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10 Devotional Islam and democratic practice
The case of Aceh’s qanun jinayat

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On 14 September 2009, two weeks before its term was set to expire, the outgoing legislature of the Indonesian province of Aceh passed the qanun jinayat, or Islamic criminal bylaw. This move was portrayed as allowing or even requiring the ‘stoning to death’ of adulterers and the torture of women said to have violated the precepts of the Muslim faith. It was widely assumed that the outgoing assembly passed this law as a PartiHun shot at the in-coming DPRA (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Aceh – Aceh People’s Representative Council), as the provincial parliament is known. But beneath all this, the most significant question concerned the extent to which the out-going DPRA had acted democratically, as well as the degree to which democratic principles were finding a home in this devoutly Islamic province.

This chapter assesses the impact of the passing of the law on Aceh’s evolving democratic process. It suggests that the qanun jinayat was not only an unpopular reading of Islamic law or shari’a (syariah in the local spelling variant), but that the application of the qanun jinayat, and its interpretation of the principles of Islamic law under which it was promulgated, were also not undertaken in a process representing the wishes of the population to whom it applied. Moreover, the out-going assembly breached fundamental democratic principles in passing legislation prior to the swearing in of a newly elected legislature. How Aceh’s relatively new democratic process addressed this problem was an important sign of the extent to which democracy was finding a home in Aceh and how democratically elected representatives understood their relationship with Islam.

It is important to note that, despite some of the generalizations made about Islam in the Western media and by Western politicians, both explicit and more commonly implicit, in particular since the events of 11 September 2001, that Islam is not only not monolithic but that even beyond its two broad streams and schools within them there is a variety of approaches to Islam by people who consider themselves to be good Muslims. At least some of that which is associated with Islam is, more accurately, a reflection of the traditional practices of particular Arab tribes or sub-cultures. While there is little doubt that aspects of Arab culture have blended with how Islam is understood by its adherents as well as outsiders, in much the same way that much of Christianity is inextricably linked to European culture, there are many Muslims who are keen to separate out what
is Islam and what is Arabic. In Indonesia in the mid-1990s, as a more political Islam became noticeable, many Indonesian Muslims spoke in a derogatory fashion about countrymen they designated as ‘pseudo-Arabs’.

Similarly, notions of ‘democracy’ are very far from singular and, while discounting the rhetorical use of the word ‘democratic’ in the names of states that are anything but, there is a wide variety of forms of ‘rule by the people’, including more liberal and more conservative interpretations, those based more closely on notions of ‘rights’ and what those rights might mean, substantive and proceduralist interpretations in which institutional elements that support electoral processes give it – or subtract from – much of its substance, and variations on majoritarian political models in which electoral politics privileges a majority at the expense of a minority.

The political history of Aceh

Between these wide fields of variation within Islam and within democracy are, potentially, numerous points of mutuality and overlap as well as many points of disagreement. At its base, however, any political system that is not regarded by its constituent members as being legitimate can only rule by force, as was the experience in Aceh from 1976 but, arguably, also from well before then, dating back to the Dutch invasion and occupation from 1873. Moreover, political systems and the legal systems that give them meaning, be they based on theocratic or secular understandings, which do not acknowledge and incorporate participation, representation and transparency are, invariably, more about preserving the power and privileges of particular elites than they are about reflecting the legitimate views and aspirations of the people they purport to serve. In this, the distinction is not one of the contrast between one’s religious faith and how one wishes to organize one’s community in order to make sound, socially acceptable decisions, but between the sole legitimacy of a particular interpretation of faith, itself reflecting all of the failings and disagreements that a small coterie of experts may be subject to, and the legitimacy of self-determination in which a people may freely choose to have a particular interpretation of one’s faith as the basis for social organization, or not, as the case may be. In this, Islam is only different to other faiths in that in a number of the places where it is practised there has to date been an otherwise low level of political development.

