

THE POLITICS OF A LOCAL SUFISM IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA A Closed Look at The Shiddiqiyah *Tarekat*

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Abstract

This article discusses the politics of local Sufi group (tarekat) in Indonesia, the Shiddiqiyah. It addresses the locality of Shiddiqiyah tarekat and its politics during New Order Indonesia and following the fall of the regime. It is argued that the Shiddiqiyah, a local tarekat with its roots in East Java and later successfully welcomes national reputation, is an example of a tarekat that utilizes nationalistic slogan to expand its influence as well as to protect the tarekat from heretic accusation. Through a series of intensive fieldwork, the article argues that the Shiddiqiyah has successfully maintained ideological patronage to the New Order Indonesia through nationalistic slogan which has been a core value of the group. The doctrine of nationalism has been translated in Sufi and Javanese idioms and become fundamental doctrine of the Shiddiqiyah.

[Artikel ini mengkaji tentang dimensi politik dalam salah satu kelompok tarekat lokal bernama Shiddiqiyah. Secara spesifik, studi ini fokus pada era Orde Baru dan pasca ketumbangannya sebagai bagian penting bahwa Tarekat Shiddiqiyah mampu menunjukkan eksistensi di tengah rezim yang sensitif dan represif. Dapat dikatakan bahwa Tarekat Shiddiqiyah—yang berakar di Jawa Timur dan



kemudian mendapatkan reputasi nasional itu—adalah contoh tarekat yang berhasil memanfaatkan slogan nasionalisme sebagai strategi untuk memperluas pengaruhnya dan melindungi kelompoknya dari tuduhan sesat. Melalui serangkaian penelitian lapangan yang intensif terhadap kelompok tersebut, artikel ini berpendapat bahwa Shiddiqiyah telah berhasil mempertahankan patronase ideologis kepada rezim Orde Baru melalui slogan kebangsaan yang telah menjadi nilai inti kelompok tersebut. Pada akhirnya, Shiddiqiyah mampu mengejawentahkan doktrin nasionalisme ke dalam idiom sufi dan Jawa serta menjadi doktrin fundamentalnya.]

Keywords: *Local Sufism, Nationalism, Politics*

Introduction

The rise of Islamist groups in contemporary Indonesia has challenged the image of smiling Islam and signaled to the so-called “conservative turn”.¹ The Islamist groups particularly promote a clear-cut Islamic orthodoxy and their agenda seem to threaten the diversity of Islamic practices and beliefs as well as the prime Indonesian state ideology, the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia/NKRI). Nevertheless, Islamism is indeed a loose range category that might appear in different forms and groupings. Sufism, for instance, despite well-known for its inclusive teachings, can also be categorized as orthodox. *Salafi Sufi*, as indicated by Howell,² is a form of Salafi adoption of ascetic behavior with several provisions strictly adhering to the basic principle of Islam (*shari’u*). This form of Sufism often reserves as the proponents of radical orthodoxy.

This article addresses the Indonesian-based Sufi order, the Shiddiqiyah *tarekat*. It is a local Sufi group that emerged in Ploso village in Jombang, East Java, and later gained a national influence. Throughout the article, I argue that local Sufi is not only closely related to genealogical

¹ Martin van Bruinessen, *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the “Conservative Turn”* (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2013), p. 3.

² Julia Day Howell, “Indonesia’s Salafist Sufis,” *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5, 2010, pp. 129.

aspect, but also to identities and local dynamics. As Talal Asad argues, the phenomenon of local and global tradition relations in Muslim societies is such a discursive tradition³ which also applies to Sufism. Therefore, the locality of Sufism lies on the identification of local elements while regarding also the universal dimension of Sufi's teachings and its global genealogies. Thus, a local manifestation of Sufism might to emerge in multiple forms. This multiplicity appears through unification of several existing *tarekat*, such as the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah⁴ and the Khalwatiyyah Samman,⁵ through localization of the teachings of global Sufi orders, such as Bayanullah in Nusa Tenggara Barat,⁶ or through the formation of *tarekat*-alike, such as Shalawat Wahidiyah,⁷ and Dzikrul Ghafilin.⁸ As the Shiddiqiyyah, the local aspect of this *tarekat* particularly appears through the recognition of local values and practices as well as the nationalistic vision by a virtue of spiritual and social identity of the *tarekat*. Thus, it is true that the Shiddiqiyyah has been particularly attractive to social group to which Clifford Geertz calls as the *abangan*⁹ or the non-practicing Muslims group.¹⁰

³ Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Washington: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986).

⁴ Martin van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia: Survei Historis, Geografis, dan Sosiologis* (Jakarta: Mizan, 1992).

⁵ Achmad Ubaedillah, "Khalwatiah Samman Tarekat in South Sulawesi, Indonesia (1920S-1998): Exercising Authority in an Era of Change," *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 42, No. 5, 2014, pp. 620-640.

