

Chalil also refers to Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī whose perspective differed from that of Ibn al-Ḥājj and Ibn Taymīyah, in that he tolerated the reading of *qasīdahs*, considering such an act as a *bid'ah ḥusnāh* (good innovation). This tolerance is in contradiction with Chalil's own view which, as previously discussed, firmly classifies the celebration of *Mawlid* as a *bid'ah dalīlah* and rejected the recital of *qasīdah*.⁴³ al-'Asqalānī's opinion was not uncommon among the Shāfi'ite scholars, who did not reject the traditions involved in the celebration. al-Suyūṭī, for example, showed considerable tolerance towards the tradition of *Mawlid* celebration for which he composed a treatise entitled *Husn al-Maqṣid fī 'Amal al-Mawlid*, which defended its good innovations.⁴⁴ It was also on the basis of the opinions of al-'Asqalānī, al-Suyūṭī and al-Haytamī that the traditionalists justified the manner of their *Mawlid* celebration.⁴⁵ This justification was consistent with their approach to legal issues and their reliance on mostly Shāfi'ite authorities, as discussed above in chapter five.

In answer to the question of whether the *Mawlid* was condemned (*mudhmūm*) or rewarded (*yuthūb*), the traditionalists referred to al-Suyūṭī, who held that in so far as the *Mawlid* took the form of a public gathering involving the recital of the *Qur'ān*, reading the Prophet's biography and serving a meal to those attending, the celebration was categorically a *bid'ah ḥusnāh*.⁴⁶ They also referred to Abū Shāmah who had declared that among the most favorable innovations (*wa min aḥsanai mā ubrudi'n*) was the *Mawlid* celebration, which was marked by the distribution of alms (*sadaqāt*), the performance of

⁴³ Chalil, "Fatwa 'Oelama' Jang Haq Tentang Bid'ah Mauloedan," 21.

⁴⁴ As an example of al-Suyūṭī's defense of the *Mawlid*, see his refutation of al-Fākihānī al-Maliki's work *al-Mawrid fī al-Kulām 'alā 'Amal al-Mawlid*, a work which vehemently condemned the tradition of *Mawlid* celebration and classified it as *bid'ah mudhmūmah* (evil innovation). al-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maqṣid fī 'Amal al-Mawlid* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1985), 45-51.

⁴⁵ Abbas, *40 Musalab Agung*, vol. 2, 177-181.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 179.

merits of the day of '*Āshūrā*' which he considered to be either *mawḍū'* or *muḥḍū*.⁶² While Ibn Rajab closely examined *ḥadīths* which promoted meritorious practices during '*Āshūrā*', Ibn Taymiyah regarded certain practices observed on this day as incompatible with the *Shari'ah*.⁶³

'*Āshūrā*' is one of the ceremonial occasions in the Muslim calendar that have acquired a special significance in Javanese culture.⁶⁴ Its celebration, known as *bukak luwur* (the opening of the cover of the grave of Sunan Kudus), for example, is annually conducted in Kudus, central Java, where the Javanese come in throngs from all over the region to keep alive this venerated day. The *bukak luwur* procession involves a component of *barakah* (blessing), which is believed to be present in the ceremonial food and in the pieces of the cloth tomb-cover from Sunan Kudus grave. These are distributed at the end of the procession to participants eager to benefit from divine favor. As a religious ceremony, *bukak luwur* is also a festive occasion featuring a number of events and attractions during the evening in the *pasar malam* (night market).⁶⁵

As was the case with his attack on the celebration of the *Mawlid*, Chalil's discussion of '*Āshūrā*' did not address the phenomena which developed out of local traditions, such as the observance of *bukak luwur*. Rather, he attacked a set of practices revered by the traditionalists, whose arguments in their favor can be found in their interpretation of the *fiqh*-texts. This discussion of the celebration of '*Āshūrā*', therefore, will also investigate these *fiqh*-texts in order to establish the viewpoint and arguments of the traditionalists. Chalil was well aware of the role of the *fiqh*-texts in shaping the

⁶²al-Shawkānī, *al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah fi al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū'ah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1986), 113-114.

⁶³Ibn Rajab, *Luḥū'if al-Ma'ārif fīmā li-Mawāsim al-'Āmm min al-Waḥā'if*, 52-53; Ibn Taymiyah, *al-Futūḥ al-Kubrā*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifaḥ, n.d.), 295-304.

⁶⁴Koentjaraningrat, *Javanese Culture* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985), 393.

⁶⁵Sunan Kudus is one of the *wali saaga* (nine sacred apostles) who pioneered in the propagation of Islam on the island of Java. For a short description of the *bukak luwur*, see Thomas B. Ataladjar, "Menara Kudus," in *Ensiklopedi Nasional Indonesia*, vol. 9 (Jakarta: Cipta Adi Pustaka, 1990), 210.

