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# SHAYKH ʿABD AL-ṢAMAD AL-PALIMBĀNĪ'S UNDERSTANDING OF *TAWḤĪD*

BY

ALI MUCHTAR

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion)

Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences

International Islamic University Malaysia

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# ABSTRACT

The present research is an attempt to explicate Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī's understanding of *tawḥīd*, which to Muslims is a very pivotal matter in terms of both its doctrine and practice. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī (d. ca. *1243*/1828) was one of the Malay thinkers who wrote prolifically on many subjects and was known as the most prominent 'translator' of al-Ghazālī's teachings in the Malay world. Here, the discourse of *tawḥīd* has become a matter of debate since the early 16th century. Many people have been confused in their understanding of *tawḥīd* because of their lack of knowledge on the essential teachings of Islam. Thus, it is important to seek an explanation of ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's views on *tawḥīd* in dealing with religious problems in his community, and how he propagated his understanding based on the teachings of the Sunni school. In this study, the approach that has been adopted is textual analysis, using descriptive and analytical methods from various works on the subject. It seeks to discover how ʿAbd al-Ṣamad elaborated his understanding of *tawḥīd* in his time. It is concluded that his understanding of *tawḥīd* is in line with the teachings of the *Ahl sunnah wa al-jamāʿah.* However, some scholars criticize his thought and say that it has an inclination toward Ibn ʿArabī's school of thought. ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī attempted to solve the intellectual and religious problems faced by the Malays during his time by reconciling the tradition of Ibn ʿArabī with al-Ghazālī's. He succeeded in harmonizing the two schools of thought as well as in synthesizing the theological approach with the Sufi tradition.

# خلاصة البحث

هذا البحث هو محاولة لفهم مساهمة الشيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني في علم التوحيد؛ الذي يُعـــدُّ أمراً محورياً للمسلمين من حيث المبدأ والممارسة. ويُعدُّ الشيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني كذلك أحد كبار العلماء الجاويين، و ألفّ عددا كبيراً من الكتب في عدّة مجالات، وأصبح مترجمـــا بـــارزا لتعاليم الإمام الغزالي في شرق آسيا. وكان علم التوحيد؛ خطابه، ومفهومه في عـــالم الملايـــو موضوعا للمجادلة والمناقشة منذ القرن السادس عشر من الميلاد، حيث أخطأ معظم الناس في فهم التوحيد لدرجة قولهم بالحلول والاتحاد وغيرهما، وذلك بسبب قلة علمهم بالأسس الثابتة والصحيحة في دين الإسلام. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى سبر غور آراء الشيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني في التعامل مع المشكلات الدينية في مـــجتمعه، وماهية إسهامه في نشر التوحيد ومفهومه على مذهب أهل السنة والجماعة. ومنهج هذه الدراسة يقوم على تحليل النصوص باستخدام المنـــهج الوصفي التحليلي لموضوع الدراسة، كما تسعي الدراسة إلى اكتشاف الجوانب العديدة مـــن أفكار الشيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني في التوحيد ومفهومه. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن آراء الشيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني في التوحيد هي مفهوم أهل السنة والجماعة نفسه، بالرغم من أنّ الشـــيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني كان يميل إلى أفكار الشيخ الأكبر ابن عربي، وقد كان الشيخ عبد الصمد الفلمباني ناجحًا في التوفيق بين فكرتي نظام التقليد والحداثة إضافة إلى توليف النهج الكلامي مع التقليد الصوفي.

# APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion)

……
Megawati Moris
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion)

……
Wan Azam Mohd. Amin
Examiner

The dissertation was submitted to the Department of Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion and is accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion)

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……
Badri Najib Zubir
Dean, Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Science

# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Ali Muchtar

Signature ……..  Date ……

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**SHAYKH ʿABD AL-ṢAMAD AL-PALIMBĀNĪ'S UNDERSTANDING OF *TAWḤĪD***

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# TRANSLITERATION TABLE

**Arabic Transliteration Scheme**
(According to IIUM Thesis Manual)

***Consonant***

| Arabic term | Transliteration | Arabic term | Transliteration | Arabic term | Transliteration |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ء | ʿ | ز | z | ق | q |
| ب | b | س | s | ك | k |
| ت | T | ش | sh | ل | l |
| ث | Th | ص | ṣ | م | m |
| ج | J | ض | ḍ | ن | n |
| ح | ḥ | ط | ṭ | ه | h |
| خ | kh | ظ | ẓ | و | w |
| د | D | ع | ʿ | ي | y |
| ذ | Dh | غ | gh | | |
| ر | R | ف | f | | |

***Vowel***

| Arabic term | Transliteration | Arabic term | Transliteration |
|---|---|---|---|
| ـَ | a | ـَا + ـَ | ā |
| ـِ | i | ـِي + ـِ | ī |
| ـُ | u | ـُو + ـُ | ū |
| اي | ay | او | aw |

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

*Tawḥīd* or the assertion of Divine Unity plays a vital role in shaping Muslim thought and behavior. It is the first principle that guides a Muslim to the real meaning of human life and interprets for him or her its past, present and future. The Qur'ān emphasizes greatly on the importance of *tawḥīd* hence, both the *Makkiyyah* and *Madaniyyah* verses discuss on this subject. *Tawḥīd* is the belief that Allāh is the one Supreme Reality and the single Absolute Truth that encompasses and transcends the world and it is the basis of faith for every Muslim. The first *Shahādah* or the testimony of faith for Muslims is an expression of *tawḥīd* i.e., "*lā ilāha illā Allāh* (There is no god but Allāh)." Muslims utter this confession by their tongue, believe it in their hearts and try to perform their actions based on this principle. Since Prophets and Messengers were sent down to this world to teach *tawḥīd* and to explain its meaning to their communities, many Muslim scholars (*ʿulamā'*), following their example, devoted their efforts to writing and elaborating on this subject. Consequently, its discourse in Islamic intellectual history sometimes became polemical because of the different understanding and various interpretations by scholars.

In the Malay world the concept of *tawḥīd* also became a topic of continuous debate. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, there emerged a school of *taṣawwuf*

or Sufism namely *Wujūdiyyah*[1] which was advocated by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī (d. ca. *998*/1590)[2] and his student Shams al-Dīn al-Sumaṭranī (d. *1039*/1630). Their ideas were attacked and their teachings suppressed by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī (d. *1068*/1658), the grand *Muftī* of Aceh at that time. According to al-Rānīrī, the *Wujūdiyyah* believed in a concept of God that deviates from the true doctrine of *tawḥīd.* Furthermore, he accused the concept of God taught by the *Wujūdiyyah* as pantheistic since they believed that God, the universe and man are one in substance.[3]

In the eighteenth century C.E. the Malay world became a flourishing centre of *taṣawwuf* with teachings that can be traced back to Sufi masters such as, Junayd al-Baghdādī (d. *297*/910), Imām al-Qushayrī (d. *465*/1074), and Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. *505*/1111). One of the proponents of this school of *taṣawwuf* in the Malay world was Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī.[4] He was one of the Malay thinkers who wrote prolifically on theology (*ʿaqīdah*), Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Sufism (*taṣawwuf*), and morals (*akhlāq*). Most of his writings were dedicated to advocating the teachings of the *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah*[5] and he was renowned as the

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[1] *Wujūdiyyah* is divided into two groups, they are: 1) *Wujūdiyyah Muwaḥḥidah* who truly affirm the Unity of God (they are considered as real Sufis) and, 2) "*Wujūdiyyah Mulḥidah*" who deviate from the truth (they are considered as *Zindīqs*). They are known as *Wujūdiyyah* because in their discussions, sayings and beliefs, they focus on the question of God's Being (Existence). See Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Rānīrī and The Wujūdiyyah of 17th Century Acheh,* (Singapore: Monographs of the Malaysian Branch Royal Asiatic Society III, 1966), 103. and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī*, (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), 177-8.

