

## ABSTRACT

It is commonly believed that in the early phase of Islamization of the Malay Archipelago, Islam was presented to the indigenous people in the form of syncretistic Sufism. The version of Sufism that had been widely propagated then was the *wujūdiyyah* doctrine identical to the *waḥdat al-wujūd* attributed to Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 637/1240). Early Malay scholars like Hamzah al-Fansūrī (d.1015/1607) and Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī (d. 1039/1630) were among the forerunners of this doctrine.

This group was vehemently opposed by Orthodox Sunni scholars represented by people like Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī (d.1068/1658) and moderately by ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf al-Sinkilī (d. 1104/1693). Around the eighteenth century of the Christian Era, there rose a group of scholars who tried to reconcile the two conflicting groups. One of them was ‘Abd al-Samad al-Falimbānī (d.1202/1788). Together with him were people like Muhammad Nafīs ibn Idrīs al-Banjārī (d.1147/1735) and Dawūd al-Fatānī (d.1263/1847). They tried to harmonise the *wujūdiyyah* approach with that of orthodox mainstream Sunnī Islam. In their attempt to resolve the differences of the two opposing trends, al-Falimbānī brought to the Malay world for the first time the teachings of a moderate and sober Ṣūfī scholar, Hujjat al-Islam Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). For many centuries, al-Falimbānī has left great impact on the development of Islam and the Muslims in the Archipelago and it is still felt until this present days.

This research analyses the spiritual and metaphysical thought al-Falimbānī which is imbued with al-Ghazālī’s methodology and worldview. It discusses, among other things, the biographical details of al-Falimbānī and tries to ascertain the most reliable position on some matters whenever possible; the impact of al-Falimbānī’s predecessors have had on the Muslims and Islam in the Archipelago that al-Falimbānī eventually inherited; his mystical teachings and finally this work attempts to answer several major criticisms raised by the modern reformers and critics of al-Falimbānī’s mystical teachings.

## ABSTRAK

Nusantara Melayu ini dikatakan menerima Islam pada awalnya dalam bentuk yang dipersembahkan melalui ajaran tasawuf. Tasawuf yang dibawa masuk di awal Islam pula dikatakan dari aliran *wahdat al-wujud* yang dikaitkan dengan Ibn ‘Arabī (m.637/1240). Tokoh-tokoh ulama Melayu yang terawal seperti Hamzah al-Fanṣūrī (m.1015/1607) dan Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī (m.1039/1630) adalah di antara tokoh yang mempelopori penyebaran ajaran ini.

Kumpulan ini ditentang hebat oleh seorang tokoh yang bernama Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī (m.1068/1658) dan ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf al-Sinkilī (m.1104/1693). Pada kurun ke lapan belas Masehi, munculnya kumpulan ulama’ yang cuba mengharmonikan kedua-dua kelompok yang bertelagah ini. Salah seorangnya ialah ‘Abd al-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī (m.1202/1788). Turut bersama beliau ialah Muhammad Nafīs ibn Idrīs al-Banjārī (m.1147/1735) dan Dawūd al-Fatānī (m.1263/1847). Dalam cubaan mereka untuk mengharmonikan kedua-dua aliran ini, al-Falimbānī telah membawa ajaran tokoh Ṣūfī yang terkenal dan diterima ramai, Hujjat al-Islam Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī (m.505/1111). Selama beberapa kurun, pendekatan yang dibawa oleh al-Falimbānī telah meninggalkan kesan yang besar terhadap perkembangan Islam dan Umat Islam di rantau ini hingga kini melalui penyebaran ajaran tasawuf aliran Imam al-Ghazālī.

Kajian ini akan menilai beberapa aspek dari konsep kerohanian al-Falimbānī. Antara lain akan membincangkan biografi lengkap al-Falimbānī berdasarkan maklumat yang berjaya diperolehi, ajaran-ajaran al-Falimbānī dan serangan terhadap ajaran-ajaran al-Falimbānī; kesan yang ditinggalkan oleh tokoh-tokoh sebelum al-Falimbānī terhadap masyarakat sehingga memaksa al-Falimbānī mewarisinya. Kajian ini seterusnya mengkaji pemikiran mistikal al-Falimbānī dan mengemukakan kritikan-kritikan terhadap pemikiran beliau itu khususnya yang dibangkitkan oleh tokoh-tokoh dan pengkritik dari kalangan reformasi moden setelah ketiadaan al-Falimbānī.

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Last but not least, I began to agree with what our Imam, Imām Shafi’e (may Allah be pleased with him) who after re-checked his masterpiece *al-Risalah* for forty times, but finally concluded that: “Allah has refused to give divine protection from error (*ismah*) to anyone besides His prophets. The matter is as he rightly said no matter how much utmost effort one has made, there is always inevitable error and inaccuracy. I present this modest work humbly with all shortcomings and oversights, and may Allah forgive me for that. I welcome suggestions and recommendations to further improve the study. There are indeed much more could have been done, as ‘there is always room for improvement’.

Wallahu’alam.

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## CONVENTIONS

Except for the foreign terms already adopted in the Oxford English Dictionary, such as ‘Islam’, ‘Sufism’, and others, the transliteration of the Arabic words, terms and names in this thesis follows the rules employed by Academy of Islamic Studies University of Malaya. This also applies to Malay-Indonesian persons, or titles of Malay works whose names are of Arabic origin rather than using their popular Malay-Indonesian style. Thus, ‘Abd al-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī’ instead of ‘Abdul Samad Palembang’ or ‘Abdus-Samad Palembang’. Non-Arabic names will be retained in their original spelling. Likewise the titles of Malay works bearing Arabic titles, will not be transliterated if they appear in footnotes or bibliography, and will be kept as they were originally written on the cover of the corresponding works: thus ‘*Hidayatus-Salikin*’ not ‘*Hidāyat al-Sālikīn*’. However, when they were cited in the main text, they will be used in their transliterated forms.

