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THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE IN THE REIGN OF SULTAN  
ALAUDIN MANSUR SHAH (8TH RULER OF ACEH)

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ABSTRACT

History has recorded the glory of Aceh in the culture of intellectual philosophy in the 16th century through the manuscripts which have been produced by scholars at the figures of the era. But to be fair, research should take into account the contributions of sponsors, or motivators to such activities. So of course the biggest contributor to the journey to restore the intellectual tradition lies in the hands of the government. In the context of the implementation of the initiators of scientific activities, the name of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah, ruler of Aceh's 8th; should be on the radar of researchers. Therefore, this study sought to examine the philosophy of science and its significance to the development of Aceh during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah. Using literature review and social cognitive theory approach, this paper seeks to trace one by one the data related to the advancement of the philosophy of science at that time. The philosophy of knowledge turns out to make a great contribution to a precise understanding in the field of religion; and most important is the awareness to bear the trust, as the caliph on this earth.

**Keywords:** Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah, Philosophy of Knowledge, Understanding, Awareness

ABSTRAK

Sejarah merakamkan kegemilangan Aceh dalam pembudayaan falsafah intelek pada abad k-16 melalui manuskrip-manuskrip yang telah dihasilkan oleh tokoh-tokoh ilmuwan pada zaman tersebut. Namun agar adil, penelitian harus memperhitungkan kontribusi sponsor, atau motivator untuk aktivitas semacam itu. Maka tentu saja penyumbang terbesar perjalanan mengembalikan tradisi intelektual itu ada di tangan pemerintah. Dalam rangka penyelenggaraan kegiatan keilmuan para penggagas, nama Sultan Alaudin Mansur Syah, penguasa Aceh yang ke-8; seharusnya sudah ada di radar para peneliti. Kajian ini berusaha mengkaji filosofi ilmu dan signifikansinya bagi pembangunan Aceh pada masa pemerintahan Sultan Alauddin Mansur Shah. Dengan menggunakan kajian pustaka dan pendekatan teori kognitif sosial, makalah ini berupaya menelusuri satu per satu data yang terkait dengan kemajuan ilmu filsafat pada saat itu. Filsafat ilmu ternyata memberikan sumbangan besar bagi pemahaman yang tepat di bidang agama, dan yang terpenting kesadaran untuk menanggung amanah sebagai khalifah di muka bumi ini.

**Kata Kunci:** Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah, Filsafat Pengetahuan, Pemahaman, Kesadaran

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**A. Introduction**

Sultan Alaudin Riayat Shah Al-Qahhar (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ruler of Aceh, is considered the most successful Ruler in developing Aceh. This is because the rulers after him were unstable; either removed from office, or assassinated (Federspiel, 2007:57). The statement may be true from the beginning to the expansion of the Empire Aceh; but in the development of philosophy of science, the Empire reached its golden age during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah, who is the ruler of Aceh 8th.

In 1580, Islamic knowledge has reached a peak in Aceh. Mastery in the field of knowledge at that time was divided into two, philosophical and practical. In the field of philosophy, the focus is on the mastery of knowledge resources, and ways to reach agreement in deciding things. Included in the field of philosophy are logical knowledge, comparative knowledge, metaphysics, semantics, metaphors, and other ideas of etiquette that reflect the height of the use of reason in intellectual development (Al-Attas, 1988:32-33).

While in practice, it is also divided into two, namely adherence to Islamic law is known as Kanun Syarak Kerajaan Aceh; and the spread of tariqah in the palace, and to all the common people. Tariqah Qadiriyyah founded by Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani being foremost tariqah practiced in Aceh, especially among the court, as mentioned in Adat Aceh,

This is the custom of the council of kings, God willing, with the blessings of the intercession of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and with the blessings of the miracles of all prophets and with the blessings of the four companions and with the noble of Sultan Arifin Sayyid Sheikh Mahyuddin Abdul Kadir Jailani and with with the blessings of the prayers of all head of saints, and with the blessings of all the saints from the east and the west and with the blessings of the sacred of the late His Majesty and with the blessings of the sacred of the late Saiyyidil Mukammil, it is on years 1015 when in the time of Sayyidina wa Mawlana Paduka Seri Sultan Iskandar Muda Juhan Sovereign over all, on the throne of the land of Bandar Aceh Darussalam (Harun and Ghani, 1985:36)

The culture of tariqah in Aceh is much earlier than that if we take into account the death of Hamzah Fansuri in 1527 (Guillot & Kalus, 2009:27). This is because he is the developer of the tariqah based on the poems he wrote,