Aceh is generally said to be Indonesia’s most devout Islamic province, having first received Islam through Arabic and Indian traders sometime after 800 CE. It is part of the mythologizing of Aceh’s past that the first Islamic kingdom, Perlak, was established within the region of Aceh in the year 804. According to the Liang Annals (502–556 CE), Chinese traders had referred to an area within Aceh as the Buddhist state of Po-Li (Stein 1907: 34n), and Perlak (possible the same as Po-Li) was probably established as a trading port by the ninth century, given that the Sailendra Dynasty in Java was flourishing at this time and that it conducted international trade, while Indian and Arabic texts from around the ninth century mention this area as a part of their trading routes.
Montana (1997: 85–95) notes that there is evidence to show the existence of an Islamic community at Nissam and Lamuri from the beginning of the twelfth century, while the Acehnese region of Samudra-Pase was recognized as having a Muslim ruler, Sultan Malik al-Salih, by the late thirteenth century (Djajadinigrat 1958). Over the next 600 years, the kingdoms of the region, including Samudra⁴ (later Pasai or Pase) and Pidie, combined with Aceh Besar to form Aceh. As Seigel noted: ‘The history of Atjeh (sic) is told largely in terms of Islam and trade’ (Siegel 1969: 4). In particular, Aceh’s focus on trade gave it an external focus, towards India, the Arab world and the Ottoman Empire, rather than focusing towards the archipelago (Reid 2006; McKinnon 2006).

Like most of Southeast Asia, Islam in Aceh is predominantly Sunni (ahl al-sunnah wa al-jama‘a), and like most Muslims in the region Acehnese are followers of the Shafi‘i doctrine, although also recognizing the four major schools of Sunni: Shafi‘i, Hanafi, Hanbali and Maliki. Imam al-Shafi‘i is believed by many Acehnese to have been the most liberal of the four great Islamic Imams, although he was known to err towards being conservative when faced with ambiguity. There are hence differences between the Acehnese and Malaysian interpretations of the Shafi‘i doctrine, for example in the matter of divorce (which is more liberal in Aceh and more conservative in Malaysia). This liberalism on the question of divorce may be regarded as an echo of Aceh’s pre-Islamic matriarchal social organization, elements of which continue to exist in terms of house ownership and the living arrangements of newlyweds.

There are also, of course, differences of interpretation of Sunni Shafi‘i Islam within Aceh, with some taking a more conservative view of its implementation, notably in the somewhat more remote West Aceh and with a more liberal interpretation in the more populated eastern and northern parts of Aceh. Differences in approach to Islam and shari‘a could be identified by, in Banda Aceh, for example, young women wearing tight, modern clothing albeit since the introduction of shari‘a also with a head scarf. In West Aceh, by way of contrast, the district administrator had attempted to impose a much more conservative form of dress, including long and loose skirts for women, while banning jeans and shorts (Hasan 2010; see also HRW 2010: 47–8 on other social forms of implementing shari‘a in West Aceh).

However, in the more populated areas and among a very much larger proportion of the Acehnese population, the emphasis appeared to be on more liberal approaches to Islam, if retaining respect for many more widely shared codes of modesty and propriety. As well as Sunni Muslims, about 10 per cent of Acehnese are Shi‘a Muslims, although there is little if any reported conflict over this division.⁵ As Islam’s starting point in the archipelago, and the last point of departure for the hajj, Aceh was given the nickname ‘veranda of Mecca’ or serambi Mekkah by Arab traders. It was from Aceh that Islam spread to the rest of the archipelago, from around the thirteenth century. Islam has consequently become deeply entrenched in Acehnese society, if of a locally defined, externally focused and, being more open to external influences, of a more tolerant type.

The key characteristic of a state in which the people are Muslim is that the moral basis of social codes of behaviour derives from Islam. These states are
divided between Islamic states, in which Islam is the state religion but which also allow for civil law, and Islamist states in which there is only Islamic law. The former may allow for the imposition of civil law based on Islamic tenets (e.g., prohibition of gambling) but which is not adjudicated through Islamic courts or which seeks to impose the *hudud* punishments of strict interpretations of Islamic law.

**Syariah, self-determination and the qanun jinayat**

The issue of Aceh’s Islamic status is muddied by the externally driven introduction of *shari`a* in 2001, which included Islamist legal codes, primarily referring to moral issues, alongside civil codes. Most Acehnese believed it was not necessary to put into law how to correctly practise one’s faith and that the *shari`a* that was imposed did not accurately reflect local values or customs. The commonly expressed view was that *shari`a* was imposed as a ‘divide and conquer’ tactic by the Indonesian military at the peak of the Aceh war. The idea was, as expressed by a number of senior GAM leaders, to create a division between GAM, which saw its war as one of national liberation and not over Islam, and the province’s otherwise supportive imams, who would be obliged to accept *shari`a*. Being overwhelmingly devout Muslims, there was (as intended) some confusion among many Acehnese about how to respond to *shari`a*, with open opposition to the law potentially implying opposition to Islam and consequently creating discord between those who accepted *shari`a* and those who did not.

