

PART 3

SHARIA AND COUNTERCULTURE IN ACEH

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Aceh has always been both a special and (for the central government) a troublesome province. The region is well-known for the religious disposition of its inhabitants and is invariably mentioned as one of Indonesia's 'most Islamic' regions. Aceh also has a history of fierce resistance against any infringements on its freedom to arrange its own affairs. In the closing decades of the 19th century it took the Dutch much effort to subjugate Aceh, something which according to the Acehnese was never fully accomplished. Between 1945 and 1950 no Dutch troops were sent to Aceh. The Dutch refrained from any effort to re-establish their authority there, afraid, if the Acehnese are to be believed, of the resistance they might encounter. During this period Aceh wholeheartedly supported Indonesia's struggle for independence, but in 1953 it clashed with Jakarta. Acehnese leaders, resisting control by the central government over the judiciary, the local administration and local units of the Indonesian army, took up arms and joined the rebellions that were taking place in other parts of Indonesia, striving for an Islamic State of Indonesia. An additional cause for concern that the province's existence was in danger was that Acehnese religious leaders had their doubts about the orthodoxy of Islam being promoted by the central government; identified by these leaders as being inspired by Islam as practised on Java. In 1957 a ceasefire was agreed upon and in May 1959 Aceh was granted special status. It became the Special Region of Aceh (Daerah Istimewa Aceh) (the only other province with the same status was and is Yogyakarta) and it was given autonomy in the fields of religion, customs and education.

In fact, May 1959 was not the right moment in Indonesian history to be awarded a degree of self-rule. Two months later President Sukarno proclaimed a return to the Constitution of 1945. The proclamation ushered in Guided Democracy, a period that would prove to be at least as oppressive as that of the New Order. The new name given to the province survived, but that was all that was accomplished. Centralisation, not decentralisation characterised the years between 1959 and 1998. The

dissatisfaction this caused once again resulted in the Acehnese taking up arms. In 1976 the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement, GAM) was founded. Government suppression of the GAM was brutal, with many ordinary citizens falling victim to the army's operations as well.

The fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 was a watershed moment. To redress the mistakes of the past, decentralisation became a political priority. This new policy was coupled with efforts to end rebellions in a number of provinces that had plagued the country for years. Under B.J. Habibie, the first president after Suharto, East Timor (Timor Leste) was granted independence, while Aceh's prerogatives of May 1959 were reconfirmed. Under his successors, Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Soekarnoputri, expecting or hoping that religious concessions might end the GAM rebellion, Jakarta gave Aceh the authority to develop its own Islamic legal system, culminating in Law No. 18 of 2001 on special autonomy for Aceh. The law also gave Aceh a new name, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Aceh Country Abode of Peace, combining Acehnese and Arabic terminology. The miscalculation in Jakarta was that for the GAM it was independence that mattered in the end, not religious reform. As Reza Idria writes in his contribution, in the negotiations leading up to the Memorandum of Understanding between GAM and the Indonesian government of 15 August 2005, Sharia formed no part of the discussions.

It took until after the tsunami of December 2004 for an agreement to be reached. By then, the central government had put into place a framework for the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh which, as would later become clear, GAM leaders could only partly endorse. The tension between Islamisation promoted from outside and local opinions is illustrated by the inclusion of the punishment of stoning to death for those who commit adultery in a draft law in 2009. This was the work of the national Islamic party PKS (which evoked the threat, often used in Islamist circles, of eternal damnation in order to get fellow Muslim politicians to support its view), but as Moch Nur Ichwan notes in his contribution, the new bill did not take effect because the governor of Aceh, a former GAM leader, refused to sign it.

In this section it has been chosen not to highlight Aceh's fame as a province where the people are committed to the enforcement of Sunni Islam, but to draw attention to behaviour in defiance of this and to the existence of groups and opinions which challenge orthodox interpretations. As Reza Idria points out, most studies on Sharia in Aceh have emphasised its enforcement, and rarely deal with the reactions of the Acehnese population to its implementation. A similar remark can be made about the reports published by human rights organisations and other NGOs, and by the coverage in Indonesian and foreign mass

media. Hence, he and Nur Ichwan, who emphasises the same point, pay particular attention to criticism and counter-streams in Acehese society. In part, such dissent takes the form of a critical discussion of the concrete shape that Sharia legislation has taken; stressing how little attention is paid to the real problems that have to be tackled, such as the combat of corruption and poverty and how detrimental the new legislation is to the position of women and members of minority groups. As becomes clear from Nur Ichwan's discussion of the position of heterodox Sufi in present-day Aceh, another point of concern is the strict interpretation of Sunni tenets that characterise the religious laws promulgated thus far in Aceh, disregarding the beliefs and practices of the Shi'a, Sufi, Ahmadiyah and other religious minority communities and the concomitant lack of religious tolerance such an approach reflects. To a degree, resistance finds its expression in defiance of religious directives imposed from above by the population at large and by punkers, homosexuals and other people with a different way of life and who are trying to preserve their own subculture. As Reza Idria also points out, yet another point is the value attached to one's own way of life. Some Acehese Islamic leaders almost took it as an insult that it was Jakarta, and not they themselves, that determined what the introduction of Islamic law would mean in a region well-known for its devotion to Islam and its rich Islamic tradition.

A question to be asked when discussing Islamic legislation – in Aceh and elsewhere – is whether 'religion' can be isolated in studying its implementation. Religiously inspired byelaws in other parts of Indonesia are defended not by an appeal to Islam, but by evoking Indonesian and local values and norms of decency. One cannot simply dismiss such reasoning as justifications conjured up by politicians in Jakarta and others in order to circumvent the legal ban on the drafting of religious regulations by local administrations. The result would be an oversimplified picture of what makes people play an active role in the introduction and enforcement of Islamic law and in resisting it. In Islamic Southeast Asia religion and customs (*agama dan adat istiadat*) are often mentioned in one and the same breath; and as the contributions to this section indicate, local values form an important point of reference. Reza Idria calls attention to the fact that in Aceh behaviour is often prohibited because it is incompatible with Islamic and Acehese culture.

His contribution is a good illustration of David Kloos' observation that fieldwork is an indispensable tool when dealing with the construction and functions of stereotypes about the Acehese, presented by outsiders and in local society itself; and also in relation to the misconceptions which are the result of fixed ideas about a society. He shows that the representation of the Acehese as being pious and militant people should

not make people conclude that the Acehnese are necessarily receptive to fundamentalist or Islamist propaganda from outside; for that the opinions about what constitutes proper Islam are too wide apart. This was, as David Kloos points out, a mistake made by former Jemaah Islamiyah leaders when they set up a training camp in Aceh, discovered by the Indonesian authorities in 2010. Earlier, in 2002, al-Qaeda leaders, investigating the possibility of setting up a base in Aceh probably made the same wrong assessment. The discovery of the training camp and the military operations against it form the point of departure of David Kloos' analysis. Taking place near the village where he was doing fieldwork, the events allowed him to gain a first-hand insight into people's reaction and beliefs; and also in a society made weary by past violence.

7 Neo-Sufism, Shariatism, and Ulama Politics

Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly and the
Tauhid-Tasawuf Movement in Aceh¹

Moch Nur Ichwan

1 Introduction

The current official implementation of Sharia in Aceh and the subsequent emergence of shariatism,² represented by Islamist groups, have positioned Sharia as the ‘master signifier’ which defines almost all spheres of life – educational, social, political, economic and cultural. In this context, official Sharia ulama as well as societal Sharia ulama emerged as the authority to define what kind of Islam is to be adopted by the government and practised by people in the region. This development has undeniably led to the marginalisation of non-Sharia oriented Muslim groups, such as Sufi and other groups considered as being deviant. This has also led to the resurfacing of a confrontation between Sufi ulama and Sharia ulama in Aceh. The best example of this conflict is that between an official ulama institution Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama (MPU, Consultative Council of Ulama)³ and the societal ulama organisations Himpunan Ulama Dayah Aceh (HUDA, Association of Acehnese Dayah Ulama) and Majelis Ulama Nanggroe Aceh (MUNA, Ulama Council of

1 Part of this contribution was presented at the conference *Sufism for a New Age*, University of Western Sydney, 9–30 September 2011. I would like to thank Prof. Julia Day Howell and the participants in the conference for their fruitful discussion. I would also like to thank the Islam Research Programme (IRP) of Leiden University for making the research for writing this chapter possible. However, I alone am responsible for its content. Fieldwork was carried out in February 2009, March 2010, July 2011 and January 2012.

2 Shariatism here is a religio-political ideology which aims to promote comprehensive Sharia implementation in all aspects of life.

3 While the MPU is a state-supported societal institution, the MPU is fully part of the state. Qanun No. 9/2003 gives the MPU powerful authority. Executive and legislative bodies are obliged to consult it not only in matters pertaining to Sharia but also in ‘secular’ policies – although such a power has not been exercised properly.

Nanggroe Aceh) on the one hand and a neo-Sufi group, called Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid Tasawuf (MPTT, Council for the Study of Tauhid Tasawuf), led by Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly, on the other hand.⁴ Amran Waly has been accused of spreading *wahdat al-wujud* (Unity of Being/monism), a Sufi teaching of man's unity with God which is considered by Sharia ulama as deviant and not being in line with 'correct' Sunni orthodoxy.

