

Analysis of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani's Concept of Thought in the Book *Al-Fathur Rabbani*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani as contained in the book *Al-Fathur Rabbani*. The main focus of the study is on aspects of Sufism, monotheism (*tawhid*), spiritual education, and Islamic ethics highlighted in his sermons and teachings. This study employs a qualitative approach using textual analysis of the book's content along with relevant literature review. The findings indicate that Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani's thoughts have made a significant contribution in guiding Muslims towards a more pious life based on Islamic shari'ah.

Keywords: Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, *tawhid*, *zuhd*, *tawakkul*, *ma'rifah*, *shari'ah*, Sufism.

INTRODUCTION

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani (470H-561H) was a renowned Islamic scholar, particularly in the field of Sufism. He was the founder of the Qadiriyyah order and was well known for his teachings that emphasized spiritual purification and closeness to Allah (Trimingham, 1971). His works, especially *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, remain a primary reference in understanding the profound concepts of Sufism (Ernst, 1997).

The book *Al-Fathur Rabbani* is a collection of sermons delivered by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani to his students and the society of his time. Each sermon in this book addresses various aspects of spiritual life and educates readers on how to attain closeness to Allah (Al-Jilani, 1997). He discusses the importance of morality, faith, and devotion to Allah in everyday life (Makdisi, 1974).

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani's thoughts in this book are not limited to theoretical aspects but also provide practical guidelines that can be applied by every Muslim individual (Smith, 2001). This book also emphasizes the balance between worldly life and the Hereafter, rejects extremism in religious practice, and offers a holistic approach to understanding Islam (Chodkiewicz, 1993). Therefore, an analysis of this book is essential for gaining a deeper understanding of the Sufi values that he advocated.

Previous Studies

Research on the thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani has been conducted by several scholars who examined the aspects of Sufism and his teachings in *Al-Fathur Rabbani*. Makdisi (1974) discussed his influence on the development of Islamic thought, particularly in the field of Sufism and the Qadiriyyah order. Ernst (1997) analyzed his spiritual teachings and their relation to the development of Islamic mysticism.

Additionally, Buehler (2011) studied Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani's approach to educating his students through the sermons contained in this book. Chodkiewicz (1993) explored how his thoughts emphasized the balance between *ma'rifah* (gnosis) and *shari'ah*, a crucial aspect of Sunni Sufism. Renard (2008) also highlighted the significance of his teachings in shaping the morality and spirituality of the Muslim community.

These studies indicate that *Al-Fathur Rabbani* is not merely a collection of sermons but also serves as a spiritual guide that has significantly impacted the development of Islamic Sufi thought. Therefore, this study will further expand the analysis of the key concepts in his teachings, including *tawhid*, *zuhd*, *tawakkul*, and the relationship between *ma'rifah* and *shari'ah*.

Research Objectives

This study aims to analyze the concepts of *tawhid*, *zuhd*, *tawakkul*, as well as the relationship between *ma'rifah* and *shari'ah*, and the role of *muhasabah* in the thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani as presented in *Al-Fathur Rabbani*.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using textual analysis and literature review methods. The primary source of this research is *Al-Fathur Rabbani* by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, which is analyzed to understand the key concepts of his thought. Additionally, this study refers to secondary sources such as books, academic journals, and previous studies discussing his teachings and philosophy (Makdisi, 1974; Ernst, 1997; Buehler, 2011).

Content analysis is conducted by examining the main themes frequently emphasized in the book, such as *tawhid*, *zuhd*, *tawakkul*, and the relationship between *ma'rifah* and *shari'ah*. This study also applies a hermeneutic approach to interpret the implicit meanings within Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani's sermons and teachings (Schimmel, 1975; Renard, 2008). Furthermore, comparisons are made with the works of other Sufi scholars to identify both the continuity and uniqueness of his thoughts in the context of Islamic Sufi development.

Tawhid in the Thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani

One of the main themes in *Al-Fathur Rabbani* is the importance of pure *tawhid*. He emphasizes that a Muslim must have strong faith in the oneness of Allah SWT and reject all forms of *shirk* (polytheism) (Al-Jilani, 1997). According to him, *tawhid* is the foundation of all correct beliefs and practices in Islam.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani stresses that *tawhid* is not merely a verbal declaration but must be internalized in the heart and practiced in daily life (Nasr, 2007). Reliance on Allah (*tawakkul*) is one of the key characteristics of a true believer, where one must firmly believe that everything is under His decree and will.