Following the imposition of *shari`a*, the *qanun jinayat* was argued by many Acehnese in the province’s coffee houses, by some religious scholars and by ordinary Acehnese to not reflect the views of the majority of Acehnese, even if they correspond to the more conservative views of some. The *qanun jinayat* was opposed by Acehnese civil society groups, as well senior provincial government officials. The human rights activist Destika Gilang Lestari thus told the English-language satellite news channel Al Jazeera International: ‘There are much more important syariah laws we need, for example against corruption. Why is there no rule against corruption? Why do they only look into people’s private lives?’ (Al Jazeera International 2009). The passage of the *qanun jinayat* by the outgoing assembly was greeted by protests outside the legislative offices, with protestors saying they opposed it both because it was legally regressive and because it was passed undemocratically (Liputan6 2009).

Consistent with *shari`a* having been imposed from Jakarta and not a product of self-determination, the *qanun jinayat* that was passed by the outgoing provincial parliament was noted for its overt orientation towards crimes involving sex, including adultery, homosexuality, paedophilia and rape, providing for the following punishment for such crimes:

- Adultery: ‘Any person who deliberately commits adultery is threatened with 100 cane lashes for the unmarried and stoning to death for those who are married.’
Homosexuality: ‘Any person deliberately performing homosexuality or lesbianism is threatened with up to 100 cane lashes and a maximum fine of 1,000 grams of fine gold, or imprisonment of up to 100 months.’

Paedophilia: ‘Any person who deliberately commits a sexual crime against children is threatened with a variable sentence of up to 200 cane lashes and a fine of up to 2,000 grams of fine gold, or maximum imprisonment of 200 months.’

Rape: ‘Any person who deliberately commits rape is threatened with at least 100 cane lashes and a maximum of 300 cane lashes or imprisonment of at least 100 months and a maximum of 200 months.’

(World Law Direct 2009)

It was not clear at any point what Islamic sources were consulted in the drafting of this proposed legislation, what debates, if any, were had on why these laws in particular should be applied while others under shari’a were not, or why the various penalties imposed were not necessarily consistent with practice or law as understood in other applications of shari’a. Although some legislators expressed concerns over the legislation, when it was put to the vote, all legislators voted in its favour. The view expressed by two senior Acehnese officials was that the dissenting legislators could not openly oppose the bill because their opposition would then be used to challenge their commitment to Islam, resulting in damage to their political careers and potentially leading to criminal charges under Aceh’s other shari’a laws.

There were, then, two issues, the first being whether the qanun jinayat was consistent with Acehnese values, and whether the legislation was consistent with Aceh’s then new democratic process. The first point was highlighted by the protests that greeted the law and by the manner in which the law was subsequently handled by the governor and the incoming DPRA. The second point raised two further issues, the first being the meaning of democracy and the second concerning Aceh and democracy.

Despite democratic processes being inscribed in Indonesia’s constitution and being warmly greeted in public consultations prior to the signing of the Helsinki peace agreement in 2005, which in effect brought open democratic process to Aceh, concerns were raised by some as to whether democracy could work in a devoutly Islamic society. ‘Democracy’ is often misapplied, lacks specificity and has been instituted in ways that undermine its normative value, not least in Islamic societies. In particular, the procedural election of pre-existing warlords passing for democratic process in Iraq and Afghanistan gives weight to criticism that ‘democracy’ is just a rationale for the imposition of external influence. Set against this undermining of its meaning, appeals to rule under the law of God, or theocracy, often have greater consistency and sense of moral purpose.

Yet the (at best) proceduralist democracy that is or has been practised in some Islamic countries does not allow appreciation of a more substantive meaning of democracy. This includes not just the necessary but insufficient criterion of (free and fair) voting, but a genuine choice of candidates, free expression and
assembly, freedom from (fear of) political persecution, separation of powers between the organs of the state (notably the governing and legal branches), and the equal and consistent application of rule of law. From these substantive qualities, democratic processes are based on justice and thus derive legitimacy. A signal quality of Islam is its appeal to justice and its opposition to injustice; justice is a basic objective of Islam and is claimed as its supreme virtue. In this, justice is seen as a necessary moral attribute for anyone claiming to be Muslim. The Holy Qur'an refers to justice (e.g. 5:8, 16:90, 57:25), which is further understood to have an egalitarian value (e.g. 4:135, 5:8, 42:15). Justice and equality, notably before the law, are principle civic values that give substance to democratic processes.

