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# The Manuscript of *Hidâyat al-Mubtadî li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadî* as a Media for Da'wah by the Book of K.H. Abdus Somad Jambi

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**Abstract.** The development of Islam in the Jambi region cannot be separated from the role of several prominent scholars. However, no comprehensive research has been conducted on these scholars, one of whom is K.H. Abdus Somad of Jambi. He is an important figure behind the development of Islam in Jambi, particularly during the Dutch colonial period. Therefore, this study aims to explore his da'wah, especially through written media, or what is known as *da'wah bi al-kitab*. This research is a qualitative study using philological and historical approaches. This is because the object of this research is the manuscript written by Abdus Somad titled *Hidâyat al-Mubtadî li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadî*. The historical approach is used to understand the situation and conditions surrounding Abdus Somad in conducting *da'wah bi al-kitab* in Jambi. This study proves that the book *Hidâyat al-Mubtadî li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadî* used by Abdus Somad as a study material is quite influential. This is due to the method of writing the book, which is simple and straightforward, yet covers most of the fiqh issues within it.
**Keywords:** Manuscript, Islam, Jambi, Abdus Somad

**Abstrak.** *Perkembangan Islam yang terjadi di wilayah Jambi tidak terlepas dari beberapa ulama besar yang mengambil peran di dalamnya. Namun, belum ditemukan penelitian secara komprehensif yang meneliti sosok para ulama tersebut, salah satu di antaranya adalah K.H Abdus Somad Jambi. Padahal ia merupakan sosok penting dibalik perkembangan Islam di Jambi terutama pada masa kolonial Belanda. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini berusaha mengeksplor dakwahnya terutama melalui media tulisan atau yang lebih dikenal dengan dakwah bi al-kitab. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan pendekatan filologi dan sejarah. Hal ini disebabkan objek dari penelitian ini adalah manuskrip yang ditulis oleh Abdus Somad dengan judul Hidâyat al-Mubtadî li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadî. Sedangkan pendekatan sejarah digunakan untuk melihat situasi dan kondisi yang mengitari Abdus Somad dalam rangka melakukan dakwah bi al-kitab di Jambi. Penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa kitab Hidâyat al-Mubtadî li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadî yang digunakan Abdus Somas sebagai bahan kajian cukup berpengaruh. Hal ini disebabkan oleh metode penulisan kitab tersebut yang mudah dan simple, namun sudah mencangkup sebagian besar permasalahan fikih di dalamnya.*
**Kata Kunci**: *Manuskrip, Islam, Jambi, Abdus Somad*

## INTRODUCTION

The process through which Islam entered the Jambi region remains a subject of debate among scholars. At least, experts are divided into several perspectives when describing the Islamization of Jambi. The first view argues that the people of Jambi had come into contact with Islam as early as the ninth century CE, as mentioned in a Chinese book entitled *Pei-hu lu*, written in 875 CE. This Islamization process was initiated by Muslim traders who brought agricultural commodities, particularly areca nuts, obtained by the Po'sse people from the state of *Chan-pei* (Deki Syahputra ZE, 2020: 15-29). According to Uka Tjandrasasmita, the term *Po'sse* referred to Persian people or traders who travelled as far as Jambi for commercial

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purposes. Meanwhile, the state of Chan-pei was the name used by the Chinese to refer to Jambi (Yunasril Ali, dkk, 2005: 59).

Jambi is well known for its large river, which flows into the eastern coast of Sumatra and served as an important access route for trade to the inland areas of Jambi. At that time, waterways constituted the principal transportation routes through which merchants travelled to various regions. Consequently, these geographical conditions became one of the factors facilitating interaction between the people of Jambi and traders from outside the region (Junaidi T. Noer, 2011, p. 67; see also Ega and Didik, 2021, pp. 33–46). The intensive commercial interactions between the people of Jambi and foreign merchants involved at least three major civilizations or regions: China, India, and Arabia. These relations extended beyond trade alone; they also influenced various other spheres, including diplomacy, religion, culture, and other aspects of social life.

The second view holds that Islam entered and developed in Jambi around the fifteenth century CE, coinciding with the establishment of the Jambi Kingdom. During the reign of Putri Serela Pinang Massak, a Turkish merchant and Islamic scholar named Ahmad Salim, also known as Ahmad Balus II, arrived in the Jambi Kingdom (Linda Yanti et al., n.d., p. 129). He subsequently married Putri Pinang Masak and was bestowed the title Datuk Paduko Berhalo. This marital alliance enabled Islam to spread significantly and eventually become the official religion of the Jambi Kingdom. Such a marriage-based method was commonly employed in the spread of Islam throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Following his marriage to Putri Pinang Masak, Ahmad Salim became the ruler of the Jambi Kingdom alongside his wife.

Their marriage produced one daughter, Orang Kayo Gemuk, and three sons: Orang Kayo Pingai, Orang Kayo Padataran, and Orang Kayo Hitam (Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, 2008, p. 43). The process of Islamization in the Jambi region developed more extensively during the reign of Orang Kayo Hitam, who was enthroned as king from 1500 to 1515 CE. One of the measures implemented by Orang Kayo Hitam, which had a considerable impact, was the enactment of a governmental legal code known as *Pucuk Undang Nan Delapan*.

In addition, Orang Kayo Hitam established Islam as an integral component of the customary identity of the Jambi Malay community and as the official religion of the kingdom. Consequently, Islam became closely associated with the identity of the Jambi Kingdom (Deki Syahputra ZE, 2020, pp. 15–29). This development gave rise to the Jambi Malay customary proverb, "*adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendikan kitabullah*," meaning that custom is founded upon Islamic law, while Islamic law is founded upon the Book of God. The Jambi customary maxim also states, "*syarak mangato, adat memakai*," meaning that Islamic law prescribes, while custom implements (Hasan Basri Agus, 2013, p. 16). The kingdom ruled by Orang Kayo Hitam subsequently became known as the Islamic Malay Kingdom of Tanah Pilih Jambi.

The third view maintains that Islam entered the Jambi region in the thirteenth century CE. This development coincided with the decline of the Srivijaya Kingdom, after which Jambi emerged as a preferred trading port for merchants from China, Arabia, and India. This condition was closely related to Jambi's strategic geographical position at the intersection of the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea. O. W. Wolters also noted that Jambi was an important trading center in Sumatra because it was geographically located along the trade route connecting China and India (O. W. Wolters, 1962, p. 496). The trade route along the

eastern coast of Sumatra was supported by major rivers that flowed into Tanjung Jabung and connected directly to the Malacca Strait. At that time, the Malacca Strait had served as a major route for international trade since the first century CE. It is therefore unsurprising that extensive interactions occurred between international merchants, including Muslim traders, and the people of Jambi.

