
Haji Batin Sulaiman's Thought in 'Aqīdah Education

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the religious educational thought of Haji Batin Sulaiman, a local cleric whose intellectual influence developed on Bangka Island from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Haji Batin Sulaiman placed strong emphasis on issues of tawḥīd within a society still shaped by local traditions and syncretic beliefs. His ideas are reflected not only through his oral da'wah activities but also through several written works in Malay text using Arabic script, including a translation of the ḥadīth "man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu", the Five Articles of Faith, and Sair Tsani, which serves as the concluding section of Asrār al-Insān by Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī. This study aims to identify and map Haji Batin Sulaiman's perspectives on 'aqīdah education as presented in his writings, and to explore their contribution to the development of Islamic education on Bangka Island. Employing a literature-based research design with historical and content-analysis approaches, this study involves data collection through source criticism, transliteration, interpretation, and textual analysis. The findings reveal that Haji Batin Sulaiman's conceptualization of 'aqīdah education centers on strengthening monotheism through an integrated rational, spiritual, and Sufi-oriented approach. Analysis of the manuscripts indicates four key emphases: (1) strengthening tawḥīd through self-knowledge, (2) reinforcing faith through the Five Creeds, (3) internalizing faith through oral and written traditions, and (4) implementing 'aqīdah education through rational and textual methods. Overall, Haji Batin Sulaiman's thought represents an important intellectual legacy and provides valuable insight for developing contextual Islamic education rooted in the principles of tawḥīd.

Keywords: Haji Batin Sulaiman, Islamic thought, 'aqīdah education, Malay-Jawi manuscripts, Islam Nusantara.

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengkaji pemikiran pendidikan keagamaan Haji Batin Sulaiman, seorang ulama lokal yang pengaruh intelektualnya berkembang di Pulau Bangka sejak akhir abad ke-19 hingga awal abad ke-20. Haji Batin Sulaiman memberikan

penekanan yang kuat pada persoalan tawhīd di tengah masyarakat yang masih dipengaruhi oleh tradisi lokal dan kepercayaan sinkretis. Gagasan-gagasannya tercermin tidak hanya melalui aktivitas dakwah lisan, tetapi juga melalui sejumlah karya tulis berbahasa Melayu beraksara Arab (Jawi), di antaranya terjemahan hadis “man ‘arafa nafsahu faqad ‘arafa rabbahu”, risalah tentang Lima Rukun Iman, serta Sair Tsani yang berfungsi sebagai bagian penutup dari kitab Asrār al-Insān karya Syekh Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan memetakan pandangan Haji Batin Sulaiman tentang pendidikan akidah sebagaimana tercermin dalam karya-karyanya, serta menelaah kontribusinya terhadap perkembangan pendidikan Islam di Pulau Bangka. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian kepustakaan yang dipadukan dengan pendekatan historis dan analisis isi, penelitian ini melibatkan pengumpulan data melalui kritik sumber, transliterasi, interpretasi, dan analisis teks. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konseptualisasi pendidikan akidah menurut Haji Batin Sulaiman berpusat pada penguatan tauhid melalui pendekatan yang terintegrasi antara rasional, spiritual, dan sufistik. Analisis manuskrip mengungkapkan empat penekanan utama, yaitu: (1) penguatan tauhid melalui pengenalan diri, (2) pengokohan iman melalui Lima Rukun Iman, (3) internalisasi iman melalui tradisi lisan dan tulisan, serta (4) penerapan pendidikan akidah melalui metode rasional dan tekstual. Secara keseluruhan, pemikiran Haji Batin Sulaiman merepresentasikan warisan intelektual yang penting dan memberikan wawasan berharga bagi pengembangan pendidikan Islam yang kontekstual dan berakar pada prinsip-prinsip tauhid.

Kata kunci: Haji Batin Sulaiman, pemikiran Islam, pendidikan akidah, manuskrip Melayu-Jawi, Islam Nusantara

1. Introduction

‘Aqīdah education constitutes one of the most essential components of Islamic education, as it serves as the foundational basis for all forms of worship and religious conduct of a Muslim (Zulkifli, 2007). ‘Aqīdah functions not only as the foundation of faith but also as a formative force that shapes the worldview, attitudes, and moral orientation of Muslims. Within the historical development of Islam in the Malay–Indonesian Archipelago (Nusantara), aqidah education has played a dual role: serving both as a medium for transmitting religious doctrine and as an instrument for shaping the sociocultural identity of Muslim communities.

