CHAPTER TWO A Biographical Sketch of Moenawar Chalil: His Life and Writings

Moenawar Chalil was born at Kendal, central Java, on February 28, 1908. He came from a respectable kiyni (religious scholar) family, whose members had established themselves as successful traders. He received a traditional education at the hands of his father, Muhammad Chalil, and his uncle, Muhammad Salim as well as other kiynis at Kendal, such as Abdulchamid and Irfan. Although Chalil's family had the financial means to educate their son at a modern educational institution, Chalil was not destined to do so. This was in compliance with his mother's wish who wanted him to become a kiyni rather than a priynyi (bureaucrat), who received his training at the modern educational system. His mother's hope was only partially realized, since Chalil's career led him to become both a prominent kiyni and a respected priynyi. However, he could not claim the title of priynyi, after abandoning his position as the head of the Department of Religious Affairs in the Semarang district.

At the age of seventeen, Chalil became involved in the nationalist movement and joined in a political uprising at Kendal, an uprising linked to the activities of Sarekat Islam (Islamic Unification) at Solo.³ As a militant movement, the activities of Sarekat Islam sometimes led to social and political unrest and, as a result, were closely watched by the colonial government.⁴ It was due to his involvement in militant activities that an order to exile Chalil to Boven Digul in Irian Jaya was issued by the assistant regent of the subdistrict of Kendal. This order was never executed, thanks to Chalil's father who persuaded the assistant regent to annul the order. At that time, Boven Digul was a designated place

¹Fadhloellah Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup Almarhum K. H. Moenawwar Chalil" (unpublished paper, Bogor, 1993), 2; M. Fadhil Munawwar, "Riwayat Hidup Almarhum K. H. Munawwar Chalil," (unpublished paper, Semarang, 1987), 1.

²"H. Moenawar Chalil," Minggu Abadi (February 28; 1960).

Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 1; Munawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 3.

⁴ For the activities of the S. I. local branches which often led to uprisings and clashes with other social forces, see Sarekat Islam Lokal (Jakarta: Arsip Nasional, 1975).

where political detainees were imprisoned during the colonial era. According to "Riwayat Hidup". Chalil's father petitioned for the reversal of the exile order on the ground of sending his son to study in Arabia. This early experience left an indelible mark on Chalil and, to a great extent, foreshadowed his future struggle against established religious dogma.

Thus, shortly after his release, Chalil was sent by his father to study in Arabia, where he spent four years (1926-1929). It was during this stay that he was influenced by the *Wnhhābī* reformist spirit, which later manifested itself in his own reformist writings and activities. His time in Arabia was a critical one, because it witnessed the efforts on the part of the Wahhābīs to establish their political and religious supremacy over the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. In fact, *Wuhhābīsan* was not an unfamiliar ideology to Chalil who had been exposed to such ideas by his teachers from Solo. 6 *Wahhābīsan* had been introduced to the Malay archipelago in the nineteenth century by pilgrims returning from the Hejaz.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Arabia was frequently visited by many young Indonesian students. They went there to study and to learn new ideas, which they disseminated upon their return to their country. The impact of Wahhābī radicalism was not only reflected in the religious zeal directed against anything considered incompatible with the purity of Islam, but also in political confrontations against the existing political structures. The best example of this impact was the sectarian antagonism between the advocates of Wahhābism, on the one hand, and the defenders of traditions, on the other, which manifested itself in the Padri war (1821-1837) in west Sumatra, a region where Wahhābism found a fertile land for growth.

⁵ Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 1; Munawwar," Riwayat Hidup," 3.

Olbid.

In an effort to spread their new ideas, reformists from west Sumatra used force against the possessors of religious and political authority, whom they considered to have hampered their reform mission. Their radicalism eventually brought about a large-scale counter-attack from the established 'ulama' and the political elite, a counter-attack which ultimately broke out in a civil war, known as the *Perung Pudri* in which the established authorities, in

Many prominent leaders of the Indonesian Muslim community went to Arabia to further their religious education with some of them becoming agents of change upon their return to their society. Hasyim Asy'ari and Ahmad Dahlan, the founders of the two largest Islamic organizations the Nahdat al-'Ulumā' (the Renaissance of the 'Ulumā') and the Muhammadīyah respectively, as well as Hamka, an eminent scholar who held various religious posts, were prime examples of this trend.

There were a number of prominent Indonesian scholars teaching in Arabia, whose academic fame attracted students from the far-off corners of Indonesia. Scholars such as Aḥmad Khaṭīb, Muḥammad Ibn 'Umar al-Bantanī, 'Abd al-Karīm and Maḥfūẓ al-Tirmidhī were among the most prominent ones. Among these, Aḥmad Khaṭīb should be given the utmost credit for contributing to the future destiny of Islamic organizations in Indonesia. It was the graduates of his halaqub (study circle) that come to lead the reformist as well as the traditionalist groups in the archipelago. 8

During his stay in Mecca, Chalil's preoccupation with the existing trend of religious thought was exhibited by his active participation in an organization established by his fellow expatriates in Arabia. It is also reported that he practiced law in an Islamic court there, an experience that eventually gave him more insight into Wuhhābism as a legal institution. This experience certainly enriched his religious views and was partly responsible for the formation of his puritanical convictions as defined by the Wahhābis. 10

Chalil also became aware of the reformist trend in Egypt and its surrounding regions during his stay in the Hejaz. Indeed, he was greatly influenced and impressed by

collaboration with the Dutch, were able to win the battle. M. Sanusi Latief, "Gerakan Kaum Tua di Minangkabau," (Ph.D. dissertation, I.A.I.N. Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, n.d.), 54-64.