Although many scholars argue that the Islamization of Jambi was primarily carried out by traders, others maintain that the process was not exclusively undertaken by merchants but also involved Sufi figures. This view is consistent with Azyumardi Azra's theory concerning the introduction of Islam to the Indonesian archipelago, which emphasizes the role of Sufis, as the early form of Islam embraced by Muslims in the archipelago tended to be Sufi-oriented. These Sufis travelled to Jambi aboard merchant ships sailing to the region. Upon arriving in Jambi, they did not immediately disseminate their teachings; instead, they first studied the local culture, social practices, customs, and traditions (Darmawijaya, 2010, pp. 2–3). This approach aimed to make the people of Jambi more receptive to the teachings introduced by the Sufis while avoiding conflict with their previous beliefs.

Islamic scholars in various regions of Indonesia, including Jambi, disseminated and taught Islam not only through oral preaching but also through written works that reflected profound intellectual thought. These works covered a range of scholarly fields, including *Umm al-Barāhīn* by Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Sanusi, *Durr al-Manẓūm* by Abū Ishaq al-Shirazi, and *al-'Aqā'id* by Najm al-Din Abū Hafs 'Umar ibn Muhammad al-Nasafi, particularly in the field of hadith studies during the sixteenth century CE. In the seventeenth century CE, several important works were produced, including *Hidāyah al-Ḥabīb fi al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb* by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī; *Sharḥ al-Laṭīf 'alā Arba'īn Ḥadīthan* by 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Fansuri, a Malay-language commentary on *al-Arba'īn al-Nawawī*; and *al-Mawā'iẓ al-Badī'ah*, also written by 'Abd al-Ra'ūf (Muhajir, 2016, p. 48).

In the field of Qur'anic exegesis, one of the most comprehensive works written in the Malay language was *al-Qur'ān al-Karīm wa Bihāmishihi Turjumān al-Mustafīd* by Shaykh Abdurrauf ibn Ali al-Fansuri al-Singkili, a prominent seventeenth-century scholar (Zulkifli Mohd Yusof and Wan Nasyrudin Wan Abdullah, 2005, p. 157). In the field of Islamic jurisprudence, one of the earliest works written by an Indonesian scholar was *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī of Aceh, which was composed in the 1640s (interview with Ahmad Ginanjar Sya'ban, Saturday, 3 September 2022). This work consists of seven books, twenty-one chapters, and ninety sections (Jamaluddin bin Hashim and Abdul Karim bin Ali, 2008, pp. 197–215).Following this work, other jurisprudential texts were produced by Indonesian scholars, including *Sabīl al-Muhtadīn li al-Tafaqquh fi Amr al-Dīn* by Shaykh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, written in the eighteenth century. This work was essentially intended as a refinement of Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī's *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, as al-Rānīrī's text employed Acehnese sentence structures and expressions, making it difficult for non-Acehnese readers unfamiliar with the Acehnese dialect to comprehend it fully (Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, n.d., p. 3).

The production of jurisprudential works by Indonesian scholars from various regions continued in subsequent periods, including among scholars from Jambi. One such work produced by a Jambi scholar was *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*. This text was written around 1316 AH, or 1898 CE, by K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi, who was born in 1870

in Pecinan, Seberang Jambi, and died in 1942 (interview with Aulia Rahman, great-grandchild of Shaykh Abdul Somad, 9 April 2023). His father, H. Ibrahim ibn H. Qosyim ibn H. Tajul ibn H. Salim ibn H. M. Arif, was a merchant. Through his commercial activities, he became acquainted with traders from Arabia and India, which inspired him to send his son to study in the Haramain. Consequently, he began providing Abdus Somad with a foundation in religious knowledge, although this early religious education was limited to the instruction he himself had received from his elders (interview with H. Dawud, grandson of Abdul Somad, Seberang Jambi, Tuesday, 29 June 2021). This information prompted the author to further examine Abdus Somad, his contributions to the field of Islamic jurisprudence, and the significance of this text as a medium of religious propagation employed by Abdus Somad.

This study was undertaken in response to the limited number of writings discussing K. H. Abdus Somad was one of Jambi's important Islamic scholars. The only study specifically addressing this prominent scholar was conducted by Ahmad Zuhdi et al. (2021), which primarily examined the history and thought underlying K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi's *da'wah bil-hāl*. Although that study briefly discussed K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi's works did not examine the content of his writings or analyze his views on a specific issue. Moreover, it did not address the significance of his text as a medium for the religious propagation undertaken by Abdus Somad.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study addresses several key questions: first, what is the concept of *da'wah* in Islam? Second, what are the characteristics of the manuscript *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī* by K. H. Abdus Somad, and what is his biography? Third, what is the significance of *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī* as one of the media through which Abdus Somad carried out his *da'wah*? Accordingly, this study aims to explain and elaborate on the concept of *da'wah* in Islam. It also seeks to examine the manuscript of *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*, authored by K. H. Abdus Somad, together with his biography and the significance of the work within the *da'wah* activities undertaken by Abdus Somad.

This research is also motivated by the limited body of literature on K. H. Abdus Somad was one of Jambi's prominent Islamic scholars. The only study concerning this scholar was conducted by Ahmad Zuhdi and his colleagues, which focused primarily on the history and ideas of K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi's *da'wah* (Ahmad Zuhdi et al., 2021). Although the study briefly discusses K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi's works do not explore the content of those works or provide an in-depth analysis of his views on particular issues. Nor does it address the significance of his writings within the context of his *da'wah* activities. Therefore, further research on K. H. Abdus Somad remains necessary, particularly with regard to his works, intellectual thought, and the significance and usefulness of his writings as media for disseminating Islamic teachings to the wider community. Such research is also important for understanding the social circumstances and conditions he faced, thereby revealing Abdus Somad's intellectual ability and careful consideration in selecting *da'wah* methods appropriate to the community and circumstances of his time.

This study is research on *da'wah* employing a philological approach. This approach was adopted because the primary material of the study is a manuscript written by K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi. In addition, the study employs a historical approach to analyze the social

context and dynamics of the Jambi community during the period in which K. H. Abdus Somad conducted his *da'wah* activities in the region. Accordingly, this study is classified as qualitative research and uses content analysis by closely examining the manuscript of *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*, written by K. H. Abdus Somad. This analysis is intended to identify the content and substance of the work, thereby facilitating an understanding of the direction and orientation of K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi's *da'wah*.

