“Sufi order” is the most common English term for the formations called ṭarīqa (lit., “path”; Ar. pl. ṭuruq; Ind. tarekat), and, when thinking about “orders” in Muslim Southeast Asia, it is the tarekat that first come to mind. The term “Sufi order” may be deceptive, however, in suggesting more “order” than is warranted. The word ṭarīqa has, at different times and places, referred to a wide variety of manifestations, and this is also true of each individual Sufi ṭarīqa. Currently, the major Sufi tarekat active in Indonesia, such as the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya and the Qādiriyya wa ʾl-Naqshbandiyya, are corporate bodies with a well-defined core membership and a much larger and more fluid body of irregular followers who may be and at times have been mobilized for political purposes. It is tempting but probably misleading to assume that this has been characteristic of the ṭarīqa since their arrival in Southeast Asia. This chapter shows that the available sources tell us little about the social dimension of ṭarīqa in Indonesia and that only from the nineteenth century onwards do we see clear examples of corporate action. Further, I argue the tarekat were not the only “order”-like formations in Southeast Asia. Communities known as putihan (people in white), consisting of more strictly practicing Muslims and distinguishing themselves in dress and habitus from the population at large, for whom they (or some of them) performed roles as religious specialists and moral exemplars, may have been a more influential disciplining force among Muslims in the archipelago in earlier periods than the tarekat themselves.

SUFI ORDERS AND THE ISLAMIZATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Settlements of foreign Muslim traders had been present in the port states of Southeast Asia for centuries, but only from the fourteenth century did significant
indigenous communities begin to adopt Islam, and it took until the sixteenth century for most of the important island of Java to be Islamized. This period of transition in Southeast Asia coincided with a time when, in the “central lands” of Islam, Sufism had evolved from an elite movement of religious virtuosi to perhaps the dominant mode of religiosity. The more popularized Sufi orders of that period offered ordinary people more or less standardized methods of cultivating devotional piety and access to at least a glimpse of mystical experience. Belief in intercession by charismatic “friends of God” (walī) capable of working miracles (karāmāt) even after their death and the visiting (ziyāra) of such saints’ graves were part and parcel of this dominant mode of religiosity, although there were also some ’ulamā’ who, like Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), critiqued and opposed such beliefs and practices.

It is not surprising, therefore, that early Southeast Asian Islam was strongly colored by the forms of Sufism prevalent across the broader Muslim world at that time. Conversion myths from various parts of the region explicitly mention foreign miracle-working Sufi-like figures as the prime movers of conversion. Several of the oldest extant Muslim texts from Southeast Asia appear infused with Sufi ethics or engage with Sufi concepts, and the earliest Muslim authors who are known to us by name—Ḥamza Fanṣūrī, Shams al-Dīn Pasai, Nūr al-Dīn Rānīrī, ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Singkel, Yūsuf Makassar—were Sufis and wrote works of poetry and prose expressing Sufi religious ideas. The apparent dominance of Sufism in early (sixteenth- and seventeenth-century) Indonesian Islam does not, however, imply a lenient attitude toward shari’a obligations, as has often been assumed. Among the oldest extant manuscripts, in Java as well as Sumatra, we also find texts on Islamic law (fiqh), and several of the greatest early Sufi authors also wrote works on jurisprudence. Indeed, in 1638, Banten’s rulers sent envoys to Mekka with a triple aim: to find authoritative answers to certain metaphysical questions of Sufi cosmology, to request the title of sultan for the ruler of Banten, and to invite a leading legal scholar to come and settle in Banten as the qāḍī (judge).

Several scholars have speculated about a causal connection between the flourishing of Sufi orders in the heartlands of Islam and the spread of Islam to Southeast Asia. Anthony Johns, notably, suggested in several early articles that Sufi missionaries accompanying Muslim traders might have played a key role in the process. Some conversion myths may be compatible with this hypothesis, but there is little other supportive evidence. It is only relatively late, from the seventeenth century onwards, that Sufi orders (tarekat) are explicitly mentioned in indigenous Indonesian sources, and they appear then in an environment that is already Muslim. The prolific author of Malay works Nūr al-Dīn Rānīrī fits the model of the foreign Sufi missionary best. He hailed from Gujarat and was of Ḥaḍramī Arab descent, belonged to the Rifā‘iyya Sufi order, and was active in Aceh as the leading Muslim scholar at the court until a conflict forced him
to leave in 1644. However, he is especially known for his polemical campaign against the monistic Sufi teachings of earlier indigenous authors Ḥamza and Shams al-Dīn, whose works already reflected a sophisticated familiarity with learned Islamic discourse. Rānīrī’s writings as well as those of Ḥamza and Shams al-Dīn addressed audiences with a considerable level of Islamic learning. Recent research has convincingly argued that Ḥamza flourished a half century earlier than had hitherto been assumed and died in Mekka in 1527. This would mean that highly developed forms of Sufi poetry were being written in Malay more than a century before the earliest documented appearance of Sufi “orders” in the region. This chronology appears to make the hypothesis of Sufi orders as a major factor in the early Islamization of the region untenable, though they may well have played a crucial role in later stages.

The most renowned Muslim scholars of seventeenth-century Southeast Asia—Nūr al-Dīn Rānīrī, ‘Abd al-Raʿūf Singkel, and Yūsuf Makassar—explicitly state their adherence to various ṭarīqa and also document their sīlṣila (chains of transmission). Rānīrī’s primary affiliation was with the Rifāʿiyya, into which he was initiated by another Arab of Ḥaḍramī descent resident in Gujarat, ʿUmar Bā Shaybān. Nūr al-Dīn’s uncle Muḥammad Jilānī Rānīrī had preceded him as a teacher in Aceh. (Nūr al-Dīn relates how his uncle, after having taught Islamic law in Aceh for a few years, traveled to Arabia to study Sufi metaphysics, because this is what the Acehnese demanded to learn, and returned then as a Sufi teacher.) When on his way from Makassar to Arabia, Yūsuf spent time in Aceh and was initiated into the Qādiriyya by either Nūr al-Dīn or his uncle (the names are conflated in Yūsuf’s account). The first part of Yūsuf’s Qādiriyya sīlṣila mentions the same ʿUmar Bā Shaybān, and for several generations it is practically identical with Rānīrī’s Rifāʿiyya chain. Bā Shaybān’s predecessors in that line belonged to the al-Aydarūs family, which had been resident in Gujarat for several centuries and appears to have been teaching both the Rifāʿiyya and the Qādiriyya as well as their own family ṭarīqa, the Aydarūsiyya. The presence of the Rifāʿiyya and Qādiriyya in Aceh in later years and their impact on popular religious practices are well attested, but it is not clear whether this is because of the influence of the Rānīrīs or from later incursions of the same ṭarīqa.

ʿAbd al-Raʿūf spent almost two decades in Arabia studying with the most prominent scholars of the time, and he was especially close with Ahmad al-Qushāshī (d. 1661) and his successor Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1690), both of whom were widely regarded as the leading scholars of Medina. Both had reputations as hadīth scholars and taught a broad range of Islamic sciences, including several ṭarīqa. Qushāshī appointed ʿAbd al-Raʿūf as his khālifa for the Shattārīyya, which he taught after his return to Aceh (probably in 1661), along with the metaphysical ideas associated with it. Qushāshī and Kūrānī figure prominently in all later Shattārī sīlṣila found in Sumatra and Java. In some, the line passes through ʿAbd al-Raʿūf and one of his deputies; in others, a later
Indonesian student is connected with Kūrānī’s son or grandson or a later successor in Medina. (Kūrānī also figures in Naqshbandī silsila, showing he initiated other Indonesians into this tariqa rather than the Shaṭṭāriyya.)