Across various regions of the Malay–Indonesian Archipelago, including Bangka Island, aqidah education developed within a complex interplay of social, cultural, and historical dynamics. As an area located along major trade routes in the Bangka Strait, the island was exposed to diverse Islamic traditions. Islam had become the predominant religion among the Malay Bangka community since the eighteenth century (Zubair, 2018). However, the consolidation of Islamic da‘wah became more pronounced in the mid-nineteenth century with the emergence of several local scholars who actively advanced Islamic education. During this period, the religious education system continued to rely on traditional models, such as surau, langgar, and instruction conducted in the homes of local ulama. Aqidah was taught orally, transmitted from one generation to the next, and was often interwoven with local customs and belief systems (Anwar & Malik, 2023)

The role of local scholars became a key factor in the development of traditional Islamic education. They did not function solely as religious instructors, (Ghozali, 2019) but also as agents of enlightenment who established educational institutions, disseminated Islamic knowledge, and produced written works relevant to the community. In this context, the tradition of religious writing in Malay Jawi played a significant role as a medium for codifying and disseminating the teachings of *aqidah* in a more systematic manner.

One of the prominent figures in the landscape of Islamic education in Bangka from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century is Haji Batin Sulaiman, a scholar from Kampung Peradong. He is remembered for his contributions to *da'wah* and for his written works in Malay using the Arabic-Jawi script (Arab Gundul). His most well-known work, *Kitab Permulaan Sembahyang*, (Masrin, 2024) although primarily discusses the jurisprudence of prayer, contains significant reflections on *aqidah* and *tasawwuf*—particularly in its introductory and concluding sections. In addition, he authored several other important manuscripts, including a Malay commentary on the hadith *man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu* (Masrin, 2024) *terjemah syahadat lima* (Masrin, 2024), and religious poems *Sair Tsani* (Masrin, 2024) which summarizes key ideas from *Asrār al-Insān* by Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī. These works demonstrate that the teaching of *aqidah* at that time did not stand as a separate discipline; rather, it was integrated into worship practices, ethical instruction, and the broader religious literary tradition of the Malay Muslim community.

Karya-karya Haji Batin Sulaiman menunjukkan karakteristik pendidikan akidah tradisional yang integratif: menggabungkan unsur tauhid, tasawuf, dan nilai-nilai moral dalam bentuk yang mudah dipahami oleh masyarakat. Misalnya, penekanan pada hadis “*man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu*” menggambarkan pendekatan akidah yang menekankan aspek introspektif dan kesadaran spiritual, sementara *syahadat lima* menunjukkan pemahaman iman yang komprehensif. Adapun *Sair Tsani* memperlihatkan penggunaan bentuk sastra sebagai medium pengajaran akidah, yang sangat sesuai dengan budaya tutur masyarakat setempat.

Studies on the thought of Haji Batin Sulaiman are particularly relevant for at least three reasons. First, documentation on local ulama in Bangka remains relatively limited, resulting in their contributions to Islamic education being insufficiently represented in broader studies of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago (Masrin, 2024). Second, his works embody a model of Islamic education grounded in local wisdom, which merits renewed attention within contemporary discourses on Islamic education. Third, the integrative approach he employed offers a humanistic and transformative pedagogical perspective that is highly relevant to the current needs of *aqidah* education in the modern era.

Amid contemporary challenges such as the crisis of religious identity, the rise of extremist ideologies, and the increasing detachment of younger generations from classical scholarly traditions, revisiting the intellectual legacy of local ulama has become increasingly important. Intellectual heritages such as the thought of Haji Batin Sulaiman illustrate how *aqidah* can be taught in a profound yet grounded manner—deeply rooted in everyday life and closely aligned with the cultural sensibilities of the community.

