SHAYKH YŪSUF'S ROLE IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

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Abstract

This article focused on Shaykh Yūsuf's role in the spread of Islam. Shaykh Yūsuf is venerated to this day, particularly in the Indonesian Archipelago and in South Africa - where he spent the last five years of his life, from 1694 to 1699. Using a literature research method, this article identified the major themes that are reflected in his writings on taṣawwuf. They are bay`ah, tawbah, dhikr, wujūd, al-ṣifah al-Ilāhīyya, Prophet's status, sharī`ah and ḥaqqah, sharī`ah and ṭarīqah, akhlāq, how Allah draws a servant close to Him, how a servant attains closeness to Allah. This article also highlighted Shaykh Yūsuf's influence in the various regions such Makkah, Makassar, Banten, Batavia (Jakarta), Ceylon and Cape Town which witnessed his presence. His presence not only strengthened the position of those who were already Muslim, but also gave impetus to the spread of Islam.

Key word: Shaykh Yusuf; Islamic teaching; the spread of Islam, Tasawwuf.

A. INTRODUCTION

The life of Shaykh Yusuf is linked with the arrival of the first Muslims in South Africa and with the history of the establishment of Islam in South African land. He was born in 1626 at Gowa, South Sulawesi under the rule of Sultan Alauddin (1591 – 1636), the 14th king of Tallo-Gowa kingdom, Karaeng Matowaya Tumamenaga Ri Agamanna, converted to Islam, where later changed his name to Sultan Alauddin.

During the 13th and 14th centuries Islam spread to the Malay. Archipelago through Arab traders and ~ufi~. After its extension into Sumatra and Java by peaceful penetration it also spread into the Malay Peninsula.

When he reached the age of eighteen - in 1644 - Yusuf undertook the pilgrimage to Makkah. Here, he studied apparently for a long time the religious sciences as a means to gain proficiency in the Arabic language and traditional Islamic sciences, like the Qur'an, Hadith (Prophetic traditions) Jurisprudence, etc. This was during the government of the 19th king of

Gowa, I Mappadulu Daeng Mattimung Karaeng Sanrobone Sultan Abdul Jalil.

Titled Tuminanga ri Lakiyung.

Shaykh Yusuf had studied "tasawwuf" or Islamic mysticism during his stay in Makkah and that first he became a disciple of the Khalwatiyyah order and then finally became its chief at Makassar. It should be expected, therefore, that some of his teachings or sayings should become popular in the East Indies since he had become, people known there due to his position as "shaykh" of the Khalwatiyyah order and also for his resistance against the Dutch. As a matter of fact, Yusuf's name is mentioned in several writings encountered in Javanese and Malay sources.

A manuscript of the Royal Batavian Society contains a collection of Bughanese writings in which one often comes across the name of Shaykh Yusuf. In the Arabic manuscripts of the Society several of Yusuf's works in Arabic are included. Even the Society's Catalogue of Malay manuscripts mentions Yusuf's name. From this it is clear that not only has some of Yusuf's teachings survived in scattered sources, but that several of his complete works are extant to this day.

During his lifetime, Shaykh Yusuf proved to be the single most ardent opponent of Dutch colonial interests in the East Indian Archipelago. A great deal of his life was dedicated to staving off Dutch expansion and preventing Dutch monopolization of trade in the Indonesian Islands. Though he failed eventually in this bid due to lack of support at home, he remains a symbol of resistance to the colonization of his country by the Dutch. After the Dutch had exiled Shaykh Yusuf to the Cape, they still regarded him as a threat to their colonial ambitions. They, therefore, sought to isolate him on a lonely farmstead and endeavored to forbid him from meeting other exiles and influencing them. In spite of these restrictions, Shaykh Yusuf continued to exert his influence over his people. So much so that even today, Shaykh

Yusuf is upheld as an ideal Muslim leader and as a model of virtue and piety in the Cape, as well as in the land of his birth.

