



e-ISSN 2798-8260



Jurnal ISO: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Humaniora Vol: 4, No 2, 2024, Page: 1-7

# The Life and Scientific Work Of Zahid Kawthari

Khabibidinov Boburshakh Abduvali Ugli

International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53697/iso.v4i2.2085>

\*Correspondence: Khabibidinov  
Boburshakh Abduvali Ugli

Email: [b\\_khabibidinov@gmail.com](mailto:b_khabibidinov@gmail.com)

Received: 10-10-2024

Accepted: 09-11-2024

Published: 16-12-2024



**Copyright:** © 2024 by the authors.  
Submitted for open access publication  
under the terms and conditions of the  
Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY)  
license  
(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Abstract:** The article provides information about the life and scientific work of the scholar Zahid Kathari, who worked and lived in Turkey and Egypt in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition, it touches on various difficulties encountered in his life path and the various debates in scientific circles. The refutations against subversive ideas were also provided.

**Keywords:** Duzja, Circassian, Naqshbandi School, Hadith, Maturudi And Ash'ari Schools, Abu Hanifa, Ahl Al Sunnah

## Introduction

Muhammad Zahid Kawthari was born on September 16, 1879 in the village of Hajihasan, Duzja province, Turkey. He came from a Circassian family. His father, Hasan Hilmiy Efendi, was born in 1831 in Shabzari, Caucasus, and worked as a mudarris. In 1863, as a result of the conquest of the Caucasus by the Tsarist Empire, he moved with his family and students to the Duzja province, where he settled in the village of Hajihasan, which was named after him. There, he joined the caliphs of the Naqshbandi school, Sheikh Davlat, and in 1865 he himself achieved the rank of caliph. In 1867, he began working in a madrasa in the village of Hajihasan. In 1870, he went to Istanbul, where he attended the classes of Ahmad Ziyovuddin Kumushkhanavi and received permission from him on the work "Daloil al-khayrat". The following year, he went to Hijaz, where he met with Musa Makki, one of the Naqshi sheikhs, and received permission from him to become a caliph. After returning to Duzha, Hasan Hilmi Efendi taught students in a madrasa and died in 1926, at the age of almost a hundred.

## Methodology

According to Sheikh Abu Ghudda, Zahid Kawthari almost died in his youth. In 1336 AH, he wanted to return from Kostomunyu to Istanbul. However, due to heavy snowfall, he had to sail by sea rather than land. Kawthari reached Eregli (Konya province), changed

ships, and sailed to the port of Akcarsehir in Duşche (a city in northwestern Turkey). When he was close to the shore of Akcarsehir, a wave arose in the sea and his ship capsized. The scholar fell into the water along with his books. Two young men on the shore saw this situation and came to help, using ropes to rescue those who had fallen into the water. Among them was the unconscious Zahid Kawthari. It took him several days to regain consciousness. Sheikh Abu Ghudda mentions that Imam Kawthari greatly regretted the loss of his books due to this incident. Because among these books were manuscripts from the 6th-7th centuries. Kawthari always carried these sources with him on his travels.

The critic and researcher Zahid Kawthari, who made a great contribution to the development of Islamic sciences, was resolute in criticizing the followers of the sect and the representatives of the opposing sect who were on the wrong path. In his books and articles written in Egypt, he condemned new concepts and sects that contradicted Islam and dealt with socio-religious issues. He opposed those who criticized the Sunni scholars and firmly defended his views. He was a supporter of Maturidism in his beliefs. Kawthari's main views on theology are as follows: the Maturid and Ash'ari schools of the Sunnis put forward common views on many issues, the differences between them are very small, therefore, attempts to bring the two sects closer together are meaningless, and non-sectarianism is a path leading to irreligion.

