жомарт Токаев.

Ключевые слова: школа Матуриды, божественные, атрибуты, традиция, религиозные знания.

Introduction

When Prophet Muhammad relocated from Mecca to Medina, marking the initial phases of Hijrah, various religious factions emerged, each advocating their own beliefs. This led to intense debates and disagreements among them, sometimes escalating to conflict and even warfare. A significant point of contention that sparked widespread debate and discord was the nature of God's attributes. Ultimately, these disputes became severe enough that each group accused the other of heresy.

In the realm of Islamic theology, there are two primary perspectives regarding the origins of issues linked to the attributes of God. One viewpoint suggests that these issues arise from external influences unrelated to Islam itself. However, there is no consensus on the specific nature of these external influences. Western scholars comment on this matter, with Theodore, a disciple of Yuhanna al-Dimashqi, claiming that Christian theological concepts, particularly through the works of Abu Qurra, have left an imprint on Islam. This interpretation has been acknowledged and supported by various Orientalists, including Baker, Von Kremer, McDonald, and Wolfson (Wolfson, 2001: 85-100). Supporters of these individuals argue that the theological dilemmas faced by Islam and Christianity, along with their approaches to resolution, exhibit considerable similarities. This alignment is not merely coincidental; rather, it reveals underlying connections in

various facets of the issues at hand (Gazzali, 1971: 96-103). As Professor Macdonald explains, the Islamic notion that the "Quran is uncreated" finds its roots in the Christian idea that the divine word exists eternally in the heart of the Father. This leads Yuhanna al-Dimashqi to assert that the Quran has a created nature; however, this stance is unfounded and constitutes a rejection of God's nature (Tritton, 1983: 59). Furthermore, Professor Wensink argues that the division of attributes into *zati* and *figli* by ahli sunnah parallels elements of the Christian theological framework (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 235). Another indication of how Christian beliefs have impacted this discussion on character can be found in the actions of Caliph Mamun's chief of police in Baghdad. This is evident from a correspondence addressed to Ishaq ibn Ibrahim. In his letter, Mamun urged Isaac to challenge Islamic scholars who assert that the Quran is *qadim* (eternal) and uncreated. He remarked, "The belief that the Quran is uncreated parallels what Christians claim about Jesus, Mary's son: 'He is uncreated because he is the word of God'" (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 235). In this scenario, the caliph was mindful of his own authority and, to safeguard it, argued that the Quran is a created entity. The perspective of Abu Huzayl al-Allaf, a prominent figure among the mutazilas, asserts that "Allah possesses knowledge and is essentially knowledge itself," which reflects the impact of Christian doctrine. However, Shahrastani disputes this view, labeling it erroneous, as he believes that categorizing

attributes in such a way implies a multiplicity within the essence of the Creator. He contended that the concepts of *ujood* (existence), *ilm* (knowledge), and *hayat* (life), akin to the notions of father, son, and holy spirit, embody the core of the Trinity in Christianity (Şehristânî, 2006: 52, Ashgari, 2010: 71). The Mutazilites rejected those attributes, claiming that Christians' positions lead to trinitarian beliefs. That is, they denied God's qualities in order to prevent Christians' erroneous conclusions.

The Mutazilite assertion that the "Quran is a creation" likely stems from Jewish beliefs regarding the "Torah as a creation." Various interpretations exist regarding those who argue that the Quran, representing the word of God (*Qalam*), was produced or created. One perspective attributes this view to Labid ibn al-Aghsam and his nephew Talut, who voiced such opinions concerning the Quran. Notably, Talut is characterized as an apostate who has continued to oppose religious principles (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 236). Ibn Quteiba claims that the first to declare the Quran as a created entity was al-Mughira ibn Said al-Ijli (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 236). Additionally, other historical accounts credit Bishr al-Marisi as the pioneer among the Mutazalites in proclaiming the Quran—the divine word—as a creature. It is noteworthy that Bishr al-Marisi's father was a Jewish figure and that he was an influential artisan in Kufa.