⁸For a detailed account, see Tamar Djaja, *Ulama Sumatera Barat* (n.p.: Pusaka Indonesia, n.d.).

⁹Munawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 2; Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 2; "H. Moenawar Chalil."

¹⁰ Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 4.

the modernist outlook of Muhammad 'Abduh, as can be discerned from the number of 'Abduh's writings that he read and cited in many of his works. Furthermore, the structure of Chalil's tafsir and his interpretation of particular Quritatic verses were obviously inspired by 'Abduh's style. His discussion of the compatibility of religion with modernity, which dominated his debate over the innate human need for religious guidance, showed the dialectical approach employed by 'Abduh in his apologetic defense of Islam against non-Muslim attacks. 11

Not surprisingly, his respect for 'Abduh reached the point of adoration, the adoration of a *murīd* (a devoted pupil) for his teacher who was nobly protecting the faith from the incursions of non-Islamic elements into the structure of Muslim religious practices. When quoting 'Abduh's ideas, Chalil often refers to him as "yang mulia" (his excellency), thus showing his deep respect and affection for the person whose faith in the truth of Islam and whose struggle for its adaptation to modernity was, in Chalil's eyes, an example to all subsequent generations of reformists.

It is known that 'Abduh's writings and fame spread as far as Indonesia. Not only did 'Abduh's ideas on Islamic reform influence the thought of individual reformists such as Chalil, but it also inspired the birth of a number of reformist organizations in Indonesia in the early twentieth century, such as the Jam Tyat Khnyr (the Association for the Good founded in 1905), the Persyarikatan 'Ulamā' (the Union of Muslim Scholars founded in 1911), the Muhammadiyah (founded in 1912), the ul-Irshād (the Guidance founded in 1913) and the Persatuan Islam or Persis (the Unity of Islam founded in 1923). 12 Of

^{1 1} See Moenawar Chalil, Tufsir Quran Hiduujutur-Ruhmuun, vol. 1 (Solo: Siti Sjamsijah, 1958).

¹²Deliar Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942 (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), 73. While studying under Indonesian teachers at Mecca, many Indonesian students there also became acquainted with Muhammad 'Abduh's reformist ideas. 'Abduh's ideas were later studied more in depth when these students continued their intellectual journey at al-Azhar. The same students were later among the transmitters of 'Abduh's ideas in Indonesia. Zamachsyari Dhosier, "K. H. Hasyim Asy'ari Penggalang Islam Tradisional," Prisma, 1 (January: 1984), 77.

these, the most puritanical one was the Persis, with which Chalil was associated as chairman of its Majlis 'Uluma'. 'Abduh's ideas were disseminated through his articles in the periodical, al-'Urwah al-Wuthqu, which was imported or smuggled into Indonesia through direct subscription or via pilgrims returning home from Mecca or traders from Singapore. 13

Chalil tried to model himself after both Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab and 'Abduh. While he subscribed to an uncompromising monotheism clearly based on Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's teachings, he also adopted the idea of the suitability of Islam to modernity and scientific discoveries, which was the main focus of 'Abduh's thought. This deep admiration for both reformers was expressed in his book, Dua Sedjoli Pembangun Alum Islamy: Muhammad Abdul Wahhab dan Muhammad Abduh (The Duumvirate, Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb and Muḥammad 'Abduh: The Architects of the Muslim World). 14 In general, however, Chalil was very receptive to the views of other Middle Eastern reformers and thinkers. The ideas of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Rashid Rida, Shakib Arsalan, Tantawi Jawhari and others also received Chalil's attention. Chalil, for example, translated a part of al-Afghānī's book al-Radd 'alā al-Dahrīyīn and the whole of Arsalān's book, Limādhā To akharn al-Muslimun wa Taqaddama Ghayruhum. 15 It was owing to this translation that Arsalan's viewpoint on the causes of the stagnation of Muslim religious life as well as the loss of Muslim political power became quite popular in Indonesia. 16

Upon his return from Arabia, Chalil became involved in both bureaucratic tasks and

¹³See Deliar Noer, "Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia," (M. A. thesis, Cornell University, Ithaca New York, 1960), 13. 14See "H. Moenawar Chalil."

¹⁵Chalil translated one chapter of al-Afghani's book al-Radd ala al-Dahriyin entitling it "Kepentingan dan Kemansaatan Agama" and including it in the last chapter of his Definisi dun Sendi Agumu (Djakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1970); Chalil's translation of Arsalan's work was the only translated version available in the Indonesian language. A sporadic translation of the book appearing in several issues of *Pembelu Islum* may be another version of his translation. See Moenawar Chalil (trans.), *Mengapa Knum Muslimin Mundur* (Djakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1954); *Pembelu Islum* 53, 54, 23-26.

reformist activities. Unlike some of the leading figures of the reform movements, who were sometimes in opposition to the regime and rejected any government appointments. Chalil was willing to work for the regime. For almost ten years, he served as the head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the district of Semarang. 17 Even though he initially seemed to recognize the legitimacy of the ruling regime, he later made clear his disagreement with the political leadership of the country. This political stance, however, was slow to manifest itself 18 and became known when charges of his involvement in an abortive Islamic rebellion, known as the Pemberontakan Dar al-Islam, the DI (the Rebellion of the House of Islam), became public. 19 His hostile attitude toward the government was translated into action with his resignation from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1951. In 1952, he refused Soekarno's offer of a high position in Jakarta and he also declined the position of Minister of Religious Affairs offered to him by the Indonesian Nationalist Party (P.N.I.)-Masjumi coalition cabinet. He believed that becoming a member of the ruling political elite in the capital city would force him to give up his oppositional stance, which was far more important for his moral integrity and political convictions than a respected status in Jakarta. 20

Chalil's political stance places him among those puritan Muslims who believed that politics made men corrupt and worldly. They felt that it was lust for worldly gains and not divine guidance that controlled the ambitions of political leaders. Puritan Muslims believed

¹⁷ Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 4.