B. METHODES

This article used a literature review as a research method. A literature review can broadly be described as a more or less systematic way of collecting and synthesizing previous research (Baumeister & Leary, 1997; Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). An effective and well-conducted review as a research method creates a firm foundation for advancing knowledge and facilitating theory development (Webster & Watson, 2002). By integrating findings and perspectives from many empirical findings, a literature review can address research questions with a power that no single study has. Specifically, this article conducted by narratives or integrative literature reviews type to identify the major themes that are reflected in Shaykh Yusuf's writings on taṣawwuf and his influencing in the spread of Islam.

C. RESULTS

1. Education Background

Shaykh Yūsuf's education began in the palace at Makassar where he was born under Daeng ri Tasammang an Arab and Chinese teachers who had migrated to South Sulawesi. According to Muzdalifah Sahib, one of his teachers was Sri Nara Diredja bin 'Abd al-Makmūr who was popularly known as Datuk ri Panggentungan. He was the son of Datuk 'Abd al-Makmūr (also known as Datuk ri Bandang) from Pagaruyung, Minangkabau, and West Sumatra who established a school of mysticism in 1634 (Cummings, 2002, pp. 69-70; Azra, 2004, pp. 87-88). In 1641 Shaykh Yūsuf travelled to Cikoang to study under Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Aidid in Cikoang, who founded a school known as Ṭarīqat Baḥr al-Nūr (The Path of the Ocean of Divine Light) (M. Sahib, personal communication, August 15, 2017; Cummings, 2002, pp. 69-70; Azra, 2004, pp. 87-88).

From Banten, Shaykh Yūsuf left for Aceh. According to some accounts, it was here that he studied under the famous Shaykh Nūruddin Ḥasanjī b Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Qurayshī al-Ranīrī who granted him the ijāzah of the Qādariyyah Sufi Order [Abū Ḥamīd, 1990]. Others think it unlikely that he had met al-Rānīrī in Aceh since he had already left Aceh for India but it is more likely that he had followed him to his native Gujarat. He arrived in Raniri in 1646. Apart from al-Rānīrī he also studied under `Umar b `Abd Allāh Bā Shaybān (Azra, 2004, p. 89).

Shaykh Yūsuf left India in 1648 for Yemen and arrived there a year later. Here he studied with Shaykh Abū `Abd Allah Muḥammad ibn `Abd al-Bāqī ibn Shaykh al-Kabīr Mizjājī al-Yamanī al-Zaydī al-Naqshbandī from whom he received the ijāzah of the Naqshbandiyyah ṭarīqah. In addition, he is said to have received the ijāzah of the Bā Alawiyah from Shaykh Sayyid `Alī al-Zubaidī. His third teacher was Muḥammad b. al-Wajīh al-Sa`dī al-Yamanī (Azra, 2004, p. 89).

Shaykh Yūsuf then left for Makkah in 1654 for the pilgrimage and then proceeded to Madinah to visit the Prophet Muḥammad's mausoleum. Since he left Makassar in 1644 it means that he eventually reached his destination after ten years. In Madinah, he studied under Hamad al-Qushāshī (who was a prominent figure in the Shattariyyah and Naqshbandiyyah orders), Ḥasan al-`Ajamī, Muḥammad al-Mazrū' al-Madanī, `Abd al-Karīm al-Hindī al-Lāhūrī, Muḥammad Murād al-Shāmī, Burhānuddīn al-Mulk and al-Muḥaqqiq al-Rabbānī al-Mulla Ibrāhīm al-Ḥusayn ibn Shihābuddn al-Kurānī from whom he received the ijāzah of the Shattariyah (Hadrawy, 1974, p. 6; Abū Ḥamīd, 1990; Azra, 2004, pp. 90-91).