Following a sect is mandatory in order to implement religious rulings in life. Salafiyya (Khashwiyya) is a sect of the Ahl al-Hadith group that claims to belong to the Salaf sect and is ignorant of the science of theology. This sect does not belong to Ahl al-Sunnah because it includes beliefs that lead to tashbih and tajsim. In the matter of obligatory proof, the evidence in the Holy Quran should be preferred. Because these evidences emphasize the impossibility of observation and the spontaneous creation of all beings, conscious and unconscious. The differences in the arguments related to the divine attributes between the Ahl al-Sunnah mutakallim and the Mu'tazilites are relative and not significant. Ibn Taymiyyah's acceptance of the divine word as eternal and the word consisting of letters and sounds as existent with hadith and essence means attributing hadith to the essence of Allah, which is impossible. The words that are added to Allah in the texts and that attribute to Him the characteristics of movement, space, aspect, and creatures must be interpreted absolutely.

Those who do not interpret these are considered polytheists. For this reason, Ibn Khuzaymah's "Kitab at-Tawheed" is a book of polytheism. Ahmad ibn Hanbal did not accept tashbih and tajsim, as the Salafis claimed, but on the contrary, he attributed some texts related to the attributes of knowledge to the comprehensive interpretation, as the Salafis did.

Belief in destiny does not mean that a person performs actions under obligation. Otherwise, a person's will becomes a part of destiny in actions for which he is responsible. Tawassul is a practice based on the narrations, and it is foolish to accept it as shirk. Some hadiths that express the inability of a person to perform his actions by his own will are considered weak because they contradict the verses that emphasize the volitional nature of actions.

Zahid Kawthari's opposition to Ibn Taymiyyah and the Salafis in his person may have been influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah's view that those who make tawassul through the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the saints are polytheists.

Zahid Kawthari, who stands out in the field of hadith, studied about twenty hadith books with his teachers and received permission to narrate. His works, "Ta'nib al-Khatib" and "an-Nuqat al-Tarifa", which he wrote in response to Abu Hanifa's criticism of the concept of hadith, caused a great stir, and refutations were written about them. Kawthari also wrote a response to some of them. His other works on hadith demonstrate his competence in the science of rijal. According to him, a narration at the level of ahad is abandoned if it does not correspond to the general meaning of the Quran and reason.

Sufism also has a special place in the scientific personality of Zahid Kawthari. Just as his father was among the Naqshi sheikhs, he himself was a murid of the Naqshi sheikh Hasan Hilmi Effendi of Kastamonu. According to Kawthari, people who are tormented by their desires need the guidance and help of perfect guides who are connected to the holy world. Tawassul is permissible because the souls of those who are tawassul are considered to have spiritual possessions because they have purified their souls. These qualities of theirs continue after their death. Known as the 20th-century reformer of the Maturid movement, the views of Zahid Kawthari have caused religious debates in Egypt and other Islamic countries, with both critics and supporters. The Egyptian mufti Muhammad Bahit was one of the most vocal defenders of his views. Among those who criticized Kawthari's views on human free will was Mustafa Sabri Efendi, an Ottoman sheikh who, like him, was forced to come to Egypt from Istanbul.

Kawthari wrote many critical works and refutations. He also wrote biographies of scholars in the form of books and pamphlets. For example, he wrote the lives of scholars such as Ahmad Shaybani, Badruddin Aini, Hasan ibn Ziyad, Ahmad ibn Shuja and the Tahawis.

## Result and Discussion

In addition, he is the author of several articles in Arabic magazines and newspapers. Muhammad Zahid Kawthari is considered a reliable scholar of hadith and narrators. At the same time, he was also a master of the sciences of "mukhtutat". According to his student Abdulfattah Abu Ghudda, may God have mercy on him, it was narrated that Kawthari and his friend from Turkey were staying in a rented guest room in Syria. After a few days, both of them ran out of money, and then his friend went to Turkey to earn money. Kawthari, despite all this hardship and hunger, continued to engage in the sciences of "mukhtutat". To forget the pain of hunger, he would go to the Zahiriya school in the morning and stay there until evening, and when it got late, he would return home and spend the nights in this state. On the third day, money came to him in the mail from a friend who had returned to Turkey to earn money. He would often remember the difficult days he had spent in this pursuit of knowledge and tell his students about it. After he came to Egypt in search of knowledge, when his friends suggested that he come to these places, saying that the climate of Sham was good, he refused them, saying that he preferred these places because the scientific environment in Cairo was better for him, and he stayed there until the end of his life and firmly adhered to the path of knowledge.

