



Ahl Al-Suffah

For Sufi Studies and Heritage Sciences

**An International Peer-Reviewed
Academic Journal Dedicated to the
Rigorous Exploration of Sharia
Sciences and the Subtleties of
Metaphysical Knowledge**

ISSN (print): 3062 - 4967

ISSN (online): 3062 - 4975

Volume 2 - Issue 2

Jumada al-Akhirah 1447 A.H.

December 2025 C.E.



**Al-Bayt Al-Muhammadi
Foundation for Sufism**

Published by the Academy of Ahl al-Suffa for Sufi Studies and
Heritage Sciences Under the auspices of Al-Bayt Al-Muhammadi
Foundation, registered under No. (10684) for the year (2017)

OBJECTIVES OF THE ISLAMIC THEOLOGY IN THE ŞŪFĪ THOUGHT: IBN ‘AṬĀ’ ALLĀH AS A CASE STUDY¹

مقاصد العقيدة الإسلامية في الفكر الصوفي: ابن عطاء الله نموذجًا

Ahmad Muhammad Muhammd Hamza

*Al-Azhar University, Faculty of Languages and Translation,
Cairo, Egypt*

أحمد محمد محمد حمزة

جامعة الأزهر، كلية اللغات والترجمة، القاهرة

¹ Article received: October 2025; article accepted: Novemebr 2025

Abstract

Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah, as a scholarly discipline, occupies currently a significant and growing position in the contemporary Islamic research. However, the issue of *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* (objectives of faith) has not yet received the same attention. The present Study attempts to shed light on the concept of *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* to emphasize that it is an integral part of the concept of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* in the broadest sense of the word “Sharī‘ah”, and that this presence has existed in Islamic scholarly heritage, especially among the great Ṣūfīs such as Imam al-Ghazālī and Sheikh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī. The Study supposes that such presence of the objectives of belief in Ṣūfī thought stemmed from the Ṣūfīs' interest in the idea of the *asrār* (spiritual secrets) of Sharī‘ah and its rulings without restriction themselves to the literal meanings only. To this end, the study addressed Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī’s “*Hikam*” (Aphorisms) to understand how he dealt with these objectives within a theological framework that sought to establish a central issue, namely, the realization of the meaning of monotheism and the consolidation of the concept of servitude to Allah, the Almighty. By focusing on the doctrine of reliance upon Allah and the spiritual station (*Maqām*) of affliction, we will see that this central issue ultimately represents the basis of doctrinal commands in Islam. Thus, the research concludes that Sufism was the most prominent framework that embraced the idea of the objectives of Creed through its interest in spiritual rulings, secrets, and goals, which represents a gate to the renewal of the science of theology and creed in light of its religious and humanistic objectives.

الملخص

تمثل مقاصد الشريعة الإسلامية مبحثًا مهمًا في الدراسات الإسلامية المعاصرة، يزداد حضوره يومًا بعد يوم، ومع ذلك لم تحظ قضية مقاصد العقيدة بهذا الحضور حتى الآن.

لذا تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى تسليط الضوء على مفهوم مقاصد العقيدة للتأكيد على أنها جزء لا يتجزأ من مفهوم مقاصد الشريعة بالمعنى الأعم لكلمة الشريعة، وأن هذا الحضور كان موجوداً في التراث الإسلامي خاصة عند كبار الصوفيين أمثال الإمام الغزالي والشيخ ابن عطاء الله السكندري. وتفترض الدراسة أن هذا الإسهام للفكر الصوفي في مقاصد الاعتقاد كان نابغاً من اهتمام أئمة التصوف بفكرة أسرار الشريعة وحكمها دون الوقوف المجرّد على ظواهر النصوص. وفي سبيل ذلك تناولت الدراسة الحكم العطائية "فلأمام ابن عطاء الله السكندري للتعرف على كيفية تناوله لهذه المقاصد في إطار إيماني عقدي يسعى إلى تكريس قضية مركزية هي تحقيق معنى التوحيد وترسيخ مفهوم العبودية. ومن خلال التركيز على عقيدة التوكل على الله ومقام الابتلاء، سنلحظ أن هذه القضية المركزية تمثل في نهاية المطاف المدار الذي تدور حوله الأحكام الاعتقادية في الشريعة الإسلامية. وبهذا يخلص البحث إلى أن التصوف كان الإطار الأبرز الذي احتضن فكرة مقاصد العقيدة عبر اهتمامه بالحكم والأسرار والغايات الروحية، وهو ما يمثل مدخلاً لتجديد علم العقيدة في ضوء مقاصدها الإيمانية والإنسانية.

Keywords: Objectives of faith, Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah, Sufism, Purification of the soul, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh al-Sakandarī, Aphorisms (*Hikam*) of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh

الكلمات المفتاحية: مقاصد العقيدة، مقاصد الشريعة، التصوف، التزكية، ابن عطاء الله، الحكم العطائية

Introduction

Recently, the discourse within Islamic intellectual circles has increasingly focused on *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (the objectives of Sharī'ah). Such discussions occupy a large space in the contemporary Islamic discourse in its various orientations and throughout the geography of the Muslim world, taking many forms, including: studies, analyses and applications. This intense presence in theory and application can be framed in several aspects, most importantly is the close connection between the concept of *Maqāṣid* and the issue of renewal of the Islamic thought. Due to this close connection, between *Maqāṣid* and renewal, it becomes logical that this concept is discussed in different fields of Islamic thought including *'Aqīdah*, despite the fact that *Maqāṣid* is basically a topic originated basically within the discipline of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Islamic Legal Theory).

This is why, the present study attempts to investigate the concept of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* in the domain of theological study to find out the purposes behind some *Sharī'ah* articles of faith. This goal drives on the intrinsic value of *Maqāṣid* as elucidated by al-Shāṭibī when he stated that the objectives (*Maqāṣid*) are “the souls of actions.”² Consequently, the essence of the Qur'an is found in its objectives, and the essence of the Sunnah lies in its objectives. Similarly, the essence of Sharī'ah rulings, religiosity hinges on realizing these objectives as fully as possible. In the same vein, the essence of creed lies in its objectives.

Statement of the Problem

The objectives of faith occupy a central place in shaping the spiritual, moral, and intellectual life of Muslims. However,

² Al-Shāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥey al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah, 2011), p. 193.

despite this priority, these objectives remain insufficiently studied, particularly in the context of Ṣūfī thought. Critics of Sufism often accuse this tradition of deviating from traditional doctrine or containing theological contradictions. These accusations often stem from a superficial reading of Ṣūfī texts or a misunderstanding of their symbolic and experiential language.