¹⁸He became the head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Semarang district after the Japanese occupied the country in 1942. It was a Japanese army commander who appointed him as the head of the ministry's district office in Semarang, central Java. Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 4-5.

¹⁹A document sent by the head of the Dār al-Islām or DI (the House of Islam) and the Teatara Islam Indonesia T.I.I. (Indonesian Muslim Military Forces) to Moenawar Chalil promised him the governorship of the province of central Java, provided that the revolt of the Dārul Islām met with success. When the document was discovered in Cirebon in late 1951, he was jailed for seven months and released by the authorities after the charges proved lacking in supporting documents. Ibid.; see also Moenawar Chalil, Al-Qur'un Dari Masa Ke Musa (Solo: Ramadhani, 1985), viii.

²⁰Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 5; "Munawar Kholil," in *Ensiklopedi Islam di Indonesia*, vol. 2, (ed.) Harun Nasution et. al. (Jakarta: Departemen Agama R. I., 1988), 630.

that these leaders had lost all religious commitment and had, therefore, adopted a secular ideology in order to remove Islam from politics. In their hands, Islam had come to be an object of manipulation and a tool for political ends. This belief led Chalil to end his career as a bureaucrat and to take up again his activities in several reformist religious movements and to do some writing. 21

Soon after his return from Arabia, Chalil rose to prominence and held a number of religious offices. He became a member of the *Majlis Tarjīḥ Pusat* (the Central Board of *Fatwā*) of the *Muḥammadīyaḥ* two years after its establishment. The *Majlis Tarjīḥ* came into existence when the proposal for the foundation of a council of Islamic jurisprudence was approved in the 28th *Muḥammadīyaḥ* convention held in Yogyakarta in 1928. The *Majlis Tarjīḥ* was founded in response to the growing need of *Muḥammadīyaḥ* members for *fatwās* on matters related to the *furū* (details) and the *khilātīyāt* (disputed issues). It should be noted that the period from the 1920s to the early 1960s was marked by intense debates between the supporters of the reformist and the traditionalist factions over the issues of *furū* and *khilātīyāt*.

The Muhammadiyah, which claimed to be the guardian of reformist principles, used the Majlis Tarjih as a platform for its 'ulamā' to express their reformist views on question pertaining to figh.²³ The word tarjih, which was thought to reflect the idea of ijāhād betokened the Muhammadīyah's conscious effort to establish rulings independent of any earlier juristic opinions. Some members of the Majlis were even of the opinion that

² Chalil's objection to working for the government was presumably also inspired by the behavior of many of the earliest jurists and theologians who refused any government appointment for fear of losing the courage to speak the truth. He claimed that many respected badich scholars and founders of madhhabs refused to become qūdis for the reason stated above. Moenawar Chalil, Biography Empat Serangkai Imam Madzhab (Djakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1955), 87-88, 193.

²² Asmuni Abdul Rahman, et. al. *Majlis Turjih Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Research dan Survey IAIN Sunan Kalijaga, 1985), 27.

² ³Fathurrahman Djamil, "Ijtihad Muhammadiyah Dalam Masalah-Masalah Fikih Kontemporer: Studi Tentang Penetapan Teori Maqūsid al-Shuri'ah," (Ph.D. dissertation, IAIN Syarif '!idayatullah, Jakarta, 1993-1994), 101.

the efforts exerted by the Majlis Tarjih had reached such an ideal level as to warrant changing the name from Majlis Tarjih to Majlis Ijtihād. This proposal, however, was turned down, because other members held that the sense of the word tarjih was more in keeping with the historical and institutional development of the Majlis.24

From its establishment, the Majlis Tirjih dealt mainly with questions related to pure ritual practices ('ibādah maḥdah), a subject in which Chalil was a most competent scholar. 25 Chalil had written some books and articles as early as 1933 which were more or less prepared as practical manuals for ritual duties. It was in consideration of his educational training as well as his reformist conviction that the founder of the Majlis Tarjih, Mas Mansur, appointed Chalil as a member of the Mujlis Turjih two years after its foundation.²⁶

The Majlis Tarjili stipulated two criteria for any potential member: first, a candidate must be a member of the parent organization (the Muhammadiyah) and second, he must be capable of performing the task of tarjih. The first and foremost requirement of any member undertaking the latter was the ability to deduce rulings from the mass (texts). 27 Chalil was the best choice for this post, since he specialized in the science of tassir and hadith, two sciences which later led him to prominence in the field of religious scholarship in Indonesia 28

Before Chalil took up his duties in the Majlis Turjih, he was already an active member of the Muhammadiyah, teaching in the organization's al-madrasah al-wusta (secondary school) and leading the Majlis Tubligh (the Propagation Board) of the

²⁴Amir Maksum, "Pemahaman Tajdid dalam Muhammadiyah," (unpublished paper presented in the 22 Muhammadiyah Convention of 1989), 15.

²⁵Djamil, "Ijtihad Muhammadiyah Dalam Masalah Fikih Kontemporer," 102.

²⁶ Soenra Moehammudijah (September; 1940), 178.; Sutrisno Kutoyo, Kyai Mas Mansur (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1982), 75.

²⁷Cited in Djamil, "Ijtihad Muhammadiyah Dalam Masalah Fikih Kontemporer," 107. 28"H. Moenawar Chalil."