He would defend the Hanafi scholars from various critical opinions and write about their biographies in book articles in support of them. An example of this is his biographies

of two Hanafi scholars, Hasan ibn Ziyad and Muhammad ibn Shuja'. The main motivation for writing this book was to defend the two great Hanafi scholars from the accusations made against them in the books "Tarih al-Khatib" and "Lisanu ibn Hajar" and to show that they were free from these discriminations. Al-Kawtari said in his "Husnut-taqazi fi siyrati Imam Abu Yusuf":

"Abu Hafs Kabir and Abu Sulayman Juz'ani are considered the basis for the narration of the books of Imam Muhammad."

Muhammad Zahid Several prominent scholars of his time expressed their opinions about Al-Kawtari. For example, the Sufi Abdullah Ghimari says: "Just as we were amazed by the profound knowledge of Zahid Kawtari, we were also amazed by his zeal in defending the school of Abu Hanifa and his firm adherence to this path. This was even stronger than Zamakhshari's fanatical approach to the Mu'tazilite school."

In his biography of Kawthari, Ahmad Hayri recounts a conversation between Abdulfattah Abu Ghudda and his teacher Mustafa Zarqa:

"When I returned to Syria after going to Egypt, my teacher Zarqa asked me which scholars I had met there. I told him about Kawthari. I spoke about the vastness of his knowledge. Some time passed. Then Mustafa Zarqa decided to go to Egypt and asked me for Kawthari's address, which I gave him. After Master Zarqa spent some time in Cairo and returned to Syria, when I met him, he said to me: "I have one regret in life, and that is that I did not study fiqh for 6 years with Master Kawthari."

Mustafa Zarqa was a jurist, and his father and grandfather were also jurists. The fact that such a person considered Kawthari as a teacher shows how high the scholar's level was.

Kawthari's translated books from Turkish into Arabic are significant. For example, it can be said that he translated Jawdat Bashi's treatise on logic, "Tarvid al-qariha bi mawzin al-fiqr as-sahiha," from Turkish.

Among the books that Kawthari edited or wrote a preface to are "Ishārat al-marām min ibarat al-imam Al-Bayādī," a work about Abu Hanifa's position in theology and the terms he used, and Bayhaqi's "Al-Asma vas-sifat."

In his work "Kashf as-satr al-fardiyya al-watr" ("Disclosure of the Obligation of the Witr Prayer"), the author presents the arguments of the Hanafi school of thought on the Witr prayer. In the introduction to this work, he cites the words of the great imams, in particular, the opinions of Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad that a person who does not pray the witr prayer cannot be a witness (in the case of a deceased person), and the words of Imam Shafi'i: "Whoever abandons the sunnah prayers of Fajr and witr is in a worse state than if he abandons all the sunnah prayers." Such scientific activities and authentic reports confirm that Muhammad Zahid Kawthari was a member of the Hanafi Maturudi school.

The biographical work "Buyug' al-amani fi sira al-imam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybani" sheds light on the biography of the most influential person in the Hanafi school after Abu Hanifa.

The scholar's work "Al-Fara'id al-wafiya" (or "Al-fawaid al-kafiya") (Pearls of Questions on the Science of Two Definitions and Rhyme) was published without the author's name. "Fiqh ahl al-Iraq" (Fiqh of the Scholars of Iraq) is a work of at least 100 pages

and is considered one of the most significant works in which the most famous scholars of the Hanafi school are listed. The source consists of useful definitions and biographical information on the main concepts of fiqh, such as analogy, scientific research (ijtihad), and perception (istihsan). In the work "Isad ar-raqi ala al-Maraki", Kawtari documented hadiths from Shurunbulali's book "Marakil-Falah".