Therefore, this research seeks to address a fundamental question: to what extent are the objectives of Islamic doctrine authentically rooted and systematically expressed in Ṣūfī thought, and how do the teachings of one of the most prominent figures of this tradition express these objectives? By examining the doctrinal principles embedded in the sayings of one of the prominent Sufī masters, this study aims to demonstrate that the pursuit of sound doctrine, spiritual purification, and theological clarity is an integral part of the Sufī path itself.

Rationale of the Study

The current study is motivated by the aim to reconsider the link between Sufism and Islamic belief in today’s scholarship. Sufism is one of the most profound intellectual and spiritual traditions in Islam. However, it often faces criticism, both in history and modern discussions, due to claims of ambiguity. These criticisms usually come from a shallow understanding of Sufī texts and a lack of recognition of the theological goals behind the Ṣūfī approach. Therefore, this study comes to clarify one of the classical Sufī works and show how inherently this text is rich with the objectives of Islamic creed.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the Study may be summarized in the following points:

1. It contributes to establishing the science of the objectives of Islamic doctrine as a complementary field to the objectives of Sharī‘ah.

2. It links Sufism, doctrine, and objectives within an integrated intellectual framework.
3. It offers a renewed reading of doctrinal heritage through a functional and teleological perspective.

Methodology of the Study

The study relied on an inductive analytical approach, attempting to extrapolate the concept of the objectives of doctrine in Islamic thought. It begins by surveying the broader Islamic intellectual tradition in order to trace the emergence and evolution of the idea of *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīda*. Through reviewing classical theological, juridical, and Sufi sources, the research seeks to identify the foundational principles, thematic structures, and epistemological assumptions that shape the doctrinal objectives within the wider heritage of Islamic thought. Building on this conceptual basis, the study then analyzes the *Ḥikam* (Aphorisms) of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī’s to extract the objectives of Islamic doctrine from it.

Literature Review

1) Muḥammad ‘Abdū, *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqā’id ‘Inda al-Imām al-Ghazālī* (Beirut, Arab network for Research and Publishing, 1st edition, 2009).

Although this book discusses the objectives of Islamic creed, it focusses mainly on Imam al-Ghazālī, without addressing the Sufi path or the works of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī.

2) ‘Abd al-Tawwāb Muḥammad ‘Uthmān, “Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah fī al-Qur’ān wa al-Sunnah”, in *Journal of Arab Studies*, Kullīyat Dār al-‘Ulūm, al-Minyā, Vol. 37, Issue 2, 2018.

This study discusses the objectives of Islamic creed through exploring the objectives of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, without addressing the Sufi thought.

3) ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Tāj al-Dīn, *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqā’id ‘Inda al-Shaykh al-Ṭāhir ibn ‘Āshūr*, An MA thesis submitted to the University of Algiers, Faculty of Islamic Sciences.

This thesis reviews the objectives of Islamic creed through the works of al-Ṭāhir ibn ‘Āshūr, which makes it differnt from the scope of the Present Study.

Section One

***Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* (objectives of Islamic Faith) Concept and Historical Background**

Definition of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah*

Maqāṣid is the plural of *maqṣid*, which is the verbal noun of *qaṣada*, which has different meanings including directing oneself to something. Ibn Jinnī says, “The origin and occurrences of root ‘*qa-ṣa-da*’ in the Arab usages revolve around intention, directing oneself to something and to rising to do something.”³

As for the word *Sharī‘ah*, it technically it refers to “religious ordinances which Allah legislates for people.”⁴ This meaning is derived from Allah's Saying, “*Then We put you, [O Muhammad], on Sharī‘ah min al-Amr; so follow it.*” (Qur'an 45:18) Muslim exegetes interpret *Sharī‘ah* in this verse as ‘religion’.⁵

However, the realm of the word ‘*Sharī‘ah*’ is disputed. Some consider that *Sharī‘ah* is restricted to *al-aḥkām al-taklīfiyyah* (*Sharī‘ah* rulings on humans’ actions). Qatādah says, “*Al-Sharī‘ah* refers to obligations, punishments, commands, and

³ Ibn Manzūr, Jamāl al-Dīn. *Lisān al-Arab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣāder, 1414 AH), Vol. 3. p. 355.

⁴ Ibn al-Athīr, Majd al-Dīn ibn Muḥammad, *Al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Athar*, ed. Ṭāher Aḥmad (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1339 AH/1979 CE), vol. 2, p. 460.

⁵ See Al-Qurṭubī, Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad. *Al-Jāmi‘ li Aḥkām al-Qur‘ān*. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 2nd ed., 1964), vol. 16, p. 163; Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja‘far. *Jami‘ al-Bayān fī Ta’wīl al-Qur‘ān* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 2000), vol. 22, p. 71.

prohibitions.”⁶ Al-Kafawī said, “It is a name applied to detailed rulings (*Aḥkām juz’iyyah*) that a *mukallaf* adheres to in his life.”⁷

Accordingly, this signification is an only specific usage of the word to confine it to all matters of religion except for creed. However, Allah, the Almighty says, “*He shar‘a [has ordained] for you in matters of faith, what He commanded to Noah.*” (Qur’an 42:13) It is admitted that the matters of creed are the common area among all of Allah’s Messengers and Prophets. On the contrary, *Sharā‘i*’ (sing. *Sharī‘ah*) in the sense of sacred law rulings differ from one messenger to another. Ibn Kathīr says, “The religion preached by all messengers is to worship Allah alone and not to associate others with him in worship.”⁸

Accordingly, when it is used in a general sense, the word *Sharī‘ah* signifies all that which Allah requires people to do and this includes:

- **Theological aspect of Islam:** which include all that which a *mukallaf* (legally responsible person) should believe in with regard to Allah, the Almighty, His Angels, Scriptures, Messengers and the Last Day.

- **Moral aspect of Islam:** including all the virtues that a *mukallaf* should observe and the immoral conduct that he must abstain from.

- **Practical aspect of Islam:** relating to *mukallaf*’s actions, i.e. statements, deeds, contracts and transactions.⁹

⁶ Ibid, p. 70.

⁷ Abū al-Baqā’ al-Kaffawī, *Al-Kullīyāt: Mu‘jam fī al-Muṣṭalaḥāt wa al-Furūq al-Lughawīyah*, ed. ‘Adnān Darwīsh (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1997), p. 524.

⁸ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’an al-Azīm*, vol. 7, p. 174.