This chapter will analyse the neo-Sufi challenge by Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly and the Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid Tasawuf, which I call the Tauhid Tasawuf movement, to official shariatisation by the state and shariatism in general. Amran Waly and the MPTT try to synthesise the *wujudiyya* Sufi doctrine with orthodoxy, a concern which has led to them being charged with heterodoxy. However, the fact that the MPTT survives to this day and is even spread widely not only in Aceh but also elsewhere in Indonesia and Southeast Asia deserves further analysis. Amran Waly's views on Sharia, 'tauhid tasawuf' and *wahdat al-wujud*, and the way Sharia ulama have reacted will get special attention here. I will argue that the long struggle between Sharia and Sufi ulama should be understood in the context of the local politics of Aceh and that the dissemination of Sufi views and ways of life reflects their resistance against the overwhelming official Sharia implementation and shariatism in Aceh today.

2 Shariatism and Sufism: Never-Ending Struggle?

The conflict between Sharia and Sufi ulama is not new in Aceh. It dates back to before the 13th century, to the early dissemination of Islam in the region. Anthony H. Johns argued that it is through Sufism that Islam was first introduced to Aceh and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.⁵ In fact, Sufism was 'state Islam' in the Acehnese Sultanate for quite a long time

4 I adopt the notion of neo-Sufism used by Howell which means 'a this-worldly ethical and devotional practice free of the Sufi orders': Julia Day Howell, 'Sufism and the Indonesian Islamic Revival', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 60:3 (2001), 701–729. Amran Waly's MPTT is included in the category of neo-Sufi movements because it emphasises the spirituality of this-worldly ethical and devotional practice and does not follow the disciplines of Sufi orders, especially in terms of the relationship between the spiritual leader and his disciples.

5 Anthony H. Johns, 'Islamization in Southeast Asia: Reflections and Reconsiderations with Special Reference to the Role of Sufism', *Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1, June 1993, 43–61.

during which period Sharia ulama were marginalised. During the reigns of Sultan 'Alauddin Ri'ayat Shah (1589–1604) and Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636), which is considered to be the golden age of Aceh, the Sufi ulama Shaykh Hamzah al-Fansuri (d. 1590) and Shaykh Syamsuddin al-Sumatrani (d. 1630) successively assumed the position of shaykh al-Islam of the sultanate.⁶ These ulamas were Sufi masters who embraced the *wujudhiyya* Sufi teaching, which believed in a possible unity with God through the spiritual path. They enjoyed the protection and patronage of their respective sultans in carrying out their intellectual activities and disseminating their teaching, despite strong opposition from the Sharia ulama.⁷ When al-Sumatrani died in 1630, he was replaced by his Sufi disciple, Shaykh Jamaluddin, but the latter was not appointed shaykh al-Islam.

Sultan Iskandar Thani, who reigned from 1636 to 1641, appointed Shaykh Nuruddin al-Raniri (d. 1658), a high profile orthodox Sufi ulama of the Rifa'iyya, 'Aydarusiyya and Qadiriyya orders from Ranir (Rander) in India, as shaykh al-Islam in 1637.⁸ Invested with this authority, al-Raniri condemned the wujudhiyya teaching of al-Fansuri and al-Sumatrani and considered it deviant and misguided. He even ordered the execution of some wujudhiyya followers and all al-Fansuri's and al-Sumatrani's books to be burned.⁹ He retained his position of shaykh al-Islam when Iskandar Thani died and was replaced by his daughter, Sultanah Safiyatuddin (1641–1675). When he lost the support of the Sultanah, he left Aceh in 1644, and was replaced by Shaykh Saif al-Rijal, a wujudhiyya Sufi master. Saif al-Rijal continued to spread al-Fansuri's and al-Sumatrani's

6 Amirul Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Aceh* (Leiden, etc: Brill, 2004), 148–149.

7 Osman bin Bakar, 'Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian World', in Seyyed Hossein Nasr (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991), 285.

8 Azyumardi Azra, *Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulama' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ASAA Southeast Asian Publication Series (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press 2004), 56. On Al-Raniri see Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Raniri and the Wujudhiyyah of 17th century Aceh* (Singapore: Monographs of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, no. 3, 1966); G.W.J. Drewes, 'Nur al-Din al-Raniri's charge of heresy against Hamzah and Shamsuddin from an international point of view', in C.D. Grijns and S.O. Robson (eds.), *Cultural contact and textual interpretation: Papers from the fourth European colloquium on Malay and Indonesian studies, held in Leiden in 1983. Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 115 (Dordrecht and Cinnaminson: Foris Publications, 1986), 54–59.

9 Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra*, 157.

teachings. Yet not much information is available about him and his thoughts.¹⁰

Replacing Saif al-Rijal in 1661, Syaikh Abdurra'uf al-Sinkili (d. 1693), who was a low profile orthodox Sufi of the Shattariyyah order, took a moderate position in the conflict between wujudiyah and shariatism. He was well accepted by the four successive sultanahs of Aceh (Safiyatuddin Tajul Alam [1641–1675], Naqiyatuddin [1675–1678], Zakiyatudin 'Inayat Shah [1678–1688], and Zainatuddin Kamalat Shah [1688–1699]) until his death in 1693.¹¹ As orthodox Sufi master, al-Sinkili, tried to reconcile Sharia and *tasawuf* (Sufism). He never condemned wujudiyah followers and discouraged the labelling of other Muslim fellows as *kafirun* (disbelievers).¹² The period of the sultanahs reflect the adoption of heterodox and then orthodox Sufism as 'state Islam'.

Today Aceh again is the scene of a confrontation between Sharia ulama, orthodox Sufi ulama and heterodox Sufi ulama, with the first group dominating the other two. While Sharia ulama can align with orthodox Sufi ulama, they cannot do so with heterodox ones. Sharia ulama and orthodox Sufi ulama even at times join hands in challenging the heterodox Sufi ulama. The dominant role Sharia ulama currently play in Aceh could not have been attained without the help of the state which officially implements Sharia from above.¹³ The role of Sharia

10 Saif al-Rijal was originally from Minangkabau. He studied in Surat in India, and arrived in Aceh on 8 August 1643. He was the student of Shaikh Jamaluddin, the disciple of al-Sumatrani. Takeshi Ito, 'Why Did Nuruddin ar-Raniri Leave Aceh in 1054 A.H.?', *BKI* 134 (1978), 490–491; Azra, *Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulama'*, 60–62; Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra*, 157; Sher Banu A.L. Khan, 'What Happened to Syaiful Rijal?', in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, April 2011.

11 For further study on these sultanahs see Sher Banu A.L. Khan, *Rule Behind the Silk Curtain: Sultanahs of Aceh 1641–1699*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Queen Mary University of London, 2009; idem, 'The Sultanahs of Aceh 1641–1699', in Graf, Schroter and Wieringa (eds.), *Aceh: History, Politics and Culture* (ISEAS: Singapore, 2010); Mehment Ozay, 'Women as Rulers Phenomenon in Southeast Asian Islamic Society: The Queens of Aceh', paper presented at World Congress for Islamic History and Civilization: Intellectuals Stimulate Transformation, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, 10–11 October 2011.

12 Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra*, 157.

13 For more on Sharia in Aceh see Moch Nur Ichwan, 'The Politics of Shari'atization: Central Governmental and Regional Discourses of Shari'a Implementation in Aceh', in R. Michael Feener and Mark Cammack (eds.), *Islamic Law in Contemporary Indonesia: ideas and institutions* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Islamic Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School and Harvard University Press, 2007), 193–

ulama in drafting some Sharia qanuns (byelaws) is apparent, since they hold positions in the Dinas Syariat Islam (Sharia Office) and the MPU;¹⁴ as is their role in drafting and endorsing the draft qanun on Jinayat (Islamic Criminal Legal Code) and the Qanun on Islamic Criminal Legal Procedure. Although these qanuns could not be implemented because the governor refused to ratify them despite their approval by the Parliament of Aceh, the Sharia ulama continue to struggle for their implementation. Together with Sharia-oriented Islamist organisations and movements, they demand the reopening of the discussion in Aceh's legislative assembly.¹⁵ Sharia ulama are also influential in other Sharia state institutions, such as Mahkamah Shariyah (Sharia courts), Wilayatul Hisbah (Sharia police – now integrated with the civil service police [Polisi

215; Tim Lindsey, M.B. Hooker, R. Clarke and J. Kingsley, 'Shari'a Revival in Aceh', in Feener and Cammack (eds.), *Islamic Law in Contemporary Indonesia*, 216–254; Arskal Salim, *Challenging the Secular State: The Islamization of Law in Modern Indonesia* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 2008); Al Yasa' Abubakar, *Syariat Islam di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam: Paradigma, Kebijakan dan Kegiatan* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Syariat Islam NAD, 2008); Reza Idria, 'Mesin Syariat', *Journal Gelombang Baru*, vol. 4 (2009), 7–15; Michael Feener, *Shari'a as Social Engineering* (London: Oxford University Press, 2013).