⁶ Mark Woodward, "Tariqah Naqshabandi Bayanullah (TNB): Localization of a Global Sufi Order in Lombok, Indonesia," *Review of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2017, pp. 55-65.

⁷ Sokhi Huda, *Tasawwuf Kultural: Fenomena Shalawat Wahidiyah* (Yogyakarta: Pelangi Aksara, 2008).

⁸ Arif Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic Spirituality: A Study of Majelis Dhikir Groups in East Java* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2010).

⁹ Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

¹⁰ Orshid, *Sejarah Thoriqoh Shiddiqiyyah Fase Pertama: Kelahiran Kembali Nama Thoriqoh Shiddiqiyyah* (Organisasi Shiddiqiyyah, 2015).

The Shiddiqiyah also offers a glimpse example of Sufi politics in contemporary Indonesia. The Shiddiqiyah is a well-known champion for its nationalistic slogan through their spiritual activities. The Shiddiqiyah politics is indeed closely related to the Indonesian New Order government project to ‘pacify’ Muslim groups in 1970-80s. To do so, the government demanded all Muslim groups, not exclusively Sufi groups, to join the state-sponsored Association for the Improvement of Islamic Education (Gabungan Usaha Perbaikan Pendidikan Islam/GUPPI).¹¹ One of the founders of Shiddiqiyah, *Kiai* Muchtar, was a high rank activist of GUPPI. In return, during the New Order, the Shiddiqiyah had enjoyed enormous government’s supports and facilities.

This article tries to revisit the notion of local Sufi and the Sufi politics. This article is based on ethnographic research that I performed in 2017. The main data was obtained from observations over approximately one year by conducting interviews of Shiddiqiyah followers and direct observation of their ritual as a participant-observer of the group. During this period, I selected informants based on two categories: interviewing representative of the leader (*khalifah*), and the followers. The observation was conducted by observing various lectures delivered by the leaders and also based on discussion, both official or informal conversation, and observing various phenomena surrounding the *Pesantren* Majm’al Bahrain Shiddiqiyah in Ploso, Jombang. I also collected important data from a variety of official documents, such as lecture transcripts written by the followers and disseminated in various media, such as personal blogs, and social media. Likewise, I also utilized video recordings that were uploaded on their social media platforms, such as *Youtube*, *Instagram*, and *Facebook*. To ensure the accuracy of these media platforms, I contacted the account owner or the administrator through digital tracking and corresponding directly with them.

¹¹ Tp., *Uraian Singkat Sejarah dan Perkembangan As-Syabadatain* (t.tp: t.p., t.t).

This article further argues that the Shiddiqiyah's teaching demonstrates a highly synthesis between Javanese culture and Sufism. The nationalistic slogan, such as the call for fostering the love of the homeland and the cultivation of nationalistic idea, reserves as political vehicle of the group to maintain its significance and influence. The Shiddiqiyah politics in contemporary Indonesia is an example of Sufi politics and the arts of a Sufi-alike institution, such as the Shiddiqiyah, to survive through adaptation and patronage to the changing political regime.

Sufi and The State

A majority scholarly discussion on the relationship between Sufism and the state focuses particularly on ideology and Sufi-inspired movements inside or outside the state. This article tries to offers an answer to the question of why a Sufi order embraces nationalistic slogan as one of its fundamental tenets of Sufi teaching and doctrine. Through looking at the historical background of Sufism in Islam, the development of Sufism is indeed dynamic, not only in terms of the varieties of its teaching but also of their contribution to the state. As argued by Trimingham¹² and Schimmel¹³, Sufism is part of the social movement throughout Islamic history. According to the sociologist Ernest Gellner,¹⁴ as Pinto cited,¹⁵ Sufism is a silent and non-political movement in Muslim society, but its existence and development are dynamics. The Sufism movement has been in dialectic relationship with the state since the early days of the Muslim empire or medieval Islam, throughout the colonial period, until the formation of the modern state. During medieval Islam, Sufism

¹² J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: University Press, 1998).

¹³ Annemarie Schimmel, *Al-Ab'ad al-Shufiyyah Fi al-Islam Wa Tarikh Tasawwuf*, trans., Muhammad Ismail Sayyid and Ridha Hamid Qutb (Germany: Al-Jamal, 2006).