⁹ See Muḥammad al-Dīṣūqī and Amīna al-Jābir, *Muqadimmah fī Dirāsāt al-Fiḥ al-Islāmī* (Introduction to Islamic Fiḥ) (Qatar: Dar al-Thaqāfah, 1999), p. 26

This comprehensive meaning is ground also in the definition provided by al-Tahanawī, who states, “What Allah has prescribed for His servants through His Messengers, weather related to practical actions, for which the science of Fiqh is established or related to creeds, for which the science of Theology is established.”¹⁰ This general meaning is the befitting one for research in *Maqāṣid* as it aims at investigating the purposes of Islam in general. Accordingly, for the purpose of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah*, one aspect of Islam cannot be separated from others so that *Maqāṣid* serves as an integral whole, the purposes of religion as a whole, i.e. creed, legislation and morals.

Definition of the *Maqāṣid* of Creed

Classical Islamic scholarship did not provide an explicit or systematic definition for the term *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah*, the higher objectives of creed. Nevertheless, by analogy with the definitions provided for *maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* (the objectives of Islamic law), the term *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* may be understood as follows: They are the divine purposes and inherent wisdoms intended by the All-Wise Lawgiver through the articles of faith, aiming to shape the believer’s moral and spiritual conduct, guiding it toward harmony with divine order.¹¹ This definition situates creed not merely as a set of doctrinal affirmations but as a dynamic framework designed to refine human behavior, purify intention, and align the believer’s inner state with the divine will. Through this lens, faith becomes both a conviction and a

¹⁰ Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Tahānawī, *Mawsū‘at Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn wa al-‘Ulūm*, ed. Rafīq al-‘Ajam (Beirut: Lebanon Publishers, 1st edition, 1996), vol. 1, p. 1018.

¹¹ See: ‘Abd al-Tawwāb Muḥammad ‘Uthmān, “Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah fī al-Qur’ān wa al-Sunnah”, in *Journal of Arab Studies*, Kullīyat Dār al-‘Ulūm, al-Minyā, Vol. 37, Issue 2, 2018, pp. 767-812.

transformative process aimed at realizing the perfection of servitude to God.

The Question of *Ta‘līl* (Causation)

Before discussing the objectives of *‘Aqīdah*, a question representing the theoretical foundation of *Maqāṣid* should be explored. This question is: Do God’s deeds have causes? When it is argued that the *Sharī‘ah* rulings and concepts have rationales or effective causes in general, then it would be valid to argue that all detailed rulings have effective causes. This entails, by necessity that there are purposes and objectives for these rulings. This is why al-Shāṭibī begins his discussion of *Maqāṣid* in *Al-Muwafaqāt* with the issue of *ta‘līl*. He says, “At this point we state a theological postulate: *Sharā‘i‘* (divine messages or laws) aim at securing people’s interest in this life and in the hereafter.”¹² Reviewing the theological scholarly literature, one finds an intense debate concerning whether or not the divine actions have rationale or effective causes (*ta‘līl af‘āl Allāh*). There are three opinions in this respect:

First, Mu‘tazilites opined that divine actions must have causes or rationales;

Second, Ash‘rites stated that divine actions are beyond causes and purposes; and

Third, Maturīdīs adopted a rational compromise that divine actions have causes and purposes, not as an obligation on Allah, but out of Mercy from him to people.

Having reviewed the different views of Muslim theologians in this respect, and giving preponderance to the Maturīdī view, Muḥammad Muṣṭafa Shalabī stated that this theological debate came as a result of certain circumstances at some age. Yet, before that time, there was a consensus that rulings have

¹² Al-Shāṭibī, *al-Muwafaqāt*, vol. 2, p. 9.

effective causes or rationales.¹³ He states clearly that the approach of the Qur'an and Sunnah, practice during the times of the Prophet's companions and their successor, the early Islamic literature emphasize that rulings are closely connected to the interests and that interest or harm is the effective cause upon which the ruling or fatwa are based.¹⁴

Is the Concept of the *Maqāṣid* of Creed an innovative one?

Although most scholarly research on *maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (objectives of Islamic law) has primarily focused on the legal and jurisprudential dimensions of the *Sharī'ah*, this focus may lead to the impression that the notion of *maqāṣid al-'aqīdah*, the objectives of Islamic creed, was absent from the Islamic intellectual and scholarly tradition, and that Muslim scholars did not address it explicitly.

However, the scrutinizing historical reading of the question of *maqāṣid* reveals the inaccuracy of such hypothesis. As previously explained, the conceptual framework of the *maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* encompasses Islam in its entirety, since the term *Sharī'ah* in its original, comprehensive sense includes not only the legal but also the doctrinal and spiritual dimensions of religion. This broader understanding finds further support in the historical basis in the writings on the *maqāṣid*, which demonstrate an implicit awareness of creedal purposes in the scholarly heritage. The following pages will illustrate this through an examination of three prominent figures whose thought reflects this integrated vision.

¹³ Muḥammad Muṣṭafa Shalabī, *Ta'īl al-Aḥkām: 'Ard wa Taḥlīl lī Tarīqat al-Ta'īl wa Taṭawuratiha fī 'Uṣūr al-Ijtihād wa al-Taqlīd* (Cairo: Maṭba'at Al-Azhar, 1947), p. 97.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

1. Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. ca 320 AH)

The earliest known book to address the issue of *maqāṣid* is al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī’s treatise “*Al-Ṣalāh wa Maqāṣiduhā*” (Prayer and Its Objectives). Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī was not a jurist or a legal theorist in the formal sense of these sciences; rather, he was a philosophical mystic whose intellectual orientation was deeply rooted in Sufism. Perhaps this Šūfī inclination was the point that led him to contemplate the inner meanings and spiritual wisdom underlying the rulings of the *Sharī‘ah*. Through this contemplative attitude, he sought to uncover how *Sharī‘ah* commands serve higher spiritual objectives, revealing a dimension of *maqāṣid* that transcends jurisprudential reasoning and enters the realm of spiritual insight.

The following are examples of Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī’s analysis and explanation of the objectives of prayer, “By the remembrance of God the heart is refreshed and softened, but by the remembrance of one’s passions and appetites it grows hard and dry. The heart may be likened to a tree which derives its moisture and suppleness from water: If it is too preoccupied with its appetites to remember God, it is as if it had been deprived of water.”¹⁵

2. Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī (d. 381 A.H.)