The data for this study were collected through documentation by reviewing literature related to K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi. In addition, data were gathered through interviews, particularly with his descendants, who possess more specific knowledge of K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi's life and background. After all data had been collected, data analysis was conducted. The first step involved reducing or filtering the collected data to ensure their relevance to the objectives of this study. Subsequently, the reduced data were displayed or presented narratively, followed by the formulation of conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *The Concept of* Da'wah bi al-Kitāb *in Islam*

Etymologically, the term *da'wah* originates from the Arabic words *da'ā–yad'ū–da'watan*, which mean to invite, call upon, summon, and serve (Mahmud Yunus, 1956, p. 127). Terminologically, *da'wah* refers to efforts aimed at motivating others to do good, follow proper guidance, promote what is right (*ma'rūf*), and prevent what is wrong (*munkar*), with the expectation that they may attain a happy life in both this world and the hereafter (Ali Mahfuzh, 1952, p. 17). Shaykh Abdullah Ba'lawy al-Haddad also explained that *da'wah* is an effort to invite, guide, and direct individuals who have gone astray or who do not yet know the true religion, so that they may turn to the path of obedience to Allah and believe in Him. Its purpose is to protect them from sinful acts and disbelief (Abdullah Ba'lawy al-Haddad, 1980, p. 68).

In the Qur'an, the word *da'wah* in its infinitive (*maṣdar*) form appears five times in several passages, including Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 186, Q.S. Yunus [10]: 89, Q.S. al-Ra'd [13]: 14, Q.S. Ibrahim [14]: 44, and Q.S. al-Rum [30]: 25. Of these five verses, two convey the meaning of supplication, namely Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 186 and Q.S. Yunus [10]: 89. The remaining three verses convey the linguistic meaning of *da'wah*: in Q.S. al-Ra'd [13]: 14 and Q.S. Ibrahim [14]: 44, the term refers to an appeal or invocation, while in Q.S. al-Rum [30]: 25, it means a call. Based on this explanation, Muslim scholars have identified several terms that are considered closely related to *da'wah*. One such term is *tablīgh*, including its various derivatives, which appears fourteen times in the Qur'an. The term refers to the process of conveying or delivering a message. Although *tablīgh* shares a similar meaning with *da'wah*, its scope is narrower because it is limited to oral transmission (*bi al-lisān*) and does not encompass other methods of *da'wah* (Abdullah, 2015, p. 15). Other terms regarded as equivalents or related expressions of *da'wah* include *dhikrā*, *naṣiḥah*, *mau'iẓah*, *tabshīr*, and *indhār*. Like *tablīgh*, these terms primarily emphasize oral communication rather than other methods.

Therefore, al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī explained that *da'wah* contains at least three essential elements. First, *al-taujīh*, namely the provision of guidance, direction, and instruction regarding the paths of life that human beings should pursue or avoid, thereby distinguishing between right and

wrong, or between the path of guidance and that of misguidance. Second, *al-taghyīr*, namely the effort to transform or improve the condition of others toward a new way of life based on the values and teachings of Islam. Third, *al-bughyah*, namely the cultivation of hope through the values conveyed, thereby generating a sense of need for those values in the conduct of life (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1991, p. 371).

The functions of *da'wah* may be viewed from two perspectives. First, from the perspective of the *da'wah* message being conveyed, *da'wah* functions to instill understanding of Islamic values; raise awareness of the need to practice those values; actualize behaviour as an expression of internalizing such values; and preserve these values in daily life through preventive, educational, and rehabilitative measures (Moh. Ali Aziz, 2004, p. 5). Second, from the perspective of social transformation (*taghyīr*), *da'wah* functions as a guide for all human activities and needs, restores and develops human instincts in accordance with their natural disposition (*fiṭrah*), and directs individuals toward a more constructive path (M. Syafaat Habib, 1982, p. 228).

Fundamentally, the ultimate purpose of *da'wah* is solely for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. However, the objectives of *da'wah* may differ according to the diverse groups to whom it is addressed, including non-believers, the People of the Book, believers, and others. First, the purpose of *da'wah* addressed to non-believers is to encourage them to believe in Allah and to recognize their position and role as servants of God. Such *da'wah* also conveys information concerning their existence as creatures created by God, thereby guiding them toward happiness in this world and the hereafter through worship and devotion to Allah. Second, the purpose of *da'wah* addressed to the People of the Book, namely Jews and Christians, is to make them aware of and acknowledge the truth of all that has been revealed by Allah, as stated in Q.S. al-Shu'arā' [26]: 15. Third, the purpose of *da'wah* addressed to believers is to further strengthen and consolidate their faith in Allah, the Exalted (Muhammad Qamaruddin Abdullah, 2019, pp. 16–21).

In the delivery of *da'wah*, several important principles must be considered to ensure that its content is well received by the intended audience. First, the delivery of *da'wah* should take into account the audience's level of ability and capacity. Second, preachers must recognize that *da'wah* is not merely an oral form of communication; the preacher's conduct is also regarded as an integral part of the *da'wah* message. Third, the quality of *da'wah* is assessed not only through the content of the message but also through the manner in which it is conveyed. Fourth, *da'wah* activities must consider spatial and temporal contexts in order to communicate messages effectively and efficiently. Fifth, the effectiveness of *da'wah* must be supported by the preacher's internal and external preparedness, as even minor disruptions may affect the delivery of the message. Sixth, communication in *da'wah* is non-sequential, meaning that it involves responses indicating that the message has been transmitted, received, and understood. Therefore, when listeners remain silent or fall asleep during a *da'wah* session, this may indicate discomfort or a lack of engagement. Seventh, the messages delivered by preachers are continuous, dynamic, and transactional. Consequently, *da'wah* messages may continue to generate discussion and produce effects that cannot easily be halted (Muhammad Qamaruddin Abdullah, 2019, pp. 6–7).

Therefore, the systematic and comprehensive delivery of *da'wah* requires particular methods or strategies. The method of *da'wah* (*kaifiyah al-da'wah*) refers to the manner in which a *dā'ī* communicates *da'wah* messages in order to make them more easily understood and accepted by others. Accordingly, the selection of *da'wah* methods should take into consideration the situation and condition of the audience as recipients of the message (Samsul Munir Amin, 2013, p. 13). Such methods are necessary to facilitate and harmonize communication between the preacher and the recipients of *da'wah*. Moreover, the method employed constitutes one of the determining factors in the success of *da'wah* activities carried out by the preacher (Fatur Bahri al-Nabiri, 2008, p. 238).

