



PROJECT MUSE®

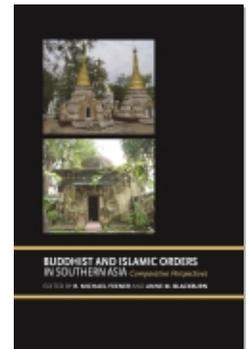
Buddhist and Islamic Orders in Southern Asia

Published by University of Hawai'i Press

Buddhist and Islamic Orders in Southern Asia: Comparative Perspectives.

Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018.

Project MUSE., <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.



➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/67424>

2

A ḤADRAMĪ SUFI TRADITION IN THE INDONESIAN ARCHIPELAGO

The Itineraries of Ibn Yaḥyā (1794–1849) and the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya

ISMAIL FAJRIE ALATAS

The nineteenth century has been regarded by some scholars as marking the end of the dominance of Sufism and Sufi orders in the propagation and expansion of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago.¹ The end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, however, should not be seen as a mere transitory phase that bridges the period of early Islamization and the era of modern Islamic reformism. To the contrary, this period witnessed consolidations of Islamic thought and practices in the various regions where Islam had been adopted.² Such processes were facilitated by the rise in the numbers of pilgrims to Mekka from the Indonesian archipelago, expanding networks of Islamic study centers and circulation of religious scholars as well as dynamic reconfigurations of Sufi “orders.”³

In this chapter, I examine the role of a Sufi tradition, the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya, in the transmission of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴ I do this by focusing on an itinerant Ḥadramī scholar, ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar ibn Yaḥyā (1209/1794–1265/1849), who visited the Malay-Indonesian archipelago in 1832 and stayed there until 1835. Although recent works dealing with state formation in Ḥadramawt have highlighted the crucial role played by Ibn Yaḥyā, not much is known about his sojourn in Java.⁵ One reason for this is the scarcity of sources. Neither his hagiography (*manāqib*) nor his biographies (*tarājim*) substantially discuss his visit to Java. To address this lacuna, I reconstruct Ibn Yaḥyā’s travel to Java by using available documentary evidence including his poems and epistles.

I will suggest that a reconstruction of Ibn Yaḥyā’s Javanese itinerary provides a contextualized glimpse into the development and expansion of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in the early nineteenth-century Malay-Indonesian world,

one that has implications for our broader understanding of religious “orders” in Southern Asia during the later colonial period. The consolidation of Dutch colonial authority and the defeat of the indigenous political and religious leadership following the Java War (1825–1830) provided Bā ‘Alawī scholars from Ḥadramawt the opportunity to broaden their involvement in the region. The travels of Ibn Yaḥyā illustrate the gradual movements of Bā ‘Alawī itineraries into more established stations during a period marked by major sociopolitical reconfigurations. The shifting Islamic landscape that resulted from these political dynamics opened up spaces through which itinerant Bā ‘Alawī scholars were able to transmit their understanding of Islamic tradition in new ways. The hallmark of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya during this period, as I will illustrate in this chapter, was a spirited sharī‘a-oriented Sufism with a strong commitment to the implementation of Islamic law, the spread of simplified theological and legal knowledge, and the creation of peace and security through what they understood as a strong and legitimate political order.

In this chapter, I adopt Nile Green’s definition of a *ṭarīqa* (Sufi “order”) as a formal and cultural mechanism of tradition. That is, a *ṭarīqa* is a conceptual and practical apparatus that reproduces standardized and consistent Sufi practice and doctrine through time and space.⁶ The notion of *ṭarīqa* enabled the Sufi-oriented Muslims to conceive their doctrine and practices as something inherited, “as a cross-generational system of inheritance” or lineage capable of distinguishing one tradition from another within an encompassing religious community.⁷ Positing *ṭarīqa* as a practical mechanism of tradition allows us to trace the changing forms and shapes of a *ṭarīqa* as it encounters novel contexts and challenges in shifting historical contexts. Although participants in *ṭarīqa* (Ar. pl. *ṭuruq*) stressed the reproduction of standardized doctrine and practices within their orders as something inherited through lineal transmission, in actuality, what was reproduced varied across historical circumstances. In the case of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in the early nineteenth-century Malay-Indonesian world, this order, or mechanism of tradition, involved three dimensions that I elaborate in this chapter: trade, royal power, and scholarly networks bounded by a shared textual canon. These three dimensions served to promote and reproduce a distinct and standardized sharī‘a-oriented Sufism as a nineteenth-century articulation of the Alawiyyā tradition, establishing a distinct identity that could be accentuated to different degrees across changing historical contexts.

Reconstructing the itinerary of Ibn Yaḥyā from Ḥadramawt in South Arabia to the Malay-Indonesian archipelago highlights the need to situate these separate regions as part of a historically cohesive space of diverse mobilities and intercultural transmissions and translations. Following Anne Blackburn and Michael Feener, I use the term “Southern Asia” to describe this “broad transregional geography that transcends the boundaries of modern academic area studies frameworks of ‘South Asia’ and ‘Southeast Asia.’”⁸ Whereas Feener and Blackburn define Southern Asia as a region “stretching from India, Sri Lanka,

and the Himalayas through mainland Southeast Asia and across the Indonesian archipelago,” in this chapter, I extend this useful geographic term to include South Arabia, where Ḥaḍramawt is located.⁹ Incorporating South Arabia as part of Southern Asia means situating the former as part of the historical circulation of people, ideas, objects, texts, and practices that made up the latter. As will be shown here, the development of a Sufi “order” like the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago cannot be separated from its contemporaneous development in Ḥaḍramawt and vice versa. This fact in turn reinforces the need to observe (1) the role of itinerant actors—like Ibn Yahyā—in forming religious networks that linked these otherwise distant regions and in performing the work of transmission, and (2) the apparatus of religious “orders”—like the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya—in maintaining coherence in what was transmitted across time and space by structuring them in the framework of a lineage.

NETWORKS AND ORDERS

Recent works on Sufism have moved away from the notion of “religious order” that was employed by earlier scholars who analyzed Sufi *ṭarīqa* in relation to perceived similarities between *ṭarīqa* and the Christian monastic institutions of the medieval period.¹⁰ Shahzad Bashir, for instance, opts for the term “network” rather than “order” for its relative neutrality. The notion of “order,” according to Bashir, “has led scholars to misapprehend the type of internal cohesion and discipline than can be attributed to the Sufi communities.”¹¹ Bashir’s use of “network” to supplant “order” is geared toward understanding Sufi *ṭarīqa* on their own terms as a form of sociality that is historically contingent.

Although the term “network” captures the complex, nebulous, and historically contingent horizontal relations among adherents of a particular *ṭarīqa*, it does not in my view capture the ways in which *ṭarīqa* have created their own modes of *vertical* interaction that have allowed them to produce a sense of coherence across time for their participants. And although Bashir’s argument for the importance of embodied beliefs and practices as mechanisms that unite people into a moral community devoted to charismatic exemplars is well taken, religious groups assume a more complex and institutionalized form, such as a Sufi *ṭarīqa*, for example, “when the group finds it needs to acquire a representation of itself that can incorporate the idea of its continuity beyond the immediate context of its members’ interrelating.”¹² Equally important is the fact that the informal connotation of the term “network” downplays the various techniques of boundary making that have historically been deployed by the adherents of a particular *ṭarīqa* to separate themselves from others. If we seek to comprehend the mechanisms of reproduction and authentication that have enabled each *ṭarīqa* to formulate a lineage that sustains a distinct identity vis-à-vis other *ṭarīqa*, we require an analytical framework that captures this temporal depth, which in my view is not adequately provided by the concept of “network.”

I suggest that the notion of “order” should be refined rather than completely abandoned as Bashir suggests. One reason for this is precisely because the term “order” is useful for comparative purposes. It allows constructive comparison across religious traditions that can shed light on the similarities and differences in the features of these traditions. Such features include their organizational infrastructure, conception of affinities, and mechanisms of reproduction, self-representation, authentication, and lineage making. To this end, the case of Ibn Yaḥyā is developed in this chapter to highlight the formal, material, and organizational infrastructure of the Alawiyyā *ṭarīqa* as a religious order. Moreover, I use the case of Ibn Yaḥyā to suggest important features that should be considered in refining and developing further the “religious order” as a comparative category. “Orders” are sustained by networks. Networks, however, are not stable over time, but are defined and organized through mechanisms that establish lineage and historical continuity, including the “chains of memory”—often in objectified forms like shrines or bodies of texts—that establish continuity within the order beyond the interpersonal encounters between its participants.¹³ The shape and character of an order’s networks at particular moments in time are related to formal, material, and organizational infrastructure within and beyond the order. Even within a single religious tradition, such as Islam, the institutional infrastructure shaping and shaped by orders will differ significantly across time and place. Analytically, the notion of “order” is able to capture the intricate constructions of temporal continuity and geographic connectivity that enabled each tradition to develop a distinct lineage and coherent identity. Employing this concept, in turn, allows us to compare similar mechanisms across different religious traditions. With this in mind, let us now turn to Ibn Yaḥyā.