Al-‘Āmirī, known also as al-‘Āmirī al-Faylasūf, is considered a great link in the chain of the development of *maqāṣid*. In his book *Al-I‘lām bi-Manāqib al-Islām*, he conducted a comparative study between Islam and other religions with regard to their doctrinal foundations. Within this framework, he explored the wisdoms, inner meanings, and distinctive virtues related to key theological themes such as the affirmation of the Divine Creator,

¹⁵ Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, *Al-Ṣalāh wa Maqāṣiduhā*, ed. Ḥusnī Naṣr Zaydān, (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1965), p. 6.

prophethood, the nature of angels, the resurrection and afterlife, as well as other matters of faith. Through this approach, al-‘Āmirī sought to demonstrate the intellectual coherence and spiritual superiority of Islamic creed, situating it within a broader philosophical discourse that linked revelation with reason.

3. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505 AH)

When speaking of the foremost scholars who contributed to the development of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah*, one cannot overlook the pioneering contributions of Imām al-Ghazālī. His contributions to this field can be gleaned from his significant work *al-Mustasfā*, where he presented a systematic theory of the purposes underlying legal rulings.

However, a careful study of al-Ghazālī’s wider writings shows another side of his thinking on *Maqāṣid*, a side that exceeds the jurisprudential focus. This is particularly clear in his great work *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), which primarily deals with spiritual refinement and ethical conduct. Here, al-Ghazālī broadens the scope of *Maqāṣid* from legal path to spiritual purification, demonstrating that the goal of the Sharī‘ah is not simply external submission but rather an inward refinement and spiritual perfection.

To elaborate this idea, Imam al-Ghazālī states, “The purpose of all *Sharā’i*‘ is to drive people towards Allah and to the joy of meeting Him...There is no path to such attainment except through the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His Attributes...”¹⁶ Here Imam al-Ghazālī states that the main objective of the *Sharī‘ah* is to know God, a matter that mainly attained through the theological aspect of Islam. From here, it comes to be evident that Imam al-Ghazālī’s conception of

¹⁶ Al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, n.d.), vol. 4, pp. 19-20.

Maqāṣid transcended the jurisprudential aspect of Islam and covered also its theological and doctrinal one.

Furthermore, al-Ghazālī was greatly preoccupied with the *Asrār* (spiritual secrets) of rulings and purposes of Sharī‘ah. He believed that a true scholar is the one who has deep knowledge of the secrets of Sharī‘ah, and this can only be attained when one abstains from sins.¹⁷ Likewise, we find Imām al-Ghazālī in his *Al-Iḥyā’* stating, after explaining the meaning of the testimony of divine unity (*shahādat al-tawḥīd*)

Such then, is the ruling of the Creed with which creation has been charged, and the rulings concerning the defense and preservation of that creed. As for the removal of doubt, the unveiling of realities, the knowledge of things as they truly are, and the perception of secrets conveyed through the onward expressions of this creed – there is no key to these except through *Mujahadah* (spiritual striving), the subduing of desires, and the complete turning of one’s being towards God, exalted be He.”¹⁸

Al-Ghazālī, thus, makes explicit that creed (*‘Aqīdah*) contains inner *asrār*, which constitute its very objectives. Furthermore, Al-Ghazālī speaks about the *Maqāṣid* embedded in the Divine Names of God saying, “The greatest of all Qur’ānic sciences lies beneath the Names and Attributes of God, Mighty and Majestic, for most people comprehend of them only what is suited to their limited understanding and have not grasped their deeper realities.”¹⁹

This insight indicates that, just as there exist divine purposes within the legal rulings of Sharī‘ah, so too do such purposes

¹⁷ Ibid, vol. 3, p. 75.

¹⁸ Ibid, vol. 1, p. 99.

¹⁹ Ibid, vol. 1, p. 283.

reside within the doctrines of Islamic faith. It is therefore untenable to assert that the jurisprudential rulings of Sharī‘ah possesses objectives while claiming that the tents of creed do not, this point will be elaborated upon in the next section.

Thus, the historical reading of the works of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, al-‘Āmirī, and al-Ghazālī shows that the early reflection on *Maqāṣid* of creed emerged not within the juristic theory, but within the spiritual and contemplative works of the Islamic thought. Each of these scholars sought to uncover the inner wisdoms and divine purpose underlying belief, emphasizing that creed is not merely a set of affirmations but a transformative path toward the knowledge of God.

Their common Ṣūfī inclination is key; Sufism considers faith as a means of purification and a path to approach the Divine. The Ṣūfī preoccupation with the *asrār* and *ḥikam* plainly led to an early awareness of the purposes embedded with Islamic doctrines.

Thus, before the articulation of the *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah*, the early Ṣūfī scholars had already sensed their essence by probing the aims of faith. Their legacy demonstrates that the pursuit of the *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* was fundamentally an undertaking, rooted in the quest, for divine wisdom and the unveiling of the heart.

Theoretical Framework of the Maqāṣid of Creed: The Five Necessities

Scholars almost unanimously agree that the *maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* are divided into three levels: necessities (*ḍarūriyyāt*), needs (*ḥājjiyyāt*), and embellishments (*taḥsīniyyāt*). The necessities, in turn, are traditionally specified as five, namely: the preservation of faith, soul, property, intellect, and progeny. Within this framework, it becomes evident that the first objective, the preservation of faith, must necessarily include the

safeguarding of Islamic beliefs. The primary level of preserving religion lies in protecting belief in Allah and all that pertains to this belief. This was clearly articulated by Imām al-Shāṭibī, who stated: “The foundations of acts of worship aim to preserving faith from the side of existence, such as the belief in Allah and the utterance of the two testimonies.”²⁰

Later, al-Ṭāhir ibn ‘Āshūr sought to reformulate the classification of the *maqāṣid* to reflect a more comprehensive understanding of the Sharī‘ah’s texts. As a result, he proposed a tripartite division: general objectives, specific objectives, and partial objectives, thereby opening the way for the study of the purposes of the *Sharī‘ah* in each of the domains of *Sharī‘ah*. Ibn ‘Āshūr also introduced the idea of expanding the range of *Maqāṣid* by adding new ones that would enhance the dynamic role of the *Sharī‘ah* in the life of Muslims. This development gave rise to the formation of the higher objectives of Islamic law.²¹

Some contemporary scholars have attempted to frame the Sharī‘ah within its higher objective, stating that Islam has three higher and overarching *Maqāṣid*:²²

1. *Tawḥīd* (Divine unit): this is the supreme governing value and the basis of Islam. It constitutes the source of the identity of Islamic Civilization, serving as its pivotal axis and the source of all other values. In the Islamic worldview, *tawḥīd* represents the organizing principle of existence: the universe operates in harmony and order, without chaos or

²⁰ Al-Shāṭibī, *Al-Muwafaqāt*, vol. 2, p. 18-19.