Islam in Acehnese politics

Democratic processes have been argued to be consistent with Islam. A shura (council, lit. ‘consultation’) was traditionally the method by which Arab tribes selected leaders and is now a common term for parliament in Islamic countries, and appears to imply a democratic disposition. Moreover, the ijma, or consensus of the Islamic community, is often understood to imply democratic process, although there is debate within Islam between conservatives and liberals over whether the ijma should apply only to religious scholars or to all Muslims. One could argue, based on notions of justice and equality, that the liberal interpretation should prevail. There has been considerable recent support for liberal interpretations of Islam as well as the necessity of constructing a secular state as a means of modernization (e.g. Madjid 1997; Barton 2002; Saeed and Akbarzadeh 2003; Saeed and Johns 2004; Sardar 2004; Saeed 2006). However, there is also considerable argument against such ‘liberal’ interpretations of Islam, but these ongoing debates within Islamic jurisprudence are beyond the scope of this chapter.

In Aceh, there was a neater fit between Islam and a more accountable and representative political process. Along with tolerance, the practice of political power had since the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1609–36) rested on a complex array of factors. Power-sharing was traditionally (and remains) expressed through what is referred to as the state code: Adat bak Po Teunteurehum, Hukom bak Syah Kuala, Kanun bak Putroo Phang, Reusam bak Bentara or ‘Power rests with the king, Law with the great imam of Syah Kuala, Tradition with the Princess of Pahang and Regulations with the Bentara’). Deleting the role of the Princess of Pahang, which refers to cultural matters, this traditional political system reflected a triumvirate in which no individual or single group were able to dominate the political process. In a more developed sense, these three positions have been characterized by some Acehnese as comprising a form of trias politica, or the combination of the three key areas of state administration divided by the separation of powers into discrete areas of responsibility, thus ensuring a political balance that is usually regarded as necessary in a functioning democracy.
Despite democratic processes being implemented throughout Indonesia from 1999, the province of Aceh did not enjoy meaningful democracy until the end of 2006 following the election of the governor and district and town heads. Prior to this, Aceh had been subsumed into North Sumatra, had been in a state of rebellion and military occupation throughout the 1950s, was in a state of political chaos and direct rule from Jakarta and then, along with the rest of Indonesia — if more so — underwent indirect rule from Jakarta. Even following Indonesia’s process of democratization from 1999, Aceh was effectively exempted as a result of the separatist war there. As a result, the positions of governor and district or town heads were appointed or were otherwise pre-arranged, usually at the behest of the Indonesian army (Tentara Nasional Indonesia — Angkatan Darat, or TNI-AD). The provincial legislative elections of 2009 were also the first that had occurred in an environment free of violence, intimidation and vote-rigging.

At least as importantly, each of these elections was notable for allowing non-national party candidates to stand. Prior to 2006, all candidates for office had to be a member of a nationally organized political party, essentially to preclude the type of separatism that local political parties could imply but diminishing local relevance. However, the Aceh peace agreement of 2005 which ended almost three decades of separatist war had as it final and most important point of negotiation the creation of local political parties (see MOU 2005: 1.2.1, 2, 3.) Added to a relatively substantial level of administrative and economic autonomy in local affairs, Aceh embarked on an experiment in democracy. The peace, and the peace agreement that enhanced local democracy, was overwhelmingly embraced by the Acehnese people.

Following the July 2006 passage of the Law on the Governing of Aceh by the Indonesian legislature, Aceh’s democratization was undertaken in two phases; the first being the December 2006 election of the governor, bupati (district administrators) and walikota (mayors). The political reorganization of the formerly militant Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or GAM) led to the development of the Partai Aceh (Aceh Party), the candidates from which won more than half of the offices. Partai Aceh was formally led by former GAM commander Muzakkir Manaf, although the party was effectively controlled by former GAM ‘prime minister’ and, with the death of GAM founder Hasan de Tiro in 2010, traditional leader, Malik Mahmud. Voter turnout was a strong 85 per cent, with 92 per cent of voters surveyed saying they believed the vote was free and fair (LGSP 2007). Based on a sufficiently high plurality in the first stage of a potentially two-stage vote (38.2 per cent, extrapolated to 76.4 per cent for a run-off), former GAM official Irwandi Yusuf was elected as governor, with head of the formerly pro-independence Aceh Referendum Information Center (SIRA — Senter Informasi Referendum Aceh15), Muhamad Nazar, elected as Vice-Governor. Partai Aceh candidates also won nine of the 19 sub-provincial positions.

