



## SHEIKH ABDUL WAHAB CALAU'S INTELLECTUAL PRACTICES: A STRUCTURATION STUDY IN 19TH-CENTURY WEST SUMATRA



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### Abstract

This research examines the distinctive intellectual practices of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau at Surau Calau in Sijunjung during the mid-19th century. His contributions significantly enriched the intellectual landscape of Islam in Minangkabau, highlighting previously underexplored scholarly movements of the era. Employing historical methodologies—data collection, critical evaluation, classification, and historiographical analysis—this study contextualizes Calau (1830–1869) within his scholarly lineage, notably alongside Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan, a pivotal figure in the development of Tariqa Syattariyah in the early 17th century. Calau's innovative pedagogical strategies reflected his personal experiences and adeptly mirrored and expanded the social structures of Surau Calau. Applying Giddens' structuration theory, this research vividly reveals the dynamic interplay between individual agency and social structures that facilitated intellectual transformation, keeping the audience engaged. Ultimately, Calau's authority derived from a robust scholarly genealogy, innovative teaching methods, and interpretative approaches to religious texts.

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Penelitian ini mengkaji praktik intelektual khas yang dikembangkan oleh Syekh Abdul Wahab Calau di Surau Calau, Sijunjung, pada pertengahan abad ke-19. Kontribusinya secara signifikan memperkaya lanskap intelektual Islam di Minangkabau dengan menyoroti gerakan keilmuan yang sebelumnya kurang mendapat perhatian. Dengan menerapkan metode sejarah—meliputi pengumpulan data, evaluasi kritis, klasifikasi, dan analisis historiografis—penelitian ini menempatkan Calau (1830–1869) dalam garis keilmuan yang diwarisinya, khususnya dalam kaitannya dengan Syekh Burhanuddin Ulakan, tokoh penting dalam perkembangan Tarekat Syattariyah pada awal abad ke-17. Strategi pedagogis inovatif yang diterapkan oleh Calau mencerminkan pengalaman pribadinya serta secara cermat merefleksikan dan memperluas struktur sosial Surau Calau. Dengan menggunakan teori strukturasi Anthony Giddens, penelitian ini mengungkap dinamika interaksi antara agen individu dan struktur sosial yang memungkinkan transformasi intelektual, sehingga menjaga keterlibatan khalayak akademik. Pada akhirnya, otoritas keilmuan Calau bertumpu pada silsilah akademiknya yang kuat, metode pengajaran yang inovatif, serta pendekatan interpretatifnya terhadap teks-teks keagamaan.

## Background

The study of Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau, particularly regarding *surau* (traditional Islamic study houses), illustrates their evolution since the 17th century. *Surau* has undergone various dynamics, enabling it to adapt and transform in response to changing times, including the Indigenous customs of Minangkabau.<sup>1</sup> Historical studies on Minangkabau *surau* depict these institutions not only as traditional educational centers<sup>2</sup> but also as vital conduits linking Islamic instruction with the socio-cultural fabric of the community.<sup>3</sup> Scholars associated with *surau*, such as Sheikh Djamil Djambek (1860-1947),<sup>4</sup> Haji Rasul (1879-1945),<sup>5</sup> Haji Abdulah Ahmad (1878-1933),<sup>6</sup> and Sulaiman Ar Rasuli (1871-1970),<sup>7</sup> utilized their *surau* as centers for complex socio-religious activities. The key examinations of these scholars and their societal roles, particularly in the Minangkabau region, reveal the complexities surrounding local Muslim intellectuals. They effectively integrated Islamic teachings with existing traditions, creating a unique regional Muslim identity through their capacities and established educational institutions.<sup>8</sup>

This research presents a novel contribution to studying Islamic history in Minangkabau by employing Anthony Giddens' structuration theory. This approach allows for a more in-depth analysis of how Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau, as an

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Hadler, *Sengketa Tiada Putus: Matriarkat, Reformisme Islam Dan Kolonialisme Di Minangkabau* (Jakarta: Freedom Institute, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Rengga Satria, "Dari Surau Ke Madrasah: Modernisasi Pendidikan Islam Di Minangkabau 1900-1930 M," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 2 (December 12, 2019): 277 – 88, <https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi.v14i2.2860>.

<sup>3</sup> Aleena Sebastian, "Matrilineal Practices among Muslims: An Ethnographic Study of the Minangkabau of West Sumatra," *Ethnography*, December 27, 2022, 14661381221147137, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14661381221147137>.

<sup>4</sup> Novita Siswayanti, "Muhammad Djamil Djambek: Ulama Pembaharu Minangkabau," *Jurnal Lektor Keagamaan* 12, no. 2 (2014): 479 – 98.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim, "Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah Dan Sejarah Muhammadiyah Di Maninjau Sumatera Barat," *Jurnal Muhammadiyah Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021): 1 – 22.

<sup>6</sup> Budi Johan Bujo and Rifma Ghulam Dzaljad, "KONSEP INTEGRASI ILMU ABDULLAH AHMAD DALAM PENDIDIKAN ISLAM," *Journal of Research and Thought on Islamic Education (JRTIE)* 5, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 81 – 101, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jrtie.v5i1.2280>.

<sup>7</sup> Herman Herman, "Historiografi Islam Minangkabau Awal Abad XX: (Analisis Terhadap Karya Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli)," *Tarikhuna: Journal of History and History Education* 4, no. 1 (June 7, 2021): 1 – 17, <https://doi.org/10.15548/thje.v3i1.2832>.