14 The Sharia qanuns are Qanun No. 10/2002 on Islamic Courts; Qanun No. 11/2002 on the Implementation of Islamic Sharia in the Field of Islamic Belief ('*aqidah*'), Worship ('*ibadah*') and Symbols ('*shi'ar*'); Qanun No. 12/2003 on Intoxicants and the like ('*khamr*'); No. 13/2003 on Gambling ('*maysir*'); Qanun No. 14/2003 on the Illicit Relations between Men and Women who are not Married ('*khalwat*'). These qanuns could not be properly implemented in the Sharia courts until the Governor's Regulation No. 10/2005 on Technical Guidance for the Implementation of Punishment ('*uqubat*') was issued on 12 June 2005. Since then Aceh has witnessed Sharia punishment, especially for gamblers, people consuming alcoholic beverages, and for *khalwat* and adultery by caning in public. The implementation of Sharia in the region was finally strengthened by the Law on the Governing of Aceh (LoGA) in 2006, a law issued after the Helsinki Peace Agreement of 2005 between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement.

15 The issue of the qanun on Jinayat was raised again in the run up to the 2014 general elections and it has been agreed to discuss it again in the Parliament. If this qanun were to be ratified by the governor, Sharia implementation would be much more 'comprehensive' and would include stoning to death ('*rajm*') for married adulterers and caning for homosexuality – practices conducted in other Islamic countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The draft qanun included such punishments as 100 lashes of the cane for unmarried adulterers and stoning to death for the married ones; 100 lashes and a maximum fine of 1,000 grammes of fine gold, or imprisonment of up to 100 months for homosexuals.

Pamong Praja]], and Baitul Mal Aceh (Islamic Treasury House).¹⁶ In these institutions orthodox Sufi ulama share some influence, but the heterodox ones do not.

As the state ulama institution which has the right to issue fatwas, the MPU plays an important role in defining Islam for the region, and can decide what kind of Islam is to be adopted by the state. By issuing fatwas, the MPU disseminates its Sharia-oriented views and exercises its political interests. It has the right to claim which groups are in line with the 'right Islam' and which are not, and which groups should be supported and which groups should be marginalised. Whereas most of its members are Sharia ulama, there are also a number of orthodox Sufi ulama, but no heterodox ones.¹⁷

There are also societal ulama organisations which bring together Sharia ulama and orthodox Sufi ulama. Among them are the HUDA and MUNA.¹⁸ While most of their members are Sharia ulama, a number of them are Sufi ulama who are mostly associated with orthodox Sufi groups (*tariqah mu'tabarah*). HUDA's chairperson, Abuya Ibrahim Bardan (well-known as Abu Pantan [1945–2013]), was a Sharia ulama who was at the same time also a member of the Naqshabandiyah order.¹⁹ MUNA's spiritual adviser, Abuya Prof. Muhibbuddin Waly (also known as Abuya Professor), was the grand leader (*murshid 'amm*) of the

16 On state policies on Sharia in Aceh see Al Yasa' Abubakar, *Syariat Islam di Provinsi Naggroe Aceh Darussalam: Paradigma, Kebijakan dan Kegiatan* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Syariat Islam (5th ed.), 2008).

17 For more information on the MPU see Moch Nur Ichwan, 'Official Ulema and the Politics of Re-Islamization: The Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, Shari'atization and Contested Authority in Post-New Order Aceh', *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22:2 (2011), 183–214.

18 HUDA is a *dayah*-based ulama association established in 1999 to support a referendum in the province on the status of Aceh (Michelle Ann Miller, *Rebellion and Reform in Indonesia: Jakarta's Security and Autonomy Politics in Aceh* (London: Routledge, 2009), 54, 77). MUNA is an ulama association created by ex-GAM members and the Aceh Party before the general elections of 2009. There is also an association for dayahs and their ulama, Inshafuddin, associated with the PERTI (Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam), a traditionalist Muslim organisation. Many of its members are also members of the HUDA, MUNA, and MPU. However, as it presents itself more as a dayah association, rather than association of dayah ulama, I do not include it in the category of ulama organisations. Moreover, Inshafuddin stays aloof from politics and Sufi debates, although some of its members get involved personally.

19 Communication with Tgk. Faisal Ali, secretary general of HUDA, 20 November 2013.

Naqshabandiyah order in Aceh until his death in 2012. Led by an orthodox Sufi, the members of MUNA are mostly Sharia-oriented and orthodox Sufi Muslims.

Although there have been differences of opinion between HUDA and MUNA, and between them and the MPU, these three ulama organisations unite in facing the MPTT and raising the issues of deviant sects (*aliran sesat*). The ulama of the MUNA, HUDA and MPU of East Aceh, for instance, joined forces against what they called groups or persons not being part of Sunnism (*Ahlu-sunnah wal-jama'ah*, People of the Sunnah of the Prophet and the Community) or being 'deviant and misguided'. They organised a gathering on 26 May 2009 to launch a fatwa that the Naqshabandiyah opinions taught by Prof Dr Kadirun Yahya were deviant and misguided. The provincial MPU issued a similar fatwa.²⁰ Kadirun Yahya's followers were asked to repent and return to the correct course in accordance with true Sunnism.²¹ One year later, on 15 May 2010, these three ulama organisations of East Aceh issued another fatwa against wahdat al-wujud, which was aimed at Abuya Amran Waly's religious teachings, as we will see below.

What is related above reflects the image of Aceh as a province of Sharia. No terms or concepts associated with Sufism are found in any of the qanuns. The Aceh administration no longer considers tasawuf an important part of governance.²² Sufism is allowed as far as it is in line with the Sharia worldview, that is, orthodox Sufism which tries to reconcile Sufism and Sharia. Among the orthodox Sufi orders active in Aceh are the Naqshabandiyah, Qadiriyyah wa Naqshabandiyah (TQN), Naqshabandi Haqqani, Shattariyyah and Haddadiyyah.

The Naqshabandiyah, a Sufi order established by Baha'ud-Din Naqshaband Bukhari (1318–1389) in Central Asia, has been active in Aceh at least since the 17th century. In the 20th century it grew in popularity

20 Majelis Ulama Permusyawaratan. *Kumpulan Keputusan Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam* (Banda Aceh: Sekretariat Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, 2008), 123–125.

21 They accused Kadirun Yahya's Naqsyabandiyah of being deviant because they claim that it teaches, among other things, that Qur'anic verses can make dead people alive; that the spirits of dead people are flying between heaven and earth; that someone who performs *suluk* (spiritual exercise) at a certain place is not obliged to perform the Friday prayer; and that someone who has no money to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca should perform *suluk* at a particular place (Sufimuda, 'Ulama yang Menyesatkan Ulama', <http://sufimuda.net/2009/05/27/ulama-yang-menyestakan-ulama/>).

22 Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad, *Acehnologi* (Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing, 2012), 84.

since in the 1940s Shaykh Muda Waly al-Khalidy disseminated its tenets. After his death in 1961, his elder son, Abuya Shaykh Tgk. Muhibbuddin Waly, was appointed the murshid 'amm of the Naqshabandiyah in Aceh. When Muhibbuddin Waly died in 2012, he was replaced by his younger brother, Abuya Tgk. Jamaluddin Waly.²³ Tgk. Ibrahim Bardan (Abu Pantan), chairperson of HUDA, was also a member of this Sufi order, but not a murshid.²⁴ The Naqshabandiya is an orthodox Sufi order which tries to bring mystical teachings and practices into conformity with the precepts of Islamic law. Weismann even says that although many ulama emphasised the basic compatibility of Sufism and orthodoxy, 'none, however, combined and implemented the two tenets in so consistent a way as did the masters of the Naqshbandiyya'.²⁵

The Qadiriyyah wa Naqshabandiyah (TQN), of which the current headquarters are located in Tungkop, Aceh Besar, is led by Tgk. Sulfanwandi Hasan. It organises *pengajian* (religious instruction gatherings) and *dhikr* meetings every Thursday evening in the mosque of the dayah Yayasan Raudhatul Qur'an Darussalam, which he leads. Most who attend have an urban background and come from Aceh's capital, Banda Aceh. The meetings usually emphasise soul purification by way of dhikr, rather than by Sharia byelaws. According to Tgk. Sulfan, Muslims can enjoy religion by practising dhikr, and not by implementing laws in the form of qanuns. Dhikr is spiritual food for humans that should be continually renewed so that human spirituality survives. Therefore, it is Islamic spirituality and not Islamic laws that should be revived.²⁶

The Naqshabandi Haqqani brotherhood of Aceh is led by Teungku Muhammad Zamhuri al-Hafizh (as *khalifa*), one of the imams of the Baiturrahman grand mosque in Banda Aceh. Teungku Zamhuri leads dhikr meetings every Wednesday night at the mosque of Gampong

23 The other murshids are Teungku Haji Adnan Mahmud Bakongan, Teungku Haji Abdul Hamid Meulaboh, Teungku Haji Hasan Abati Lamno, Abu Matang Peureulak, Abu Karimuddin Baktya, Teungku Haji Nasir Waly, Waled Hasanul Basri Pimpinan Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga, Abu Muhhammad Tayeb Batee Lhee Lhoksukon dan Tgk. Zuhdi, the son of Abu Karimuddin: 'Dayah Darussalam: Pusat Kajian Tauhid dan Tasawuf Tertua di Pantai Barat Selatan Aceh', <http://www.dokumenpemudatqn.com/2013/09/dayah-darussalampusat-kajian-tauhid-dan.html>.