[2] The Information in the bracket refers to the year according to Hijri calendar and followed by the Gregorian calendar. The discussion related to Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī, Shams al-Dīn al-Sumaṭranī and Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī will be presented in chapter four.

[3] Ahmad Daudy, *Allah dan Manusia dalam Konsepsi Syeikh Nuruddin al-Raniri*, (Jakarta: CV Rajawali, 1983), 83-5.

[4] Alwi Shihab, *Islam Sufistik*: *"Islam Pertama" dan Pengaruhnya Hingga Kini di Indonesia,* (Bandung: Mizan, 2001), 74.

[5] The term *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah* means those people who are refrain from deviating from dogma and practice. They are called *Ahl al-sunnah* because they adhere to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, and they called *Ahl al-jamāʿah* because they are united (*mujtamiʿūn*) in following the two authoritative sources, i.e. al-Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Al-Baghdādī mentioned in his work *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* this victorious group who include the people of *ḥadīth* (*muḥaddithūn*), jurists (*fuqahā'*) and theologians (*mutakallimīn*), linguists/grammarians (*nuḥāt*), the experts in various reading of the Qur'ān (*ʿulamā' al-qirā'āt/mufassir*), Sufi ascetics (*zuhhād al-ṣūfiyyah*), They are not the Rafiḍites, Qadarites, Kharijites, the anthropomorphist (*mushabbahah*) and the like. Among the principles of the teachings of *ahl sunnah*

foremost interpreter of al-Ghazālī's teachings in the Malay world. Hence, in his teaching on *taṣawwuf* he used to focus on purification of the soul and moral behavior instead of speculative and philosophical mysticism. The adaptation and rendering of al-Ghazālī's works such as *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn* and *Bidāyat al-Hidāyah* are contained in Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī's books entitled *Siyar al-Sālikīn and Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* respectively. These books are still being reprinted and widely circulated and are being studied extensively in Southeast Asia until today.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The correct understanding of *tawḥīd* is very important to Muslims in terms of both its doctrine and practice. This understanding must be based on the Qur'ān and *al-Sunnah* which are the two original and authoritative sources of the doctrine of *tawḥīd*. A concept of *tawḥīd* which has been given a new interpretation may not be correct and hence, do not possess religious truth and will lead to incorrect beliefs and wrong practices.

In the Malay world, the discourse on *tawḥīd* during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be divided into two major streams. They are: first, the *wujūdiyyah mulḥidah*; and second, the *wujūdiyyah muwaḥḥidah*. Both schools interpret the meaning of *tawḥīd* based on their understanding and belief of what is contained in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad was very concerned with this issue and he tried to explain the concept and true meaning of *tawḥīd* in his

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*wa al-jamāʿah* are the belief in Names and Attributes of God and the eternity of God, to believe in the beatific vision of God, affirming the Qur'ān and His Prophets and Messengers, to believe in resurrection and gathering in the hereafter, to believe in the questioning of the angels in the grave as well as to believe in the pool of the Prophet (*al-ḥawḍ*) and the scales (*al-mīzān*), see ʿAbd al-Qāhir bin Ṭāhir bin Muḥammad al-Baghdādī, *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2003), 19, 244, 248-9; H.A.R Gibb and J.H. Kramers, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974), 781-3. See also more elaboration of *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah* in chapter 3.

writings such as, *Zahrat al-Murīd fī Bayān Kalimat al-Tawḥīd,*[6] *Siyar al-Sālikīn*[7]*, Hidāyat al-Sālikīn*[8] and other works that reflect his views on matters related to theology (*ʿaqīdah*), Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and Sufism (*taṣawwuf*). Many subsequent Malay scholars discussed and wrote on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's thought and views. Some of them contended that despite the strong influence of al-Ghazālī on his thought, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad still accommodated Ibn ʿArabī's ideas on Sufism particularly, on the concept of *wujūd* (being).