It is often asserted that outside influences, notably from philosophers, played a significant role in the complex issues concerning the attributes of God. In this context, it can be noted that there were links between *Qalam* scholars, including the Mutazilites, and Greek philosophical thought. The Mutazilite thinker Shahristani, referencing Wasil ibn Ato, remarked on these characteristics: "This perspective was not common at first. He argued that it is inconceivable to have two eternal beings. Those who claim that there exists another ancient essence aside from God are essentially introducing the idea of multiple deities" (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 236). Over time, Wasil's followers delved more deeply into philosophical texts. This exploration led to a rejection of the belief that Allah is *Alim* (All-Knowing) and *Qadir* (All-Powerful), ultimately resulting in a denial of His attributes. Abu al-Hashim remarked that these two qualities represent ancient states of the Creator. In contrast, Abu al-Hasan al-Basri viewed these attributes as part of a singular doctrine, aligning his perspective with that of genuine philosophers (Şehristânî, 2006: 48-49). Shahristani notes that another Mutazilite, Abu al-Huzayl, adhered to the philosophical tradition. Al-Allaf posits that God's knowledge is intrinsic to Him, equating this

knowledge with God's essence. Additionally, He possesses power, and this power is also identified with His very nature. Consequently, they did not perceive these attributes as having eternal properties. Thus, they adopted the philosophical approach (Şehristânî, 2006: 51). Regarding the second perspective that contributed to the emergence of issues concerning God's attributes, it is important to note that external influences did not play a role in the development of other related topics stemming from rational considerations in matters of faith. In fact, this can be regarded as an indication of the intellectual growth and profound contemplation within Islam. While one cannot entirely dismiss the impact of belief systems outside of Islam, these influences did facilitate a deeper exploration of the problems at hand, broadening their scope. Professors Wensick and Watt suggest that the discussion surrounding divine attributes originated from a conflict among the Kharijites regarding the fate of individuals who committed significant sins. This contentious debate ultimately prompted people to reflect upon the concept of destiny. Such disagreements and disputes among the Kharijites can be traced back to the early periods of Islamic thought. During that period, the theological aspects of Islam remained largely unaffected by other religious traditions. The evolution and enrichment of Islamic thought stand out as distinctly unique, unlike the philosophical developments found elsewhere. Other belief systems do not seem to influence the trajectory of growth and well-being within this context (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 237-238). This distinctive feature garnered attention in the Islamic realm and propelled its further advancements. Focusing solely on the superficial, literal interpretation of the *khbari* traits within the Quranic texts suggests that these elements emerged from intrinsic Islamic principles rather than external sources. Embracing the divine attributes in a literal (*haqiqi*) manner, rather than in a metaphorical (*majazi*) one, led to an increased emphasis on the semantic, philosophical, and ontological dimensions of language. The notable contributions of Andalusian Jewish thinker Musa ibn Maimun and historian ibn Khaldun marked a significant early engagement with this evolving discourse.

As previously noted, in the early centuries of Hijra, tensions among various religious factions escalated. Each faction sought to undermine the others, labeling them as heretics, idolaters, or apostates. Their attempts to impose their beliefs even resorted to violence and intimidation. Specifically, during the reigns of the mutazila caliphs Mamun, Wasiq, and Mugtasim, those adhering to Sunni beliefs faced

significant persecution for their opposition. Scholars aligned with the renowned Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal were particularly targeted with aggressive measures. However, as the tumultuous environment began to ease, the scholars of Qalam shifted their focus, suggesting that the debate over the attributes of God was not among the core issues of faith (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 232). Some academics, referencing the ideas of Daouani, who provided a commentary on the writings of al-Aqeed Adudia, have argued that this dilemma cannot be resolved through mere logic and reasoning. Renowned fiqh scholar and philosopher Daouani Jalaluddin asserts that comprehending and accepting the resolution of conflicts regarding divine attributes is beyond human capacity without divine revelation, specifically through qashf. He suggests that regardless of the approach taken, no detrimental consequences can be seen (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 233). Consequently, it is often posited that an in-depth discussion on the nature of the divine has become unnecessary in contemporary times. This stems from the fact that such inquiries do not align with the core objectives of Shariah, are inconsistent with the essential mission of the faith, and no faction can arrive at a universally accepted conclusion that satisfies everyone (Muhammed Abdu, 1986: 106).