Therefore, *Tauhid*, according to Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, is the fundamental foundation of life that leads a person to both spiritual and worldly success. It is not merely a belief but a practice that shapes character, strengthens the relationship with Allah, and brings blessings into modern life. By fully understanding and implementing *Tauhid*, one can attain true happiness and inner peace while facing the challenges of life.

Tawhid in Actions (*Tawhid al-Af'al*)

Tawhid al-Af'al refers to the belief that all actions and occurrences in the universe are solely the result of Allah's will and power. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani asserts that every movement, change, and event happen by the decree and authority of Allah SWT (Al-Jilani, 1997).

He reminds that humans must understand that everything that occurs—whether good or bad—is a divine decree and a test from Allah SWT for His servants (Nasr, 2007). Therefore, a Muslim should practice patience (*sabr*) when facing trials and express gratitude (*shukr*) for the blessings received, as all of them originate from Allah SWT (Winter, 2018).

Moreover, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani emphasizes that no one should rely solely on themselves or on other creations when performing any action, as all strength and ability (*quwwah* and *istiṭā'ah*) come from Allah SWT (Chittick, 2000). Complete dependence on Allah in all aspects of life is the true manifestation of *tawhid al-af'al*.

In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he also highlights the significance of sincerity (*ikhlas*) in worshipping Allah SWT. According to him, sincerity in worship is a reflection of worship tainted by ostentation (*riya'*) or worldly motives can lead to hidden shirk (shirk khafi) (Chittick, 2000).

Additionally, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani also elaborates on the concept of *fanā'* (annihilation in the Divine) as part of a deeper experience of *tawhid*. According to him, a person who truly understands *tawhid* will realize that they are merely a servant of Allah and that everything besides Him is perishable (*fana'*) (Winter, 2018). Therefore, one must strive to purify the heart from attachment to worldly desires in order to attain *ma'rifatullah* (gnostic knowledge of Allah). Therefore, *Tauhid Af'al*, according to Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, is the foundation of inner peace and worldly success. By practicing it, Muslims can face the challenges of the modern era with greater calmness, patience, and complete reliance on Allah.

Tawhid Rububiyyah and Uluhiyyah

Rububiyyah is an Islamic theological term derived from the Arabic word "Rabb" (رَبِّ), meaning Lord, Sustainer, and Master, while Uluhiyyah comes from the Arabic word "Ilah" (إِلَهِ), meaning deity or one who is worshipped.

Tawhid rububiyyah in the thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani refers to the belief that Allah SWT is the sole Creator, Owner, and Sustainer of the entire universe. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he emphasizes that all occurrences in this world happen solely by the permission and will of Allah SWT (Al-Jilani, 1997). Therefore, humans must firmly believe that provisions, life, death, and all decrees are under the absolute authority of Allah SWT (Winter, 2018).

In the context of tawhid uluhiyyah, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani underscores the importance of worshipping Allah SWT alone, without intermediaries or associating partners with Him. He asserts that humans must abandon all forms of worship other than Allah, including excessive reliance on creation or worldly matters (Nasr, 2007). Acts of worship should be performed with sincerity and love for Allah SWT, rather than being driven solely by worldly rewards (Chittick, 2000).

According to him, *tawhid uluhiyyah* also requires individuals to prioritize Allah's laws in their lives. Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani stresses that a Muslim must not take any system other than Islamic *shari'ah* as their ultimate guide because only Allah has the absolute right to be worshiped and obeyed (Al-Jilani, 1997). Therefore, he calls upon Muslims to avoid all forms of doctrinal deviations that could compromise the purity of their *tawhid* (Winter, 2018).

Therefore, *Tauhid Rububiyyah* and *Tauhid Uluhiyyah* play a significant role in shaping a balanced, meaningful life that is centered on Allah. By practicing both aspects of *Tauhid*, Muslims can face the challenges of the modern era with confidence, tranquility, and steadfastness in worship and social life.

Internalizing Tawhid in Daily Life

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani emphasizes that the realization of *tawhid* is not merely theoretical but must be manifested in daily life. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he teaches that a Muslim should fully surrender to Allah in all aspects of life (Al-Jilani, 1997). This includes placing complete trust in Allah when seeking sustenance, facing trials, and making life decisions (Winter, 2018).