¹⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁵ Paulo Pinto, "Dangerous Liaisons: Sufism and the State in Syria," *IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences*, ed. S. Jakelcic, Vol. XIV (Presented at the in Crossing Boundaries: From Syria to Slovakia, Vienna, 2003), p. 2-9.

seems to be in competition with the Sultanate power. *Zawiyah*, *Khanaqah*, or *ribat* (the building designed for religious gathering Sufi brotherhood) had been centers for Sufi to exercise their power. As for the period of colonialism, some resistance against the colonial government was led by the Sufi groups, as we see in Africa by the Sanusiyyah *tarekat*¹⁶ and in several regions in Indonesia by the Tijaniyyah *tarekat*.¹⁷

In later periods, following the foundation of the modern nation-state, tensions between Sufi groups and the government continued, as we found in Turkey that involved the secular Turkish government and the Naqshabandi¹⁸ and in Syria the Naqshbandiyya Kuftariyya and Shadhiliyya *tarekat* contested the government. Pinto maintains that the relationship between Sufi groups and the government as “dangerous liaisons” as it could bring benefits as well as harmful risks.¹⁹ Pinto also argues that the closeness of Sufi figures with the government will reduce the authority of Sufis as religious leaders whose every decision become a role model of the disciples. The disciples no longer fully respect the *fatwa* (religious decisions) delivered by the leader.²⁰ In contrast, Sujuthi²¹ has noted the political dynamic of Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Sufi order in Indonesia. *Kiai* Musta’in Ramli, one of the leaders of Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Sufi order in Jombang, exercised tactical steps, such as to plunge into the political arena. The involvement of Sufi figures in the government becomes an agent of change when the national political

¹⁶ Ghulam Samsu Rahman, “Sanusiyyah: A Study of a Revivalist Movement in Islam,” *AI-Ehsan*, No. 2 (t.t.).

¹⁷ Asep Achmad Hidayat and Setia Gumilar, “Gerakan Tarekat Tijaniyah di Garut, Jawa Barat, Indonesia, 1935-1945,” *Sosiobumanika*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2016; Dudung Abdurahman, “Gerakan Sosial-Politik Kaum Tarekat di Priangan Abad XX” (UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2008).

¹⁸ Svante E. Cornell, “The Naqshbandi-Khalidi Order and Political Islam in Turkey-by Svante E. Cornell,” <http://www.hudson.org/research/11601-the-naqshbandi-khalidi-order-and-political-islam-in-turkey>, accessed August 21, 2019.

¹⁹ Paulo Pinto, “Dangerous Liaisons,” p. 2–9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Mahmud Sujuthi, *Politik Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Jombang: Studi tentang Hubungan Agama, Negara, dan Masyarakat* (Yogyakarta: Galang Press, 2001).

atmosphere was unstable. Gus Miek, the leader of Dzikrul Ghafilin, the local Sufi group in Kediri, is another example of Sufi leaders taking bold steps in favor of the Indonesian New Order government.²²

The contemporary dynamics of the relationship between Sufis and the state, I argue, is also essential as the former offers counter-narratives to the teachings of extremism and radicalism. As O'Dell argues, the Sufism practices become non-orthodox community that opposed *Salafi* groups. Some countries in Central Asia defined their national Islamic identities through the *Hanafi Maẓhab* (Islamic jurisprudence school) and Sufism when fighting against the *Salafi* in Caucasus.²³ O'Dell further explains that Sufism in Central Asia was supported by the state with a variety of different mechanisms. In Uzbekistan, the government helps the Sufi to marketize Sufi shrines for tourists' attraction and foreign diplomacy and encourages women traditional healers to practice in public. In Turkmenistan, government recruited female Sufi practitioners to support the government campaign against radicalization targeting children, while in Tajikistan, Sufi teaching has been a Islamic living tradition of a great majority Muslim. The leader of Turkmenistan, Niyazov, promoted the practice of pilgrimage (*ziarah*) to tombs of prominent Sufi master (*mursbid*) as a national "duty". This move was intended to "restore historical justice" and to give the invaluable heritage of ancestors to the present and future generations of Turkmen.²⁴

In addition to the intricate relationship between the Sufi and the state, contemporary dynamics of Sufi in translocal contexts show the continuous identity making. It invites contestation and negotiation as, the Iran-based Sufi group of Shamaghsoudi in London demonstrates. Sahahmaghsoudi Sufi Order formulated a distinct type of Iranian identity

²² Muhamad Nurul Ibad, *Suluk Jalan Terabas Gus Miek* (Yogyakarta: Pelangi Aksara, 2007).

²³ Emily O'Dell, "Subversives and Saints: Sufism and the State in Central Asia," *Islam, Society, and Politics in Central Asia* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017), p. 125.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

which is adapted to the British society and culture. The group also offers a counter-narrative to the Iranian model of Islam which has been eclipsed by the Islamic revolution. Spellman further illustrates that the teachings of Sahahmaghsoudi rooted in Iran are no longer as authentic as its earliest form as it has experienced various forms of contextualization and adaptation in diasporic context.²⁵ In the same vein, Tschacher stated that the local Sufi tradition, particularly concerning saint veneration in Singapore brought by Indian Tamil immigrants, has experienced a process of migration and transnationalism. Local and national boundaries are no longer easily recognized. Therefore, according to Tschacher, the dichotomy between the two is no longer relevant to see the existence of saint-veneration at the Nagore *Durgah* (a Sufi shrine adopted from Tamil Culture) in Singapore.²⁶

As the above discussion on the intricated relationship between the state and the Sufi, it is argued that internal dynamics of the Sufi and the external pressure by the state are mutually dependent. It particularly appears at three conditions: *first*, when the state confronted colonialism and imperialism, *second*, when the Sufi was the minority group that required external protection, mainly through state apparatus and policies, in order to maintain the Sufi's identity amid the rising Islamic orthodoxy, and *finally*, in the situation when the state confronted radical groups. This latter condition particularly appears in Syria and Pakistan where Sufism became an alternative ideology to promote peace while confronting Islamic fundamentalism.