Ibn Rushd asserts in this context: “The essential aspects of divine nature that most individuals need to grasp have been explicitly articulated in Shariah. Without delving into intricate details, it is necessary to acknowledge and believe in the existence of general divine attributes. Ordinary individuals struggle to identify a precise, straightforward matter amidst complex explanations” (Irfan, Yeprem, 2020: 233). Similarly, Muhammad Abdu, a prominent 19th-century scholar of Qalam, discusses a comparable concept in his work “Risala Tawheed”. He expresses in one of his statements: “We hold the belief that the Creator is distinct from all others—azali/abadi (eternal), hai (living), alim (knowledgeable), murid (willing), qadir (powerful), wajib al-wujud (must exist), mutakallim (speaking), samigh (hearing). It is essential for us to embrace and recognize these exceptional attributes of God at the highest level of perfection. Engaging with thoroughly examined topics does not steer the human intellect towards a definitive conclusion; rather, it fails to arrive at a resolute answer. Instead, it confuses the intellect and leads to misinterpretations within the Shariah” (Muhammad Abdu, 1986: 106-107).

In later centuries, scholars of Qalam held views that closely resembled those of early thinkers. While the followers of ahlus-sunnah maintain that

comprehending the true essence and nature of God, along with His attributes, is unattainable, they were unafraid to engage in debates with the Mutazilas, whom they regarded as adversaries on these matters. The representatives of the earlier generation, often referred to as the righteous, dismissed this type of discourse, perceiving it as a trivial concern of lesser importance.

Justification for the choice of topic, goal and task

The subject of divine attributes within Islamic theology has roots tracing back to 1300, originating during the time of Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi tradition, who established the initial theories of Qalam teachings. Approximately two and a half centuries later, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, a prominent disciple, critically examined theological positions and established foundational elements for a new school of creed, thereby revitalizing and organizing the discourse. Notable scholars such as Abu Mugin Nasafi and Abu Yusr al-Bazdawi dedicated themselves to effectively communicating Maturidi’s teachings to the broader public. Additionally, figures like Fahrudin Razi and Taftazani contributed their insights by formulating scholarly conclusions concerning divine attributes. They employed philosophical concepts to elucidate and articulate the nature of God’s attributes (Mehmet, 2024: 1). Theological debates, shaped by various political and intellectual influences, gave rise to new schools of thought and diverse interpretations of divine attributes (Zaini, Fauziah: 2024: 1). If we analyze the evolution of these attributes, the phase mentioned above is deemed classical. During the second medieval period, fatalistic ideologies gained dominance, and while theology saw some innovations, it also entered a phase of stagnation (Narendra and others, 2024: 1-2). This decline is attributed to the emergence of the Jabri school, which limited reasoned discussions surrounding God’s attributes. In the third and final phase, thinkers such as Muhammad Abdu, Said Ahmad Khan, and Ismayil Raji al-Faruqi endeavored to interpret divine attributes within contemporary contexts, aiming to link the foundational teachings of Islam with modern developments (Narendra and others, 2024: 1). The interpretation of divine attributes has varied significantly based on geographical, political, and social contexts, leading to diverse representations of the concept of God. Regardless of the passage of time, it remains clear that today the categorization of divine attributes within Islamic teachings is primarily based on the Maturidi

framework, which continues to be a subject of scholarly examination. Concurrently, the traditional religious knowledge of the Kazakh people is explored through the works of notable figures such as Abai, Shakarim, Mashhur, and Ybrai, rather than solely from a unilateral theological perspective. This multidimensional analysis underscores the significance of our research topic. In our research endeavor, we aim to establish a scientific and theoretical framework for traditional Islam, as highlighted by President Kassym-Jomart Kemeluly Tokaev, to promote the values of traditional Islam, it is essential to examine the literary contributions of our forebears that were developed within the context of the Hanafi-Maturidi teachings, which have strong historical ties to the Kazakh populace. We must articulate the fundamental principles of these teachings with great clarity (kazislam.kz, 2023). Moreover, it is crucial to explore the connection between religion and tradition from a theological perspective and to conduct a comparative analysis using specific convolutions.

Scientific research methodology

The primary focus of this article is the attributes of the divine, specifically the qualities associated with God. Our research emphasizes the development of these divine characteristics over time. We also explore the attributes highlighted in the works of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and various scholars from the Maturidi school, key figures who contributed to the traditional religious understanding of the Kazakh people, including Abai, Shakarim, Ybrai, and Mashhur. Our objective was to elucidate the relationships by offering dual conclusions. To illustrate these connections, we employed a range of methodologies: comparative analysis, historical-genetic exploration, as well as descriptive and interpretive approaches.