This research will present and elaborate on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's understanding and interpretation of *tawḥīd* and show how his explanations preserve the true Islamic faith. The significance of this topic is clear, since the doctrine of *tawḥīd* is the core of Islam and everything Islamic. It is important in present-day Islamic discourse especially in Malay society which is facing many attempts by various streams and groups to challenge the truth of Islamic beliefs as manifested in various forms in the daily lives of Malay Muslims.

Based on the issues mentioned above, the researcher will explore Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's works such as *Siyar al-Sālikīn, Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* and his book specifically on *tawḥīd* namely, *Zahrat al-Murīd fī Bayān Kalimat al-Tawḥīd* to show his understanding and his explanation on matters related to *tawḥīd*. Other books written by him will also be referred to when appropriate and necessary.

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[6] The book was written in Mecca in *1178*/1764. It contains the lectures of Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Damanhūrī on *tawḥīd* and logic (*manṭiq*). Al-Damanhūrī was an Egyptian scholar who frequently visited Mecca in *1177*/1763 on the occasion of the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*).

[7] *Siyar al-Sālikīn ilā ʿIbādat Rabb al-ʿAlamīn* is considered to be Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī's *magnum opus*. It consists of four parts and was finished in Ṭā'if in *1203*/1788. It is an adaptation and translation of *Lubāb Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, an abridged version of al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn.*

[8] *Hidāyat al-Sālikīn fī Sulūk Maslak al-Muttaqīn* is an adaptation of al-Ghazālī's *Bidāyat al-Hidāyah*. It was finished in Mecca in *1193*/1778. It deals with theology (*ʿaqīdah*), Islamic law (*fiqh*) and others, in somewhat a mystical way.

## 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research attempts to investigate and answer the following questions:

1) What are Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's main views on *tawḥīd*?
2) Who were the Muslim scholars who influenced his thought especially on *tawḥīd*?
3) Does his understanding and interpretation of *tawḥīd* comply with the *ʿaqīdah* of the *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah*?
4) How did Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad contributed to the Islamic theological discourse in the Malay world with his writings on *tawḥīd*?

## 1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1) To elucidate Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's views on *tawḥīd*.
2) To show the Muslim scholars who exerted their views on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's thought especially on *tawḥīd*.
3) To evaluate Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's views on *tawḥīd* with the objective of determining their compliance with the *ʿaqīdah* of the *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah*.
4) To show Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's contribution to the Islamic theological discourse in the Malay world.

## 1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The main focus of this research is to examine Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's views on *tawḥīd* which is a pivotal topic in Islamic faith and to help clarify the basic precept of Islam. This study is important because it will investigate the celebrated Malay

proponent of al-Ghazālī's thought in the eighteenth century and one of the great Sufi masters and disseminators of *taṣawwuf,* especially the Sammaniyah Order (*ṭarīqah*) in the Malay archipelago. This research is also important because it can help the Muslims particularly, Malay-Muslims to understand the doctrine of *tawḥīd* in detail by referring to works in their own language and intellectual legacy which are still unexplored in many manuscripts written by their predecessors. These Malay scholars were eminent thinkers not only in the Archipelago but also in the central Muslim lands. This research can throw some light and offer some answers to the challenges on the Islamic faith made by new interpretations on the doctrine of *tawḥīd* not founded on the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* which have implications on other aspects of Islamic life and thought such as on ethics and morality.

## 1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study mainly investigates the concept of *tawḥīd* that has been presented and elaborated by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad in his particular work on *tawḥīd* that is *Zahrat al-Murīd fī Bayān Kalimat al-Tawḥīd.* Other works such as *Siyar al-Sālikīn* and *Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* will be referred in order to make the study more comprehensive. The second aspect of this study focuses on how far his elucidation on *tawḥīd* as a doctrine preserves the pure meaning of *tawḥīd* as espoused by the *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah*. In relation to his contribution to the Islamic theological discourse in the Malay world, this study limits its discussion on *tawḥīd* and not other issues such as the polemics of the *Wujūdiyyah*.