Like 'Abd al-Raʿūf, Yūsuf Makassar spent many years in Arabia studying with an equally impressive range of scholars from Yemen to Syria, and he was likewise initiated into several other tariqa. Besides the Qādiriyya, he gives his silsila for the Naqshbandiyā, Shaṭṭāriyya, BāʿAlawiyya, and Khalwatiyya. His Shaṭṭāriyya teacher was Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, and his silsila therefore is practically identical with 'Abd al-Raʿūf’s. He became known primarily as a teacher of the Khalwatiyya, which he had taken in Syria, but he appears to have combined the specific techniques of this tariqa with those of others, notably the Naqshbandiyya. He probably returned to Indonesia sometime in the 1660s; in 1672 we find him settled in Banten and rapidly gaining influence and power at the court. He appears to have taught his tariqa only to members of the nobility of his own ethnic group, the Makassarese. Known as Khalwatiyya Yūsuf (to distinguish it from a later incursion of the order, Khalwatiyya Sammān), it is still present in South Sulawesi and retains its somewhat aristocratic character.

There is one Indonesian source that hints at an earlier, sixteenth-century, arrival of Sufi orders, although this source is itself of a later date. The Banten court chronicle Sajarah Banten Ranté-Ranté or Hikayat Hasanuddin, which must have been compiled sometime between 1662 and 1725, relates how the founder of the Muslim polity of Banten, Maulana Makhdum alias Sunan Gunung Jati, spent decades studying in Mekka and Medina and was initiated there into several tariqa: the Kubrawiyya, Shādhiliyya, Shaṭṭāriyya, and Naqshbandiyya. Most interestingly, this text lists the most important names of the silsila of two distinct Kubrawiyya branches as those of fellow students of Sunan Gunung Jati. The text lists no later representatives of this tariqa than ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Jāmī, who visited Mekka in 1547–1548, and Aḥmad Shinnāwī (d. 1619), who was Qushāshī’s predecessor as the leading scholar of Medina. This suggests that some Bantenese must have been aware of the Kubrawiyya and possibly initiated in it in Mekka and Medina at different points between 1547 and 1619.

**SUFI ORDERS IN THE CENTRAL LANDS OF ISLAM IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

In what still remains the major general overview of Sufi orders, J. Spencer Trimingham sketches their historical development as a simple linear progression along three stages of increasing systematization of spiritual techniques, increasing degree of organization, and incorporation of increasing numbers of followers. Trimingham associates the first stage with the khānaqā, or Sufi lodge, in which a master lived with his close disciples; the second with the tariqa in the restricted sense, as “continuative teaching schools of mysticism” characterized by “new types of collectivistic methods of inducing ecstasy”; and the third stage
with the emergence of “corporations” or “orders” proper, for which he uses the term tāʾifa (group, collectivity).11

Such a highly simplified model of major trends can be helpful as long as we are aware that in reality the developments were neither uniform nor unilinear. However, it may make more sense to look at the three ideal types of Trimingham’s stages as different aspects of any single ṭarīqa: the physical institutions, the chain of transmission and standardized package of spiritual techniques, and the social organization. Sufi “lodges” (named khānaqā, zāwiyā, or tekke in different contexts) remained important institutions until very recently, but there has always been wide variety in their functions.12 Initially, the khānaqā and zāwiyā were primarily associated with their founders (princes, governors, rich merchants) or the individual shaykhs heading them.13 In later stages, they became associated with specific Sufi orders or lines of affiliation. It could happen that a lodge belonging to one order was taken over by (or handed over by the state to) another, but independent lodges were virtually nonexistent.

Trimingham’s second stage was the crucial one in which chains of affiliation with the founders of distinctive spiritual traditions emerged. Virtually all ṭarīqa are named after the founder or a reformer of this tradition, and the masters and disciples of the ṭarīqa are connected by a silsilā, a chain of master-disciple relations, to this founder and thence to the Prophet. Each of these paths consists of distinctive spiritual techniques, which can be carried out privately or collectively: recitation of the divine names (dhikr), litanies (wird, rātib), supplications (duʿāʾ), and various forms of meditation. The silsilā is central to the concept of a Sufi order; it constitutes the genealogical legitimation of the master and his teachings, and it connects him with the saintly predecessors whose reputations define the spiritual tradition of the particular ṭarīqa.

The silsilā is also a formative structural element of the social organization of the Sufi order. An influential shaykh who appoints several khalīfa, who in turn appoint their own to other places, is at the center of a network of local congregations, which is, as it were, a geometrical representation of the khalīfa’s combined silsilā. Originally unconnected groups of devotees may, moreover, become part of the network by submitting themselves to the shaykh or a khalīfa and rearranging their silsilā accordingly.14

Two other practices were important to the organizational aspect of the ṭarīqa: the bayʿa, or vow of loyalty and obedience, which marks the formal moment of entry into the order, and the ijāza, or license to practice the techniques of the order. In most orders, there were different degrees of membership (Trimingham speaks of “adepts” and “affiliates”) and a hierarchy of ijāza (to practice, to lead communal rituals, to induct new members into the order).

By the fifteenth century, several of the major Sufi orders—Qādiriyya, Khalwatiyya, Suhrawardiyā, and Rifāʿiyya—consisted of networks of local groups of practitioners spread all over the central Islamic lands, from Egypt to India. The Kubrawiyya and Naqshbandiyā, then still Central Asian orders,
rapidly expanded to the south and west in the sixteenth century, and the latter especially would henceforth be one of the most influential and most strongly connected orders. The Chishtiyya and Shaṭṭāriyya were originally and long remained Indian orders and the Shādhiliyya, a North African order; they gained a presence in Mekka or Medina when scholars from these regions settled there as teachers. The degree of organization of these orders is difficult to gauge from the sources. Some were no doubt more like corporations than others. Some of the orders were centralized, and the authority of the central lodge or supreme master was recognized by other local communities. This was especially the case where a state supported the central authority of the ṭarīqa. The major orders, however, transcended state boundaries and were at best partially centralized. Men like Shinnāwī, Qushāshī, and Kūrānī in Medina, who were among the most famous scholars of their time and who held teaching ijāza for a handful of different ṭarīqa, would not have been subjected to any one order’s higher authority. It is not clear whether they actually headed zāwiya and regularly led collective rituals; since this would seem to imply a more unique affiliation with a single ṭarīqa, it may not have been the case.

WHAT CHARACTERIZED A ṬARĪQA IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY INDONESIA?

What the seventeenth-century scholars Rānīrī, ʿAbd al-Raʿūf, and Yūsuf write about their ṭarīqa is limited to their silsila and a few general prescriptions concerning the performance of dhikr and other ritual recitations. Yūsuf prescribes different recitations for beginners and the advanced, the latter progressing from the vocalization of the first sentence of the “profession of faith” (“There is no god but God”/Ar. lā ilāha ilāh) to Allāh, Allāh, and finally Hū Hū (“Him, Him”), and explains how the syllables of the first-named dhikr should be “drawn” through the body, dragging a lengthened lā of negation from the navel up to the brain, then the ilāha to the right shoulder, with one pause briefly before moving to the left, hammering ilā ilāh into the heart with great force. ʿAbd al-Raʿūf gives similar, but more elaborate, descriptions of dhikr in several of his treatises, while adding that oral instruction by the murshid (spiritual guide) is essential for correct practice. He also describes the wīrd to be recited after the five daily prayers and the rātib litanies recited in meetings on the eve of Friday and Tuesday. ʿAbd al-Raʿūf’s instructions for the rātib are the only indication that he adhered to collective Sufi rituals (the instructions are explicit about the alternating of the imam’s singing and the congregation’s response). There is reason to question, however, whether this collective ritual was specifically associated with the ṭarīqa and performed by initiated followers only. ʿAbd al-Raʿūf may have introduced it as a meritorious practice for the community at large. In later years, the rātib, in the louder and more ecstatic form associated with the Sammâniyya
that reached Aceh a century later, eventually became a form of popular entertainment that lost much of its original Sufi devotional connotation. In the late nineteenth century, as Snouck Hurgronje explicitly notes, these performances were very different from the less conspicuous Shattārī devotions, which were usually recited individually, not collectively. He also notes that there were very few adepts of the Shaṭṭāriyya in Aceh, but there was a lively cult centered on ʿAbd al-Raʿūf’s grave.

