

# Islam in Aceh

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Entry tags: Islamic Traditions, Southeast Asian Religions, Abrahamic, Religious Group

Aceh enjoys a reputation as Indonesia's "Verandah of Mecca," a place of special piety and devotion to Sunni Islam. With the confirmed presence of Muslims in the region by the 13th century, Aceh gave rise to one of the oldest Islamic kingdoms in Southeast Asia and emerged by the 1600s as a center of Muslim scholarship during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda and several female "sultanah" successors. After the Dutch colonial invasion of the sultanate, Acehnese Muslims leapt to the forefront of religiously inspired resistance against colonialism during the long Dutch-Aceh War (1873-1914), forged vibrant Islamic schools during the 20th century, and claimed "special autonomy" status in matters of religious administration in the aftermath of their incorporation into the newly independent Indonesian nation-state in 1945. Since the end of Suharto's "New Order" regime in 1998, Aceh continues to forge ahead with the implementation of a distinctive Islamic legal and bureaucratic system (Syariat Islam) as part of its special autonomy status. Within this general framework of Sunni Islamic piety, Acehnese Muslims have embraced varied religious practices, textual traditions, political affiliations and approaches to the interpretation of Islamic law.

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Date Range: 1500 CE - 2020 CE

Region: Aceh

Region tags: Asia, Indonesia, Sumatra

The Province of Aceh currently occupies nearly 58,000 square kilometers at the northern tip of Sumatra Island, in the far northwest of the Republic of Indonesia. Along with a mountainous interior and equatorial rainforests, Aceh has thousands of kilometers of coastline abutting the busy Straits of Melaka and the Indian Ocean.

## Status of Participants:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists    ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

## Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Edward Aspinall. *Islam and Nation: Separatist Rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Source 2: R. Michael Feener. *Sharia and Social Engineering: The Implementation of Islamic Law in Contemporary Aceh*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Source 3: Amirul Hadi. *Islam and State in Sumatra: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Aceh*. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Source 1: Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje. *The Acehnese*, 2 volumes. Translated by A.W.S. O'Sullivan. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1906.
- Source 2: Sher Banu A.L. Khan. *Sovereign Women in a Muslim Kingdom: The Sultanahs of Aceh, 1641-1699*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2017.
- Source 3: David Kloos. *Becoming Better Muslims: Religious Authority and Ethical Improvement in Aceh, Indonesia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017.
- Source 1: Jacqueline Aquino Siapno. *Gender, Islam, Nationalism and the State in Aceh: The Paradox of Power, Co-Optation and Resistance*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.
- Source 2: Mohammad Said. *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 2 vols. Medan: Independently published, 1961.
- Source 3: James Siegel. *Rope of God*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969

Online sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: <http://acehresearch.org/>

– Source 1 Description: An English and Indonesian language website operated by the International Centre for Aceh and Indian Ocean Studies. Devoted to the presence of an international scholarly community in the region, the website hosts a wide variety of discussions, blog posts, webinars, local scholarly journals, and other resources.

– Source 2 URL: <http://acehinstitute.org/>

– Source 2 Description: An Indonesian and English language website run by the Aceh Institute, a non-profit organization established in the aftermath of the devastating 2004 tsunami to assist in post-conflict and post-tsunami reconstruction. The website offers a wide variety of blog posts, news items, discussion fora, and other resources on contemporary Aceh.

#### Relevant online primary textual corpora (original languages and/or translations):

– Source 1 URL:

<https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP329#:~:text=The%20content%20of%20the%20manuscripts,the%20manuscripts%20are%20highly>

– Source 1 Description: Operated by the British Library Endangered Archives Programme, this website hosts the archival records of a project dedicated to identifying and digitizing private collections of Acehese manuscripts from the Pidië and Aceh Besar Regencies of this region. The website as of 2020 includes 493 entries with digitized “collections” of Acehese and Malay language primary source materials in Jawi (Arabic) script.

– Source 2 URL: <https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/acehbooks>

– Source 2 Description: Operated by the Leiden University Library, Aceh Books comprises a digital collection of 1200 primary and secondary source publications on Aceh from the 17th until the 21st century. The preponderance of these sources are either Dutch, Indonesian, Acehese, or English language. Some of these sources are available as full text, while others have restricted access.

– Source 3 URL: <https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/snouckhurgronjepapers>

– Source 3 Description: The Snouck Hurgronje Papers comprises a collection of correspondence, archives, and photos held by the Leiden University Library in the Netherlands. Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje was one of the Netherlands’ most influential Orientalist scholars of Islam and Aceh in the late 19th and early 20th century, and he worked as the advisor of indigenous affairs to the Government of the Netherlands East Indies from 1889 to 1906. In addition to his journey to Mecca, Hurgronje is most well-known for his scholarship and political work in the region of Aceh during the Dutch-Aceh Wars, when he supplied military intelligence to generals seeking to pacify the region for colonial control. This work also led to publication of key ethnographic works on the region including *The Acehese (1893-1894)* and *The Gayoland and its Inhabitants (1903)*. In addition to a detailed online catalogue of the Snouck Hurgronje papers available in-person at Leiden University, many letters, manuscripts, and photos are also available online. While the collection covers a wide range of materials from Hurgronje’s career, a significant portion of this collection relates to Aceh.

– Source 1 URL: <https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/view/item/97373?page=19#page/1/mode/1up>

– Source 1 Description: This is a digitized version of P. Voorhoeve’s essential finding aid, *Catalogue of Acehese Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and Other Collections Outside Aceh*. This catalogue includes a list of 161 Acehese hikayat (tales) and other written sources, as well detailed descriptive summary and finding aid information on how to access such sources at the Leiden University Special Collections Library.

## General Variables

### Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: As of the 2010 census, 99% of the Acehese population identified as Muslim. There are also approximately 55,000 non-Muslims residing in Aceh, including Protestants, Catholics, Buddhists, Hindus, and Confucians. Most of the non-Muslim population is concentrated either along the border with North Sumatra, a province with a larger non-Muslim minority, or in the largest regional urban centers of Lhokseumawe, Langsa, and Banda Aceh. Historically, Acehese Muslims had extensive encounters with the Karo Batak peoples in the mountainous interior to their south, most of whom practiced various forms of animism or who later converted to Christianity. Arskal Salim, “Living under Islamic Authority: Identity and Community among Non-Muslims in Aceh,” *Contending Modernities: Exploring how Religious and Secular Forces Interact in the Modern World*, University of Notre Dame

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

— Yes

Notes: Many writers have framed historical conflicts between Aceh and European powers as a series of competitive religious clashes between a pious Islamic sultanate and Christian colonial rivals. The Acehese sultanate fought a long-running series of battles and military campaigns against Portuguese Catholic invaders who occupied Melaka (1511-1641) in the nearby Malay Peninsula. Likewise, the Acehese earned a reputation as committed foes of Dutch colonial rule, sometimes deplored as kafir (infidels), during the Dutch-Aceh War of 1873-1914. Besides European Christian powers, the Acehese have also historically sought to convert nearby indigenous people like Karo Batak peoples to Islam, particularly in the 17th century.

↳ Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:

— Yes

Notes: While Muslims comprise the overwhelming majority of Acehese and the Acehese regional government has since 2002 implemented a range of provisions for following Islamic law under its "special autonomy" status, the government nonetheless guarantees protections for Christians and other non-Muslim minorities. In accordance with Acehese and Indonesian law, regional statutes explicitly state that the "Aceh government and district /city government guarantee freedom, foster harmony respect religious values adopted by religious people and protect fellow religious people to practice worship by the religion it embraces." Thus, Christians and other non-Muslims can legally practice their own religion in Aceh even with the deepening implementation of Islamic legal codes after 2002, although the extent to which such people can exercise such legal rights in practice has varied, and difficulty in obtaining permits for non-Muslim houses of worship has at times proven difficult. Muhammad Anzor, "We are from the Same Ancestors: Christian-Muslim Relations in Contemporary Aceh Singkil," *Al-Albab Borneo Journal of Religious Studies* 2, no. 1 (2014): 3-24. Ernawati and Ritta Setiyati, "Implementation of Sharia Regulations for Minorities in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam," <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ce2f/7a7699ec5e0d39b3246893cc2725b19b58a5.pdf>.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2002 CE - 2020 CE

↳ Is the cultural contact neutral:

— No

Notes: Although the Acehese regional government provides protection to non-Muslims, that does not provide for "neutral" cultural contact between religious groups. For example, Moch Nur Ichwan argues that Aceh after 2001 inscribes a sort of "host-guest" framework of illiberal citizenship for non-Muslims. According to statute, "everyone who resides or is in Aceh shall respect the implementation of Islamic law." In this framework, Nur argues Acehese Muslims see their region as a "land of sharia" (nanggroe syariat), while regarding non-Muslims as "guests". The primacy of Islamic Shari'a law in the post-2002 autonomous framework for Aceh thus does impose some restrictions upon non-Muslims in matters such as church construction and clothing/dress. Moch Nur Ichwan, "Faith, Ethnicity, and Illiberal Citizenship: Authority, Identity, and Religious "others" in Aceh's Border Areas," *Contending Modernities: Exploring how Religious and Secular forces Interact in the Modern World*, University of Notre Dame Keough School of Global Affairs, <<https://contendingmodernities.nd.edu/field-notes/faith-ethnicity-illiberal-citizenship-authority-identity-religious-others-acehs-border-areas/>>. Anzor, "We are from the Same Ancestors," 3-24. Ernawati and Setiyati, "Implementation of Sharia Regulations."

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2002 CE - 2020 CE

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

— Yes

Notes: Although non-violent relations generally prevail between Muslims and non-Muslims in modern post-Independence Aceh after 1945, tensions have on occasion devolved into protests

or even serious violence. In particular, some Acehese Muslims have voiced fear about Christian intentions of conversion in the region. In 1967, such concerns over proselytism caused local Muslims to stage a protest against the construction of a Methodist Church in the city of Meulaboh. At least ten churches suffered similar attacks in South Aceh in the late 1970s. More recently in 2012, similar rumors of Christianization prompted a mob of hundreds of people to physically attack the Bethel Church in Penauyong, Aceh while hurling stones and epithets at Christian churchgoers. Other such incidents have occurred, including the burning of two churches in 2015. Al Makin, "Islamic Acehese Identity, Sharia, and Christianization Rumor: A Study of the Narratives of the Attack on the Bethel Church in Penauyong Banda Aceh," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 1 (2016): 1-36.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1967 CE - 2020 CE



Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

— Yes

Notes: Writers and scholars have long depicted Acehese history as a story of struggle for cultural independence, Islamic religiosity, and proud resistance against the impositions of various outside powers, including the Portuguese, Dutch, and Indonesian states. Such narratives can represent something of an oversimplification. Acehese states pursued outright warfare or rebellion, along with various forms of diplomacy and accommodation with external powers. Some local actors cooperated with the Dutch colonial state, while much of the local Acehese elite worked within the systems of the post-colonial Indonesian state in the decades after 1945. Nonetheless, the history of war and rebellion against outside powers is real. With the diplomatic support of the Ottoman Empire, the Acehese Sultanate waged a series of periodic attacks against the Portuguese Southeast Asian stronghold of Malacca in the 16th and 17th centuries, cementing Aceh's status as a defender of Islam against Christian European intrusions. Similarly, the Acehese fought a long though ultimately unsuccessful war of resistance against Dutch colonization in the Dutch-Aceh War between 1873 and 1914. Many rebels like Teungku Cik di Tiro invoked the mantle of Islam and holy war against Christian outsiders. From 1953 to 1962, a charismatic leader from the All-Aceh Association of Ulama (PUSA), Muhammad Daud Beureueh, joined an emergent-armed movement (called Darul Islam) to establish the newly independent Republic of Indonesia as an Islamic state and sought to align Aceh with this movement. Resistance largely ended after the Indonesian central government agreed to confer on Aceh "Special Region of Aceh" status in 1959 with wide autonomy in matters of religion, education, and customary law. Finally, from 1977 through 2005, an organization known as the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM) launched a series of attacks against Indonesian state institutions and military installations. While GAM often invoked the restoration of the Islamic Sultanate of Aceh and asserted Islam's role as a defining features of the Acehese people, it did not pursue a specifically Islamist form of government and some factions revealed a more "secular" orientation. Edward Aspinall, *Islam and Nation: Separatist Rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), 269-339. Paulo Jorge de Sousa Pinto, *The Portuguese and the Straits of Melaka, 1575-1619* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2012): 79-122.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1967 CE - 2004 CE