IBN YAḤYĀ AND THE ṬARĪQA ‘ALAWIYYA IN ḤAḌRAMAWT

Ibn Yaḥyā was born in the town of Ghuraf āl-Shaykh—a settlement founded by his ancestor Shaykh b. Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā—on 20 Jumād I 1209 (December 13, 1794).¹⁴ He studied under his parents and two maternal uncles, Ṭāhir (d. 1229/1814) and ‘Abdallāh b. Ḥusayn ibn Ṭāhir (d. 1272/1855). It was ‘Abdallāh who first formally initiated him into the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya. Ibn Yaḥyā also studied under influential Bā ‘Alawī scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, including ‘Umar b. Saqqāf al-Saqqāf (d. 1216/1801) and his brother ‘Alawī (d. 1235/1819), al-Ḥasan b. Šāliḥ al-Baḥr al-Jufrī (d. 1273/1856), and Aḥmad b. ‘Umar ibn Sumayṭ (d. 1258/1842).¹⁵ His teachers from among the non-Bā ‘Alawī Ḥaḍramī scholars included ‘Abdallāh b. Aḥmad Bā Sawdān (d. 1266/1849) and ‘Abdallāh b. Sa‘ad ibn Sumayr (d. 1262/1846).¹⁶ Ibn Yaḥyā also studied with ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal (d. 1250/1834) in Zabīd, Yemen, and ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Karīm b. ‘Abd al-Rasūl al-Aṭṭār (d. 1249/1833) in Mekka.

Ibn Yaḥyā’s biographical account illustrates how the transmission of Islamic knowledge and practices in Ḥaḍramawt took place in informal study

circles that revolved around a particular teacher.¹⁷ There is no mention of Ibn Yaḥyā enrolling in a formal educational institution or in Sufi lodges (*zawāyā*; *arbiṭa*) despite their existence throughout South Yemen since the seventh/thirteenth century.¹⁸ In Ḥaḍramawt, however, the first formal educational institution was only founded as late as 1878.¹⁹ Ibn Yaḥyā’s initiation into the *ṭarīqa* was thus accomplished by studying with and being in the company of scholars who had been initiated into the *ṭarīqa* by their predecessors. The education also involved visiting the tombs and mosques of the Bā ‘Alawī predecessors, where Sufi audition and concert (*samā’*) were performed on a regular basis.²⁰ In the absence of formal educational institutions or Sufi lodges, such practices enabled scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā to conceive the standardized Islamic doctrines and practices he was immersed in as something coherent and inherited through lineal transmission, thereby providing them with temporal depth and distinct genealogical identity.

The hagiography describes how the young Ibn Yaḥyā traveled from one place to another to read texts under different scholars, all of whom had their own followings. From these scholars he acquired the proper authorizations (*ijāza*) and initiations into the *ṭarīqa* (*tahkīm*), providing him with tangible links to previous masters that also created social bonds with his fellow students. The Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in Ḥaḍramawt did not, however, develop the elaborate economic and institutional structures that characterized large organized Sufi orders found in some other areas of the Muslim world. According to Alexander Knysh, this may be attributable to a “lack of resources on the part of Yemeni ruling elites” that barred the rulers from endowing Sufi lodges and economic foundations for the growth of the *ṭarīqa*.²¹ In addition, intrinsic political instability and fragmentation due to the absence of a powerful centralized political order may have contributed to this reality.²² Under such conditions, formal elements like the bond of allegiance (*uqda*) between masters and disciples together with chains of initiations (*silsila*) functioned to generate a sense of both vertical and horizontal identity and solidarity among the initiates. Among the Bā ‘Alawīs, such formal elements intensified vertical and horizontal connections that were already present through kinship ties.

By studying with the leading scholars of his day, Ibn Yaḥyā concurrently formed his spiritual connection to the deceased scholars through grave visitations and was gradually able to emerge as an important node in the intellectual genealogy of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya himself. The scholar ‘Aydarūs b. ‘Umar al-Ḥabashī (d. 1314/1896)—author of the *‘Iqd al-yawāqūt* (A knot of rubies), a compilation of the initiatory chains of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya—listed Ibn Yaḥyā as one of the nineteen crucial nodes that linked Bā ‘Alawī scholars of the eighteenth century to those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Al-Ḥabashī described how he studied several texts under Ibn Yaḥyā’s guidance, including the legal primer *al-Minhaj* of the Syrian jurist al-Nawāwī (d. 676/1278) and the Bā ‘Alawī Sufi manual *Fath al-khallāq* of ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Abdallāh

Bilfaḳīh (d. 1162/1748). Ibn Yaḥyā initiated al-Ḥabashī into the *ṭarīqa* in 1845 and renewed the initiation in 1848 at the mausoleum of the eponymous ancestor of the Bā ‘Alawī. He also gave al-Ḥabashī the authorization to recite a collection of Bā ‘Alawī litanies and prayers (*adhkār wa awrād*) compiled by Ibn Yaḥyā’s teacher and uncle Ṭāhir.²³

Al-Ḥabashī’s account reveals the dynamics of educational practice and ritual socialization among the Bā ‘Alawī in early nineteenth-century Ḥadramawt. Learning consisted mainly of reading Islamic legal texts in conjunction with Bā ‘Alawī Sufi manuals under the direction of senior scholars, who in turn bestowed the *licentia docendi* (*ijāza*) to the students. In some cases, it also involved initiation into the *ṭarīqa*, usually formalized by the bestowal of a cloak of investiture (*khirqā*).²⁴ Equally important were visits to the graves of those perceived to be the luminaries of the *ṭarīqa*. The *ṭarīqa* also stressed the recitations of litanies and prayers, usually compiled and organized by the Bā ‘Alawī predecessors to facilitate guided ritual recitations. Together with other formal elements, these litanies served as proprietary practices that differentiated the adherents of the *ṭarīqa* from other Muslims. The *ṭarīqa* therefore provided an institutional rubric binding a historical community—consisting of both the dead and the living—through a sense of shared canonical texts, practices, rituals, sacred spaces, and litanies. These elements were reproduced through a chain of master-disciple relationships, thereby forming a perceivable lineage and historical continuity with clear boundaries.

Most of Ibn Yaḥyā’s teachers were working under the reformed paradigm of the *ṭarīqa* set by the influential eighteenth-century scholar ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād (d. 1132/1720). Motivated by a drive to reform society, al-Ḥaddād reshaped the teachings of the *ṭarīqa* from their earlier emphasis on individual devotional efforts into a set of moral and ethical guidelines for both the elites and the masses.²⁵ Following al-Ḥaddād, the *ṭarīqa* in the early nineteenth century was marked by a combination of the commitment to the sacred law and its implementation, the spread of simplified legal and theological knowledge, and the creation of peace and security through a strong and legitimate political order. Such a vision was by no means unique to the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya. In fact, since at least the sixteenth century, different Sufi orders placed a great emphasis on the law-abiding moral rectitude of the Sufis as a social role model for Muslims in general, an emphasis that made Sufism attractive to state administrators. Sufism as it developed in different parts of the Muslim world at that time had grown into “a powerful idiom of collective organization and communal solidarity,” which went hand in hand with the systematic attempts of several Islamic polities to demote “the nomadic, charismatic, and ‘anarchistic’ Sufism associated with rural tribal groups.”²⁶ The reformed paradigm of al-Ḥaddād should therefore be situated in relation to these broader developments.

Ibn Yaḥyā himself was known for his mastery of Islamic law, especially the Shāfi‘ī legal school.²⁷ Appointed as the mufti of Ḥadramawt at a relatively young

age, Ibn Yahyā emphasized the learning and teachings of Islamic law as the most crucial step to the attainment of a higher spiritual state.²⁸ Rather than seeing the law and Sufism as two different entities, he posited Sufism as an intensification of the law ultimately geared toward emulation of the Prophet, a position that had a long precedent in the history of Sufism. In Ibn Yahyā's view, spiritual wayfaring is a process of emulating the Prophet and, as such, knowing the correct forms of practices pursued along this path constitutes the first crucial step.

In Ḥaḍramawt the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyyā developed as sporadic kinship and scholarly networks. Rather than seeing it as an exclusive Sufi fraternity that emerged from a particular lodge, it is more accurate to comprehend the *ṭarīqa* as a mechanism of tradition sustained by a dispersed network of master-disciple relationships devoted to the promotion of a sharī'a-oriented Sufism. This mechanism of tradition involved rituals, sacred spaces, and liturgies to develop concrete bonds of vertical and horizontal connectivity. It also comprised formal apparatuses including *'uqda* (pledge of allegiance between a disciple and his or her Sufi master), *khirqā* (ritual robe of investiture, usually of distinctive design or color), and *silsila* (chain of spiritual genealogy of master-disciple links), all of which functioned to constitute its discursive boundaries and define its historical and lineal identity. The shape and character of a particular *ṭarīqa*, however, was also intricately linked to the formal, material, and organizational infrastructure available to it at a particular time or in a particular region. In what follows, I will turn to Ibn Yahyā's travel to the Indonesian archipelago to examine the development of the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyyā in that region.

ISLAM, TRADE, AND POLITICS IN THE INDONESIAN ARCHIPELAGO

Beginning as early as the seventeenth century, the Bā 'Alawīs began to emigrate in increasing numbers to different places in Southern Asia, including India, Malaya, and the Indonesian archipelago.²⁹ Internal strife and limited opportunities in Ḥaḍramawt together with the ample economic opportunities abroad drove many Bā 'Alawī to leave their homeland. Thriving port cities including Malacca, Aceh, and several Javanese port cities became the preferred destinations for many. These cities became the bases from which the migrants traveled both inland and to other islands, where they established trading ventures. Before the consolidation of British and Dutch colonization, the Bā 'Alawīs had already established themselves in prominent positions in the regions, with some even assuming the position of sultans.³⁰

Advances in maritime transportation in the early nineteenth century resulted in the increasing presence of Ḥaḍramī Arabs in the region.³¹ The sphere of Ḥaḍramī mercantile activities was for the most part centered on the sea and the littorals. Shipping was their dominant economic activity until the middle of the nineteenth century. Beginning in the mid-1750s, Ḥaḍramīs specialized in

sailing from Java to Palembang and Malacca, with an average ship size of over fifty tons. William G. Clarence-Smith has noted that “from 22% of the registered tonnage of square-rigged ships in 1820, Arabs went to just over 50% in 1850, compared to 29% for the Chinese, 9% for the Dutch, 9% for the British, and 3% for ‘natives.’”³² This expanding world of Ḥadramī merchants provided the foundation for the expansion of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya, as will be shown in the next section.