## 1.7 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This research will utilize the qualitative method of study which relies on textual analysis. Hence, this research will mostly be analytical in nature. Since this study is based on library research, materials will be derived from both primary and secondary sources. Data and information will be gathered from books, articles, conferences and seminar papers, journals, theses and dissertations as well as reliable websites. The primary sources include books written by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad which are *Zahrat al-Murīd fī Bayān Kalimat al-Tawḥīd, Siyar al-Sālikīn, Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* and others. The secondary sources include various works of early and contemporary scholars which discussed on his teachings especially on *tawḥīd*. The researcher also will be comparing the writings of the early and contemporary scholars to highlight the similarities and differences between them.

To analyse the data and information obtained, the researcher will use the following methods:

1. Descriptive method: This method is applied to describe the life and intellectual background of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad.
2. Analytical method: This method is used in analysing Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's thought on *tawḥīd*, how much he was influenced by other scholars from the *Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah* and the extent of his contributions to Islamic faith discourse.
3. Deductive method: This method is applied to examine and evaluate critically the information obtained regarding Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad 's views on *tawḥīd* in order to draw conclusions for this research.

## 1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW AND DESCRIPTION OF SOURCES

The literature review was selected from relevant writings on accounts of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī's life and his ideas that are related to the subject under discussion.

For a comprehensive study on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's life and career and how certain people and events shaped his thought, the following books written by Malay historian and scholar Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah are important. However, many works written by Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah were described in a historical way and he did not go deeply to analyze the views and thoughts of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad, specifically his views on *tawḥīd*; for that purpose this research will contribute to works analyzing his thought hence fill the gap.

The first work is, *Syeikh Abdus Shamad Palembang: Ulama' Sufi dan Jihad Dunia Melayu*. In this book the author concentrated on giving an account of his life and the role played by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad during his stay in Kedah at the time of the Siamese-Buddhist attack of Kedah. It was reported that many scholars (*ʿulamā'*) from Sumatra, Banjar and Patani took part in the war against the Siamese invasion. Wan Mohd. Shagir firmly stressed that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad was a martyr (*shahīd*) in this war and he was buried in the village of Sekom in the northern part of Patani. The author also mentioned other *ʿulamā'* from Palembang and their works for example, Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn (the author of *Mukhtaṣar Jawhar Tawḥīd)* and Kemas Fakhr al-Dīn (the writer of Kitab *Mukhtaṣar*), a Malay translation of Shaykh Raslān al-Dimashqī's *Risālah fī al-Tawḥīd*.[9]

Another important work by the same author is *Al-ʿUrwatul Wuthqa Syeikh ʿAbdus Shamad al-Falimbani; Pegangan yang Kukuh Golongan Shufi*. This book is

[9] Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah, *Syeikh Abdus Shamad Palembang: Ulama' Sufi dan Jihad Dunia Melayu*, (Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 1996).

about the methods (*kayfiyāt*) of *dhikr*[10] and *rātib*[11] of the Sammāniyyah Order (*ṭarīqah*). Originally in Arabic, the book was written by Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al Karīm al-Sammānī al-Madanī (d. *1189*/1775) as an instruction to his students on the daily *rātib*. It also deals with the *awrād* which are supposed to be recited at certain fixed times. The author clarifies further the account of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's life including information on his father's name and on the circumstance of his death. The book also mentioned the origins of the Sammāniyyah Order and its advent into the Malay world by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's teacher Shaykh ʿAbd al Raḥmān bin Abd al-Mubīn Pauh Bok al-Faṭānī a renowned scholar from Patani.[12]

Another important work is *Hidayat al-Salikin Syeikh Abdus Samad al-Falimbani* (*Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī); this book is a transliteration of the *Jawi* work by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad and it consists of three volumes. This work is an adaptation and expansion of al-Ghazālī's *Bidāyat al-Hidāyah* which deals with Sufism (*taṣawwuf*) meant for the beginners (*mubtadī'*). Wan Mohd. Shaghir Abdullah also added some annotated comments on the content, a brief history of the writer and information on the publication of the work. In the third volume, he gives a glossary of Arabic technical terms found in the text, a short remark on the defence of *Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* and *Siyar al-Sālikīn* against critics accusing Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad of deviationist teachings, and finally an appendix containing a

[10] *Dhikr* (pl. *adhkār*) means "Recollection of God by rhythmic recitation of formulas containing God's name. It may be uttered aloud (*jalī*) or silent (*khafī*), in which ultimately the worshipper forgets the words and only thinks only the named " see, J.M.S Baljon, *Religion and Thought of Shah Wali Allāh Dihlawi 1703-1762,* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 208. and Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, *Some Aspects of Sufism as Understood and Practiced Among the Malays*, (Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute LTD, 1963), 68.