24 Communication with Tgk. Faisal Ali, secretary general of HUDA, 20 November 2013.

25 Itzhak Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya: Orthodoxy and Activism in a Worldwide Sufi Tradition* (London etc.: Routledge, 2007), vii.

26 Communication with Sehat Ihsan Shadiqin, who sometimes attended the *pengajian* of TQN, 5 January 2011.

Lambhuk in Banda Aceh, conducted after the evening prayer and usually attended by about 20 people, coming from Lambhuk and the surrounding villages. In 2004 after the tsunami, Teungku Zamhuri and his disciples coordinated donations from the members of the Naqshabandi Haqqani from around the world for the survivors of the disaster. What is special about the order is that it uses music, called in Aceh *rapai*, during the dhikr. This is unusual in Aceh, because most Sharia-oriented ulama consider music forbidden, certainly during dhikr meetings. However, Teungku Zamhuri views *rapai* as a medium for making the heart peaceful and for concentrating on the dhikr. He believes that the Sufis in the past used music during dhikr meetings to increase concentration. Concerning Sharia, Teungku Zamhuri said that implementation of Sharia as it is today will not bring people closer to God. For him, God should be approached by dhikr and good deeds to others.²⁷

The Shattariyah order has been active in Aceh since the days of Shaykh ‘Abdurrauf al-Sinkili. The current centre is the Masjid Jamik (Grand Mosque) of the village of Peulekong in the Seunagan Timur sub-district in Nagan Raya. The order is led by the murshid Abu Habib Kudrat, descendent of Habib Abu Muda Seunagan, an important Shattariyyah leader in Aceh. The Shattariyah Sufi in Aceh persist in using their own method of deciding the beginning of Ramadan and Shawwal, and it is not uncommon for its followers to begin fasting and to celebrate ‘Id al-Fitri on a day different from that decided by Sharia ulama and the government.²⁸

Unlike other Sufi orders, the Haddadiyya, known also as Alawiyya, does not have many followers in Aceh where it was introduced by Syaikh Abu Hasan Krueng Kalee (1886–1973), who joined it when he lived in Mecca.²⁹ Syaikh Abdullah Ujong Rimba, his disciple, joined the order under his guidance. The reason the Haddadiyya order is not well developed is that neither of these charismatic ulama made a conscious effort to propagate it. The grandson of Syaikh Krueng Kalee, Tgk. Qusaiyen, informed me that he had been told that Syaikh Krueng Kalee considered *tariqa* (spiritual path) to be compatible only for those who have problems with (or are weak in) religious Islamic

27 Sehat Ihsan Shadiqin, ‘Tasawuf dalam Wilayah Syariat: Sufisme dalam Masyarakat Aceh Kontemporer’, *Jurnal Ar-Raniry*, No. 86, July–December 2009, 76–94.

28 ‘Pengikut Tarekat Syattariah di Aceh Shalat Id hari ini’, <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2013/10/14/1505506/Pengikut.Tarekat.Syattariah.di.Aceh.Ikuti.Shalat.Id.Hari.Ini>.

29 Sehat Ihsan Shadiqin, *Tasawuf Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing, 2008), 143–146.

knowledge. He also said that it had been tried to revive the Haddadiya, but that this had not been successful.³⁰

All the abovementioned tariqas in Aceh are part of orthodox Sufi orders. There are also some heterodox wujudiyya Sufi and neo-Sufi groups. In the past wujudiyya Sufism existed as spread by Hamzah al-Fansuri, Syamsuddin Sumatrani and Saiful Rijal. Today, Aceh wujudiyya Sufism has emerged in a new form. The Majelis Tasawuf Hamzah Fansuri, for instance, which is led by Abu Alimin, the head of dayah Hamzah Fansuri of Ujong Pancu, disseminates the teachings of Hamzah al-Fansuri. Unlike other dayah, his students come to the dayah in the evening, sleep there after studying and go home in the morning. What is taught is not Sharia, but rather *haqiqa* (Essence of God) and *ma'rifa* (spiritual knowledge of God). Some ulama accuse Abu Alimin of spreading Hamzah al-Fansuri's teaching of wahdat al-wujud, which mainstream Acehnese ulama look upon as deviant. Abu Alimin is interested in the esoteric, spiritual dimension of Islam, rather than in the qanunisation of Sharia.³¹

There are some other groups, locally commonly called *salek buta* (blind Sufi practitioners), which perform certain Sufi practices, but do not have tariqa chains or a murshid. Most of them are based on doctrines of wujudiyya. Fatwas were issued against them by the MUI of Aceh during the New Order period and by the MPU after 1998. Another organisation condemning them was the Muhasabah Ulama Forum of North Aceh. In August 2009 it issued a fatwa against the teachings of Kasem Bin Sulaiman,³² followed in November 2009 by a fatwa against Amran Waly. A third fatwa was issued in 2010 against Teungku Muhammad of Tanah Pasir.³³ All these groups are considered to go against the correct doctrine of the Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'a.

In the last decade new popular neo-sufi movements have emerged. As elsewhere in Indonesia this happened especially in the cities. In Indonesia neo-Sufism has been an urban phenomenon since the 1990s.³⁴

30 Communication with Tgk. Qusaiyen, 29 January 2014.

31 Shadiqin, 'Tasawuf dalam Wilayah Syariat', 80–85.

32 'Fatwa MPU Aceh Utara Tentang Aliran Salek Buta', <http://www.santridayah.com/2012/12/fatwa-mpu-aceh-utara-tentang-aliran-salek-buta>.

33 'Dinyatakan Sesat Aliran Sekte Salek Buta Masih Resahkan Aceh', <http://www.voa-islam.com/read/indonesiana/2010/01/06/2439/dinyatakan-sesat-aliran-sekte-salek-buta-masih-resahkan-aceh/#sthash.d4utj2fs.dpbs>.

34 Julia Day Howell, 'Indonesia's Urban Sufis: Challenging Stereotypes of Islamic Revival', *ISIM Newsletter* 6 (2000), 17; Julia Day Howell, Subandi and Peter L. Nelson, 'Indonesian Sufism, Signs of Resurgence', in *New Trends and Developments in the World of Islam*, Peter B. Clarke (ed.) (London: Luzac Oriental, 1998).

In Aceh it became so after the end of the GAM conflict. Most of the leaders of such neo-Sufi groups are also affiliated with traditional Sufi orders. While the traditional Sufi orders remain small, probably because of their tight spiritual discipline, neo-Sufi groups gain a wide following. Amran Waly's Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid-Tasawuf (MPTT) is one of the best examples of such neo-Sufi groups in Aceh.³⁵ Accused of spreading deviant teachings by the Muhasabah Ulama Forum of North Aceh, Amran Waly is actually a neo-Sufi who tries to synthesise wujudiyya Sufi doctrine with orthodoxy. His concern with wujudiyya, although interpreting it in a new way in order to bring it into conformity with orthodoxy, has made him and his tauhid-tasawuf movement the target of accusations of spreading deviant beliefs. In spite of this the MPTT is growing not only in Aceh but also elsewhere in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. There are ulama who consider his teachings deviant, but due to his commitment to uphold Sharia other ulama do not. The latter are mostly those who have relations, directly or indirectly, with Amran Waly's father, Shaykh Muda Waly.

3 Syeikh Amran Waly and Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid Tasawuf (MPTT)

Abuya Shaykh Haji Amran Waly al-Khalidy is one of the most important Sufi leaders in Aceh today.³⁶ He was born on 21 August 1947 into the family of an important modern-day Acehnese Sufi leader, Abuya Shaykh Muhammad Waly al-Khalidy, better known as Shaykh Muda Waly (1917–1961),³⁷ leader of the Dayah Darussalam of Labuhan Haji in South

35 Majelis Zikir al-Waliyah, led by Abuya Shaykh Jamaluddin Waly, Amran Waly's stepbrother, is another example of a neo-Sufi group. Emphasising dhikr, it is much smaller than the MPTT: Shadiqin, *Tasawuf Aceh*, 149–151. Shadiqin wrote that its leader is Abuya Professor Muhibbuddin Waly, the eldest son of Shaykh Muda Waly, but Abuya Jamaluddin Waly told me that he led the group. Interview with Abuya Jamaluddin Waly, February 2009.

36 For a brief account of Amran Waly and MPTT see sub-chapter 6 by Moch Nur Ichwan, 'Alternatives to Shariatism: Progressive Muslim Intellectuals, Feminists, Queers and Sufis in Contemporary Aceh', in *Regime Change, Democracy and Islam: the Case of Indonesia, Final Report Islam Research Programme Jakarta* (Leiden: Leiden University, March 2013).

37 He learned religious Islamic knowledge from Abu Hasan Krueng Kalee and Teungku Hasballah Indrapuri and continued his studies in West Sumatera and Mecca. After returning from Mecca he established Dayah Darussalam, Labuhan Haji. On Shaykh Muda Waly see Muhibbuddin Waly al-Khalidy, *Ayah*

Aceh.³⁸ Hasjmy counted Shaykh Muda Waly as an important leader of the 'Kaum Tua', traditional Muslims in Indonesia resisting the reform movement at the beginning of the 20th century.³⁹ He was a *khalifa* of the Naqshabandiyya Sufi order.⁴⁰ Almost all Naqshabandiyya murshids in Aceh have ties to him and many of the founders of the big dayahs in Aceh which were established after 1945 were his students.⁴¹ Amran Waly learned religious Islamic knowledge from his parents, and then from Abuya Syech Zakaria Labai Sati (West Sumatera) and Imam Syamsuddin (Sangkalan Abdiya), two of Muda Waly's disciples, in subjects such as *fiqh*, *usul fiqh* (methodology of Islamic law), *'aqida* (theology), *tasawuf*, *mantiq* (logic), and Arabic linguistics.