²¹ See: Ibn ‘Āshūr, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah al-Islāmiyyah*, trans. Mohamed al-Taher al-Mesawi (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, I427AH/12006), pp. 91-96.

²² See: Ṭaha Jābir ‘Alwānī, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* (Beirut: Dār al-Hādī, 1st edition, 2001), pp. 135-150.

corruption, hereby reflecting the unity of its ultimate reference, the Creator.

2. (purification of the soul): a fundamental principle in Islam that occupies a central position in the framework of its values. As humans are composed of both matter and spirit, the principle of *Tazkiyah* implies the refinement of the inner being. Therefore, discussions of reform, revolve around the elevation of human beings through successive degrees of this refinement. This *tazkiyah* represents the result of the first higher objective, *tawhīd*. It plays a double role as being the means and, at the same time, the objective of the third higher objective *‘umrān* (Civilizational and human development).

3. *‘Umrān* (Civilizational and human development): once the first two objectives are attained, the subsequent objective is *‘umrān*, which is a central Qur’anic notion that defines how Islam understands action in this world life. It expresses the constructive engagement of human kind in developing the earth according to divine guidance, thereby linking spiritual elevation with social vitality and ethical progress.

In light of this theoretical framework, it becomes clear that the *Maqāṣid* of creed (*‘aqīdah*) are intrinsic part of the theory of *Maqāṣid* in Islam. First, the notion of the five necessities (*ḍarūriyyāt*) are framed in the way that prioritizes the preservation of faith (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) which implies safeguarding the sound belief and protecting the foundations of monotheism, the basic theological objective. Second, the notion of the three higher objectives of Islam includes two objectives which aim to preserve the Islamic creed, i.e. *tawhīd* and *tazkiyah*. It is noteworthy that these three higher objectives combines monotheism with Sufism as it states *tazkiyah* as the second objective, and this *tazkiyah* is the focus of the Ṣūfī studies practices.

Section Two

Ibn Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī and the Concept of *Maqāṣid* of Creed in the Şūfī Thought

1. Biography and Intellectual Background

Tāj al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī (d. 709 AH / 1309 CE) is one of the most prominent figures of the Shādulī school in the seventh Islamic century. He was born in Alexandria to a scholarly family, and memorized the Glorious Qur’an, and studied Arabic languages, Islamic Jurisprudence, Hadith, and Exegesis. However, his spiritual inclination changes greatly after he met Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās al-Mursī, a disciple of Imam Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhulī, under his guidance he devoted himself to the Şūfī path and became a leading teacher. Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh gathered outward sciences of Sharī‘ah with the mystical insight; He was a Mālikī jurist and an Ash‘arite theologian, as well as a spiritual guide and teacher. Thus a perfect synthesis of intellect and soul was reflected in his personality. He was famous for fusing the inward sciences of faith and purification with the external sciences of the Sharī‘ah while teaching at Manşūriyya School and al-Azhar Mosque. His writings, which combine the principles of creed with spiritual and ethical instruction, reflect this synthesis. He died in Cairo in 709 AH / 1309 CE and was buried in the great Qarāfa cemetery, where his tomb remains a site of visitation for students and seekers of knowledge.

Among his most important works are *Al-Ḥikam al-‘Aṭā’iyyah*, *Laṭā’if al-Minan fī Manāqib Abī al-‘Abbās al-Mursī wa-Shaykhihi Abī al-Ḥasan*, *Tāj al-‘Arūs al-Ḥāwī li-Tahdhīb al-Nufūs*, and *Al-Qaṣd al-Mujarrad fī Ma’rifat al-Ism al-Mufrad*. These works represent the basis of his theological and spiritual thought, translating his understanding of divine unity (*tawḥīd*)

and spiritual discipline from a clear objective-orient (*maqāṣidī*) perspective.

According to the scholar Eric Geoffroy, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh presented a mature synthesis of Sunni Sufism in Mamluk Egypt, successfully reconciling Ash‘arite rational theology with the experiential spirituality of the Shādhulī path, in opposition to the esoteric and philosophical trends inclined toward excessive allegorical interpretation.²³

2. The Intellectual and Historical Context of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s School

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh appeared during the Mamluk period, a period of great political instability and intellectual contestation between theological schools and legal madhhabs, in addition to the strong presence of Ṣūfī orders. Since the fall of Baghdad in 656 AH/1258 CE, Egypt had, during the latter half of the seventh Islamic century, entered into a process of religious and cultural reconstruction that resulted in Cairo and Alexandria taking over the role of the center of Islamic intellectual activity.

In this light, the Shāduhilī order was instituted by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhulī (d. 656 AH), a disciple of ‘Abd al-Salām ibn Mashīsh. The Shādhulī order represented a Sunni reformist form of Sufism which tried to balance the outward observance of the Sharī‘ah with the inward realization of spiritual truth (*ḥaqīqah*), combining legal commitment with inner purification. Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh inherited this approach and expanded it through theoretical explanation and spiritual practices, highlighting that the path of monotheism (Tawḥīd) is not a path of denouncing or rejecting reason; rather it is a means to bring about the higher objectives of faith through awareness of God and His Existence.

²³ See: Éric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Egypte et en Syrie sous les derniers* (Paris, 1995), p. 122–125.

The evolution of Sufism from a personal ascetic practice to a structured educational movement is reflected in the historical background of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh's thought. By systematizing the spiritual experience in accordance with the goals of the Sharī‘ah and sound Islamic doctrine, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh is counted as one of the leading theorists of this transformation. According to Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, “He was one of the scholars who combined knowledge and practice, jurisprudence and Sufism, and his words on Divine Unity were of great benefit.”²⁴

3. The Distinctive Features of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s Theological and Spiritual Thought

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s thought and spiritual path are characterized by three main intellectual and spiritual features:

A) Integration of Sharī‘ah and Ḥaqīqah

Reviewing the works of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh, one finds that he believed that creed (‘*aqīdah*’) is inseparable from the Sharī‘ah. He believed that the ultimate purpose of faith is the achievement of one’s servitude to Allah in both conduct and consciousness. In one of his *Ḥikam* (Aphorisms), he said: “Among the signs of depending on actions is losing hope in presence of a slip.”²⁵ This statement reflects a *maqāṣid*-oriented theological balance between belief in divine decree and the necessity of human effort. For Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh, the genuine belief lies in perceiving the purposes of Divine Unity (tawḥīd) within both the self and the universe.

²⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A‘yān al-Mi‘ah al-Thāminah* (India, Hyderabad, 1972 CE), vol. 1, p. 153.

²⁵ Ibn ‘Abbād al-Nafarī al-Rundī, *Al-Ḥikam al-‘Aṭā’iyah*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Maqṣūd (Cairo, Al-Aharm Center for Publishing, 1st edition, 1998 CE), Aphorism No. 10.

B) The Pedagogical approach to Tawḥīd

In Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s thought, *Tawḥīd* is situated as the basic objective of human existence, not merely an epistemological principle. Knowledge of Allah, thus, is attained only through self-purification, moral discipline, and freeing the heart from worldly attachments. As he states: “The root of every sin, heedlessness, and distraction of the heart is contentment with the self.” Thus, he transforms *tawḥīd* into a living process of spiritual education that leads the believer from self-awareness to divine awareness.

C) Integration between rationality and Spiritual taste (Dhawq)

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh stresses that integration between reason and Spiritual taste (Dhawq) for the realization of the truths of faith, based on the Ash‘arite theology that holds harmony between rational proof and inner illumination. He summarizes this vision stating that: “*Perhaps, He opened for you the door of worship but did not open for you the door of acceptance; and perhaps, He decreed for you a sin and it became a reason for your reaching Him.*” This insight expresses his conviction that divine mercy and the wisdom of trial are integral dimensions of true faith and understanding.²⁶

Through this comprehensive approach, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh lays the foundations of what might be termed the science of the objectives of faith (*maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah*). He viewed creed as a comprehensive system with three primary goals rather than as a collection of theoretical commands:

1. The True knowledge of Allah;

²⁶ Aḥmad Zarrūq, *Sharḥ al-Ḥikam al-‘Aṭā’īyah*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd (Cairo: Dār al-Sha‘b), p. 32-33.

2. Purifying the soul and releasing it from subordination to anything other than Allah.

3. Establishing harmonious relationship between the Creator and creation based of love and submission to Allah.

Section Three

Objectives of Islamic Creed in the *Hikam* of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh

In this section, we shall examine the theological purposes (*maqāṣid* ‘*aqdiyyah*) underlying certain Islamic principles and spiritual states that befall the believer in the course of life, in order to uncover how Shaykh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh approached these experiences in a way that reveals their inner wisdom and divine objectives.

First: Objectives of Reliance upon Allah (*Tawakkul*)

Reliance upon Allah is centered primarily on the notion of attaining absolute certainty and unwavering faith that God alone is the ultimate disposer of all affairs. *Tawakkul* is the fruit of complete faith, leading to serenity and contentment in this life and the hereafter. However, such reliance upon God does not imply abandoning causes; rather, it entails active striving while the heart remains fully surrendered to Him, filled with trust, security, and tranquility. In his *Hikam*, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh unveils the deeper dimensions of this spiritual station and the divine purposes it embodies.

1) Attaining certainty, security, and inner peace as an objective of *tawakkul*

Shaykh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh considers that among the higher purposes (*maqāṣid*) of reliance on God is the believer’s inner rest, serenity, and tranquility, so that a believer shall not regret over what has passed or feel distressed over what has been decreed. He says:

أرح نفسك من التدبير ، فما قام به غيرك عنك لا تقم به لنفسك

“Relieve yourself from the burden of administering; Don’t try to do what Someone Else has undertaken for you.”

By “administering” (*tadbīr*), the Shaykh refers to one’s preoccupation with means as if they alone determine outcomes. Such an attitude exhausts the soul and burdens it beyond its capacity, often leading to spiritual stagnation or even negligence of acts of devotion. The believer, rather, is called to engage with causes responsibly, then surrender the outcome to God and entrust all affairs to Him, thereby finding rest from the anxiety of self-management.

Commenting on this *ḥikmah*, Ibn Zarrūq cites the saying of Sahl ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Tustarī, “The servants have three responsibilities [decreed by] Allah: their duties, their appointed lifespans, and the administration [of their affairs]. And God has upon His servants three: that they rely on Him, follow His Prophet, and remain patient in doing so until death.”²⁷

2) Success in One’s Actions and Attainment of Divine Guidance

Another objective of adhering to reliance upon Allah is to get the success in one’s action. In *Ḥikmah* no. 26, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh says:

من علامات النجاح في النهايات، الرجوع إلى الله في البدايات

“*One of the heralds of success in endings is returning to Allah Most High in beginnings.*”

Whoever rectifies his beginning by returning to God, relying upon Him, and seeking His assistance, as previously mentioned, will find prosperity and divine success in his ending.²⁸ This meaning is also closely related to *Ḥikmah* no. 27:

من أشرقت بدايته أشرقت نهايته

“*Whoever’s beginning shines, his ending also shines.*”

²⁷ Ibid, p. 28.

²⁸ Al-Rundī, *Al-Ḥikam al-‘Aṭā’īyah*, p. 38.

The implication of these aphorisms applies not only to matters of religion and spiritual journeying, where the *beginning* refers to the seeker's turning toward God, and the *end* to his arrival at divine nearness, but also to worldly affairs. In both domains, sincerity and reliance upon God at the outset are the keys to right guidance and successful outcomes.

3) Strengthening the belief in the Divine Unity by Realizing that God Alone is the True Agent of All Things

In Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's thought, reliance upon Allah instills in a servant's mind that Allah Is the true agent of all affairs; nothing occurs in the universe except through Him. By this, one nourishes his faith in the unity of Allah and His absolute Power. In Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh says:

ما توقف مطلب أنت طالبه بربك ولا تيسر مطلب أنت طالبه بنفسك

“No aim is halted that you seek through your Lord and no aim is made easy that you seek through yourself.”

Ibn 'Abbād explains: “Whoever presents his needs to God, seeks refuge in Him, and relies upon Him, God will suffice him in every burden, bring near to him what seems distant, and ease for him what is difficult.”²⁹ This meaning is grounded in the conviction that God is the sole and true agent behind all events. Thus, when the servant relies upon Him, he is entrusting his affairs to the very One Who commands and determines all things. Such *tawakkul* can only be realized when the heart is fully imbued with the oneness of God (*tawḥīd*). As Shaykh al-Būṭī observes, the source of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's statement is the Qur'an itself; and his assertion here represents one of the

²⁹ Ibid, p. 149.

foundational principles of *tawhīd*, which forms the very core of Islamic creed.³⁰

Second: Theological objectives inherent under Affliction (*Al-Balā’*)

Affliction in human life is not merely a passing test, but rather a manifestation of divine wisdom that deepens the servant’s relationship with his Lord and purifies the heart from attachment to anything other than Him. In times of trial and affliction, the reality of faith is revealed; the believer’s sincerity in his reliance upon Allah, his patience, and his contentment with Allah’s decrees becomes manifest.