When Ibn Yaḥyā arrived in Java in 1833, the island had just recovered from an extended war between the composite forces that made up the supporters of Prince Dipanegara and the Dutch colonial regime.³³ The Java War had begun in 1825 and ended in 1830 with the victory of the colonial forces. The conclusion of the war left the colonial regime with no serious competitor to its increasing power, allowing it to refocus on profit acquisition. The new governor general, Johannes van den Bosch (d. 1844), enacted an agricultural reform plan to facilitate the extraction of agricultural products from Java in quantities and at prices that would make the Netherlands Europe’s biggest supplier of tropical products, especially coffee.³⁴ The cultivation system helped the Dutch to rebuild Holland’s economy following the ravages of the Napoleonic war and the Belgian secessionists. In Java, it led to a neofeudalization, converting and buttressing a *priyayi* class of Javanese elites to colonial intermediaries.³⁵

The monetization of the agricultural economy resulted in flourishing trade, which then led to an increase in the number of Javanese pilgrims to Mekka.³⁶ By the 1850s and 1860s, an average of approximately 1,600 pilgrims set out from the Netherlands Indies annually, despite the colonial authority’s attempt to discourage them from going.³⁷ In Mekka, they were exposed to diverse visions of Islamic reform and the revival movements of the early nineteenth century. On their return to Java, many of these pilgrims challenged the social positions of established rural teachers and attempted to carve a niche for themselves and their enthusiastic transmission of what they had learned in Mekka to their fellow Javanese Muslims. Nineteenth-century Java was a conflictual and competitive “religious marketplace” where competing visions of Islam vied against each other while state patronage and resources were rapidly diminishing.³⁸

One Islamic vision gaining ground during the period was *sharī‘a*-oriented Sufism. By the early 1800s, the works of Egyptian Sufi-oriented scholars, emphasizing the dissemination of simplified texts on legal and ethical guidance, had begun to replace the earlier Medinese tradition of Sufism with its emphasis on Sufi philosophical teachings.³⁹ This new trend worked to restrict the dissemination of the more speculative Sufi treatises to a small religious elite, while laying the foundation for what later became the standard Islamic curriculum in Java and across other areas of the Indonesian archipelago. This curriculum situates a thorough immersion in relatively simplified legal and theological tradition under the guidance of a competent teacher as a prerequisite to mystical

training. The gradual process of curricular standardization in turn demanded a cohort of trained scholar-instructors.

The dissemination of this sharī'a-oriented Sufism was facilitated by the emergence of new Islamic educational institutions, the *pesantren* (rural Islamic religious schools), across Java. The aftermath of the Java War witnessed the movement of Muslim scholars—many of whom were involved with the insurrection—away from the royal court into the countryside and the littoral, resulting in the rapid increase of new *pesantren*.⁴⁰ According to the colonial survey of education in Dutch Java, Cirebon, Semarang, and Surabaya had the largest number of *pesantren*. In 1831, Cirebon had 190 with a total of nearly 2,800 pupils; Semarang had 180 with a total of almost 3,000; and Surabaya, a total of 2,600 pupils.⁴¹ The Great Post Road, linking the western to the eastern tip of Java, was completed in 1808, facilitating greater communication between *pesantren* and allowing students to move more easily from one institution to another.⁴² These *pesantren* served as the nodes of intellectual exchanges through which a new Islamic curriculum—based on sharī'a-oriented Sufism—was developed.

Central to this emerging Islamic vision was an insistence on the performance of the five daily prayers along with heightened observation of other “pillars of Islam.” These practices, according to Ricklefs, became key elements during this period differentiating the reformed Muslims from the adherents of the prior and long-established Islamic tradition in Java. Ricklefs argues that among the adherents of the old religious tradition—what he describes as “the mystic synthesis”—“those who practiced the ‘perpetual *salat* [prayer]’ did not see a need to perform ‘the (ordinary) *salat*’ with ablutions.”⁴³ Ibn Yaḥyā should be placed within the development of this diverging vision of a reformed Islam that historians like Ricklefs and Laffan have detailed. As noted above, Bā ‘Alawī Sufi scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, including Ibn Yaḥyā himself, were influenced by the wider turn of Sufi thought in the Middle East toward legal-oriented Sufism.

The itineraries of wandering Ḥaḍramī scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā should therefore be situated alongside the expansion of trade networks and other Sufi traditions that paved the way for the emergence of a new vision of sharī'a-oriented Islam. At the same time, such a dynamic landscape was often marked by conflicts, contestations, and competitions among different scholars representing different Sufi traditions. As such, a distinct religious order like the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya should not be examined in isolation from other intellectual developments in overlapping networks within the encompassing religious community of Javanese Islam. With this shifting historical context in mind, I will now turn to the three dimensions of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in the early nineteenth-century Indonesian archipelago that I have identified through my reconstruction of Ibn Yaḥyā’s journey, namely, trade, royal power, and scholarly networks bound by a shared canon of texts. I will illustrate how these three dimensions served to create and reproduce a distinctly Bā ‘Alawī vision of a standardized sharī'a-oriented Sufism.

TRADE

When Ibn Yaḥyā traveled to Singapore in 1832, he was entering the expanding and prosperous world of the Ḥadramī diaspora. Since its establishment in 1819, Singapore had attracted merchants from various ethnic communities, including Ḥadramīs from all over Malaya and the Indonesian archipelago. Among them was the wealthy Bā ‘Alawī merchant ‘Umar b. ‘Alī al-Junayd (d. 1269/1852), with whom Ibn Yaḥyā stayed during his sojourn in the port city. Al-Junayd had come to Singapore from Palembang shortly after Raffles established Singapore. He brought his accrued wealth from Sumatra and invested in Singapore, buying lands and developing properties that led to the substantial expansion of his family’s fortune. He built what today is known as the first mosque in downtown Singapore in 1820. He was also in the habit of sending money for the maintenance and renovation of the tombs and mosques of the Bā ‘Alawī ancestors.⁴⁴ Al-Junayd’s wealth together with his philanthropic passion and enthusiasm for the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya attracted several members of the Ḥadramī scholarly elites to Singapore. It is no surprise that al-Junayd became Ibn Yaḥyā’s destination in Singapore.

Among the Ḥadramī scholarly elites in Singapore who revolved around al-Junayd was the jurist Sālim b. ‘Abdallāh ibn Sumayr (d. 1853). Ibn Sumayr had migrated to Singapore several years before Ibn Yaḥyā and had begun teaching there, presumably with the financial support of al-Junayd. His study circle attracted advanced students from Singapore and Java.⁴⁵ Ibn Sumayr was a close friend of Ibn Yaḥyā; the former’s father was one of the latter’s teachers. Ibn Sumayr had traveled to the Hijāz and India before settling down in Batavia and Singapore. He was the author of a legal abridgment (*mukhtaṣar*), the *Safīnāt al-najāh* (Ark of salvation), which became popular in Southeast Asia as a basic primer for the study of Islamic law. This short text continues to be studied in Islamic boarding schools across Java today.⁴⁶ Ibn Sumayr was also known for his active condemnation of Sufi teachers who initiated “ignorant masses” into their *ṭarīqa* without basic knowledge of Islamic law. While such a position exemplified the reformed paradigm of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya, it also provided incoming Ḥadramī scholars with the necessary discursive arsenal to criticize other Sufi orders active in the religious marketplace of the early nineteenth-century Malay-Indonesian archipelago. At the same time, it allowed scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā and Ibn Sumayr to introduce their *ṭarīqa* as being strictly based on Prophetic teachings. Accessible Ḥadramī legal primers, like that of Ibn Sumayr, gradually became popular all over Malaya and the Indonesian archipelago and more so as Singapore became a major center of Islamic publication in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴⁷ These texts constituted one way through which the Bā ‘Alawī vision of sharī‘a-oriented Sufism spread in the region.

Apart from establishing connection with the wealthy Ḥaḍramī community of Singapore, Ibn Yaḥyā also visited the Ḥaḍramī merchant elites of Java.⁴⁸ Among the poems he wrote during his sojourn in Java were four poems naming and dating the construction of new boats owned by Ḥaḍramī merchants in Surabaya.⁴⁹ Interestingly, Ibn Yaḥyā named these vessels after Bā ‘Alawī saints. In one poem, he named a vessel *al-Saqqāf*, adding that “the named will be under the protection of the name,” referring to the Bā ‘Alawī saint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf (d. 819/1416), who instituted many of the ritual practices of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya.⁵⁰ Ibn Yaḥyā also used these poems to counsel the owners of the vessels in basic Islamic teachings, especially on spending their accrued wealth in accordance with the teachings of the *ṭarīqa*. Designating trading vessels with the names of Bā ‘Alawī saints established historical connections between the boats, their owners, the wealth that these boats generated, and the saints’ tombs in Ḥaḍramawt. Like the tombs, the boats constituted “chains of memory” that produced a sense of historical continuity. This historical connection in turn provided the trajectory through which profits generated by the boats could be channeled into the maintenance of the *ṭarīqa*’s infrastructure, such as the conservation of al-Saqqāf’s tomb in Ḥaḍramawt. It allowed the reproduction of the Bā ‘Alawī saints’ memory among the merchant elites, establishing semiotic ties that diachronically connected them to the saints. Such a practice also reproduced horizontal connectivity in the form of network and social bonds among these merchants and other adherents of the *ṭarīqa*, including scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā and their brethren in Ḥaḍramawt. Just as an initiation ceremony *formally* inducts a living body into a religious order and adopts him or her into its lineage, such symbolic gestures *formally* imbued these vessels with clear pedigrees, thereby repositioning them as the material apparatus of the *ṭarīqa*. Such activities exemplify the process identified earlier in this chapter in which the shape of a religious order, in this case the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya, at particular moments owes much to the available material and organizational infrastructure in which it functions, which, in turn, allows for different practices of lineage making.