Shaykh Yūsuf journeyed to Damascus in 1658 where he received the ijāzah of the Khalwatiyyah ṭarīqah from Shaykh Abū al-Barakāt Ayyub b Aḥmad b Ayyūb al-Dimashqī al-Khalwatī, the imām of the masjid and was

bestowed with the title "al-Tāj al-Khalwatī". According to legend, he visited Istanbul while resident in Damascus for three years but this is contested by several scholars (Azra, 2004, p. 92].

Muzdalifah speculates that Shaykh Yūsuf was inducted into five of these orders by the Sufi shaykhs mentioned above as follows:

Rifa'iyyah by Shaykh al-Rānīrī and Shaykh `Umar bin 'Abd Allāh Bā Shaybān.

Idrisiyyah, Shādhiliyyah, and Suhrawardiyyah also by Shaykh 'Umar bin 'Abd Allāh Bā Shaybān.

Kubrawiyyah by Shaykh Aḥmad al-Qushāshī in Madīna (personal communication, June 12, 2017).

2. Contribution in Tasawwuf Thought

Shaykh Yūsuf's lasting contribution is in the field of taṣawwuf. His name has been mentioned in several writings that appear in Javanese and Malay sources. Some have been preserved both in public libraries and private collections. Shaykh Yūsuf cited Qur'ānic verses, aḥādith, and ṣūfī sayings throughout his writings. However, it should be noted what the texts often describe as "ahadīth" are not to be found in the known Hadīth collections. They are, in fact, popular sayings attributed to prominent Şūfī masters; and they can be traced to their writings or cited by writers on tasawwuf. In this article I will not cite the Quranic verses and ahadīth which Shaykh Yūsuf has included in his writings but focus on his actual sayings or those of the Sufi masters he has quoted.

In this section, I found the major themes in Shaykh Yūsuf's writings in which he has either mentioned and/or cited over forty Sufi shuyūkh, including Muḥī al-Dīn ibn Arabi and Abū al-Qāsim Junayd al-Baghdādī. I have identified the following themes in Shaykh Yūsuf's writings: bay`ah, tawbah, dhikr, wujūd, al-ṣifah al-Ilāhīyya, Prophet's status, sharī`ah and ḥaqqah, sharī`ah and ṭarīqah, akhlāq, how Allah draws a servant close to Him, how a servant attains closeness to Allah.

To begin with, Shaykh Yūsuf defines taṣawwuf as "beautifying character, purification of the soul and purification of the heart", "cherishing good thoughts about people", "good character". When murīds set out on their journey, he states, they are at the stage of `awāmm [initiates, lit. common folk], they then reach the stage of khawāṣṣ [elite] and finally the stage of akhaṣṣ al-khawāṣṣ [super elect].

The themes and selected depictions of each station in Shaykh Yūsuf's writings are as follows:

Bay`ah: "If the murīd (disciple/seeker) is seeking the path to Truth, he must pledge allegiance (bay`ah) to a spiritual mentor (shaykh/ murshid)".

Dhikr: "There are three types of dhikr: lā ilāha illallāh, Allah Allah and Hu Hu", "Increase dhikr of Allah until they think you are insane", "Dhikr for one hour is better than worship for a thousand years", "When Allah loves a servant, He inspires him with dhikr".

Sharī`ah and Ṭarīqah: "The sharī`ah represents the ẓāhir [exoteric/outer] dimension of Islam and the ḥaqīqah represents the bāṭin [esoteric/inner spiritual] dimension of Islam", "This is the way which is outwardly law (Sharī`ah) and inwardly the spiritual path (Ṭarīqah) and it is the way of Muḥammad and his heirs from among the prophets, saints and gnostics (arifin)".

Sharī`ah and Ḥaqīqah: "The Sharī`ah is the outward form of the Ḥaqīqah while the Ḥaqīqah is the essence of the Sharī`ah", "Every act of sharī`ah without ḥaqīqah is false and every ḥaqīqah without sharī`ah is futile" (Bāyazid al-Bustāmī').