In general, there are at least three principal patterns of Islamic *da'wah* disseminated by religious scholars. First, *da'wah bi al-lisān* refers to the form of *da'wah* delivered orally and requires interaction between a preacher and an audience. This form of *da'wah* may be conducted in two ways. The first involves direct, face-to-face communication without the use of media. This method offers several advantages: preachers are able to understand the circumstances and conditions of their audience, receive immediate responses, and adapt the content of their sermons accordingly. The second form of *da'wah bi al-lisān* employs media platforms, such as television, YouTube, and other communication channels.

Second, *da'wah bi al-kitābah* or *bi al-qalam* refers to *da'wah* conveyed through written media, including pamphlets, books, magazines, and other forms of publication. This model of *da'wah* is not new; rather, it had already been practised by the Prophet Muhammad centuries ago. One example was the Prophet's practice of sending letters to kings and political leaders of his time, inviting them to embrace Islam. Historical records indicate that the Prophet sent at least eight such letters, which were delivered directly by his companions (Abdul Majid Khan, 1985, p. 201). Third, *da'wah bi al-ḥāl* refers to *da'wah* conveyed through attitudes and actions, with the expectation that others will emulate what is demonstrated or practised. In Indonesia, this term became known in the 1970s, although it is not known with certainty who first introduced it. According to Quraish Shihab, this form of *da'wah* aims to support various dimensions of community life so that people are better able to address their needs in areas such as the economy, health, education, and other fields (Quraish Shihab, 1992, p. 398).

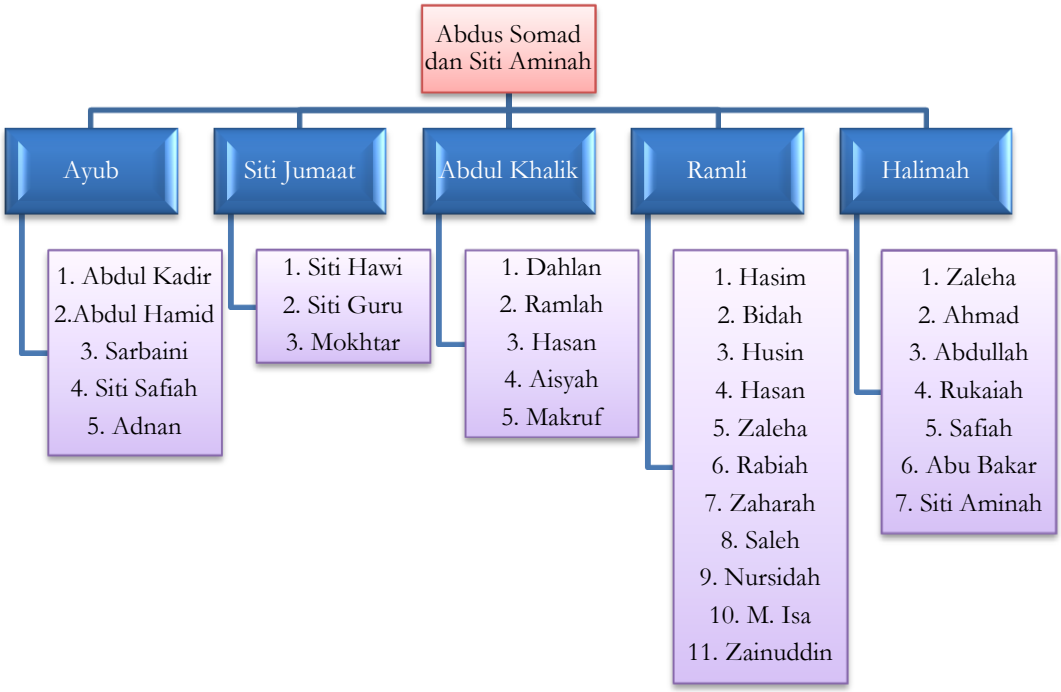
### *K. H. Abdus Somad Jambi*

Abdus Somad was born in 1870 in Pecinan, Seberang Jambi, into a family of merchants or traders, and died in 1942 (interview with Aulia Rahman, 9 April 2023). His father was H. Ibrahim ibn H. Qosyim ibn H. Tajul ibn H. Salim ibn H. M. Arif. Based on this genealogy, it may be assumed that K. H. Abdus Somad did not come from a family with a strong religious scholarly tradition, as his family was primarily engaged in trade. According to Ahmad Thamrin, a member of the family, K. H. Abdus Somad had two siblings, namely Hasan and Bonok (interview with H. Ahmad Thamrin, 11 April 2023).

During his lifetime, Abdus Somad married three times. His first marriage was to a Malaysian woman of Seleman Village, Kerinci descent, named Hj. Siti Aminah. The marriage took place in Malaysia after Abdus Somad had returned from pursuing his studies in Haramain. While in Malaysia, he also had the opportunity to carry out his role as an Islamic scholar by inviting and encouraging the community to practice Islamic teachings. Several years

later, they decided to return to Kerinci (interview with Abdullah, grandson of Abdus Somad, 30 April 2023). This marriage produced five children: H. Ayub, H. Ramli, H. Khalid, Siti Jumat, and Hj. Halimah. The following is the genealogical lineage of Abdus Somad's descendants through his first wife:

**Picture 1.**
Genealogical Chart of K.H. Abdus Somar




*Source: Documentation of Rapidah binti Abu Bakar, S.Pd.*

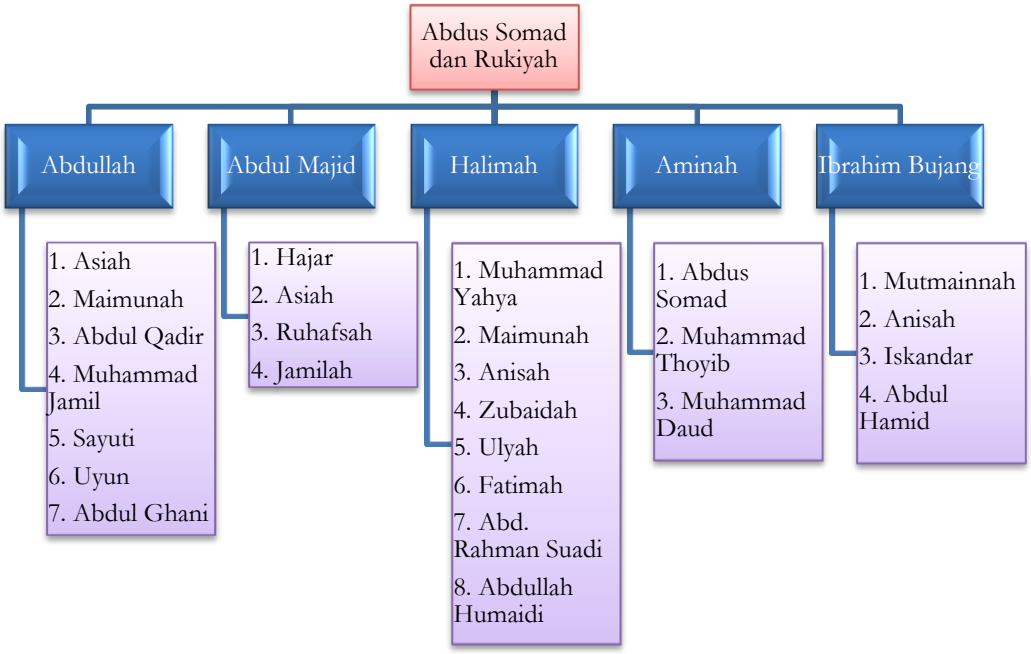
Although most of his descendants chose to return to their mother's homeland, H. Abdul Khalik, one of Abdus Somad's descendants, decided to remain in Malaysia and never returned to his mother's hometown in Seleman. This was conveyed by Hj. Normilah binti H. Dahlan bin H. Khalid bin H. Abdul Somad. She stated that they had never returned to Kerinci, although their father and grandfather had told them that they were of Kerinci origin (interview with Normilah, 29 April 2023). Similar statements were made by Hj. Faridah, Fauziah, Musa, and Hj. Habibah. Nevertheless, they have never forgotten the origins of their ancestors, namely Abdul Somad and his wife, Hj. Siti Aminah. As stated by Fauziah, she deeply longs to visit Kerinci, the homeland of her ancestors. However, her wish to visit Kerinci and continue to Jambi to make a pilgrimage to the grave of her ancestor, Abdul Somad, has not yet been fulfilled (interview with Fauziah, great-granddaughter of Abdus Somad, 1 May 2023). Furthermore, Normilah explained that her parents often told stories about Abdul Khalid's piety and devotion, which were inherited from his grandfather, Abdus Somad. This encouraged him to teach religious knowledge to his children and to conduct his daily life in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. One distinctive feature of his educational approach was his frequent use of the Kerinci language, intended to ensure

that his children and grandchildren remained aware of their Kerinci ancestry (interview with Normilah, 29 April 2023).

Following the death of Aminah in 1913, Abdus Somad informed his children that he intended to travel to Jambi to teach and conduct *da'wah* activities (interview with Abdullah, 30 April 2023). Upon arriving in Jambi, Abdus Somad entered into his second marriage with Siti Hajir, a woman of Palembang descent. This marriage produced one son, H. Ahmad Nawawi (interview with Aulia Rahman, 9 April 2023). Abdus Somad subsequently married for the third time to Rukiyah, who was born in Pecinan, Seberang Jambi. Their marriage produced five children: Abdullah, Abdul Majid, Halimah, Aminah, and Ibrahim Bujang. These children later had numerous sons and daughters who continued Abdus Somad's genealogical line. The following is the genealogical chart of Abdus Somad's descendants through his third wife:

**Picture 1.**

Genealogical Chart of K.H. Abdus Somar




*(Source: Documentation of Aulia Rahman bin Abdus Somad)*

Based on the information presented above, it can be seen that Abdus Somad had eleven children from three different wives. These children subsequently produced numerous grandchildren who continued his scholarly legacy. Judging from the names given to his children and grandchildren, it may be inferred that Abdus Somad's extended family was deeply religious, reflecting the teachings instilled by Abdus Somad as their father and ancestor. Like other children of his generation, Abdus Somad received a general education, particularly basic instruction in Islamic religious studies, from teachers in the Pecinan area of Jambi. At least two important institutions served as the primary centers of his education: Masjid Baru and Langgar Putih in Kampung Tengah. Among the teachers who were involved in educating Abdus Somad were 'Abdul Ghani, Ketib Mas'ud, and Abu Bakar al-Jambi. According to information provided by local residents, Shaykh K. H. Abdul Somad received instruction from

Shaykh Hasan Yamani during his childhood, although no one knows how Shaykh Hasan Yamani came to be in Jambi (Fauzi Moh. Bafadhal, n.d., p. 102). The account of H. Dawud, which is consistent with studies on Islamic education in Jambi, states that in addition to studying at Masjid Baru and Langgar Putih, Abdul Somad also received religious instruction from his father, H. Ibrahim, and his grandfather, H. Qasyim (interview with Dawud, grandson of Abdus Somad, 7 April 2023).

Abdul Somad's education from the age of one until the age of twelve was largely influenced by his biological parents. During this period, he studied several areas of Islamic knowledge, including ethics (*akhlāq*), individual religious obligations (*farḍ 'ayn*), theology (*tawḥīd*), and Sufism (*taṣawwuf*). His parents taught him how to perform prayers, undertake ablution, observe fasting, and maintain other forms of Islamic worship and religious practices. This pattern of education and instruction continued until he reached the age of thirteen (interview with Ahmad Thamrin, great-grandchild of Abdus Somad, 11 April 2023). This educational method appears to be consistent with the approach to *da'wah* adopted by the Prophet Muhammad, which placed greater emphasis on strengthening faith (*'aqīdah*) before addressing matters related to worship, Islamic law, and other religious issues.

From the age of thirteen to sixteen, Abdus Somad studied primarily under his grandfather, H. Qasyim Badul Somad, as well as teachers at Masjid Baru. Among the subjects he studied with these teachers were Sufism, Islamic worship, and theology (*tawḥīd*), along with a broad range of foundational Islamic disciplines (interview with Ahmad Thamrin, 11 April 2023). Subsequently, from the age of seventeen to twenty-three, Abdus Somad pursued Islamic studies in the Haramayn. Although the names of his teachers are not specifically recorded, several of his Indonesian contemporaries and fellow students in Mecca are known, including K. H. Ahmad Dahlan, K. H. Hasyim Asy'ari, Shaykh Mustafa Husein Purba, Shaykh Sulaiman al-Rasuli of Candung, and several others. They all studied under Shaykh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi.

When viewed in light of the historical experiences and *da'wah* activities of other contemporary Indonesian scholars, their missions of Islamic propagation reveal considerable similarities. Before pursuing further education in the Middle East, they generally received religious instruction from close family members, such as their fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other relatives. Upon returning from the Middle East, they commonly established educational institutions, including *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), madrasas, and orphanages. They also founded mosques and *langgar* (*musalla*) as spaces for educating and nurturing their students, as well as members of the wider community who came to study Islam.