The expanding and prosperous world of the Ḥaḍramī economic diaspora, therefore, constituted one dimension of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in this period. It acted as an important mechanism of tradition that allowed the reproduction of a standardized Bā ‘Alawī Sufi practice and doctrine with a distinct historical identity and lineage. The Ḥaḍramī merchants assumed the role of patrons for traveling Bā ‘Alawī scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā and Ibn Sumayr, who then articulated the sharī‘a-oriented doctrines and practices of Bā ‘Alawī Sufism. Financially supported by the Ḥaḍramī merchant elites, these scholars were able to provide spiritual guidance, instructing these merchant families and other Muslims in the basic teachings of the *ṭarīqa*. Although today legal abridgments like *The Ark of Salvation* are used in Islamic boarding schools throughout the Indonesian archipelago, it may also be the case that they were initially composed to provide

accessible teachings of the *ṭarīqa* to these merchant elites and their families. Proper education for the children of these merchant elites seems to have been a central preoccupation of Ibn Yaḥyā. In a poem written during his stay in Singapore, Ibn Yaḥyā implores al-Junayd to send his children to Ḥadramawt for proper education that they might become acquainted with the *ṭarīqa* of their ancestors.⁵¹ Without proper education and ritual socialization, it was feared that the children of these wealthy Ḥadramī merchants would lose their attachment to the *ṭarīqa*.

At the same time, interactions between traveling scholars and the Ḥadramī merchant elites reshaped the *ṭarīqa*. Such networks allowed the construction of new material infrastructures, like merchant boats, that were mechanisms for the identification and unification of the order. Whereas some Sufi orders during this era were characterized by landholdings, lodges, and caravanserais, Bā ‘Alawī sharī‘a-oriented Sufism depended on a different kind of infrastructure, the multilocal and prosperous world of the Ḥadramī economic diaspora and its merchant patrons. For merchant elites and their families, the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya and connections to its scholarly elites offered a sense of prestigious history, inherited tradition, social bonds, and translocal geographic connectivity. These provided a distinct lineage and coherent identity, thereby differentiating them from other merchant communities, Muslim and non-Muslim.

ROYAL POWER

As previously noted, the aftermath of the Java War witnessed the movement of Muslim scholars away from the royal courts and into rural Islamic religious schools (*Jv. pesantren*). This shift provided an opportunity for Ḥadramī scholars to take over prominent religious positions, which would enable them to extend their influence through attaining prominent positions within the reconfiguration of courts of Southeast Asian sultanates in the colonial period. There is a long historical precedent attesting to the relationship between Sufi *ṭarīqa* and ruling structures. Sufi *ṭarīqa* have historically been able to develop their institutional structure through royal patronage. Rulers have traditionally sought legitimacy through the patronage of influential Sufi scholarly families who held sway among the populace. These rulers acted as grantors of pious endowments (*waqf*) supporting the infrastructural development of *ṭarīqa*. They also accorded Sufi scholars prominent posts in the bureaucratic administration. These scholars in turn connected sultans to wider Islamic intellectual currents and enhanced their positions as legitimate leaders of their communities.⁵²

Such dynamics are clearly articulated in the letters that Ibn Yaḥyā wrote to local rulers in the Indonesian archipelago. The compilation of Ibn Yaḥyā’s correspondence includes three extant letters addressed to different rulers. The first was addressed to the Bā ‘Alawī sultan Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qadrī of Pontianak, Borneo. The second letter was addressed to the Pakunataningrat,

the hereditary ruler of Sumenep on the island of Madura, off the northeast coast of Java. A third was addressed to Sultan ‘Abd al-Qādir b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Tjakraadiningrat II (d. 1847) of Bangkalan, also on Madura.⁵³ As the form and content of the three letters are similar, in what follows I will limit myself to a close reading of the letter written to the ruler of Bangkalan.⁵⁴

Written in Surabaya in 1833, the text is framed as a letter of scholarly advice and counsel (*munāṣaḥā wa tawāṣī*) to a ruler in an epistolary genre that goes back to the classical period of Islam.⁵⁵ In the letter, Ibn Yaḥyā explained his motivation for writing to the sultan in such terms:

And the thought surfaced to address this writing [*al-kitāb*] to your high stature [*alī al-janāb*] to fulfill the task ordered by the Lord of the lords [*rabb al-arbāb*] on those who were given knowledge and the Book [*al-kitāb*] to instruct it to the people and explain it to them [*bayyanūh*] without circumventing or concealing it from them [*yuktamūh*] and to strive to counsel the brethren [*al-ikhwān*] from all the people of the faith [*al-īmān*] especially those with power [*dhā sultān*] as stated by the most distinguished creation of the Most-Merciful [*al-raḥmān*]. Religion is counsel [*al-naṣīḥa*] for the sake of God, His messenger, His books, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.

In that *ḥadīth*, the Prophet specifically refers to the leaders and judges, because when they are counseled, it becomes possible to reform the conditions of both the elites and the masses, thereby perfecting the [social] structure. If one turns away from advising them, then the worst condition will befall the state and its people. So know, may God strengthen and guide you, that our master the Prophet—peace be upon him—initially invited everyone to embrace Islam. He then instructed them to perform prayers and made it incumbent upon them. *But if they repent and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them* [Q. 9:5].⁵⁶

Consequently, Ibn Yaḥyā continues, it is incumbent upon any ruler to instruct and even to compel his subjects and those under his authority to perform prayers. Failure to do so would result in the calamities experienced by people of the past:

So it is incumbent upon every ruler to instruct his Muslim subjects who live in his dominion to perform prayers. And to force them if they decline to do so even if they have to be killed, in accordance to what has been explained by the scholars in following the footsteps of the Prophet, and to maintain what has been instructed by his Lord. And verily God commanded us to follow the Prophet and to hold fast to his laws. *Follow what has been sent down unto you by your Sustainer, and follow no masters other than Him.*

How seldom do you keep this in mind! And how many a community have We destroyed, with Our punishment coming upon it by night or while they were resting at noontide! [Q. 7:3–4].⁵⁷

Ibn Yaḥyā further advised the sultan to honor and implement the sacred law, especially the obligation to perform collective prayers five times a day and to have the call to prayer (*adhān*) be clearly heard in the streets and the markets:

What we requested from your lordship—may God advance his condition and aid his religion by strengthening its pillars—is for you to strive truly with utmost perfection in resuscitating Islam’s greatest symbol. And that symbol is the injunction and commandment for both the elites and the masses of his dominion and all of his subjects to perform the five obligatory prayers in the beginning of their times. And that you make the call to prayer manifest and organize communal prayers in every village. Verily, prayer is the pillar of religion. It is a mark that differentiates the Muslims from the infidels. It *restrains from shameful and unjust deeds* [Q. 29:45], elevates the ruler, and affords him victory over his foes. *Allah will certainly aid those who aid his [cause]; for verily Allah is full of Strength, Exalted in Might; those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity enjoin the right and forbid wrong* [Q. 22:40–41].⁵⁸

He ended the letter with a warning:

So hasten to this honor [*makārim*] and execute it with strong determination and resolution [*‘azā’im*]. Attain aspiration [*al-munā*], esteem, and splendor [*sanā*] in the hereafter and here [*hunā*]. Thank God for what He has bestowed upon you in the form of kingdom and delight [*ni‘ma*] by upholding what is incumbent upon you in terms of service [*khidma*]. For what is truthfully required from the ruler is the improvement of religion and teaching the ignorant [*juhhāl*] while instructing them to perform righteous deeds [*‘māl*]. Verily, if he thanks God by commanding his subjects to pray [*ṣalāt*] and [to observe] all that has been ordained by his Lord [*mawla*], God’s bounty will abide with him [*ni‘ma*] and repel his enemies and those who are envious of him [*‘dāh*]. But if he becomes lenient in these biddings [*‘māl*] and leans toward the path of ignorant kings [*al-mulūk al-juhhāl*], then he jeopardizes the delights to wither [*li’l-zawāl*] *if you are grateful, I shall give you more; but if you are ungrateful, verily, my chastisement will be severe indeed* [Q.14:7]. So hurry, hurry [*fā al-badār al-badār*] to that which will provide us with pride [*al-fakhhār*] and complete esteem and zenith [*al-manār*] in this abode and in the final abode [*dār al-qarār*].⁵⁹

Like the other two letters to local rulers, this letter to Sultan ‘Abd al-Qādir of Bangkalan exemplifies an explicit moral discourse communicated eloquently. The potential sting of the advice is removed by the deployment of poetic language ornamented with Qur’ānic verses and rhymed prose. The formal composition of the letter itself is a moral performative, demonstrating the proper way of addressing a ruler. Hence, the letter frames the interaction as that between an Islamic scholar and a powerful ruler, both having moral obligations and responsibilities. Such a framing was especially important when the actual power of local kingdoms was rapidly diminishing in the face of the Dutch colonial expansion. The performative dimension of the letter thus functioned to safeguard the dignity of the increasingly weakened monarchs by fostering particular types of ethical interactions.