Muhummadiyah branch at Kendal. 29 In some branches, the Majlis Tubligh ran tubligh schools, where the graduates of the M-mudrusuh W-wusta were taught the Islamic sciences and were instructed in the skill of propagation ('ilm nl-da'wah) and the science of comparative religion. 30 The graduates of the schools were expected to become leading propagandists to spread the message of reformist ideas to their fellow Muslims. 31 As such. the Majlis Tubligh anticipated a number of challenges facing its mission, particularly from the opponents of reform. While there is no record indicating the establishment of such a mbligh school at Kendal, nevertheless after Chalil moved to Semarang in 1933, he was assigned to teach a propagation course at the Muhammadiyuh branch there. This assured him of a role in the Muhammadiyah's da'wah activities, given his position in charge of teaching the subject of theology in light of reformist views, for which course he prepared a book on the purification of Islamic theology. 32

Chalil was also the secretary of the Lajnah Ahli-Ahli Hadith Indonesia (the Committee of the Indonesian Experts on Hadith) from its inception in June 1941, a position that he held until his death on May 23, 1961. The Lajanh was chaired by Imam Ghozali, a prominent 'Alim (singular of 'ulama') from Solo. Ghozali was assisted by a deputy, Muhammad Ma'shum, a scholar with a considerable reputation in the field of hadith. Both belonged to reformist organizations and the latter was even a regular columnist writing in the section Sval-Djawab (Questions and Answers) devoted to religious issues for various Persis journals, which became an important forum for propagating the puritanical views of the organization's 'ulamā', 33

²⁹Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 4.

³⁰ Sejurah Pendidikan Swasta di Indonesia (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1976), 82.

^{3 1} Musthafa Kamal, et. al. Muhammadiyah Sebagai Gerakan Islam (Yogyakarta: Persatuan Islam, 1988), 118-122.

³² See his book Cursus Pengudjarun Oentoek Membersihkan Kalimuh Tuuhid (Soerabaia:

n.p., 1933); Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 2.

3 3 Muhammad Ma'shum wrote his fatwās in Sual-Djawab under the initials Mhd. Ms. See Sual-Djawab, vols. 1-8, 11-15, (Bangil: Persatuan Islam, n. d.); for the importance of Sual-Djawab, see Federspiel, Persutuan Islam, 21.

The establishment of the Lajach was an interesting phenomenon, since not only did it reflect a desire to promote and rejuvenate the study of the science of hadith, but it also gave impetus to the effort to prepare standard book of fight more in tune with the reformist perspective. 34 The reformists believed that the science of hadith tended to receive much less attention than that of fight. The blame for this was placed on the traditionalists by the reformists, who accused them of not giving the study of hadith its full share of attention. This lack of attention, the reformists argued, inhibited the traditionalists and prevented them from maintaining and transmitting the authentic teachings of the Prophet. They held that the curriculum of the pessatrens (traditional religious seminaries), which were mostly run by the traditionalists, relied too heavily on the study of figh 35

It was no coincidence that the project of creating a "new" figh was also one of the major concerns of some reformers in the Middle East, such as 'Abduh. 'Abduh's proposal of a new Islamic law was aimed at replacing an archaic figh, which he considered incapable of responding to new demands and needs. Similarly, the new version of figh proposed by the Lajach was designed to replace the existing figh books, the contents of which, the reformists believed, were not directly derived from the primary sources of Islamic law.

Although the Lajnah was a body in which each of its members could claim to be an active participant, yet the main credit for its pioneering work must be attributed to the constant dedication of three persons: Moenawar Chalil, Imam Ghozali and Muhammad Ma'shum. It was in recognition of their cooperation for the sake of maintaining the centrality of the *Qur'iin* and of promoting the role of *hadith* in Muslim life that the three were called the *trio-'ulama*. The role of Chalil was central in the affairs of the *Lajnah*.

³⁴ Imam Ghozali and Moenawar Chalil, Al-Figh al-Nabawy: Figih Berdasar Atas Pimpinan Nabi s. a. w. vols. 1-18 (Solo: Al-Ma'murijah: n. d.).

³⁵A. Farichin Chumaidy, "The Jam'iyyah Nahdlatul 'Ulama': Its Rise and Early Development, 1926-1945," (M. A. thesis, McGill University, Montreal, 1976), 117.
36M. Dawam Rahardjo, "Melihat ke Belakang Merancang Masa Depan: Pengantar," in

The latter's objective in writing a "compendium" of Indonesian figh, for example, was not put into effect until Chalil became involved in the undertaking soon after his retirement from government service and his release from prison. 37 The fruit of the work of the Lujanh was the publication Al-Fighun al-Nabawy, which was written in eighteen volumes. Each volume consisted of about forty pages and was issued separately, so that the public could afford to buy them. This was an important goal for their mission, which sought to provide a guide for the public on the religious duties prescribed by the Prophet. 38

Apart from its central mission to spread the Prophet's traditions to the vmmah, the Lajanh tried to open a new dimension in the socio-religious life of Muslims by attempting to eradicate sectarianism through the creation of its Mustashār Khāṣṣ (the Special Advisory Board). Hasyim Asy ari, a prominent scholar and the founder of the traditionalist organization Nahdut al-'Ulama' was included on this board. 39 This non-sectarian policy was stated literally in its statutes and underlay its main objective of establishing a coordinating forum, in which both the knum mudn (the modernists) and the knum run (the traditionalists) experts on hudith would work together in the interest of promoting the Prophetic traditions. 40 In reality, however, the members of the Mustashār Khāṣṣ were predominantly modernists, such as Mas Mansur, chairman of the Majlis Tarjih of the Muhammadiyah, Hadjid, a member of the Central Board of the Muhammadiyah, A. Hassan, chairman of the Persis in Bangil and Ahmad Al-Shurkati, founder of the M-Irshild, to name but a few 41

Islam Indonesia Menatap Musa Depan, (ed.) M. Dawam Rahardjo (Jakarta: P3M, 1989), 1-2; M. Dawam Rahardjo, Intelektual, Inteligensia dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa: Risulah Ceadekiuwaa Muslim (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), 33.