Non-English words are italicised throughout this work apart from words already have been anglicised such as ‘Sufism’, ‘Hajj’ and others. The plural form of all Arabic words is also anglicised by adding an ‘s’ instead of using proper Arabic forms for the word. Thus *tariqahs* rather than *turuq*, or *hadīths* instead of *ahādīth*. In citing Malay authors with patronymic names or *nisbah*, the *nisbah* is used. Thus in the case of ‘Abd al-Samad bin ‘Abd Allah al-Falimbānī’, ‘al-Falimbānī’ is used instead of ‘Abd al-Samad’ or his family name, ‘Abd Allāh, or its popular Malay-Indonesian spelling ‘Abdus-Samad’. The Library of Congress cataloguing style for Malay names without *nisbah* is used throughout the work where the first name is referred,

thus 'Wan Mohd. Shaghir bin Wan 'Abd Allah' is cited as 'Wan Shaghir' or simply 'Shaghir' not 'Abd Allah' or 'Wan 'Abd Allah'. As for the translation of the Qur'ānic verses, we adopt the translation made by Abdullah Yusuf 'Alī.

## TRANSLITERATIONS

Arabic Alphabet	Transcription	Arabic Alphabet	Transcription
ا, ء	a, 'a	ط	t
ب	b	ظ	z
ت	t	ع	'
ث	th	غ	Gh
ج	j	ف	F
ح	h	ق	Q
خ	kh	ك	K
د	d	ل	L
ذ	dh	م	M
ر	r	ن	N
ز	z	هـ	H
س	s	و	W
ش	sh	ي	Y
ص	s	ة	H
ض	d		

Long Vowels	Short Vowels	Difthongs
آ : ā	ا : a	أو : aw
و : ū	و : u	أى : ay
ى : ī	ي : i	ي : iy/ī
		ؤ : uww

- The rules emphasize transliterating words as they are written, not as they are pronounced (i.e., graphically, not phonetically).

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements  
Conventions

### CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1.	Background	1
1.2.	Problem Statement	5
1.3.	Research Objectives	6
1.4.	Importance of the Research	6
1.5.	Scope and Limitations of Research	7
1.6.	Literature Review	8
1.7.	Methodology of the Research	15
1.8.	Organization of the Thesis	15

### CHAPTER TWO: INTELLECTUAL AND RELIGIOUS MILIEU IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

2.1.	Introduction	18
2.2.	Chronology of Islamization Process In the Archipelago	19
2.3.	Al-Falimbānī's Predecessors and Their Impacts	31
	2.3.1. Hamzah al-Fansūrī	33
	2.3.2. Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī	38
	2.3.3. Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī	41
	2.3.4. 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī	46
	2.3.5. Yūsuf al-Maqassārī	52
2.4.	Conclusion	56

### CHAPTER THREE: BIOGRAPHY OF AL-FALIMBANI

3.1.	Introduction	57
3.2.	His Name	57
3.3.	Family Background	60



3.4. His Birth	62
3.5. His Death	63
3.6. Educational Background	67
3.6.1. In the Archipelago	67
3.6.2. In the Arabia	69
3.6.2.1. Arabian Peninsula	71
3.6.2.2. Yemen	75
3.6.2.3. Egypt	77
3.7. His Teachers	78
3.8. His Contemporaries	79
3.9. His Works	80
3.10 The Influence of Scholars	83
3.11. Conclusion	89
CHAPTER FOUR: ON KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRITUAL EDUCATION	
4.1. Historical Background	92
4.2. Sources of al-Falimbānī's Teachings	95
4.3. About <i>Siyar al-Sālikīn</i> and <i>Hidāyat al-Sālikīn</i>	101
4.4. On Epistemology	105
4.4.1. Classification of Knowledge	108
4.4.2. Aims of Spiritual Education	116
4.5. On Creed	121
4.6. Conclusion	122
CHAPTER FIVE: ON SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY AND COSMOLOGY	
5.1. Man as a Spiritual Entity	123
5.2. Spiritual Purification	128
5.3. Spiritual Journey	130
5.4. Degrees of Spiritual Purification	138
5.5. Spiritual Virtues and Vices	147
5.6. Conclusion	151
CHAPTER SIX : ON SEVEN STAGES OF BEING	
6.1. Introduction	153

6.2.	Historical Context	156
6.2.1.	<i>Wujūdiyyah</i> Teachings of al-Fansūrī	161
6.2.2.	<i>Wujūdiyyah</i> Teachings of al-Sumatrānī	162
6.3.	<i>Wujūdiyyah</i> Teachings of al-Falimbānī	165
6.3.1.	Its Origin	165
6.3.2.	Its Teachings	171
6.4.	Contemporary Debates Surrounding Al-Falimbānī’s Teachings	184
6.4.1	Introduction	184
6.4.2.	Arguments Against Seven Stages	186
6.4.2.	Arguments For Seven Stages	192
6.4.2.1.	Knowledge of ‘Unveiling’	192
6.4.2.2.	Pantheism	200
6.4.2.3.	Real Existence ( <i>wujūd haqīqī</i> )	203
6.4.2.4.	Eternity of the Universe	204
6.4.2.5.	Usage of Seven Stages Theory	206
6.5.	Conclusion	208
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUDING REMARKS		210
BIBLIOGRAPHY		214