[11] *Rātib* singular of *rawātib* is a non-obligatory form of worship performed and valued for its mystical significance. The term *rātib* is neither mentioned in the *Qur'ān* nor in the traditions of the Prophet (*sunnah*), but there is no doubt that the *rātib* must have been originated from and evolved out of the *dhikr* particularly the *dhikr jalī* or loud chanting. Al-Attas, *Some Aspects of Sufism,* 68-9.

[12] Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah, *Al-ʿUrwatul Wuthqa Syeikh ʿAbdus Shamad al-Falimbani; Pegangan yang Kukuh Golongan Shufi,* (Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 1998).

printed version of *Hidāyat al-Sālikīn.*[13]

Another book on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad is entitled *Penyebaran Islam dan Silsilah Ulamā' Sejagat Dunia Melayu Jilid IX*. It gives an account of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's life including a discussion of his birth date which the author cannot determine precisely. He also discussed on Chatib Quzwain's book *Mengenal Allah Studi Mengenal Ajaran Tasawuf Syeikh Abdus Samad al-Palimbani* and Azyumardi Azra's work *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII.* This book is a new edition of the book entitled *Syeikh Abdus Shamad Palembang: Ulama' Sufi dan Jihad Dunia Melayu*.[14]

An elaboration on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's works was written by Peter Riddell entitled, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmissions and Responses.* In this book, Riddell discussed Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's contribution to the Malay world especially through his works such as, *Siyar al-Sālikīn* and *Hidāyat al-Sālikīn.* Riddell held that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's rendering of al-Ghazālī's composition into Malay was demanded at that time. He believed that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad did not just adapt al-Ghazālī's works rather he used al-Ghazālī's writings as a vehicle for presenting other streams of Sufi thought including those of Ibn ʿArabī,[15] al-Jīlī,[16] al-Burhānpūrī[17] and others. Riddell mentioned that some of Shaykh ʿAbd al-

[13] Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah, *Hidayah al-Salikin Syeikh Abdus Samad al-Falimbani*, (Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 1998).
[14] Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah, *Penyebaran Islam dan Silsilah Sejagat Dunia Melayu Jilid IX,* (Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 2000).
[15] *Shaykh al-Akbar*, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Muḥy al-Dīn al-Ḥātimi al-Ṭā'ī (as a decendent of Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī) al-Andalusī, a celebrated mystic pantheistic doctrine. He was born on the 17th ramaḍān *560*/1165 at Murcia. In Spain he was also called Ibn Surāqa but in the East generally Ibn ʿArabī (without article), to distinguish him from the Qāḍī Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī. His principle works are: *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyah and Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. Gibb, *Shorter Encyclopaedia*, 146-7.
[16] He is ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī a famous Sufi and proponent of Ibn ʿArabi's teaching especially on the idea of the Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*), born in Jīl near Baghdad. He was a descendant of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, the founder of the Qādiriyyah Order. Although little is known about his life, historians have noted that al-Jīlī travelled in India and lived in Yemen from *795*/1393 to *805*/1403. His well-known work include *al-Insān al-Kāmil fī Maʿrifat al-Awākhir wa al-Awā'il.* This is a treatise on

Ṣamad's works inspired the author of the Acehnese poem '*Perang Sabi*' which was responsible for widely encouraging the Acehnese to struggle against the Dutch in the last quarter of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.[18]