Through pain and hardship, a person remembers his weakness and dependence upon God, returning back to Him in humility and supplication. In doing so, his certainty is strengthened, and his inner self is purified. Affliction thus becomes a means for spiritual elevation and the expiation of sins. As the Qur’an states: “*And give glad tidings to those who are patient*” (Qur’an 2:155), and the Prophet ﷺ said: “No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that.”³¹

Hence, affliction is in truth a mercy veiled in trial, drawing the believer closer to his Lord and teaching him that true happiness lies not in the absence of pain, but in the constancy of connection with God and contentment with His decree.

When we examine the theme of trial (*ibtīlā’*) in Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s *Al-Hikam*, we find that it carries several theological purposes (*maqāṣid ‘aqdiyya*).

³⁰ Muḥammad Sa‘īd al-Būṭī, *Al-Hikam al-‘Aṭā’īyah : Sharḥ wa Tahlīl* (Syria, Dar al-Fikr, 2003), vol. 1, p. 349.

³¹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth No (5641).

1) Drawing the servant nearer to God as an objective of Affliction

The first reference to affliction appears in *Hikmah* no. 63, where Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh states:

لم يقبل على الله بملاطفات الإحسان قيد إليه بسلاسل الامتحان.

“Whoever does not approach Allah by the gentle acts of His grace is drawn to Him by the chains of tribulations.”

Among the manifestations of God’s wisdom is that He endears Himself to His servants through His favors, granting them blessings and increasing them in bounty. Naturally, such blessings should lead them to gratitude and excellence, as the Qur’an says: *“Is there any reward for goodness except goodness?”* (Qur’an 55:60).

However, some people fail to recognize this grace and deny their Lord’s blessings, distancing themselves from Him. Such estrangement may arise from arrogance and denial or from being overpowered by one’s desires and sins. In the latter case, God subjects the person to trials as a merciful call back to Him, as if to say: *“My gifts did not bring you close, but perhaps hardship will.”* Thus, affliction becomes a divine means of awakening: for those who do not know God in times of ease will come to know Him in times of hardship.

2) Strengthening certainty in God’s Power and Sovereignty as an objective of Affliction

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh says:

متى أعطاك أشهدك بره، ومتى منعتك أشهدك قهره؛ فهو في كل ذلك متعرف إليك ،
ومقبل بوجود لطفه عليك

“When He gives to you, He makes you witness His benevolence; when He withholds from you, He makes you

witness His dominion. In all of this, He is making Himself known to you and approaching you through His gentleness.”

A person’s life alternates between times of blessing and times of trial. The Shaykh explains that one must discern God’s intent in every circumstance: in giving, He manifests His generosity and kindness; in causing affliction, He reveals His Majesty and Power.

In his commentary on this *ḥikmah*, Ibn Zarrūq explains the link between affliction and faith, saying: “Know that God’s overpowering sovereignty over His servants is among the greatest gateways through which they come to true faith and knowledge of Him. Were it not for His overpowering Might, those deluded by the strength that God granted them would never awaken to the humility of their servitude, nor realize that they move only within His grasp and draw all their power from His strength and authority.”³²

Thus, trials are not necessarily signs of divine rejection, but manifestations of God’s Lordship, through which the believer’s certainty (*yaqīn*) deepens, and his awareness of divine Omnipotence is renewed.

3) Awakening the heedless to God’s blessings and being a divine disciplinary action as objectives for Affliction

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh says:

من لم يعرف قدر النعم بوجدانها عرفها بوجود فقدانها.

“Whoever does not recognize the value of blessings in their presence is reminded of them in their absence.”

The purpose of Divine blessings is that the servant should show gratitude for them, for gratitude is the key to their increase,

³² Zarrūq, *Sharḥ al-Ḥikam*, p. 131.

as God says: *“If you are grateful, I will certainly give you more.”*
(Qur’an 14:7)

Yet, a person may forget this purpose, rejoicing in the blessing but forgetting the One who bestowed it. He may even go so far as to misuse it in disobedience to God, falling into what the Qur’an calls “ingratitude for blessings.” When this happens, the removal of the blessing becomes a form of divine discipline, reminding the servant that he had no inherent right to it, and that it was purely a gift from God’s grace.

Thus, the loss of blessings serves a didactic purpose to awaken the heart from heedlessness and teach the believer that true gratitude is both acknowledgment of God’s bounty and righteous use of His gifts in accordance with His will.

4) Driving a Servant to supplication as an objective of Affliction

Ibn ‘Atā’ Allāh says:

ما طلب لك شيء مثل الاضطرار، ولا أسرع بالمواهب إليك مثل الذلة والافتقار.

“Nothing pleads on your behalf like extreme need, nor does anything speed gifts to you quicker than lowliness and poverty before God.”

Such state of extreme need is a result of afflictions befalling a servant. Here the Shaykh teaches that Affliction places a person in a state of helplessness and dependence, driving him to turn sincerely to God in desperate need, just as the Qur’an declares: *“Who is it that answers the distressed when they call upon Him?”* (Qur’an 27:62).

The Shaykh here reveals that this state of desperation acts almost as an intercessor for the servant; it mediates between him and divine mercy. When a person is stripped of worldly supports, he ceases to rely on causes and instead clings to the Causer of causes. In that moment of humble brokenness, his heart becomes

most receptive to grace, and his supplication most likely to be answered.³³

Thus, the purpose (*maqṣid*) of such afflictions is spiritual restoration through supplication: to awaken the soul from its illusion of self-sufficiency and lead it back to intimate dependence upon the Divine.

5) Punishment for Ingratitude to God’s Favors as an objective for affliction

The Shaykh explains that affliction and depriving a servant of His graces may be a result for abandoning thanking God and showing Gratitude for how blessings. Stating that he says:

من لم يشكر النعم فقد تعرض لزوالها، ومن شكرها فقد قيدها بعقالها.