ʿAbd al-Raʿūf appointed two deputies (khalīfa), whose graves also became major pilgrimage centers in the Indonesian archipelago: the Minangkabau scholar Burhān al-Dīn in Ulakan in Pariaman, West Sumatra, and the Javanese ʿAbd al-Muhāyī in Pamijahan, West Java. All three graves attract numerous visitors, but few of them are actually affiliated with the Shaṭṭāriyya. In West Sumatra and in West and Central Java there are, however, a number of small congregations of Shaṭṭāriyya adepts and affiliates that trace their genealogies through one these two khalīfa and ʿAbd al-Raʿūf to Qushāshī. The relatively large number of Shaṭṭāriyya manuscripts containing silsila mentioning Burhān al-Dīn or ʿAbd al-Muhāyī indicates that both established self-perpetuating lines of Shaṭṭāriyya transmission. Other Shaṭṭārī silsila from Java reflect later initiations by descendants or successors of Ibrāhīm Kūrānī in Medina.

In both Sumatra and Java, the name of the Shaṭṭāriyya is especially associated with popularized versions of the theory of divine emanation in “seven grades of being” (martabat tujuh) that, grafted onto indigenous cosmological ideas, became fundamental to numerous later esoteric movements as well as magical practices. Actual initiation into the ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyya, however, appears to have remained limited to small numbers of adepts and affiliates. In Java, the court of Cirebon stands out as the major center of Shaṭṭāriyya teaching. There appears to have been a direct connection between ʿAbd al-Muhāyī and the Cirebon court; some oral traditions claim he married a Cirebon princess, and several silsila in Cirebon manuscripts mention him as the fountainhead of the Shaṭṭāriyya in Java (but others claim a later introduction directly from Medina). The ṭarīqa later—in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century—also began to be taught by the major pesantren (sites of Islamic learning) of the Cirebon region but until then appears to have remained restricted to court circles.

The same appears to have been true of the other tarekat (ṭarīqa) appearing in Indonesia in the seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth. Nūr al-Dīn Rānīrī and ʿAbd al-Raʿūf were the leading Islamic scholars at the court of Aceh. Yūsuf Makassar came to play the same role at the court of Banten and corresponded with a prince of his native Gowa on matters of politics and mysticism. The most prominent ṭarīqa teacher of the mid-eighteenth century, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Qahhār, who had received ijāza to teach the Shaṭṭārīyya and Naqshbandiyya from Ibrāhīm Kūrānī’s second or third successor in Medina, was himself a member of Bantenese court circles. Cirebon court elites received Shaṭṭārī ijāza from him, but he also appointed three Naqshbandi khalīfa to the
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Bogor-Cianjur region. The latter three were hajjis but may have been well-to-do commoners rather than court aristocrats. These men probably restricted their teaching of the ṭarīqa to those who had sufficient knowledge of Islamic doctrine and understanding of Sufi metaphysics. Courtiers may have had other reasons to prevent instruction in the ṭarīqa from reaching the masses. As the Hikayat Hasanuddin and the Babad Cerbon strongly suggest, the various ṭarīqa were considered as sources of occult knowledge (ngèlmu) that served to supernaturally support as well as to legitimize the ruler’s control of his realm and to provide protection from all sorts of danger. In martial arts circles, it is still believed that the ṭarīqa-derived techniques of cultivating extraordinary strength (tenaga dalam) and invulnerability (kekebalan) were long jealously guarded as a monopoly of the courts.

All these men actively taught one or more ṭarīqa rather restrictively. They appointed only a few khalīfa, and did not induce large numbers of novices into their ṭarīqa. There are no references in our sources to ḏawiya or similar physical institutions and no indication the ṭarīqa was a sort of association with members acting in concert (but we cannot conclude from the silence of our sources that collective rituals or other communal action did not take place). Judging by their extant writings, all of these men devoted more effort to the elucidation of mystical doctrines and their harmonization with Islamic orthodoxy than to instruction in the practical exercises of the ṭarīqa. There was clearly a local demand for authoritative explanations of these doctrines. As mentioned above, one of the tasks of the embassy the court of Banten sent to Mekka in the seventeenth century was to find such explanations. A few decades later, Ibrāhīm Kūrānī wrote his Ḩāf al-dhākī in response to debates that had arisen in Indonesia over the interpretation of Burhānpūrī’s widely read popularizing work on waḥdat al-wujūd. Such writing was directed at an intellectual elite, which must have been mostly based at the courts.

After these Sufi authors’ deaths, cults developed around their graves, and it became common to invoke their intercession and supernatural protection. These popular practices had but a tenuous link with the ṭarīqa they taught and practiced. It is perhaps significant that in late nineteenth-century Aceh, Nūr al-Dīn Rānīrī was not remembered for the ṭarīqa he had taught himself, but his name was invoked in a ṛatīb associated with the Sammāniyya order, which represents a later phase in Indonesian Sufism.

ENTER THE MASSES

The first indigenous reference to what looks like mass participation in ṭarīqa activity is in a Malay text from Palembang, the Syair Perang Menteng, which describes events that took place in 1819, when a Dutch military force commanded by the recently appointed governor Herman Warner Muntinghe (“Menteng”) prepared to attack and conquer the sultanate. The syair describes
how a large group of men dressed in white ("hajjis," according to the text) worked themselves into a trance by reciting dhikr ("hammering the words lā ilāha illā llāh into their hearts"), raised their frenzy by loudly shouting a rātib, and fearlessly attacked the militarily superior Dutch force. Invoking the most powerful of God's names, they fearlessly gave battle and dispersed the attackers. The "hajjis" appeared to believe that the dhikr and rātib they recited loudly, accompanied by wild physical movements, gave them supernatural strength and virtual invulnerability.

As the Dutch expanded their territorial control of the archipelago in the nineteenth century, they repeatedly came up against similar "fanatical" resistance, in which people prepared themselves for battle by collective Sufi rituals of dhikr and rātib. In the 1860s, an anti-Dutch uprising in South Borneo reportedly became a more serious threat when people en masse performed bay' a with a ṣaṭrīqa teacher, who taught them a rātib and gave them amulets for invulnerability. For decades, this beratib beamal movement, as it was locally known, was the major expression of common people’s resistance to Dutch advances.

Although the sources do not mention any specific ṣaṭrīqa in this connection, it is almost certain that in both Palembang and South Borneo they were connected to the Sammāniyya, a "new" order known for its loud, rhythmic rātib and ecstatic dhikr. Its founder, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Sammān (d. 1775), was one of the great scholars teaching in Medina who developed a synthesis of various mystical traditions. His Sammāniyya is based on the Khalwatiyya, with the addition of various elements borrowed from other orders, notably the Qādiriyya and the Naqshbandiyya. It has some features unique to it, such as a loud dhikr beginning with divine names but then proceeding to apparently meaningless sounds. After his death, he acquired a reputation for supernatural intervention only second to that of ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī.

The Sammāniyya rapidly spread to many parts of Southeast Asia owing to the mediating role of the learned ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Palimbānī, a protégé of the Palembang court who spent most of his life in Arabia, studying, teaching, and writing Malay books that were to become the most widely read texts on Sufism in Southeast Asia. Numerous Southeast Asians who spent time studying in Arabia during the second half of the eighteenth century were ʿAbd al-Ṣamad’s students, studying at least some texts of fiqh and other disciplines under his supervision. He was also one of Sammān’s khalīfa and must similarly have instructed many in the dhikr and rātib of the Sammāniyya or have pointed them to Sammān himself and later to his chief khalīfa in Medina, Ṣiddīq b. ʿUmar Khān. All three of these shaykhs appointed Muslims from Southeast Asia as khalīfa. The Palembang court patronized the Sammāniyya, and a year after Sammān’s death the sultan of Palembang had a Sammānī zāwiya built in Jeddah for the benefit of his subjects who made the pilgrimage. The construction of this zāwiya is mentioned in the Malay adaptation of the Arabic hagiography of Sammān that was probably composed in Palembang not long
after his death and copied in many parts of the archipelago. Within decades, the Sammāniyya was known not only in Palembang, but also in Batavia and Banten, Aceh, Patani, South Borneo, and South Celebes (where it was known as Khalwātiyya-Sammān).36

The Sammāniyya had bay‘a, but its dhikr and rātib were also recited by many who had no formal affiliation with the order. Membership was not a strict condition for participation. Some Indonesian teachers of the order appointed their own khalīfa, resulting in a certain hierarchy of organization and the possibility of corporate action. The Sammāniyya’s role in anti-Dutch resistance made it more conspicuous, but in most places the collective dhikr and rātib were not connected with any form of political mobilization. The Sammāni rātib developed in some regions into a form of popular entertainment or folk performance; elsewhere it was adopted by martial arts groups as an invulnerability technique, in which Shaykh Sammān was called on along with ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī and Aḥmad Rifāʿi to protect their devotees from the effects of cutting iron, scorching fire, and noxious poison.37 Compared with the ṭarīqa of the seventeenth century, the Sammāniyya appears less aristocratic and more activist. Its networks spread more rapidly and more pervasively among the population at large, and in many places its rituals merged with popular culture.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Sammāniyya was gradually eclipsed by the Qādiriyya waʾl-Naqshbandiyya, a similar “new” ṭarīqa founded by the Mekka-based Malay scholar Aḥmad Khaṭīb Sambas (d. 1875) and successfully propagated in Java by three khalīfā may have belonged to families with historical court connections, but they were based in pesantren outside the center and spread the order among the rural population of the hinterland through a network of lower-ranking deputies.