Amran Waly became a member of the Naqshabandiyya order under the guidance of Shaykh Aidarus Kampar, the son of Shaykh Abdul Ghani Al-Kampari, who also granted him the authority to spread Naqshabandiyya and to teach *Majmu' Rasail*, a treatise on the order written by Shaykh Sulaiman Zuhdi at the end of the 19th century. He also learned religious knowledge from Abu H. Daud Zamzami of the pesantren Riadhus Shalihin in Banda Aceh and studied at universities in Aceh and West Sumatera, as well as at the College Islam in Lampuri in Kotabaru in Kelantan, Malaysia, but he did not finish his graduate studies.⁴²

Kami Maulana Syekh Haji Muhammad Waly al-Khalidy (Teungku Syekh Haji Muda Waly) (Kuala Lumpur: Kuliyah of Laws International Islamic University, 1993).

38 His mother, Raudhatinnur (Ummi Pawoh), was the second wife of Muda Waly. Shaykh Muda Waly had three wives and 14 children (ten sons and four daughters). His first wife was the mother of Muhibbuddin Waly and Jamaluddin Waly, his second of Amran Waly. Among Muda Waly's other children are Ahmad Waly, Harun Ar-Rasyid Waly, Mawardi Waly, Muhammad Nasir Waly and Ruslan Waly, all respected ulama in Aceh: A. Hasjmy, 'Teungku Syekh Haji Muhammad Waly al-Khalidy', in *Ulama Aceh: Mujahid Pejuang Kemerdekaan dan Pembangun Tamadun Bangsa* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1997), 205–206.

39 Hasjmy, 'Teungku Syekh Haji Muhammad Waly al-Khalidy', 201–208.

40 Nurhayati Razali, 'Peranan Syaikhul Islam Syekh Muhammad Waly Al-Khalidy dalam Pengembangan Pendidikan Tarikat Naqsyabandiyah di Aceh', *Peuradeun* 1:1 (September 2013), 41–52.

41 On Naqshabandiyya in Indonesia, including Aceh, see Van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia: Survei Historis, Geografis, dan Sosiologis* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992).

42 Hasjmy, 'Teungku Syekh Haji Muhammad Waly al-Khalidy', 205; MPTT, 'Riwayat Pesantren Darul Ihsan', <http://mptt.or.id/home/pesantren/item/73-pesantren-darul-ihsan.html>.

One of his brothers and also one of his main antagonists was Muhibbuddin Waly, an orthodox Sufi, Naqshabandiyah leader and spiritual adviser of the MUNA. As Shaykh Muda Waly did not grant the title of murshid to his own sons, Muhibbuddin Waly received his from Shaikh Abdul Ghani Al-Kampari, Amran Waly from Shaikh Aidarus Kampar, the son of Syech Abdul Ghani Al-Kampari. It seems that this was the root of their strained relations.

Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly led the dayah Darussalam of his father from 1972 to 1982, and established his own dayah, Darul Ihsan, also in Labuhan Haji, in 1982. Yet, together with his brothers Muhibbuddin and Jamaluddin, he continued to run the dayah Darussalam. Once he was also a politician. He was a legislator of South Aceh from 1982 to 1987.

The Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid Tasawuf Abuya Syech Amran Waly al-Khalidy, or MPTT Abuya Syech Amran Waly al-Khalidy, or simply MPTT was not founded by Shaykh Amran Waly himself, but by a number of his students, who deemed it important that Amran Waly's teachings on tauhid-tasawuf were disseminated.⁴³ The MPTT was established in 2005 with Amran Waly's dayah as its headquarters, but the pengajian meeting where the initiative was taken was held in February 2001. Its aims are: first, to promote religious practices based on Prophetic traditions or Sharia according to the fiqh of the Shafi'ite school of law; second, to encourage virtue (*akhlaq*) and to come closer to God the Almighty in order to gain insight (*ma'rifa*) into His Oneness (*tauhid*); and, third, to believe (*aqidah*), to witness (*mushahadah*) and to unveil (*kashaf*) the reality of Allah, who is one in His essence (*dhat*), attributes (*sifat*) and acts (*Wahdat al-Wujud Muwahhidah*).⁴⁴ Such teachings, according to the MPTT, will enhance humans' love for Allah and His creatures, and lead to Islam and true belief (*iman haqiqi*).

In 2012, the MPTT had branches in more than 13 districts in Aceh, and in some other regions in Indonesia, among them in Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi, as well.⁴⁵ In Terengganu in Malaysia Amran Waly's followers founded the Ikatan Pendidikan Tauhid Tasauf (IPTAF – Association of

43 The name Abuya Syech Amran Waly al-Khalidy is attached to the MPTT because tauhid-tasawuf was also taught previously by his brother Prof Muhibbuddin Waly.

44 MPTT, 'Riwayat Pesantren Darul Ihsan', <http://mptt.or.id/home/pesantren/item/73-pesantren-darul-ihsan.html>.

45 Interview with Tgk. Meflin al-Hasani, Amran Waly's disciple, March 2010 and July 2012.

Tauhid Tasawuf Education), led by Ustaz Mustaffa Kamal bin Hamzah.⁴⁶ In its development, it is supported by Syekh Ibrahim Mohammad (Malaysia), Dr Rahimuddin Nawawi Al-Bantani (an ulama from Banten living in Malaysia) and Dr Diauddin Kuswandi (Surabaya). Until 2014, there were three Southeast Asia Ulama Conferences of Tauhid Tasawuf: in Meulaboh, West Aceh (2010), Selangor, Malaysia (2012), and Blang Pidie, Southwest Aceh (2014).

4 Some Aspects of Amran Waly's Teachings

There are three important teachings of Amran Waly which deserve our attention here. They concern Sharia, tauhid tasawuf and *al-Insan al-Kamil* (Perfect Man).

4.1 SHARIA AND SHARIATISM

Islamic Sharia in the Aceh qanuns is defined as 'Islamic guidance in all aspects of life'. These few words signify that the implementation of Sharia should not be 'partial', but comprehensive (*kaffah*), covering the private and the public spheres. However, hitherto implementation is far from comprehensive; it covers only Islamic clothing, intoxicants and the like, gambling, and illicit relations between men and women who are not married to one another. The reason is that before the state can enforce Sharia norms, qanuns have to be drafted and these qanuns have to be agreed upon and ratified by the legislative assembly and the governor before they become effective.

Moreover, the Sharia euphoria has neglected the inner dimension of Islam and marginalises Sufi groups. Amran Waly does not oppose Sharia as a divine norm, but he rejects the 'qanunisation' of Sharia and the neglect of the esoteric dimension of Islam. He suggests that Muslims should implement Sharia in their daily life, with or without qanuns, and that Sharia is not the end objective. It is the first step towards the ultimate goal, that is God. His notion of Sharia is close to that of fiqh. Sharia is related to religious devotion, like prayer, fasting, paying the *zakat*, and the pilgrimage to Mecca; and the relations between human beings (*mu'amalah*), like trade and financial management. He suggests that after conforming to Sharia one should try to progress to the more advanced

46 Interview with Ustaz Mustaffa Kamal bin Hamzah, head of the IPTAF Terengganu, in Meulaboh, 9 March 2010.

stages of *haqiqa* and *ma'rifa*; two fundamental aspects of *tasawuf*.⁴⁷ *Tasawuf* purifies the heart of all relations other than that with Allah. With a purified heart, affection follows, and good relations with God and with all fellow creatures on earth are secured. 'Performing Shari'a without *haqiqah* will lead to *fasiq* [sinful behavior]. *Fasiq* will lead to hypocrisy. Hypocrisy causes *fitnah* [chaos] and many problems which cause destruction in this world.'⁴⁸

Moreover, *Sharia* is aimed at eliminating *shirk jali* (apparent polytheism), and *haqiqa* at eliminating *shirk khafi* (hidden polytheism).⁴⁹ The latter is much harder to accomplish than combating apparent polytheism by applying *Sharia*. *Sharia* is the basic foundation which can not do without the higher religious experience of divine reality. This means that a private religious experience is better than a public display of religiosity which lacks the deeper dimension of Islam.

Meeting members of the MPTT made it clear to me that what is called '*amal* (good deed) is a spiritual exercise, rather than a social activity. It is usually understood in spiritual practice terms. They are critical of what they refer to as the 'qanunisation of *Sharia*'.⁵⁰ *Sharia* is divine but qanunisation of it could trivialise it and even obstruct the path to the spiritual realm and to deeper knowledge of God. Such critical views of a *Sharia*-oriented understanding of Islam are typical of Sufism. Yet a close reading of their views shows that what they perceive as *Sharia* is merely *fiqh*, and does not serve as 'Islamic guidance in all aspects of life' as reflected in the qanuns or 'way of life' as understood by most Islamists.

