

Reclaiming the Conversation

Islamic Intellectual Tradition
in the Malay Archipelago



Edited by

ROSNANI HASHIM

with a Foreword by

MOHD KAMAL HASSAN

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Mohd Kamal Hassan

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The Other Press
Kuala Lumpur

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First published 2010
The Other Press Sdn. Bhd.
607 Mutiara Majestic
Jalan Othman
46000 Petaling Jaya
Selangor, Malaysia
www.ibtbooks.com

The Other Press is affiliated with Islamic Book Trust.

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Reclaiming the conversation : Islamic intellectual tradition in the Malay archipelago / edited by Rosnani Hashim ; foreword by

Mohd Kamal Hasan

Includes index

Bibliography : p. 269

ISBN 978-983-9541-73-1

ISBN 978-983-9541-74-8 (pbk.)

1. Philosophy, Islamic. 2. Muslim philosophers. I. Rosnani Hashim.

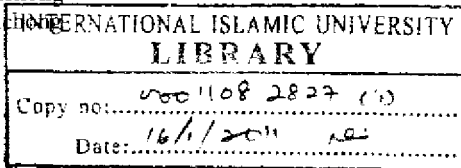
II. Mohd. Kamal Hassan.

181.19

Cover image

Students at an Indonesian pesantren.

Printed by
Academe Art and Printing Services Sdn. Bhd.
7, Jalan Rajawali 1A
Bandar Baru Puchong
Batu 8, Jalan Puchong
47100 Selangor



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Shaykh ‘Abd al-Samad al-Palembani

The Islamic Concept of Education in Relation to the Issue of Personality Integration¹

Muhammad Uthman el-Muhammady

THE CONCEPT OF EDUCATION EMBRACED BY Muslims in the contemporary world has been greatly reduced to the physical and intellectual aspects of the human being. No aspect of the curriculum pays particular attention to the spiritual dimension. The spiritual crisis of modern man has been well-expressed by S.H. Nasr² in his work, *Man and Nature*. If not for some elementary religious education, Muslim education would have completely lost its spiritual dimension. It is within this context that the work of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Samad al-Palembani (or sometimes also spelled al-Falimbani) is significant. He understood the need for a concept of education that deals with the holistic personality of man instead of just appealing to his mind and body. In this chapter an attempt is made to portray the configuration of the Islamic traditional doctrine in education—as obtained in the Sufi perspective—in relation to the issue of the integration of the human personality, in the *gestalt* of its traditional worldview, as expressed by one of the most significant spiritual and intellectual figures in this region—Shaykh ‘Abd al-Samad of Palembang, whose active literary life in Makkah and Ṭā’if in Arabia extended from 1178 AH 1768 AD to 1203 AH 1793 AD.

The attempt made here is to consider the views of the Shaykh in the context of Islamic esoteric doctrine and practice and the