As in the case of the Sammāniyya, much of our knowledge about the popular following of the Qādiriyya waʾl-Naqshbandiyya stems from the fact that the order was implicated in a number of uprisings against Dutch rule (or, rather, against the indigenous elite that collaborated with the Dutch). The great
rebellion of Banten in 1888 occurred against a background of economic discontent and what the historian Kartodirdjo believed to be a religious revival, in which the Qādiriyā waʾl-Naqshbandiyā provided an institutional framework for communication and solidarity. The man who had been ʿAbd al-Karīm, was at that time residing in Mekka, where he had succeeded his teacher as the titular head of the order. Neither he nor his local deputies had been involved in the preparations for the uprising, but no doubt many of their followers took part in it. The loud dhikr and amulets made by khalīfa or other men of religion may have strengthened people’s daring and belief in their invulnerability. We find the order in the background of several other revolts of the late nineteenth century as well.39 In other regions, where there were no such uprisings connected to aspects of Sufism, it may well have also been present without being noticed. In the twentieth century, the Qādiriyā waʾl-Naqshbandiyā developed into three well-organized and centralized networks together covering all of Indonesia and Malaysia, with hundreds of thousands of followers and hundreds of local groups regularly meeting for collective dhikr and other rituals.40

IN SEARCH OF AN EXPLANATION: WHAT HAD CHANGED?

There are some remarkable differences between the manifestations of the Shāṭṭāriyya, Khalwatiyya, and Naqshbandiyā in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and those of the Sammāniyya and Qādiriyā waʾl-Naqshbandiyā in the nineteenth. Most notably, there appears to have been a pronounced increase in the degree of organization and popular participation. Here one cannot help being reminded of the second and third stages in Trimingham’s three-stage model of the development of Sufi orders. All these orders were “continuative teaching schools of mysticism” that offered “collectivistic methods of inducing ecstasy” (as in Trimingham’s second stage), but only the last two were to some extent “corporations” (third stage). A satisfying explanation for these apparent transitions and transformation, however, does not easily present itself. We have little sociological information about the earlier period, and it is conceivable that there was more organization and mass participation than was recorded in our sources for the earlier period. Assuming that the perceived differences cannot entirely be reduced to the uneven quality of our sources, however, explanation should be sought in either changes in the ṣāḥīqa as they functioned in Arabia or changes in Indonesian society that enabled the ṣāḥīqa to play new roles. I have pointed out some differences between the “new” orders and the older ones, but it is hard to see how these could have been the major cause of the former’s greater popularity in Indonesia. Moreover, the Sammāniyya and the Qādiriyā waʾl-Naqshbandiyā did not experience a similar expansion elsewhere in the world (with the partial exception of the Sudan in the case of the Sammāniyya).
Therefore, it is necessary to seek relevant developments in Indonesian and Southeast Asian society generally that may have been causal factors. The obvious and most conspicuous change in Indonesian society was the colonial powers’ expanding territorial control. Colonial control brought in its wake a number of other changes that may have been more directly relevant for an expanding role of the Sufi orders. The various sultanates, which had been patrons of Sufis and scholars, lost much of their former power over the course of the nineteenth century. The sultanate of Banten was actually abolished in the early nineteenth century. Many others survived but were placed under Dutch suzerainty, and their control of land and people continued to decline. There were substantial changes in the infrastructure of the archipelago. Roads were built, and communications between previously isolated communities improved over the course of the nineteenth century. Scholars returning from study in Mekka established simple pesantren not at the court but in rural areas, interacting with a very different population. From the late eighteenth century through the nineteenth, the number of pesantren and their students gradually increased. 

Tarekat and their teachers offered the rural population alternative sources of authority, partly replacing that of the court. There had always been persons and places of spiritual authority in the periphery, independent of the courts, but the development of pesantren significantly increased their number at a time of increasing colonial pressure on the authority of the archipelagic courts. The pesantren itself is, primarily, an institution in which children are taught to read kitāb, religious texts. Some of the same teachers also provided services for adults, in the form of communal rituals involving the reading of devotional texts, supplications, rātib, and dhikr.

The expanding pesantren network in Southeast Asia was directly related to another development in Mekka: the emergence of a large community of resident “Jāwa,” or Southeast Asians, many of them, but by no means all, scholars. There is reason to believe, as I shall explain below, that the presence of a significant number of Jāwa teaching in Mekka was a relatively recent phenomenon, emerging not long before the nineteenth century. These scholars, even when teaching Arabic texts, would give explanations in Malay or Javanese. Their presence made it possible for men with limited command of Arabic to gain prestigious knowledge in Mekka quickly, within one or two years. Men like ʿAbd al-Raʾūf Singkel and Yūsuf Makassar had had to spend decades in Arabia before returning to Indonesia as teachers. The presence of Jāwa scholars (as well as Jāwa assistants to scholars and Sufis for the benefit of Jāwa students) made shortcuts possible for later generations. The number of Jāwa students increased, and on average they spent much less time in Arabia.

Intriguing indications about the dynamics of this community can be glimpsed from the chains of transmission (isnād) of the books they studied. The isnād are very much like the silsilā of a ṭarīqa and have the same legitimating function. In the traditional educational setting, face-to-face contact was
essential even in teaching written texts; a student who had completed the study of a particular text received an *ijāza* for this text from his teacher, usually with the *isnād*, the chain of preceding teachers, attached. It was not unusual for scholars to write intellectual autobiographies that consisted almost entirely of *isnād* for the major books they had studied and *silsila* of the *ṭarīqa* with which they were affiliated. The man who was considered the leading Indonesian traditionalist scholar in Mekka in the late twentieth century, Shaykh Yāsīn Padang (d. 1990), was a great collector of *isnād* and published several books containing nothing but his *isnād* for all the major works of *fiqh*, *ḥadīth*, *tafsīr*, and other disciplines. A preliminary analysis of this corpus yields some interesting findings relevant to the history of Indonesian *tarekat*. Shaykh Yāsīn had studied with many different teachers, and even books studied under the same teacher usually had quite different *isnād*, indicating that the previous generation of teachers also had sought knowledge with a variety of authorities. However, some of the same names recur in many *isnād*, suggesting that these were the leading authorities of their generation. During the entire nineteenth century, Southeast Asian names predominate among these authorities, with a sprinkling of famous Arabs, giving the impression of a tightly woven community of Jāwa scholars, mostly studying under other Jāwa and only a few of them directly under Arab scholars. In the mid-nineteenth century, for instance, the famous Nawāwī Banten constitutes a distinct node in the Jāwa scholarly networks. He taught many texts to numerous students. However, the key position in the networks belongs to ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Palimbānī of the earlier nineteenth century, who transmitted a wide range of texts, in all Islamic disciplines, from a variety of mostly Arab teachers to numerous Jāwa students. He appears to stand at the beginning of a self-perpetuating scholarly community of Jāwa in Mekka.