Akhlāq: "I have been sent but to perfect good character (akhlāq)", "The prophet stated: `The one with best character will be closest to him on the day of judgement'", "The best person is the one with the best character", "The best in Creation is the one who is best in conduct".

Attaining closeness to Allah: "The main objective of the murīd [disciple] or sālik [seeker] is to attain nearness to Allah [qurbah]. He has to gain control over the nafs (animal self) and purify the heart (qalb) which is 'the throne of Allah'", "Who knows Me will seek Me and who seeks Me will find Me and who finds Me will love Me and who loves Me I will kill".

Al-Sifat al-Ilahiyyah: "Imbue yourselves with the attributes (Ṣifāt) of Allah", "The Ṣūfī is imbued with the divine attributes and is His vicegerent".

Tawbah: "I seek the forgiveness of Allah ...and I turn towards Him (in repentance)", "He who seeks forgiveness for his sins is like the one who has absolutely not sinned", "If you do not sin, He will bring forth a people who will sin. They will sin and seek His forgiveness. And He will forgive them", "I seek forgiveness seventy times daily", "I seek forgiveness a hundred times a day".

Wujūd: "The universe has no existence in reality", "Nothing exists besides Him", "Nothing exists in reality", "Allah exists in everything", "We have no existence (wujūd) but existence in reality belongs to Allah", "What is meant by mujarrad is the type of remembrance that repudiates nothingness and asserts the being of Allah as the reality of existence".

How Allah draws a servant close to Him: "If Allah wishes good for His servant He mentions him abundantly", "If Allah wishes to make His servant a friend (walī), he makes him remember Him", "My servant continues coming closer to Me with voluntary actions until I love him, and I become his ear with which he hears, his eye with which he sees, his hands with which he

strikes, and his foot with which he walks", "Neither My earth nor My heavens can contain Me but the heart of My God-fearing, pure servant can contain Me", "Whoever seeks Me will find Me", "My intimate friends (awliyyah) are under my supervision, no one knows them except Me", "The heart of the believer is the throne (`arsh) of Allah", "If Allah loves a servant no sin harms him".

The Prophet's status: "The first thing to be created was the Nūr of Muhammad", "The first thing that was created was my soul I have created everything for your sake", "The first thing Allah created was My soul [rūḥ].", "I was a prophet when Adam was between water and clay.", "None of you believes until I am more beloved than yourselves and your wealth", "None of your faith will be complete until his desires comply with what I brought", "He must follow the Prophet in words and deeds openly and secretly", "The Prophet is the best of creation".

In sum, Shaykh Yūsuf's central focus is on the renunciation of worldly things (faqr), abstinence from what is unnecessary (warā'), purification of the rūḥ (tazkiyyat al-nafs) through constant dhikr, reformation of character (ahkhlāq) and mystical contemplation (murāqbah) of the Divine Essence.

3. Influence

Shaykh Yusuf's great learning in the Islamic Sciences was sought by high and low. He taught not only the Sultan and his courtiers at Banten various aspects of Islam, but also to his disciples as head of the Khalwatiyyah Sufi order. Shaykh Yusuf's reputation as a political activist, a pious Sufi, and as a fine scholar of Islam and Sufism won him the respect of his friends and foes. In this section, I identified Shaykh Yūsuf's influence in Arabia, the Ceylon, the Indonesian Archipelago and the Cape.

a. Influence at Makkah

Shaykh Yūsuf, bearing the title "Jawi alim", taught in al-Masjid al-Ḥaram in Makkah and attracted not only his own students but also pilgrims from all over the archipelago (Abū Ḥamīd, 1994; Azra, 2004, p. 92).

b. Influence in Macassar

Shaykh Yūsuf left Makkah in 1667 and arrived in Makassar in 1668 (2006, p. 9). The people of Makassar regarded him as a 'walī Allah' (friend of God) and bestowed on him the nickname of Toewang Salamah the blessed master (Veth, 1896, p. 42). Some admirers of Shaykh Yūsuf considered him to be a 'national saint' and after the harvest they undertook a 'pilgrimage' to his grave at Lakiung to get his blessings (Cense, 1950, pp. 56-57).