<sup>8</sup> Nasr M Arif and Abbas Panakkal, eds., *Southeast Asian Islam: Integration and Indigenisation* (London: Routledge, 2024), <https://www.routledge.com/Southeast-Asian-Islam-Integration-and-Indigenisation/Arif-Panakkal/p/book/9781032699257>.

intellectual agent, interacted with the sociocultural structures of his environment.<sup>9</sup> By adopting the structuration theory, this research examines the role of individuals and explores the complex dynamics between agency and the existing social framework.<sup>10</sup> This perspective diverges from previous studies that primarily emphasized biographical elements or conflicts associated with the Padri movement, offering a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the interaction between individual actions and the broader social context in which they occur. The agency of ulama and the structure of ulama educational institutions in Minangkabau served as catalysts for social transformation in the early 19th century,<sup>11</sup> especially within Southeast Asia, thereby shaping a unique and intriguing pattern of their intellectual mobility that significantly differed from the Islamic world centered on the Arab region.<sup>12</sup> The intellectual practices of local ulama, particularly Sufi scholars in Southeast Asia, specifically in the Malay world (Minangkabau), were not solely efforts towards Islamization but also contributed to the preservation and dissemination of Islamic knowledge through writing and the exchange of ideas, as well as the formation of *surau* communities (Urang Siak) as socializing and idea-sharing spaces.<sup>13</sup> During the 19th century, Sufis engaged in the transmission of knowledge through the copying and composing of Islamic manuscripts.<sup>14</sup> Overall, local ulama in Indonesia played a substantial role as agents of societal transformation, mainly through the educational institutions they established, such as *surau* in Minangkabau, pesantren in Java, and madrasah in

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<sup>9</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press: Polity Press, 1984).

<sup>10</sup> Richard Whittington, "PUTTING GIDDENS INTO ACTION: SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND MANAGERIAL AGENCY," *Journal of Management Studies* 29, no. 6 (1992), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.1992.tb00685.x>.

<sup>11</sup> B Herry-Priyono, *Anthony Giddens: Suatu Pengantar* (Jakarta: KPG, 2002); Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Welch, "Seek Knowledge Throughout the World? Mobility in Islamic Higher Education," *Research in Comparative and International Education* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2012): 70 – 80, <https://doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2012.7.1.70>.

<sup>13</sup> Barbara Watson Andaya, "The Introduction, Spread, and Circulation of Islam up to the Early Col," in *Routledge Handbook of Islam in Southeast Asia*, ed. Syed Muhammad Khairuddin Aljuneid (London: Routledge, 2022), 13 – 29, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429275449-3/introduction-spread-circulation-islam-early-colonial-period-southeast-asia-leonard-andaya?context=ubx&refId=e1d41278-b523-4e8c-a497-fe75a8d11566>.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Jacobius Morgan, "Letter Writing as the Mingling of Souls: Remote Knowledge Exchange among Eighteenth-Century Naqshbandis," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 33, no. 4 (October 2023): 1005 – 27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186322000852>.

Aceh.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the function of Islamic ulama, especially local Sufi scholars in Southeast Asia, is critical in forming new moral communities, cultivating cultural identity, promoting literacy, and shaping religious practices.

Prior historical studies on Minangkabau scholars and their activities can be categorized into three main issues: biographies and ideas, educational institutions, and socio-religious practices within the community. These studies indicate that Minangkabau scholars, such as Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan,<sup>16</sup> Sheikh Tuanku Nan Tuo Cangkiang,<sup>17</sup> Haji Miskin<sup>18</sup>, and Sheikh Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi,<sup>19</sup> played instrumental roles as reformists within society. Their influence significantly shaped the intellectual framework through various works, such as Sheikh Abdurrahman al-Bawan's writings, including *Tuhfat al-Aḥbāb*, and *Jawāb al-Mushkīlāt*,<sup>20</sup> Sheikh Muhammad Yasin Al-Fadani renowned for his work *al-Iqdu al-Farid min Jawahir al-Asanid*,<sup>21</sup> and Sheikh Imam Maulana Abdul Manaf Amin, who authored several critical historical texts, including *Sejarah Ringkas Aulia Allah as-Salihin Syaikh Burhanuddin Ulakan*, *Inilah Sejarah Ringkas Aulia Allah as-Salihin Syaikh Abdurrauf (Sheikh Kuala)*, *Pengembang Agama Islam di Aceh*, *Kitab al-*

<sup>15</sup> Ja'far Ja'far et al., "Discovering the Legacy of Mandailing Ulama: Education, Intellectuals, and Politics in North Sumatra in the Early 20th Century," *Ulumuna* 26, no. 2 (December 28, 2022): 296 – 336, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v26i2.502>.

<sup>16</sup> See Burhanuddin Daya, *Gerakan Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1990); Imam Maulana Abdul Manaf Amin, "Inilah Sejarah Ringkas Auliyaullah Al-Salihin Shaikh Burhanuddin Ulakan Yang Mengembangkan Agama Islam Di Daerah Minangkabau" (Manuskrip Tulis Tangan, Padang: Batang Kabuang, 1993).

<sup>17</sup> E. Ulrich Kratz and Adriyetti Amir, *Surat Keterangan Syeikh Jalaludin Karangan Faqih Saghir, Seri Wawasan Sastra Klasik* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasan dan Pustaka: Dewan Pustaka dan Bahasa, 2002); Azyumardi Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Islam Tradisional Dalam Transisi Dan Modernisasi* (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> H.A. Steijn Parve, "Kaum Padari (Padri) Di Padang Darat Pulau Sumatera," in *Sejarah Lokal Di Indonesia*, ed. Taufik Abdullah (Jakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1996), 147 – 76.