Back in the seventeenth century, ʿAbd al-Raʿūf Singkel and Yūsuf Makassar may also have acted as mediators for the other Jāwa studying in Arabia in their time. It is claimed that Yūsuf’s future chief *khalīfa* had been with him in Arabia, for instance, and that ʿAbd al-Raʿūf communicated with Ibrāhīm Kūrānī on behalf of other Jāwa. However, the next few generations traveled to Arabia to study under the (non-Jāwa) successors of Kūrānī and his colleagues. The situation in the nineteenth century was quite different. The study of texts had become easier, as there were enough teachers who could give explanations in Malay, and practical training in the techniques of a *ṭarīqa* was also available in languages of Southeast Asia. There was a *zāwiya* of the Sammāniyya in Jeddah, where presumably Malay was spoken, and the learned founder of the Qādiriyya waʾl-Naqshbandiyya was himself a Jāwa resident of Mekka, Aḥmad Ḥaṭīb Sambas, who personally initiated “thousands of pilgrims and residents, from all parts of the East Indies.”

With the increasing numbers of pilgrims from Southeast Asia, many of whom wished to return home with an *ijāza* obtained in Mekka, there was such a demand for initiation in a *ṭarīqa* that by the mid-nineteenth century even some
non-Jāwa teachers were beginning to specialize in training Jāwa students. The (Turkish and Daghistani) shaykhs of the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya order in Mekka had a staff of Malay, Javanese, and Sundanese assistants and translators in order to be able to serve as many customers as possible. Snouck Hurgronje, following his informants, writes in scathing terms of the Naqshbandī ḥāwilā in Mekka as a commercial enterprise in which quality was sacrificed to quantity. His judgment may, however, have been influenced by the fact that the first prominent Indonesian teacher belonging to this branch of the Naqshbandiyya, Ismāʿīl Minangkabawī, had been a “rather learned but very fanatical” man, that is, a fierce opponent of infidel rule over the Indies. Be that as it may, the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya also experienced very rapid development in Indonesia and became perhaps the most highly organized of the orders there.

THE ṬARĪQA AS A CORPORATION: NAQSHBANDĪ VILLAGE OF BABUSSALAM, LANGKAT, NORTH SUMATRA

In this history of increasingly structured organization of Indonesian tarekat, one pivotal figure was Shaykh Sulaymān al-Zuhdī, who led the Naqshbandī ḥāwilā on the hill of Abū Qubays in Mekka during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He was not the first Mekkan teacher of this order to gain influence in Southeast Asia, but he was the most prolific. His predecessors, Sulaymān al-Qirīmī and ʿAbdallah al-Arzinjānī, assisted by their Malay-speaking deputy Ismāʿīl Minangkabawī, had presided over the first expansion of the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya in Java and Sumatra, but it was especially al-Zuhdī who systematically appointed khalīfa to all parts of the archipelago. A brief basic training followed by a twenty- or forty-day retreat (khalwa or sulūk) in the ḥāwilā under the close supervision by the shaykh or his assistants was apparently sufficient to warrant an ijāza. This abbreviated program of initiation proved to be a significant factor in the expansion and popularization of the order in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Most of Sulaymān Zuhdī’s Indonesian khalīfa only held ijāza to lead the dhikr and induce novices into the order but not to appoint their own deputies or successors. This meant that each new generation needed to request its ijāza from Mekka, which thereby remained the de facto center of the Southeast Asian Naqshbandī networks. A few trusted khalīfa, however, were also given ijāza to appoint their own deputies. One of them was a Malay from Central Sumatra who went on to become the most prolific Indonesian ṭarīqa teacher ever: ʿAbdul Wahab Rokan. He had studied under Shaykh Sulaymān al-Zuhdī, who had given him authority to develop the order over all of North and East Sumatra, from Aceh to Palembang, and this he did. He traveled extensively in this region, was welcomed everywhere as a man of special gifts, concluded strategic marriages with women of influential families, and inducted members of the local elites
into the ṭarīqa. Between his return to Sumatra in 1868–1869 and his death in 1926, he married at least twenty-seven women, begot forty-three children, and appointed around 120 khalīfa in this region and across the straits in Malaya.  

‘Abdul Wahab gained the favors of many of the local rulers throughout the region, including the sultans of Langkat and Deli, who were the most prominent indigenous authorities on the east coast of Sumatra. Sultan Musa of Langkat, who was attracted to the religious life and who was affluent through his pepper plantations, became his chief benefactor. After a number of shorter visits, during which the shaykh had taught the dhikr and led retreats (sulūk), the sultan invited him in 1877 to settle permanently at the court in Tanjung Pura and a few years later endowed a large tract of land as waqf for the shaykh to develop as a center of the Naqshbandī order.  

The shaykh had arrived with wives and children and a following of some 150 people from various parts of Sumatra, most of them Malay and Mandailing Batak. These were the first settlers of the village that was built on the waqf land, which the shaykh named Babussalam. The center of the village was (and is) the large mandarsah (lit., “school”), a brick mosque with a separate space for dhikr above the prayer hall. Separate from the mandarsah there were two rumah suluk (Ar. sulūk), houses for retreat, large wooden barracks partitioned by cloth screens into small cells where men and women from all over the east coast would come for the ten-, twenty-, or forty-day retreats that are a special feature of the Nashbandiyya Khālidiyya. As more followers of the shaykh continued arriving, the village grew to a size that was economically self-sustaining.  

Under ‘Abdul Wahab’s direction, the residents of Babussalam planted various cash crops on the waqf land—fruit trees, coffee, pepper, rubber—and raised animals. All had to contribute time and effort to the common enterprise, and the village economy flourished. The shaykh wrote an elaborate “constitution” (peraturan-peraturan) for the village, which stated that only active followers of the Naqshbandiyya could settle there, and access was completely denied to non-Muslims. All residents had to wear distinctive white headgear that made them stand out from the surrounding society. Space and time were patterned by voluntary work and devotions, as the entire village participated in the daily prayers and dhikr. At dawn and sunset, the call to prayer from the minaret was preceded by a long munājāt (supplication) invoking all the saints of the Naqshbandī silsila.  

As an economic enterprise, Babussalam was self-reliant and a contributor to the economic growth of the larger region, but it was also embedded in a network of economic transactions that reflected the hierarchical relations between teacher and disciple, and thereby the centralized structure of the Naqshbandiya ṭarīqa. ‘Abdul Wahab had been poor when he returned to Sumatra, but his reputation as a man of extraordinary qualities and patronage by the rich and powerful soon made him prosperous. He had earlier built a more modest
village in Kubu, a district of Riau, from which he had begun his teaching. Disciples and visitors brought gifts in money and kind according to their abilities, which soon amounted to a considerable annual income. As soon as he could afford it, he sent each year large sums of money as gifts to his teachers in Mekka, especially Sulaymān al-Zuhdī. Once he had gained the patronage of the rich Sultan Musa of Langkat, he persuaded the latter to perform the hajj and introduced him to al-Zuhdī. The sultan performed a retreat under al-Zuhdī and received an ijāza as khalīfa. He had a mosque built close to al-Zuhdī’s zāwiya, which he donated to the shaykh, and houses for other teachers of ‘Abdul Wahāb’s network.

The large rumah suluk in Babussalam attracted a steady stream of visitors who came to perform a retreat under the shaykh’s guidance, bringing such gifts as they could afford. Especially in the quiet period following the harvest, villagers from far away traveled to Babussalam for ten- or twenty-day retreats. Sulūk or khalwa was a practice known in other orders too, but it had been adopted as one of the central practices for adepts of the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya order by the reformer Mawlānā Khālid. It involved a regime of isolation, fasting, and entire days spent in dhikr and meditation. Whereas every khalīfa was allowed to lead communal dhikr sessions, the supervision of sulūk demanded a higher level of spiritual attainment recognized by a different type of ijāza. The network of ritual halls for these observances (rumah suluk) thus contributed to keeping the network of local Naqshbandī branches relatively centralized. There was, moreover, a hierarchy of rumah suluk and khalīfa, as was to be seen in the case of Sultan Musa’s visit to Mekka. For ambitious adepts, spiritual progress corresponded with a rise along this hierarchy, from training by one or more local khalīfa to a number of retreats in Babussalam, and culminating in a retreat in the Mekkan zāwiya of Abū Qubays.