It is claimed that when Shaykh Yūsuf left for Bantam, he left behind three of his disciples, Nūr al-Dīn b. `Abd al-Fattāh, `Abd al-Bashīr al-Darīr and `Abd al-Qādir Karaeng Jeno, to spread the Nagshbandiyyah and Khalwatiyyah orders, though Azra is skeptical of this account (Azra, 2004, p. 94).

Muzdalifah Sahib (personal communication, August 15, 2017) credits the following students of Shaykh Yūsuf with spreading and popularizing his teachings in Makassar: 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Karaeng Karunrung (the first caliph of the Yūsufiyyah Sufi Order) and Shaykh Jami' al-Dīn bin Ṭālib al-Tīmī al-Khalwatī al-Maqassarī who was also the student of Shaykh 'Abd al-Başīr al-Raffānī, the first caliph of the Khalwatiyyah Sufi Order.

c. Influence in Banten

Shaykh Yūsuf spent many years teaching the Sultan and his courtiers about various branches of Islamic sciences (Jeffreys, 1939, volume 6, p. 195) and played an active role in the spread of Islam (Du Plessis, 1973, p. 3). Since the establishment of the rule of Sultan Ageng, Bantam had become a centre of Islamic learning. People came from outside Bantam – from all parts of the Muslim world - to acquire knowledge in Islamic sciences (Drewes, 1926, vol. VI/2, p. 84; Azra, 2004, pp. 95-96). A section of the Sulṭān Ageng Mosque - built by Ageng's father Sulṭān Ḥasanuddīn - served as a kepekihan (Islamic institution) where Shaykh Yūsuf taught his students. Many of the students from South Sulawesi were influenced by Shaykh Yūsuf and returned to their places of origin to disseminate his teachings (Azra, 2004, p. 95).

When Sulṭān Ageng began to conduct jihād against the Dutch who were attempting to colonise Bantam, he appointed Shaykh Yūsuf as the leader of his Makassarian auxiliary troops. Though Sultan Ageng was eventually defeated Shaykh Yūsuf continued his jihād against the Dutch. After he was eventually captured, the DEIC sent him to Batavia (see Dangor 2019, pp. 56-62).

d. Influence in Batavia

In Batavia Shaykh Yūsuf acquired great influence over the indigenous Muslim population. He was revered as a Sufi and a pious man [walī] and was looked upon 'as a man in every sense far above his fellow creatures' (Deeds, 1913, p. 3). The reverence which his followers held for him is evident from the fact that when he spat out his sepah (chewed betel nut), they picked it up and preserved it as a relic (Valentijn, 1926, p. 123).

Since Governor-General Cornelis Speelman considered it dangerous to keep him in Batavia any longer and decided to send him to Ceylon (modern day Sri Lanka) (Deeds, 1913, p. 5). Shaykh Yūsuf with his two wives, children, twelve disciples and several servants were exiled to Ceylon in 1684 (Generale Missiven, vol. 4, p. 709 cited in Azra, 2004, p. 98).

e. Influence in Ceylon

During his stay in Ceylon, Shaykh Yūsuf, apart from teaching Sharī`ah and Taṣawwuf, produced a number of works. This is evidenced by the fact that several of them bear the title Saylāniyyah (Ceylon). He established

friendship with several scholars of Indian origin, including Sidi Matilaya, Abū al-Maʾānī Ibrāhīm Minḥān and ʾAbd al-Ṣiddīq b. Muḥammad Ṣādiq (Azra, 2004, pp. 98-99) The Mughal Emperor Awrangzeb who had learnt of Shaykh Yūsuf's presence in Ceylon, advised the Dutch to provide for his well-being (Azra, 2004, p. 99). Shaykh Yūsuf also had contacts with Muslim traders who came to Ceylon for business as well as pilgrims who were in transit in Ceylon on their way to Makkah and Madīnah. These pilgrims retuned to the archipelago with some of Shaykh Yūsuf's works (Azra, 2004, p. 99).