As for the Shiddiqiyah *tarekat*, it is reasonably true that the adaptation to the state politics and ideology is a key strategy for the *tarekat* to acquire the official protection of the state. In so doing, the

²⁵ Kathryn Spellman, "A National Sufi Order with Transnational Dimensions: The Maktab Tarighat Oveyssi Shahmaghsoudi Sufi Order in London," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 5, 2004, pp. 945-960.

²⁶ Torsten Tschacher, "From Local Practice to Transnational Network—Saints, Shrines and Sufis among Tamil Muslims in Singapore," *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 2006, pp. 238.

Shiddiqiyah claims to be a nationalist Sufi with a trustful Islamic teaching originated from its founder. Thus, one of most important doctrines of the Shiddiqiyah which reserves as one of oath (*bai'at*) to join the *tarekat*, is the testimony to love the homeland (*cinta tanah air*). In addition, the Shiddiqiyah has been flourishing among the *abangan* community who is well-known for their nationalistic doctrine. The nationalistic doctrine of the Shiddiqiyah has also culminated to the genealogical link of its founder, *Kiai* Muchtar to the famous rebellious 19th century Javanese Prince Dipanagara who led the Java war against the Dutch between 1825 and 1830.²⁷

The Shiddiqiyah: A Local Sufism

To identify the locality of Shiddiqiyah, I pursue three main aspects; *first* is related to their teaching which is adapted to local traditions and their appreciation towards local cultures, *second* is related to the specific litanies (*dhikr*), and *third* is related to the genealogical chain (*sanad*). Although the founder of Shiddiqiyah, *Kiai* Muchtar, refused the identification of the Shiddiqiyah as a local *tarekat*, the Javanese characteristics of the Shiddiqiyah resort as fundamental tenets of the group. The founder *Kiai* Muchtar was indeed renowned for his deep knowledge on Javanese science mysticism (*kejawen*). In addition, the Javanese tradition, such as *rumatan*, is also well-preserved through the group's ritual. Therefore, different from findings as proposed by scholars, such as Clifford Geertz,²⁸ Niels Mulder,²⁹ Koentjoroningrat,³⁰ Mark R.

²⁷ Carey P. B. R., *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1785-1855* (Leiden: KITL Press, 2007).

²⁸ Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

²⁹ Niels Mulder, *Mistisisme Jawa* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2001).

³⁰ Koentjaraningrat, *Kebudayaan Jawa* (Balai Pustaka, 1984).

Woodward,³¹ Merle Calvin Ricklefs,³² Robert W. Hefner,³³ and Andrew Beatty,³⁴ who particularly locates Sufism and Javanese tradition as two contrasting spheres, the Shiddiqiyah indeed defines Sufism through Javanese rituals and cosmologies. Sufism has been vernacularised through local practices and tradition. Therefore, to better comprehend the local dimension of Shiddiqiyah, I am inclined to follow Nur Syam's finding on Islamic tradition in areas of North coast of Java. According to him, Islam and Java complement and do not dominate each other.³⁵ I maintain that Sufism and Javanese teaching neither dominates one to the other, but are in interactive exchange and borrowings.

Kiai Muchtar combines Javanese mysticism tradition and Sufism. Preserving Javanese, some rituals indeed develop from Javanese tradition but imbued with Sufism nuance. Javanese language is also essential for being the language of *bai'at* (testimonies of allegiance) of Shiddiqiyah followers.³⁶ *Kiai* Muchtar also dictated their disciples the essence of Javanese mysticism the so-called *Ilmu haq layar tujuh pati* (the truthful knowledge of seven layered substance).³⁷ This Javanese treatise is about the concept of human being and their relation with God which is sealed in the doctrine *martabat tujuh* (seven stages) to whom the 16th Acehese Sufi, Hamzah Fansuri, attributed to.³⁸ There are also several Javanese rituals performed and preserved by the Shiddiqiyah community, such as

³¹ Mark R. Woodward, *Islam Java: Kesalehan Normatif versus Kebatinan* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2004).

³² Merle Calvin Ricklefs, *Mystic Synthesis in Java: A History of Islamization from the Fourteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Norwalk: EastBridge, 2006).

³³ Robert W. Hefner, *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam* (Princeton University Press, 1990).

³⁴ Andrew Beatty and British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow Andrew Beatty, *Varieties of Javanese Religion: An Anthropological Account* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

³⁵ Nur Syam, *Islam Pesisir* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2005).