The centralized structure of the order was further underlined and maintained by the Naqshbandī meditation technique called rābita or rābita bi’l-shaykh, in which the murīd closes the eyes and visualizes the master, in order to establish a spiritual connection with the master and through him to the earlier masters of the silsila up to the Prophet. Mawlānā Khālid demanded that all disciples and even later generations perform the rābita directly with him (rather than with one of his khalīfa). Sulaymān al-Zuhdī, who was a third-generation khalīfa of Mawlānā Khālid, required his disciples and khalīfa to visualize Mawlānā Khālid. A notebook brought back by an Indonesian pilgrim who had received an initiation in Sulaymān al-Zuhdī’s zāwiya contained, besides many other notes on Naqshbandī techniques, a brief description of Mawlānā Khālid’s facial features as an aid to visualization. All of ‘Abdul Wahāb’s disciples were instructed to visualize Mawlānā Khālid each time they meditated and thereby maintained a strong connection with the center. It was only after the ties with Mekka had been cut owing to the second conquest by the Wahhabis that Indonesian Naqshbandīs began visualizing Indonesian masters in the rābita.
SUFI ORDERS, PESANTREN TAREKAT, AND PUTIHAN VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

Babussalam is a unique case because of the scale of ‘Abdul Wahab’s successes in spreading the ṭariqa and organizing agricultural production, but there were other cases of ṭariqa teachers establishing village communities in the twentieth century. Such examples of institutionalizing tarekat highlight the transformations undergone by Sufi orders within the Indonesian archipelago during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A century before ‘Abdul Wahab, the Banjarese scholar Arshad al-Banjārī (d. 1812)—who had spent many years studying in Arabia and was probably affiliated with the Sammāniyya—similarly built a new village on a tract of wasteland granted to him by the sultan of Banjarmasin, which went on to become the major center of Islamic education in South Borneo. Arshad al-Banjārī together with his family and followers dug irrigation canals and opened up the land for cultivation, making the village a model for agricultural development in the region. In ‘Abdul Wahab’s time, other khalīfa of Sulaymān al-Zuhdī opened up their own villages in the forested interior of Java and Sumatra, and many more took up teaching the Naqshbandī devotions in existing mosques and pesantren. Many of these khalīfa appointed their own deputies and established expanding networks of local groups of Naqshbandī affiliates. Two generations later, we find Naqshbandī shaykhs leading Sufi villages similar to Babussalam in South Aceh and Malaya.

The rapid expansion of the Naqshbandiyya Khālidīyya was in part due to the reforms Mawlānā Khālid (d. 1827) had introduced into the order, the large number of khalīfa he appointed, and the missionary zeal he inspired in them. Its expansion in the Ottoman Empire preceded that in Indonesia and was even more rapid and spectacular. Shaykh Khālid had well over sixty khalīfa, in different parts of the Ottoman Empire, several of whom appointed numerous khalīfa of their own (although none may have been as prolific in this respect as ‘Abdul Wahab Rokan). Whereas in the Ottoman domains the Naqshbandiyya Khālidīyya was the only order that showed such dynamism in the nineteenth century, in Indonesia its expansion and activities had much in common with those of the two other recently arriving orders, the Sammāniyya and the Qādiriyya wa’l-Naqshbandiyya, which also had a number of regional networks with an internal hierarchy in Indonesia and a central authority based in Mekka or Medina.

The expansion of these centralized ṭariqa networks in the nineteenth century was part of a broader development, the proliferation of rural (and occasionally urban) communities that signaled their stronger commitment and stricter adherence to Islam by wearing white headgear or dress, thus distinguishing themselves from their surroundings. There were various types of such communities, known in Java as putihan or pamutihan (“white ones”). Some consisted of families that guarded holy graves and could boast a long history; others had
emerged more recently around a religious teacher or a village head of exemplary piety. Some, but not all, of these communities were exempted from certain taxes and other obligations in exchange for the religious services they provided for local rulers. Many pesantren found their origin in such putihan communities. The increase in the number of these communities was largely due to the increasing numbers of men returning from studies in Mekka and setting themselves up as teachers. Not all founders of pesantren and/or putihan communities had a Mekkan connection, however. One of the oldest extant pesantren of West Java is that of Buntet in Cirebon, founded in the late eighteenth century. The teachers, their families, and adherents there came to constitute a large putihan community. As oral tradition has it, before becoming a center of textual learning, Buntet was a pesantren tarekat, where adults came in search of supernatural power. The ṭarīqa that was taught here was the Shattāriyya, the same as that of the Cirebon court, but Buntet’s first Shattārī teacher, known as Ki Buyut Kriyan, had taken his ijāza neither from court circles nor directly from Medina but from a Javanese teacher in Central Java, Kyai Ashʿarī of Kaliwungu (who had studied in Mekka but is not locally remembered as a ṭarīqa teacher, but rather as a representative of “Mataram Islam”—the Javanese-Islamic synthesis). Unlike Babussalam, Buntet was not embedded in a larger ṭarīqa network, but the community appears to have carried out Shattārī devotions collectively. It was a putihan community not directly connected with Mekka but inspired by tarekat teachings embedded in Javanese culture. In the early twentieth century, however, facing competition from a nearby Qādiriyya waʾl-Naqshbandiyya pesantren, Buntet was the first in Indonesia to adopt and actively propagate the Tījāniyya ṭarīqa, in which one of the teachers, Kiai Anas, had been initiated during a stay in Arabia. This new development made the pesantren the center of a highly dynamic network of adepts and mobilized devotees recognizing a higher authority in Medina.

These putihan communities and the pesantren that gained prominence in the nineteenth century constituted orderlike social formations that might be, but in many cases were not, affiliated with a regular ṭarīqa and connected to an external source of religious authority. Little detailed information on the putihan communities is available. Colonial surveys of perdikan (tax-exempted) villages were compiled relatively late and moreover probably missed newly founded putihan villages that did not have old tax privileges. The Javanese santri lelana literature (Serat Centhini, Serat Jatiswara, and so on) makes frequent mention of such communities but provides little concrete information, and local histories may give valuable information but are notoriously vague about chronology. There are, nonetheless, some indications that over the course of the “long” nineteenth century (beginning in the late eighteenth and continuing into the twentieth) the number of putihan communities significantly increased, and there was a significant shift of orientation. Although previously most of these communities had been connected with local centers of spiritual power such as holy
graves, they increasingly came to be connected, via silsila and/or isnād, with authorities in Mekka or Medina.

Both the ṭarīqa and the pesantren were associated with putihan communities, but there was no simple or uniform relationship between these different social categories in nineteenth-century Java. Most putihan communities mentioned in Javanese texts performed various types of communal and individual devotions besides the obligatory prayers but may not have adhered to any specific ṭarīqa. Conversely, not all ṭarīqa followers belonged to putihan communities, even if most teachers did. The Shaṭṭāriyya was present in this period as a diffuse influence. Popular beliefs and magical practices were influenced by cosmological and metaphysical ideas once associated with this ṭarīqa. Most Shaṭṭāri teachers were a few generations removed from the last representatives of the learned line of teachers in Medina, and there appeared to be little uniformity in what they taught. The Qādiriyya wa’l-Naqshbandiyya and the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya (and later the Tījāniyya) were more centralized orders. Communities of followers were connected with one another and especially with the central authority in Mekka. Both orders also, at least in theory, demanded strict adherence to the sharī’a and therefore some degree of textual knowledge.

The simplest pesantren only taught the Arabic script and memorization of some passages from the Qur’an, although some also taught basic fiqh and doctrine, using simple textbooks. As the nineteenth century progressed, more pesantren emerged that also taught more sophisticated fiqh books and other kitāb in Arabic. Their founders were typically men who had spent years in Mekka in the teaching circles of established scholars, in most cases resident Jáwa ‘ulamā’ reading these kitāb under supervision and finally receiving ijāza to teach them. These men’s relationship with their Mekkan teachers differed little from that of an Indonesian khalīfa of a ṭarīqa with his shaykh. In fact, although a scholar did not expect the same level of submission and obedience that the ṭarīqa shaykh demanded, the bond with him could even be stronger because of the protracted and intensive interaction that went with textual studies. The isnād constituted a lasting link of authority and legitimation, like the silsila, the main difference being that most graduates from Mekka had multiple isnād, connecting them with more than one Mekkan teacher. Having studied under the same teachers in Mekka created bonds among the Javanese Islamic teachers (kyai) similar to those between adepts of the same ṭarīqa. Jointly, the community of Jáwa scholars resident in Mekka and their students who established (or taught at) pesantren in Southeast Asia constituted a sort of brotherhood, membership in which was not dependent on a formal bay’a but on the ijāza proving the successful mastery of a body of texts.