Hamzah is originally Fansuri  
Got to exist in Shahrnawi  
Obtained the caliphate of knowledge that supremacy  
From Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (Rastam, 2020:10)

Hamzah position as a Caliph, likely to have caused this tariqah spread throughout Aceh, and the states of Malaya. After his death, the role of spreading the tariqah was probably taken over by his students such as Hasan Fansuri and Abdul Jamal (Iskandar, 1995:375)

Tariqah Qadiriyyah constantly be the most important element in the spiritual practicality in the palace officially, until the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mahmud Shah (25<sup>th</sup> Ruler of Aceh), It has been destined by Allah Almighty with the blessings of the miracles of Rasulullah (peace be upon him) and with the blessings of Sayyid Sheikh Abdul Kadir Jailani and with the blessings of all saints and with the sacred blessings of all kings and the blessings of the late Paduka Marhum Alaudin Ahmad Shah and the blessings of the glory and greatness of Paduka Marhum Alaudin Johan Shah Berdaulat, then Paduka Seri Sultan Alaudin Ahmad Shah left Mukim Empat on the

twenty-seventh day of the month of Jumadil Awal, Sunday night for an hour until the Ulee Susu Mosque at midnight, then agreed with all the elders... (Harun & Ghani, 1985:33)

Foreign scholars who came to Aceh during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah were not spared from getting involved in the debate on the philosophy of science. But they finally leave Aceh for not being able to withstand a very strong current of intellect, which have reached levels so high at that time. Sheikh Abu Al-Khair ibn Sheikh Ibn Hajar, and Sheikh Mohamed Yamani, two scholars of Mecca, had sailed leave Aceh after failing to find solutions to the debate about A'yan Thabitah (The Permanent Archetypes). Similarly, Sheikh Muhammad ibn Hasan Jilani from Gujarat, who decided to sail to Mecca after being asked by the people of Aceh, in order to teach the science of mysticism (Ar-Raniri, 2004-339-340).

Philosophy of science spread in Acehnese society at that time was very unique because it combines the integration of knowledge and charity; which is rooted in the most basic thing which is knowledge that can introduce oneself to Allah SWT. The glory of knowledge is according to the measure of the glory of knowledge. Thus, the most important, highest and most glorious information is Allah SWT as the creator. As revealed by Sheikh Shamsudin Al-Sumatra'i, in his writing entitled *Jawhar Al-Haqa'iq*, one needs to know Allah with perfect knowledge (Rastam, 2020:54).

In his other writing, entitled *Al-Ma'rifah*, Sheikh Shamsudin stated that the mysticism is divided into two, namely the mysticism of the beginning and the mysticism of the end. The initial mysticism refers to the process of knowing the oneness of Allah SWT and knowing Rasulullah SAW by faith. The mysticism of the end is to look at Al-Haqq Ta'ala with the eyes of the heart (Rastam, 2020:55).

Sheikh Shamsudin is a very famous scholar Aceh at the time of Sultan Iskandar Muda Mahkota Alam (12<sup>th</sup> Ruler of Aceh). One of his teachers in the field of tariqah was Muhammad ibn Husin Jani Jamilah Al-Bahmani (Rastam, 2020:12); who had studied with the great scholar of Makkah, who was originally from India, named Sheikh Abdul Wahhab Al-Muttaqi. Sheikh Abdul Wahhab who was also a professor in the field of hadith in Makkah, died in 1592. He became a professor in the field of hadith after his teacher, Sheikh Ali Al-Muttaqi Al-Burhanpuri died in 1568. Sheikh Ali Al-Muttaqi took the knowledge of hadith from Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al-Sakhawi, Abu Al-Hasan Al-Bakri and Ibn Hajar Al-Makki, who died in 1567 (Ishaq, 1976:232-236). Ibn Hajar al-Makki was likely the father of Sheikh Abu Al-Khair, one of the scholars who come to worship in Aceh during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah. Based on the above dating, it can be assumed that Sheikh Shamsudin also most likely became a scholar during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah.

In another narration, Sheikh Shamsudin was appointed Sheikh of Islam around 1588-1589 during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Riayat Shah Sayyid Al-Mukammil. It is said that the age requirement for such appointment is 40 years (Rastam, 2020:7). Thus, it can be estimated that the

age of Sheikh Shamsudin during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah was around 29 to 36 years.