<sup>19</sup> See Jajang A Rohmana, "FATWA SHEIKH AHMAD KHAṬĪB AL-MINANGKABĀWĪ (DS 0003 00018): A Jāwī Ulama's Response to the Heterodoxy of Sufism," *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 23, no. 2 (November 28, 2023): 451 – 78, <https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v23i2.5936>.

<sup>20</sup> See Apria Putra, "Jawāb Al-Mushkīlāt: Respon Ulama Syattariyah Terhadap Paham Wujūdīyah," *Manuskripta* 5, no. 1 (2015): 139 – 60; Yusri Akhimuddin, "Naskah Tuhfat Al-Aḥbab Karya 'Abd Rahman Bawan: Tradisi Pernaskahan, Edisi Teks, Dan Silsilah Tarekat Syattariyah Di Minangkabau" (Jakarta, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2020).

<sup>21</sup> See Dzulkifli Hadi Imawan, "Sheikh Muhammad Yasin Al-Fadani's Contribution to the 20th Century Nusantara-Haramain Ulama Intellectual Network in Manuscript Al-'Iqdu al-Farid Min Jawahir al-Asanid," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, February 29, 2024, 149 – 70, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol23.iss1.art5>.

*Takwim*, and among many others.<sup>22</sup> Their influence is also evident in the propagation of Sufi teachings, notably through orders such as the Naqsyabandiyah, Syattariyah, and Samaniyah in Indonesia.<sup>23</sup> Figures like Sheikh Da'ud al-Fatani (1720-1879) and Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau exemplify the synthesis of local traditions with global Islamic currents, which shaped intellectual landscapes and reinforced Islamic identity in the region. The intellectual tradition championed by scholars like Nawawi al-Bantani (1813-1897), Da'ud al-Fatani, Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsudin Al-Sumatrani (d. 1630), and Abdurrauf al-Singkili (d. 1893), who wrote in both Arabic and Malay, significantly influenced the intellectual dynamics of the Muslim community.<sup>24</sup>

Extensive research has been conducted on the history of Islam in Minangkabau, predominantly focusing on the 19th-century Padri conflict, which is frequently associated with the puritanical and violent movements inspired by Wahhabism. This focus often overlooks the intellectual dimensions of the local ulama (Islamic scholars), who played a significant and enlightening role in the social and religious transformation of the community.<sup>25</sup> Given the limited focus on the intellectual dimensions of the local ulama in existing literature, there is a clear need for further research. Investigating the scholarly practices of ulama, particularly exemplified by Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau at Surau Calau, can significantly enrich our understanding of the intellectual dynamics of Islam in Minangkabau during the 19th century. This research opens new avenues for historical discourse, shedding light on the relatively advanced intellectual movements in Minangkabau during the same period.

This research aims to analyze the intellectual practices of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau at Surau Calau in Sijunjung during the mid-19th century. Utilizing Anthony Giddens' structuration theory as a theoretical framework, this study explores how Sheikh Abdul Wahab, as a significant intellectual agent, contributed to the formation and transformation of social and religious structures through his teaching practices, manuscript writing, and the administration of the *surau* as an intellectual center. Furthermore, this research offers a novel and intriguing perspective within the discourse of local Islamic history by highlighting the

<sup>22</sup> See Imam Maulana Abdul Manaf Amin, Syekh Paseban: Pengantar Dan Suntingan Teks, ed. Yeri S Putra, Transliterasi Manuskrip (Padang: LPPM Universitas Andalas, 2019).

<sup>23</sup> R.M. Feener, "'Abd Al-Samad in Arabia: The Yemeni Years of a Shaykh from Sumatra," Southeast Asian Studies 4, no. 2 (2015): 259–77.

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad Affan, "The Role of Sufis in Connecting Aceh to the Global Islamic Network in the 17th Century," ISLAM NUSANTARA:Journal for the Study of Islamic History and Culture 4, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.47776/islamnusantara.v4i2.700>.

<sup>25</sup> See Irhash A. Shamad and Danil Mahmud Chaniago, Islam Dan Praksis Kultural Masyarakat Minangkabau (Palembang: Noer Fikri, 2022), p. 121-129.

interplay between individual agency and social structure within a specific historical context.

This study utilizes historical methodologies, including data collection, critical evaluation, classification, and historiographical analysis.<sup>26</sup> This methodological framework has been specifically selected to analyze the intellectual practices of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau, with a particular emphasis on primary sources, such as manuscripts, alongside secondary sources, including colonial archives, historians' narratives, and pertinent contemporary literature.<sup>27</sup> The validity of the data has been rigorously assessed through triangulation, achieved by comparing local manuscripts, colonial archives, and secondary literature. This comprehensive approach enables the research to reconstruct the intellectual activities at Surau Calau while elucidating the role of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau as an agent of social transformation within the Minangkabau community in the 19th century. The methodology presented herein significantly contributes to the field by introducing the application of structuration theory in the study of local Islamic history. Such an approach not only facilitates the exploration of the intricate relationship between individual agency and social structures but also enriches our understanding of the intellectual roles of ulama in shaping social and cultural dynamics. Moreover, this research highlights the utilization of local manuscripts as primary sources for studying Islamic history in Indonesia, which are frequently neglected in mainstream historiography.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, the methodology articulated in this study can serve as a model for similar research endeavors in other regions.