Among the works of Zahid Kawthari, "Maqalat" occupies a special place, distinguished from others by its detailed coverage of issues related to various topics. This work of Zahid Kawthari is directly related to his other scientific works, and in analyzing it, one often has to refer to other works of the scholar. For example, one of the issues in the work is related to the author's condemnation of al-Uqayli, one of the Hanbalis, in his work "Naqd kitab al-Duafa li al-Uqayli" for going too far in his struggle. Because in his book, Uqayli attacked scholars such as Abu Hanifa, who collected weak and fabricated hadiths, and Thabit al-Bunani, Ibn al-Madini, al-Bukhari, Abdullah ar-Razzaq, Ibn Abu Shayib, and Affan ibn Muslim.

The scholar's article "Tahdir al-umma min duat al-wasaniyya" ("Warning the Ummah against those who turn to idolatry") was written in 1942, in which Al-Azhar was severely criticized for allowing the publication of Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Darimi's book "Ar-Radd ala al-Jahmiyya". The reason is that this book contained such expressions related to the knowledge of the unseen, which sowed the seeds of discord against the Islamic faith: "Allah acts as He wills...", "He descends and ascends as He wills...", "He sits and rises as He wills...", "Allah has limits and His place has limits..." Kawthari first defended the concept of following a school of thought by defending Abu Hanifa. He did not blindly defend the position of the Hanafi school, but rather took a broader view: by defending the position of Abu Hanifa and clearing it of lies and slander, he opposed the absence of a school and its theorists who wanted to question the very essence of Islamic jurisprudence. To understand this, it is enough to refer to the historical circumstances that prompted Kawthari to write about Abu Hanifa.

At that time, there was an organization in Egypt called the "Society of the Ansar of the Sunnah of Muhammad," whose chairman was a scholar named Muhammad-Hamid al-Faqi. This person published a source full of lies and insults against Imam Abu Hanifa. The most interesting thing is that Muhammad-Hamid al-Faqi sent the publication not somewhere, but to India, for distribution in an environment traditionally devoted to the Hanafi school of thought.

Muhammad Zahid Kawthari died in 1952 at the age of seventy-five. His funeral was held at Al-Azhar Mosque on Friday by Sheikh Abdul-Jalil Isa, a professor of Arabic at Al-Azhar University, and he was buried in the Shafi'i cemetery. Soon after, his wife also passed away due to illness. Muhammad Zahid Kawthari's two daughters, Sunayha and Mulayha, were also buried at their father's last resting place. The following is the eulogy delivered by Imam Abu Zahra after Kawthari's death:

"Islam has lost one of the Muslim leaders who worked alone, who was far from the daily grind, who sincerely loved knowledge, and who was busy worshiping his Lord. Because the scholar knew that knowledge is part of worship, if he seeks the pleasure of



Allah, and does not seek anyone other than Him. The scholar does not seek prestige and high position, does not seek power and influence, and does not try to create a high opinion of himself among people. He does not seek the transient things of this world. His only goal is to gain the approval of the true Creator. The person who combined these qualities in himself was Imam al-Kawtari. May Allah bless his resting place and be pleased with him.

I do not know of a greater loss in knowledge than the gap that could be created after the death of Imam al-Kawtari. He was part of the righteous predecessors who did not use knowledge as a source of income or a means of achieving worldly goals. He was a true scholar who lived in the image of those mentioned in the hadith that says: "The scholars are the heirs of the prophets." He considered his activity as a jihad to show the true essence of Islam and to expel the errors that were distorting its essence."

## Conclusion

These words show that Imam al-Kawtari was completely different from the supporters of the emerging false movements, that is, he did not strive for innovations that his predecessors did not do and did not know. The Imam was completely opposed to false innovations and tried to avoid them. However, he was one of those who were called by the intellectuals as a renewer (*mujaddid*). From this it can be understood that the concept of renewal is to restore the religion to its former greatness and eliminate misunderstandings, and to ensure that the faith is manifested before people in its pure essence and original form. It is also a path that aims to give life to the Sunnah, as a result of which harmful innovations will fade away and a pure religion will be established among people.