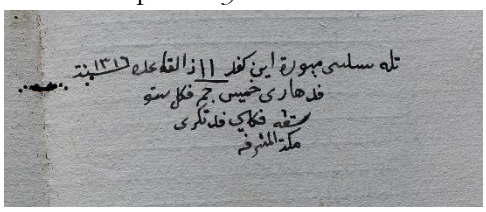
These steps were undertaken gradually until the development of *da'wah* could be carried out effectively and comprehensively. One indication of their success was the emergence of cadres whom they had educated in various disciplines of Islamic scholarship and who later became leaders in diverse communities, institutions, and organizations. The education and teachings imparted to their students and disciples reflect Abdul Somad's view that the prosperity and well-being of the world require generations characterized by faith and *akhlāq al-karīmah* (noble character). Such generations are expected to encourage goodness and prevent immoral and reprehensible acts.

**Description of the Manuscript *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī***

The manuscript of *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī* is one of the many works written by Abdus Somad. It is currently held in the collection of Muhammad Daud, a grandson of Abdus Somad, who resides in Seberang Jambi. The manuscript remains highly legible, although several sections have been torn as a result of insect damage. It has been carefully preserved; however, the preservation process has not yet met appropriate manuscript conservation standards. This is due to limited information regarding proper conservation practices and insufficient funding, resulting in the manuscript being maintained only through basic measures. The manuscript is written on paper measuring 25 cm × 17.5 cm, while the text block measures 17 cm × 7.5 cm. The manuscript does not contain page numbers; however, based on a manual count, it consists of twelve folios, or approximately twenty-four pages, including four blank pages located at the beginning and end of the manuscript. These blank pages were most likely intended for additional notes or served as inner cover pages for the manuscript's contents. Overall, the manuscript remains legible, although several parts are torn. Nevertheless, the damage does not affect the main content of the manuscript. The final section of the manuscript contains a colophon. In philological studies, a colophon has a fundamental function in identifying manuscript data, as it usually contains information about the author, date of composition, place of writing, and other notes related to the production of the manuscript. The information that can be read from the colophon of this manuscript is as follows:

**Picture 3.**

Colophon of the Manuscript *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*



*(Source: Documentation of Ahmad Zuhdi)*

Among the information that can be derived from the colophon is the statement: *"This work was completed on the 11th of Dhu al-Qa'dah in the year 1316 AH, on a Thursday at half past one in the morning in the noble city of Mecca."* This indicates that the manuscript was completed on 11 Dhu al-Qa'dah 1316 AH, corresponding to 23 March 1899 CE. The colophon further explains that the manuscript was completed on a Thursday at 1:30 a.m. while its author was in Mecca. Based on Abdus Somad's year of birth, namely 1870 CE, the manuscript was completed when he was approximately twenty-nine years old and still residing in Mecca.

The contents of the manuscript include discussions on the status of a person following an imam during prayer, the legal ruling on preceding the imam in prayer, and other issues related to these matters. In addition, the manuscript addresses several general issues in Islam, such as *ijtihād*, the call to prayer (*adhān*), almsgiving (*zakāh*), fasting, pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), standing at 'Arafah (*wuqūf*), circumambulation of the Ka'bah (*ṭawāf*), commercial transactions, offer and acceptance (*ījāb qabūl*), contracts, and other related matters. Although the manuscript contains a variety of religious issues, all of these topics are discussed in a simple manner. It presents

only the main points without providing detailed explanations or discussing scholarly debates concerning the issues under consideration.

## The Relevance of the Manuscript *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī* as a Medium of *Da'wah bi al-Kitāb* for the People of Jambi

The history of Islamization in Jambi has attracted considerable attention from researchers due to the limited literature addressing this subject. Consequently, scholarly discussions and debates have emerged regarding the origins of the Islamization process in Jambi. The first view maintains that the people of Jambi had come into contact with Islam, particularly through Muslim traders, as early as the ninth century CE. This view is based on a Chinese book entitled *Pei-hu lu*, written in 875 CE, which states that agricultural commodities in the form of areca nuts were obtained by the Po'sse people from the state of Chan-pei (Deki Syaputra, 2020, pp. 15–29). Uka Tjandrasasmita stated that *Po'sse* referred to Persian people or traders who travelled as far as Jambi for commercial purposes. Meanwhile, according to Yunasril Ali, *Chan-pei* was the name used by the Chinese to refer to Jambi (Yunasril et al., 2005, p. 59).

Jambi is known for its large river, which flows into the eastern coast of Sumatra and served as an access route for trade entering the interior of Jambi. This condition was closely related to the role of waterways, which at that time constituted the principal transportation routes used by merchants to reach inland areas. Consequently, these geographical conditions also became one of the factors facilitating interaction between the people of Jambi and traders from outside the region (Junaidi, 2011, p. 67). Bambang Budi Utomo stated that at least three major regions maintained intensive relations with Jambi, namely China, India, and Arabia. The interactions between the people of Jambi and these three regions influenced various aspects of social life, including diplomacy, religion, culture, trade, and other related spheres (Bambang, n.d., p. 11).

The second view maintains that Islam entered Jambi in the thirteenth century CE. This development coincided with the decline of the Srivijaya Kingdom, which led Jambi to emerge as a favored trading port for merchants from China, Arabia, and India. Its prominence was largely attributable to its strategic geographical position at the intersection of the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea. Jambi was indeed one of the important commercial centers in Sumatra because, geographically, it was situated along the trade routes connecting China and India (O. W. Wolters, 1962, p. 496). Trade routes along the eastern coast of Sumatra were supported by major rivers that flowed into Tanjung Jabung and connected directly to the Malacca Strait. At that time, the Malacca Strait had served as a principal route for international trade since the first century CE. It is therefore unsurprising that extensive interactions took place between international merchants, including Muslim traders, and the people of Jambi.

Several sources describe the Islamization process in Jambi as not having been carried out solely by merchants, but also by Sufi figures. This view is consistent with Azyumardi Azra's theory concerning the introduction of Islam to the Indonesian archipelago, which emphasizes the role of Sufis, as the early form of Islam embraced by Muslims in the archipelago tended to be Sufi-oriented. These Sufis arrived in Jambi aboard merchant ships travelling to the region. Upon reaching Jambi, they did not immediately disseminate their

teachings. Instead, they first studied the local culture, social practices, customs, and traditions (Darmawijaya, 2010, pp. 2–3). This approach was intended to make the people of Jambi more receptive to the teachings introduced by the Sufis while avoiding conflict with their previous beliefs and practices.