Results and discussion

The Maturidi doctrine is intricately connected to the aforementioned issues. When discussing Maturidi, one immediately thinks of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, who organized and codified the ideas of Abu Hanifa. During the time of Abu Hanifa, the divine attributes and names associated with the concepts of *azal* and *abadi*, or the nature of eternity, had not yet emerged. The attributes associated with change and transformation are characteristics of creation, while God's attributes are defined as *hayat* (life), *samg* (hearing), *basar* (sight), *ilm* (knowledge), *ku-*

dra (power), *irada* (will), and *kalam* (speech), even though they manifest within creation. Furthermore, these attributes are neither identical to the essence of God nor completely distinct from it. Concepts such as creation, sustenance, and the act of bringing forth something from nothing, along with other physical attributes linked to actions, are regarded as eternal in nature. Allah Almighty embodies the essence of being the creator even prior to creation and serves as the provider of sustenance before it is actually bestowed. His actions are eternal, meaning the created entities emerged subsequently while the uncreated existed beforehand (Mulla Ali Qari, 2011: 43-46). Maturidi's views on the eternality (*azzali*) of all divine attributes were influenced by Abu Hanifa. Drawing from Abu Hanifa's writings, Imam Abu Mansur identified fundamental issues pertaining to faith, aligning them with rational thought and textual evidence. He conducted a thorough analysis, thereby integrating these concepts into the essential teachings of Qalam (Kemal Işık, 1980: 16). The contributions of scholars from the Abu Maturidi school, who meticulously examined Mansur al-Maturidi's intellectual legacy and sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of theological issues, are also significant. For example, numerous theological issues raised by Abu Hanifa can be found within the Maturidi framework. Scholars of the Maturidi tradition contend that the attributes of Allah do not exist as independent entities, contrary to the assertions of the Mutazilas. The Qaramite representatives argue that these attributes exist apart from the essence itself. However, Maturidi thinkers assert that each attribute is intrinsically linked to its essence. Moreover, the interrelationship among the attributes is consistent; they are neither together nor distinct from one another. If two entities exist separately, they imply the existence of two distinct things, where one can exist without the other. Such a notion cannot hold true between the Almighty Allah and His essence or among His attributes. Thus, they do not exist in separation or in unity. This relationship can be illustrated by the analogy of 1 and 10; the number 1 is neither the entirety of ten nor exists independently from it (Sabuni, 2018: 234). Hakim Abai analyzes the attributes of God in his 38th verse, and he characterizes it as the representation of the true Hanafi-Maturidi school, saying: "Laghayru wala hua" (Qunanbayuly, 2016:129). That is, he states that the attributes are neither God nor something separate from Him. The legendary Jussip also said in his poetry: "I recognize the eight attributes of God, the One Creator":

“His Attribute: neither ghyzy, not ghari.

This is what happened by His order, – confirms Hakim Abai’s words (Mashhur Jussip, 2013: 199).

Besides Abai Qunanbaiuly and Mashhur Jussip, who explored the characteristics of the divine, other notable figures include Shakarim Qudaiberdiuly and Ybyrai Altynsarin. After outlining the principles of faith, Ibray Altynsarin goes on to describe God’s attributes. In his work “Pillar of Islam,” he conveys, “If someone inquires about the essence of God, the reply should be: God is deserving of our reverence. He stands alone; no one is like him and none can compare” (Altynsarin, 2024: 15). Similarly, Shakarim Qudaiberdiuly writes in “Muslim Faith”: “Oh, friends! From the preceding statements, you have learned that Allah is one. Now, let me expound on His attributes. God is real; He exists indepen-

dently and was not created by anyone. His existence is eternal, with no beginning or end-He will never cease to exist, die, age, or change. God is singular, lacking any partner, counterpart, or likeness, and He does not resemble anything” (Qudaiberdiuly, 2024: 7). When the famous Jussip spoke about God the Creator:

To compare God to nothing,

Nothing can be like Him, – he says (Mashhur Jussip, 2013: 199). These conclusions are clearly consistent with the saying in Abu Mansur al-Maturidi’s famous “Kitab at-Tawheed” book about the wrongness of equating God to a single thing: “Allah the Most High is alone; nothing is like to Him.” He is eternal, and nothing contradicts or equals Him” (al-Maturidi, 2010:89). Now, let’s compare these notions and find out from table 1.