Against this background, this article aims to examine the contribution of Haji Batin Sulaiman's thought to *aqidah* education in Bangka Island through a thematic analysis of several of his written works. This study is expected to enrich scholarship on Islam Nusantara while also offering insights into the dynamics of *tawhid* education in the Malay world, a region that has thus far received limited academic attention.

2. Method of Research

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive historical design. A qualitative approach is used because it enables an in-depth understanding of the meanings embedded in religious texts and the socio-intellectual context in which these texts developed. The descriptive design aims to systematically present the characteristics of the research object through processes of description, categorization, and narrative interpretation (Ratna, 2010).

More specifically, this research applies the historical method, which consists of several stages: (1) selecting the topic and formulating the research focus; (2) conducting heuristics or source collection; (3) performing external and internal criticism to assess the authenticity and credibility of the sources; (4) interpreting the content of the texts; and (5) presenting the findings in the form of historiography. This method is used to trace the intellectual context and contributions of Haji Batin Sulaiman's thought in the field of Islamic theology (*'aqidah*) education.

Data for this study were collected through library research techniques. The primary sources include Haji Batin Sulaiman's works, namely *The Translation of the Hadith "man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu"*, *The Translation of the Five Declarations of Faith (Syahadat Lima)*, and *Sair Tsani*. Additional data were obtained from supporting literature such as books, articles, manuscript transcriptions, and relevant prior studies. Data collection was carried out by reading, examining, annotating, and selecting information directly related to the research focus.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively through the processes of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis involved interpreting textual content, identifying theological concepts, and linking them to the historical and cultural context of Bangka during the period of Haji Batin Sulaiman

3. Result

3.1. Biography of Haji Batin Sulaiman and His Works

The life history of Haji Batin Sulaiman has not been fully documented with certainty. However, based on a manuscript copy recorded by Akek Arpa'i in 1980, his original name was Rimbun, while his Chinese name was Tjhau Hin Lie Mintit (Pak We Bujang, personal communication, 2020). Locally, he was more widely known by the honorific name Tok Aji Sulaiman. He was born in the second half of the nineteenth century (ca. 1820–1920), within the Malay Bangka community, which at the time remained deeply rooted in local traditions while gradually opening itself to the expanding influence of Islam.

Haji Batin Sulaiman was of Chinese descent, originating from the Chao (Tjhau) clan. His father, Chao Tungit (Tjhau Tungit), later embraced Islam and

became a *muallaf*, while his mother, Jinah (also known as Rimah), was a descendant of Akek Peradong (Masrin, 2024). According to a record by Abdul Mu'in dated 1947, Haji Batin Sulaiman's father is believed to have arrived on Bangka Island, and subsequently in Peradong, around 1820, bearing the clan name Siang Tjhau (Abdul Mu'in, 1947).

Following the death of his father, his mother remarried Batin Daik in the village of Ibul. Upon reaching maturity, her son Rimbun was symbolically adopted (*disalinkan*) and appointed as a *Batin*—a traditional leadership position. Later, Haji Batin Sulaiman moved from Ibul to Peradong, where he assumed the role of *Batin* of Peradong. As Batin Rimbun, he married a woman from Peradong and had eight children: one son and seven daughters.

Haji Batin Sulaiman's childhood was shaped by close interaction with the distinctive Malay cultural environment, which at the time still retained elements of Hindu-Buddhist traditions alongside growing colonial influence. He received his basic religious education within the family setting and from local religious teachers. This early religious upbringing laid the foundation for his understanding of Islam and fostered his motivation to pursue deeper religious knowledge. The environment in which he was raised played a significant role in shaping his character as both a religious scholar and a social leader with a profound Islamic vision.

His desire to broaden his religious knowledge eventually led him to study beyond Bangka Island. Several oral traditions indicate that he had the opportunity to perform the pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca, which marked a turning point in his life as a religious scholar. During his time in the Holy Land, Haji Batin Sulaiman not only fulfilled the rituals of the pilgrimage but also deepened his religious learning, particularly in the fields of *tawhīd* and *fiqh*. His educational experience in Mecca provided him with broader insights into Islamic thought, which he later adapted to the socio-cultural context of Bangka.