The third view maintains that Islam entered and developed in Jambi during the fifteenth century CE, concurrently with the formation and establishment of the Jambi Kingdom. During the reign of Putri Selera Pinang Masak, the Jambi Kingdom was visited by a merchant and Islamic scholar from Turkey, Ahmad Salim, also known as Ahmad Barus II (Linda, n.d., p. 129). The merchant subsequently married Putri Pinang Masak, who was a descendant of the ruler of Pagaruyung and had been granted authority over the Jambi region (Marwati, 2008, p. 43). He was then bestowed the title Datuk Paduko Berhalo. Through this marital alliance, Islam was able to develop and eventually became the official religion of the Jambi Kingdom. Marriage alliances of this kind were commonly used as a means of disseminating Islam throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Following his marriage to Putri Pinang Masak, Ahmad Salim became the ruler of the Jambi Kingdom alongside his wife.

Their marriage produced one daughter, Orang Kayo Gemuk, and three sons: Orang Kayo Pingai, Orang Kayo Padataran, and Orang Kayo Hitam (Marwati, 2008, p. 43). The Islamization process in Jambi began to develop more extensively under the leadership of Orang Kayo Hitam, who was enthroned as king from 1500 to 1515 CE. This development was closely associated with Orang Kayo Hitam's efforts, including the enactment of a governmental legal code known as *Pucuk Undang Nan Delapan*. In addition, he established Islam as an integral element of the customary identity of the Jambi Malay community. Islam was also designated as the official religion of the kingdom and became closely associated with the identity of the Jambi Kingdom (Deki Syaputra, 2020, pp. 15–29). Consequently, the Jambi Malay customary proverb emerged: *adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendikan kitabullah*, meaning that custom is founded upon Islamic law, while Islamic law is founded upon the Book of God. Similarly, a Jambi customary maxim states: *syarak mangato, adat memakai*, meaning that Islamic law prescribes, while custom implements (Hasan, 2013, p. 16).

Considering the dynamics of the Muslim community in Jambi, Islam had essentially developed significantly by the seventeenth century CE. This development was marked by a transformation in the governmental structure from a kingdom to a sultanate. One possible reason for this change was that the majority of the Jambi population had embraced Islam by that period, leading to the adoption of the term *sultanate*, which was more closely associated with Islamic governance (Ona, 2019, pp. 100–112). This situation was also influenced by Dutch incursions beginning in the seventeenth century CE, during the reign of Pangeran Kadek, who held the title Sultan Abdul Kahar (1615–1643 CE). The circumstances were further complicated by a dispute between the Sultan of Jambi and the Sultan of Johor, who demanded the surrender of the Tungkal territory. The Dutch attempted to exploit this conflict by accusing the Sultan of Jambi of siding with Sultan Agung of Mataram, who was regarded as an enemy of the Dutch. Consequently, Governor-General Antonie van Diemen issued a warning letter to the Sultan of Jambi and threatened military action should the allegation prove to be true (Raden, 1954, p. 37).

Depati Anom, who ascended to the throne in 1643 CE, was compelled to establish cooperation with the Dutch in the fields of trade and government. This was due to increasing Dutch pressure, compounded by the continuing conflict with the Sultan of Johor. Through this cooperation, the Dutch gradually began to interfere in Jambi's economic and governmental affairs. During the reign of Sultan Sri Ingolago (1665–1690 CE), the Dutch further employed a divide-and-rule strategy between the Sultan of Jambi and Johor. Although the Dutch provided support to Jambi, they demanded compensation in return. When this demand was not fulfilled, conflict ensued, ultimately resulting in the Dutch exile of Sultan Sri Ingolago to Banda Island (Raden, 1954, p. 62).

This situation persisted for a considerable period. Although the Dutch office in Jambi was temporarily closed in the 1740s and the VOC was dissolved in 1799, the Dutch victory over Palembang in 1825 encouraged them to reassert their control over Jambi. Eventually, under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Mechiels, the Dutch succeeded in entering Sarolangun and blockading the river routes. These circumstances led to an agreement between the Dutch and Sultan Keramat, who ruled Jambi at the time. The agreement stipulated that the Jambi state would be controlled and protected by the Dutch and that the Dutch would have the right to establish military forces anywhere within Jambi territory when necessary. However, the Resident of Palembang, Practorius, considered the agreement incomplete because it did not fully guarantee Dutch authority over Jambi. Consequently, on 15 December 1833, the Dutch introduced an additional agreement containing several provisions: the Dutch government was entitled to collect all customs duties, monopolize the sale of salt, refrain from interfering in domestic governmental affairs and customary practices except in cases of customs fraud, and provide an annual payment of Rp. 8,000 to Pangeran Ratu (Ministry of Information, n.d., p. 65).

Although Jambi was undergoing a period of resistance against Dutch colonial rule, Islam generally continued to exist and remain influential. A manuscript dated 25 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1235 AH / 12 January 1820, for instance, contains regulations concerning the obligation to observe Islamic law, particularly with regard to compulsory acts of worship. The state also participated in supervising the implementation of these religious obligations and imposed sanctions on those who violated them (Irma, 2020, p. 69). However, these conditions did not necessarily contribute to the development of Islamic education as a medium for the dissemination and advancement of Islam. This is evident from the relatively stagnant development of education in Jambi. The transmission of Islamic knowledge also proceeded slowly. The dissemination of Islam through Islamic educational institutions began to expand more extensively between 1915 and the 1930s (Siti, 2015, pp. 101–113). Therefore, it may be concluded that Islam during this period was characterized more by practical religious observance than by the systematic transmission of knowledge through formal institutions or religious study circles.

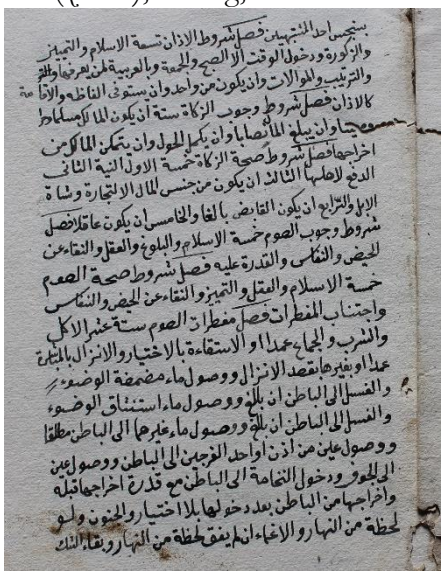
The process of *da'wah* undertaken by an individual must take into account the socio-cultural characteristics of the target community. Differences in region, ethnicity, and historical period may give rise to distinct circumstances and conditions, thereby requiring the use of more varied methods to ensure that *da'wah* messages are more readily understood and accepted. This principle applies not only to *da'wah bi al-lisān*, namely *da'wah* conveyed orally,

but also to *da'wah* communicated through written works, commonly referred to as *da'wah bi al-kitāb*. Readers' levels of understanding of the content presented in such texts are likewise influenced by the factors mentioned above. This was the approach adopted by Abdus Somad in disseminating Islamic knowledge, particularly concerning Islamic jurisprudence, among the people of Jambi during his time. It is strongly presumed that the primary bases for Abdus Somad's dissemination of Islamic studies were his own residence and a *surau* located near his home. This method had long been commonly employed by Indonesian Islamic scholars, who used their homes, *surau*, and mosques as principal centers for *da'wah* activities.