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

— Yes

Notes: Children in Acehese families generally undergo a series of rituals after birth and during early childhood, defining them as Muslims. The adhan prayer (bang in Acehese) and iqamah prayer are voiced after the child's birth. Other rituals are sometimes identified as part of customary Acehese tradition (adat), sometimes seen as part of Islamic tradition and sometimes even regarded as a non-Islamic holdover from the past. Such rituals include cukôök or the hair shaving ceremony, the puecicap in which a sweet flavor of honey and fruit water is given to the baby, and the aqiqa ceremony involving the ritual slaughter of goats and water buffalo for some wealthy families. The trononah usually involves the holding of a communal kanduri meal for relatives, neighbors, and friends. Sri Astuti A. Samad, "Character Education Base on Local Wisdom in Aceh (Study on Tradition of Children Education in Aceh Community)," *Al-Ulum* 15, no. 2 (December 2015): 351-370. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30603/au.v15i2.206> Yusriati et al., "Exploring the Values of Character Education in the Tradition of Tron Tanoh in Aceh Pidie Community," *Advances in Social Science, Education and*

- ↳ Assigned at birth (membership is default for this society):
  - Yes
- ↳ Assigned by personal choice:
  - No
- ↳ Assigned by class:
  - No
- ↳ Assigned at a specific age:
  - No
- ↳ Assigned by gender:
  - No
- ↳ Assigned by participation in a particular ritual:
  - Yes
- ↳ Assigned by some other factor:
  - No

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– Yes

Notes: In the 20th century, Acehese Muslims did not undertake extensive efforts to convert non-Muslims to Islam, as almost 99% of the population already subscribe to this dominant religion. However, Aceh often figures prominently into narratives of Islamization in Indonesian and Southeast Asian history. Precise accounts of how the broader Acehese population converted to Islam over time remains sketchy due to scant sources. Nevertheless, popular and elite narratives often depict Aceh, which sits at the interface between the Indian Ocean and the wider archipelagos of Southeast Asia, as the first site of widespread conversion to Sunni Islam in the Malay-Indonesian World beginning in the 13th century. This narrative continues with accounts of the Acehese sultanate as a leading regional sponsor of Islamic scholars from the Middle East and India during the 16th century, including Hamza Fansuri, Shams al-Din al-Sumatra'i, Nur al-Din al-Raniri and 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Singkili. Other scholars and experts also emphasize the role of Shaṭṭariyya and Naqshbandiyya Sufi brotherhoods, or tariqa, in popularizing Islam with the broader Acehese population through physical or devotional exercise or chants like dhikr (remembrances of God), education in dayah boarding schools, and various dance/singing practices like the seudati. Some of these efforts at promoting conversion and Islamization also extended beyond Acehese speaking peoples as Sultan Iskandar Muda (r. 1607-1636) organized campaigns into neighboring communities of Gayo and Karo in Sumatra with significant animist populations. Beyond this long historical process of conversion, Islam also features a strong missionary strain devoted to da'wa, or propagation of Islam among Muslims themselves to reinvigorate and strengthen devotion to the faith. Scholars such as Daniel Birchok, for example, have noted that narratives of Islamization in Indonesia and Aceh often lay stress on the process by which people progressively deepen their commitment to Islam (in Indonesian, mengislamkan), than on the initial conversion to Islam itself. After 1965, the New Order Indonesian state especially sought to harness this idea of da'wa in Aceh, promoting what R. Michael Feener refers to as a "da'wa paradigm" through institutions like the Aceh Ulama Council and State Institute of Islamic Studies (Islamic universities). These institutions linked intensified doctrinal purity and public morality with national modernization. Daniel Andrew Birchok, "Putting Habib Abdurrahim in His Place: Genealogy, Scale, and Islamization in Seunagan, Indonesia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no. 2 (2015): 502, 519. R. Michael Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering: The Implementation of Islamic Law in Contemporary Aceh, Indonesia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 90-101. Margaret Kartomi, "The Development of the Acehese Sitting Song-Dances and Frame-Drum Genres as part of Religious Conversion and Continuing Piety," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 166, no. 1 (2010): 83-

106. Werner Kraus, "Transformations of a Religious Community: the Stattariyah Sufi Brotherhood in Aceh," in *Nationalism and Cultural Revival in Southeast Asia: Perspectives from the Centre and the Region*, ed. Sri Kuhnt-Saptodewo et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrossowitz, 1997): 169-189.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1200 CE - 2020 CE

↳ Is proselytizing mandated for religious professionals:

– No

Notes: While the idea of da'wa or propagation of Islam, particularly among Muslims, is in the abstract required of most Acehnese Muslim professionals, this does not translate into much of a practical emphasis on converting non-Muslims to Islam during the 20th century

↳ Is proselytizing mandated for all adherents:

– No

Notes: While it is well-known through gravestones that local elites in Aceh converted to Islam as early as the 13th century, and that some of these elites undertook military campaigns to establish an Islamic Acehnese sultanate by the 16th century, it is not well-understood how and when the broader Acehnese population adopted Islam. For example, scholars do not know if Acehnese sultans imposed Islam on the local population, or if the Sultanate encouraged adoption of Islam by making it the religion of the state or subsidizing various scholarly and Sufi activities.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1200 CE - 2020 CE

↳ Is missionary work mandated for religious professionals:

– No

↳ Is missionary work mandated for all adherents:

– No

↳ Is proselytization coercive:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While it is well-known through gravestones that local elites in Aceh converted to Islam as early as the 13th century, and that some of these elites undertook military campaigns to establish an Islamic Acehnese sultanate by the 16th century, it is not well-understood how and when the broader Acehnese population adopted Islam. For example, scholars do not know if Acehnese sultans imposed Islam on the local population, or if the Sultanate encouraged adoption of Islam by making it the religion of the state or subsidizing various scholarly and Sufi activities.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1200 CE - 2020 CE

Does the religion have official political support

– Yes

Notes: During the Acehnese sultanate's reign from 1500 through 1874, Islam and politics were inextricably intertwined. According to indigenous sources, the Acehnese viewed the sultan as the "shadow of God on Earth" and a specifically Muslim ruler. The Acehnese sultan promoted the implementation of God's commands and God's path. Meanwhile, the ulèëbalang—landed elites, who technically worked as servants of the sultan and received from the ruler a sarakata (royal edict) conferring upon them authority—in practice functioned as autonomous leaders over individual territories beyond the capital. Like the sultan, society vested the ulèëbalang with the responsibility for administering Islamic law, hiring qadi Islamic judges, patronizing local officials responsible for Muslim prayer services and the collection of required zakat alms expected of Muslim believers (teungku meunasah and imeum meunasah). After the Dutch dissolved the Acehnese Sultanate in 1874, the colonial government allowed the ulèëbalang to continue to partially administer Islamic law and

collect zakat, even subsidizing some Muslim schools run by organizations like civil-society organizations like Muhammadiyah. However, the vast majority of Muslim organizations operated independently and often in outright opposition to the Dutch. After the end of the Darul Islam rebellion, the national Indonesian and provincial Acehese government have supported Islam through establishments including an Ulama Council, Shari'a Courts and a State Islamic Studies Institute (IAIN) post-secondary university. After the establishment of a framework of special autonomy in the years following 1999, further institutions for the implementation of Islamic law emerged, including a re-organized Shari'a Court System, a State Shari'a Agency and a "Shari'a Police" known as the Wilayatul Hisbah (WH). Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*. Amirul Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Aceh* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

– Yes

Notes: From a variety of indigenous language sources, including the Adat Aceh, Hikayat Aceh, and Bustan al-Salatin, historians know that the Acehese sultanate from the 1570s through mid-1600s patronized a vibrant Islamic world of prayer, religious celebrations, legal scholarship, and Sufi mysticism at the palace court (kraton). For example, these sources indicate the sultan travelled in a ceremonial public procession to the mosque for both Friday juma'a prayers and the Eid al-Fitr festival marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. They also show a variety of religious functionaries likely paid by the Sultanate participated in these religious ceremonies including the khatib, imam, kadi, etc. However, from the time of the 1600s through the advent of Dutch colonial rule in 1874, it is difficult to say to what extent the sultanate may or may not have patronized religious scholars beyond the capital. In fact, the ulèëbalang, who in theory served as underlings of the sultan, in practice exercised primary political authority and enjoyed effective autonomy in their territorial domains. There, ulèëbalang patronized a category of religious officials called leube or malem, including an imeum who served as the primary officiant at central mosques, teungku meunasah for prayer halls in smaller villages, and kali or religious judicial officials. While ulèëbalang sometimes paid these religious officials, there is also evidence that many religious officials exercised some degree of autonomy. Apart from these leube, who provided basic elementary religious instruction to village boys, training in chanting of the Qur'an, and basic legal judgments, there was a separate category of ulama. The ulama, or teungku in Acehese, comprised a specialized group of "religious scholars" who gradually filtered from the capital city and port cities to the Acehese countryside. In the post-colonial period, the national Indonesian and provincial Acehese government have supported Islamic scholars and officials through establishments including an Ulama Council, Shari'a Courts and a State Islamic Studies Institute (IAIN) post-secondary university. Following the establishment of a framework of special autonomy in the years after 1999, the Acehese government continued to deepen its patronage of Islam through a re-organized Shari'a Court System, a State Shari'a Agency and a "Shari'a Police" known as the Wilayatul Hisbah (WH). See subsequent entries for a thorough investigation of how the government has patronized Islamic officials in the post-colonial period. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 42-53. Amirul Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra*, 125-146. Eric Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations," (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1983), 42.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1600 CE - 1874 CE

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

– Yes

Notes: The state partially supports religious infrastructure. However, religious institutions like the dayah schools also enjoy many of their own autonomous resources, leube religious officials historically often managed to raise funds independently from the ulèëbalang territorial chiefs under whom they served, and extensive Islamic activity occurs without the support of the modern Acehese government.

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– No

Notes: In accordance with typical Sunni practice, there is no real "head" of the Acehese religious community. During the period of the sultanate from the 16th century through 1874, the sultan did derive his legitimacy from being the religiously sanctioned head of a Muslim community, the "shadow of God on Earth," or as a khalifa, or deputy of God/successor of

Prophet Muhammad. However, consistent with Sunni practice across the Islamic world, none of this meant that the Acehese Sultan served as the head religious functionary or the chief of an organization analogous to the corporate Catholic Church. Islam does not feature such an organized hierarchy. During Dutch colonial rule from 1874 to 1941, non-Muslims served as leaders of the colonial administration for Aceh. While the colonial government delegated control over circumscribed religious matters to ulèëbalang and established an Advisory Board of Ulama in 1919, non-Muslim governors did not exercise direct religious authority. After Indonesian independence, the military governor of Aceh serving from 1947 to 1951 and the governors of Aceh Province serving from 1957 through the present functioned as officials within the Republic of Indonesia. These governors did not occupy any specific religious role and did not exercise any formal control as a head of the Acehese Islamic community. However, several governors such as Teungku Daud Beureueh and Teungku Ali Hasjmy did initially rise to prominence as members of the All-Aceh Association of Ulama (PUSA), an explicitly Islamic association of Muslim scholars that emerged in the 1930s. Among other measures, governors supported the establishment of a postsecondary State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) university in the capital, promoted an "upgrading ulama" program to harness religious leaders for various developmental projects, and in 1999 extended financial support to a Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama (MPU) council of Ulama. Thus Ulama council, according to statute, worked "parallel to and in equal partnership with" the provincial government, though it is without power to independently pass legislation. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 105.

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

— No

Notes: During period of the Acehese sultanate, one could identify specifically religious functionaries distinct from political leaders. However, this political/religious boundary was quite permeable. Most ulèëbalang officials who acted as effectively autonomous rulers under customary Acehese adat law derived their legitimacy from acting as Muslim leaders and presided over explicitly religious officiants like the leube mentioned earlier. After the establishment of the Indonesian Republic, the government gradually established a form of government separate from religion. Still, in practice, people associated with the ulama often enjoyed prominent political positions like that of governor. After 1999, the Ulama Council (MPU) enjoyed the official right to issue fatwas on official matters. With the establishment of the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Autonomy Law, the regional government embarked on the process of instituting specifically Islamic codes of law and punishment (sharia). A State Shari'a Agency (Dinas Syariat Islam, DSI) was established with legislation passed in 2001. Eric Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh," 42-43. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 81-92, 97-128, 192-202.