Upon his return from Mecca, Haji Batin Sulaiman was recognized not only as an *ulama* but also as a leader capable of mobilizing the community. He established religious study circles (*majelis pengajian*) as a means of providing Islamic education on Bangka Island, aiming to enhance public understanding of religious teachings. These study circles became centers of learning that produced numerous students who later continued the mission of Islamic propagation in Bangka and surrounding areas. In addition, he was actively engaged in delivering sermons, Friday sermons (*khutbah*), and providing direct religious guidance to the community, both in mosques and within broader social settings.

One of his most significant scholarly contributions is the manuscript *Permulaan Sembahyang*, written in 1915 (Masrin, 2024). This work provides practical guidance on the jurisprudence of prayer (*fiqh al-ṣalāh*) using simple and accessible language tailored to the local community. The manuscript reflects Haji Batin Sulaiman's concern for enabling society to understand Islamic teachings in a manner that is both profound and contextually grounded.

Haji Batin Sulaiman devoted his life to Islamic propagation with unwavering commitment until the end of his life. He was buried in Menggarau hamlet, near the Pelangas River, which marks the boundary between Menggarau and Peradong. He is remembered not only as a figure who successfully integrated Islamic teachings with local cultural traditions, but also as a leader who inspired the people of Bangka to continually deepen their understanding of Islam. His rich

life experiences and dedication firmly establish Haji Batin Sulaiman as one of the most significant figures in the history of local Islam on Bangka Island.

3.1.1. Lineage

The lineage of Haji Batin Sulaiman has been reconstructed from multiple sources, both written and oral. These include, first, the record of Abdul Mu'en (1947); second, the notes of Arpai'i Jarsono (1980); third, the account of Al Jufri (1994); fourth, oral testimonies from Ati, Sani, and Eeng (2019); fifth, oral testimony from Abdullah Bung No (March 2021); and sixth, oral testimony from Nurhanudin (August 2021). The 1947 record provides a brief discussion of the history of Peradong and the arrival of Chinese migrants around 1820, among whom was an ancestor of Haji Batin Sulaiman from the Chao (Siang Tjhau) clan.

The 1980 record identifies the name of Haji Batin Sulaiman's father as Chao Thungit and lists the names of his children from his marriage to Mariam in Peradong, totaling eight offspring—one son and seven daughters. Their names are Wahab, Siti Tegek, Siti Liwet, Siti Rinda (also known locally as Nek De), Siti Limah (Nek Amah), Siti Aisyah, Siti Midah (Nek Dut), and Siti Rani'ah. Further genealogical elaboration is provided in the 1994 record and through the oral testimony of Abdullah Bung No, which trace descendants through two of his children, namely Wahab and Siti Limah (Nek Amah). Oral accounts from Ati, Sani, and Eeng detail the lineage descending from Siti Rinda (Nek De), while Nurhanudin's oral testimony outlines the descendants of Siti Midah (Nek Dut).

3.1.2 Teachers of Haji Batin Sulaiman

Batin Rimbun of Peradong studied in Mentok under Datok Hasanudin, also known as Shaykh Hasanudin of Palembang, who was active in teaching Islam in Mentok. Subsequently, Haji Batin Sulaiman was formally authorized to serve as a religious teacher in various villages and granted legitimacy to establish Friday congregational prayers (*ṣalāt al-jum'ah*). His authorization extended from the village of Pal Enam (Air Belo) to Tanjung Niur (Tempilang) and Kelapa. After performing the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) to Mecca, he remained there as a resident (*mukīm*—locally referred to in the Bangka dialect as *naon*) for approximately one year. Upon returning to Peradong, Batin Rimbun formally adopted the name Haji Batin Sulaiman. In Peradong, particularly in the area of Pekal Bawah, he began disseminating the religious knowledge he had acquired in the Holy Land of Mecca.