Ibn Yaḥyā’s correspondence to local rulers can thus be read as attempts to persuade these power holders to implement and realize the Bā ‘Alawī sharī’a-oriented vision of Islam more forcefully in their dominions. Note, however, that Ibn Yaḥyā did not invite the rulers to pledge their allegiance to the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawīyya. Rather, he was more interested in communicating the practical teachings of the *ṭarīqa* than in dwelling on its institutional structures and composition. His correspondence thus illustrates the crucial point that the dissemination of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawīyya in the early nineteenth century took on the form of the expansion—ideally with the assistance of royal power—of the sharī’a-based vision of Islam, which is not necessarily based on formal affiliation to an order. In this fact, we can glimpse an important dimension of the history of Islam in the region that would be difficult to appreciate if one viewed the *ṭarīqa* as an “order” only in the sense of an institutional structure.

Ibn Yaḥyā’s engagement with local rulers was thus part of an ongoing effort by the Bā ‘Alawī sayyids to gain influence and position in the region. Indeed there seems to be an increase in their penetration of royal courts in the archipelago from the late eighteenth century onwards. One famous example was Ibn Yaḥyā’s contemporary, the Bā ‘Alawī scholar Shaykh Aḥmad Bā Faqīḥ (d. 1289/1872). Born in the port of al-Shiḥr on the coast of Ḥaḍramawt, Bā Faqīḥ traveled to Surabaya before moving to the Maluku Islands to set up trade. He later became acquainted with the ruler of Sumenep, Madura—the Pakunataningrat—who invited Bā Faqīḥ to become the personal religious tutor to his family. Bā Faqīḥ spent twenty-five years in Sumenep, where he commanded considerable influence in the royal court.⁶⁰

Attachment to the royal courts and the ability to influence society that came with it allowed Bā ‘Alawī scholars to disseminate their teachings more forcefully. Although there was certainly a degree of status and financial stability to be gained from being connected to royal courts—even at a time of diminishing royal power—Ibn Yaḥyā’s attempt to influence local rulers should also be situated in a longer trajectory of Bā ‘Alawī commitment to the implementation of the sacred law, the spread of simplified legal and theological knowledge, and the

promotion of a strong and legitimate political order. Such engagements placed local ruling structures in the service of the Bā ‘Alawī Sufi order. Royal power functions as a significant mechanism for the reproduction and implementation of particular forms of Islamic doctrine and practices. This second dimension of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawīyya in the early nineteenth-century Malay-Indonesian archipelago is thus marked by engagement with, rather than disassociation from, royal power. As Sufi orders like the Shaṭṭāriyya, the Sammaniyya, and the Khalwatiyya were moving away—albeit without fully detaching themselves—from the royal courts and were developing in various sites of learning closer to the general population from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, Bā ‘Alawī scholars continued to make inroads into the circles of the local ruling elites.⁶¹ The sharī‘a-oriented Sufism envisioned by Bā ‘Alawī scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā offered ideological means of reinforcing royal authority. Aside from providing rulers with powerful idioms of collective organization and ruling ideology, as members of wider Islamic scholarly networks, traveling Bā ‘Alawī scholars were, to a certain extent, able to validate their aspiration and claim to the mantle of “defenders of Islam.”

SCHOLARLY NETWORKS

The last dimension of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawīyya in this period was the establishment of Islamic scholarly networks connected by a shared canon of texts. The dissemination of sharī‘a-oriented Sufism in the Indonesian archipelago was facilitated by the proliferation of *pesantren* across the region in the nineteenth century. At the same time, new infrastructure, including the Great Post Road, allowed the intensification of communication between Muslim scholars living in different places. Ibn Yaḥyā attempted to tap into these networks and use them to transmit the Bā ‘Alawī vision of a sharī‘a-oriented Sufism to the broader public.

Such an endeavor can be observed through the *tadhkira* (reminder), he wrote at the request of a number of Javanese scholars who studied with him in Surabaya.⁶² This short text illustrates Ibn Yaḥyā’s engagement with local scholars and his attempt to redefine the canon of Islamic texts while establishing an intellectual genealogy between local scholars and the Bā ‘Alawī scholars of Ḥadramawt. In short, it shows Ibn Yaḥyā’s attempt to create another apparatus that could serve as a mechanism for the consolidation of the ‘Alawī order in the early nineteenth century. As this is an important document, I translate it in its entirety:

In the name of God most Gracious, most Merciful

O ye who believe! Fear Allāh and be with those who are true [Q. 9:119].

All praise be to Allāh who has made piety [*taqwā*] as a cause for goodness in this world and the next. God’s salutation be upon our master Muḥammad, His prophet and His chosen one [*muṣṭafāhu*], and his elevated

family and companions. This is a reminder from him who is in need of God's mercy, 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar, to our brethren, the pilgrims [*al-hujjāj*] residing in Surabaya. [They have] requested [from] me this [reminder]. I have seen their commitment to goodness, their acceptance of the truth, and their assistance in reviving the symbols [*sha'ā'ir*] of the religion. May God further them and us in this, and lead them and us to the best path. Know, O brothers, that this religion is built on five things:

First, beneficial knowledge, that which introduces you to your Lord and His commandments and prohibitions; and [teaches] abstention from the world, desire for the hereafter, and humility; and discourages you from great sins, jealousy, envy, the desire for respect in the hearts of men, and being removed from the truth. Any knowledge that results in these [spiritual/psychological] states is beneficial knowledge to our condition and possessions. Any knowledge that does not result in what we have described is harmful knowledge. It will not result in anything in the two abodes except disgrace and decay. This [beneficial] knowledge is divided into two: exoteric and esoteric. As for the exoteric: [it is] the knowledge of the law [*fiqh*]. And among its sources are beneficial books for every seeker: *Mukhtaṣar bā faḍl* and *'Umdat al-sālik*, *Mukhtaṣar al-anwār*, and the *Minhāj* of Imām al-Nawawī. As for the esoteric: the *Bidāya al-hidāya* of al-Ghazālī, the *Naṣā'ih al-dīniyya* of al-Ḥabīb 'Abdallāh b. 'Alawī al-Ḥaddād, also *Risāla al-mu'āwana* and *Risāla al-mudhākara* by the same author, and the *Minhāj al-'ābidin* of al-Ghazālī.

Second, teaching this knowledge to those who are ignorant, especially his [al-Ghazālī's] selected writings on creeds [*al-'aqā'id*], the creeds of al-Ghazālī [*'aqīda al-ghazālī*], and other abridged treatises on theology such as the *matn Jawharat al-tawḥīd* and *Ta'līm al-'ishrīn al-ṣifa*, without learning the [*'Umm*] *al-barāhīn*. As for the last book, it is forbidden to learn it, except for those who have mastered several sciences and have the intelligence and acumen as cautioned by the imams, such as al-Ghazālī and Shaykh Ibn Ḥajar. They asserted the interdiction of teaching the book to the ordinary people. And the people of this age are ordinary [*'awām*]. We have mentioned earlier the selections of books in the legal sciences and Sufism. However, the novice should start by learning short and gentle abridged manuals. Of particular importance is the *Sullam al-tawfīq* of our master and shaykh my maternal uncle 'Abdallāh b. Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir Bā 'Alawī. Our lover [*muḥibbunā*] Ḥajji Muḥammad Ḥāshim has received the text and we have read it in the Ampel mosque in the presence of our lover Ḥajji Muḥammad Arshad for the most part.⁶³ Beware, and beware of occupying oneself with learning any knowledge before learning these short manuals, as these texts have collected a lot of important things that have to be put before the others.

Third, being truthful to God with sincerity in knowledge and work. Truthful to God's creations in advising, teaching, and instructing them in the good, while prohibiting them from any evil, first with gentleness and soft speech, then with warnings and reminders, and finally with pressure and anger freed from whims and debased passions.

Fourth, leaving any pretension of being a man of knowledge and positioning oneself as a teacher to the ignorant while having no ability on such matters. As it will only bring calamities to the person and his followers. The Prophet, may peace and blessing be upon him and his family, said:

God does not snatch away knowledge from the chests of His servants, but He takes away knowledge by the death of scholars, until, when there are no more scholars remaining, the people take ignorant leaders [as scholars]. And these leaders will be asked [by the people], and they will respond without any knowledge, and they will be misguided and misguide others.

This is narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim. There seem to multiply in this land those whom the master of all masters [*sayyid al-sādāt*] had warned. Many occupy themselves with teaching and giving legal opinion [*fatwā*] without the necessary knowledge and mastery, resulting in destruction and catastrophe. Many people are led astray because of them, and the sins that result from such confusions remain continuously and accrue upon them even after their death. And among the disasters of those phony men is their preoccupation with learning great tomes that no one has the ability to master except the '*ulamā*' and the erudite sages [*jahābadha al-mubarrizīn*], and as a result they make mistakes in comprehending their intended meanings. This has led to the obfuscation of [legal] boundaries. Thus, what is suitable for them is to occupy themselves with simple texts [*al-mukhtaṣarāt*] so that they can gain some knowledge that will lead them to its conclusions. As such, they will learn what is obligatory for them. And among the calamities is their preoccupation with uncommon problems without any finality. There is no benefit in learning about every situation. They hope that, in discussing such matters in their gatherings, they will be seen as illustrious '*ulamā*'. They do not know that the Prophet—may God and peace and blessings be upon him—prohibited [them] from *al-aghluṭāt* [irresolvable questions of doctrine]. So beware, and beware [occupying oneself with] such matters, as it constitutes something without benefits [*al-fuḍūl*], which only results in anger and discord. It is an approach by which Satan led people to pride and arrogance.