↳ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:

— Yes

Notes: The Acehese Sultanate historically upheld religious observance at court, and in outlying regions beyond the capital ulèëbalang oversaw leube religious officiants who upheld Islamic practice. However, it is difficult to say to what extent the sultanate and ulèëbalang enforced religious observance. After the establishment of Aceh Province in 1956 within independent Indonesia, the local administration has played a growing role in enforcing religious observance. By 1963, Governor Ali Hasjmy pushed through legislation on the topic of "Syiar Islam" that stipulated official observance of Islamic holidays, the closing of shops and offices for Friday prayers, and measures that required Muslims and non-Muslims alike to "respect the atmosphere of the fasting month." Subsequent laws mandated that the provincial government support Islamic worship (ibadat), prohibit "intoxicating liquids," and impose formal requirements of Qur'anic literacy for primary schools graduates. This trend deepened as formal sharia provisions were rolled out starting in 2002, including with regulations that "every person in the Province of Aceh must respect the sincere observance of Islamic ritual practice." Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 137, 142.

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

— Yes

Notes: Islamic law has long been interwoven into the fabric of the Acehese polity's legal code since the time of the sultanate. While the Dutch colonizers placed less emphasis on Islamic Law, despite some interest in receiving advice from an ulama council on matters of inheritance and family law, a profound shift started in the wake of Indonesian independence. Starting in 1962, the production of Islamic law steadily moved from the domain of ulama as

religious scholars into the field of political and state legislation, as leaders sought to simplify and codify religious law for the provincial government's legal code. For example, the passage of a 1968 law on "Elements of Islamic Shari'a" promoted greater government involvement in education and Islamic propagation (da'wa). This trend of political intervention in religious law culminated in special autonomy legislation passed in 2001, which granted Aceh's provincial government the right to develop substantive Shari'a legislation that received the designation "qanun." With this new authority, the legislature passed specific Shari'a laws on alcohol, gambling, and the proper scope of contact between unmarried members of the opposite sex, along with the promotion of Islamic education and da'wa. Scholars like R. Michael Feener, however, have argued the attempt to pass an Islamic criminal code (qanun jinayat) in 2008 focused on more aggressive forms of punishment reflected the politicization of religious law and an attempt by politicians to signify the Islamic credentials of the state, rather than a deep engagement with Islamic fiqh jurisprudential tradition. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, ch. 5

↳ Polity provides preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax, exemption)

– Yes

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Are apostates prosecuted or punished:

– Yes

Notes: In 2002, the Acehese government moved ahead under the new authority granted by the 2001 law on Acehese autonomy to define various crimes within the Islamic legal code and subject to punishment via caning (see entry on punishment). Apostasy was included as one of the crimes subject to this penal codes, consistent with the standard Sunni definition of crimes with mandatory punishment as prescribed by the Qur'an (hudud). Some people who have criticized the enforcement of these new Shari'a regulations have been accused of apostasy (ridda/murtad). However, there does not seem to be scholarship that systematically traces the full scope or extent of trials, prosecutions, or punishments against people for the crime of apostasy. The Aceh government did spearhead at least one high-profile case against a group it officially condemned as "deviant" (sesat in Indonesian): the Millata Abraham. Facing accusations of beliefs that transgressed Muhammad's role as the final prophet, the Acehese government with the support of the provincial military command, public prosecutor, and police commissioner, apprehended all the group's followers and effectively repressed it. From the earlier period of the Acehese Sultanate during the 17th century, during the golden age of the Acehese Sultanate, some sketchy accounts of concern for apostasy exist. During the reign of Sultan Iskandar Thani from 1637 - 1641, a Gujurati orthodox scholar named Nur al-Din al-Raniry successfully accused rivals who subscribed to theory of wujuddiya, a monistic interpretation of God, of being apostates (murtad). The sultanate oversaw the execution of these mystical rivals at al-Raniry's behest. More recently, anti-colonial rebels and Darul Islam fighters in the 1950s seeking to create an Islamic State of Indonesia accused their opponents of apostasy. Aspinall, *Islam and Nation*, 95-96. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 124-126, 165. Anthony Reid, "Islamization and Christianization in Southeast Asia: The Critical Phase, 1550-1650," in *Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era: Trade, Power, and Belief*, ed. Anthony Reid (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 175-176.

↳ Apostates are socially shunned and/or publicly vilified:

– Yes

Notes: The norms upholding proper Islamic behavior and enjoining behavior deemed as apostasy have remained strong throughout Acehese. In Post-New Order Aceh after 1998, the modern Ulama Council (MPU) have embraced this social role, issuing a fatwa in 2007 that outlined specific procedures and criteria for investigating religious groups suspected of promoting deviant (sesat) teachings. Following this fatwa, Acehese authorities have brought in leaders of various groups accused of deviance for questioning to explain their practices; such testimony prompted the MPU to designate at least 14 groups as deviant from Islam. Such excommunication orders facilitate a process of social shunning through extensive media coverage and mockery, along with periodic vigilante retaliation. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 123-126. Abidin Nurdin, Al Chaidar, Apridar, and Muhammad bin Abubakar, "The Role of Ulama in the

Application of Islamic Syariah in Aceh: A Study of Aceh Ulama Council's Fatwa on Apostasies and Heresies," Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam 17, no. 1 (June 2018): 46-68.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1998 CE - 2020 CE

↳ Do apostates receive corporal punishment:  
– No

↳ Do apostates receive divine punishment:  
– Yes

↳ Punished in the afterlife:  
– Yes

### Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Estimated population, numeric: 5200000

Notes: According to Statistics Indonesia, the total Acehnese population of Aceh was 5.316 million in 2019; 98% of which was Muslim, or about 5.2 million.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2019 CE - 2019 CE

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Estimated population, percentage of sample region: 98

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2019 CE - 2019 CE

Nature of religious group [please select one]:

– Large official religious group with smaller religious groups also openly allowed

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: While there is no formal hierarchical organization of Sunni Islam analogous to the Catholic Church with a clear leader like a pope at its apex, Acehnese Islam certainly does have a range of informal and formal authorities. Historically, Acehnese society supports leube religious officiants at mosques and meunasah prayer halls. Ulama religious scholars also gradually filtered across the Acehnese landscape as respected social elites; by the 1930s these ulama organized into formal political organizations like Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh (PUSA) and seized most positions in Aceh's regional government by the 1950s. More recently, the provincial government of Aceh bureaucratized institutions of Islamic administration such as the Faculty of Da'wa at the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) in Banda Aceh, the Ulama Council or Majelis Permusawaratan Ulama (MPU), and the State Shari'a Agency (DSI). The Ulama Council and the State Shari'a Agency both selected government-aligned officials to support mosque activities, expand Islamic education, and otherwise implement Islamic law. However, while members the Ulama Council or the first director of Aceh's State Shari'a Agency, Alayasa Abubakar, certainly served as prominent, government supported leaders within the Islamic community, they were not the clear, undisputed leader of Acehnese Islam

↳ Is there a hierarchy among these leaders:  
– No

Notes: Acehese mosques do not have a formal hierarchical organization. Mosques and meunasah enjoy significant autonomy, even as they might receive support from provincial government institutions that support the implementation of Islamic law. Indeed, rival groups of ulama like the Himpunan Ulama Dayah Aceh (Ulama Association of Aceh Islamic Boarding Schools) compete with the officially sanctioned ulama council and reflect more conservative teachings on fiqh (jurisprudence). Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 104-106.

↳ Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:

– Yes

Notes: "Some" is the best answer. While not all modernists recognize or acknowledge the supernatural powers or qualities, it is fair to say that many Sufi leaders and traditionalist ulama in Aceh have been seen as possessing supernatural powers both historically and possessing through the present. Stories of such keramat, or supernatural powers, of figures like Teungku Muda Waly continue to circulate within the Acehese Muslim population.

↳ Are religious leaders chosen:

– Yes

Notes: In Post-New Order Aceh after 1998, much of the selection process for members of the newer institutions involved in administering Islamic and shari'a law follow a fairly standard bureaucratic and political process. For example, in the Ulama Council (MPU), an Executive Director presides over a Plenary Council consisting of members who serve a fixed term of five years. The selection process starts locally when each village nominates potential members. Further winnowing occurs at the administrative sub-district (kecamatan) and district (kabupaten) levels. This finally leads to a total province-wide pool of 260 finalists. From the finalists, 26 are selected, largely based on their religious learning, character, and maturity. The Provincial government of Aceh thus exercises significant influence over the composition of the Ulama Council and other Islamic institutions. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 106-107.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1998 CE - 2020 CE

↳ A leader chooses his/her own replacement:

– No

↳ Other leaders in the religious group choose that leader:

– Yes

↳ A political leader chooses the leader:

– Yes

↳ Are leaders considered fallible:

– Yes

↳ Are close followers or disciples of a religious leader required to obediently and unquestionably accept the leader's pronouncements on all matters:

– No

## Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– Yes

Notes: In line with Sunni Islam, Acehese Muslims believe that the Qur'an constitutes their most holy sacred text and the direct word of God. Acehese Muslims also believe that the hadith, or the collected traditions and reports of the Prophet Muhammad compiled after his lifetime, comprises the second most important source of religious law.

↳ Are they written:

– Yes

↳ Are they oral:

– Yes

Notes: While collected into standardized written recensions by political leaders of the emerging Muslim community (caliphs) in the years following the Prophet Muhammad's life, the literal translation of the "Qur'an" as "recitation" reflects the belief that God's revelations were communicated orally to Muhammad. Muslims around the world and in Aceh place special significance on the memorization and spoken recitation of this text.

↳ Is there a story (or a set of stories) associated with the origin of scripture:

– Yes

Notes: The standard narrative of the Prophet Muhammad's life, told in classical Islamic sources like the sira biography of Muhammad written by Ibn Ishaq (c. 704-767), is widely accepted by Muslims across the world, including in Aceh. According to these narratives, the revelation of God to Muhammad started in 610 CE outside Mecca at the Cave of Hira and continued until the time of his death in 632 CE.

↳ Revealed by a high god:

– Yes

↳ Revealed by other supernatural being:

– Yes

Notes: The first revelations from God are transmitted to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel.

↳ Inspired by other supernatural being:

– No

↳ Originated from divine or semi-divine human beings:

– No

↳ Originated from non-divine human being:

– No

Notes: Muhammad serves as the messenger of God and hence occupies a special place in Islam as the final Prophet of God. However, Muhammad is still a non-divine human being, and Muslims reject the notion that he originated these scriptures.

↳ Are the scriptures alterable:

– No

↳ Are there formal institutions (i.e. institutions that are authorized by the religious community or political leaders) for interpreting the scriptures:

– Yes

Notes: By the late nineteenth century, Acehese Islamic education played a large role in the process of interpreting scriptures through the teaching of both exegesis or close textual

reading of the Qur'an and hadith, as well teaching of standard works in jurisprudence (fiqh) in the Shāfi'i maddhab. The institution of the dayah Islamic boarding school constituted a focal point for such ulama and scholarly jurisprudence in the pupils' education. However, in post-independence Aceh after 1945, the composition and scholarly emphasis of ulama shifted. Instead of receiving training in traditional Shāfi'i fiqh jurisprudence, ulama increasingly attended state-sponsored universities like the State Institute for Islamic Studies and focused more on broad categories of reform, religious propagation (da'wa) renewal, awareness, and spirit-building than traditional textual hermeneutics (see entry on education).

Specific to this answer:

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists

↳ Can interpretation also take place outside these institutions:

– Yes

Notes: Although graduates of the IAIN and dayah institutions mentioned above might enjoy the most social authority as ulama scholars of jurisprudence in the post-colonial period after 1945, they do not hold a formal or informal monopoly on the study of Islamic scripture and law. Reformist and "modernist" trends in the 20th century, in fact, increasingly placed emphasis on the responsibility of all individual Muslims all to read and interpret Islamic scriptures for themselves.