4.2 TAUHID-TASAWUF

Sufism, according to Amran Waly, is based essentially on the 'science' of *tauhid-tasawuf*. About the relationship between *tasawuf* and *Sharia* he is clear: '[t]asawuf is the spirit (*ruh*) of *Sharia*, without which law cannot be implemented in a more consistent way, strong belief and high moral standards can not be achieved, and the Prophetic traditions cannot be followed'.⁵¹ He believes that Sufism can enhance moral behaviour and

47 On the notions of *ma'rifa* in Sufism see Reza Shah-Kazemi, 'The Notion and Significance of *Ma'rifa* in Sufism', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 13:2 (2002), 155–181.

48 Amran Waly, *Ajaran Tauhid-Tasawuf*, 8.

49 Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly, 'Soal-jawab seputar Tauhid-tasawuf Abuya Syech Amran Waly', MPTT brochure (10 October 2009).

50 Interviews with Meflin, July 2011, and Abdul Qadir, January 2012.

51 Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly, 'Mukaddimah', in Ismail al-Harawi, *Manazil al-Sairin*, trans. Abuya Shaykh Amran Waly (Labuhan Haji: MPTT, 2012), v.

should be taught to all Muslims; ulama, bureaucrats and lay people alike. He disagrees with most Sharia ulama who are of the opinion that Sufism should only be taught to a limited number of people, people with mature religiosity, and not to lay people.⁵²

Tauhid-tasawuf is an important concept in Amran Waly's thought. It underlies the whole teaching he developed in the MPTT. In a brochure, *Uraian/Pembahasan dalam Pengkajian Tauhid Tasawuf untuk dapat Disampaikan dan Dipahami bagi Umat Islam* (Explanation about Tauhid-Tasawuf to be Delivered or Understood by the Islamic Community), the study of tauhid-tasawuf is defined as: 'The study of the knowledge of tauhid by individuals who have purified their heart from being closer to others than Allah. He or she views Allah as pure from new things, and is able to disregard outer causes based on Allah's eternal knowledge and Allah's eternal laws.'⁵³

The concept of tauhid-tasawuf is a critique of the understanding of tauhid which emphasises the belief (*i'tiqad*) in the existence of Allah and His divine attributes, without which *'ibada* (devotion) is not accepted. This is not wrong, but it is not enough. To eliminate hidden polytheism and reach the real tauhid it should be complemented with the Sufistic teachings of haqiqa and ma'rifa.⁵⁴

Haqiqa and ma'rifa are related to the concept of tauhid (monotheism) and shirk (polytheism). Knowing the Essence of God (haqiqa) is aimed at eliminating hidden polytheism (shirk khafi). Hidden polytheism also leads to all kinds of negative human behaviour, foremost among these *ananiyya* (egoism), *'ujub* (vanity) and *riya'* (to deliberately present oneself to be virtuous or good natured in order to get respect, admiration or a good reputation). Ananiyya, *'ujub* and *riya'* can only be attributed to God. Men or women who behave in such a way are regarded as claiming to be God, and that is shirk. All such behaviour may lead to hypocrisy and *hubb al-dunya* (love of the world). Meanwhile, apparent polytheism (*shirk jali*) can be eliminated by practising Sharia.⁵⁵ Knowing the substance of Sharia, haqiqa and ma'rifa means knowing the true tauhid (*ma'rifat tauhid yang hakiki*). Such knowledge would encourage 'a weak man or

52 Meflin, 'Amran Wali: Kesufian Perbaiki Akhlak Kita', *Gema Baiturrahman Online*, 5 June 2010, <http://www.gemabaiturrahman.com/2010/06/amran-wali-kesufian-perbaiki-akhlak.html>.

53 Abuya Syech Amran Waly, 'Uraian/Pembahasan dalam Pengkajian Tauhid Tasawuf untuk dapat Disampaikan dan Dipahami bagi Umat Islam', MPTT brochure (no date), 1.

54 Amran Waly, 'Soal-jawab seputar Tauhid-tasawuf Abuya Syech Amran Waly', 1.

55 Ibid.

woman to become a true Muslim so that he or she can be on friendly terms or associate with both the Creator (*khaliq*) and creatures (*makhluq*), and have a noble character (*akhlaq*) and affection. The result will be the unity of the community (*umma*) who follow the Prophet and are true Muslims.⁵⁶

According to Amran Waly, it is such knowledge that has been neglected by most ulama in Aceh, Indonesia and Southeast Asia. That is why he makes such a great effort to develop and spread Tauhid-Tasawuf teachings through the MPTT in Southeast Asia.

4.3 WAHDAT AL-WUJUD AND AL-INSAN AL-KAMIL: REINTERPRETING IBN 'ARABI THROUGH AL-JILI

In November 2009, Amran Waly published *Sekelumit Penjelasan tentang Ajaran Tauhid-Tasawuf Abuya Syekh H. Amran Waly & Penjelasan beberapa ucapan 'Abdul Karim al-Jili dalam Kitabnya al-Insanul-Kamil fi Ma'rifatil-Awakhir wal-Awa'il* (Brief Clarification of the Teachings of Tauhid-Tasawuf of Abuya Syekh H. Amran Waly and an Explanation of a number of Remarks by 'Abd Karim al-Jili's in his Book al-Insanul-Kamil fi Ma'rifatil-Awakhir wal-Awa'il). The book was controversial because it discusses the opinions of 'Abd Karim al-Jili (d. 1428),⁵⁷ whom many Sharia ulama accuse of expressing the 'deviant' teaching of *al-Insan al-Kamil* which in fact contains the teaching of Ibn 'Arabi of *wahdat al-wujud*. 'Abd Karim bin Ibrahim al-Jili, a Sufi master from Yemen, was a descendant of the famous Sufi 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166) and entered the Qadiriyya order. He was a disciple of Shaykh Sharaf al-Din Ismail

56 Ibid.

57 'Abd Karim bin Ibrahim al-Jili wrote about 30 books and treatises, of which *al-Insān al-Kāmil fī Ma'rifat al-Awākhir wa al-Awā'il* is the best known. It is based on Ibn 'Arabi's concept of *Insan Kamil* in which he discussed three stages for the perfect man. The first, *bada'ah* (beginning), when a human is given his divine attributes; second, *tawassut* (intermediate stage), when the perfect human being, who is both human and divine, can understand both human and divine realities and receive all knowledge (both seen and unseen); third, *khitam* (end), when the perfect human being is given power that can be used in the natural world and gives him or her power over any other being; Reynold A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1994), 81; H. Ritter, 'Abd al-Karīm, Kutb al-Dīn b. Ibrāhīm al-Jīlī', *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., P. Bearman, T. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs (eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2014). Reference. 08 July 2014, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/abd-al-karim-kutb-al-din-b-ibrahim-al-djili-SIM_0099.

al-Jabarti (d. 1403–1404), from Zabid, Yemen, whose name is included in the chain of transmission (*sanad*) of the Qadiriyya in Indonesia.⁵⁸ About the influence of al-Jili's al-Insan al-Kamil, Nicholson wrote that 'the Insānu'l-Kāmil exerted a powerful influence upon Indonesian Sufism'.⁵⁹ Al-Attas, Osman bin Bakar, and Van Bruinessen agree with this.⁶⁰ Osman bin Bakar points out that although Al-Fansuri found his Sufi inspiration in Ibn 'Arabi's Wahdat al-Wujud, his writings also reflect familiarity with the works of Al-Jili, with particular reference to his teaching on the al-Insan al-Kamil.⁶¹ Thus, Amran Waly's adoption of al-Insan al-Kamil indicates a continuing influence of al-Jili, and through him of Ibn 'Arabi's wahdat al-wujud, in Aceh to this day.

In the *Sekelumit Penjelasan tentang Ajaran Tauhid-Tasawuf*, Amran Waly does not explain all aspects of al-Jili's teachings. Instead, he concentrates on four statements which deal with Sharia, tariqa, haqiqa and ma'rifa.⁶²

1. *Allah rabbun Muhammad 'abdun fi al-sharia* (Allah is Master, Muhammad is servant in the Sharia).
2. *Allah dhatun Muhammad sifatun fi al-tariqa* (Allah is Essence, Muhammad is attribute in the tariqa).
3. *Allahu ruhun Muhammad jasadun fi al-haqiqa* (Allah is Spirit, Muhammad is body in the haqiqa).
4. *Allah Muhammad fi al-ma'rifa* (Allah is Muhammad in the ma'rifa).

Amran Waly carefully comments on these statements, trying to get rid of Wahdat al-wujud connotations.

On the first statement he says, 'We are advised to be obedient to Allah by paying attention to the boundaries of law, because Sharia is law containing commands and prohibitions which are an obligation and must be followed.'

On the second statement he says, 'Muhammad is presented here as attribute, because an attribute (*sifat*) always needs an essence (*dhat*), to which an attribute belongs'. He rejects the interpretation that Muhammad

58 Martin van Bruinessen, 'Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani and the Qadiriyya in Indonesia', *Journal of the History of Sufism*, 1–2 (2000), 361–395.

59 Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, vii.

60 Martin van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia: Survei Historis, Geografis, dan Sosiologis* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992).