Table 1

Abu Mansur Al- Maturidi / Maturidi doctrine	Mashhur Jussip’s work	Ybray Altynsarin’s work	Shakarim Qudaiberdiuly
لا شبيه له (there is no similar) la Shabiha لا ضد له (no rival) la didda Lahu لا ند له (incomparable)	Nothing can be like Him Nothing is like Him	No one has the likeness or equality of Allah Almighty	Allah is alone, has no companion, friend, or counterpart, and is unlike anything

Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, along with proponents of the Maturidi school and religious educators among the Kazakh populace, expressed: “There is none comparable to Him.” This assertion aligns with the Quranic text, which describes Allah as “Samig (all-hearing) and Basir (all-seeing)” (Quran Karim, 2015: 484). Al-Maturidi emphasizes that the essence of this verse signifies that the Creator stands alone, with no peer or likeness to anything (al-Maturidi, 2010: 89). Moreover, Husamuddin al-Sygnaqi, a prominent Islamic scholar from the Kazakh steppes, underscores in his significant work “Tasdid” that the cited text does not suggest any abstract, concealed, or fluctuating interpretations (Husamuddin, 2021: 136). It’s important to note that terminologies used in religious writings can vary. The text under discussion is categorized as muhkam, meaning it is a clear verse that conveys a singular meaning. Conversely, a verse that may have multiple interpretations, making it challenging to ascertain the intended meaning, is termed mutashabih, rendering it unsuitable as definitive evidence for a singular judgment (al-Babirti, 2021: 97-98). In Islamic theology, the con-

cept of tanzih is fundamental when discussing God. This principle asserts that the Creator is devoid of any flaws, and all perfection is attributed to Him (al-Babirti, 2021: 97). To properly evaluate God’s qualities, one must apply this criterion. Consequently, scholars from the Hanafi-Maturidi tradition, along with figures such as Abai, Shakarim, Mashhur Zhusip, and Ybyrai Altynsarin—all of whom played a significant role in promoting religion among the Kazakh people—agree on the necessity of recognizing divine attributes through the lens of tanzih and muhkam as central tenets. They further emphasize the importance of classifying these attributes for a deeper understanding.

After outlining the principles of faith, Ybray Altynsarin elaborates on the characteristics of God Almighty. He delineates the seven attributes as follows: “The first is life, which means being alive, having knowledge, wielding power, hearing, seeing, desiring will, creating from nothing, and articulating words” (Altynsarin, 2024: 15). Though it’s stated that there are seven attributes, it becomes apparent that eight traits are referenced in the discussion.

The distinction between the attributes of power and creation can be traced back to Maturidi theology. In his book “Muslim Faith,” Shakarim Qudaiberdiuly begins by addressing the essence of faith, affirming the existence of God and His singularity. This introduction indicates that the text is crafted with a logical framework; prior to detailing the attributes, he emphasizes the importance of clarifying who is being referred to, questioning His existence and oneness. Ibray Altynsarin viewed the attributes solely as subutiya, while Shakarim Qudaiberdiuly categorized them into three groups: zatiya, subutiya, and salbiya. The attributes of existence include being existent, self-existent, already present, non-existent, solitary, and unique. In addition to these, the text lists eight characteristics termed subutiya, which are: life, knowledge, power, desire (indicating a preference for occurrences), and predictive abilities (such as speaking, listening, and seeing, regardless of existence). The text also addresses the characteristics of salabiya, which describe those who do not sleep and do not undergo change. If it is stated that there are no imperfections, this can be understood (Qudaiberdiuly, 2024: 7). Similarly, Mashhur Jusip articulated the attributes of God in his poetry. To declare that he is solitary, lacks a partner, is unlike any other, and possesses life through attributes such as knowledge, strength, vision (basar), hearing (samigh), will (yrada), creation from nothing (takwin), and speech (kalam) like Ibray and Shakarim, highlights the characteristics of subutiya, as discussed by Mashhur Zhusip (2013: 94). He did not merely cite the names of these attributes; he also provided a thorough exploration of each one. Similarly, Abai Qunanbaiuly addressed the divine attributes. In his thirty-eighth word, he initially emphasizes the concepts of knowledge and understanding, then delves into the essence of true faith. It is clear that merely believing in the oneness of Allah, His holy Quran, and His prophet Muhammad will not resolve the issue or produce fruitful outcomes. He underscores that achieving perfect faith necessitates an approach that genuinely capitalizes on the essence of belief. He delves into the significance of the eight qualities and emphasizes the importance of thoroughly examining them, outlining the essential attributes of the Almighty: Life, Knowledge, Power, Sight, Hearing, Will, Pen, and Creation (Qunanbaiuly, 2016: 126). Hakim Abai regards these attributes as zatiya and asma al-husna, meaning there are additional beautiful names that pertain specifically to the Creator. He notes that the majority of these are classified as zatiya, subutiya, and figlia attributes (Qunanbaiuly, 2016: 128). Consequently, these