³⁶ Aziz, Tasrichul Adib, "Perbedaan Ajaran Shiddiqiyah dengan Kejawen," *Al-Kautsar*, 2010, pp. 6.

³⁷ Orshid, *Sejarah Thoriqoh*.

³⁸ Hamzah Fansuri, "Asrar al-`arifin fi Bayan `Ilm al-Suluk wa-al-Tawhid" (Leiden, 1907).

ritual *kajatan*. The *kajatan* also called *ujuban* is the recitation of the prayer of hope which is symbolized through different meals. The reading of *ujuban* is performed at the *slametan* (communal meal) which is performed at the Shiddiqiyah anniversary of the leaders and rituals such as giving birth, funerals, or commemoration of certain months.

The locality of the Shiddiqiyah also appears in the ritual of *kautsaran*, a collective recitation of litanies. *Kautsaran* is also a compilation of litanies containing several short *surah* (chapters) in the Qur'an, *bā qiyatus Ṣālībāt*, *kalimah tayyibah*, *nafi' ihbāt* (several Islamic phrases mostly recited in the ritual), and *Asmā al-ḥusna* (99 names of Allah/God).³⁹ The *Kautsaran* was compiled by Kiai Muchtar based on the spiritual inspiration he received during his spiritual journey (*mujaḥ hadah*) in the range of 1956 from East Java to West Java.⁴⁰ The *Kautsaran* is also compiled based on the virtues which are recommended both in the Qur'an and the hadith. For James J. Fox, *Kautsaran* is the key ritual that demonstrates the locality of the Shiddiqiyah *tarekat*. *Kautsaran* has been one of the components that support the establishment of the Shiddiqiyah as a *tarekat* institution.⁴¹

From the side of genealogy, the *sanad* (genealogical chain) of Shiddiqiyah, despite its ambiguity, is related to other *tarekats*. According to Kiai Muchtar and his followers, the *sanad* of the Shiddiqiyah can be found in the book of *Tannīr al-Qulūb* by Amin al-Kurdi and also the book of *Fathul 'Arīfīn* by Ahamd Khatib Al-Makki.⁴² Based on my investigation on the *Tannīr al-Qulūb*, the *sanad* contained in the book ends with Muhammad Amin al-Kurdi. As Endang Turmudi also suggests, the *sanad* of Shiddiqiyah is unclear as it ends only to the 19th century figure

³⁹ Moch. Mukhtar Mu'thi, *Kautsaran Dan Dasar-Dasar Wirid Kautsaran* (Jombang: Al-Ikhwan, 2012), p. 1-39.

⁴⁰ Moch. Mukhtar Mu'thi, *Sejarah Do'a Kautsaran dan Kentamaannya* (Jombang: Al-Ikhwan, 2007), p. 4.

⁴¹ James J. Fox, "Wawancara," Australian National University (ANU) Canberra, November 25, 2019.

⁴² Ikhwan Roudlur Riyahin, *Thoriqoh Shiddiqiyah di Mana Saja, Kapan Saja, dalam Keadaan Apa Saja* (Jombang: Al-Ikhwan, t.t.), p. 88–91.

Amin al-Kurdi and does not mention the following chain that leads to *Kiai Muchtar*. He also did not mention how he acquired the leadership (*mursbid*) of Shiddiqiyah *tarekat*.⁴³

The centrality of Amin al-Kurdi in the Shiddiqiyah is perhaps closely related to another *tarekat* that also popular in Jombang, the Naqsyabandiyah *tarekat*. Both *tarekat* claim to establish their *sanad* to Amin al-Kurdi. Nevertheless, in *Fathul 'Arifin* by Ahmad Khatib al-Makki (1916), the *sanad* listed in the book ends with Ahmad Khatib al-Makki.⁴⁴

Kiai Muchtar claimed that he was connected to Ahmad Khatib through Syua'ib Jamali, the disciple of Nurul Iman. Unfortunately, these latter two names are still being discussed and need to further inquiry whether they are connected or not. If the claim is true, in fact, the *sanad* of Shiddiqiyah which is connected to Ahmad Khatib Al-Makki, resorts as an ample proof that the *sanad* of Shiddiqiyah which is related to the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. As it is known, the book of *Fathul 'Arifin* is a book about *dhikr* which also mentions the *sanad* of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. Therefore, it is possible that the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah's *sanad* is also used by the Shiddiqiyah .

Nevertheless, several Sufi sources mentioned that the name of Shiddiqiyah was indeed used by several early Sufi orders⁴⁵ including the Egyptian Shiddiqiyah. However, the Shiddiqiyah in Egypt has different characteristics from the Shiddiqiyah in Jombang, Indonesia as the former traces its *sanad* to Abu Hasan al-Syadili (d. 1258), the founder of Syadiliyyah *tarekat*. Thus, it is reasonably true that Egyptian Shiddiqiyah is known also as the Shiddiqiyah Syadiliyyah,⁴⁶ while the Shiddiqiyah

⁴³ Endang Turmudi, *Struggling for the Umma; Changing Leadership Roles of Kiai in Jombang, East Java* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2006), p. 63.