The condition to become a Sheikh of Islam is to be pious in four sects, as well as master the 16 main branches of knowledge. These include the other conditions relating to the personality of themselves as embodied in the Kanun Syarak Kerajaan Aceh (Code of Islamic kingdom of Aceh). Nevertheless, almost all of the books written by Sheikh Shamsudin Al-Sumatra'i, which is estimated to number 58 in all (Rastam, 2020:34), revolve around the mysticism to Allah SWT in the context of the philosophical-monotheistic-metaphysical debate that is the essence of development, and the intellectual views of the time.

This writing has two main objectives, namely, to look at the philosophy of knowledge that spread during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah, and the role of the philosophy of knowledge in forming an accurate understanding of the true purpose of life in the world. The basis of the framework of this study is social cognitive theory because the focus is on the philosophical dimension, which refers to the ability to know God. The philosophical dimension is considered the highest dimension in the context of intellectual debate during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah.

Because this dimension is in the domain of metaphysics, then the debate must not run away from the perspective of monotheism with certain characteristics such as religious order, belief, reasoning, contemplation and blessings. The domain of metaphysics makes philosophy abstract, categories and divine, until it finally triggers the recognition of divinity. An appreciation of this recognition will motivate and stimulate a person to improve his skills, mastery and achievement (Teh, Embi, Yusoff, & Mahamod, 2009:6).

This qualitative study also uses a library approach to collect data, classify data according to keywords and organize data according to historical chronology. Furthermore, the data will be critically analyzed in accordance with the theme of the study.

## **B. Discussion**

### **Mysticism as the highest Philosophy of Science**

In the 16th century, imperialist powers from Europe sought to dominate all corners of the world in particular by controlling important trade routes. To balance that power, the Muslims, especially the largest Islamic empire at that time, the Ottomans, played a very important role in developing engineering technology and armaments. However, another factor that is no less important in balancing the colonial power is the influence of religions and cultures that are very strongly rooted in the archipelago. The influence of this religion-culture became a philosophy of life; which formed an accurate view of Islam so as to play an important role in the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago, and made the religion a means of developing life and administration. At that point, the government of Aceh can be regarded as the greatest



representative of the archipelago. The discovery of the manuscript of the translation of Al-Aqa'id Al-Nasafi which is believed to have been completed was written in 1590; secures the most important evidence of Muslims' thought in the archipelago, particularly in Aceh at the time, based on the unity of Malay-Muslim's ontology-epistemology who are very strong (Daud, 2005:6).

It is unreasonable if Al-Aqa'id Al-Nasafi was only studied in 1590. Instead of course it had been well mastered a few years earlier especially in the years of the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah which was flooded by foreign scholars at the time. The discovery of the manuscript translation of Al-Aqa'id Al-Nasafi considered very important because it can give an idea of the philosophy of science among the Malays at that time. Among the important pictures that can be identified are

1. A description of the various ways to achieve knowledge in an integrated and systematic manner, that is, through the senses, intellect, and reliable news such as mutawatir news, and news from Rasulullah SAW. The assertion of this description suggests that the Malays understanding of the concept of science and epistemology methods are more comprehensive than the concept and modern methods.
2. Understanding the Malays against the truths that remain, and are subject to change; for example the nature of all the realms of beings which is always new because it consists of appearance and nature.
3. The Oneness of God and His Attributes; is the backbone of the Malay world view in all matters such as the socio-political, legal and moral. This view has empowered the soul of the believer to dare to divide the oceans and forests and examine nature because the soul is no longer beset by distorted understandings.
4. Understanding the Malays about the role of God Almighty that encompasses all human actions, and the meaning of counsel. The concept of endeavor makes human life always active, but God remains the determinant in every aspect of life.
5. God has the power to determine punishment and forgiveness on His servants who commit sins as long as they do not allow what is forbid, or forbid what is allow because both of those things can lead to disbelief. This understanding motivates human beings to always correct their spiritual and moral position, and to be within the circle of Iman and Islam.
6. Understanding the Malays of the position of the Companions and the Caliphate. It is an obligation for Muslims to have a leader with the tasks that have been decided, and always have a good thought of the companions.
7. An understanding of the position of believers, who are exalted higher than the angels, always motivates Muslims to strengthen their faith (Daud, 2005:8-12).

The understanding as above is often seen as very related to the term *Wujudiyah*, although the author wants to avoid using this term because the philosophy contained in it seems to be seen as a deviant philosophy. While *Wujudiyah* understood in the present context should be viewed in the perspective of intellectual because that is the philosophical discourse understanding in the community, particularly in the Aceh government of the past. If it is deviant, of course Sheikh Shamsudin as the Sheikh of Islam will not write about it which has reached dozens of books.

