

THE ORIGINS OF ISLAMIC REFORMISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern
'*Ulamā*' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

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Seventeenth Century Malay-Indonesian Networks III: Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Maqassārī

Our discussion of the Malay-Indonesian connection of the networks of '*ulamā*' up to now has centred mainly on Aceh. The third figure of Islamic renewal in the archipelago, Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Maqassārī (1037–1111/1627–99), brings our discussion into a vast region, from South Sulawesi (Celebes) and West Java to Arabia, Srilanka and South Africa. In order to get a better grasp of al-Maqassārī's role in Islamic development in these places, we must also deal in passing with the religious and intellectual life of the Muslims in these respective areas.

There have been a number of studies devoted to al-Maqassārī, in both Indonesia and South Africa.¹ But most of them centre only on his career in the archipelago or when he was in exile in South Africa; very little attention has been given to his scholarly connections within the international networks of '*ulamā*'. This fails not only to trace the origins of al-Maqassārī's teachings but also to recognise his role as one of the early transmitters of Islamic reformism to the region where he lived.

FROM SULAWESI TO BANTEN AND ARABIA

Muḥammad Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh Abū al-Maḥāsīn al-Tāj al-Khalwātī al-Maqassārī, also known in Sulawesi as '*Tuanta Salamaka ri Gowa*' (Our Gracious Master from Gowa), according to the Annals of Gowa, was born in 1037/1627.² Despite myth and legends concerning the parents and events surrounding the birth of al-Maqassārī, probably fabricated after his death, his family was among those which had been fully Islamised.

As a result, from his early years of life, prior to his departure to Arabia, al-Maqassārī was educated according to Islamic tradition. He initially learned to read the Qur'ān with a local teacher named Daeng ri Tasam-mang. Later he studied Arabic, *fiqh*, *tawhīd* and *taṣawwuf* with Sayyid Bā

Shaykh Yusuf Makasar (1626 - 1699)

Abstract: *Shaykh Yusuf Makasar is a prominent sûfi, intellectual and statesman who devoted his entire life to struggling for the fate of his nation. He was born in kingdom of Gowa, Makasar, known today as Ujung Pandang, South Sulawesi. He was brought up in the palace of Sultan Alauddin and received religious education, including memorizing the Qur'ân, when he was still very young. He pursued his education in Aceh, Yemen, Mecca, Medina and Syria. He was baptized into almost all sûfi orders directly by their Masters. Having finished his wandering, he went back to his home area, Gowa, to transfer his experiences to his fellow people.*

Unfortunately, he saw that Gowa was not as it used to be. People mainly engaged in immoral acts, such as drinking, cock-fighting, gambling and so forth. He failed to convince the Sultan to use his authority to ban immoral acts, which contradicted Islamic teachings. Shaykh Yusuf Makasar then left Gowa for Banten, West Java, which was ruled by Sultan Tirtayasa (1651 - 1695). This Sultan, who was a devout Muslim, appointed him as the Muftî of the kingdom and married him to his daughter. They worked hand-in-hand in the struggle to maintain the kingdom's independence from the interference of the Dutch company, V.O.C. Having carried out a guerrilla war for three years, the Sultan was arrested and Shaykh Yusuf was exiled to Ceylon and then to Cape Town, South Africa in 1694 where he remained until his death in 1699.

Shaykh Yusuf Makasar wrote 22 manuscripts in Arabic, not to mention his works in the Bugis-Makasar and Banten languages. All these writings deal with mysticism, mystical orders and ethics. Most of the works