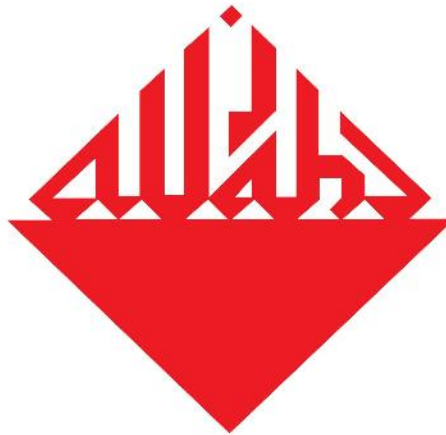


# STUDIA ISLAMIKA

INDONESIAN JOURNAL FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

Volume 30, Number 3, 2023



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PRIORITIZING LIFE OVER RELIGION  
IN INDONESIA'S COVID-19 FATWAS:  
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THE RELIGIOUS IDENTITY OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES  
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AGAINST FATWA OF THE MECCAN ULAMA

Jajang A. Rohmana

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## Revealing New Insights: Preserving Islamic Manuscripts in Eastern Indonesia

**Abdullah Maulani**

As one of the regions with a majority Muslim population in the eastern part of Indonesia, South Sulawesi is home to several prominent scholars who pioneered the spread of Islam in the archipelago. Among these figures was Shaykh Yūsuf al-Maqassarī (1627-1699) who hailed from Makassar, and whose influence reached the Hijaz Peninsula and South Africa. In the 19th century, the influence of scholars from Sulawesi residing in the Haramayn (Mecca and Medina) became even more vibrant, contributing to the religious life in the Sulawesi Islands. This was marked by their return to their hometowns and the establishment of various Islamic educational centers. One of them was Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd bin ‘Abd al-Hayy al-Bugīsī al-Būnī (d. 1878). He was one of the scholars from Pompanua, Bone Regency, who had Islamic education activities in Haramayn for 25 years and returned to South Sulawesi in 1860.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd was a student of Shaykh Aḥmad bin Idris al-Hasani (1172–1253 H/1758-1837 AD), the founder of the Idrisiyyah Order from Morocco. He also learned with Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Sanusī (1787–1859), a prominent scholar from Aljazair, in Mecca. His descendants, Faisal Ibrahim and Fadly Ibrahim, explained that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd had departed for Mecca at a young age with



his parents and two siblings to settle there and returned to Bone around the year 1860. Upon arriving hometown, he continued the activities of teaching Islam to the surrounding community, which had been initiated by his father, Shaykh 'Abd al-Hay (d. 1830), in Dulung Ajangale, Bone.

Shaykh 'Abd al-Majīd was highly regarded by the local community as a distinguished scholar renowned for his extensive contributions to Islamic pedagogy through prolific writing. Unfortunately, today, these manuscript collections are in terrible condition. Yet, his works serve as authentic evidence of how Islam flourished rapidly in South Sulawesi in the 19th century through the networks of scholars from Haramayn and Africa. The alarming condition of the Indonesian manuscripts is not limited to the collection of Shaykh 'Abd al-Majīd. During the period from 2018 to 2023, the Dreamsea program (Digital Repository of Endangered and Affected Manuscripts in Southeast Asia) initiated by PPIM UIN Jakarta and CSMC University of Hamburg has already rescued more than 2000 manuscripts held by communities in the eastern part of Indonesia, especially in the Sulawesi Islands and its surrounding areas.

### **Dreamsea and The Manuscripts Preservation in the Region of Eastern Indonesia**

Dreamsea is a program initiated by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) of Jakarta, Indonesia, in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) at the University of Hamburg, Germany, and fully supported by the Arcadia Foundation, United Kingdom. The main objective of this program is to preserve the cultural diversity of Southeast Asian communities contained within their manuscripts, by means of preservation and providing broad access for the advancement of knowledge. The Dreamsea program also provides support to manuscript owners in Southeast Asia to effectively maintain and preserve their collections in synergy.

Since its launch in 2018, Dreamsea has conducted six preservation missions in the Eastern Indonesia region, particularly in the Sulawesi Islands. The first mission in this region began in the city of Baubau, Southeast Sulawesi, which rescued 124 manuscripts from the legacy of the Sultanate of Buton in 2018. In 2019, the Dreamsea team preserved 53 manuscripts from community collections scattered across Makassar,

Bantaeng, Takalar, and Bulukumba. In 2023, the Dreamsea team successfully rescued manuscripts belonging to communities in Wajo District, Bone, Bantaeng, Maros, and the city of Makassar, totalling 631 manuscripts or equivalent to 58,831 manuscript pages, including those belonging to the descendants of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd.

Fundamentally, the Dreamsea program’s efforts in manuscript preservation are not confined solely to Islamic manuscripts. Considering cultural diversity, religion, and background, Dreamsea also preserves collections of manuscripts belonging to the Chinese community in South Sulawesi (2019-2023) and the manuscript collection of the Cathedral Church in Makassar in 2020. These two collections were also threatened due to a lack of resources and religious conflicts. This threat was evident when one year after the preservation and digitization of the Cathedral Makassar manuscript collection by the Dreamsea team, the Christian place of worship became the target of a suicide bombing in 2021.