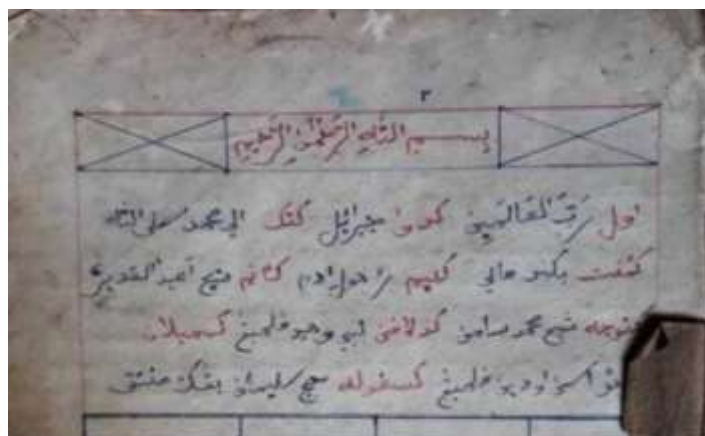
According to the records of Arpa'i, the *sanad* (genealogical chain of teachers) of Haji Batin Sulaiman is as follows: from the Prophet Muhammad, transmitted to Abu Bakr, then to 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, followed by Shaykh Muhammad Saman, then Ja'far Ṣiddīq, Shaykh Adam Bilal of Palembang, 'Abd al-Ṣamad Bilal of Palembang, Shaykh 'Abd al-Sāḥit Bilal of Palembang, and finally Shaykh Hasanudin of Palembang, who taught in Mentok.

Furthermore, based on a manuscript copy by Muhammad Yasir written in 1970, the lineage of teachers of Haji Batin Sulaiman is presented in a slightly different formulation. The chain begins with Rabb al-'Ālamīn (the Lord of the Worlds), followed by the Angel Jibrīl (Gabriel), then the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), thereafter 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Rūḥ al-Ādam, Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir, Shaykh Muhammad Saman, Labi Wahid of Palembang, Datuk Asan Udin

(Hasanudin) of Palembang, and ultimately Haji Batin Sulaiman of Bangka, Mentok.

Figure 1.

The *Sanad* (Chain of Teachers) of Haji Batin Sulaiman as Recorded in the Manuscript Copy by Muhammad Yasir (1970)



3.1.3. Students of Haji Batin Sulaiman

Among the students of Haji Batin Sulaiman who later became teachers and were assigned to specific areas were Djidin of Ibul village, Teret of Ibul village, Djidan of Teritip village (Air Nyatoh), Aman of Peradong village, Lipung of Pangek village, Rinda (female) of Peradong village, Samah of Mayang village, Wahab of Mayang village, Dirun of Berang village (who later performed the pilgrimage), Ketak of Pelangas village, and Amat of Kacung village. This network of students was subsequently continued by Haji Dullah (Abdullah), who carried out itinerant religious teaching across Bangka Island. Haji Dullah passed away in Sungai Buluh village in the 1940s.

According to the oral account of Sardi, his grandmother (*nek*) had also studied under Haji Batin Sulaiman. She reportedly crossed the Pelangas River by swimming in order to attend lessons, as the river marks the boundary between Menggarau and Peradong villages. This pedagogical legacy was transmitted within Sardi's family line: the chain of *ṣalāh* knowledge began with his father (Buman Budin), who learned from his own mother (Saidah), while Saidah had studied directly under Haji Batin Sulaiman. Nek Saidah belonged to the same generation as Kek Ketak—also from Pelangas—who has been mentioned above (Sardi, personal communication, March 10, 2024).

Furthermore, descendants of Haji Batin Sulaiman's students who have continued the tradition of Jawi (Malay-Arabic) writing and the transmission of his teachings can still be found in the Peradong region and its surroundings. These include figures such as Kek Pi'i (also known as Kek Klares), Kek Yasir, Kek Durahim (residing in Berang village), Bungno Abdullah (Simpang Gong), Bujang bin Himroni (Pal 3 village, Mentok), among others.

4. The Works of Haji Batin Sulaiman

Several works attributed to Haji Batin Sulaiman can be identified as follows:

- a. *Syair Tsani*, a poetic composition functioning as a summary rendered in *syair* form from a work by Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānirī of Aceh entitled *Asrār al-Insān*. This *syair* was copied in Peradong village, although no specific year of completion is recorded.
- b. *Untitled Manuscript on the Merit of Recitation and the Meaning of the Letters of al-Fātiḥah*, an untitled manuscript dealing with the spiritual merit of reciting and the meanings of the letters of *al-Fātiḥah*. It was completed in 1327 AH, corresponding to 1909 CE, with no information provided regarding the place of copying.

