

**The Suluk Ritual in the Tradition of the Tariqa (Sufi Order)
Naqsyabandiyyah Al-Kholidiyyah Jalaliyyah in Indonesia**

طقوس السلوك في تقليد الطريقة الصوفية النفسانية البندية الخالدية في إندونيسيا

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Abstract

Sufi plays an important role in Indonesia's early Islamization. Tariqa is a part of the Sufi tradition which strengthens the distinct identity of Indonesian Islam as it continues to evolve. This article is based on qualitative methods employing observation and interview techniques to gather data. Tariqa is part of the Sufi tradition which consists of several Muslims who are committed to increasing their spirituality. Tariqa goal is to get closer to God. The Suluk is the tarekat's special ritual which is done monthly in the first ten days. This article argues that the ritual activity of Suluk in Tariqa is a religious activity that has a double function, namely increasing spirituality as well as social relations in Muslim society. This article finds that Suluk's goal is not only to achieve the desired level of spirituality but also to increase social solidarity. In the suluk ritual tradition, the humanist nature that blends in with spirituality reflects that this tariqa encourages spirituality that does not threaten human relations. Suluk encourages tariqa members to engage in socially responsible behavior. The spirit of togetherness is cultivated in such a way that Muslims are produced who not only pursue personal spirituality but also improve social relations among Tariqa members.

Keywords: Suluk, Sufi, Tariqa, Indonesia.

ملخص

يلعب الصوفية دورًا مهمًا في أسلمة إندونيسيا المبكرة. الطريقة هي جزء من التقليد الصوفي الذي يعزز الهوية المميزة للإسلام الإندونيسي مع استمراره في التطور. تستند هذه المقالة إلى الأساليب النوعية التي تستخدم تقنيات المراقبة والمقابلة لجمع البيانات. الطريقة هي جزء من التقليد الصوفي الذي يتكون من العديد من المسلمين ملتزمين بزيادة روحانيتهم. هدف الطريقة هو التقرب إلى الله. السلوك هو طقوس الطارق الخاصة التي تتم شهريًا في الأيام العشرة الأولى. يناقش هذا المقال أن النشاط الشعائري لسلوك في الطريقة هو نشاط ديني له وظيفة مزدوجة، وهما زيادة الروحانية والعلاقات الاجتماعية في المجتمع الإسلامي. تجد هذه المقالة أن هدف سلوك ليس فقط تحقيق المستوى المطلوب من الروحانية ولكن أيضًا زيادة التكافل الاجتماعي. في تقليد طقوس السلوك، تعكس الطبيعة الإنسانية التي تمتزج مع الروحانية أن هذه الطريقة تشجع الروحانية التي لا تهدد العلاقات الإنسانية. يشجع سلوك أعضاء الطريقة على الانخراط في سلوك مسؤول اجتماعيًا. تزرع روح العمل الجماعي بطريقة يتم فيها إنتاج مسلمين لا يسعون وراء الروحانيات الشخصية فحسب، بل يقومون أيضًا بتحسين العلاقات الاجتماعية بين أعضاء الطريقة.

Introduction

Tariqa is part of the Sufi tradition which has certain rituals. The rituals in the tariqa aim to improve the relationship between the tariqa followers and God. They usually prioritize specific rituals to deepen one's spiritual qualities. The tariqa followers' primary emphasis on the esoteric aspect reflects their distinct and adaptable character in understanding and practicing the values of Islamic teachings. Indonesian Islam's adaptable and tolerant character is typical of *washatiyyah* (middle) Islam (Azra, 2010). The number of tariqa followers in Indonesia is not traceable but can be estimated to be in the millions. This can be seen from the number of tariqa schools in Indonesia, which amount to 45 tariqa schools (Luthfi, 2013). The role of the tariqa in the context of social religious movements in Indonesia is quite significant. Ni'am (2020) says that the development of Islam in Indonesia is influenced by the existence of the tariqa which is considered capable of accommodating Indonesian cultural characteristics so that Islam is well received by Indonesian people.