### **Connecting Sulawesi, Haramayn, and Maghribi Networks**

In general, the collection of manuscripts of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd, successfully preserved by the Dreamsea team, consists of 91 volumes of manuscripts. Several manuscript titles have been identified, including *Ithāf al-Murīd bi Sharhi Jawhari al-Tauhīd* by ‘Abd al-Salām ibn Ibrāhīm al-Laqqānī (971–1087 AH/1563–1676 AD), copied by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd in Mecca in 1270 AH/1853 AD. There is also the text *Sharh Rā’iyyat li Ma’rifati Rasmi al-Mushaf al-Uthmānī* by Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ahmad al-Turkī, completed in 1257 AH. Beside that, he also copied *Majmu’ah min al-Auridah wa al-Ad’iyyā’*, and *Mukhtaṣar ‘alā Ankiḥah wa Zawāj* by ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Hijāzī al-Sharqāwī (1737–1812), a grand sheikh of Al-Azhar University. Additionally, there is a manuscript copy of *Sharh al-‘Azīzī ‘alā Jam’i al-Ṣaghīr* dating back to 1245 AH in this collection. In general, most of the manuscripts copied in Haramayn are in good condition and complete.

Fadly Ibrahim revealed several prominent Islamic scholars associated with this collection. One of the names recorded in the manuscripts is Shaykh Yahya al-Bugisi. His residence was used as a place for writing these manuscripts by Bugis scholars who were active in Haramayn. Another name is Muhammad Khalīfah, who is the second son of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd. Prior to the discovery of these manuscripts by Fadly two years ago, he was entirely not well-known to the people of

Bone. Previously, these books were stored above the ceilings of Abdul Mukadim house. The parents also did not provide clear information regarding this collection and only considered it as the Qur'an and ordinary Arabic texts.

Based on the findings of the manuscript, it can be concluded that the scholarly network map of the ulama originating from Bone, South Sulawesi, has a high level of complexity. On the other hand, from the identified texts, we can ascertain that the scholarly characteristics of South Sulawesi society were shaped by the scholarly networks of ulama from the Middle East and North Africa in the 19th century.

### **Preservation of Shaykh 'Abd al-Majid Manuscript Collection**

The Dreamsea project appointed Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, a researcher from the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) of Indonesia, as a leader and academic expert of this preservation mission. She was accompanied by Hamsi (BRIN) as her assistant and two photographers named Hasmawati and Muhammad Jamil Ramadhan. In addition, Dreamsea also assigned Abdullah Maulani (Data Manager Dreamsea) and Ilham Nurwansah (IT and Media Specialist Dreamsea) to supervise and provide technical training on manuscript digitization to the team and the community in this activity.



Figure 1. Preservation and digitization activities of the manuscript collection of Syekh 'Abd al-Majid were held at the Haji Ahmad Surur Foundation, Pompanua, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi.

The Dreamsea team not only carried out the manuscripts preservation and digitization, they were also involved in a mini exhibition of the manuscript collection of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd. During the preservation and digitization process, the Haji Ahmad Surur Foundation in Bone hosted a gathering of followers of the Idrisiyyah Order. This event was attended by thousands of people from Bone, Wajo, Malaysia and Morocco. The participants also visited the grave of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd. Additionally, the Dreamsea team provided education to the attendees of the event on how to care for manuscripts to slow down their physical deterioration.

Husnul stated that this collection is one of the most important collections that have not been uncovered in Islamic studies in South Sulawesi. She also emphasized that this collection is another evidence of the strong academic connection between the Middle East and Sulawesi in the past. Fadly Ibrahim also explained that these manuscripts are authentic evidence of how Sufi orders such as the Muhammadiyah, Idrisiyah, and Sanusiyyah developed in South Sulawesi.

On the other hand, Oman Fathurahman as a Principal Investigator of Dreamsea affirmed Dreamsea’s commitment to the preservation and utilization of the Shaykh ‘Abd al-Majīd manuscript collection. All manuscripts will remain at the location where they are stored (in situ), and digital copies will be uploaded to the Dreamsea database located at <http://dreamsea.co>. This activity is expected not only to contribute to preservation efforts but also to be part of the development of research infrastructure in Islamic studies, especially the Islamic civilization in the Eastern Indonesia region.

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2. Booth, Anne. 1988. "Living Standards and the Distribution of Income in Colonial Indonesia: A Review of the Evidence." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 19(2): 310–34.
3. Feener, Michael R., and Mark E. Cammack, eds. 2007. *Islamic Law in Contemporary Indonesia: Ideas and Institutions*. Cambridge: Islamic Legal Studies Program.
4. Wahid, Din. 2014. *Nurturing Salafi Manhaj: A Study of Salafi Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia*. PhD dissertation. Utrecht University.
5. Utriza, Ayang. 2008. "Mencari Model Kerukunan Antaragama." *Kompas*. March 19: 59.
6. Ms. *Undhang-Undhang Banten*, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
7. Interview with K.H. Sahal Mahfudz, Kajen, Pati, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

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السنة الءالءونء، العءء ٣، ٢٠٢٣



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Arif Maftuhin

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Ali Munhanif & A. Bakir Ihsan

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المفضلة عءء أءباع جمعية المءمءية ونهضة العلماء  
فءى إنءونيسيا

عارف سبحان

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