### Intellectual Genealogy Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau

Sheikh Abdul Wahab (1789 – 1869) was a prominent Minangkabau scholar whose intellectual journey began in Nagari Tanjungbonai Aur, Sijunjung.<sup>29</sup> During the early 1830s, as his influence began to proliferate among local and neighboring communities in Patahan, a penghulu from Muaro Sijunjung extended an earnest invitation for him to relocate and establish a *surau* in their *Nagari*. He established Surau Calau in Muaro in the 1830s, alongside several smaller *surau* that served as

<sup>26</sup> Kuntowijoyo, *Penjelasan Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2008); Sartono Kartodirdjo, "Historical Study and Historians in Indonesia Today," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 4, no. 1 (March 1963): 22 – 30, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0217781100000740>.

<sup>27</sup> Oman Fathurahman, "Manuskrip Arab Sebagai Argumen Islam Asia Tenggara," *Studia Islamika* 31, no. 2 (August 31, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v31i2.40888>.

<sup>28</sup> Oman Fathurahman, "Naskah Dan Rekonstruksi Sejarah Lokal Islam Contoh Kasus Dari Minangkabau," *Wacana, Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia* 7, no. 2 (2005), <https://doi.org/10.17510/wjhi.v7i2.302>.

<sup>29</sup> See Surau Calau, "Riwayat Hidup Syekh Abdul Wahab" (Manuskrip Tulis Tangan, Sijunjung: Surau Calau, n.d.), p. 1. and see Umar. S L Tuanku Mudo, "Daftar Guru-Guru Calau" (Arsip Surau Calau, n.d.).

residences for his students. By the late 1860s, a Dutch colonial official documented that the number of students under Sheikh Abdul Wahab's instruction at his *surau* was estimated to be between 300 and 400.<sup>30</sup>

The intellectual activities of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau can be linked to Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan.<sup>31</sup> According to the genealogy documented in his *surau*, Sheikh Abdul Wahab's primary teacher was Sheikh Amiluddin Pudak of Sijunjung (1731-1811), a significant local scholar of the late 19th century. His *surau* in Pudak attracted numerous students (*Anak Siak*)<sup>32</sup> from various regions surrounding Sijunjung. In addition to studying under Sheikh Amiluddin Pudak, Sheikh Abdul Wahab also learned from Sheikh Sultan al Kisai Ibn Habibullah (1752-1832)<sup>33</sup> and Sheikh Abdul Muchsin Ulakan, the latter being a student of Sheikh Abdurrahman Ulakan.<sup>34</sup>

As a scholar, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau carried out his role as a teacher and educator by implementing a simple curriculum based on the manuscripts in his *surau*. The study and description of all of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau's manuscripts were conducted by a team from the Poetics Study Group of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Andalas, in collaboration with TUFS Japan and the Nusantara Manuscript Society (Manassa) in 2011, who had access to preserving the manuscripts of the Surau Calau collection. Based on the team's preservation, it has 99 manuscript bundles, most of which are in good condition and complete. This finding makes this *surau* the scriptorium with the highest number of manuscripts kept in *surau* in Minangkabau.<sup>35</sup> Based on preservation conducted by the Sijunjung Regency Public Library team and other researchers from the manuscript bundles, there are around 339-343 manuscript texts after being described.<sup>36</sup> The manuscript

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<sup>30</sup> See Verkerk Pistorius A.W.P, "De Priester En Zijn Invloed Op de Samenleving in de Padangsche Bovenlanden," in TNI, III 3, 1869, 423 – 52, p. 445.

<sup>31</sup> Oman Fathurahman, Tarekat Syattariyah Di Minangkabau: Teks Dan Konteks (Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2008), p. 118.

<sup>32</sup> Anak Siak is a term attached to santri who study in Minangkabau Surau. They are usually new students who enroll in a surau in Minangkabau.

<sup>33</sup> See Oman Fathurahman, Tarekat Syattariyah di Minangkabau...op.cit., p. 118.

<sup>34</sup> See Oman Fathurahman, Tarekat Syattariyah di Minangkabau... ibid., p. 174.

<sup>35</sup> Pramono, Khazanah Naskah Minangkabau (Padang: ERKA, 2018), p. 43-44. and Pramono Pramono, "Khazanah Naskah Koleksi Dua Surau Di Ranah Lansek Manih," in Menyingkap Rahasia Kata: Masyarakat Dan Naskah Nusantara (Jakarta: Jakarta: Manassa-Digital Repository of Endangered and Affected Manuscripts in Southeast Asia (DREAMSEA) Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2021).

<sup>36</sup> Citra Amanda, "Kontribusi Perpustakaan Dan Kearsipan Kabupaten Sijunjung Dalam Pelestarian Naskah Kuno," JIPIS: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan Dan Informasi Islam 2, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.31958/jipis.v2i1.8846>, p. 339-343. Syukriadi et al., "Autentisitas Hadis Dalam Manuskrip Risalah 73 Golongan Pada Koleksi Surau Tarekat

texts consist of various topics, such as Sufism, fiqh, *tafsir*, Arabic grammar, prose, *mojarobat*, *dhikr*, and treatises, with the years of writing or copying ranging from the 17th to the 19th century.

Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau played a significant role in developing the Asy'ariyah doctrine, a theological school of thought in Islam, and incorporated its principles into his teachings at Surau Calau. The use of *Tafsir Jalalain* (codes CL-SJJ-2011-02 and CL-SJJ-2011-03) by Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau demonstrates his teaching tendency towards the Asy'ariyah's understanding of theological education for his students in his institution. Both authors of *Tafsir Jalalain* adhere to the Asy'ariyah doctrine in theological thought.<sup>37</sup> In interpreting verses related to creed, they tend to refer to the principles taught by the Asy'ariyah doctrine. This can be seen in their explanations of some of the main themes in the doctrine, such as *mutasyabihat* verses, verses about the possibility of seeing God, verses about the status of the perpetrators of major sins, and other relevant verses. In addition, there is also the text *Al Yawakib al Jawahir* by Imam Sya'rani with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-12-d, *Bayan al-tasdiq* by Taj al-din Ahmad al-Malik with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-44-a, and *Sifat Duapuluh* with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-19-a, and CL-SJJ-2011-53b, as the handbook text of the Asy'ariyah curriculum taught by Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau in his *surau*. The Asy'ariyah doctrine in these texts supports the teaching of *Kaji Tubuh* or *Martabat Tujuh*, which became the doctrine of the *tariqah* developed by Shaykh Abdul Wahab Calau.<sup>38</sup> Other handbook texts of *Kaji Tubuh* and *Martabat Tujuh* teaching in Surau Calau include *'Ainal-Alam qabla an Yukhlaq* by Nurudin ar-Raniri with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-05-v, *Tuhfah Almursalah* by Fadhullah al Burhanpuri with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-24-c, *Kitab at-Tillimsani* by Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Umar Ibn Ibrahim at- Tillimsani with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-25-b, *Jawhar al-Haqa'iq* by *Shams al-Din al-Sumatra'i* with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-77-b, and many more.

## Agency and Structure: Syekh Calau's Socio-Religious Nexus

In addition to serving as a significant site for the instruction of Asy'ariyah theology, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau, as an agency, played a pivotal role as an educator and teacher by establishing Surau Calau as a prominent center for Arabic

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Syatariyah Calau Kabupaten Sijunjung," FOKUS: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan 6, no. 1 (2021): 75–92, p. 76.

<sup>37</sup> Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi and Jalaluddin Muhammad Ibnu Ahmad Al-Mahally, "Tafsir Al-Jalalain," *Tafsir Jalalain* (Terjemah), 2015; Muhammad Ikhsanul Faqih, "Konstruksi Pemikiran Madzhab Asy'ari Dalam Tafsir Jalalain," *AQWAL Journal of Qur'an and Hadis Studies* 2, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.28918/aqwal.v2i2.6022>.

<sup>38</sup> See Oman Fathurahman, Tarekat Syattariyah Di Minangkabau: Teks Dan Konteks, p. 45.

language education in the interior of Minangkabau during the mid-19th century. Among these texts are notable works such as *Al-Marah al-Arwah* by Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Mas'ud,<sup>39</sup> catalogued under manuscript code L-SJJ-2011-01-a; *Al-Jurumiyyah* by Ibn al-Jurum, with manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-12-a; *Qatr al-Nida*, recorded as CL-SJJ-2011-51-a; and *Syarah Qatr Nida* by Jamal al-Din b. Yusuf b. Hisham al-Ansari, designated as CL-SJJ-2011-24-c. Additional texts include *Tamriin al-Thulaab* by Khalid ibn Abdilah al-Azhari (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-36-a), *Al-Mukhtasar fi al-Ilm al-Nahwi* (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-55d), and *Al-Awamil fi al-Nahw* by al-Shaykh Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani. Among these, *Kitab al-Awamil fi al-Nahw*, authored by al-Jurjani, is exceptionally prominent, as it boasts the highest number of copies associated with teaching Arabic grammar. Al-Jurjani, a renowned scholar of his time, contributed significantly to the field of Arabic grammar, and his work continues to be influential. This manuscript exists in multiple copies, identified by the following codes: CL-SJJ-2011-52b, CL-SJJ-2011-21b, CL-SJJ-2011-23b, and CL-SJJ-2011-35a.

As a reflexive agent, Sheikh Abdul Wahab employed his experiences to critically assess and adapt his pedagogical methods at Surau Calau.<sup>40</sup> He recognized the challenges faced by the local community in accessing Arabic texts, which often posed significant barriers to understanding. In response to this issue, he undertook the dual responsibility of copying and translating essential texts into Jawi, facilitating comprehension and fostering the dissemination of knowledge.<sup>41</sup> This initiative reflects his acute awareness of local challenges and demonstrates a strategic application of traditional knowledge as a catalyst for social transformation, showcasing the power of adaptation and innovation in education. Sheikh Abdul Wahab's decision to translate works such as *Tafsir Jalalayn* and other Ash'ari texts is a testament to his unwavering commitment to inclusivity in education. By prioritizing language as a vital medium, he effectively bridged the intellectual gap between the global hubs of Islamic scholarship and the Minangkabau community.<sup>42</sup> This commitment not only enhanced accessibility but also nurtured a deeper

<sup>39</sup> Joyce Ekesson, Arabic Morphology and Phonology, E-PDF, vol. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, 35 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

<sup>40</sup> See Mukhammad Lutfan Setiaji and Aminullah Ibrahim, "Human Rights in the State of the Rule of Law: Between Progressive Law and Positive Law," *Lex Scientia Law Review* 1, no. 1 (2017): 69–80.