⁴⁴ Ahmad Khatib, *Fathu Al-'arifin*, n.d., p. 9.

⁴⁵ Aboebakar Atjeh, *Pengantar Ilmu Tarekat (Uraian Tentang Mistik)*, 3rd ed. (Solo: Ramadhani, 1985).

⁴⁶ Siddiqiya, "Al-Ta'rif Bi al-Thariqah al-Siddiqiyah al-Shadiliyyah," *Al-Thariqah al-Siddiqiyah al-Shadiliyyah*, <https://siddiqiya.com/index.php/what-is-siddiqiya>, accessed January 21, 2021.

Jombang is closer to the Naqsyabandiyah, Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah or Khalwatiyyah, as mentioned above. In other words, the *sanad* of this *tarekat* is still problematic, as Zamakhsyar Dhofier also urges.⁴⁷

Thus, as the above discussion, the Shiddiqiyyah is indeed par excellence a local Sufism in contemporary Indonesia. The Shiddiqiyyah combines Islamic Sufism and Javanese tradition into a single Sufi group. Thus, the locality of Shiddiqiyyah become a vivid example of the so-called of “Javanese Sufism.” Javanese Sufism infers to Sufi that adopt and adapt Javanese and Islamic Sufi tradition, thus the two are in constant negotiation and exchange. In the following discussion, I will turn to another important characteristic of the Shiddiqiyyah and its relation the Indonesian state ideology. This part argues that the Shiddiqiyyah not only developed a nationalist identity as a strategy of self-defense from outside attacks but also to counter the disintegration of the nation which began to develop, especially those who came from Islamic conservatism. This phenomenon seems to return to the period in which the Sufism movement was an important agent in maintaining the integrity of a nation in the context of colonialism.

The Nationalistic Ideas of Shiddiqiyyah

The Shiddiqiyyah is well-known for its strong nationalistic slogan. The doctrine of nationalism has been essential for the Shiddiqiyyah and it resorts as a venue to embrace state ideology with a strong Sufi tradition. The doctrine of love of the homeland (*cinta tanah air*), for example, believed as an authentic hadith rather than the saying of the Prophet's companions (*sahaba*) lies as the core doctrine of the Shiddiqiyyah. *Kiai* Muchtar believes that the norms of loving the homeland also cannot be separated from the Indonesian independence phenomenon that was

⁴⁷ Zamakhsyari Dhofier, “The Pesantren Tradition: A Study of The Role of The Kyai in the Maintenance of the Traditional Ideology of Islam in Java” *Ph.D Thesis*, Australian National University, 1980.

given by God.⁴⁸ In addition to interpretations of the *hadith* love of the homeland, Shiddiqiyah's followers also believe that the history of the Prophet as a figure who loves Makkah more than his love for other cities. The Medina Charter (*mīthāq al-madīnah*) which unites *Muhājirīn* (the immigrant) and *Ansār* (the native inhabitant), Muslims and Jews in Medina also became the normative source of the nationalistic ideas brought by the Shiddiqiyah. These normativity and historical construction was contextualized by the Shiddiqiyah into the context of the Indonesian nation. In so doing, the Shiddiqiyah demonstrates the nationalistic doctrine through various religious symbols. It is written in various places and also delivered orally on many occasions. This action aims to instill the doctrine that the love of the homeland is an obligation that must be implemented in various aspects of life.



Figure 1. The monument of Love of the homeland, located at the Center of Shiddiqiyah, Ploso Jombang

⁴⁸ Moch. Mukhtar Mu'thi, *Keumikan Thoriqoh Shiddiqiyah* (Jombang: Al-Ikhwān, 2014).

In terms of history and the cultural space in which Shiddiqiyyah emerged and developed, *Kiai* Muchtar claimed that he was the grandson of a warrior during the Diponegoro war. His grandfather, Yai Syuhada was a pupil of the Diponegoro⁴⁹ who was famous as a powerful guerrilla and leader of the Javanese war against the Dutch. It is also said that the first Indonesian president Sukarno was a best friend to *Kiai* ‘Abdul Mu’thi, the father of *Kiai* Muchtar. Soekarno’s father, *Raden* Soekemi had a good relationship with Haji ‘Abdul Mu’thi while living in Ploso Jombang as a teacher. The story goes that Soekemi often received financial assistance from Haji ‘Abdul Mu’thi, because the teacher’s salary he earned was not sufficient to meet the needs of his daily life. In return, *Raden* Soekemi was also requested to teach the children of Haji ‘Abdul Mu’thi, including *Kiai* Muchtar.⁵⁰

Importantly, we should also pay attention to the early foundation of Shiddiqiyyah to better comprehend its nationalistic slogan. As declared as a *tarekat* group, the Shiddiqiyyah had been contested by majority of Sufi groups in Indonesia. It is argued that the Shiddiqiyyah is a heretic *tarekat* as having no convincing genealogical links or *sanad* to mainstream Sufi groups. Consequently, the Shiddiqiyyah has exempted from the list of authentic *tarekat* groups by two major Indonesian Sufi groups associations, the *Jam’iyyah Ahlith Thoriqoh al-Mu’tabaroh an-Nahdliyyah* and *Jam’iyyah Ahli Thoriqoh Mu’tabaroh Indonesia* (JATMI).