↳ Interpretation is only allowed by officially sanctioned figures:

– No

↳ Is there a select group of people trained in transmitting the scriptures:

– Yes

Notes: At least since the 19th century, the ulama class of Islamic scholars, known in Aceh as teungku, have long exercised influence as a socially sanctioned, privileged group for the study of fiqh jurisprudence along Shāfi'i lines and the leadership of Islamic dayah boarding schools. In the 20th century, these ulama also often emerge from a more "modernist" style of education that eschews classic jurisprudence of fiqh. Beyond ulama scholars, previously figures known as imeum meunasah oversee prayers and ritual worship for everyday Muslims during the sultanate and continue to hold positions in post-New Order Aceh under the partial guidance of the State Shari'a Agency. Eric Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh," 28-30. Feener, Shari'a and Social Engineering, 197.

↳ Is there a codified canon of scriptures:

– Yes

## Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Notes: Gravesites and tombstones, mosques, and meunasah prayer halls comprise three important categories of Islamic architecture.

↳ In the average settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There have not been any systematic survey of the space taken up Acehnese religious monuments; however mosques, meunasah prayer halls, graveyards, and tombs all occupy prominent spaces in Acehnese population centers. In smaller villages, the meunasah often comprise the largest physical structures.

↳ Size of largest single religious monument, square meters:

– Square meters: 1500

Notes: Baiturrahman Masjid Raya (Baiturrahman Grand Mosque) in the provincial capital city of Aceh features 1500 square meters of indoor sitting space.

↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:

– Height, meters: 33

Notes: The tallest minaret at the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in the provincial capital reaches a height of 33 meters.

↳ Size of average monument, square meters:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Height of average monument, meters:

– Field doesn't know

↳ In the largest settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While scholarship has not provided any systematic survey of the size of religious architecture, the largest city in Aceh, the provincial capital of Banda Aceh, features numerous Islamic institutions and sites. The most famous "Grand Mosque" in Banda Aceh, the Grand Mosque Baiturrahman, features 8 minarets with the tallest reaching 33 meters in height, 7 domes, an interior sitting space of 1,500 square meters, and capacity for 30,000 people.

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes

Notes: Gravesites and tombstones, mosques, and meunasah prayer halls comprise three important categories of Islamic architecture.

↳ Tombs:

– Yes

Notes: Sacred graves and tombs for noted Muslim leaders regarded as saints have comprised important sites of Islamic belief in Aceh and served as keramat, or holy sites. Scholars regard the tomb of Syiah Kuala as among the most important such keramat in Aceh. Outside the city of Indrapuri, notable graves included those of Teungku Chik di Tiro (one of the leaders in the Aceh War), Teungku Chik Eumpetrieng, and Teungku Lam Djamee. David Kloos, "Becoming Better Muslims: Religious Authority and Ethical Improvement in Aceh, Indonesia," (Ph.d. diss., Free University of Amsterdam, 2013), 72, 116-118.

↳ Cemeteries:

– Yes

Notes: Historians can trace the first Muslim tombstones in Aceh as far as the 1200s and 1300s, some of the earliest in Southeast Asia. The Batu Aceh or "Aceh stones" tradition of carved headstones spread more widely in the 15th century and featured a distinctive range of materials, shapes, and decorations. More recently, Acehnese Muslims continue to bury their dead in cemeteries, as is common in Islamic tradition. Elizabeth Lambourn, "The Formation of the Batu Aceh Tradition in Fifteenth Century Samudera-Pasai," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 32, no. 93 (July 2014): 211-248. Daniel Perret, "Some Reflections on Ancient Islamic Tombstones Known as Batu Aceh in the Malay World," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 35, no. 103 (2007): 313-340.

↳ Temples:

– Yes

Notes: A masjid, meuseugit (Acehnese) or mosque comprises the central place of worship for Acehnese Muslims. Historically, mosques comprised focal points for most Acehnese

communities, ranging from the Sultan's court to smaller villages. Dutch orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje emphasized that as soon as local communities could organize into large enough groups to sustain the construction of a mosque, they did so. For many centuries, these mosques followed the distinctively Southeast Asian architectural style, with elevated raised stone foundations, pointed pyramidal type roofs of two to five tiers, building material consisting of wood, bamboo, and palms, a veranda on the side or front of the structure, and an open-space surrounding the structure. Notably, traditional mosques in Aceh and Southeast Asia did not include architectural features typical to Middle Eastern mosques like kubah (domes) or separate minaret towers. However, the Dutch sponsored re-building of the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in 1877 included such monumental style domes and minarets in the construction style of these mosques. These Middle Eastern features as well as usage of building materials like cement have become more widespread in late 20th century and early 21st century mosque architecture. Howard Federspiel, *Sultans, Shamans, and Saints: Islam and Muslims in Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 74-76. Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehnese*, vol. 1, trans. A.W.S. O'Sullivan (Leiden: Brill, 1900), 81. Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan and Ratu Arum Kusumawardhani, "The Influence of 19th Century Dutch Colonial Orientalism in Spreading Kubah (Islamic Dome) and Middle-Eastern Architectural Styles for Mosques in Sumatra," *Journal of Design and Built Environment* 11 (December 2012): 7-9

↳ Devotional markers:

– Yes

Notes: Acehnese mosques and meunasah include mihrab, or masonry niches, that indicates the qibla or direction of prayer toward Mecca, as well as pulpits (minbar in Arabic bimba in Acehnese) from which the Friday congregational prayers are lead.

↳ Mass gathering point [plazas, courtyard, square. Places permanently demarcated using visible objects or structures]:

– Yes

Is iconography present:

– No

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

Notes: Mosques and meunasah comprise places in which Acehnese Muslims pray and participate in other sacred religious activities. Tombs or cenotaphs at the gravesites of particularly revered saints also function as keramat sacred spaces.

Are pilgrimages present:

– Yes

Notes: Acehnese often refer to their homeland as the Serambi Mekka, or Verandah of Mecca, to signify their deep religious piety. This designation also attests to the centrality of the hajj pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in distant Saudi Arabia as one of the Five Pillars of Islam. All Muslims seek to complete hajj at least once in their lives. Historically, a relatively small but still significant proportion of Acehnese rulers, Sultans, ulama, scholars, and traders made the trek, which could take many months before the advent of the steamship. In post-independence Indonesia, hajj has become more common for a much broader cross-section of Acehnese. Recently, the State Shari'a Agency (DSI) has taken a critical role in preparing Acehnese Muslims for this religious journey. Besides hajj, which is common to Muslims around the world, some Acehnese still practice more localized versions of pilgrimage known as ziarah to the sacred gravesites of saints or otherwise notably devout figures. Such visitations to gravesites have provoked significant controversy, however. In the post-Independence period, reformist Muslim leaders from the All-Aceh Ulama Association (PUSA) tried to prohibit ziarah because such veneration of sacred graves suggested the possibility that dead ancestors could intercede on living people's behalf - a belief reformists argued went against the strict monotheism of God. Yet, despite this opposition, pilgrimages experienced a resurgence in the 1960s and persist through the present day. David Kloos, "Becoming Better Muslims," 116-118.

↳ How strict is pilgrimage:

– Obligatory for some

Notes: Although pilgrimage to Mecca comprises one of the mandatory Five Pillars of Islam and all Muslims aspire to complete this ritual once in their life, exemptions exist for people who lack the resources for the journey or are in poor health.

## Beliefs

### Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer “no” only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body.

Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: Islamic belief distinguishes between the physical body and the soul (ruh in Arabic or roh in Acehese) that dwells in the grave after death before being re-united with the body and resurrected at the time of Final Judgment. Some scholars assert that Muslim Southeast Asian Muslims reformulated the Austronesian concept of *semangat*, or soul-substance/spirit, to fit within Islamic categories of the *roh*. However, this spirit/body distinction does not comprise an absolute separation of the two, as most Muslims and academic scholars regard the spiritual and physical as inextricably intertwined, with the soul infusing the material body. Catherine Smith, *Resilience and the Localisation of Trauma in Aceh, Indonesia* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2018), 82-83. Anthony Reid, “Continuity and Change in the Austronesian Transition to Islam and Christianity,” in *The Austronesians: Historical and Comparative Perspective*, eds. Peter Bellwood et al. (Canberra: ANU Press, 2006), 341. Jane Idleman Smith and Yvonne Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Juan Eduardo Campo, “Death,” *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (Gale Publishing, 2016).

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

– Yes

Notes: Muslims, including Acehese, understand the soul as in some sense non-material. However, religious scholars nevertheless generally perceive soul/spirit and body as interdependent and intertwined, if distinct, elements. See above entry.

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: Muslims in Aceh and elsewhere believe in death, an intermediate journey of the soul while the body lies in the grave, and a Final Day of Judgment with bodily resurrection and immortal life in one of two possible final destinations. The first is paradise or *janna*, which translates as “the Garden.” The second is Hell, or *nar*, which translates as “fire.”

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: While scholarly debate on the precise location of the afterlife exists, many experts like Nerina Rustomji stress that the Islamic visions tend to portray “The Garden” and “The Fire” as abodes or almost physical spaces or objects rather than as states of being. This physical type of space that comes after the Final Judgment contrasts with the Christian ideas of “Heaven,” which relies on the ideas of sun, moon, and stars as an “above” space, placing heaven “above” and “apart” from life on Earth. Nerina Rustomji, *The Garden and the Fire: Heaven and Hell in Islamic Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), xiii – xxii.

↳ Afterlife in specified realm of space beyond this world:

– Yes

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: Islamic fiqh jurisprudence prescribes a specific obligation of washing of the body to ensure ritual purity, followed by wrapping of the corpse in a white shroud. The Dutch Orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje reported on these at some length in his book *The Acehnese*. Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehnese*, vol. 1, trans. A.W.S. O'Sullivan (Leiden: Brill, 1900), 418-433.

↳ Cremation:

– No

↳ Mummification:

– No

↳ Interment:

– Yes

Notes: Burial/interment follows the cleansing of the corpse, the ritual enshrouding of the body, and the ritual service for mourners. It is a process in Aceh described at length by Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje. Finally, mourners bury the corpse in a wooden coffin (kreunda).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– No

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– Yes

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):

– No

↳ Corpse is interred some other way:

– No

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– No

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

↳ Secondary burial:

– No

↳ Re-treatment of corpse:

– No

- ↳ Other intensive (in terms of time or resources expended) treatment of corpse:
  - No

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

- No

Are grave goods present:

- No

Are formal burials present:

- Yes

- ↳ As cenotaphs:
  - Yes

- ↳ In cemetery:
  - Yes

Notes: Acehnese generally bury their dead in cemeteries with tombstones marking the place of burial. Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus have done extensive work cataloguing historical grave inscriptions in all of the major cemeteries on Aceh's North Coast from 1400 – 1523. More recently, Dutch Orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje described the centrality of tombstones to the final burial of Acehnese Muslims. Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus, *Les monuments funéraires et l'histoire du sultanat de Pasai à Sumatra, XIIIe - XVIe siècles*. Paris: Association Archipel, 2008. Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehnese*, vol. 1, trans. A.W.S. O'Sullivan (Leiden: Brill, 1900), 430-433.

- ↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):
  - No

- ↳ Other formal burial type:
  - No

## Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

- Yes

- ↳ A supreme high god is present:
  - Yes

Notes: A supreme transcendent God, reflected in the doctrine of tawhid ("unity of God," constitutes one of the foundational beliefs in Islam and is shared by Acehnese Muslims.

- ↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic:
  - No

- ↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity:
  - No

↳ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld):

– No

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god):

– No

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– No

Notes: Extensive Islamic traditions, including in Aceh, hold Muslim Sultan leaders as a “Shadow of God on Earth” and as khalīfat Allāh (Deputy of God). However, this phrase does not imply that Muslim rulers or sultans comprise direct supernatural emanations of God on earth. Rather, it generally refers to the obligation of the Sultan to rule righteously on behalf of God along the lines of the Caliphs (successors) who ruled in Arabia after the Prophet Muhammad’s life. Amirul Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra*, 237.

↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites:

– No

↳ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites:

– No

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ The supreme god's knowledge is restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– No

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– No

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

– Yes

Notes: Muslims hold the unity of God, or tawhid, as one of their foundational beliefs. This unity includes attributes such as omnipotence (unlimited power), perfect goodness, and unlimited knowledge. While the interpretation of what such attributes mean in practice might vary, the principle of a transcendent

and all-knowing God prevails with Acehese Muslims and Muslims around the world.

↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):  
– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):  
– Yes

↳ The supreme high god knows your basic character (personal essence):  
– Yes

↳ The supreme high god knows what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):  
– Yes

Notes: While all Muslims accept the all-knowing nature of God, the question of how this applies to questions of human free will versus predestination was a topic of heated debate among early Muslim scholars. Generally, Muslims believe individual humans are responsible for their actions, yet that God is omniscient. Famed theologian al-Ash'ari, whose interpretation became dominant in the Shāfi'i maddhab (Islamic legal school) across Southeast Asia, posited a balance between free will and God's preordained plan. Al-Ghazzali summarized this in one of his writings by saying, "man had gotten freedom of action but it is not opposed to our opinion that everything in the creation of God and man's freedom of will is also the creation of God." The scholar Daniel Birchok explores how 21st century Acehese navigate these tensions between the two Qur'anic concepts of inescapable destiny (Ar. qadha) and human will/responsibility (Ar. qadhar) in matters of everyday life such as marriage, divorce, and the existence of romantic soulmates (I. jodoh). "Teungku Sum's Dilemma: Ethical Time, Reflexivity, and the Islamic Everyday." *Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 9, no. 2: 274-277. Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 24-29.

↳ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:  
– Yes

Notes: The question of God's causal efficacy in the world of humans was widely debated in early Islamic philosophy. The Ash'arites, the dominant school of Islamic thought in the Shāfi'i maddhab and most prevalent throughout Aceh and Southeast Asia, believe that causal efficacy resides only with God. Ash'ari Sunni Islamic views tend to believe that God is continuously intervening in the world and thus are shaping individual actions. Many modernists to some degree contest interpretations of the Qur'an that suggest God is a continuous force for intervention in human affairs, suggesting that human beings do not automatically respond to direct or indirect commands. However, there is ample evidence that popular Acehese Islamic culture has a conception of God's direct causality and intervention in human affairs. For example, many Acehese Muslims interpreted the devastating tsunami of 2004, which killed upwards of 130,000 people locally, as a form of divine intervention. Many believed this intervention simultaneously punished Acehese for their sins while offering them a sign of the need to improve to ensure a better place in the afterlife. Shahrough Akhavi, "Sunni Modernist Theories of Social Contract in Contemporary Egypt," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 35, no. 1 (February 2003): 23-49. Annemarie Samuels, "Hikmah and Narratives of Change: How Different Temporalities Shape the Present and the Future in Post-Tsunami Aceh," in *Islam and the Limits of the State: Reconfigurations of Practice, Community and Authority in Contemporary Aceh* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 25-26.

↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Scholars are paying increasing attention to the role of pawang (spiritual master) in Southeast Asia, who claim esoteric knowledge of miracles, remedies, agriculture, etc., transmitted from God to the Prophet Muhammad and then to the pawang. Teren Sevea, in particular, has written extensively on such pawang in agricultural areas of the Malay Peninsula across the Straits of Melaka from Aceh who invoke esoteric knowledge in the matter of agriculture or firearms. These pawang could help control demons (hantu), armies of the devil, or various Muslims and non-Muslim jinns (spirits). Until the 1950s, there were reports that belief in such jinns (spirits) or hantu (ghosts) were widespread in Aceh itself, and that pawang helped cure illnesses caused by such hantu. However, as Sevea makes clear, many reformist or modernist "Muslims" deprecated such "intercessors between man and Allah" as promoting "primaeval belief." This intense "modernist" opposition to such belief in jinns and hantu certainly is prominent in Aceh, where such matters invite great controversy and charges of un-Islamic behavior. While scholarship on the role of pawang in Aceh is sparse, textual investigations of sources like the Hikayat Aceh by David Kloos indicate that such belief in the importance of divination existed historically. This epic tells how the Sultan hired religious specialists to rid a magical war vessel of jinn; only when done so can the ship set sail. David Kloos, "From Acting to Being: Expressions of Religious Individuality in Aceh, ca. 1600-1900," *Itinerario* 39, no. 3 (December 2015): 444-445 Teren Sevea, "Pawang on the Muslim Frontier: Miraculous Intermediaries of Rice, Ore, Beasts and Guns," (Ph.d. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2013).

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes

Notes: In popular Acehnese Islamic culture, the souls of deceased Sufi saints and ancestors can offer the hope of intercession with God on matters like the curing of an illness or other important matters. As mentioned before, Acehnese visit the tombs of particularly renowned saints believed to possess keramat, or unique supernatural powers, blessing, grace, superabundance, purity, and the capacity for miracle-making, in the hope of such intercession. Such saints include figures like Syeikh Abdurrauf Singkili (South Aceh), Syeikh Abdurrauf Syiah Kuala (Banda Aceh), Hamzah Fansuri, Syeikh Makhudum (Barus, North Sumatra), and Teungku Fakinah (a female Sufi). Thousands will visit these shrines and offer kenduri or ritual meals in the hope of such intercession from human saints on key Muslim holidays like Ramadan. Many such saints, including the women Maknih and Wan Doneh described by Daniel Birchok, are associated with esoteric knowledge tied to Sufi orders and sometimes passed genealogically to descendants and students. People will also visit the tombs of their own ancestors for such purposes. As mentioned before, however, such practices elicit strident opposition from "modernist" Muslims who see this as a violation of the concept of the Unity of God. Daniel Andrew Birchok, "Women, Genealogical Inheritance and Sufi Authority: The Female Saints of Seunagan, Indonesia," *Asian Studies Review* 40, no. 4 (2016): 583-599. Jacqueline Siapno, *Gender, Islam, Nationalism, and the State in Aceh: The Paradox of Power, Co-Optation and Resistance* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 83.

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– No

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– No

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: As mentioned before, controversial beliefs in jinn (spirits) and hantu (ghosts) inhabiting trees or other objects survived until the 1950s. However, many reformist Muslims stridently condemned such practices as un-Islamic, and noted ulama like Teungku Hasballah Indrapuri, a leader of the All-Aceh Ulama Association (PUSA) in the 1940s, sometimes hacked away at

such trees to prove that no harm would be done and such beliefs amounted to superstition. Due to this type of reformist/modernist opposition, such beliefs dissipated to a much greater extent than did the ziarah grave visits. David Kloos, "Becoming Better Muslims," 120-121.

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

– No

### Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Yes

Notes: Muslims in Aceh and around the world believe in the divine, immutable law of God (Shari'a) embodied the Qur'an and hadith. Muslims believe humans must follow this divine law according to God's will and that souls will either find a final home in heaven or hell based on their adherence to such laws. To the extent that adherence to divine law and the will of God in this world determines the status of soul in the afterlife and eternity, it can be said that supernatural monitoring through this law is present. It should be noted that Islamic tradition generally perceives Shari'a, the immutable and ideal law of God, to be distinct from the fallible and changeable human interpretation of such laws embodied by fiqh jurisprudence.

↳ There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:

Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously "moral" or "ethical" norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Yes

↳ Food:

– Yes

↳ Sacred space(s):

– Yes

↳ Sacred object(s):

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of coreligionists:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other religions:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other polities:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about sex:

– Yes

↳ Adultery:  
– Yes

↳ Incest:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about lying:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about honouring oaths:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about laziness:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about sorcery:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about non-lethal fighting:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about shirking risk:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about disrespecting elders:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about property crimes:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about performance of rituals:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about conversion of non-religionists:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about economic fairness:  
– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about personal hygiene:  
– Yes

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: Acehnese Muslims, along with Muslims throughout the rest of the world, generally believe that God will determine whether people enter “The Garden” (heaven) or “The Fire” (hell) on the Day of Judgment. Thus, punishment is mainly in the afterlife.

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

Notes: God is the supreme arbiter in terms of judgment, but Muslims believe that angels and other beings assist in this process by recording good and bad deeds, guarding over the Garden and the Fire, executing divine reward and punishment, and conveying people to their final destinations.

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: God, angels, and other beings are involved, see above.

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– No

↳ Done by other entities or through other means [specify]

– No

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

– Yes

↳ Done to enforce group norms:

– Yes

↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:

– Yes

↳ Done randomly:

– No

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural punishments in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– Yes

- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure:
  - Yes
- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory displeasure:
  - Yes
- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as an inferior life form:
  - No
- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in an inferior realm:
  - No

- ↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:
  - Yes

Notes: As discussed in earlier sections on causality, Muslims do believe in God's causal efficacy in this life, and to some degree, Acehnese and other Muslims often interpret events like a tsunami or colonial intervention as a form of divine retribution for going astray from correct Islamic practice and belief. These earthly punishments are often interpreted as "warnings" (peringatan) for the final punishments that might befall them in the afterlife if they fail to change their ways

- ↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:
  - No

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– Yes

- ↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in the afterlife:
  - Yes

- ↳ Supernatural rewards in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of mild sensory pleasure:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory pleasure:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of eternal happiness:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as a superior life form:
  - No

- ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in a superior realm:
  - No

- ↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in this lifetime:
  - Yes

### Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

- Field doesn't know

Notes: Shi'a Islamic theology included a well-defined theological concept of messianism revolving around the figure of the Mahdi, a messianic type figure who will usher in an era of justice and true belief just prior to the end of time. This concept of a messianic end-times figure generally exerts greater sway upon Shi'a belief, but it also does exist to a lesser extent in Sunni Islamic theology. Indonesian historian Sartono Kartodirdjo contends that the belief in a Mahdi generally has been absent. However, he also argues that generally restiveness and discontent that produced a peasant rebellion against Dutch colonial rule in Banten on Java contributed to a sense the arrival of a Mahdi was imminent. The extent to which such beliefs may have existed in Aceh has rarely been examined in the extant scholarship. Sartono Kartodirdjo, *The Peasant's Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course, and Sequel – A Case Study of Social Movements in Indonesia* ('s-Gravenhage : Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 165-168.

Is an eschatology present:

- Yes

- ↳ Eschaton in this lifetime:

- Field doesn't know

Notes: The Day of Judgment brings the end of the world, bodily resurrection of all people, and the final determination on whether all people go to Heaven ("The Garden") or Hell ("the Fires"). However, Muslims do not regard the time of this as known or specified; it could be in the near future, but it could also be in the distant future.

- ↳ Eschaton at specified time in future:

- No

- ↳ Eschaton at unspecified time in near future:

- Yes

- ↳ Eschaton at unspecified time in distant future:

- Field doesn't know

- ↳ Eschaton at some other time:

- Field doesn't know

- ↳ Adherents need to perform specific tasks to bring about World's end:

- No

- ↳ Divine judgment event:

- Yes

- ↳ Restoration of the world:

- No

- ↳ Start of a new temporal cycle:

– No

↳ Establishment of a new political system:

– No

↳ Establishment of a new religious system:

– No

↳ Will anyone survive the eschaton:

– No

Notes: The world will not survive or endure; the resurrection of people and their souls will result in a final destination in Heaven or Hell.

### Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: In the scholarly literature on Aceh, there has long been a debate about the distinction between Islamic law and something known as adat, roughly translated as customary traditions, moral values, and legal institutions. Dutch colonial Orientalists - like Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje - often contrasted Islam and adat custom as inherently irreconcilable frameworks, with Acehnese supposedly being "ignorant" of the genuine laws of Islam. However, most post-colonial scholars from the 1960s onward dismissed that view, instead acknowledging that customary Acehnese views of adat and Islam were, in the words of James Siegel, "closely linked, the first dependent on the second." Adat or customary norms and moral frameworks nonetheless entail numerous practices distinct to Aceh, such as matrifocal and matrilocal kinship relations, as well as important communal rituals on birth, death, marriage, or the harvest such as the "cooling down" of "hot things" like newborn children (peusijeuk). Adat customary frameworks also provide for political officials, like the ulèëbalang territorial rulers common before the Acehnese social revolution of 1945-46 or the keuchik village headmen. Finally, adat can also involve the informal resolution of disputes without the need to involve the police or secular or Islamic courts. These customary institutions and moral norms are distinct from, if complementary and intertwined with, Islamic moral codes. David Kloos, "Becoming Better Muslims," 8. James Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 70

↳ What is the nature of this distinction:

– Present and clear

↳ Are specifically moral norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Specifically moral norms are implicitly linked to vague metaphysical concepts:

– I don't know

↳ Specifically moral norms are explicitly linked to vague metaphysical entities:

– Yes

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked to impersonal cosmic order (e.g. karma):

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked in some way to an anthropomorphic being:

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked explicitly to commands of anthropomorphic being:

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are have no special connection to metaphysical:

– No

Are there centrally important virtues advocated by the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Honesty / trustworthiness / integrity:

– Yes

Notes: The term al-siddiq comprises an important honorific in Islamic ethics, meaning roughly someone “who speaks nothing but truth,” or “who never lies.” The honorific is famous in Sunni Islam for its connection to the first caliph after Muhammad, Abu Bakr – suggestive of the importance of this virtue. Amanah offers another word in Islamic ethics with a similar meaning of trustworthy, trustworthiness, or honesty. Although few academics have investigated how Acehnese view honesty specifically, this virtue remains important for Sunni Muslims across the world and in Southeast Asia today, as evidenced by the way voters in Java deem the qualities of honesty (al-siddiq) as important attributes for properly Muslim politicians. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’an* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2002), 91-92. Morris Anwar and Dan Sofia Aunul, “Multiculturalism and Subculture in 2019 Indonesian General Elections,” *International Journal of Communication Research* 9, no. 3 (Oct-Dec 2019): 292-300.