f. Influence at the Cape

Since Shaykh Yusuf's continued presence in Ceylon was also considered harmful to Dutch interests and a threat to their rule, he was exiled to the Cape. He was then already in his sixty-eighth year. Shaykh Yūsuf arrived on board De Voetboeg on 2 April 1694 with his retinue of forty-nine (Cense (1950, p. 51).

Shaykh Yūsuf was housed on a farmstead so that he would not be able to get in touch with other exiles from the East Indies who had arrived before him (Jeffreys, 1939 vol. VI, p. 195). In spite of the DEIC's attempts to isolate him, he became the focus of a gradually growing Muslim community (Cense, 19550, p. 51). Zandvliet, in fact, became the meeting place for the exiles and slaves who rallied round Shaykh Yūsuf though it brought them into disfavor with the Dutch authorities (Jeffreys, 1939, vol. VI, p. 195).

Greyling supports the view that the rapid growth of the Muslim community in the Cape was due largely to the arrival of a number of leaders with a better educational and social position, particularly political exiles, best known among them being Shaykh Yūsuf. His presence not only strengthened the position of those who were already Muslim, but also gave impetus to the spread of Islam. Thus, many slaves were won over to Islam (Greyling, 1976, p. 9).

When Shaykh Yūsuf arrived at the Cape his entourage included twelve imams. These imams, no doubt, were his closest disciples and were deeply influenced by his teachings and practices. We can imagine them faithfully continuing their master's work after his death. Shaykh Yūsuf is also venerated at the Cape as a mujāhid against Dutch colonization, in particular because Muslims in SA lived under Dutch rule for a century and half.

Shaykh Yūsuf's familiarity with Sufis and knowledge of Sufism is phenomenal. This is manifested through his identification of over forty Sufis, and references to their works and citations of their words and statements in his writings. Shaykh Yūsuf's writings are very much mainstream. The contents are what one would typically find in standard Sufi texts. Most of the shuyūkh he cited in his writings are renowned in the field of taṣawwuf. The concepts that permeate his writings are well-established.

He can be classified as "orthodox" in his approach because he did not advocate departure from the sharī`ah as do some other Sufis. In addition, he emphasized adherence to not the Qur'ān only but also to the Sunnah which effectively rules out many of the peculiar practices associated with some Sufi orders.

There is no evidence that Shaykh Yūsuf produced any texts during his exile at the Cape. It can be safely assumed that he continued with practises associated with the Khalwatiyyah ṭarīqah, including the initiation of members. Some scholars argued that the ṭarīqah influenced several rituals such as burials at the Cape.

D. CONCLUSION

Shaykh Yūsuf is known to have possessed an attractive and imposing personality, was worldly-wise and brave, energetic and intelligent (Van Selms, 1968, p. 429). According to Cense (1950, p. 57)) it was this "remarkable and outstanding personality that procured for him great

influence and won for him the respect and admiration of his followers". As we have now learnt, this veneration was carried over to posterity (particularly) in South Sulawesi as well as in South Africa, and remains strong to this day.

The role of Shaykh Yūsuf's own students or students of his disciples in popularising his writings in Macassar (M. Sahib, personal communication, June 21, 2018) and by Sulṭān Aḥmad Ṣālih (1775-1844) in Bone (South Sulawesi) has been noted above. His students were responsible for spreading their master's writings on taṣawwuf throughout the archipelago.

Judging from the foregoing, one can conclude that Shaykh Yūsuf certainly had a commanding influence in various ways in Java, Macassar and the whole of the Archipelago as mention in literatures, as well as Ceylon.

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