“*He who is ungrateful for blessings exposes himself to losing them while he who is grateful ties them down [from escape].*”

Thanking Allah for His blessings is a means for the preservation of such blessings. However, negligence of such attitude of thankfulness takes away them. Allah Most High has said, “*God does not change the condition of a people [for the worse] unless they change what is in themselves.*” [Qur’an 13:11]

Conclusion

This study has attempted to examine *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* (objectives of faith) the Islamic Šufī thought, particularly through the *Hikam* (Aphorisms) written by Sheikh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī. The study initially sought to identify the theoretical core on which the concept of the objectives of doctrine could be established, and found that the theory of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah*, which was formed within the framework of a tripartite classification of: *darūriyyāt*, *ḥājīyyāt*, and *taḥsīniyyāt*, represents a solid foundation for understanding the objectives of creed, as well as investigating the higher objectives

³³ See: Al-Būṭī, *Al-Hikam al-‘Aṭā’īyah*, vol. 3, pp. 404-405.

of *Sharī'ah*, which reveals that the highest objective is the realization of monotheism.

The study also highlighted the efforts made by Ṣūfī scholars in the field of the objectives of creed, starting with al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī, al-Ghazālī and Sheikh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī. Through an analysis of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s *Hikam*, it became clear that he was keen to reveal the objectives of creed in Islamic theological thought in an intensive manner by focusing on connecting a Muslim to God, establishing the creed of monotheism, and achieving genuine servitude to Allah. The findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

1- *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* were not absent from the thought of Muslim scholars; rather, they were present even before the discussion of the objectives of jurisprudential rulings.

2- Ṣūfīs contributed strongly to establishing the concept *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* through a long line of scholars, most notably Imam al-Ghazālī and Sheikh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Sakandarī.

3- The Ṣūfīs' interest in the concept of *asrār* (spiritual secrets) and wisdom behind the texts played a major role in revealing *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah*.

4- Sheikh Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh treats theological commands as a means to achieve major purposes and objectives.

5- The most prominent theological goals are the unity of God and the affirmation of His Omnipotence and Mercy toward His creation, and that He is the true Agent of all affairs.

6- One Divine act may imply different purposes, such as affliction, which may in reality be a reminder from Allah to the servant to return back to Him, or to be fretful for His blessings.

7- The awareness of *Maqāṣid al-‘Aqīdah* can contribute to strengthening belief and building a religious

discourse that combines between knowledge and conscience, and between understanding and guided conduct.

Bibliography

- The Qur'ān (The Noble Qur'ān).
Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (The Sound Collection of al-Bukhārī). Beirut, Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 1422 AH.
- Al-Disūqī, Muḥammad, and Amīna al-Jābir. Muqaddima fī dirāsāt al-fiqh al-islāmī (Introduction to Islamic Fiqh Studies). Qatar, Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1999.
- Al-Ghazālī, Abū Hāmid. Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn (Revival of the Religious Sciences). Beirut, Dār al-Ma'rifa, n.d.
- Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Alī. Al-Ṣalāh wa maqāṣiduhā (Prayer and Its Objectives). Edited by Ḥusnī Naṣr Zaydān. Cairo, Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1965.
- Al-Kaffawī, Abū al-Baqā'. Al-Kulliyāt, mu'jam fī al-muṣṭalaḥāt wa al-furūq al-lughawiyya (The Book of Universals, A Dictionary of Terms and Linguistic Distinctions). Edited by 'Adnān Darwīsh. Beirut, Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1997.
- Al-Qurṭubī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. Al-Jāmi' li aḥkām al-Qur'ān (The Compendium of Qur'ānic Legal Rulings). Cairo, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1964.
- Al-Rundī, Ibn 'Abbād al-Nafarī. Al-Ḥikam al-'Aṭā'iyya (The Aphorisms of Ibn 'Aṭā'illāh). Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maqṣūd. Cairo, Al-Ahram Center for Publishing, 1998.
- Al-Shāṭibī, Abū Ishāq. Al-Muwāfaqāt fī uṣūl al-aḥkām (Reconciliations in the Principles of Legal Rulings). Edited by Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Beirut, al-Maktaba al-'Aṣriyya, 2011.
- Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. Jāmi' al-bayān fī ta'wīl al-Qur'ān (Comprehensive Exposition of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān). Beirut, Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 2000.
- Al-Ṭahānawī, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī. Kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn wa al-'ulūm (Dictionary of the Technical Terms of the Arts and Sciences). Edited by Rafīq al-'Ajam. Beirut, Lebanon Publishers, 1996.

- ‘Alwānī, Ṭaha Jābir. *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘a* (The Objectives of Islamic Law). Beirut, Dār al-Hādī, 2001.
- Būṭī, Muḥammad Sa‘īd. *Al-Ḥikam al-‘Aṭā’iyya, sharḥ wa taḥlīl* (The Ḥikam of Ibn ‘Aṭā’illāh, Explanation and Analysis). Damascus, Dār al-Fikr, 2003.
- Geoffroy, Éric. *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans* (Sufism in Egypt and Syria under the Last Mamluks and the First Ottomans). Damascus, Institut Français de Damas, 1995.
- Ibn al-Athīr, Majd al-Dīn ibn Muḥammad. *Al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-athar* (The Ultimate Explanation of Rare Hadith Expressions). Edited by Ṭāhir Aḥmad. Beirut, al-Maktaba al-‘Ilmiyya, 1979.
- Ibn ‘Ashūr, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir. *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘a al-Islāmiyya* (The Higher Objectives of Islamic Law). Translated by Mohamed al-Taḥer al-Mesawi. London, The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2006.
- Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī. *Al-Durar al-kāmina fī a‘yān al-mī‘a al-thāmina* (Hidden Pearls on the Notables of the Eighth Century). Hyderabad, Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyya, 1972–1976.
- Ibn Kathīr, Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar. *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘azīm* (Exegesis of the Mighty Qur’ān). Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1419 AH.
- Ibn Manzūr, Jamāl al-Dīn. *Lisān al-‘Arab* (The Tongue of the Arabs). Beirut, Dār Ṣādir, 1414 AH.
- Muḥammad Mustafā Shalabī. *Ta‘līl al-aḥkām* (The Reasoning Behind Legal Rulings). Cairo, Maṭba‘at al-Azhar, 1947.
- ‘Uthmān, ‘Abd al-Tawwāb Muḥammad. “Maqāṣid al-‘aqīda fī al-Qur’ān wa al-Sunna (The Objectives of Creed in the Qur’ān and the Sunnah).” *Journal of Arab Studies* 37, no. 2 (2018): 767–812.
- Zarrūq, Aḥmad. *Sharḥ al-Ḥikam al-‘Aṭā’iyya* (Commentary on the Aphorisms of Ibn ‘Aṭā’illāh). Edited by ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd. Cairo, Dār al-Sha‘b, n.d.