This situation led the Shiddiqiyyah to protect their organization from outsiders and nationalism which was promoted by Shiddiqiyyah aimed to attract the attention of the state that their teachings did not deviate from the ideology of Pancasila (Five Principles of the Indonesia State). Thus, the Shiddiqiyyah develops what I call as “ideological strategy.” By this strategy, Shiddiqiyyah later received the attention of the state. As a part of supporting the state, during the New Order era, *Kiai* Muchtar

⁴⁹ See more detail on Diponegoro, P. B. R., *The Power of Prophecy*.

⁵⁰ Dian Sukarno, *Trilogi Spiritualitas Bung Karno, Candradimuka* (Jombang: Dibra Al-Kautsar, 2013), p. 177.

also instructed his followers to vote for the government party, the Golkar⁵¹ and *Kiai* Muctar was appointed as an important person in the state supported Gabungan Usaha Pembaharuan Pendidikan Islam (GUPPI).⁵² Nevertheless, the state backed-up Sufi group is not enclosed to the Shiddiqiyyah only as other Sufi groups, such as Khalwatiyah Samman in North Sulawesi⁵³ and the Syahadatain in West Java, received generous support from the New Order government.

The doctrine of nationalism that Shiddiqiyyah indoctrinates appears in many ritual and activities. The Shiddiqiyyah requests the doctrine to love the homeland and to be faithful to Indonesian state as fundamental prerequisite for joining the *tarekat*. The Shiddiqiyyah requires his followers to read the pledge of allegiance to the homeland before *bai'at* (oath of allegiance). This pledge of allegiance to the homeland is one of eight agreements that were imposed for the disciples before binding their promises to become members of the *tarekat*.



Figure 2. Eight obligations of the Shiddiqiyyah that must be fulfilled

⁵¹ Orshid, *Sejarah Thoriqoh*.

⁵² Mochammad Munif, *Sejarah Kemenangan Perjuangan Shiddiqiyyah Pada Tahun 1970*, Vol. 2, (Jombang: Al-Ikhwani, 2012).

⁵³ Ubaedillah, "Khalwatiyah Samman Tarekat in South Sulawesi, Indonesia (1920S-1998)," 637.

Those eight are: able to obey and serve God, able to obey and serve Muhammad as the Prophet, able to obey and serve parents, able to serve other people, able to serve The Unitary of the Republic of Indonesia, able to love of Indonesia as a homeland, able to practice *Tarekat Shiddiqiyyah* teaching, and able to appreciate the time.⁵⁴

In addition to basic principles, the words *atas berkat rahmat Allah yang Maha Kuasa* (as for the blessing of Allah's almighty), a sentence which is written in the earliest Indonesian constitution on 1945, become a faithful sentence among the Shiddiqiyyah members. In many documents of the Shiddiqiyyah, this sentence is always written after *basmalah* (the first verse of the Qur'an) and recited in many speeches. According to *Kiai* Muchtar, the sentence delivers a deep meaning for Indonesians. Without the soul and philosophy of this sentence, Indonesians would surely fail to protect diversities of the Indonesian.

Manunggaling keimanan lan kemanusiaan (the unity between faith and humanity) and also the triple S: *Silaturrahmi* (friendship), *Santun* (polite), and *Sedekah* (alms) are two other fundamental doctrine of the Shiddiqiyyah. In so doing, the Shiddiqiyyah establishes also the Persaudaraan Cinta Tanah Air Indonesia (PCTAI) which promotes the principle of unity of faith and humanity. Although the organization was initiated by an Islamic organization, the PCTAI as exemplifies through its flag (see the following flag) accommodates various religions in Indonesia. The "top three yellow dots" reflect the basis of several religions: Trinity in the Christian and Catholic, *Tripitaka* in Buddhist, *Trimurti* in Hinduism, and *San Cai* in Confucius. The symbol of "+" on the right and left is called *tapak dara* in the Buddhist, the cross in the Christianity, the *swastika* symbol in Hinduism.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Mu'thi, *Keunikan Thoriqoh Shiddiqiyyah*.

⁵⁵ "Anggaran Dasar Persaudaraan Cinta Tanah Air Indonesia yang Dijiwai Manunggalnya Keimanan Dan Kemanusiaan" (Jombang, March 18, 2017).