Fifth, inviting [people] to the collective performance of the five obligatory prayers, calling [people] to it in the markets and streets, and

reverberating the *adhān* [call to prayer]. Such acts are among the symbols [*shā'ā'ir*] of Islam and *imān* [faith]. Commit to it with perseverance, and invite every Muslim to it. When they gather, teach them interactively, and summarize for them the commandments of the religion. This is because the ordinary people do not benefit from the reading of books. They do not fully understand the arguments and explanations [of these books]. And those who are teaching them [the masses] should approach them in their gatherings, their congregations, their fathers, and their mothers. By doing so, they will revive Islam, and they will gain God's mercy. I ask the almighty God to secure you and us in all goodness, and to protect us from all evils. May God's salutation and blessing be upon our master Muḥammad, his family, and his companions. And all praise belongs to God the lord of the two universes.

The *tadhkira* illustrates another apparatus of the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya in this period, that is, scholarly networks consisting of both Ḥaḍramī and local scholars bound by a particular textual canon that incorporated the works of the Bā 'Alawī luminaries. Several important points can be adduced from this document. First, the document clearly shows that Ibn Yaḥyā was involved in the establishment of intellectual networks tying Bā 'Alawī scholars in Ḥaḍramawt with scholars and students in various parts of the Indonesian archipelago, facilitated also by the Ḥaḍramī merchant network discussed above. The document illustrates how he himself had taught the *Sullam al-tawfīq*—a Sufi-oriented legal abridgment authored by his maternal uncle and teacher 'Abdallāh b. Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir—to his local students. It is likely that Ibn Yaḥyā was the first person to bring this now popular text to Southeast Asia.⁶⁴ Other texts that he recommended for the Muslims of Java consisted mostly of short legal and Sufi texts written by Ḥaḍramī scholars including Bā Faḍl and al-Ḥaddād. He also criticized the established practice of teaching intricate theological texts like the *'Umm al-barāhīn* of al-Sanūsī (d. 895/1490). Ibn Yaḥyā was therefore involved centrally in the broader transformation of the Islamic curriculum in Java discussed above. In the period when the teachings of the Egyptian Sufi-oriented scholars were gaining ground in the Indonesian archipelago, Ibn Yaḥyā introduced and disseminated teachings with similar outlooks produced by scholars affiliated with the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya. By transmitting the works of the Ḥaḍramī scholars affiliated with the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya, Ibn Yaḥyā was not only disseminating the teachings of the *ṭarīqa*; he was also forming intellectual ties between the Javanese and the Bā 'Alawī Sufi scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, thereby establishing a particular lineage that served to define and structure these networks.

Second, while Ibn Yaḥyā was actively propagating the teachings of the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya, he apparently did not take oaths of allegiance (*'uqda*) from the people. Although such formal elements have historically functioned to generate a sense of both vertical and horizontal identity and solidarity within a

ṭarīqa, they were not the only mechanism of lineage formation that reproduces a *ṭarīqa*. It appears that Ibn Yaḥyā's approach to the consolidation of the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya focused on the redefinition of the textual canon used by the order's adherents rather than other mechanisms of social incorporation. In this way, curriculum reproduced a particular and recognizable configuration of Sufi doctrine and practice, one with a perceivable pedigree. It also worked as a boundary marker, defining a textual canon for students of Islamic knowledge to the exclusion of other texts. Such a canon together with establishment of an intellectual genealogy through teacher-disciple relationship facilitated the emergence of a particular kind of religious order. These expanding networks and the proliferating educational institutions that they generated functioned to reproduce a coherent body of religious doctrine and practice. As such, they should be identified as one key dimension of the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya, insofar as they promoted a distinctly Bā 'Alawī vision of sharī'a-oriented Sufism even when they did not necessarily involve formal elements of *ṭarīqa* affiliation like *'uqda* or *khirqā*.

Aside from propagating a new Islamic curriculum, Ibn Yaḥyā was also involved in the production of simplified legal and theological texts that represented the teachings of the Ṭarīqa 'Alawiyya. He wrote three short legal manuals on (1) the correct performance (*manāsik*) of pilgrimage to Mekka, (2) the proper etiquette (*ādāb*) for visiting the Prophet's tomb, and (3) the righteous division (*tafrīq*) of alms. He also issued legal opinions (*fatwā*) on various issues he witnessed in the Malay-Indonesian world, including the performance of *dabus*, payment of religious officials, alimony, and the marriage between a woman from the Prophet's family and a non-sayyid.⁶⁵ He argued that imitating the dress and language of the colonial rulers did not constitute unbelief as long as no religious commitment was involved.⁶⁶ He also composed a short creedal statement during his time in Java on the meaning of the *shahāda*. That short text, titled *'Aqīda jāmi'a nāfi'a* (The complete beneficial creed), was written so as to facilitate oral recitation and dictation in gatherings—thus reflecting Ibn Yaḥyā's injunction to teach the masses interactively and mnemonically. In addition, he wrote a short treatise called *Risāla fī ibṭāl bida' munkarāt* (Epistle on nullifying reprehensible innovations), comprising a diatribe against what he witnessed as erroneous innovations in local commemorations of the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson Ḥusayn (*'āshūra*). In the treatise, he attacked those who demonstrated excessive grief over the event as well as those who were pleased with it. The focus of Ibn Yaḥyā's criticism is on practices such as wailing, outburst of emotion, self-flagellation, and the tearing of one's garments.⁶⁷

The available historical sources do not permit us to fully discern the success of Ibn Yaḥyā's attempt to tap into local scholarly networks. In a period marked by the proliferation of competing visions of Islamic knowledge, Ibn Yaḥyā's vision was certainly not the only one. Ibn Yaḥyā's curriculum resonated with the broader sharī'a-oriented Islamic visions that were gaining ground during the period, while at the same time incorporating key texts written and lineally

transmitted by the luminaries of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya including al-Ḥaddād and Ibn Ṭāhir. The fact that these texts have been incorporated into the course of study of the traditional *pesantren* hint at the significant success of Bā ‘Alawī scholars including Ibn Yaḥyā in redefining Islamic curriculum in the region.⁶⁸ However, the fact that texts excluded by Ibn Yaḥyā, such as al-Sanūsī’s *‘Umm al-barāhīn*, remain central in the curriculum of the *pesantren* suggests that Ibn Yaḥyā’s aims were not completely realized.

In this chapter, I have partially reconstructed Ibn Yaḥyā’s sojourn to observe the development of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in the early nineteenth-century Malay-Indonesian world. I have shown that the shifting sociopolitical context enabled the gradual movement of Bā ‘Alawī scholars into more established positions. This process was facilitated by the broader rise of sharī‘a-oriented Sufism transmitted by returning pilgrims and scholars who were exposed to the intellectual currents prevalent in places like the Hijaz. This religious orientation was akin to that promulgated by Bā ‘Alawī scholars in Ḥaḍramawt—many of whom studied in the Hijaz, where they were exposed to such currents—and brought to different parts of Southern Asia and East Africa by Ḥaḍramī merchants and itinerant scholars.⁶⁹ The convergence of these multiple itineraries resulted in the emergence of a strong vision of sharī‘a-oriented Sufism in the region. Within this complex and competitive religious economy, where different Sufi orders and competing visions of Islam vied against each other for societal influence, Ḥaḍramī scholars like Ibn Yaḥyā attempted to transmit Bā ‘Alawī sufism as encapsulated in the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya.

I have shown that the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya in this period was characterized by a strong commitment to the implementation of the sharī‘a, the spread of simplified legal and theological knowledge, and the promotion of particular forms of political order. As a formal and cultural mechanism of tradition, the *ṭarīqa* functioned as an order, involving formal, conceptual, and practical apparatuses that reproduced standardized practice and doctrine, maintaining consistency and coherence. The *ṭarīqa* enabled its adherents to perceive these intellectual and practice components in the framework of a lineage, that is, as something inherited from previous scholarly generations and thus possessed of a distinct historical identity, differentiated from other *ṭarīqa*. In Ḥaḍramawt, this sense of identity was shaped through kinship and scholarly networks bound by shared rituals, sacred spaces, and liturgies, solemnized by formal elements including *‘uqda*, *khirqā*, and *silsila* that constituted its discursive boundaries and defined its identity. In the Indonesian archipelago, the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya order retained coherence and distinctiveness within a social ecology markedly different from that of the order’s origins in southern Arabia. Three dimensions of the ‘Alawiyya order made this possible: the Ḥaḍramī merchant diaspora, royal power in the archipelago, and scholarly networks consisting of both Ḥaḍramī and local scholars bound by a particular textual canon that incorporated key Bā

‘Alawī texts. These three dimensions served as mechanisms that promoted a Bā ‘Alawī vision of sharī‘a-oriented Sufism.

The case of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya developed in this chapter attests to the value of retaining the term “order” as an analytic category. The term allows the development of comparative perspectives on the organizational infrastructure, conception of affinities, and mechanism of reproduction of diverse religious lineages and formations. Such comparisons can, in turn, highlight the dynamic formal, material, and organizational infrastructures that, together with shifting historical contexts, enable a religious order to function across time and space.

NOTES

I would like to thank Sayyid Zayd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā, the director of the Markaz al-Noor Research Center, Tarim, Ḥadramawt, for providing me with access to the primary sources used in this chapter. Webb Keane, Engseng Ho, Nancy Florida, and Nico Kaptein have all read the chapter in draft and provided helpful comments. Ahmad al-Habsyi helped me with the translation of several difficult passages. Last but not least, I would like to thank R. Michael Feener and Anne Blackburn for their critical reading of the chapter and their valuable feedback.

1. See, for example, Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Christine E. Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784–1847* (London: Curzon Press, 1983); and Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973). For more elaborate discussion and critique of this perception, see Michael Laffan, *The Makings of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

2. Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (Singapore: Horizon Books, 2001).