³⁷The project to write a new *figh* book was hampered by many difficulties. The first edition of its kind was issued in 1952, more than ten years late, due to, among other things, the Japanese military invasion and occupation of the country from 1942 until 1945 as well as the detainment of Moenawar Chalil and Muhammad Ma'shum in the early 1950s. See Al-Fighua al-Nabawy, vol. 1, 3-4. 38lbid.

^{39&}lt;sub>Ibid.</sub>

⁴⁰ See item two of its stipulation, ibid.

⁴ llbid.

It seems, therefore, that the appointment of Asy'ari to the office of *Mustashār Khāss* was prompted more by recognition of his broad-minded personality rather than in acknowledgment of his capacity as the *Ra'is 'Amm* of the *Shūrīyah* (chairman of the Advisory Board) of the *Nahdar al-'Ulamā'*. His academic reputation and wisdom had won the sympathy of the reformists, who clearly did not consider Asy'ari to be an advocate of the "traditionalist" faction, but, instead as a senior scholar, whose influence among the Muslim masses could hardly be matched by any Muslim leader. 42

Hamka describes Asy'ari as a religious scholar who preferred a gradual approach towards transforming Islamic thought. Hamka also approves of Asy'ari's commitment to the establishment of *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) among Muslims. In comparing Dahlan with Asy'ari, Hamka states that while the former expressed his ideas in a "revolutionary" way the latter promulgated his in an "evolutionary" way. That Hamka decided to spread Asy'ari's mawn'iz (guiding messages) in his reformist journal *Pandji Masjarnkan* messages in which the latter appealed to both the reformists and traditionalists to close their ranks and to work side by side, indicates Asy'ari's acceptability within the modernist circle. 43

While acknowledging the importance of the Lajanh's efforts in promoting sectarian reconciliation. Chalil, nevertheless, chose to put his energy into a plan to establish a coordinating office for the 'wana'. As a member of the corps of 'vlama'. Chalil realized that they had a moral authority over the Muslim population and that because they were

⁴²During the War of Independence, Hasyim Asy'ari issued faires (legal opinions) in which he declared that war against the Dutch was a fibil (holy war) and that using a Dutch ship to go on pilgrimage was prohibited by Islamic law. His campaign to spread the spirit of fibil and to boycott the Dutch transportation met with a remarkable success due to his strong influence among the Muslim masses and the role of his Tebuireng pesuatren within the circle of pesuatren community, particularly in the densely populated regions of East and Central Java. It seems, therefore, that it was due to his respected position and strong influence among the Muslim masses that the reformists often sought his involvement in their project. Noer, "Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia," 77.

⁴³See Hamka, "Al-Mawaa'izh Sjaich Hasjim Asj'ari," Pundji Masjurakat (August, 15; 1959), 3-6. Solichin Salam, Kini Hadji Hasjim Asj'ari, Ulama Besar Indonesia (Djakarta: Djaja Murni, 1963), 52-56.

heard on social and political matters as well, the 'ulumā' had a greater responsibility to act with prudence and wisdom. The 'ulumā' should work for the unity of the ummub, since they were the transmitters of the message of God to subsequent generations following the Prophet. 44

Through their role as transmitters of the divine message and as guardians of its pristine truth, Chalil states that the 'wlamā' had built up considerable respect among lay Muslims. He further maintained that lay Muslims would often respond to the words of the 'wlamā', while at the same time remaining deaf to similar orders from state officials. In his works, Chalil strongly condemns those 'wlamā' who abused the trust bestowed on them by the population and who manipulated it for material gain and high positions, while leaving the wmmah in a state of sectarian fragmentation. He declares that type of 'wlamā' to be 'wlamā' sū', (deceiving) or ushqiyā' (immoral). Those who belonged to the 'wlamā' sū', Chalil maintained, usually feared to speak the truth and were blindly loyal to rulers, who were in turn often oppressive. 45

For this reason, Chalil appealed to the Department of Religious Affairs to form a council of the Indonesian 'vlamā' modeled after the Hay'at Kibār al-'Ulamā' of Egypt. The proposal aimed at closing the gap between the 'vlamā' and creating a channel through which better understanding among members, irrespective of their sectarian affiliation, would be maintained. Owing to the dictates of their own religious outlook and political orientation, the 'vlamā' often issued different fatwās on a similar question. 46 This of

⁴⁴ Moenawar Chalil, Funksi Ulumu Dulum Musjurukut Dun Neguru (Djakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1957), 27-28.

⁴⁵Ibid.; see also Moenawar Chalil, "'Ulama dan 'Ulama: Imam al-Ghazali Mengutuk 'Ulama Penggila Kedudukan Disamping Baginda Radja," *Pandji Masjarakat* (January 1; 1960). 11-12; idem, "Funksi Ulama dalam Masjarakat dan Negara," *Hikmah* (May 29; 1954), 23-25.