Some scholars who are interested in researching the tariqa include Martin van Bruinessen. He studied the development of the tariqa in Indonesia. He however focuses only on the 'main' tariqas like Naqshbandi, Qadiriyyah, tijanniyah, khalwatiyyah, sammaniyah,

shattariyah, and shadhiliyah (Bruinessen, 1992). He did not elaborate in detail on some local tariqas such as Naqshabandiyyah al-kholidiyyah jalaliyyah. In addition, the study was conducted several decades ago. Some studies do not provide a detailed description of the Suluk ritual in tariq. Masduki, Hartono and Rosidi (2017) only see the tradition of the tariqa qadiriyyah wa naqshabandiyyah in protecting the environment and nature, the development of the tariqa qadiriyyah wa naqshabandiyyah in Pekanbaru (Masduki, Hartono & Rosidi, 2018), and the tariqa and politics (Handoko, Hidayati, Azhar, Mulkhan, Rafi, Setiawan & Rahmanto, 2020). Perangin-Angin (2022) studied the role of the founder of the Naqshabandiyyah al-Kholidiyyah Jalaliyyah tariqa, and Sheikh Salman Da'im, in developing the tariqa. However, this article does not focus on the Suluk ritual which is an important part of the Naqshabandiyyah al-Kholidiyyah Jalaliyyah tradition.

Suluk is commonly used in the Sufi tradition to refer to the spiritual path or journey that a seeker takes toward union with God. In the context of the Tariqa, which is a Sufi order or spiritual path, Suluk refers to the various stages of spiritual development that a seeker must go through to reach the ultimate goal of spiritual realization. The purpose of this article is to describe the suluk ritual of the Naqshabandiyyah al-kholidiyyah jalaliyyah tariqa in Indonesia. The suluk ritual performed by tariqa followers, according to this article, cannot be separated from the local context. This tariqa then improves the spirituality of its followers through culturally appropriate rituals. This suggests that the tariqa, as a social institution, is attempting to maintain its existence in the face of social changes.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach. According to Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (2007, 6), researchers in the social and behavioral sciences, as well as those studying human behavior and roles, can use the qualitative method. The primary source of data for this article is based on field research. As a result, this article is based on participant observation and in-depth interviews. First, observations are made to learn about the behavior of key figures in the tariqa being studied. Second, in-depth

The psychological function of religion, on the other hand, is related to the role of religion in meeting the spiritual and psychological needs of individuals. Religion can provide inner peace and hope in the face of uncertainty and death. Religion can also give meaning and purpose to an individual's life, and help overcome feelings of loneliness and confusion.

Overall, W. Robertson Smith's theory of the function of religion shows that religion has an important role in society and individual life. The social and psychological functions of religion are interrelated and contribute to strengthening social structures and individual well-being. However, this theory has also been the subject of criticism and debate, with some scholars doubting the simplicity and generality of Robertson Smith's concept of the function of religion.

According to Smith, religious rituals performed by adherents of religion have the social function to intensify community solidarity. Adherents of religion do carry out religious ritual obligations, but in essence, their goal or motivation is not solely to worship God. Apart from worshipping God, they also have the motivation to increase social solidarity (Smith, 1987).

This theory will be useful to explain the reasons for Tariqa members perform the ritual of suluk. This article will support this theory but the purpose of worship is still believed to be the main reason for members of the Naqshabandiyyah al-Kholidiyyah Jalaliyyah tariqa to perform or participate in suluk activities. Apart from worshipping Allah, some members of the Naqshabandiyyah al-Kholidiyyah Jalaliyyah tariqa have the goal of improving relations with all members of the tariqa. However, this goal is still secondary.

Thus, this article interprets the ritual of suluk as a religious activity that has a dual function, namely as a binding relationship between members of the tariqa and to fulfill the spiritual and psychological needs of individuals. Suluk can provide inner peace and hope in the face of uncertainty and death. Suluk can provide the hope of being able to become a medium for solving economic, political, or other life pressures that cannot be resolved by Tariqa members. This inability then gave birth to an

Suluk involves a process of purification of the self, which includes the purification of the heart, mind, and body, as well as the development of spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation, and dhikr (remembrance of God). The seeker must also cultivate certain virtues and qualities, such as humility, patience, and love, and overcome negative qualities such as pride, jealousy, and anger. The Suluk is guided by a spiritual teacher or guide, known as a murshid or sheikh, who provides guidance and support to the seeker on their spiritual journey. The seeker must also be willing to surrender their ego and submit to the guidance of the sheikh to progress on the path. The Suluk in the Tariqa is a transformative journey that requires dedication, discipline, and a deep commitment to spiritual growth and realization.