The second phase was the election of the legislature. The results led to the turnover of 80 per cent of existing seats (Tapol 2009), with Partai Aceh
candidates taking just under 47 per cent of the vote, securing 33 of the 69 contested seats. The Democratic Party of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono took 10 seats with just under 11 per cent of the vote. As Partai Aceh did not have a majority in its own right but there had been a degree of closeness between Partai Aceh leaders and Democratic Party founder Yudhoyono due to his support for the peace process, the two parties formed an alliance for the purpose of passing legislation. However, despite an election having been called and voted for and, moreover, the known results showing that the incumbent legislature had overwhelmingly been voted out of office, Aceh’s then DPRK continued to actively operate as the provincial legislature. The continuation of a legislature in office following the announcement of results of an election is a local anomaly that reflects more a lack of convention rather than a constitutional ordering of the legislative process. In Indonesia, the legislature’s term is fixed and, in theory, it can continue to operate until its term has expired. However, once campaigning for elections has commenced (in a fixed period after the elections have been called), in keeping with wider democratic convention, governments or legislatures do not initiate or enact major changes.

Conclusion: Islam and the democratic process in Aceh

It is common practice in many other democracies that once an election has been called, the government or legislature does not initiate new policy, undertake new initiatives or further engage in the legislative process. Rather, the government operates in caretaker mode, in which it continues to oversee the bureaucratic machinery of state. This is to ensure no unfair advantage to the incumbent, as well as the status of government being back in the hands of the voters. Despite the introduction of an open democratic process and its outcome, the clearly articulated convention of caretaker mode does not yet exist in Indonesia, much less in Aceh, so, four months after it had been voted out of office in 2009, the outgoing DPRK believed that it still retained the authority to pass local legislation, even though their only post-election legislation was the proposed Islamic criminal bylaw.

This last-minute rush to push through this legislation was in marked contrast to the assembly’s previously lack of urgency in seeking to pass the Islamic law. Aceh’s shari’a was developed in Jakarta, later in consultation with selected Acehnese ‘ulama. As with the announcement by the government in Jakarta of ‘special autonomy’ for Aceh in 2001, of which shari’a was a part (implemented in 2003), the move did not require formal local agreement (KBRI Canberra 2001). The imposition of shari’a, rather than its local voluntary adoption, meant that while it had been implemented and, prior to the change of Aceh’s political environment as a result of the peace agreement in 2005, was often enforced, it lacked a depth of support. This resulted in the wilayatul hisbah (syariah police) having their powers curbed and otherwise decreasing in activity, as well as a reduction in the number of public punishments for offences against shari’a. There was overall a marked reluctance to enact any enabling regulations that would give full effect to the laws that were already in place.
The chairman of the Aceh chapter of Nahdlatul Ulama (Awakening of Religious Scholars), Indonesia’s largest Muslim organization traditionally associated with conservative Muslims, Teungku Faisal Ali, said the bylaws had failed to have a substantial effect on Acehnese society because they were not strong enough. Ali identified the shortcomings being as a consequence of a lack of political will by the local government. ‘Conditions today are the same as ten years ago,’ Teungku Faisal said. ‘In fact, during the last five years, Islamic Shariah has been going nowhere in terms of regulations and enforcement’. He added that: ‘The bylaws on crimes cannot be implemented to this day because there are punishment clauses considered controversial’ (Hasan 2011). That is to say, there was recognition by more hard-line Islamists that elements of shari’a were not popular with many of Aceh’s otherwise devoutly Islamic citizens.