⁴⁶ Muslims were divided into several political and religious factions and each established its own council of 'ulamā'. While the Muhammadīyah had the Majlis Turjīh, the Nuhdur al-'Ulamā' established the Majlis al-Shūrīyah wa al-Fatwā. The Musjumi named its council of 'ulamā' Majlis al-Shūrīyah and the Partai Sarekut Islam Indonesia, the P. S. I. I., founded its Majlis al-Shur'īyah.

course. Chalil believed, only caused confusion in the *ummah*, who, thus, became the victims of the religious disputes among the 'uluma' who were supposed to provide guidance, rather than friction. Chalil, therefore, welcomed the initiative of the Department of Religious Affairs in organizing, for the first time, a convention of all 'uluma' in Jakarta in 1951. He also recommended that such conventions be continued and expanded and that, if necessary, a permanent office called Dar ul-Ista' (Office of Farwa) be established, which would serve as the religious body in Indonesia with a full mandate to issue facwas to the unmah.⁴⁷

Chalil's concept of unity, however, could not be easily applied. His understanding of unity did not respect the right of individuals to have different opinions, but rather called for the amalgamation of differences into a single opinion which, he claimed, should be in accordance with the *Qur inic* norms and the Prophetic traditions. ⁴⁸ The traditionalists were certainly wary of such demands, regarding the call for a single opinion as favoring the conclusion of the *Qur in* and *findith*-based reformists over their own-*madhhab* based interpretations of the sources. Chalil's efforts, however, should be perceived as a genuine attempt to repair the fragmentation of the *ummah* by abolishing partisanship of the Islamic rite and by a unanimous return to the original sources of Islam.

After his resignation from his government post in 1951, Chalil found a new outlet for his political aspirations in the reformist political party, the *Majlis Shūrā Muslimin Indonesia*, or *Masjumi* (the Indonesian Muslim Consultative Council) and was quickly appointed to its *Majlis Shūrā Pusat* (Central Religious Consultative Board). This *Majlis* was primarily in charge of the proclamation of *Intwās* The task of the *Majlis Shūrā* was far from being purely religious, since the *Majlis* regularly issued *Intwās* in answer to any

⁴⁷ Moenawar Chalil, "Pertemuan Alim Ulama," Pemandangan (August, 17, 1951).

⁴⁸See his "Persatuan dan Kesatuan, 1," *Abadi* (August 26; 1960); idem, "Persatuan dan Kesatuan, 2," *Abadi* (September 7; 1960); idem, "Hikmah Dan Filsafat Salaam," *Abadi* (February 13; 1953).

question that concerned the party and the ummuh.

The political role of the Mujlis was made possible by the fact that the Masjumi itself was organized in such a way to enable the 'wama' to be involved at all levels of the party's structure. There was always at least one 'alim' on the control board of each level of the organization. 49 The role of the 'vluma' in the organizational structure of the Masjumi was to accommodate the fact that in Indonesia the 'ulama' could not be ignored as a political force and that whoever gained their political approval would consequently gain a large following, particularly in the rural areas. 50 M. Isa Anshary, one of the chairmen of the Masjumi Central Board, believed that the unpredicted electoral success of the Nahdat M-'Uluma' in the 1955 general election lay in the trust bestowed by the population on its 'u/ami', who exerted a strong influence on the masses. 51 The Masjumi underestimated the immense influence enjoyed by the 'vluma' of the Nahdat al-'Uluma' and even went so far as to consider it a marginal Islamic party before the election. The Nahone al-Ulama' had previously received a "quota" of eight seats only in the legislative body, when it was still affiliated with the Masjumi. However, the result of the electoral vote was a big step forward for the Nahdat al-'Ulama', representing a gain of forty five seats and third position after the Masjumi in terms of the number of seats held in the legislative body. 52

The 'vlama's political role was more or less confined to the sphere of issuing farwas relevant to the questions that arose at particular times. During the first general election of 1955, for instance, Chalil issued a farwa declaring that winning the political contest in the election was a religious obligation. Using analogical reasoning, he equated a general election with a jihad (holy war), in which every able Muslim was obliged to

⁴⁹Federspiel, Persatuan Islam, 182.

⁵⁰ Noer, "Masjumi," 50.

^{5 1}M. Isa Anshary, "Mu'tamar Masjumi Bandung adalah Permulaan Bajangan Gelap," Duwlah Islamyah. (1957), 20; for an account of the role of the 'ulama' in the Nahdat al-'Ulama' and their strong influence among its supporters, see Chumaidy, "The Jam'iyyah Nahdlatul 'Ulama'," 53-59.

⁵² Alfian, Pemikiran dan Perubahan Politik Indonesia (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1978), 33.

participate for the glory of the faith. According to him, a Muslim who committed himself to fight for the victory of Islam by all possible means in the election deserved noble rewards equivalent to those promised by God to the *mujithidia* (religious fighters). Furthermore, he appealed to Muslims to donate part of their alms to the political cause, so that sufficient funding would be available for the Islamic parties enabling them to carry out activities leading to their electoral victory. 53

His other political *Intwits* were typical of the *Persis Intwits* and were concerned with the general content of nationalism, the philosophical bases of a nation-state and the condemnation of political trends opposed to Muslim political goals. ⁵⁴ In one of his writings, for instance, he criticizes the secular nationalists for denying the strong Islamic element which historically had been present in Indonesian nationalism. For him, it was only through Islam that the edifice of Indonesian nationalism had been erected. He further argues that Indonesian secular nationalists who were trying to adopt the model of the Turkish secular nationalists' thought were misled. In Turkish nationalism, Chalil explains, Islam had played an important role in unifying all ranks within Turkish society, a unity which determined the Turkish victory in their War of Independence and in their efforts at driving the Greeks from their soil. ⁵⁵

As a reformist who strove for the implementation of the *Shari'uh* as a positive law in the country. Chalil believed that Islam, as an ideal political system, had been relegated to the background by the secular nationalists. 56 He further accused them of ignoring Islam in

⁵³See Moenawar Chalil, "Menggunakan Zakat Utk Pemilihan Umum," Abadi (April 4; 1954; idem, "Beranilah Berqurban Untk Pemilihan Umum," Abadi (August 6; 1954).