By the mid-nineteenth century, this brotherhood of kitāb scholars and their students probably made up only a minor, but growing, proportion of all those classified by the Dutch as geestelijken (“clerics” who made their living by religion). Many of the latter simply provided religious services such as leading
salāt prayers or other devotions, taking care of the dead, guarding holy graves and overseeing grave visitation, reciting supplications (duʿāʾ) on behalf of clients, divination, and healing. Many also taught dhikr, wīrd, and various other formulae to be recited for magical purposes. Indeed the word tarekat was widely used to refer to magical practices even when there was no formal initiation into a specific ʿtarīqa. The most significant shift taking place in the nineteenth century is that the two types of Mekka-based “orders,” the new Sufi tarekat and the brotherhood of kitāb scholars, gradually became dominant in influence, if not in numbers, within the category of religious specialists.

To summarize, a ʿtarīqa can be defined by three aspects. Each has, first, a distinct spiritual genealogy, or silsila, and, second, a repertoire of techniques and devotions that constitute its distinct “way.” In addition, they can be associated with a specific pattern of social organization in which particular institutions may be diversely configured. Regarding the third aspect, a single ʿtarīqa may show great variety over time and space.

The spiritual techniques of various established Sufi ʿtarīqa have been taught in Southeast Asia since the seventeenth century and quite possibly since the second half of the sixteenth. Sufi thought and practice initially circulated primarily among the aristocratic elite of the indigenous sultanates. A lively interest in Sufi metaphysics and debates about the interpretation of the doctrine of wahdat al-wujūd appears to have preceded the adoption of ʿtarīqa as standardized ways of attaining the mystical experience. Actual adherence to a ʿtarīqa long remained restricted, but at least in some regions certain practices of recitation (dhikr, wīrd, rātib) became part of popular devotion. The social organization of the ʿtarīqa remains the most elusive aspect. The extant sources suggest that ʿtarīqa teachers had but few khalīfa and that the numbers actually inducted into a ʿtarīqa remained restricted.

Only from the nineteenth century onwards do we find reports of large numbers of people publicly taking part in collective ʿtarīqa rituals. Besides greater concern on the part of Dutch colonial officials who cared to report on these activities, this may reflect two important changes in the relations between Southeast Asian Muslims and the symbolic center of the Muslim world—the holy cities of Mekka and Medina. Larger numbers of Southeast Asians were spending many years studying in the holy cities, which had become easier because the number of “Jāwa” scholars resident there who could serve as teachers for an increasing number of students from Southeast Asia had reached a critical mass. Moreover, new ʿtarīqa had emerged that actively recruited among the Jāwa pilgrims and students, using the Malay language as a medium: the Sammāniyya in the eighteenth, and the Qādiriyya waʾl-Naqshbandiyya and Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya in the nineteenth century. The khalīfa of these orders established rapidly expanding networks of local adepts and affiliates, turning the ʿtarīqa into mass movements no longer associated with elite court culture.
There was during this same period a similar, albeit slower, expansion of schools where Islamic texts (kitāb) were taught. Mekka-trained scholars, united by common loyalty to the teachers to whom they owed their ijāza, constituted a sort of brotherhood that stood out among the class of professional religious and by the early twentieth century had become dominant among them. Scholars and pesantren teaching kitāb thus constituted parallel and potentially overlapping networks that were structurally similar to those of the new Sufi orders—as seen in the documentation of religious lineages in the parallel forms of silsila and isnād. For both, Mekka was the exemplary center where ultimate authority was located and where each new generation sought spiritual and scholarly perfection. Both also had secondary centers in different parts of Southeast Asia from which further expansion took place. The Saudi conquest of Mekka in 1924 was to result in changes in these networks again, notably a renewed indigenization of the ṭarīqa networks, but those developments are beyond the scope of this chapter.

NOTES

1. Russell Jones, “Ten Conversion Myths from Indonesia,” in Conversion to Islam, edited by Nehemia Levtzion (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979), pp. 129–158. One should not forget, however, that these myths are of much later date than the alleged conversion event.


3. The first mission was sent in 1638. Several later rulers sent similar missions upon accession. The metaphysical questions seem to refer to works written by Ḥamza and another, unknown author. Titik Pudjiastuti, “Sadjarah Banten: suntingan teks dan terjemahan disertai tinjauan aksara dan amanat” (Ph.D. diss., Universitas Indonesia, Depok, 2000), canto 37.7, 42.26; see also Hoesein Djajadiningrat, Critische beschouwing van de Sadjarah Banten: Bijdrage ter erschetsing van de Javaansche geschiedschrijving (Haarlem: Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, 1913), pp. 50, 174–175.


6. It has been claimed, on the basis of one of Ḥamza’s quatrains, in which he declares that he received trusteeship of the exalted knowledge (beroleh khilafat ilmu yang ‘ali) from ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, that he belonged to the Qādiriyya Sufi order and was in fact a khalīfa, a deputy representing the grand shaykh himself. Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), pp. 10–11. This is one possible reading, and there are a few more references to ‘Abd al-Qādir in Hamza’s works that indicate that he felt a special veneration for the Baghdadi saint. However, although there are frequent later references to Hamza’s poetry and Sufi metaphysics, his name is never
mentioned in later chains of transmission of the Qādiriyya in Indonesia. For this and other reasons, I believe his teaching in Aceh did not include formal instruction in the ṭarīqa. For more on this, see the arguments presented in Martin van Bruinessen, “Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī and the Qādiriyya in Indonesia,” *Journal of the History of Sufism* 1–2 (2000): 361–395, esp. pp. 362–364.


11. J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 103, summarizing the preceding historical discussion. Later scholars have been critical of some of Trimingham’s analyses and claims, and there exists now a vast body of detailed and more sophisticated scholarship, but this remains the major synthesizing study. Two more recent major overviews are Alexandre Popovic and Gilles Veinstein, eds., *Les voies d’Allah: Les ordres mystiques dans le monde musulman des origines à aujourd’hui* (Paris: Fayard, 1996); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, ed., *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), both of which are rich in information about individual orders but do not attempt an overall synthesis.


13. In his study of Sufism in Egypt and Syria in the Mamluk period, Eric Geoffroy suggests that the khānaqāh was an institution defined by its powerful or rich founder, and the zāwīya was known for the Sufi master who led it. Eric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans: Orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels*
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(Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1995), pp. 116–175. Geoffroy’s distinction may be valid for that period, but I do not believe it makes sense for other times and places.


16. Trimingham rightly observes that the term tāʾifa was also used for two other types of associations with a religious character that should be distinguished from the Sufi order although having similar patterns of organization: the trade guild and the futuwwa (“youngmanliness,” or chivalry) association. The Kāzarūnīyya, of which we know thanks to the early fourteenth-century Moroccan traveler Ibn Batūţa, was yet another similar formation. Rizvi, *History of Sufism in India*, vol. 1, pp. 409–411, discusses it as a special type of Sufi order. Trimingham, *Sufi Orders in Islam*, p. 21, calls it a “Sufi insurance company.” It consisted of a network of lodges dedicated to the eleventh-century Sufi Abū Ishaq Kāzarūnī, patron saint and protector of sailors and merchants along the trade routes between the Persian Gulf and South China. Ibn Batūţa visited the saint’s shrine in Kāzarūn (Southern Iran) and the khānaqā in Cambay and Calicut in India, as well as the one outside the major South Chinese port of Zaytun, and notes that merchants vowed sums of money to the saint in exchange for protection. These sums were collected by the guardians of the various khānaqā (whose names were appended with the nisba Kāzarūnī, suggesting they were either biological descendants of Abū Ishaq or licensed representatives, khalīfā) on behalf of the central shrine and redistributed according to an intricate system that Ibn Baṭṭūţa describes. There is, however, no mention of Sufi rituals or local followers of these khalīfā. They appear as agents of a financial institution rather than spiritual teachers. (See the summary of the functioning of this commercialization of Abū Ishaq’s baraka in Trimingham, *Sufi Orders in Islam*, p. 236.)