<sup>41</sup> Sri Astuti A. Samad and Munawwarah Munawwarah, "Adat Pernikahan Dan Nilai-Nilai Islami Dalam Masyarakat Aceh Menurut Hukum Islam," *El-USRAH: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 3, no. 2 (August 18, 2020): 289, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v3i2.7716>.

<sup>42</sup> Siti Yumnah et al., "Strategi Kepala Sekolah Dalam Mengelola Sumber Daya Guru Untuk Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan," *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (February 22, 2023): 92–104, <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i1.350>.

engagement with Islamic teachings, significantly contributing to the broader objective of educational equity.

Additionally, Sheikh Abdul Wahab replicated the social structure of Surau Calau and expanded it through his innovative curriculum designs. He integrated Sufi doctrines into theological teachings, notably the *Martabat Tujuh* concept, thus developing an educational framework that resonated with the social dynamics of Minangkabau culture. This innovation enriched the intellectual tradition of the *surau* but also provided students with a profound understanding of Islam contextualized within their cultural framework.<sup>43</sup> By employing manuscripts such as Fadhullah al-Burhanpuri's *Tuhfah al-Mursalah*, Sheikh Abdul Wahab ensured that his *surau* remained a relevant educational center, adept at addressing the intellectual and spiritual needs of the community while reinforcing regional Islamic identity. Sheikh Abdul Wahab's pedagogical approach underscores his commitment to harmonizing traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary societal developments, fostering a learning environment that is both spiritually enriching and culturally grounded.<sup>44</sup> His significant contribution to the evolution of educational practices in Minangkabau can be seen in his emphasis on the necessity of contextually relevant religious education. By adapting traditional methods to the local context and addressing the challenges faced by the community, he paved the way for a more inclusive and accessible educational system.

Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau's intellectual legacy is distinguished by his meticulous dedication to copying and translating the works of esteemed scholars from Haramain and Nusantara. His transliterations and translations, which primarily focus on theological texts, Sufism, Hadith, and fiqh, are rendered into *Jawi* to enhance comprehension and facilitate the dissemination of knowledge. One of his most notable translations is the *Tafsir Jalalayn*, cataloged under manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-03.<sup>45</sup> This manuscript is likely a product of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau's meticulous work, as it includes a statement of ownership that reads, "This is the letter of my master under Manggis in Aur, housed in Muaro in Calau." In addition to *Tafsir Jalalayn*, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau is presumed to have directly transliterated and translated several other manuscripts, including a damaged fiqh text in both Arabic and *Jawi* (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-74); *Khatimat al-Zikr* in Arabic (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-67-a); *Kitab Hadarah*, also in Arabic

<sup>43</sup> See Ke Song, Hokkun Wan, and Qiaoran Jia, "A Backlash against the High-speed Modernity of Gastronomy Tourism: An Analysis of the Evolution of Macanese Cuisine," *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 65, no. 2 (August 2024): 171 – 86, <https://doi.org/10.1111/apv.12412>.

<sup>44</sup> See Domonkos Sik, "Giddens' Social Theory," *Tőrsadalomkutatás* 31, no. 1 (March 1, 2013): 55 – 71, <https://doi.org/10.1556/tarskut.31.2013.1.5>.

<sup>45</sup> Arif Maftuhin, "Translating the Untranslatable," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 51, no. 151 (September 2, 2023): 279 – 303, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2023.2264672>.

(manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-43); the texts of *Asma' al Mathlab fi isthilahi al 'Awaqi*, *Dignity of Seven*, *Tuhfah al-Mursalah* by Fadhullah al-Burhanpuri, and *Risalah Tarikat* (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-15); the Arabic text of *Syarah al Kafiyah* (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-12-i); and the Hadith text in Arabic (manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-11).

The curriculum at Surau Calau was notably dominated by Asy'ariyah manuscripts, reflecting the theological needs of the Minangkabau community in the 19th century, which pursued doctrinal stability amidst significant social change. The Asy'ariyah doctrine emphasizes the equilibrium between reason and revelation and provides a moderate framework for understanding Islamic teachings.<sup>46</sup> This philosophical stance is evident in the selection of texts such as *Tafsir Jalalayn*, a prominent Qur'anic commentary, and *Sifat Dua Puluh*, a thorough guide to Islamic theology, which serve as cornerstone references. These texts not only preserve the Asy'ariyah theological tradition but also reinforce its role as an educational institution that fosters dogmatic instruction and deep intellectual engagement, thereby significantly contributing to the preservation of Islamic scholarship.<sup>47</sup> As a result, the prevalence of Asy'ariyah manuscripts played a crucial role in shaping a distinct scholarly identity within the Minangkabau context.

The incorporation of Ash'ariyah texts within the Surau Calau curriculum significantly influenced the intellectual landscape of Minangkabau, enabling students who engaged with works such as *Al-Yawaqit wal Jawahir* and *Tuhfah al-Mursalah* to attain a profound understanding of Islamic theology while integrating Sufi values into daily practices.<sup>48</sup> This pedagogical approach nurtured an intellectual tradition deeply rooted in spirituality and local wisdom, thereby significantly influencing the intellectual and spiritual development of the Minangkabau community.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the dominance of the Asy'ariyah doctrine fostered social cohesion, presenting a moderate theological perspective that

<sup>46</sup> See Ervan Nurtawab, "The Problems of Translation in *Turjumān Al-Mustafid*: A Study of Theological and Eschatological Aspects," *Studia Islamika* 18, no. 1 (April 28, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v18i1.440>.