61 Osman bin Bakar, 'Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian World', 283–285.

62 The author follows here the classical phases of gaining mystical knowledge by following the Sharia, followed by the path (tariqa), leading to the Essence (haqiqa), ending in deeper knowledge or gnosis (ma'rifa).

is the attribute of God, or that Muhammad is the manifestation of the existence of God, or that God becomes Muhammad.

On the third statement he said that it is 'a symbol of a person who has been overwhelmed by the Light of God's existence, whose dhat is without *kaifiyat* (properties), infinite and incomparable, so that actions, attitudes and dhat of Allah manifest (*tajalli*) factually in himself, after his existence has disappeared in his view. This is the *maqam* of *fana'* ([mystical] stage of annihilation). The use of *fana'* is to eliminate *ananiyyah* (egoism).'

The fourth statement he translates as 'Allah is the *mutawalli* (guide) of Muhammad'. He argues that the word *mutawalli* is actually omitted in the Arabic original sentence. For in Arabic grammar, it is possible for the first substantive in a genitive construction (*al-mudaf*) to be omitted in favour of the second noun in the genitive construction (*al-mudaf ilayhi*). This is called *hadhf al-mudaf 'ala l-mudaf 'ilayh*. He compares this statement linguistically with Surat Yusuf (12:82), *wa-s'al al-qaryata* (ask the village), which should be read as *wa-s'al ahl al-qaryah* (ask [the people of] the village). The word *ahl* (people) is in this example the omitted *mudaf*. He says, 'Allah guides Muhammad or people in this life by giving them guidance, well-being (*taufiq*) and help (*ma'unah*).'⁶³ He also says that 'in this stage, a Sufi has reached *baqa'* (eternity) after *fana'* (annihilation). He will be always with Allah, and not with his own bad desires (*hawa nafsu*). The person who has reached this state is called *khawash al-khawash* (the special among the specials), and therefore he or she becomes an *insan kamil* (perfect human being).'⁶⁴

According to Amran Waly, these statements signify the 'spiritual migration of a human being to his or her God. Anyone who follows these statements properly will reach the status of a perfect human being.'⁶⁵ In these statements Muhammad is a symbol of a perfect human being; the term Muhammad refers to a perfect human being in general, and not necessarily to the Prophet Muhammad. Amran Waly also said that 'those who do not understand correctly Abd al-Karim al-Jili's teachings or statements will not get the Light of Knowledge (*nur ma'rifa*). They should no longer claim to be a leader of *tariqah*, or the spiritual path, like some persons do who claim to be *tariqa* leaders or false *murshids*.'⁶⁶

Amran Waly also quotes a controversial interpretation by al-Jili of the Qur'anic verse *Qul huwa Allahu ahad*. This verse is usually translated as 'Say, Muhammad, He is Allah the only one.' Al-Jili suggests that the word

63 Amran Waly, *Sekelumit Penjelasan*, 6.

64 Ibid., 7.

65 Ibid., 3.

66 Ibid., 3.

huwa (he) does not refer to Allah, but to the 'reality of man' (*haqiqa insan*). But Amran Waly said that it does not mean that 'the reality of man is Allah'. The real reality of man is illumination (*faid*) or shadow of God, which does not exist independently.⁶⁷

The above views must be seen from the perspective of the already mentioned aim of the MPTT: 'to believe, to witness and to unveil the reality of Allah, who is one in His Essence, attributes and acts'.⁶⁸ By inserting the concepts witnessing (*mushahada*) and unveiling (*kashaf*) in his teaching, Amran Waly tries to synthesise *wahdat al-wujud* with *wahdat al-shuhud* (unity of witnessing).⁶⁹ By such effort, Amran Waly claims that his understanding of al-Jili's *wujudiyya* is in line with orthodoxy and cannot be considered deviant. Perhaps the word *muwahhidah*, meaning one who believes in the oneness of God (*tauhid*), inspired him to choose the name 'tauhid-tasawuf'. It is this reinterpretation of al-Jili's *wujudiyya* which was misunderstood by and is widely debated among Sharia ulama and orthodox Sufi ulama in Aceh, which would cause Amran Waly and the MPTT much trouble.

4.4 SYNTHESISING AL-JILI WITH IBN ATAILLAH AND AL-HARAWI

Apart from teaching al-Jili's *Al-Insan al-Kamil*, Amran Waly also teaches *Hikam* (Maxims) and *Manazil al-Sa'irin ila Rabb al-'Alamin* (Stations of the Seekers towards the God of the Universe), the works of the great orthodox Sufis Ibn Ataillah al-Sakandari (al-Iskandari) (d. 1309) and Abu Ismail Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Ansari al-Harawi (d. 1089) respectively. He teaches *Al-Insan al-Kamil* to a limited number of disciples belonging to his inner circle, and *Hikam* to a broader audience who have basic knowledge of Sufism, and *Manazil al-Sa'irin* to a still wider group of laymen. Amran Waly translated *Manazil al-Sa'irin* into Indonesian.

The use of *Hikam* and *Manazil al-Sa'irin* by Amran Waly has been welcomed by the ulama and society at large. There have been no negative reactions. MPTT meetings have been attended by hundreds of people, and sometimes by more than a thousand. The reason must be that both Ibn Ataillah and Ibn Ismail al-Harawi are orthodox Sufi ulama. Why Amran Waly bases this teaching upon these three Sufis is not clear. Perhaps there is a pragmatic consideration, that is to address the controversial teachings

67 Amran Waly, *Sekelumit Penjelasan*, 7.

68 MPTT, 'Riwayat Pesantren Darul Ihsan', <http://mptt.or.id/home/pesantren/item/73-pesantren-darul-ihsan.html>.

69 Contrary to *wahdat al-wujud* which is the unity of all being in an ontological sense (monism), *wahdat al-shuhud* is the mystical experience of this unity.

of al-Jili he adopted, but, more than that, there are substantial similarities of Sufi teaching, which at the end can be interpreted in the perspective of *wujudiyya muwahhida*. *Hikam* is a widely read and well-accepted Sufi book in Aceh and Indonesia. Ibn Ataillah also never condemned Ibn 'Arabi's teaching of *wahdat al-wujud* and defended Ibn 'Arabi in his debate with Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328).⁷⁰ Al-Harawi's teachings are regarded as a reformed Sufism. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350), Ibn Taymiyya's disciple, wrote a book, *Madarij al-Salikin*, which is based on al-Harawi's *Manazil al-Sa'irin*. It seems that Amran Waly wants to show Sharia ulama and orthodox Sufi ulama and society that his opinions are not deviant.

5 Fatwa against Amran Waly and His Movement

A serious confrontation between Amran Waly and the Sharia ulama occurred after Amran Waly had published his Brief Clarification in November 2009. A few months later on 15 May 2010 a meeting was held in Pantonlabu in North Aceh to commemorate the anniversary of the Dayah Malikussaleh of Teungku Ibrahim Bardan, at that moment chairperson of the HUDA. He and the MPU of North Aceh used the occasion to discuss Amran Waly's book. Muhibbuddin Waly delivered a speech on 'The Controversy over the Doctrine of Wujudiyyah in Aceh's History'.⁷¹ In its written version Amran Waly is not mentioned, but it seems that he was in the actual speech. When I asked Muhibbuddin Waly a few months later, he told me that he considers what his brother is teaching as deviant.⁷²

What is certain is that the book was indeed discussed at the same school during a meeting on 15 May 2010, attended by a number of popular ulama. As reported in *Santri Dayah*, Abu Tumin said, 'Wahdat al-wujud, which is wrong, is that what was taught by Hamzah Fansuri and Syamsuddin Sumatrani. Abuya Muda Waly never taught *wahdat al-wujud*, he taught *wahdat al-shuhud*. *Wahdat al-wujud* is divided into two: that which leads to *ittihad* and that which leads to *hulul*. *Ittihad* is the fusion of two realities into one form, while *hulul* is the manifestation of Allah in man.'⁷³ Ibrahim Bardan said that Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. 874) said that one should not believe that a person is reaching *haqiqa* if he

70 Stephen Schwartz, *The Other Islam: Sufism and the Road to Global Harmony* (New York etc.: Doubleday, 2008), 127–128.

71 The paper was published in the magazine *Santri Dayah*, VII (05, 2010), 2–8.

72 Interview with Abuya Muhibbuddin Waly, July 2011.

73 *Santri Dayah*, 7: 5 (2010), 9.

does not perform Sharia properly, 'even if he would fly to the sky'. He also quoted Ibn Hajar (d. 1567) that Ibn 'Arabi is a Sufi who believes not in *wahdat al-wujud*, but *wahdat al-shuhud*. About Amran Waly, he said, 'No one said that Abu Amran [Amran Waly] is deviant, but what is taught by Abu Amran could not be grasped by common people.' Abu Mustafa Puteh said, 'There is no need to look at history. That is their own business. What is important for today is that *wahdat al-wujud* is not allowed.'⁷⁴ Two conclusions and six recommendations were issued which were referred to by the media as 'the Fatwa of the MPU of North Aceh'. One of the conclusions was that *wahdat al-wujud* containing *ittihad* and *hulul* was deviant and misleading (*sesat dan menyesatkan*). Of the recommendations points 1, 2 and 4 are the most relevant for our discussion. They urged the Aceh government in the implementation of Sharia to stick to the opinions of the Shafi'ite school of law; to keep an eye on and prosecute people who publish in whatever form ideas which could contaminate the beliefs and moral standards of the Islamic community; and to act in the same way against any group which spreads deviant teachings in society.⁷⁵

Although Amran Waly is not mentioned by name in the fatwa, during the meeting his name was dropped and, therefore, the fatwa implicitly refers to him. The meeting also concluded that the content of Amran Waly's book is dangerous for people's belief and that it could lead to *wahdat al-wujud*. Ibrahim Bardan called on people to hand in their copies to the MPU to have them burned.⁷⁶

6 The MPTT's Ulama Meeting of 2010: Sharia Ulama's Intervention

What the effect was of the fatwa became clear when the MPTT wanted to organise a gathering of its ulama in 2010. Sharia ulama, through the MPU and the involvement of the governor and police, intervened and prevented it from taking place. Later they turned an MPTT conference into a Sharia-oriented meeting.