Figure 2.

Manuscript of *Pahala Membaca dan Makna Huruf Fatihah*



- c. *Kitab Permulaan Sembahyang*, originally titled *Nuqil yang kecil tempat permulaan berlajar agama Islam mendirikan sembahyang yang lima waktu di dalam sehari semalam*, this concise treatise serves as an introductory guide to Islamic religious learning, particularly the establishment of the five daily prayers. For analytical purposes, this study refers to the work as *Kitab Permulaan Sembahyang*. The manuscript was completed in Mentok on Wednesday, 9 Ramaḍān 1333 AH (1915 CE).
- d. *Translation of the Prophetic Ḥadīth “Man ‘Arafa Nafsahu Faqad ‘Arafa Rabbahu”*, a translation of the well-known ḥadīth, “Whoever knows himself knows his Lord.” The place of completion is not specified; however, the manuscript records the date as Friday, 13 Ramaḍān 1316 AH.
- e. *Ilmu Uṣūl al-I’tiqād yang Ṣaḥīḥ: Soal dan Jawab Bayannya*, a doctrinal work on the sound foundations of belief presented in a question-and-answer format. This manuscript is a copy (*nasakh*) of a work by Muḥammad Ma’šūm al-Jāwī. It was copied in Peradong on 6 Rabī’ al-Awwal 1325 AH (1907 CE) and signed “al-Ḥājj Sulaiman al-Faqīr.”
- f. *Perihal Zikir*, a manuscript concerning *dhikr* practices, although the specific type of *dhikr* discussed is not identified. It was copied in Peradong on 4 Dhū al-Qa’dah 1326 AH (1908 CE) and bears the name Haji Batin Sulaiman, written letter by letter as *h, j, s, l, (m), n*.
- g. *Perihal Sembahyang dan Talqin Mayyit*, a work addressing prayer and the ritual instruction (*talqīn*) for the deceased. No information is provided regarding the date or place of copying.

- h. *Terjemah Syahadat Lima*, a translation and exposition of the Fivefold *Shahāda*. This manuscript was copied in Peradong on 22 Dhū al-Qa'dah 1300 AH (1883 CE).
- i. *Hakikat Sembahyang, Rahasia, dan Ma'rifatnya*, a manuscript discussing the essence of prayer, its inner secrets, and its relationship to *ma'rifah*. It was copied on 3 Jumādā al-Awwal 1325 AH (1907 CE), with no information provided regarding the place of copying.
- j. *Notes and Other Writings*, a collection of miscellaneous notes and other minor writings attributed to Haji Batin Sulaiman.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the construction of an *ulama's* intellectual thought is profoundly shaped by his life background, educational experiences, social environment, and social position within the community. In this regard, the thought of Haji Batin Sulaiman cannot be separated from his lived experience as a local Bangka *ulama* during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He emerged within a strong Malay-Islamic tradition while simultaneously confronting social transformations brought about by colonialism, migration, and mining-based economic change. These conditions gave rise to a mode of religious propagation (*da'wah*) that was accommodative, contextual, and oriented toward strengthening the community's religious identity.

As a religious leader and local intellectual, Haji Batin Sulaiman integrated the traditional values of Bangka Malay culture with Islamic teachings through an inclusive and transformative approach to *aqidah* education. He was known not only for teaching the foundations of faith but also for functioning as a social mobilizer who fostered the community's spiritual resilience. These findings resonate with previous studies on the role of local *ulama* in the Malay world, which position them as agents of learning, guardians of tradition, and producers of religious texts grounded in community needs.

Within the context of social change, *aqidah* education functioned as a bastion of identity, and Haji Batin Sulaiman's contribution is evident in his Malay-Arabic (Jawi) texts that were widely accessible. This locally grounded textual approach enabled *aqidah* teachings to reach diverse segments of society, including groups distant from formal centers of learning. His role thus served as a bridge between classical Islamic scholarly traditions from Aceh, Minangkabau, Palembang, and Banjar, and the Bangka Malay community.