Ample information on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's life can be found in *al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* (History on the Genealogy of Kedah). The work was written by Muhammad Hassan bin Tok Kerani Mohd. Arshad. This book explains the history of the state of Kedah Darul Aman and the genealogy of the Sultans of Kedah and their authority, starting from the establishment of the kingdom until the reign of their descendants. It is interesting to note here that this book is the only Malay reference which gives a complete account of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's life including the event of his birth and his lineage. According to the author, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's father is Shaykh ʿAbd al-Jalīl the grand *Muftī* of Kedah during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Jiwa and that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad was educated and trained by his father before he was sent to a local *pondok*[19] in Patani and proceeded to study in the Ḥaramayn.[20]

Pertaining to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's teachings on Sufism, M. Chatib Quzwain has done a good work in presenting the former's ideas in his book *Mengenal Allah: Suatu Studi Mengenal Ajaran Tasawuf Syaikh 'Abdus-Samad al-Palimbani* (Knowledge of Allāh: a Study of ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī's Teachings on

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the doctrine of realization of true self. See Gibb, *Shorter Encyclopaedia*, 170-1; Cyrill Glassé, *Concise Encyclopedia,* 210.

[17] His full name Muḥammad ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Burhānpūrī was born in Burhanpur, Gujerat India (*952*/1545) widely known by his work *al-Tuḥfat al-Mursalah ilā Rūh al-Nabī* written in *998*/1590. This an elaboration of the doctrine of the seven grades of Being (*martabat tujuh*). He was initiated to Syattariyah *ṭarīqah* by his Shaykh Wajh al-Dīn.

[18] Peter Riddell, *Islam and The Malay-Indonesian world: Transmissions and Responses,* (Singapore: Horizon Books, 2001).

[19] Literally means "hut, cottage." It is an alternative term for Islamic religious boarding school where students (*santri*) study classical Islamic subjects and pursue a communal life based on orthopraxy. *Pondok* is used most often in Malaysia and the Patani region of southern Thailand, whereas *Pesantren* is the preferred term in Indonesia. See Pesantren. *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* New Edition, Vol. VIII, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 296.

[20] Muhammad Hassan bin Tok Kerani Mohd Arsyad, *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah,* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1968).

Sufism). This book touches many aspects of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's Sufism especially his metaphysics, spiritual psychology and it gives a comparison of some of Ibn ʿArabi's and al-Ghazālī's teachings. The author demonstrates how the Malay thinker successfully accommodates the two Sufi masters' teachings into his own, hence proving that the two streams of Sufism are not divergent and incompatible as commonly claimed. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad is one of the best examples of a scholar who successful in his attempts to reconcile the legal and spiritual aspects of Islam. In addition, he was the scholar most responsible for the further spread of "neo-Sufism" in the Malay Archipelago. The immense popularity of Ghazalian Sufism in this part of the world can be attributed to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's contribution.[21]

The global network and contribution of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad was clearly explained by Azyumardi Azra in his book *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII (The Network of Middle East and the Malay Archipelago scholars during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)*. Azra showed evidence about the religious and intellectual connections between scholars in the Middle East and the Malay Archipelago during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the time of the rapid development of Islam in the Archipelago many of the people travelled to the Middle East, such as Mecca, Medina and several other regions in an effort to seek knowledge. In a small part of the book, the author devoted his attention on scholars from Palembang including Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad and the significance of his contribution in Malay intellectual history.[22]

An account of the advent of Sufism in the Malay world and the involvement of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad in the Sammaniyah Order can be found in the book *Kitab*

[21] M. Chatib Quzwain, *Mengenal Allah: Suatu Studi Mengenal Ajaran Tasawuf Syaikh 'Abdus-Samad al-Palimbani,* (Jakarta: PT. Bulan Bintang, 1985).
[22] Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1994).