Additionally, he highlights the importance of purifying the heart from diseases such as ostentation (*riya'*), arrogance (*takabbur*), and envy (*hasad*), as these can hinder a person from achieving true *tawhid* (Nasr, 2007). Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani asserts that those who truly understand *tawhid* will possess a pure heart and a peaceful life because they rely not on worldly matters but solely on Allah SWT (Chittick, 2000).

In social life, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani teaches that the realization of *tawhid* should be reflected in interpersonal interactions. A person with strong *tawhid* will be honest, trustworthy, and responsible, as they are fully aware that Allah is always watching over their actions (Al-Jilani, 1997). Therefore, understanding *tawhid* not only strengthens one's relationship with Allah but also enhances relationships with fellow human beings.

Tawhid as the Key to Inner Peace

In the realm of spiritual education, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani emphasizes that the perfection of *tawhid* can only be achieved through *mujahadah* (striving against one's lower self) and *riyadhah* (spiritual training). A person who truly upholds *tawhid* will feel the presence of Allah in every aspect of their life and strive to reach the *maqam ihsan*—worshiping Allah as if they see Him, or at the very least, being constantly aware that He is watching them (Schimmel, 1975; Renard, 2008).

Tawhid is the foundation of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani's thought. He asserts that belief in the oneness of Allah is the basis of all righteous actions (Al-Jilani, 1997). In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he frequently highlights the importance of surrendering all affairs to Allah and avoiding both apparent and hidden forms of *shirk*. True *tawhid*, according to him, is not merely a verbal declaration but must be manifested in one's actions and character (Chittick, 2007; Buehler, 2011).

Tawhid is not limited to theoretical discussions but must be applied in daily life. Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani teaches that a person who truly upholds *tawhid* will place their trust, hopes, and reliance solely on Allah, without depending on any created being (Geoffroy, 2010).

Asceticism (*Zuhud*) and Its Necessity in a Believer's Life

The Concept of *Zuhud* in Islam

In the thought of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, *zuhud* refers to detachment from worldly possessions and prioritization of the Hereafter. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he explains that *zuhud* does not mean completely abandoning the world, but rather ensuring that it is not the ultimate goal of life (Al-Jilani, 1997).

According to him, a Muslim who possesses *zuhud* will use wealth and status as mere tools to attain Allah's pleasure rather than as ends in themselves (Nasr, 2007). True *zuhud* is when a servant of Allah possesses worldly things in their hands but not in their heart (Chittick, 2000).

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani also emphasizes that *zuhud* must be accompanied by *qana'ah* (contentment) and *tawakkal* (trust in Allah). He reminds that the world is merely a place of trials, and true success lies in attaining Allah's pleasure in the Hereafter (Winter, 2018).

The Role of *Zuhud* in Purification of the Soul

In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani emphasizes that *zuhud* plays a crucial role in *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul). He states that a person who removes the love of the world from their heart will be closer to Allah and will have a heart purified from greed and arrogance (*ujub*) (Al-Jilani, 1997).

Zuhud helps individuals suppress their desires and makes them more sincere in their worship of Allah (Nasr, 2007). Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani reminds that the world is a test that can distract people from the Hereafter, and only those who practice *zuhud* can attain high spiritual ranks (Chittick, 2000).

He also stresses that *zuhud* is not merely about physically renouncing the world but rather about training the heart to not depend on it, always prioritizing Allah's pleasure in all aspects of life (Winter, 2018).

Tawakkal as a Fortress of Faith

Definition and Importance of Tawakkal

Tawakkal in the thoughts of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani refers to complete reliance on Allah SWT after exerting the best possible effort. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he explains that *tawakkal* is not a passive attitude but rather a form of absolute dependence on Allah after striving sincerely (Al-Jilani, 1997).

He emphasizes that *tawakkal* is a sign of true faith and one of the essential elements in attaining closeness to Allah SWT. According to him, those who possess *tawakkal* will always feel at peace because they trust that Allah is the best planner (Nasr, 2007).

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani also links *tawakkal* with purity of heart and steadfastness in faith. He asserts that those who truly rely on Allah will not be easily swayed by worldly fears or the loss of material possessions because they firmly believe that Allah is the ultimate source of everything (Chittick, 2000). Therefore, *tawakkal* not only strengthens one's conviction but also helps achieve inner peace and resilience in facing life's challenges (Winter, 2018).