## References

- Abdullah as-Suduni. *Tajū-t-tarājim fi tabaqoti-l-hanafiya*. – Leipzig: Flugel, 1862. – P. 78; Qurashiy Abu Muhammad Abdulqadir ibn Abi-l-Wafo Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Misri. *Al-Jawahiru-l-mudiya fi tabaqoti-l-hanafiya*. 2 vols. – Hayderabad: 1332/1913. J. II. P.189; Baghdadi Ismail Pasha. *Hadiyatu-l-arifin*. II vols. – Istanbul: 1951-1955. J. II. P. 387.17
- Ahmad Khairi, "al-Imom al-Kevseriy", Cairo. 1972, b. 16-32.
- Mehmet Emin Özafshar, "Muhammed Zahid al-Kevseri: his way of life", Muhammad Zahid al-Kevseri: works, Istanbul, 1996, p. 29-54
- Abdullah as-Suduni. *Tajū-t-tarājim fi tabaqoti-l-hanafiya*. – Leipzig: Flugel, 1862. – P. 78; Qurāshiy Ābu Muhammad Ābdulqadir ibn Ābi-l-Wafo Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Misri. *Āl-Jawahiru-l-mūdiya fi tabaqoti-l-hanafiya*. 2 vols. – Hyderabad: 1332/1913. J. II. P.189; Baghdadi Ismail Pasha. *Hadiyatu-l-ārifin*. II vols. – Istanbul: 1951-1955. J. II. P. 457

- Tamimi Al-Mawla Taqiyuddin Abdulqadir. At-Tabaqatu-s-saniya fi tarajimi-l-hanafiya. Volume IV / Published by Abdulfattah Muhammad al-Hilv. – Doru-r-Rifo'iy, 1983. J. IV. B. 513; Ibn Qutlubug'o al-Qasim
- Shukhratovich T. B. HISTORY OF TRAINING OF SECONDARY MEDICAL SERVICES IN UZBEKISTAN //EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR). – 2021. – T. 7. – C. 1-1.
- Normatova D. Issues of man and humanism in renaissance literature and art in Europe //Academicia: An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal. – 2021. – T. 11. – №. 3. – C. 1865-1871.
- Ugli A. Z. Z. THE PLACE OF ALIKHANTORA SOGUNIY IN THE HISTORY OF EAST TURKESTAN //Colloquium-journal. – Голопристанський міськрайонний центр зайнятості, 2020. – №. 24 (76). – C. 32-33.
- Arslonov Z., Ergashev H. ALIKHANTORA SOGUNIY'S VIEWS ON POLITICAL GOVERNANCE IN EAST TURKESTAN //Студенческий вестник. – 2020. – №. 32-2. – C. 84-85.
- Maxsudov D. Развитие исламоведения (корановедения) в Узбекистане: история и современность //Вестник КазНУ, Серия Религиоведение. – 2020. – Т. 21. – №. 1. – C. 60-67.
- Maxsudov D. Razvitie islamovedenija (koranovedenija) v Uzbekistane: istorija i sovremennost' //Chabarşy. Dintanu serijasy. – 2020. – T. 21. – №. 1. – C. 60-67.
- Islamov Z. Codicological Analysis of Manuscripts of “Mukaddamatu-l-Adab” of Mahmud Zamakhshari in the Funds of the World //The Light of Islam. – 2020. – T. 2020. – №. 2. – C. 30-36.
- Islomov Z. International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan—a result of the reforms worth to the centuries //The Light of Islam. – 2018. – T. 1. – №. 1.
- Ugli A. Z. Z., Farxodjonova N. Alikhantura Soguniy Role in State Administration in East Turkestan //Journal of Modern Islamic Studies and Civilization. – 2024. – T. 2. – №. 02. – C. 128-132.
- Normatova D. E. SPIRITUALITY AND ENLIGHTENMENT, THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY //Gospodarka i Innowacje. – 2023. – T. 41. – C. 553-562.
- Zokirjonugli Z. A. Approaches to studying the scientific heritage of Alikhantora Soguni //Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research. – 2022. – T. 1