⁵⁴Federspiel, Persacuan Islam, 134.

⁵⁵See Moenawar Chalil, "Kebangsaan Jang Tinggalkan Agama," Abudi (February, 12; 1954).

⁵⁶Moenawar Chalil criticized those who claimed to be the followers of Islam, but who were politically involved in hampering the establishment of Islam as the only ruling system in Indonesia. He, therefore, articulated that Islam should be the only true ideology for the state and hoped that the cause of Islam would gain ground. See Moenawar Chalil "Umat Islam Harus Ta'ashub Kepada Agamanja," *Abadi* (September, 24; 1954); idem. "Beranilah Berqurban Untk Pemilihan Umum."

the Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 (Constitution of 1945), on which the foundations of the Republic of Indonesia were built. He also shared with the Musjumi politicians a common opposition to the secular nationalists, a stand which reached its climax in the early 1950s with the rise of several Muslim rebellions against Soekarno's regime in various parts of the country. Nevertheless, Chalil's opposition certainly never extended beyond promoting the concept of an Islamic state through democratic means. 57

His political aspirations were in line with the Musjumi's political stance, even before he became a member of its Majlis Shura. In the Kongres Muslimin Indonesia (the Indonesian Muslim Congress) held in Yogyakarta from 20-25 December, 1949, he proposed a resolution demanding that the Kongres not condemn the Dar al-Islam movement and that it differentiate between renegade groups creating terror in the countryside and the true members of the Dar al-Islam. According to him, it was due to the terror spread by those renegade groups that the reputation of the leader of Dar al-Islam. Kartosuwirjo, had been tarnished. He made this statement in reply to Musaddad, a participant in the Kongres, who had earlier argued that once the Dar al-Islam was able to establish a provisional government in the districts under its control, it began to impose heavy taxes and to create terror among the population. This, in turn, led many of its supporters to defect and caused the $D\bar{a}rul$ -Islām to lose its reputation. 58 In his argument, Musaddad mentioned that he was a member of the Dar al-Salam (the House of Peace), an organization that was initially involved in conducting pengnjians (religious gatherings) only, but which had later developed into a para-military force. The Daral-Sulam had lent its military support to the Dar al-Islam, when the latter launched a campaign against Dutch attempts to reoccupy the country. However, as soon as the Dar al-Islam began to exploit and abuse the population, the former severed its association with the latter 59

Muslimin Indonesia, n.d.), 41-47.

59lbid.

⁵⁷B. J. Boland, The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982). 58 Boeah Kongres Muslimin Indonesia (Djogdjakarta: Badan Usaha dan Penerbitan

In this debate, Chalil's opinion won strong support from many of the participants in the Kongres. especially from his close associates in the Persis, the Muhammadiyah and the Lajaah Ahli-ahli Hadith Indonesia, such as Imam Ghozali, Muhammad Ma'shum and Hadjid. The session of the Kongres finally issued a resolution fully supporting the Masjumi's attempts to resolve the question of the Dit al-Islām in a spirit of peace and compromise. Throughout the 1950s, Moehammad Natsir, speaking as the Masjumi leader, deplored many government attempts to resolve the Dit al-Islām problem by force of arms. It seems that the difference of opinion over the question of the Dit al-Islām, as reflected in the debate between Chalil and Musaddad, had proceeded along reformist and traditionalist political lines. It should be noted at this point that [Anwar] Musaddad was later one of the chairmen of the Central Shūriyah (consultative) Board of the Nahdat al-Ylamā 62

As a person who faithfully approached issues from a puritanist perspective. Chalil, a member of the Majlis Shord, criticized any religious ruling which, according to him, was not properly and accurately devised. He, for example, accused the chairman of the Shord, Shalih Su'aidy, of negligence in issuing a facual permitting a female member of the Central Board of the Masjumi to travel to Russia without a multim (a close male relative). The permission was based on a Quranic verse which, according to Su'aidy's interpretation, allowed a female to travel alone, provided that the journey was done in fulfillment of a religious duty. Her journey to Russia, which was intended to uncover the plan of the enemies of Islam (the communists), certainly met the criteria suggested by the Quran. Su'aidy even went so far as to declare that such a journey could rightly be called a jihād

⁶⁰ Ibid.: the fourth Masjumi Convention declared, through a committee established for this purpose, that the Republik Indonesia Serikat or R. I. S. (the United Indonesian Republic) should approach the question of the Dār al-Islām rebellion in peaceful way. M. Isa Anshary, "Masjumi dan D. I.," Suara Partai Masjumi, 6 (June; 1951), 9; D. I./ T. I. Tiduk Ditolerir (Jakarta: Majalah Islam Kiblat, 1983), 7.

⁶ l Federspiel, Persucum Islum. 108.
6 2 For the role that Musaddad played in the Nuhdat al-'Ulumu', see "Prof. K. H. Anwar Musaddad Pelindung dan Payung N. U. Sunda," Aula (March; 1995), 81-86.