An analysis of the *Terjemah Hadis Man 'Arafa Nafsahu Faqad 'Arafa Rabbahu* reveals that Haji Batin Sulaiman positioned the concept of *ma'rifah*—knowing God through self-knowledge—as the foundation of *aqidah* education. His elaboration of human potentials such as hearing, sight, reason, desire, and bodily movement demonstrates an integration of rational, spiritual, and ethical approaches. The ten principles of *aqidah* he formulated—*pohon ilmu* (the tree of knowledge), *laku* (practice), *terima* (acceptance), *tapa* (ascetic discipline), *sembahyang* (prayer), *amal* (deeds), *mati* (death), *hidup* (life), *surga* (paradise), and *neraka* (hell)—constitute a systematic pedagogical framework that links faith with everyday ethical practice.

Further analysis of the *Terjemah Syahadat Lima* demonstrates Haji Batin Sulaiman's emphasis on comprehensive affirmation of faith through layered

stages—*syahadat azali*, *muqabalah*, *tahlil*, *shalawat*, as well as *iman mujmal* and *iman mufassshal*. This structure reflects not only conceptual *aqidah* content but also a pedagogical strategy aimed at cultivating theological and spiritual awareness gradually. Learners are encouraged not merely to memorize ritual texts, but to attain reflective internalization of their beliefs. This finding aligns with Islamic education scholarship asserting that the teaching of the *shahāda*, in both formal and informal contexts, plays a crucial role in developing a deep and dynamic foundation of faith. The *shahāda* is not merely a verbal declaration, but a basis for the ongoing internalization of religious values in response to lived realities. Johariyah (2023), for example, emphasizes that the *shahāda* functions as a visualization of a believer's life vision and mission—manifested through thought, feeling, and action in everyday life.

Additional studies on *shahāda* instruction in Islamic primary education further indicate that effective pedagogical approaches significantly enhance students' understanding of foundational faith statements when teaching emphasizes meaning rather than rote memorization. Priyanti and Widodo's (2024) study on the STAD cooperative learning model in primary schools found that collaborative learning methods substantially improved students' comprehension of the *shahāda*, underscoring the need for pedagogies that mediate between religious texts and learners' cognitive development.

From a theoretical perspective, scholarship positioning the *shahāda* as a central element of *aqidah* education reinforces its relevance as a foundational pillar of faith that must be understood holistically. Within Islamic education studies, the *shahāda* is regarded as a primary institution shaping a Muslim's spiritual and moral consciousness, as it embodies acknowledgment of the fundamental principles of belief—faith in God, angels, scriptures, prophets, the Last Day, and divine decree (Salmah & Wahyuni, 2022).

Accordingly, the analysis of the *Terjemah Syahadat Lima* strengthens the understanding that the *aqidah* education developed by Haji Batin Sulaiman was not merely instructional but transformational. It promoted a holistic, reflective, and contextual process of faith learning, consistent with Islamic educational literature that emphasizes balance among cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in the way *shahāda* texts were structured as stages of spiritual experience rather than as a sequence of ritual formulas—an approach widely recognized as essential to Islamic faith education.

Meanwhile, *Syair Tsani* by Haji Batin Sulaiman stands out as a literary practice that transformed concepts of *tasawwuf falsafi*—such as those articulated in *Asrār al-Insān* by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī—into Malay poetic forms written in Jawi script. This transformation was not merely transliteration, but a process of cognitive and pedagogical adaptation. Abstract theological concepts were rendered into rhythm, rhyme, and local diction, making them easier to memorize, teach, and practice within local religious assemblies. This finding reinforces the argument that traditional poetry and *syair* function as effective media of religious education in Malay societies, encapsulating theological doctrine while simultaneously offering affective learning that resonates with communal spiritual experience (Masrin, 2023).