Some scholars have discussed suluk. Maryam Yusuf (2020) explains the role of suluk in strengthening one's faith and love for Allah. She describes suluk as a long spiritual journey, in which the individual seeks to draw closer to God and attain a higher spiritual awareness. In this article, Maryam also highlights the importance of developing strong relationships between tariqa members and suluk teachers, who can guide individuals on their spiritual journey and help them reach higher goals.

Nasrudin's article entitled "Suluk as Social Piety: Phenomenological Studies at The Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah Sufi Order in Sokaraja Banyumas" (2021) discusses how the practice of Suluk Sufi can act as a form of social piety. The author describes suluk as a spiritual journey carried out by individuals to achieve higher spiritual awareness and closer to God. In a social context, the practice of suluk can also be a means of strengthening social relations between individuals and society, as well as forming good moral and ethical character. This article also sheds light on the role of the mystical guru in guiding individuals on their spiritual journey and helping them reach higher goals. Throughout the article, Nasrudin emphasizes that the practice of Suluk Sufi can bring wide spiritual benefits to individuals and society, as well as play a role in strengthening social piety and morality.

Several articles that discuss suluk above have not comprehensively explained how Naqshabandiyah Al-kholidiyyah Jalaliyyah Tariqa's suluk

When Syekh H. Jalaluddin made the pilgrimage to Mecca, where he gave bai'at to Sheikh Ali Ridha in Jabal Kubis. Then, before the time of wuquf (ceremony of gathering on the field of Arafah during the Hajj) in Arafah, he went to Jabal Kubis for a retreat with Shaykh Ali Ridha, and he was given the book *Syahifat al-Syafa li Ahl al-Wafa* by Shaykh Sulaiman Zuhdi. This book serves as a guide for the development of Naqsyabandiyah Al-Khalididhiyah tariqa in Indonesia. Jalaluddin was born in Kotobaru Tigo Koto Maninjau, Sumatera Barat, on December 31, 1882. He was a Sufi, theologian, and poet (mathnawi). According to his book "Sinar Keemasan," he was handed over by his mother to study at a MILO school (elementary school level) when he was 10 years old (1890).

In 1960, Syekh Salman Da'im established the Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Al-Kholididhiyah Jalaliyah. This tariqa is run by the 'murshid' (leader) of Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Al-Kholididhiyah Jalaliyah, which was given to him by his teacher, Syekh H. Jalaluddin. In 1960, he established a 'persulukan' (tarekat ritual center) in Desa Gajing, Pematang Siantar, Simalungun. He then opened another 'persulukan' in Kota Baru, Tebing Tinggi, Deli, Sumatera Utara in 1967. In 1970, he founded 'persulukan' and 'Rumah Ibadah Suluk' (ritual center) in Bandar Tinggi. Then, in 1980, he founded Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic basic school), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic senior high school), and Qismu Ali in Bandar Tinggi, near the 'persulukan'.

Suluk as Spritual and Social Ritual

The word suluk is derived from the phrase "Ass-Suluk," which means "taking the road, entering a place, temperament, or behavior." Arabs frequently say "Husnus Suluuk" for people of good character and "Suus Suluuk" for bad behavior. The purpose of suluk is to emphasize the improvement of human nature by purging oneself of negative traits (immorality and mentality) and replacing them with positive ones (by doing both physical and mental obedience) (Mahjuddin, 1996).

Suluk is an important ritual in the Naqsyabandiyah Al-Kholididhiyah Jalaliyah tariqa. This is shown by Syekh Salman Da'im who issued a 'ritual' program called 'Suluk Reguler' in Bandar Tinggi. He also issued

Furthermore, in 1985, Syekh Salman Da'im supported his followers to continue their education at Universities. This support aims not only to increase spirituality but also social status. Educational Degrees have an important role in Indonesian society. Education obtained through college or other formal educational institutions can be one of the factors that determine a person's success in career and life. In Indonesia, an education degree is often the main requirement for getting a good job and is recognized by society.

In addition, educational degrees are also considered a social status that distinguishes one person from another. People with higher educational degrees are perceived as more respected and have higher levels of self-confidence. This is often used as a benchmark by society in assessing someone. An educational degree in Indonesian society remains a significant factor in determining one's success. Therefore, education remains an important investment for the future of individuals and the Indonesian nation.