The philosophy of knowledge that is in the domain of metaphysics is tied to the ideology of *gnosis-illumination* which leads to the theme of love. It contains philosophy, belief, and asceticism which are a speculative union. It is this condition that causes the unity to be mystical, even though it is a manifestation of the true understanding of monotheism, and an interpretation of the true Existence which is the oneness of God (Humaidi, 2019:95).

Asceticism which is the key to the Sufi life exemplifies a positive outlook in interacting, thus overcoming conventional external limitations. This idea is unique in understanding the diverse existence, and facilitates the process of dealing with it. The inclusive nature that exists in Sufi discourse highlights warmth as opposed to the theology which is exclusive in nature. It is this understanding that fails to be understood in the context of the present that places such an inclusive position as an attempt to provoke pluralism, whereas the most important element that is highlighted is the attitude of tolerance, without ignoring the position of Islam, which remains a recognized religion, and defended its truth (Ramli & Abdullah, 2018:132). With this understanding, we are still able to see the Portuguese breed in Aceh and Malacca, leaving many legacy even though they now no longer called invaders.

Philosophy of science is engraved in Aceh interpret the faith to accept the oneness of God and cleanse it of all things. The confirmation of this oneness is in the form of *syahadah* which shows that Allah is the True Being. The fact of existence is understood in the framework of absolute power to belong to God, although man has the will to act but his space of action remains within the rule of God. Nature is the sign of God's creation. Nature can be seen but the Essence of God cannot be seen because only God is All-Knowing about Himself. Therefore, only Allah alone is worthy of worship because Allah is the Creator and Owner of the Universe. This understanding of monotheism can be summarized into two parts, namely knowledge of God's power and knowledge of God's position. The power of God as the owner of all the Universe can be seen through the manifestation of the creation of the Universe, but God's position on His Essence is known only by Himself (Siraj, 2020:132-140). With this understanding of the Malay community, especially in Aceh at the time, aware of the responsibilities that should be implemented as the servant and God's creatures.

This monotheistic philosophy is like a pearl that completes human perfection, which requires wise interpretation. The values contained in it are extraordinary values that are able to

reduce protracted conflicts because its axis is love and tolerance among beings, but at the same time place Islam in the highest position. Once blended in the soul, then this philosophy becomes a tonic to present the best morals, worship and work to God (Wirajaya, Sudardi, Istadiyanta, & Wardo, 2020:56-60).

Awareness of mysticism has given birth to the appreciation of the philosophy of knowledge throughout life. For example, the Aceh's house has a philosophy associated with the law and the fact of Islam. In terms of law, the house to be built must be based on purity and rituals of worship. The house is built on a platform to avoid being exposed to feces or dirt. While the design is horizontal by facing the Qibla, is in order to attract more family members or guests to be able to perform congregational prayers together. The same is true of the position of the stairs, which should not disturb the congregation who are praying, or be a barrier to male and female guests. In term of fact, the house to be built must be based on brotherhood that strengthens family and neighborhood ties. The low door of the house are designed to mutual respect transformed from guests to the hosts, while host welcomed him with warmth, harmony with the famous phrase of Acehnese society,

Aceh's door house is like a hearts of Aceh's people, it is difficult to enter, but once inside will be received with open heart and warmth (Muttaqin, 2012).



Figure 1: Traditional House of Aceh is rich in aesthetic value of Islam

### **Kanun Syarak and Tariqah as a manifestation of mysticism understanding**

Kanun Syarak (Islamic Penal) of Aceh was originally known as Tazkirah Tabaqah written in the time of the first ruler of Aceh, Sultan Alauddin Shah Johan Ali Ibrahim Mughayat. The book was completed in 1507. Its content revolves around law and constitution (Usman, 2005:7). The content of this book was probably fully implemented during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah, based on a note in Bustanul Salatin,

Is the sultan very pious and God-consciousness, yet fair on all items that are punished, and hard on all items of his command (Ar-Raniri, 2004:339).

Justice is very important in governance because it shapes the personality of the ruler in order to have human values, which are virtue. Rulers are given a special position because this group is considered to be the legacy of the caliphate in the Islamic government. But at the same time, ruler must display fairness in line with the dominant concept in Islamic leadership. Justice is not limited to matters of government, judiciary and law alone but covers all aspects of human life without any exceptions. Islam gives a description of the meaning of justice as putting something in its right and proper place. In other words, justice involves the recognition of the right to an appropriate position. Justice in Islam is not the same as the principle of neutrality or neutral attitude, because justice is in fact in favor of truth (Jamian, Yusoff, Hanafiah, & Yunos, 2017:63-64).