eight attributes are part of the essence that is solely representative of God. In truth, Hakim Abai affirms that these traits are categorized into zatiya, subutiya, and figlia. Furthermore, it is crucial to highlight that merely memorizing these attributes is not beneficial; instead, they should be actively involved into our lives. “How is it?” A question may arise. He says that it is vital to align your interests with God’s qualities. He tells us that we should not be disgusted with ignorance, asking if we can be like God, and that being like does not mean being exactly the same as the Creator. He concludes that only then can we enter real Islam and grasp the core of true faith.

Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and the principles of Maturidi thought provide an in-depth exploration of divine attributes. Various scholars have represented their classifications through differing frameworks. Before delving into specific details, there is an important discussion regarding the uniqueness of these attributes to God. Al-Maturidi asserts that the divine qualities are affirmed through the Quran, hadiths, and reasoned arguments. In his comprehensive analysis, he frequently employs rational evaluation to elucidate these attributes. For instance, the act of creating the universe from nothing demonstrates God’s will. Consequently, the attribute of omnipotence follows from this premise. To reject the essence of divine power is to imply weakness and impotence, which contradicts the notion of an all-powerful deity (al-Maturidi, 2010: 108-109). In this framework, certain characteristics have been established and solidified. He also addressed the traits of qalam and takwin independently. The primary challengers of Abu Mansur were the Mutazilas. Regarding the topic of divine attributes, their leader categorized the Kagbi attributes into zati and figli, detailing their distinctions. Abu Mansur aimed to counter the claims of the opposing faction. While al-Maturidi does not explicitly categorize the divine attributes into two groups, it becomes evident from his dialogue with the mutazila that there exist both essential and accidental attributes (al-Maturidi, 2010: 113). When examining the al-Maturidi doctrine, which expands upon Mansur’s intellectual contributions and positions Maturidi as a significant creed, we find that the categorization of divine attributes is not presented in a uniform manner. Prior to this classification into various types, there was an effort to clarify the eternal nature of these attributes and to affirm that they are indeed characteristics of the Creator. A key issue arises from the close connection between divine attributes and the act of creation. This implies that processes like bringing the universe into being, causing life and death, provid-

ing sustenance, and creating existence from non-existence are all intertwined with these attributes.

The scholars of the Maturidi school, including Nuriddin Sabuni, Mulla Ali Qari, and Kamaluddin al-Bayadi, have presented various classifications of divine attributes in their writings. Sabuni focuses solely on zatiya attributes, while Mulla Ali Qari expands on this by addressing both zatiya and figlia attributes, providing a detailed explanation grounded

in Abu Hanifa’s teachings. In contrast, Kamaluddin al-Bayadi categorizes attributes into salbiya and subutiya, asserting that both types fall under the zatiya category. Notably, this method of classifying attributes within the Maturidi framework aligns closely with the teachings found in the works of Abai, Shakarim, Ybrai, and Mashhur.