3. M. C. Ricklefs, “The Middle East Connection and Reform and Revival Movements among the *Putihan* in 19th-Century Java,” in *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*, edited by Eric Tagliacozzo (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), pp. 111–134; Laffan, *Makings of Indonesian Islam*, pp. 25–64; Christian Pelras, “Religion, Tradition, and the Dynamics of Islamization in South Sulawesi,” *Indonesia* 57 (April 1993): 133–154; A. H. Johns, “Sufism in Southeast Asia: Reflections and Reconsiderations,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26.1 (1995): 169–183.

4. The Ṭarīqa ‘Alawiyya originated among the Bā ‘Alawī *sāda* (sing. *sayyid*), the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad who had long settled in the Ḥadramawt valley of southern Yemen. Initially articulated in the thirteenth century by Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Bā ‘Alawī (d. 653/1255), also known as al-Faqīḥ al-Muqaddam (the preeminent jurist), The *ṭarīqa* combines two spiritual genealogies (*silsila*): that of the Prophet’s family (*ahl al-bayt*) transmitted through the Prophet’s descendants and that of the renowned sufi master of the Maghrib, Shu‘ayb Abū Madyan (d. 594/1198). The *ṭarīqa* provides a particular model of spiritual wayfaring, a set of sharī‘a-oriented guidelines for those climbing the ladder of spiritual stations (*maqāmāt*). Its practical underpinning is articulated in the doctrine of emulating the

Prophet inwardly and outwardly by following the footsteps of his family and descendants, in particular the Bā 'Alawī. See Ismail Fajrie Alatas, “[al-]’Alāwīyya (in Ḥaḍramawt),” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 3, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson (Brill Online, 2014), http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/al-ala-wiyya-in-h-ad-ramawt-COM_23830, accessed August 6, 2014.

5. Ulrike Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

6. Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 81.

7. Ibid.

8. See Anne Blackburn and Michael Feener’s introduction to this volume in Chapter 1. See also R. Michael Feener, “Issues and Ideologies in the Study of Regional Muslim Cultures,” in *Islamic Connections: Muslim Societies in South and Southeast Asia*, edited by R. Michael Feener and Terenjit Sevea (Singapore: ISEAS Press, 2009), pp. xiii–xxiv; Anne M. Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

9. See Anne Blackburn and Michael Feener’s introduction to this volume in Chapter 1.

10. For a prominent example, see, J. S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

11. Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), p. 11.

12. Danièle Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), pp. 151–152.

13. Ibid., pp. 106–107.

14. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Ubaydillāh al-Saqqāf, *Idām al-qūt fī dhikr buldān ḥaḍramawt* (Sana’a: Dār al-minhaj 2005), p. 824.

15. ‘Aqīl b. ‘Abdallāh ibn Yaḥyā, *Tadhkira al-aḥyā’ bi-manāqib sayyidinā wa imaminā al-sayyid al-sharīf ‘abdallāh b. ‘umar bin yaḥyā bā ‘alawī*, edited by Zayd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā (privately printed, n.d.), p. 32.

16. Abdallāh b. Sa’ad ibn Sumayr was the father of the jurist Sālim bin Sumayr (d. 1270/1853), the author of the popular text on jurisprudence *Safīnat al-najāh* (Arc of salvation) and a close friend of Ibn Yaḥyā. Today, the text is still in use as an elementary text in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) throughout Java.

17. The summary of Ibn Yaḥyā’s life is based on his *manāqib* (hagiography), titled *Tadhkira al-aḥyā’ bi-manāqib sayyidinā wa imaminā al-sayyid al-sharīf ‘Abdallāh bin ‘Umar ibn Yaḥyā Bā ‘Alawī* (Reminder for the living with the hagiography of our master and our imam the sayyid and *sharīf* ‘Abdallāh bin ‘Umar ibn Yaḥyā Bā ‘Alawī), written by his son ‘Aqīl (d. 1294/1877). The text summarizes the birth, upbringing, education, and teachers of Ibn Yaḥyā. It also illustrates his many virtues and noble characters together with several anecdotes of miracles that he performed. Aqīl concludes the *manāqib* with a detailed exposition of Ibn Yaḥyā’s chain of initiation into the *ṭarīqa* together with the chain of his cloak of investiture (*khirqā*). I thank Sayyid Zayd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā for sending me a typescript of the unpublished *manāqib* together with a collection of Ibn Yaḥyā’s discourse, correspondence, and poems that he edited and compiled from various manuscripts in Ḥaḍramawt. For a shorter version of Ibn Yaḥyā’s biography as well as the biographies of his descendants, see Muḥammad ‘Alawī b. Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-‘Alawī al-Ḥaḍramī, *Sharaf*

al-muḥayyā fī tarājīm ‘adad min ‘ulamā’ wa udabā’ āl yahyā (Tarīm: Tārīm lidirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2007), pp. 25–48.

18. Alexander Knysh, “A Tale of Two Poets: Sufism in Yemen during the Ottoman Epoch,” in *Le Soufisme à l’ époque Ottomane*, edited by Rachida Chih and Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen (Cairo: Institut française d’archéologie orientale, 2010), p. 338.

19. This was the *ribāṭ* (pl. *arbiṭa*) in Say’ūn founded by the charismatic Bā ‘Alawī scholar and poet ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1914). See Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants*, pp. 278–281.

20. Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), pp. 43–44.

21. Knysh, “Tale of Two Poets,” p. 338.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 339.

23. ‘Aydārūs b. ‘Umar al-Ḥabashī, *‘Iqd al-yawāqīt al-jawhariyya wa simṭ al-‘ayn al-dhahbiyya bi-dhikr ṭarīq al-sādat al-‘alawīyya* (Jakarta: privately printed, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 127.

24. For further elaborations on these formal elements of a *ṭarīqa*, see Jamal J. Elias, “The Sufi Robe (*khirqā*) as a Vehicle of Spiritual Authority,” in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, edited by S. Gordon, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), pp. 275–289.

25. Ismail Fajrie Alatas, “‘Abdallāh b. ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 3, edited by Fleet, Krämer, Matringe, Nawas, and Rowson, http://www.pauyonline.brill.nl/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/abdalla-h-b-alawi-al-h-adda-d-COM_24682, accessed August 6, 2014.

26. Green, *Sufism*, p. 175. For this development in the Ottoman Empire, see Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). For similar development in the Safavid Empire, see Kathryn Babayan, “The Safavid Synthesis: From Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi’ism,” *Iranian Studies* 27.1–4 (1994): 135–161. For the Mughal Empire, see Muzaffar Alam, “The Mughals, the Sufi Shaikhs and the Formation of the Akbari Dispensation,” *Modern Asian Studies* 43.1 (2009): 135–174.

27. For instance, the *Nayl al-waṭar*, a biographical dictionary of the Yemeni scholars of the thirteenth Islamic century, mentions Ibn Yahyā as a scholar and jurist without specifying his role as a shaykh of the Ṭarīqa ‘Alawīyya. See Muḥammad Zubāra, *Nayl al-waṭar min tarājīm rijāl al-Yaman fi-l-qarn at-thālith ‘ashr* (Sanaa: al-Maṭba‘a al-Salafiyya, 1931), pp. 91–92.

28. Ibn Yahyā, *Tadhkira al-ahyā’*, pp. 39–40.

29. For detailed accounts on this expanding world of Ḥadramī diaspora in Southeast Asia, see Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants*, chap. 1; Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, chap. 6.

30. Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, chap. 6; Omar Farouk Bajunied, “Arabs and the Nation-State in Southeast Asia,” *al-Mahjar* 2.1 (1997): 4–6.

31. R. Michael Feener, “New Networks and New Knowledge: Migration, Communication, and the Refiguration of Muslim Community in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 6, edited by Robert Hefner (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 39–68; James L. Gelvin and Nile Green, “Introduction,” in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, edited by James L. Gelvin and Nile Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), pp. 1–24.

32. William Gervase Clarence-Smith, “Entrepreneurial Strategies of Hadhrami Arabs in Southeast Asia, c. 1750s–1950s,” in *The Hadhrami Diaspora in Southeast Asia: Identity*

Maintenance or Assimilation? edited by Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk and Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 139–140.

33. Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1758–1855* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008).

34. Robert Van Niel, “Measurement of Change under the Cultivations System in Java, 1837–1851,” *Indonesia* 14 (Oct. 1972): 89–109.

35. The term *priyayi* originally referred to the younger siblings of the king. Subsequently it came to denote the bureaucratic or administrative elite of Java. See Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite* (Singapore: Heinemann, 1979).

36. Eric Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mekka* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 63–82.

37. Ricklefs, “Middle East Connection and Reform,” p. 114.

38. The term “religious marketplace” is Nile Green’s. See Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 47.

39. Laffan identifies the role of traveling scholars like ‘Abd al-Samad al-Palimbānī (d. 1789) and Muḥammad Arshad al-Banjarī (d. 1812), both of whom studied with the Medinese shaykh Muḥammad Samman (d. 1776), as the forerunners of this shift. Samman cultivated links with the Cairene tradition of Sufism that emphasized the writings of the medieval Sufi theologian and jurist Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) and his Egyptian commentators like ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha’rānī (d. 1565). See Laffan, *Makings of Indonesian Islam*, p. 33. On al-Sha’rānī’s role in the reconfiguration of Sufi thought, see Richard J. A. McGregor, “Notes on the Transmission of Mystical Philosophy: Ibn ‘Arabī According to ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha’rānī,” in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam*, edited by Todd Lawson (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005), pp. 380–394.