<sup>47</sup> A. Samad and Munawwarah, "Adat Pernikahan Dan Nilai-Nilai Islami Dalam Masyarakat Aceh Menurut Hukum Islam."

<sup>48</sup> See Aglaia Iankovskaia, "Reading Arabic in Sumatra: Interlinear Translation in Didactic Contexts," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 52, no. 153 (May 3, 2024): 221 – 42, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2024.2354597>.

<sup>49</sup> Jajat Burhanudin, "NINETEENTH-CENTURY KITĀB JAWI SUFI WORKS IN PATTANI, THAILAND: MAINSTREAMING ETHICAL SUFISM OF AL-GHAZALI," *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 28, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 51 – 71, <https://doi.org/10.31436/shajarah.v28i1.1594>.

resonated with diverse groups within the Minangkabau community.<sup>50</sup> In this regard, the institution emerged as a pivotal platform for cultivating scholars who possessed extensive knowledge and the capacity to foster harmony within their communities, thereby playing an integral role in shaping the trajectory of Islamic scholarships.

The prevalence of *Asy'ariyah* manuscripts had a profound and enduring influence on the development of local Islamic scholarship, impacting not only the generation of students during that time but also shaping future scholars. This *Asy'ariyah*-based pedagogical tradition has effectively preserved the continuity of Sunni Islamic doctrine within the Minangkabau community, even in the face of modernization and colonial pressures.<sup>51</sup> Graduates of Surau Calau, who subsequently became prominent ulama in various regions, carried forth this educational legacy and disseminated it within their communities. The institution, in this context, is not just a place of learning, but a significant institution that emerged as a catalyst for intellectual transformation, capable of reconciling traditional Islamic heritage with contemporary challenges.<sup>52</sup> Incorporating *Asy'ariyah* manuscripts into the curriculum illustrates how local intellectual traditions can survive and thrive within a global context, demonstrating the institution's capacity to adapt and maintain relevance.

In the mid-19th century, Minangkabau ulama was characterized by an emerging spirit of "neo-Sufism." This period saw the rise of scholars like Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau, who played a significant role in shaping the neo-Sufism movement.<sup>53</sup> Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau was not only well-versed in Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) but also an authority on Sufi teachings, adept in the complexities of religious rituals, and lived the mystical realities of divine experience. His influence and teachings, evident in the text found in manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-38, are a testament to his role in the emergence of neo-Sufism in Minangkabau. The manuscript analyzes the structural significance of Islamic

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<sup>50</sup> Hasnan Bachtiar and Zakiyuddin Baidhawy, "Muslim Intellectuals' Insights and Their Contributions to the Development of Alternative Social Science in the Malay-Indonesian Context," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 12, no. 2 (December 1, 2022): 307 – 30, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2022.12.2.307-330>.

<sup>51</sup> Muhammad Rosyidin and Jumari Jasminto, "The Absorption of Islamic Education Thought of KH. M. Hasyim *Asy'ari* through Teaching of *Adab al-'Alim Wa al-Muta'Allim* among the Santri at the Pesantren Tebuireng," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 22, no. 2 (2023): 611 – 40.

<sup>52</sup> Mohd Hilmi Ramli and Muhammad Syukri Rosli, "Ta'rifat Jāwī Oleh Tuan Guru Haji Ibrahim Haji Jusoh (m. 1980): Satu Kajian Perkamusian Istilah Saintifik Di Alam Melayu," *Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 24, no. 2 (December 31, 2022): 35 – 98, <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol24no2.2>.

<sup>53</sup> See this concept in Azyurmardi Azra,, *Jaringan Ulama Nusantara...op. cit.* Particularly Chapter IV.

prayers as conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad. The *Fajr* prayer features two *Rak'ahs*, reflecting Allah's essence. The four *Rak'ahs* of the *Zuhr* prayer symbolize existence, knowledge, light (*nur*), and witness (*shuhud*). The *'Asr* prayer, also with four *Rak'ahs*, corresponds to elemental teachings of water, fire, wind, and earth. The *Maghrib* prayer, comprising three *Rak'ahs*, embodies guidance, unity, and singularity. The *Isha* prayer includes four *Rak'ahs* linked to valley, past, seed, and sustenance. Finally, the *Witr* prayer, requiring at least one *Rak'ah*, underscores Allah's singularity, promoting completeness in prayer.

At the heart of the practices at Surau Calau was Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau's neo-Sufism. This unique approach, which served as the foundational socio-religious practice, became the cornerstone of the Neo-Surau movement that he initiated. In the context of the Minangkabau "neo-Surau" movement, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau established Surau Calau as a pivotal center for Islamic scholarly knowledge, encompassing various disciplines such as *tafsir* (Quranic exegesis), *usul fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), and Arabic grammar. This institution became integral to the intellectual development of its students. Furthermore, it served as a significant locus for the broader metaphysical teachings of Islam, which are represented by the doctrines of various sects. Notably, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau displayed an openness to heterodox teachings, including the doctrine of *wujudiyah*, which is deeply rooted in the thought of Ibn Arabi and further developed by prominent figures such as Hallaj, Sheikh Siti Jenar, Hamzah Fansuri, and Syamsuddin al-Sumatrani. In addition to its focus on Islamic sciences, this institution functioned as a space for studying history and literature. It emerged as a repository for numerous treatises, *nazams* (poetic verses), and poems rich in aesthetic value and significance.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, it played a crucial role in preserving and enriching the cultural heritage of the Minangkabau people through various forms of *mantras*, amulets, dream interpretation, and *mojarobat* (traditional medicine). These practices reflect the profound local wisdom of the Minangkabau people and underscore the multifaceted nature of the knowledge and traditions cultivated within this *surau*, fostering a sense of connection to the rich cultural heritage.<sup>55</sup>

Following the conclusion of the Padri War, Surau Calau emerged as a significant locus for the interaction between Indigenous Communities and Surau society, facilitated by the inclusive nature of this educational institution. Numerous discoveries within the manuscripts of this surau have documented the identities of

<sup>54</sup> See manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-04, CL-SJJ-2011-05-u, CL-SJJ-2011-05-x, CL-SJJ-2011-10-a, CL-SJJ-2011-45-c, and many more.