↳ Courage (in battle):

– Yes

Notes: Historical Acehnese epic tales (hikayat) and modern Acehnese political writers frequently emphasize courageousness in battle as a key attribute of the local character. The most celebrated hikayat of the Acehnese poetic and literary traditions, for example, usually focus upon Aceh’s battles with Portuguese and Dutch combatants in the defense of Islam against invading non-Muslims. Tales such as the Hikayat Malem Dagang and the Hikayat Perang Sabi (Story of the Holy War) valorize the willingness of individual Acehnese to join the battle in defense of their religion against non-Muslim invaders. These stories stress the rewards for such brave fighters in God’s Final Judgment and the hereafter (akhirah). Some recent scholarship such as that of David Kloos has sought to complicate the view that such works simply act as a symbol of religious militancy, noting that these hikayat often include a subtext of moral and ethical improvement for individual Muslims in this life. However, battle and courage still occupy an important role in these texts. In the post-colonial period, a wide range of Acehnese leaders and writers invoked these themes of courageousness. They included politicians who worked within the Indonesian government system, like the governor Ali Hasjmy, and rebel leaders who sought Acehnese independence from Indonesia, like Hasan di Tiro. All celebrated the courageous Muslim fighting in battle as the preeminent trait of Acehnese society. Beyond these “holy war” narratives, it should also be added that scholars like Elsa Clavé-Çelik have examined the bravery attributed to various female warriors such as Tjut Njak Dhien and Tjut Meutia who fought in the Dutch-Aceh War and other conflicts. Elsa Clavé-Çelik, “Silenced Fighters: An Insight into Women Combatants’ History in Aceh (17th-20th C.),” *Archipel* 87 (2014): 273-306. Amirul Hadi, “Exploring Acehnese Understandings of Jihad: A Study of the Hikayat Prang Sabi,” in *Mapping the Acehnese Past*, edited by R. Michael Feener et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 183-197. Ali Hasjmy, *Hikayat Perang Sabil Menjiwai Perang Aceh Lawan Belanda* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1997). David Kloos, “From Acting to Being: Expressions of Religious Individuality in Aceh, ca. 1600-1900,” *Itinerario* 39, no. 3 (December 2015): 437-461.

↳ Courage (generic):

– Yes

Notes: Various Acehese sources, including the Kanun Syarak Kerajaan Aceh (Aceh canonical laws based on Islamic Shari'a) and the famed Taj us-Salatin, highlight the importance of courageousness and bravery as key criteria in the selection of the Muslim Sultan of Aceh. Courageousness is still valued until today. Sher Banu A.L. Khan, "Men of Prowess and Women of Piety: A Case Study of Aceh Dar as-Salam in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 2 (June 2013): 222-223.

↳ Compassion / empathy / kindness / benevolence:

– Yes

↳ Mercy / forgiveness / tolerance:

– Yes

Notes: The concept of rahmat, or mercy, is central in Islamic ethics and the Qur'an. Few have done any systematic study of its importance to Aceh, although the concept is certainly a valued virtue for Southeast Asian Muslims.

↳ Generosity / charity:

– Yes

↳ Selflessness / selfless giving:

– Yes

↳ Righteousness / moral rectitude:

– Yes

↳ Ritual purity / ritual adherence / abstention from sources of impurity:

– Yes

Notes: Ritual purification and cleanliness (for example, cleaning of the body, or wudu) comprise longstanding and essential components of Islamic law and everyday practice, in Aceh included. Government and Muslim authorities increasingly stress adherence to ritual since the New Order campaigns for da'wa (propagation) to create a more moral order in the region.

↳ Moderation / frugality:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Moderation, or al-wasatiyya, defined as capacity for flexibility and compromise, has long occupied a role as an important virtue in Sunni Muslim ethics. In particular, Muslims often juxtapose this attribute of moderation against the unyielding views of much-maligned Kharijites who assassinated Caliph Ali in early Islamic history, an assassination that caused civil war (fitna) and unrest. However, few if any scholars have assessed how this virtue of moderation may or may not figure into Acehese Islamic history, especially in contrast to the emphasis on more martial values of bravery and courage.

↳ Forbearance / fortitude / patience:

– Yes

Notes: The quality of forbearance and patience (sabar) enjoys great importance in the Qur'an. Scholars such as Annemarie Samuels and Catherine Smith have both discussed how this religious virtue of patience served as a source of strength from which Acehese Muslims could draw upon as they struggled to overcome the traumas of the devastating 2004 tsunami. Smith specifically points out that Acehese recite the 36th chapter of the Qur'an, the Yasin, as a means to cultivate this patience in the face of trauma. Annemarie Samuels, *After the Tsunami: Disaster Narratives and the Remaking of Everyday Life in Aceh* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 84, 89-90. Smith, *Resilience and the Localisation of Trauma in Aceh, Indonesia*, 46-7.

↳ Diligence / self-discipline / excellence:

– Yes

Notes: The idea of emphasizing personal discipline as promoting a moral and Islamic social order gained greater prominence in Acehese history, particularly with the advent of reformist organizations like Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Ulama-ulama Seluruh Aceh starting in the 1920s and 30s, continuing through the present. As R. Michael Feener shows, this tendency continued with the emergence of Indonesian New Order era campaigns of da'wa, which emphasized the cultivation of personal habits of discipline such the wearing of "Islamic dress" and headscarves (jilbab). David Kloos illustrates how this permeates everyday life of ordinary Acehese Muslims, as some of his informants stress the regular performance of prayers (salat) as an almost physical sort of defense against the workings of the devil, who will make you lazy (seteen yang melalaikan). Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 29, 206. David Kloos, *Becoming Better Muslims: Religious Authority & Ethical Improvement in Aceh, Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 141.

↳ Power / status / nobility:

– Yes

Notes: Male sultans in the 17th century derived much of their prestige from their ability to be "men of prowess," or people endowed with unique charisma and power by qualities of their soul following in the analysis of O.W. Wolters' "men of prowess." Figures like Sultan Iskandar Muda and Sultan Iskander Thani deployed grand titles, fine jewelry, armies, royal elephants, horses, and ceremonial parades to project their strength. While this concept played an essential role in Acehese statecraft, some argue the importance of this sense of potency in Acehese Islamic society declined over time. Sher Banu A.L. Khan, "Men of Prowess and Women of Piety: A Case Study of Aceh Dar as-Salam in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 2 (June 2013): 208.

↳ Humility / modesty:

– Yes

Notes: Narratives of proper Islamic rule often identify humility and modesty as important attributes among the caliphs who followed the Prophet Muhammad. At least some Acehese Muslim rulers, like Sultanah Safiatuddin invoked the Muslim virtues of "humility" in their letters and their administration of Allah's laws. Annabel Teh Gallop, "Gold, Silver and Lapis Lazuli: Royal Letters from Aceh in the Seventeenth Century," in *Mapping the Acehese Past*, edited by R. Michael Feener et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 126. Sher Banu A.L. Khan, "Men of Prowess and Women of Piety: A Case Study of Aceh Dar as-Salam in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 2 (June 2013): 214-215.

↳ Reverence / awe / wonder:

– Yes

↳ Faith / belief / trust / devotion:

– Yes

↳ Wisdom / understanding:

– Yes

## Practices

### Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

– Yes

Notes: Generally, Sunni Islamic tradition considers any sexual contact between a man and woman outside a marriage as an illegal crime (zina). Historically within Aceh, there are reports from European travelers that the Acehnese kingdom imposed penalties of physical mutilation for those found guilty of adultery during the 1600s. By the 20th century, few states enforced or punished such rules. However, in the late 20th century, there has been a revival of some of these types of laws, including in Aceh. As part of the provincial Islamic legal code, the Acehnese government enacted Qanun 14 in 2003 prohibiting close proximity or improper covert association (khalwat) between "any two legally responsible adults of the opposite sex who are marriageable, but unmarried." Qanun 14 also identified that any "actions, activities, and situations that could lead to fornication (zina)" constituted khalwat. These laws stipulated 3-9 caning/strokes (corporal punishment) and a fine of USD 261 - 1,044 for those convicted of khalwat. Such cases generate considerable media coverage in the local media, invite the investigations of the Wilayatul Hisbah, and have occasionally gone to the Mahkamah Syariah/Shari'a court for trial. However, the overwhelming majority likely are settled outside the formal channels of Aceh's Shari'a Courts, and many cases referred to by the police end with "moral instruction" or the turning over of the offenders to community leaders. Feener, Shari'a and Social Engineering, 137-151, 156, 174-175, 179-181.

↳ Monogamy (males):

– No

Notes: Monogamous relationships and marriages comprise the overwhelming norm in Aceh. However, Islam does historically permit men to have multiple female wives, even if it was never a widespread practice. In Indonesia's 1974 Marriage Law, the government defined monogamous marriages as the norm, but also spelled out special provisions upon which a man could enter into polygamous male relationships if his first wife agreed. In 2019, the Acehnese regional government considered legislation to simplify polygamous marriage arrangements, but significant protests followed and such regulations have not been passed to date.

↳ Monogamy (females):

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– Yes

Notes: see entry on circumcision.

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular

Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

– Yes

Notes: Required almsgiving, or zakat, constitutes one of the Five Pillars of Islam, in which Muslims with means are supposed to pay a fixed proportion of their wealth or crops-in-kind. Several scholars have reported on how the Acehese Sultanate in the 17th century organized such zakat payments. The Dutch orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje reported on how local religious ulama collected zakat during the Dutch-Aceh War. More recently, the Acehese regional government instructs local imeum meunasah on how to collect zakat. Amelia Fauzia, Faith and the State: A History of Islamic Philanthropy in Indonesia (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 76-81, 107 Feener, Shari'a and Social Engineering, 197-198

↳ To other in-group members:

– Yes

↳ To out-groups:

– No

↳ Destroyed:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”

– Yes

↳ On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:  
– Field doesn't know

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):  
Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.  
– I don't know

↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:  
Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.  
– Yes

Notes: Since the 1920s and 1930s, and even before during the time period of Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī at the court of the Acehese Sultanate from 1636-1644, many Muslim reformers in Aceh have sought to define orthodox and unorthodox practice. The modern emphasis on such reformist tendencies really gathered strength with the emergence of the “modernist” movement and the All-Aceh Union of Ulama (Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh) or PUSA in the 1930s and 1940s. PUSA leaders sought to counteract popular beliefs in things like hantu (ghosts) or jinn (spirits) that undermined their interpretation of strict monotheism. They often invoked the failure to promote an “uncorrupted” version of Islam in their campaign against ulēēbalang territorial chiefs, and pushed for the establishment of a Shari’ a court. Such trends continued to gather force in post-New Order Aceh. Major government-sponsored religious institutions - such as the Aceh Ulama Council (MPU), the State Shari’ a Agency, and the Wilayatul Hisbah (“Shari’ a Police”) - seek to promote their definitions of what constitutes “orthodox” Islam and define other groups, beliefs, or practices as “deviant.” The Ulama Council defines the scope of orthodox and unorthodox through its issuance of fatwa guidance, and the other Islamic organizations will even on occasion attempt to enforce such distinctions in conjunction with police forces and local government. However, it should also be noted that the Ulama Council generally took a moderate approach to many practices deemed unorthodox, trying to promote gradual social change rather than coercive prohibitions. Feener, Shari’ a and Social Engineering, 114, 117-126. Arskal Salim, “Shari’ a from Below in Aceh (1930s-1960s): Islamic Identity and the Right to Self-Determination with Comparative Reference to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front,” *Indonesia and the Malay World* 32, no. 92 (March 2004): 80-99.