Figure 3. the flag of PCTAI

To conclude the above discussion, we could argue that the entanglement between Sufism and the doctrine of nationalism should be better comprehend through the historical dynamics of Shiddiqiyah. At the beginning of its development, Shiddiqiyah adopted an ideological strategy to protect the group from external threats and accusations. To do so, the Shiddiqiyah embraced nationalism as its ideological protection and identity. According to Syakur,⁵⁶ the closeness of Shiddiqiyah to the state ideologically is a survival strategy of the movement. In its history, not only Shiddiqiyah but also the Sufi orders, naturally, struggled to maintain its existence and persist in attracting followers. The Sufi orders are in a social arena that cannot be separated from social conflict. Therefore, the survival movement is a necessity for them. In the context of Shiddiqiyah, the problem faced at the beginning of its development is the allegation of deviant teachings from various circles, including came from the JATMAN. It was confirmed by *Kiai* Muchtar, that Shiddiqiyah was accused of being a deviant sect and teaching the *kejawen* (the Javanese mysticism

⁵⁶ Abd Syakur, "Gerakan Tarekat Shiddiqiyah Pusat Losari, Ploso, Jombang: Studi tentang Strategi Bertahan, Struktur Mobilisasi, dan Proses Pembimbingan" (Disertasi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2008).

teaching) and Shamanism. He said the slander against Shiddiqiyah came from various directions. Indeed, disputes between Shiddiqiyah and their oppositions were resolved in court.⁵⁷

Therefore, looking at the background of the emergence of Shiddiqiyah, I argue that their nationalist ideology is an effort to strengthen the organization. In the 1970s, nationalist organizations received sufficient recognition from the Indonesian government. Consequently, it is not surprising if the Shiddiqiyah received political privileges and protection from the New Order government. Nevertheless, following the fall of New Order and the subsequent recognition by JATMAN in 2009, the external threats have been diminishing. The Shiddiqiyah experiences further periods which I would call as “the period for struggle and defense”. The first period is the phase where Shiddiqiyah has not been recognized as a *tarekat* organization by JATMAN or by society. Whereas the second phase is the phase after Shiddiqiyah is recognized as the *tarekat mu'tabarah* (recognized Sufi order) and accepted by the wider community. From these two phases, I contend that the nationalism promoted by Shiddiqiyah suffered a change in motives and functions. In the first phase, the Nationalism of Shiddiqiyah was can be seen as a form of ideology for the survival of an organization. At that time the local *tarekat* was similar to the Indonesian minority of beliefs (*aliran kepercayaan*) that were stigmatized by the community negatively. The only way that can be done to maintain the organization is by showing identity as an integral part of the state ideology. With this strategy, it will get recognition from the state even though some people are still reluctant to admit it.

After receiving recognition from the wider community and the authority of *tarekat* organizations in Indonesia, the problems faced by Shiddiqiyah were different. The rise of Islamism that disturbs the diversity of religious ways is a threat in itself. Shiddiqiyah made

⁵⁷ Orshid, *Sejarah Thoriqoh Shiddiqiyah Fase Pertama*.

nationalism an advocacy effort for understanding Islamic moderatism. Shiddiqiyah with his character taught the importance of maintaining diversity, seeing the emergence of Islamism as a threat that must be addressed early on. The defense strategy employed by Shiddiqiyah was effective because it was based on a very strong doctrine. I argue that the nationalism branding strategy developed by Shiddiqiyah has fulfilled the ideal criteria of ideology and can survive amid the current of social change. Shiddiqiyah can easily call up various socio-religious problems that arise, both on a national and international scale, one of them is the issue of Islamism. Shiddiqiyah has advocated a moderate understanding of Islam with various efforts and movements.

Conclusion

The locality of Shiddiqiyah particularly appears through synthesis of Sufism Javanese mysticism. Shiddiqiyah also represents a local tarekat in Indonesia that successfully adopts the state ideology and campaigns nationalism through Sufi activities at the grassroots. The adoption of the state ideology is reasonable if we look at the history of the Shiddiqiyah. In 1973, when the Shiddiqiyah foundation was firstly established, at the same time as the external conflict faced by Shiddiqiyah, the founder, *Kiai* Muchtar made nationalism as the strategy to survive amidst negative stigma coming from society and mainstream Islamic organizations. At that time Shiddiqiyah was a minority of Sufi group organizations, famously known as a local Sufism as mentioned by Bruinessen⁵⁸ and Syam.⁵⁹ At the peak of Islamic conservative-turn in contemporary Indonesia, the Shiddiqiyah plays as an agent advocating and promoting moderate Islamic understanding, by respecting plurality and diversity.

⁵⁸ Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat* (Yogyakarta: Gading Publishing, 2012).

⁵⁹ Nur Syam, "Kata Pengantar," *Tasawuf Kultural: Fenomena Salawat Wahidiyyah* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2008).

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