22. Ibid., pp. 16–20.


27. See note 3 above.


31. P. J. Veth, “Het beratip beamal in Bandjermasin,” Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië 3.2 (1869–1870): 197–202; Helius Sjamsuddin, “Islam and Resistance in South and Central Kalimantan in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth centuries,” in Islam in the Indonesian Social Context, edited by M. C. Ricklefs (Clayton: Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1991), pp. 7–17. The ṭātib reported there was not the standard Sammānī ṭātib, but diverging versions have been reported from elsewhere too. The Sammāniyya is known to have been introduced into this region by Naťs al-Banjārī, the author of the locally popular Sufi treatise al-Durr al-naṭis, and possibly by other returnees from Arabia as well.
32. In calling these synthetic orders “new,” I refer to their recent emergence as distinct formations and am not alluding to “Neo-Sufism,” a term that has been used to refer to too many different things and has so far caused more confusion than clarity (see the discussion in Martin van Bruinessen, “Sufism, ‘Popular’ Islam, and the Encounter with Modernity,” in Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates, edited by Muhammad Khalid Masud, Armando Salvatore, and Martin van Bruinessen [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009], pp. 125–157).

33. For an example of such a dhikr, see Syed Naguib Al-Attas, Some Aspects of Sufism as Understood and Practised among the Malays (Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 1963), p. 86.


38. In this case these were, as the earliest handbook of the order, Fath al-‘ārifīn, has it, the Naqshbandiyya, Qādiriyya, Ṭarīqat al-Anfās, Ṭarīqat al-Junayd, and Ṭarīqat al-Muwāfaqāt. The same text makes the intriguing observation that this combination of tariqa is identical (?) with the Sammāniyya. A similar synthetic order with which Aḥmad Khaṭīb may have been well acquainted was the Khitmiyya, which became important in Sudan (see Karrar, Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan, pp. 64–66, 73–102).


41. This expansion had begun in a much earlier period. The reason Yūsuf of Makassar did not settle in his native Gowa on his return from Arabia but opted to live in Banten was that Gowa had been conquered by its Bugis neighbor Bone and the Netherlands East Indies Company. When the company later intervened in Banten too, replacing Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa with his more pliant son, Sultan Haji, Yūsuf firmly sided with the former and took to the mountains. Company troops captured him, and he was sent into exile in Ceylon.

43. Several of the pesantren I have visited retain memories of previously having been pesantren tarekat, which meant they did not teach bookish knowledge but spiritual techniques, often for magical purposes.

44. This Jawa community was famously described in the second volume of Snouck Hurgronje’s Mekka (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1889).

45. Two famous examples are Ahmad Qushāshi’s Al-Simṭ al-majīd and Ibrāhīm Kūrānī’s Al-Umam li-īqāẓ al-himam, both of which were printed in Hyderabad as recently as 1909–1910.

46. Shaykh Yāsīn was the director of the Indonesian college Dār al-Ūlūm al-Islāmiyya in Mekka. He wrote at least ten such books, of which the most important are M. Yāsīn b. M. Ḥisā al-Fadānī, Al-ʿiqd al-farīd min jawāhir al-asānīd (Surabaya: Dār al-Saqqāf, n.d.), and idem, Nayl al-amānī fī baʿd asānīd al-shaykh Muḥammad Yāsīn bin Muḥammad Ḥisā al-Fadānī (Jakarta: Panitia Haul Syekh Moh. Yasin Isa al-Fadani, 1993).

47. Snouck Hurgronje, Mekka, vol. 2, p. 372. Snouck observes that both Aḥmad Khaṭīb and his successor ʿAbd Karīm Banten enjoyed the respect of all social classes, including even the most learned scholars, primarily the Jawa but also scholars of local origin. He also makes some interesting observations on ʿAbd al-Karīm’s teaching of the ṭarīqa and relations with different categories of affiliates; ibid. 372–379.


50. These khalīfa are listed, district by district, in H. A. Fuad Said, Syekh ʿAbdul Wahab: Tuan guru Babussalam (Medan: Pustaka Babussalam, 1983), pp. 136–139; for wives and descendants, see pp. 170–185. The author of this biography/hagiography is one of ʿAbdul Wahab’s 207 grandchildren.


52. According to the biography, ʿAbdul Wahab sent al-Zuhdī each year at least 400 ringgit, the equivalent of 1,000 Dutch guilders. See Said, Syekh ʿAbdul Wahab, p. 40.


54. See Butrus Abu-Manneh, “Khalwa and Rabita in the Khalidi Suborder,” in Naqshbandis, edited by Gabarieau, Popovic, and Zarcone, pp. 283–302, on Mawlānā Khalīd’s emphasis on khalwa as a physical retreat from the world. This differed from the classical Naqshbandī principle of khalwat dar anjuman, the cultivation of an otherworldly attitude while
actively engaging with the world. Of the other orders, most branches of the Khalwatiyya (which owes its name to the practice) are said to have endorsed *khalwa*, but there is no unambiguous indication that it was ever introduced into Indonesia. (There is one intriguing account by the French missionary Nicolas Gervaise of what could be *khalwa* in a mosque in Makassar in the 1680s, but Gervaise had not been there himself and his description seems colored by his personal acquaintance with Thai Buddhism; see Christian Pelras, “La première description de Célèbes-sud en français et la destinée remarquable de deux jeunes princes makassars dans la France de Louis XIV,” *Archipel* 54 [1997], pp. 63–80, esp. p. 67; Michael F. Laffan, *The Makers of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* [Princeton University Press, 2011], pp. 20–21.)


56. See also: Bruinessen, “After the Days of Abû Qubays.”


59. Ibid., pp. 143–146 (South Aceh), 158–160 (Selangor, Malaysia).


61. Muheimin, “Islamic Traditions of Cirebon,” pp. 249–250, and personal interviews in Buntet; the *silsila* names a Muhammad Sa’îd Madanî as Ash ʿarî’s teacher and continues through “Tâhir Madanî,” “Ibrâhîm,” and another “Tâhir” to Ibhrâhîm al-Kûrâni (various combinations of the same name, sometimes as Ibhrâhîm b. Tâhir or Tâhir b. Ibhrâhîm, occur in other Javanese Shattârî *silsila*). Local memories of Kyai Ash’ârî are compiled in Sholekhatul Amaliyah, “Peran Kyai Asy’ârî (Kyai Guru) dalam berdakwah di Kecamatan Kaliwungu Kabupaten Kendal” (Walisongo State Islamic University thesis, Semarang, 2010).


63. Thus ‘Abdul Wahab Rohan retained a lifelong loyalty to his chief teacher of *kitâb* in Mekka, H. M. Yunus Batu Bara. It had been Yunus who advised him to supplement the theoretical study of Sufism through Ghazâlî’s *Ihyā* with practical experience under Sulaymān al-Zuhdî. ‘Abdul Wahab later sent annual gifts of money to both, and, when his patron, the sultan of Langkat, visited Mekka, he not only honored al-Zuhdî but showed equal respect to Yunus Batu Bara (Said, *Syekh ‘Abdul Wahab*, pp. 28–33, 58).

64. See the analysis of the statistics on *geestelijken*, hajjis, schools, and students in the 1860s through 1880s, from a variety of Dutch sources, in Ricklefs, *Polarising Javanese Society,*
pp. 63–72. Based on the differential geographic distribution of geestelijken and hajjis, Ricklefs gathered that most of the former, who outnumbered the hajjis everywhere but more so in the interior of Java, held religious views similar to the Javanese “mystic synthesis” embraced by the aristocracy, views that were challenged by the new ideas coming from Mekka. He perceives these two types of religious leaders as representing “diverging worlds of pious Islam.” My own, slightly different, interpretation is that the divergence took place within the category of geestelijken. Only those hajjis who had pursued serious study in Mekka and on return became teachers made much of an impact.