To summarize the above points, please refer to the table below:

Table 2

Divine attributes/ صفات الله				
Imam Maturidi and Maturidi Creed School (group 1) according to the position ↓ Sifa figlia ↓ Sifa zatiya	Maturidi Creed School (Group 2) ↓ Sifa zatiya ↙ ↘ Salabiya Subutia	In Hakim Abai’s works ↓ Zati Subuti Figli	In Shakarim’s work ↓ Zati Subuti Negative	In Ibray and Mashhur’s works ↓ General 8 subuti attributes

Conclusion

The Maturidi doctrine, passed down through generations, holds significant importance in Central Asia. Specifically, it has served as a foundation of religious understanding for the Kazakh population throughout history. However, during the Soviet period, which lasted nearly a century, widespread secularization led to a profound religious and spiritual crisis in Central Asian nations. The long-standing religious customs and teachings of the area faded from collective memory. Following the downfall of the atheistic system and the breakup of the Soviet Union, a widespread quest for spiritual meaning emerged among the population. Since the early years of independence, numerous religious beliefs from several Muslim nations have progressively made their way into the region. This area had, for nearly a century, seen a decline in its own spiritual traditions and values. While the religious groups from Turkey and Pakistan have distinct perspectives, approaches to sharing their faith, and practices, the majority of them adhere to the Hanafi Madhab. These congregations were characterized by the Sufi tradition, a mission of religious enlightenment, and the practice of preaching. However, over time, fundamentalist ele-

ments began to emerge among those who followed the path of Islamic call.

The Salafi/Wahhabi philosophy is widely recognized as the dominant religious doctrine exported to the region by Arab countries. There is little doubt that the extremist Salafist philosophies differ from the region’s traditional Hanafi-Maturidi doctrines in terms of fiqh, theology, and methodology. This concept is quickly spreading in the ex-Soviet countries. The primary reason for this is that the Muslim peoples of the region lost their traditional religious worldview for a long period due to Soviet ideology.

Essentially, the Salafi philosophy of fundamentalism is the only tool for spreading the Arab style of Islam. This teaching denigrates the national culture and traditions of Muslim nations and ethnic groups, while religion is taught solely via Arab culture and worldview. According to this viewpoint, this philosophy contradicts the Hanafi-Maturidi concept, which integrates religion and tradition. To ensure political, religious, and social stability in the area and in our own country, we must reestablish the old religious model based on the Hanafi-Maturid philosophy, which Central Asian nations have followed for generations. Only then will the peoples of the region stick to the traditional faith of Islam while

still preserving their own national identity and rich culture.

The unique theological worldview of Central Asian Muslims, as well as theology (usul), “fiqh” (furugh)/fiqh methodology (usul al- fiqh), tafsir, hadith, and “tasawwuf,” an autonomous scientific school that has existed for more than 12 centuries, have a religious-scientific foundation. This assertion is congruent with the traditional (parallel) scientific heritage recorded by Central Asian scholars in all areas of religious teachings. Many scientists from Kazakhstan contributed significantly to the foundation and growth of this scientific school, leaving valuable scientific works behind. Their number is infinite. However, if we highlight the most prominent figures, they include Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, Ahmed Yugnaki, Suleiman Bakyrqani, Alauddin Ispidzhabi, Qawamuddin al-Itqani, Husamuddin as-Syghnaqi, as well as notable individuals of the 18th–20th centuries who made significant contributions to the preservation of Kazakh spirituality and religious values through their poetic works, such as Mashhur Zhushup, Shortanbai Qanayuly, Bukhar Zhyrau, Shakarim Qudaiberdiyuly, Abai Qunanbaiuly, and Ybyrai Altynsarin. In addition to poetry, specialized books addressing the theological, legal, and moral dimensions of Islam were also published during this period. From this perspective, Muslims in Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, do not need religious and ideological exports outside of Kazakhstan. Today, the primary objective and purpose of the country’s religious policy should be to resuscitate the religious tradition/worldview and the religious-scientific school of Islam as a religious-ideological

foundation for the Kazakh nation, which has existed for more than 12 centuries. In this regard, we propose the following solutions:

- Comprehensive research and academic projects should be initiated by scholars;
- The essence and content of traditional Islam should be analyzed through historical-comparative studies that consider language, culture, and traditions;
- Specialists in this field should create textbooks and educational materials in a manner accessible to the general public;
- National and spiritual values should not be limited to books but actively promoted through social media in audio and video formats;
- Given the recognized significance and prestige of our traditional Islamic studies school, its presentation to the public should incorporate modern technologies to align with contemporary needs.

It is the only method to combat the many fundamentalist, radical and harmful religious doctrines.

Our study’s focus on theological divine characteristics is just one aspect of the Kazakh nation’s ancient religious understanding. Through such scientific research, we can build people’s religious immunity and contribute to the prevention of many bad tendencies.

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