More than 100 of his followers now hold undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. His support represents his modernization project. This can be interpreted as requiring the support of worldly life to traverse the tariqa's world. A tariqa member also requires material support to achieve ritual perfection. Musthofa (2017) studied Sadziliyah tariqa, A Murshid (tariqa follower) is more than just a figure of the spiritual leader. He can also serve as a formal leader and professional manager. This means that, as part of the Sufi tradition, the tariqa does not completely disregard worldly life, including modernity. Huda (2017) claims that adaptations to modern life and Sufi characters who practice hybridity – spirituality and social life - are characteristic of modern and contemporary Sufi traditions.

To achieve the goals of desired spirituality, the tariqa teaches the importance of performing certain rituals. One of the important rituals in the tradition of the Naqshabandiyah Al-Kholidiyah Jalaliyah tariqa is suluk. To make it easier for members of the tariqa in Kandis to perform the ritual, in 1990, the Darus Shofa Suluk (Worship House), in Kandis-Riau, was established. In Kandis, it is estimated the number of pilgrims is

The above activities are carried out with high enthusiasm even though, for Muslims outside the tariqa, these activities or rituals are hard. When asked about Islamic doctrine which teaches ease in carrying out Islamic teachings, Ali replied:

Yes, I understand that Islam teaches about ease in practicing Islamic teachings. However, I also feel that what I do in the suluk ritual is not heavy. For me, it is easy. Many Muslims do something light but they find it hard and heavy. So, don't look at the form of the ritual, but look at the heart of the person performing the ritual. Other people may think it is hard, but the person doing the ritual does not feel it is heavy and difficult (Ali, personal communication, 8 September 2018).

Suluk ritual according to Tariqa members is a religious activity that is not heavy. They carry out these activities earnestly to expect a reward from God. What they do is not a difficult ritual because they do it solely expecting reward and closeness to God. A close relationship with God is the dream of every member of Tariqa. It is intended that this closeness quenches their thirst for spirituality.

The ritual function that they perform is basically in line with the opinion of W. Robertson Smith regarding the function of religion in which suluk is done to fulfill the spiritual and psychological needs of individuals. The psychological needs of each individual who follows mysticism certainly vary. However, in general, they have many problems living outside. Some of them, for example, have economic difficulties. Siti said:

I did live with difficulties. The husband is just a farm worker. While I'm not working. Yes, sometimes I work to help my husband plant corn in other people's gardens. These difficulties make me feel the need to draw closer to God so that these economic difficulties can disappear or be reduced (Siti, personal communication, 10 September 2018).

Psychological pressure due to economic difficulties has made some members of Tariqa perform suluk rituals so that God will help solve their problems. This hope has not yet been fully realized, but they believe that one day this hope will be granted by God.

Another activity that involves cooperation and authentic Indonesian is cooperation or gotong royong (Gonggong, 2016). Gotong royong is a traditional Indonesian concept of working together for a common purpose. It is deeply ingrained in Indonesian culture and is practiced in various forms across the country. During Suluk, gotong royong is often used for communal tasks such as cleaning the environment and repairing the mosque. Tariqa members work together for free, to complete a task that benefits the entire community. This practice has been passed down for generations and is seen as a way of maintaining social harmony and strengthening community ties. In some areas in Indonesia, gotong royong takes on a different form. It may involve neighborhood cleanups, community events, or fundraising efforts for local causes. In some instances, it may be organized by government or non-governmental organizations. Gotong royong is seen as an important value in Indonesian society, emphasizing the importance of working together and caring for one another.

This activity fosters a thick Indonesian spirit. This activity is usually held to maintain the cleanliness of the environment of places of worship while preserving it from possible damage. The Gotong royong activities are grown and promoted in the worship activities of suluk. This proves that Suluk has social goals. Such 'humanist' character activities continue to be maintained by this tariqa through suluk activities to encourage Islamic character which esoterically aims at moral purification and at the same time exoterically being friendly and full of social solidarity.

Conclusion

The Suluk tradition is an important activity in the Nasyabandiyah Al-Kholidiyah Jalaliyah tariqa. Suluk does not only aim to reach the desired level of spirituality but it also aims to increase social solidarity. In the Suluk ritual, the dimension of personal piety is encouraged and practiced fairly by social piety. The characteristics of suluk which involve the togetherness of its tariqa members show that social solidarity is preserved through suluk in Naqsyabandiyah Al-Kholidiyah Jalaliyah tariqa. This social goal indicates that the suluk ritual tradition has a humanistic character.

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