In 2009, some months before the fatwa, the MPTT had asked the MPU for a recommendation to hold a Southeast Asian congress on Tauhid-Tasawuf in Banda Aceh. This is normal procedure. All public

74 *Santri Dayah*, 7: 5 (2010), 9.

75 *Santri Dayah*, 7: 5 (2010), 8. The usual translation of *hulul* is incarnation.

76 'MPU Larang Peredaran Buku Syeh Amran Wali', *Serambi Indonesia*, 26 November 2009.

events in Aceh require such a recommendation besides permission by the police. The MPU declined because, as it stated in a letter dated 23 July 2009, it was not sure what Abuya Amran Waly exactly taught in the MPTT. In response the MPTT invited the MPU to attend one of its regular religious meetings in which he discussed Ibn Ataillah's book *al-Hikam*, to find out whether his teaching is deviant, but the MPU leaders ignored the invitation. Probably they were well aware of Amran Waly's religious ideas and could not agree with them.

A few months later the MPTT did hold its first Ulama Conference attended by its followers from various parts of Aceh and Malaysia. It took place in Meulaboh on 9–10 March 2010. The MPU had issued its recommendation but had made the condition that it should be a Sharia conference, and not a Sufi one. It had also enforced a Sharia-oriented programme. All speakers were Sharia ulama, and Amran Waly and MPTT guests from abroad were not allowed to deliver speeches. The official conference, with its morning and afternoon sessions, seemed a success. However, the MPTT members organised their own unofficial Sufi programme, held after the early morning and sunset and evening prayers, as a hidden resistance to the intervention of the state's Sharia-oriented ulama. I was present and regularly heard participants oppose the official Shariatisation. There was a feeling of being oppressed by the Sharia ulama and the government with its 'simplistic' policies, as they saw it, of Islamisation taking the form of formal Shariatisation. The implementation of Sharia in Aceh was dismissed as trivial and artificial, because the qanuns and official Sharia discourse neglected the richness of the esoteric dimensions of Islam.⁷⁷

This was not the last Ulama Conference of the MPTT. Two others were held, one in Selangor in Malaysia in 2012, and another one in Abdya in West Aceh in 2014. Unlike the one in 2010, these were real Sufi conferences, in which Sufi teachings, including wujudiyya, were discussed openly without fear.

7 Political Alliance: Struggle for Existence

After the issue of the fatwa which declared his views deviant, Amran Waly actively looked for political patronage and extended his networks. His alignment with the regent of West Aceh enabled him to hold the Ulama Congress in Abdya. Regent Ramli supported the meeting politically and financially. This alliance is reflected in the slogan of

77 Interview with Tgk. Zainuddin, Amran Waly's disciple, Meulaboh, March 2010.

Meulaboh as 'the city of Tauhid-Tasawuf'. Undeniably, the regent of West Aceh looked for religious legitimacy from Amran Waly and MPTT to support his Islamisation policy. He issued Regent Regulation (Peraturan Bupati) No. 5/2010 which forbids women to wear tight trousers. He was criticised by feminist and human rights activists as well as progressive Muslim intellectuals. Some ulama, among them Alyasa' Abubakar, even considered the regulation unnecessary, pointing out that trousers are the traditional attire of Acehnese women.⁷⁸

Amran Waly also cemented ties with former Abdya regent, Akmal Ibrahim (who wanted to run for regent for a second time), the present Abdya regent, Jufri Hasanuddin, the South Aceh regent, Husein Yusuf, regent of Galus, Ibnu Hasim, and vice regent of Pidie, Nazir Adam, to mention a few. Amran Waly was usually invited to deliver speeches before the regency officials. He and the MPTT stressed that this belonged to the realm of da'wah and thus was part of the duties religion demanded from them, and not a political activity.⁷⁹ Yet it is such political alliances which were instrumental in strengthening Amran Waly's influence in society and among the political elite and which have protected him and his Tauhid-Tasawuf movement against the possible consequences of the fatwa and other negative charges.

During the governorship of Irwandi Yusuf (2007–2011), Amran Waly failed to get support from the provincial government. This was understandable, because Irwandi Yusuf as ex-GAM combatant was closer to Muhibbuddin Waly and the MUNA (an ex-GAM member created the ulama council), than to Amran Waly and the MPTT. For the same reason Irwandi Yusuf's successor, Zaini Abdullah, also does not support him. However, Malik Mahmud, Wali Naggroe (traditional leader) of Aceh since December 2013, does. He opened the Southeast Asian Ulama Conference in Abdya in 2014. The conference was funded by the administration of Abdya, which spent about 1.2 billion rupiah. The fact that the MPTT is not part of the local government but was able to get such a large sum of financial support could not be seen as other than political success. Partly because of such political backing, the Tauhid-Tasawuf movement has survived until today, has even spread in Aceh and has gained new followers elsewhere.⁸⁰

78 Interview with Prof. Alyasa' Abubakar, Banda Aceh, May 2011.

79 Interview with Abdul Qadir, Amran Waly's disciple, January 2012.

80 Before the 2014 election, Amran Waly proposed the need to create, or even convert the MPTT into a local political party. Yet, most members disagreed with the idea on the grounds that it is better for the MPTT to remain what it is, a neo-Sufi movement. Also, not all members have similar political views. However,



Amran Waly (3rd from right) with Shaykh Muhammad Fadil Al-Jaelani (4th from right) and the Wali Nanggroe of Aceh (2nd from right) during “Muzakarah Tauhid Tasawuf” 2014. Picture courtesy of Harian Aceh.

8 Conclusion

The mainstreaming of Sharia through the official implementation of Sharia in Aceh for more than a decade has marginalised Sufism, especially heterodox Sufism. Sharia ulama have been given ample opportunity to define Islam in the region from above. Through the state ulama institution MPU they have issued Sharia-oriented fatwas, some of which are against Sufism considered to be heterodox. Sharia ulama have sometimes cooperated with orthodox Sufi ulama to marginalise heterodox or allegedly heterodox Sufi ulama and groups. What brings them together is Sharia. The consequence is that because of accusations of deviancy by Sharia ulama and orthodox Sufi ulama, most heterodox Sufi groups have a limited following. The issue of deviancy is a sensitive one in Aceh. Many of those labelled as such have been attacked by society. However, Amran Waly and the MPTT are an exception. Their ideas attracted new followers. This

a new wing organisation was established, called Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah Perjuangan (Perti-P). It is intended to be an alternative to the existing Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (Perti), a national socio-religious organisation introduced in Aceh by Shaykh Hasan Kueng Kale. Shaykh Muda Waly was adviser to the Perti. Amran Waly was of the opinion that the Perti needed reform. Because it was impossible to accomplish this, he established Perti-P. Personal communication with T. Misbah Lembong, adviser to the Perti-P, January 2014.

reflects the popular need for not only a legalistic understanding of Islam, but also for a religious spiritual experience.

There are at least four reasons why the MPTT survived the charges and even grew. Firstly, as the son of Shaykh Muda Waly Amran Waly has 'blue blood'. People respect him because they respect his father. Secondly, he has been supported by a number of orthodox Sufi ulama, most of whom have relations directly or indirectly with Shaykh Muda Waly and his Darussalam dayah, who do not consider his teachings to be deviant – although some say that they should not be taught to lay people. Thirdly, Amran Waly synthesises al-Jili's teachings with those of orthodox Sufism, that is, with the teachings of the great orthodox Sufis Ibn Ataillah and Abu Ismail Abdullah Al-Ansari al-Harawi, which gives his teachings an orthodox touch. Fourthly, his alignment with members of the political elite has provided political protection and patronage. The fact that the third Southeast Asian MPTT ulama conference was supported politically and financially by the district administrations indicates that this political alignment contributed to the survival of the movement. The negative reaction of some Sharia ulama and traditional orthodox Sufi ulama must be seen as the continuation of the long conflict between Sharia ulama and Sufi ulama in general, and the alignment between Sharia ulama and orthodox Sufi ulama against heterodox Sufi ulama in particular. Nevertheless, the existence of orthodox and heterodox Sufisms, although with the marginalisation of the latter and the synthesis of both, indicates that Acehnese implementation of Sharia is not as comprehensive as its slogan suggests. The long Acehnese history has shown that, despite shariatism hegemony, there always is room for Sufism.