One of the texts used as a reference in these religious study sessions was *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*, which was written in Mecca. Judging from its title, the primary purpose of this work was to provide beginners with a concise yet comprehensive understanding of issues in Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore, as explained in the previous section, the text was written in simple and direct language so that it could be accessible to a broad audience, particularly beginners seeking to study matters of Islamic jurisprudence. This can be seen, for example, in its discussions of the call to prayer (*adhān*), fasting, almsgiving (*zakāh*), and other related issues.

**Picture 4.**

One section of the manuscript *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*, which discusses various issues of Islamic jurisprudence, such as the call to prayer (*adhān*), almsgiving (*zakāh*), fasting, and others.



*(Source: Documentation of Ahmad Zuhdi)*

The manuscript explains that there are nine conditions for the validity of the *adhān*: *the caller must be Muslim; possess discernment (tamyīz); be male; observe the commencement of the prescribed prayer time, except for the dawn and Friday prayers; use Arabic for those who are able to do so; maintain the proper sequence; deliver the call continuously; ensure that it is performed by one person who completes all of its prescribed formulae; and observe the same requirements for the iqāmah as for the adhān. It further explains that there are six conditions that make zakāh obligatory: the owner of the property must be Muslim and free; the property must reach the niṣāb threshold; a full ḥawl (one lunar year) must have elapsed; and the owner must be able to disburse the property. The manuscript then identifies five conditions for the validity of zakāh:*

*intention; distribution to eligible recipients; payment from the relevant category of zakāh assets, except in the case of trade goods, sheep, and camels; and the requirement that the recipient be an adult and of sound mind.*

In addition, the manuscript explains several matters relating to fasting, including the conditions that make fasting obligatory: *being Muslim, having reached adulthood, being of sound mind, being free from menstruation and post-partum bleeding, and being physically capable of observing the fast. It further identifies five conditions for the validity of fasting: being Muslim, being of sound mind, possessing discernment (tamyīz), being free from menstruation and post-partum bleeding, and abstaining from matters that invalidate the fast. The manuscript also states that there are sixteen acts that invalidate fasting: eating; drinking; deliberate sexual intercourse; intentional vomiting; deliberate emission of semen, including semen intentionally induced for the purpose of ejaculation; the entry of water used for rinsing the mouth during ablution or ritual bathing into the interior of the body as a result of excessive rinsing; the entry of water used for nasal cleansing (istinshāq) during ablution or ritual bathing into the interior of the body due to excessive practice; the entry of water other than that used for rinsing the mouth or nasal cleansing into the interior of the body without qualification; the entry of an object through the ear or either private part into the interior of the body; the entry of an object into a bodily cavity; the return of phlegm into the interior of the body after it has previously been expelled and then reintroduced without deliberate intention; insanity, even if only briefly during the daytime; unconsciousness when consciousness is not regained, even briefly, during the daytime; continued uncertainty regarding the intention to fast until sunset; and breaking the fast before there is a strong presumption that the sun has set.*

The selection of this text as a reference for the religious studies conducted by Abdus Somad reflects his intellectual discernment and careful assessment of the circumstances prevailing at the time. He chose to teach this work to the community, particularly to beginners, because it was considered relevant and applicable to their needs. In addition to being written in a simple form, the text comprehensively addresses most of the fundamental issues in Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore, the work could be relied upon to explain jurisprudential issues effectively within a relatively short period. This was particularly important given that the social and political circumstances of the time remained under Dutch intimidation and colonial rule, making it impracticable for him to teach jurisprudential matters in detail according to the complete views of the four schools of Islamic law, including the debates among them.

The use of this text also indicates that Abdus Somad adopted a method of *da'wah* that emphasized ease and avoided imposing hardship, following the approach exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. Nevertheless, Abdus Somad was known as a scholar with profound and extensive knowledge, having studied under prominent scholars of his time, including Shaykh Khatib al-Minangkabawi, Shaykh Mahmud al-Bukhari, Shaykh Muhammad Ali al-Maliki, Shaykh Abd al-Majid, Shaykh Said al-Yamani, and others. Therefore, it is highly likely that Abdus Somad also produced works in more comprehensive fields, accompanied by detailed explanations.

This condition is further substantiated by evidence that Abdus Somad also wrote Islamic works in various fields, including *kalām* (Islamic theology), Sufism, and others. If collected, the number of works written by Abdus Somad would amount to dozens of books. However, most of these works are no longer legible because they have been severely damaged by termites. At present, only a small number of Abdus Somad's writings remain clearly

readable and well preserved (interview with Daud, 7 April 2023). Therefore, his selection of *da'wah* references in accordance with the circumstances and conditions of the community he encountered demonstrates Abdus Somad's social and spiritual piety.

## CONCLUSION

One of the Jambi scholars who had a significant impact on the dissemination and development of Islam in the region was K. H. Abdus Somad. He was an Islamic scholar born in the late nineteenth century CE who pursued religious studies in Haramayn. One of the *da'wah* methods he employed in the process of disseminating Islam was *da'wah bi al-kitāb*, particularly through the teaching of *Hidāyat al-Mubtadī li al-Mas'alah al-Muqtadī*. This work was written in Mecca during his period of study there. It contains various issues of Islamic jurisprudence presented in clear and simple language, thereby making it accessible to both ordinary members of the community and religiously educated readers.

Therefore, Abdus Somad's selection of this work as a medium of *da'wah* constituted an important consideration, given the critical social and political circumstances of the period. The people of Jambi were living under Dutch colonial rule, which required careful consideration of time efficiency, methods, and appropriate teaching materials in conducting *da'wah*. This approach proved effective in disseminating and developing Islam in the Jambi region, particularly in Seberang Jambi. It is therefore unsurprising that Islamic traditions remain deeply rooted within the local community to this day. These circumstances also contributed to the continued existence and endurance of the *pesantren* established by Abdus Somad in Seberang Jambi.

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***Interview***

Aulia Rahman, cicit Abdul Somad

Dawud, cucu Abdul Somad

Abdullah, cucu Abdus Somad

Normilah, cucu Abdus Somad

Fauziah, cicit Abdus Somad

Ahmad Thamrin, cicit Abdus Somad