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:  
Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.  
– Yes

Notes: In just one example of social pressure to enforce Islamic orthopraxy, many ulama from the All-Aceh Association of Ulama (PUSA) condemned the holding of a ritual feast called kandoeri between the 1930s and 1960s. As scholars like Daniel Birchok have noted, these meals which featured an exchange of food and recitation of prayers at important life-cycle events or holidays elicited the criticism of many religious reformers. For these reformers, such kandoeri stimulated idolatry through traffic in spirits and an overemphasis on ritual form. The campaign waged against kandoeri, while unsuccessful, represented only one such social effort to check for orthopraxy. Birchok, “Putting Habib Abdurrahim in His Place, 513.

↳ Does participation entail synchronic practices:  
– I don't know

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– Yes

↳ Tattoos/scarification:

– No

↳ Circumcision:

– Yes

Notes: In the 1960s, James Siegel reported on male and female circumcision from his ethnographic research in Aceh. Male circumcision is widespread, although surprisingly little research has been carried out on the topic. The extent to which female circumcision, a very contentious issue, is conducted in contemporary Aceh is difficult to say as there are few systematic statistics maintained on the topic. Two scholars claimed that the practice of female circumcision was often done with considerable secrecy. Andrée Feillard and Lies Marcoes, "Female Circumcision in Indonesia: To 'Islamize' in Ceremony or Secrecy," *Archipel* 56 (1998): 342-343, 358, 367. James Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 151-154.

↳ Food taboos:

– Yes

↳ Hair:

– No

↳ Dress:

– Yes

Notes: The State Shari'a Agency and other post-New Order Acehnese have sought to promote and propagate da'wa through the promotion of "Islamic dress" particularly the wearing of headscarf (jilbab) by women and other forms of modesty. R. Michael Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 206.

↳ Ornaments:

– No

↳ Archaic ritual language:

– No

## Society and Institutions

### Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– A state

### Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

– Yes

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

– Yes

Notes: Historically, the Sultanate of Aceh stood at the forefront of institutionalized management of zakat, or charity, in 17th century Southeast Asia. Local texts from Aceh such as the *Bustan as-Salatin* reference the collection of 'ushr tax on land and imported merchandise as part of the zakat obligations put into the *baitul mal* state treasury. The funds in this treasury supported the welfare of the Muslim community, Islamic trusts, and perhaps partially the upkeep of poorer people. There is also evidence that zakat al-fitr or fitrah, a charitable donation of foodstuff made at the end of Ramadan to support those who did not have enough food and usually existed independently of state institutions, also occurred at the societal level during 17th century. Later on under Dutch colonial rule, it appears that fitrah payments within Acehnese Muslim communities, were usually paid to ulama (teungku) for their upkeep and partially redistributed to those most in need. In contemporary Aceh, the Acehnese regional government moved to institutionalize zakat as part of its Shari'a initiatives starting in 1999, creating a *Baitul Mal Aceh* (Aceh Islamic Treasury) for regulating zakat, sadaqa (alms), and waqf (endowment). A portion of these funds is supposed to support poverty alleviation and anti-poverty development. Beyond this institutionalized poverty relief under the rubric of zakat and fitrah, external Muslim organizations also increased their disaster relief activities in Aceh after the tsunami of 2004, including Indonesian organizations like Muhammadiyah and international groups like Muslim Aid, Islamic Aid, and the Turkish Red Crescent. Jeremy Bethall, *Islamic Charities and Islamic Humanism in Troubled Times* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 46-56. Robin Bush, "Muhammadiyah and Disaster Response: Innovation and Change in Humanitarian Assistance," in *Natural Disaster Management in the Asia-Pacific*, ed. Caroline Brassard et al. (Tokyo: Springer Japan, 2015), 33-48. Amelia Fauzia, *Faith and the State: A History of Islamic Philanthropy in Indonesia* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 76-81, 107. Moch Nur Ichwan, "Official Ulema and the Politics of Re-Islamization: The Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, Shari'atization and Contest Authority in Post-New Order Aceh," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22, no. 2 (May 2011): 202. Muhammad Haris Riyaldi and Farah Maulida Sari, "Analysis of the Determinant of Productive Zakat, Infaq, and Shodaqah Recipients' Welfare in Baitul Mal Aceh," *International Conference of Zakat 2018 Proceedings*, <<https://www.iconzbaznas.com/submission/index.php/proceedings/article/view/125/70>>

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

– No

Notes: In contemporary Aceh, the responsibility to care for the elderly and infirm mainly falls upon households, family units, and adult children instead of the provision of institutionalized care for elderly by Islamic organizations or the provincial government. Of course, households may seek various forms of poverty relief or charity from religious organizations and the government on behalf of the elderly, but these programs are not generally devoted to the elderly per se. Institutional settings like nursing homes are not common.

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: See above.

## Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– Yes

Notes: For much of Acehnese history, the meunasah or prayer hall provided a focal point for Islam at the village level across Acehnese society and provided the basics of Islamic education, teaching ordinary children to read and recite the Qur'an among many other activities. Starting in the 20th century, meanwhile, two parallel systems of formal Islamic education proliferated in the form of the

traditionalist “dayah” and the “modernist” madrasa schools. Dayah schools today borrow from the traditions of the Naqshbandiyya order of Sufism and often promote a more advanced study Arabic language texts of fiqh jurisprudence along the lines of the Shafi’i maddhab. Madrasa associated with many of the ulama who led the All-Aceh Ulama Association (PUSA), meanwhile, promoted a model of combined religious and secular curricula with chairs, writing tables, blackboards, and other materials associated with “modern” education. By 1946, 200 such madrasa existed. In the post-colonial period, the Indonesian state took a more activist role in intervening in both the dayah and the madrasah. The state used financial inducements such as subsidies for hard infrastructure, teaching materials, and salaries to prod Islamic schools to devote nearly 70 percent of their classes to “general” education alongside 30 percent for religious subjects. Beyond these dayah and madrasa, the Indonesian and Acehese provincial governments also undertook an effort to build a system of higher Islamic Education in the form of the Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ar-Raniry University in Banda Aceh. This university advanced a state-sanctioned system of advanced Islamic education, with faculties of Theology (Usuluddin), Islamic Law (Syariah), Education (Tarbiyah), and Dakwah (da’wa). All of these faculties played a critical role in the intellectual development and staffing of the institutions (Aceh Ulama Council, State Shari’a Agency, Shari’a Courts, etc.) responsible for implementing Islamic law in post-New Order Aceh discussed in other answers. Feener, *Shari’a and Social Engineering*, 61-87.

↳ Is formal education restricted to religious professionals:  
– No

↳ Is such education open to both males and females:  
– Yes

Is formal education available to the group’s adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Is extra-religious education open to both males and females:  
– Yes

### Bureaucracy

Do the group’s adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– Yes

Do the group’s adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

– Yes

### Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– Field doesn’t know

Is public food storage provided to the group’s adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn’t know

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– No

Notes: In historical and contemporary Aceh, organized Islamic groups have not been the groups chiefly responsible for public works like irrigation and flood control. However, various religious figures and ulama, who could enjoy prominent roles in government, did sometimes take an active role in

providing infrastructure in an ad hoc sort of fashion. For example, a prominent alim, Teungku Daud Beureueh who was the leader of the All-Aceh Ulama Association (PUSA), the Military Governor of the region from 1945-1946, and a leader of the Darul Islam rebellion until 1962, played a prominent role in helping to oversee the construction of a new irrigation channel in Pidië region in 1963. The prominent Islamic leader managed to oversee the completion of this irrigation projection within about a month, organizing never less than 300 and sometimes as many as 2,000 workers through the help of the local imeum Muslim functionary. Beureueh interpreted such public works as part of his religious obligations as a Muslim leader. James Siegel, *Rope of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 61-67.

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: While not a focus of extensive research or scholarship, water management, irrigation, and agriculture more generally fell into the domain of local political administration rather than any specifically Islamic institutions. For example, the local territorial lords/rulers known as ulèëbalang appeared to manage and charge duties for access to irrigation channels known as lueng. Much more recently in Post-New Order Aceh, the provincial and local governments play the main role in supporting various water management, irrigation, aquaculture, and agricultural initiatives through organizations like the Water Resources Department of Aceh Province – as opposed to specifically religious Shari'a organizations within the government. James Siegel, *Rope of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 23.

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

— No

Notes: While the specifically Islamic institutions of Acehnese government like the the Aceh Ulama Council or the State Shari'a Agency do not oversee infrastructure, provincial leaders have nonetheless often interpreted their responsibility to provide public works within a religious framework. As mentioned before, prominent alim and political figure Daud Beureueh became involved in the construction of irrigation channels; he also helped encourage communities to improve their road system. Once Beureueh delivered a speech in which he declared the repair of roads part of religious duty, or ibadah, saying "maybe you think it is enough just to pray and read the Koran. Maybe you think the relations between people are not the concern of religions," but they are. For Beureueh, infrastructure and public works was part of the law governing relations between humans. Earlier religious leaders and reformers like Habib Abdur Rahman had similarly helped organize the construction of roads and bridges in the 1860s as an Islamic religious duty. Nevertheless, while many people have stressed public infrastructure as a religious duty, Muslim organizations and institutions today are not primarily responsible for the provision of such services. James Siegel, *Rope of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 66-67.

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: In contemporary post-New Order Aceh, local and provincial governments oversee the construction and maintenance of roads through specialized agencies like the Public Works Agency and Transportation Agency. These specialized organizations also receive funds from the national Indonesian government. Ezri Hayat and Dilanthi Amaratunga, "The Impact of the Local Political and Socio-Economic Condition to the Capacity of the Local Governments in the Maintenance of Post-Disaster Road Infrastructure Reconstruction Assets," *Procedia Economics and Finance* 18 (2014): 718-726.

## Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

— Yes

Notes: Since 2007, regional and local governments in Aceh play a role facilitating the administration of zakat - the obligatory payment based on the wealth or property of Muslims for the upkeep of the welfare of the entire Muslim community - as one of its budgetary revenue sources. The Baitul Mal established in Aceh acts as a treasury for these zakat payments. Local religious functionaries, known as Imeum Meunasah, were encouraged by the State Shari'a Agency to help with the collection of zakat

with relevant bureaucratic forms. However, the collection of such zakat only progressed slowly, and in between 2007 – 2010, only 6 of 23 local governments in Aceh collected zakat. In earlier eras of Acehese history, the sultanate and local ulèëbalang, and ulama also played a role in collection of zakat. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering, 197-198*. Eric Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh," 70-71. D. Siswanto, "Characteristics of Local Government as Zakat (Tithe) Collector," in *Competition and Cooperation in Economics and Business*, Gani et al. (London: Taylor & Francis, 2018), 33-40.

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: In Post-New Order Aceh, the provincial government and all local subunit governments enjoy the right to raise revenue through taxation. The national Indonesian government also transfers a significant amount of tax revenue and funds to Aceh Province. These taxes play an outsized role in sustaining the various Shari'a Islamic legal institutions, which function under the auspices of the provincial government in Aceh.

### Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– Yes

Notes: In 2002, Qanun 11 of the Acehese Shari'a Legal Code established a new institution responsible for the enforcement of Islamic Law in Aceh: the Wilayatul Hisbah (WH) or "Shari'a Police." This law provided WH officers with the mandate to "admonish and advise" those arrested for violation of various provisions of Aceh's Shari'a laws like drinking or possessing alcohol, gambling or khalwat. If the arrested party did not repent or alter their behavior, then the WH could turn the case over to the regular police or a "civil service investigator" who could launch a formal judicial case in the Shari'a Courts, or Mahkamah Syariah. In 2007, the governor of Aceh more formally integrated the WH into the civilian police force; civilian police often accompanied WH officers in their operations thereafter. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 221-224.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2002 CE - 2020 CE

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The Indonesian national police force (Kepolisian Republik Indonesia, POLRI) operates the Aceh Police Region under its command as a civilian police force in Aceh with various precincts and sectors. The Wilayatul Hisbah "Shari'a Police" is distinct from that POLRI police structure, but since 2007 more formally collaborates with regular civilian police. The Indonesian National Army (TNI) also rotates paramilitary police (BRIMOB) units through the province to counter perceived security threats. Matt Davies, *Indonesia's War Over Aceh: Last Stand on Mecca's Porch* (London: Routledge, 2006), 64-65.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2002 CE - 2020 CE

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– Yes

Notes: Islamic courts in Aceh enjoy a long history dating back to the time of the Acehese sultanate in the 17th century. The short-lived Japanese colonial regime in Aceh revived Islamic "religious courts," establishing district and sub-district Qadi courts in 1944. Aceh's religious courts continued to gain prominence and greater jurisdiction throughout much of post-independence, Indonesian period of the region's history. With the push for Shari'a law in the post-New Order period, the Acehese provincial government established Aceh's Shari'a courts (Mahkamah Syariah) to adjudicate within the jurisdiction of Islamic criminal law (Qanun Jinayat). While the court's jurisdiction included any of the Qanun passed by the legislature, as of 2013, most judicial proceedings in the Mahkamah Syariah pertained to one of three areas: gambling, alcohol consumption, or khalwat, that is, impermissible close contact between unmarried members of the opposite sex. Almost all of the Aceh's Shari'a court judges received degrees from the post-secondary IAIN Islamic education system. The physical plant of Islamic courts has been upgraded in recent decades. The vast majority of cases before the court

continue to relate to non-criminal matters such as divorce, inheritance, and determinations of joint marital property, with some related to waqf administration. Between 2006 and 2008, the courts also heard a relatively modest amount of cases related to criminal violations like gambling, alcohol consumption, and khalwat. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, Ch. 6.

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: Aceh has a long history of plural religious and non-religious legal jurisdictions dating back to the period of the Sultanate of Aceh in the 17th century. During this period, international travelers reported the existence of a system of four courts with distinct jurisdictions: a "civil" court, a "criminal" court, a "religious" court with a qadi as presiding judge, and a commercial type court. In post-Independence Aceh, Islamic and non-religious civil courts continued to coexist, but with the religious courts steadily gaining more prominence over time. After the establishment of "Special Autonomy" and Aceh's Shari'a courts in 2002, these Islamic courts continued to coexist with and be integrated into a broader civil court system. For example, the new Shari'a courts fall under the Indonesian Supreme Court's administrative supervision, incorporating Acehnese Islamic jurisprudence into Indonesian courts under "one roof." As with elsewhere in Indonesia, moreover, a parallel system of civil courts exists alongside the Shari'a courts in every district and municipality of Aceh. However, the Shari'a courts have pushed their jurisdiction much further beyond family law into financial issues, property disputes, and minor penal offenses, thereby establishing a uniquely "plural" legal order with greater primacy for religious courts than elsewhere in Indonesia. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 155-156, 165. Arskal Salim, *Contemporary Islamic Law in Indonesia: Sharia and Legal Pluralism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 39-50.

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

— Yes

Notes: Violations of the Islamic criminal code (*qanun jinayat*) are subject to institutionalized punishment from the Shari'a courts supervised by the office of the Public Prosecutor (Jaksa).

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

— No

Notes: Currently, the Islamic criminal code in Aceh does not include capital punishment for violations like alcohol consumption, gambling, or khalwat. However, from 2009 until 2014, laws passed by the provincial legislature did in fact include a provision for capital punishment by public stoning as part of the criminal code, for those who committed the criminal act of adultery (*zina*). Although the provincial legislature passed the stoning provision, the governor of Aceh at the time refused to sign it into law, and the penalty was never enforced. R. Michael Feener argues that such inclusion of execution provisions generated significant backlash against the whole Shari'a project. In 2014, the legislature repealed the stoning provision altogether. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 148, 153 Moch Nur Ichwan, "Official Ulema and the Politics of Re-Islamization: The Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, Shari'atization and Contest Authority in Post-New Order Aceh," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22, no. 2 (May 2011): 2011.

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

— No

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include corporal punishments:

— Yes

Notes: Historically, there is evidence corporal punishment existed during the height of the Acehnese Sultanate in the 17th century for offenses such as adultery, theft, banditry, and murder. However, some scholars contest whether these penalties were consistent with the formal rules of fiqh Islamic jurisprudence accepted at the time. During the Dutch colonial period and much of the post-1945 independence period, the government in Aceh did not prescribe corporal punishment. In 2002, however, this situation changed with the push for shari'a regulations and the implementation of the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Autonomy Law starting in 2002. Corporal punishments for offenses against the Islamic criminal code involving gambling, alcohol consumption, and khalwat (improper contact between members of the opposite sex) were prescribed as part of the Shari'a law. The main form of punishment involved

corporal punishment through caning. The law prescribed 40 strokes by caning for alcohol-related offenses consistent with hudud (mandatory) punishments, as well as 6-12 strokes for gamblers and 3-9 strokes for violations of khalwat as part of the ta'zir (discretionary) punishments. In practice, the application of such penalties were rare, but also highly visible and an essential element of the government's campaign of public shaming. Feener, Shari'a and Social Engineering, 144-145.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 2002 CE - 2020 CE

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– Yes

Notes: While the rare but significant application of corporal punishment in Aceh's Shari'a system garners considerable international attention, the most common type of pressure applied against offenders of Islamic legal code is social pressure. Significant media attention and public shaming through reports in newspapers or other sources for violators are quite common. One of the key functions of the "Shari'a Police" is to "admonish and advise" accused offenders.

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– No

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

– No

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include corporal punishments:

– No

Notes: Aceh's Islamic legal system is the only legal system in contemporary Indonesia that mandates caning.

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– No

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– I don't know

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– Yes

Notes: Shari'a regulations implemented in Aceh starting in 2002 stem from classical Islamic jurisprudential categories of both mandatory punishments mandated as limits set by God (hudud) and "discretionary punishments" (ta'zir) determined by worldly authorities. Before 2002, the study of fiqh jurisprudence in the Shāfi'i school constituted one of the central components of Acehnese Islamic education. Dutch orientalist scholar C. Snouck Hurgronje reported on a popular Acehnese saying that "the study of jurisprudence produces saints." Despite this importance of jurisprudence, however, it bears mentioning that R. Michael Feener notes that many of the judges in the Shari'a Courts received a "modernist" education that focused less on Sunni Schools of Law and fiqh than on human reason. This emphasis is reflected in the fact that decisions in the Shari'a courts much more frequently cite

national Indonesian law than they do standard works of Arabic language fiqh. Feener, *Shari'a and Social Engineering*, 63, 144, 168-169.

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: All Indonesian law beyond the framework of Aceh's Shari'a legal system applies in the region.

## Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– No

Notes: At the height of the Acehne Sultanate during the 17th century reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda, the kingdom effectively wielded military force and projected power across the Straits of Melaka in multiple encounters with their Portuguese foes based in Melaka. However, as Takeshi Ito demonstrates, evidence does not indicate that a centralized standing army in the modern sense existed. Instead, the elite *ulèëbalang* and *orang kaya* controlled access to weapons and temporarily mobilized people from their land for battle in time of war. Also, the sultanate did more directly control a corps of 900 war elephants trained for battle, as well as a slave corps charged with the task of putting royal commands and sentences into effect. Reliance on an ad-hoc mobilization of forces by *ulèëbalang* – as opposed to a regular standing army – continued through the 19th century when they raised 10,000 to 100,000 troops to defend the sultanate against the Dutch colonial invasion of 1873. After the dissolution of the Acehne sultanate, Muslim ulama or *teungku* played a greater role in raising "guerrilla" type troops to wage "holy war" or *perang sabil* against the Dutch occupying force during the 1880s and 1890s before a more stable period of colonial rule followed in the 20th century. During the chaotic Indonesian Revolutionary and Social Revolution period of 1945 – 1946, a dizzying array of irregular guerrilla forces arose, many of which aligned with the nascent Republican Army of Indonesia even as they maintained functional autonomy. One such well-organized guerilla force was the *Mujahidin* (Fighters in the Way of Allah) organized by the All-Aceh Ulama Association (PUSA). By the 1950s, the now-independent central Indonesian government tried to integrate these various guerilla forces into the Republican Army Division of Aceh under the control of the Indonesian Central Army Command. However, The Darul Islam rebellion spearhead by Teungku Daud Beureueh continued to wield tightly-organized guerrilla forces like the Islamic Army of Aceh until their defeat and disbandment in the early 1960s. From the 1960s onward, the Indonesian National Army exercised primary control over Aceh and maintained an extensive presence in the region. However, the legacy of armed insurgent groups fighting on behalf of Acehne Muslims never entirely disappeared, as the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) wielded an organized military force (first the Forces of the Free Aceh Movement" and later the "Army of the State of Aceh") from the late 1970s through the early 2000s. Van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam*, 269-339. Takeshi Ito, "The World of the Adat Aceh: A Historical Study of the Sultanate of Aceh," (Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, 1984), 27-28, 51, 166 Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain, 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 109.

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Since the founding of independent Indonesia, Acehne serve in the Indonesian military (TNI) and the Indonesian police system (POLRI).

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The Indonesian national military (TNI), as mentioned above.

## Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– Yes

Notes: Acehese Muslims speak their own native language, "Acehnese." Experts in linguistics categorize Acehese primarily as an Austronesian and Chamic language most closely related to various other Chamic languages found in central and southern Vietnam, as well as Cambodia (being Cham, Raglai, Ede, Jarai, and Churu). For the past five hundred years, the Acehese language played a large role as a defining feature of Acehese culture and society. One of the most treasured literary traditions of the region, at least 100 known epics (hikayat) were composed in the Acehese language, many in Arab (jawi) script, including famous ones like the Hikayat Dagang, the Hikayat Pocut Muhamat, and Hikayat Prang Sabil (Epic of the Holy War). Acehese persisted as a widely spoken language through the Dutch colonial and early Indonesian period, continuing through the present day. In 2000, the Indonesian census estimated that about 3.5 million people spoke the distinct Acehese language. However, most Acehese are multilingual, speaking the national language of Indonesian used across the Indonesian nation. Beyond Acehese, the use of Arabic as a language of prayer, orthopraxy, and Islamic education also prevails across much of the region. Of course, though, Arabic is not unique to Aceh but shared across the Islamic world in both Arab and non-Arab Muslim societies. Most Acehese Muslims learn sufficient Arabic to read and recite the Qur'an. More advanced students in the dayah Islamic boarding schools (see education answer) become more fluent in the language to study Arabic language fiqh texts of jurisprudence, as well as to communicate with other Islamic scholars. The use of Arabic script for the writing of Acehese language texts reflects this strong influence of Arabic in Acehese Muslim society. While basic Arabic sufficient for reading and reciting the Qur'an is widespread among the Acehese population, fluency is more limited to a smaller set of religious scholars and specialists. Teuku Muhammad Ridha Al-Auwal, "Reluctance of Acehese Youth to Use Acehese," *Studies in English Language and Education* 4, no. 1 (2017): 1-14. Graham Thurgood, "The Historical Place of Acehese: the Known and the Unknown," <[https://wayback.archive-it.org/all/20080119135359/http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/Aceh-project/full-papers/aceh\\_fp\\_grahamthurgood.pdf](https://wayback.archive-it.org/all/20080119135359/http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/Aceh-project/full-papers/aceh_fp_grahamthurgood.pdf)>

↳ Is use of this distinct written language confined to religious professionals:  
 – No

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Acehese society has a long history of multilingualism. Although the linguistic structure of Acehese derives most clearly from Austronesian Chamic languages, the language also exhibits extensive Malay influences through what some linguists refer to as "contact induced change" with this principal trading language of island Southeast Asia. Indeed, Malay comprised the language of the Acehese Sultan's court through much of its history. In the post-independence Indonesian era, the national language of Indonesian (a standardized version of earlier Malay languages) grew in prominence in Aceh through usage in schools, government institutions, and commercial life. Indonesian language is arguably the principal language spoken in Acehese urban areas – not Acehese.

## Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– Yes

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes

↳ Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Fishing
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
- Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

- Yes



Please characterize the forms/levels of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Fishing
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
- Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)