As a result of the perceived breach of democratic process by the out-going provincial assembly, passing legislation after it had been voted out of office but its term not having yet expired, Aceh’s democratically elected governor refused to sign the qanun jinayat into law. Irwandi Yusuf said he had no intention of signing into law legislation that was not wanted by most Acehnese people and, moreover, law that had been passed by a legislature that had not only not been properly democratically elected but had been voted out of office.\(^{16}\) There were many in Aceh’s elected leadership who believed that it had been the intention of the out-going DPRA to pass the legislation as a ‘poisoned chalice’ for the incoming legislature, presuming that they would lose popularity if they accepted the law, and that they would be accused of being anti-Islamic if they rejected the law.\(^{17}\)

The passage of the qanun jinayat was, however, understood by many former GAM members as an abuse of democratic legislative process and an offence to the Islam’s command to establish justice.\(^{18}\) The failure to sign the qanun jinayat into law or it ultimately being rejected by the new provincial legislature raised almost no public concern in Aceh. It was not an issue raised by any of the leading candidates in the lead up to the proposed February 2012 gubernatorial election campaign, indicating that no-one who was seeking election to public office would burden themselves with such an unpopular and unwanted policy.

Given that the Governor had refused to act by signing the qanun jinayat into law, it was formally considered by the incoming DPRA as not having been accepted as law in an applied sense. In this, the trias politica, in which the separation of the executive and the legislature ensured a degree of political checking and balancing, provided a safeguard against the abuse of the legislative process. With the qanun jinayat not having been signed into law, the then newly sworn-in DPRA followed the refusal to endorse the qanun jinayat as law by stating that the legislation, being passed by a legislature that had lost its mandate and no longer enjoying the consent of the governed, could only be considered as draft legislation to be taken on advice by the new legislature. On that basis and considering that there was a perception that it reflected the imposition of an unwelcome interpretation of Islam, the qanun jinayat was rejected by the new DPRA. The proposed legislation subsequently lapsed.
The importance of this attempted anti-democratic legislative process and its defeat is that the freely elected representatives of the Acehnese people rejected the imposition of the proposed law as undemocratic as well as being out of keeping with their religious beliefs. Despite the historical confluence of Islam and non-representative politics, the case of Aceh and the qamun jinayat showed that devout Islam and democratic processes were not necessarily mutually exclusive. In accordance with the basic tenets of Islam of privileging justice over power, in the case of Aceh, democracy and Islam were mutually reinforcing.

Notes

1 Literally ‘the way’ or ‘the well-trodden path’ that Muslims should follow, shari’a is usually understood as implying Islamic law.
2 Based on the author’s personal experience in western Indonesia from the early 1990s until the lifting of restrictions on political Islam in 1998.
3 Personal communication with Mohamad Nur Djuli, March 2004. Perlak was probably not Islamic at this time.
4 After which the island of Sumatra is named.
5 Personal communication of the author with a number of Islamic scholars in Aceh between 2004–9.
6 Based on discussion with numerous Acehnese between 2001–9. Notable among them were the democratically elected Governor, Irwandi Yusuf, and Vice-Governor Mohamad Nazar, and several senior provincial officials and bupati (democratically elected district administrators).
7 This anecdotal understanding was gained through conversations with numerous Acehnese from a spectrum of backgrounds. Although there was no formal survey undertaken in Aceh on this subject, this general view seemed to correspond to a wider view of how Acehnese understood Islam, based on several years of experience with Acehnese in a variety of settings.
8 It is not possible to identify these officials, on the grounds that such identification could have negative repercussions.
9 The price of one gram of gold was a little more than US$30, meaning the fine equated to approximately US$30,000, or about eight years’ average income in Indonesia. The fine for paedophilia is double this in approximate value and earning capacity.
10 The officials (one elected, one appointed) cannot be identified because their views may be used to question their commitment to Islam, which would be politically debilitating and potentially illegal under syariah. Based on the author’s personal discussions in Aceh, October 2009.
11 Democratic processes were substantially strengthened following constitutional changes in 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.
12 Views based on discussion with several Acehnese, predominantly from GAM and SIRA (Senter Informasi Referendum Aceh – Aceh Referendum Information Centre) in the period January 2005–July 2006.
13 A position comparable to the modern-day office of chief of police.
14 The trius politica, or separation of powers, usually refers to the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.
15 SIRA reconstituted itself as a political party, known as the Suara Independen Rakyat Aceh (also SIRA, or the Independent Voice of Acehnese People).
16 Personal communication with the author, October 2009.
17 According to a senior Aceh official who is also a devout Muslim, private correspondence, October 2009.
18 Personal communication with the author, October 2009.
References