Justice is the result of a perfect understanding of enlightenment and wisdom. Justice is perfectly executed when the testimony and confession of the existence of God, is fully understood. A perfect understanding will validate the position and role of man as a caliph on earth and submit to the Creator (Al-Attas, Risalah Untuk Kaum Muslimin, 2001:37-39).

Perhaps it is not impossible, because it is to be a reminder to the king and the people to deal with trust, then this sense of justice has been immortalized on the currency as found on the gold dinar during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah.



Figure 2: On the front, the name of Alaudin ibn Ahmad is written. While the back, Al-Sultan Al-Adil. This currency is a type of quarter dinar gold (Chuan, 2005).

Most likely, Tariqah Qadiriyyah is the earliest Sufi Order that had been practiced at the court, and among the people of Aceh based on the traditions of the community who sought

recourse to the founder of the spiritual respect, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani as contained in the manuscript Adat Aceh (Harun & Ghani, 1985:36).

Society's acceptance of this tariqah is probably related to its characteristics such as love for all beings, avoiding fanaticism in religion or politics, and educating the heart to always be humble (Riyadi, 2014:376).

Tariqah has a very important role in the socialization of society for example

1. To develop an ideal-divine-oriented education system by making the field of preaching as a creative culture, which is able to adapt to the group of traditions. This principle of tariqah-based education tends to be evolutionary acculturative, rather than revolutionary exclusively. For that reason, tariqah is very easily accepted and spread from the palace to the lower society. The local culture wrapped in Islamic teachings makes it easy to spread and embody, then take root in new places.
2. Solve the problems that plague society by creating well-being icons such as charities, financial institutions and business skills. But the most important function is to lead a life based on brotherhood and family.
3. Creating a sense of togetherness and obedience so as to produce spiritual strength that can be transformed at any time to defend the sovereignty of Islam. This strength has helped the government of Aceh against the colonial power in the archipelago (Riyadi, 2014:377-382).

This dynamic function of tariqah eliminates prejudice against it, which often assumes that tariqah makes human beings stagnant, fatal and rigid in terms of intellectual development (Riyadi, 2014:382).

### **C. Conclusion**

As contained in the Kanun Syarak (Code of Islamic) of Aceh, the requirements to become a community leader in the countryside must master the Islamic law, and the rulings of government. In other words, if subordinate leaders are required to master sharia law well, of course the higher positions, master more branches of knowledge and skills. In fact, the position of hulubalang (warrior) is equivalent to the position of imam mukim (district leader), who not only masters the sharia law and the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW, but is also able to be a community leader by being the imam of Friday Prayers and reciting sermons. As for positions such as kadi, it is necessary to qualify to be a imam mukim and hulubalang, as well as to master the knowledge of Sorof (morphology), Nahu (grammar), Fiqh (law), Tauhid (creed), Tasawwuf (metaphysics), Hadith, Tarikh (history), Balaghah (rhetoric), Bayan (comparison, tropes and metonymies), Ma'ani (semantics), Badi ' (science of metaphor and good style), Isti'arah (metaphor), Mantik (logic), Hisab and Adab (Usman, 2005:90-93).

It is not surprising when the uncle of Sheikh Al-Raniri Nurudin named Muhammad Al-Hamid came to Aceh circa 1580-1583 to teach jurisprudence, ethics, logic and rhetoric; Acehese people are more inclined to explore the field of metaphysics and Sufi doctrine. This is because most of them have already mastered the fields of knowledge to be taught by Muhammad Al-Hamid. Thus, their interest is more directed towards the philosophy of knowledge that can radiate deeper intellectual satisfaction. This condition causes Muhammad Al-Hamid was forced out of Aceh to explore the science of mysticism, although he was a great scholar of that era (Al-Attas, 1988:33-34).

The development of a complex philosophy of science, and has an inside edge to the real purpose of life, has enabled the government of Aceh during the reign of Sultan Alaudin Mansur Shah has a legal and administrative system which systematically. This situation has created a conducive scientific environment that has succeeded in producing important characters whether in the field of intellect, military or leadership after the era of his rule. An understanding of the field of religion has given birth to an awareness to defend the sovereignty of religion and to bear the responsibility to govern the universe in the best possible way.

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