<sup>55</sup> See manuscript code CL-SJJ-2011-12-g, CL-SJJ-2011-26, CL-SJJ-2011-38-c, CL-SJJ-2011-42, CL-SJJ-2011-60a, CL-SJJ-2011-60c, CL-SJJ-2011-62, and many more.

prominent Indigenous figures, including Datuk Bandaro and Khatib Hulubalang, who were likely actively engaged in educational initiatives associated with the *surau*. This documentation supports the assertion that Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau, with his visionary leadership, effectively established a dialogue channel between the *surau* community and the adat leaders of the Minangkabau, thereby fostering social cohesion. The innovative educational framework of this *surau* sought to integrate customary practices and Islamic law into an effective negotiating forum, wherein the Indigenous Communities perceived themselves as integral participants in the communal transformation pertinent to spiritual adherence while reinforcing the daily spiritual functions of the *surau* community. This paradigm has facilitated social integration within Minangkabau, positioning the *surau* as a symbol of reconciliation following the conflict.<sup>56</sup>

Consequently, one of the significant obstacles faced by the ulama of the *surau*, in light of the historical-political framework, pertains to their necessity to position their institutions as a new theological construct capable of assimilating Islamic principles and traditions into a cohesive social identity. The ulama, with their unwavering dedication, have played a crucial role in this context. Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau articulated his correspondence as a crucial medium for neo-Sufi practices through comprehensive instructional texts. As a result, the political and historical transformations in Minangkabau following the Padri War impacted the social framework. They engendered new theological interpretations by integrating customary values alongside the adaptations of other local ulama to the evolving political landscape.

Historically and culturally, Surau Calau has significantly influenced the application of moderate Islamic practices and contextual interpretations within the Minangkabau society during the mid-19th century. The extensive collection of Islamic scientific texts, consisting of numerous manuscripts preserved in this *surau*, alongside the religious influence exerted by Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau within the Syattariyah community and Minangkabau tradition, has been pivotal to developing these practices and interpretations. The influence of Surau Calau on the application of moderate Islamic practices is a significant aspect of its historical significance, enlightening us about its role in shaping the Minangkabau society. Notably, adherence to the principle of adat based on religion, religion based on al-Quran (*adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah, ABSSBK*), which integrates local customs and culture into the framework of Nusantara Islam, exemplifies a model of moderate Islamic leadership within Minangkabau society.<sup>57</sup> This practice illustrates

<sup>56</sup> Rama Mani, "Rebuilding an Inclusive Political Community After War," *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 4 (December 2005): 511 – 26, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010605060452>.

<sup>57</sup> See Ridwan Benny et al., "Islam Nusantara, Ulemas, and Social Media...op.cit.

the indigenization of Islam, highlighting the incorporation of traditional local elements into religious compliance. The framework of ABSSBK has engendered religious moderation by embracing local wisdom.<sup>58</sup>

## Conclusion

This study explores the enduring legacy of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau, a pivotal figure in shaping 19th-century Islamic education in Minangkabau. Employing Giddens' structuration theory uncovers the intricate interplay between individual agency and social structures that drove intellectual transformation. Surau Calau's innovative curriculum and preservation of Asy'ariyah manuscripts testify to the resilience of local Islamic traditions. Calau's manuscript copying and translation practices enriched the intellectual landscape and established connections with broader scholarly networks across the archipelago and the Holy Lands. His contributions, which significantly enhanced local scholarship and fostered the vital exchange of ideas among his students, continue to resonate, underscoring his enduring legacy.

Applying Anthony Giddens' structuration theory offers a nuanced understanding of Sheikh Abdul Wahab Calau's impact on Minangkabau society in the 19th century. Calau established a new socio-religious structure at Surau Calau, significantly shaping and reproducing social systems through his intellectual endeavors. His authority and legitimacy stemmed from a strong scholarly genealogy, innovative teaching methods, and interpretations of various religious manuscripts. His practices, including teaching, copying, and translating texts from broader Islamic centers, exemplify the interplay between individual agency and social structure. Calau's reflexivity—his capacity to adapt educational practices based on experience and knowledge—was crucial in transforming Surau Calau into a vital Islamic learning center. This adaptability was a key factor in his success and is something we can all appreciate. While Giddens' theory highlights scholars as agents of social change, it occasionally neglects historical events, creating a disconnect in explaining historical structures. Future research could expand this perspective through comparative studies of similar Southeast Asian institutions, enhancing our understanding of the region's intellectual history.

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<sup>58</sup> See M.A. Fuadi et al., "Religious Moderation in the Context of Integration Between Religion and Local Culture in Indonesia," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 1 (2024): 47–59, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no1.4>.

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