

TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH

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REVISING HISTORY OF ŠŪFĪSM IN INDONESIA. 18TH CENTURY TREATISE *TUḤFAT AL-RĀGHIBĪN FĪ BAYĀN-I ḤAQĪQAT AL-ĪMĀN* BY SHAYKH ‘ABD AL-ŠAMAD AL-PALIMBĀNĪ

It is well worth beginning this article with the quotation from the old book published in Chicago in 1909, *The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam* by Prof. D. McDonald whose unique and truly scientific approach to the study of Islam is still highly estimated by his colleagues:

“The shell that separates the Oriental from the Unseen is still very thin, and the charm or amulet of the magician may easily break it” [1].

The translation of the abstract we are presenting now seems to me as having a particular value for studying Islam in Indonesia. In spite of the fact that the treatise was written as a demand in its time, the 18th century, for the purpose of purifying the Muslim faith from different “heresies”, it can be used nowadays for teaching true Islamic values, especially on Indonesian soil.

According to the opinion of all those who studied Indonesian Islam, it has always appeared to be different from Islam practised in, e. g., Arabia. The religious attitudes of the Indonesians were more influenced by the Indian religions (Hinduism, Buddhism) and even older indigenous beliefs of their ancestors. Two categories of residents can be singled out as representatives of the Middle Eastern Islam incursion into Indonesia: the Arab traders and ‘*ulamā*’ (especially those claiming to be descendants of the prophet Muḥammad, the *sayyids*) and those Indonesians who made the pilgrimage to Makka (*ḥājjīs*), many of whom had changed their lifestyle upon return. M. van Bruinessen distinguishes the *ḥājjīs* and *sayyids* as the representatives of the forces of globalisation:

“‘global’ Islam was, in the late 19th century, not only perceived to be a less pleasant form of this religion but inherently threatening because of its transnational character” [2].

In general, it is misleading to perceive the islamization as a one-time event as it is a process which started in the 13th century for Indonesia that is not completed, as well as the reform of Islam that has been also an ongoing process through the centuries, as the struggle against indigenous rituals and beliefs has normally been a chief concern of reformists. However, one can mention that Indonesian Islam produced its own cultural forms but these at best spread only within the region.

The oldest Indonesian manuscripts, mostly Javanese, brought to Europe by merchants' ships *ca.* 1600, dealt not only with the problems of mysticism but also with *fiqh* and *sharī’a*. For example, the famous Indonesian Muslim authors of the 17th century, Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī and ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Sīnkilī wrote not only works on mysticism but also works dealing with *fiqh*. The central theme of the 18th century Islamic thought in the Malay-Indonesian region, which was to a great extent influenced by those of the Middle East, was renewalism (*tajdīd*) as the return to Sunnī “orthodoxy”, which finds its way in the harmony between *sharī’a* and *taṣawwuf*. Malay-Indonesian ‘*ulamā*’ of the 18th century, contributed much to the strengthening of the Islamic identity of their societies. There are many arguments among scholars dealing with the beginning of the process of renewal in the Malay-Indonesian world as early as the 17th century, rather than at the beginning of the 19th or the early 20th century. However, all of them mention the influence of renewal ideas which had come from Makka since the 18th century, stimulated by Jawi students and pilgrims as well as scholarly networks, established by Muslim scholars. To a great extent this process was a response to the increasing colonial encroachment in the 18th century. A number of prominent Malay-Indonesian ‘*ulamā*’ of that time had a South Sumatra origin (Palembang region), among them one can name Shihāb al-Dīn b. ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad, Kemas Fakhr al-Dīn,