*Kuning: Pesantren dan Tarekat, Tradisi-Tradisi Islam di Indonesia* ("Kitab Kuning": Sufi Orders and Pesantren; The Traditions of Islam in Indonesia) written by Martin van Bruinessen. This book gives detailed aspects of the different types of Sufi Orders, their founders, the Shaykhs and the followers in Indonesia. The relevant contents are included in the section on *The Study of Sufism in the Latter Part of the Eighteenth Century; ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī, Muḥammad Nafīs al-Banjarī and Sammāniyah Ṭariqah*, which details the birth of the Sammaniyah Order and the relationship between the founder Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Sammāni and Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad.[23]

G.W.J. Drewes, a Dutch scholar who spent many years studying on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad and other Malay authors, wrote a work entitled, *Directions for Travellers on the Mystic Path*. This book discussed on the epistle written by Shaykh Raslān al-Dimashqī entitled *Risālah fī al-Tawḥīd*, and its commentary *Kitāb Fatḥ al-Raḥmān* by Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī. Both works were written as attempts to restrain the growing interest in the doctrine of the seven grades of Being (*martabat tujuh*) at the popular level and the widespread disregard for the Islamic law (*sharīʿah*) as a result of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of this doctrine as expounded by the *Wujūdiyyah*. The author mentioned the importance of these adaptations, translations and commentaries based on the two above works written by Palembang scholars such as Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn and Kemas Fakhr al-Dīn.[24] In this book the author also touched on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's life and manuscripts of his works.[25]

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[23] Martin Van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning: Pesantren dan Tarekat, Tradisi Islam di Indonesia,* Third Edition, (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1991).
[24] G.W.J. Drewes, *Directions for Travelers on the Mystic Path*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977).
[25] Drewes enumerated the works of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad which comprises of seven books including his Arabic writings. they are: *Zahrat al-Murīd fī Bayān Kalimat al-Tawḥīd (1178/*1764*) Hidāyat al-Sālikīn fī Maslak al-Muttaqīn (1192/*1778*), Siyar al-Sālikīn ilā ʿIbādat Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn (1203/*1788*), Tuḥfat al-Rāghibīn fī Bayān Ḥaqīqat Īmān al-Mu'minīn (1188/*1774*), Naṣīḥat al-Muslimīn wa*

There is an article written by G.W.J. Drewes entitled, *Further Data Concerning ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī*. This article discusses on the two letters ascribed to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad, which was sent to two Javanese pilgrims returning to their homelands under Sultan Hamengkubuwana I (ruled. *1168-1206*/1755-1792) in Jogyakarta and Susuhunan Prabu Jaka in Surakarta who was the son of Amangkurat IV (ruled. *1131-1138*/1719-1726). The writer also subscribed to the view that the *Tuḥfat al-Rāghibīn* was the work of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad. The work is a brief Malay exposition on the substance of *īmān* (faith) and the factors which cause its corruption. The work investigates on the misconceptions, misbeliefs and rituals, among which were pre-Islamic traditional practices. The reason for their practice was because Islam was not solidly rooted in the Palembang hinterlands until the latter part of the seventeenth century during the reign of Sultan ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[26]

A worthy book on the subject is written by Alwi Shihab, *Islam Sufistik: "Islam Pertama" dan Pengaruhnya Hingga Kini di Indonesia* (*Sufistic Islam: 'The first Islam' and its Influence until the Present in Indonesia'*). In this book the author analyzes and shows al-Ghazālī's influence on the thought of a few Javanese and Malay thinkers including Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad. The author focuses on Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's Sufism and his position which is characterized by harmonizing between contradictory schools of Sufism i.e., on his synthesis between Ibn ʿArabī's and al-Ghazālī's thought. There are also studies which focused on the thought and works of individual Malay thinkers who mentioned al-Ghazālī as a source of their ideas and some investigations were done to show his influence. The author wrote that most Malay-Muslims consider the central intellectual contents of their tradition are

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*Tadhkirat al-Muʾminīn fī Faḍāʾil al-Jihād fī Sabīl Allāh wa Karāmat al-Mujāhidīn fī Sabīl Allāh, al-ʿUrwat al-Wuthqā wa Silsilat Ūlī al-Ittiqā* and *Rātib ʿAbd Ṣamad al-Palimbānī.*

[26] G. W. J. Drewes, "Further Data Concerning 'Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani," *BKI*, vol. 132, (1976): 267-73.