The relationship between poetic form and the transmission of Sufism is further supported by broader studies of Malay literary traditions. Research on

Sufi poetry in the archipelago—such as studies of Hamzah Fansuri and Acehese Sufi traditions—demonstrates how poetry served as a primary medium for communicating concepts of *ma'rifah*, *tawhīd*, and mystical experience to wider audiences, including non-elite groups less exposed to classical Arabic texts. A similar pattern is evident in *Syair Tsani*, which draws on Raniri's intellectual lineage while embedding it within Malay cultural vocabulary, facilitating the internalization of *aqīdah* through oral and performative modes. This situates Sulaiman's work within the continuity of Malay Sufi-literary traditions documented in recent scholarship (Arifka, 2025).

Nevertheless, historical nuance must also be considered. The integration of Sufism into *aqīdah* education has not always been free from contestation within Malay Islamic intellectual history. The theological debates between figures such as Hamzah Fansuri and Nuruddin al-Rānirī reveal enduring internal controversies over metaphysical interpretations of Sufism. Consequently, whenever Sufism is employed as a pedagogical medium, there exists a risk of doctrinal deviation according to certain standards of orthodoxy. In this light, Haji Batin Sulaiman's practice may be understood as a careful endeavor to adapt *tasawwuf falsafī* into locally communicative forms while maintaining recognized textual (*naqlī*) elements, thereby preserving theological legitimacy. This perspective is essential in assessing his contribution—not merely as a pedagogical innovator, but as an agent negotiating the boundaries between orthodoxy and local practice (Hamzah et al., 2017).

The convergence of classical texts, poetic adaptation, and local study-circle practices illustrates a pedagogical model with significant relevance for contemporary efforts to revitalize *aqīdah* education: namely, the strategic use of cultural media (*syair*, *pantun*, and *gurindam*) to convey theological teachings in communicative and contextual ways. Future research would benefit from exploring the comparative impact of poetic versus formal textual methods on religious understanding and attitudes across different age groups and socio-cultural settings.

When viewed through the comprehensive scope of *aqīdah*—encompassing *Ilāhiyyāt*, *Nubuwwāt*, *Rūḥāniyyāt*, and *Sam'īyyāt*—the works of Haji Batin Sulaiman demonstrate a primary emphasis on the theological dimension (*Ilāhiyyāt*) without neglecting other aspects of belief. This emphasis aligns with the objectives of *aqīdah* education: strengthening belief in the oneness of God, safeguarding against *shirk*, and cultivating moral character. The findings further indicate that Haji Batin Sulaiman's pedagogical approach combined rational (*burhānī*) and textual (*naqlī*) methods. He did not rely solely on oral instruction, but also produced texts that could serve as communal teaching materials, rendering *aqīdah* education more dialogical—transcending doctrinal transmission to foster spiritual self-reflection. These results are consistent with Kasman et al. (2022), who emphasize the strategic role of *aqīdah* education in shaping moral conduct, religious behavior, and spiritual resilience within Muslim communities, as well as the necessity of contextual approaches in addressing contemporary socio-religious challenges.

Overall, this discussion affirms that Haji Batin Sulaiman's contribution extends beyond the authorship of religious texts to the formation of a distinctive Bangka model of *aqīdah* education that integrates *tawhīd*, Sufism, local culture, and everyday religious practice. His pedagogical legacy demonstrates that

aqidah education is not merely theoretical knowledge, but a process of cultivating spiritual consciousness that engages both intellect and heart. This approach renders his works and thought enduringly relevant and positions them as an essential component in reconstructing the history of Islamic education on Bangka Island.

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Haji Batin Sulaiman was a significant *ulama* on Bangka Island during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whose contributions extended to religious propagation (*da'wah*), Islamic education, and the development of local scholarly traditions. Through his works—such as *Terjemah Syahadat Lima*, the translation of the ḥadīth “*man ‘arafa nafsahu faqad ‘arafa rabbahu*”, and *Syair Tsani*—he conveyed *aqidah* teachings in clear, communicative Malay–Jawi language with a Sufi orientation, making them readily accessible to the broader community. His thought reflects continuity with the wider tradition of Nusantara *ulama* while simultaneously offering simplified theological concepts attuned to the educational needs of Bangka society. In this respect, Haji Batin Sulaiman functioned as a mediator between classical Islamic intellectual heritage and local contexts, thereby making a substantive contribution to the strengthening of *aqidah* education in the region.

7. References

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