40. This, however, does not mean that Muslim scholars were not active in the countryside before the Java War. Evidence suggests that they were already spread across the countryside and establishing *pesantren*, like the famous *pesantren* of Tegalsari. Sources like the 1815 *Serat Centhini* suggest that the royal court, the countryside, and Muslim scholars were in dialogue. Similarly, one should not assume that the royal court was not actively involved in the *pesantren* of the countryside. Nancy Florida has shown how several key court luminaries, particularly literati and court poets—including the veritable literati family of Yasadipura—were educated in rural *pesantren*. In addition, when Chinese rebels overran the court of Pakubuwana II in 1742, the king fled the royal court and took shelter with the Islamic scholar Kyai Ageng Imam Besari of Panaraga, East Java. In sum, available historical sources suggest that (1) Muslim scholars were already active in the countryside before the Java War and (2) luminaries from the royal court were not imprisoned behind palace walls. Rather, there seems to have been circulation of people and ideas between rural Islamic establishments and the royal court. Nevertheless, the end of the Java War did result in the proliferation of new *pesantren* across Java. See Nancy K. Florida, “Writing Traditions in Colonial Java: The Question of Islam,” in *Cultures of Scholarship*, edited by S. C. Humphreys (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pp. 187–217. See also Florida’s contribution in this volume.

41. M. C. Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese Society: Islamic and other Visions, c. 1830–1930* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007), p. 52–53.

42. Peter J. M. Nas and Pratiwo, “Java and De Groote Postweg, La Grande Route, the Great Mail Road, Jalan Raya Pos,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 158.4

(2002): 707–725; Pramoedy Ananta Toer, *Jalan Raya Pos, Jalan Daendels* (Jakarta: Lentera Dipantara, 2005).

43. Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese Society*, p. 81.

44. ‘Abd al-Qādir b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Junayd, *al-‘Uqūd al-‘Asjadiyya fī nashr manāqib ba’dh afrād al-usra al-junaydiyya* (Singapore: al-Mahdudah, 1994), pp. 167–168, 178–180; Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, pp. 82–83.

45. Al-Saqqāf, *Idām al-qūt*, pp. 601–602; L. W. C. van den Berg, *Hadramaut dan Koloni Arab di Nusantara*, translated by Rahayu Hidayat (Jakarta: INIS, [1886] 1989), p. 106.

46. Laffan, *Makings of Indonesian Islam*, p. 48; Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), p. 122.

47. Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Nusantara: Jaringan Global dan Lokal* (Bandung: Mizan, 2002), p. 141; William R. Roff, “The Malayo-Muslim World of Singapore at the Close of the Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 24 (1964): 75–90; Michael Laffan, “The New Turn to Mekka: Snapshots of Arabic Printing and Sufi Networks in Late 19th Century Java,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 124 (2008): 113–131.

48. One report from 1848 suggests that the Arab population in the coastal region was not big but was large enough to have significant impacts. In Tegal, for instance, out of a total population of 317,446, there were at least 2,275 Arabs and other Asian Muslims. See Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese Society*, p. 81.

49. Ibn Yahyā, *Tadhkira al-ahya’*, pp. 376–381.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 378. For al-Saqqāf, see Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, pp. 43–44.

51. Ibn Yahyā, *Tadhkira al-ahya’*, p. 325.

52. Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern ‘Ulama’ in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2004); R. S. O’Fahey, “‘Small World’: Neo-Sufi Interconnexions between the Maghrib, the Hijaz and Southeast Asia,” in *The Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa*, edited by Scott S. Reese (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 274–288.

53. Arabic letters circulated around the Indonesian archipelago and beyond between rulers who had scribes and translators for such correspondence. Writing a few decades later, the Dutch colonial official L. W. C. van den Berg described how the princes of the Madurese royal family were solidly educated in Arabic. An Arabic speaker himself, van den Berg was impressed by the Arabic proficiency of the Madurese princes as well as the Arabic holdings of the royal libraries. Such a conscious effort to be more attuned to the wider Muslim world had opened up lucrative positions for Ḥadramī scholars as Arabic instructors to the Madurese royal families. See van den Berg, *Hadramaut dan Koloni Arab*, p. 108.

54. Claiming descent from the last king of Majapahit, the Tjakraningrat family had ruled Madura since the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century, they were appointed to govern Madura under the suzerainty of the Mataram Sultanate. Following the Javanese-Chinese War of 1741–1743, Tjakraningrat IV took the opportunity to shake off his vassal obligation to Mataram with the help of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Recognizing the importance of the alliance, the VOC decided in 1762 to raise the title of Tjakradiningrat V to Panembahan Tjakradi-ningrat V. During the reign of Tjakradiningrat VII (1780–1815), the kingdom began to send troops to support the colonial authority on its military campaigns, a practice that continued until the Java War. In 1816, the sultan signed a contract with the Dutch relieving the sultanate of taxation in return for the supply of military manpower. In recognition of their military role, the Dutch reorganized the Madurese troops into a permanent armed corps, the *barisan*, consisting

of infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Despite the general commitment to reducing the power of the sultan, the Dutch continued to confer various decorations and privileges on the Madurese ruler. By the 1820s, the Sultanate of Madura was referred to not as *zelf-bestuurders* (self-administrators) but as *onafhankelijk bondgenoten* (independent allies). The honors, however, were not bestowed purely out of generosity, as successive Dutch authorities wished to prevent Madurese defections in the tumultuous first decades of the nineteenth century. In 1808, Tjakraadiningrat VII elevated his title and prestige to become the first sultan of Madura. His son, 'Abd al-Qādir, succeeded his father as Sultan Tjakraadiningrat II. See Kuntowijoyo, *Perubahan sosial dalam masyarakat agraris Madura, 1850–1940* (Jogjakarta: Matabangsa, 2002); Heather Sutherland, "Notes on Java's Regent Families: Part II," *Indonesia* 17 (1974): 1–42.

55. For an extended discussion of Islamic epistolary tradition, see Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, "The Essay and Debate (*Al-Risāla* and *al-Munāzara*)," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, edited by Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 134–144; Samer Akkach, *Letters of a Sufi Scholar: The Correspondence of 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (1641–1731)* (Leiden: Brill 2010).

56. Ibn Yahyā, *Tadhkira al-ahya'*, p. 209.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

59. *Ibid.*

60. Van den Berg, *Hadramaut dan Koloni Arab*, p. 109.

61. Laffan, *Makings of Indonesian Islam*, pp. 25–39.

62. The original copy of this manuscript is kept in the Markaz al-Noor archive in Tarim, Haḍramawt. I thank Zayd bin Yaḥyā for providing me with a copy of this precious document.

63. In Sufi knowledge culture, the term *muḥibbīn* (lovers) is usually contrasted with the term *murīdīn* (disciples). The former refers to the "untutored enthusiasts" of a Sufi master, whereas the latter denotes the "formally initiated disciples." See Vincent J. Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), p. 197. In Haḍramawt, the term *muḥibbīn* is also used to refer to the non-Bā 'Alawī followers and devotees of the Bā 'Alawī sayyids.

64. Together with the *Safīnāt al-najāh* of Ibn Sumayr (see above), the *Sullam al-tawfīq* is one of the two most recited and taught elementary legal abridgments in Java to the present day. Both texts are recited not only in the *pesantren*, but also in neighborhood and village prayer halls (Jv. *langgar*).

65. Nico J. G. Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and the Modern Age in the Netherlands East Indies: A Biography of Sayyid 'Uthman (1822–1914)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), p. 66. *Dabus* is a dance with roots in Sufi tradition common in several places in Sumatra, Malaya, and Banten. The word *dabus* in Arabic means "iron awl with a handle." The Sufi dance was probably called *dabus* because it was performed with sharply pointed iron awls. After reaching a trance-like state, the dancers stab their bodies and arms with the awls without physically injuring themselves. See Jacob Vredendregt, "Dabus in West Java," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkunde* 129.2/3 (1973): 302–320; Martin van Bruinessen, "Shari'a Court, Tarekat and Pesantren: Religious Institutions in the Banten Sultanate," *Archipel* 50 (1995): 165–199.

66. The issue of Muslims adopting non-Muslim dress has long been a subject of intense debate among Muslim scholars. Central to this contention is the definition of *tashabbuh* (imitation) as stated in a saying attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad: "whosoever imitates a particular group, he is from among them" (*man tashabbaha bi qawmin fā huwā minhum*). Some

scholars argue that adopting European dress constitutes *tashabbuh* of non-Muslims and can lead to apostasy. The term *tashabbuh* refers to the adoption of customs and habits that are deemed to be peculiar to a particular group. According to this perspective, the adoption of dietary and sartorial habit constitutes *tashabbuh*. Learning a foreign language, however, does not constitute *tashabbuh*. Ibn Yaḥyā's opinion regarding the imitation of European fashion and language is thus more lenient than most scholars'. In 1904, another Bā 'Alawī scholar from the same family as Ibn Yaḥyā, who also happened to be one of his students, Sayyid 'Uthmān (d. 1914), authored a small brochure forbidding Muslims from imitating European dress, as by wearing a cravat or necktie. See Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and the Modern Age*, pp. 66, 137–138.

67. Ibn Yaḥyā, *Tadhkira al-ahya*, pp. 299–304.

68. By the time L. W. C. van den Berg had compiled a list of fifty texts studied in the *pesantren* of Java and Madura in 1887, a clear and consistent program of study was already discernible, albeit with slight variations from one institution to the next. Van den Berg's survey demonstrates that the texts recommended by Ibn Yaḥyā had been incorporated into the established curriculum. See L. W. C. van den Berg, "Her Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera: En de Daarbij Gebruikte Arabische Boeken," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 31 (1887): 1–38. See also Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat*, pp. 112–171.

69. For the activism of Bā 'Alawī scholars in East Africa, see Anne K. Bang, *Islamic Sufi Networks in the Western Indian Ocean, c. 1880–1940* (Leiden: Brill, 2014). For their religious activism in South Asia, see Muḥammad Abū Bakr 'Abdallāh Bā Dhīb, *Ishāmāt 'ulamā ḥadramawt fī nashr al-islām wa 'ulūmihi fī al-hind* (Amman: Dār al-fath lil-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr, 2014).