Ma'rifah and Shari'ah: A Complementary Relationship

The Importance of Ma'rifah in Islam

Ma'rifah in the thought of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani refers to deep and true knowledge of Allah SWT. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he emphasizes that *ma'rifah* is the highest stage in a servant's spiritual journey, which can only be achieved through sincerity of heart, sincere worship, and purification of the soul (Al-Jilani, 1997).

According to him, *ma'rifah* is not merely intellectual knowledge but a spiritual awareness that leads a person to firm conviction in the greatness and oneness of Allah SWT (Nasr, 2007). Those who attain *ma'rifah* will possess inner peace and always rely on Allah in every aspect of their lives (Chittick, 2000).

He also asserts that *ma'rifah* is the key to happiness in this world and the hereafter because it brings a person to a true closeness with Allah SWT. Therefore, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani teaches that *ma'rifah* should be the primary goal in a believer's journey toward Allah's pleasure (Winter, 2018).

The Balance Between Ma'rifah and Shari'ah

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani stresses that *ma'rifah* without *shari'ah* can lead to misguidance, while *shari'ah* without *ma'rifah* can become empty rituals that bring no spiritual benefit (Al-Jilani, 1997). In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he explains that maintaining a balance between *ma'rifah* and *shari'ah* is the key to a harmonious Islamic life.

According to him, *ma'rifah* provides a deeper understanding of divine reality, but it must always be guided by *shari'ah* to ensure that one does not fall into deviant beliefs (Nasr, 2007). *Shari'ah* serves as the foundation that ensures a person's practices and worship remain on the right path, while *ma'rifah* enriches the spiritual experience and leads one to a more profound appreciation of Islam (Winter, 2018).

The Importance of Self-Reflection and Purification of the Soul

The Role of Self-Reflection in a Muslim's Life

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani emphasizes the importance of *muhasabah* (self-reflection) in a Muslim's life. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he explains that *muhasabah* is the key to soul purification and the strengthening of one's faith. A Muslim must constantly evaluate their deeds and correct their shortcomings to remain on the path that pleases Allah SWT (Al-Jilani, 1997).

According to him, continuous *muhasabah* brings a person closer to Allah SWT and helps them avoid negligence and sin (Nasr, 2007). By recognizing their own weaknesses, a Muslim can improve their worship and strengthen their relationship with both Allah SWT and fellow human beings (Winter, 2018).

Purification of the Soul as a Path to Allah

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani asserts that soul purification (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) is a fundamental aspect of a Muslim's journey towards Allah SWT. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he explains that a pure and clean heart is a

crucial requirement for attaining *ma'rifatullah* (true knowledge of Allah) and nearness to Him (Al-Jilani, 1997).

He stresses that a Muslim must avoid spiritual diseases such as envy (*hasad*), ostentation (*riya'*), and arrogance (*takabbur*), as these can become barriers between them and Allah SWT (Nasr, 2007). The process of purifying the soul requires *mujahadah*—continuous effort in restraining one's desires and increasing acts of worship.

According to Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, a servant who wishes to attain *ma'rifat* must embark on a journey of patience and perseverance in performing righteous deeds. In *Al-Fathur Rabbani*, he emphasizes that those who truly love Allah SWT will always seek ways to improve themselves and increase their piety (Winter, 2018).

CONCLUSION

Overall, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani's thoughts in *Al-Fathur Rabbani* emphasize the balance between *tawhid*, *tasawwuf*, and adherence to *shariah* in a Muslim's life. He highlights the importance of pure *tawhid*, soul purification, and piety as the fundamental principles in drawing closer to Allah SWT.

The *tawhid* concepts he teaches encompass *rububiyyah*, *uluhiyyah*, and *af'al*, forming a holistic understanding of divinity in Islam. Meanwhile, soul purification is emphasized as the key step toward achieving *ma'rifat* (true knowledge of Allah) and spiritual closeness to Him. All these aspects contribute to shaping a Muslim individual who not only maintains a strong relationship with Allah but also upholds noble character in daily life.

His teachings remain relevant in the modern world, where Muslims can benefit from his wisdom to enhance their spiritual connection and strengthen their faith in facing life's challenges.

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