The term jihād, Su'aidy added, should be understood in broader terms as not only fighting non-Muslims in the battlefield, but also traveling to a non-Muslim country in order to obtain information about the strength and weaknesses of potential enemies. Chalil, on the other hand, declared that not only did the *Qurānic* verse quoted by Su'aidy not apply to the case in point, but that Su'ady's argument was entirely invalid, having been put forward merely to avert the prohibition prescribed by Islamic law. 63

Chalil also denounced the validity of the *hadith* used by Su'aidy and questioned the reliability of one of its transmitters. Despite the fact that the *hadith* was transmitted by 'Adi Ibn Hātim and was contained in al-Bukhāri's collection, Chalil found that one of its transmitters, Isrā'il Ibn Yūnus Ibn Ishāq, was an unreliable authority on the basis of the opinion of such great scholars as Ibn Sa'd, 'Alī al-Madanī, Ibn Hazm and Ja'far Ibn Shaybah. Therefore, Chalil concluded that the *hadīth* suffered from a serious defect which rendered the use of the *hadīth* unacceptable. 64 Citing a *hadīth* only after strictly scrutinizing the reliability of its transmitter, as practiced by Chalil, was typical of a puritan who did not want to employ any tradition, unless its authenticity was established. According to Chalil, any religious scholar who loosely quoted a *hadīth* without subjecting its transmitter to strong scrutiny should be called a *daijāl* (imposter). 65

Chalil also doubted Su'aidy's claim that some medieval jurists, whom al-Nawawi mentions in his al-Majmū' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab, had declared that such travel is lawful. Chalil said that Su'aidy's manner of quoting al-Nawawi's opinions was not correct and that he only took note of those 'ulamā' who permitted such travel and discounted those who were against it. Chalil further claimed that he had verified Su'aidy's argument and

⁶³ See his article, "Fatwa Model Pimpinan Harian Madjelis Sjura Pusat Masjumi Tentang Safarul Mar-ah," *Dawluh Islamyuh* (August; 1957), 22; idem, "Hukum Wanita Islam Belajar Sendirian," *Abudi* (August 13; 1954).

⁶⁴See his two articles, "Fatwa Model Pimpinan Harian Madjelis Sjura Pusat Masjumi tentang Safarul Mar-ah," 22; idem, "Islam Tinggal Nama," Abadi (March 5; 1954).

⁶⁵ Moenawar Chalil, "Djangan Mempermudah Urusan Hadits," Abadi (July 16; 1954); idem, "Awas Partai Dadjdjal," Abadi (February 27: 1953); idem, "Ratjoen Jang Berbahaja Bagi Oemat Islam," Pembela Islam, no. 52, 10-13.

discovered that in *nl-Majmū*, al-Nawawi advanced opinions both for and against travel by an unaccompanied female. Authenticity was the guiding factor in Chalil's approach to making any religious ruling, particularly if the arguments cited were derived from the *Qur in* and *sunneh* 66

The highest position Chalil held was that of chairman of the Majlis 'Ulama' (Council of the 'Ulumu') of the Central Board of the Persis. He had been a member of the Persis since the early 1930s, at which time he was serving as a regular columnist for its periodical, Pembela Islam, for the Kendal region. From that time onward he had held a dual membership: as a leading member of the Muhammadiyuh and a columnist for the Persis. 67 It must be noted that many persons belonging to the Persis were influential members of other religious, political and social organizations as well. Moehammad Natsir, for example, belonged to the Jong Islamieten Bond, while Sabirin was a prominent member of the Sarekat Islam.⁶⁸ This phenomenon may be an indication that its members regarded the Persis as a group formed for religious study and education and that other groups could be used to attain other goals. 69 As the head of the Persis Majlis 'Ulama', Chalil also spoke for Persis' views. In his polemics with Su'aidy, for example, Chalil can be said to have been representing the Persis. Indeed, he declared that the arguments he had put forth were in support of the opinions of A. Kadir Hassan, the son of the founder of the Persis in Bangil and Chalil's colleague in the Mujlis 'Ulama' of the Persis 70 His political stance also fell within the realm of the political aspirations of the Persis. His critical attitude towards the secular nature of the constitution of the country, for example, was in harmony

⁶⁶Chalil, "Fatwa Model Pimpinan Harian Madjelis Sjura," 23.

^{67&#}x27;Abdu-1 Mu'ti 'Ali, "The Muhammadijah Movement: A Bibliographical Introduction," (M. A. thesis, McGill University, Montreal, 1957), 80; Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 2; Munawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 5.

⁶⁸ Aboebakar, Sedjarah Hidup K. H. A. Wachid Hasjim dan Karangan Tersiur (Djakarta: Panitija Buku Peringatan Alm. K. H. A. Wachid Hasjim, 1957), 80; Pembela Islam. 34 (September; 1931), frontispiece.

⁶⁹ Federspiel, Persutuan Islam, 17-18.

⁷⁰Chalil, "Fatwa Model Pimpinan Harian Madjelis Sjura Pusat," 24; H. M. A. Perempuan Berdjalan Keluar Negeri," Svul-Djawab, No. 4, 30-31.

with Moehammad Natsir and Isa Anshary's position, which never lost sight of the goal of establishing an Indonesian state based on Islamic principles. 71 While both Natsir and Anshary were chairmen of the *Persis*, the former was also the general chairman of the *Musjumi* and the latter a member of its central leadership. 72

Among the other religious posts that Chalil held, one can count that of adviser to the Pusat Pendidikan Islam (Center for Islamic Education) at Solo and member of the Pantia Pertimbungun Kesehatan dan Shar' (Committee for Health and Shar' Consultation) of the Department of Health. 73 There is no detailed record of Chalil's contributions in the Pusar Pendidikan Islam, while his activities in the Panitin Pertimbungan Kesehatan dan Shar' could be gleaned from a number of pamphlets. The Panitin was established on August 12, 1954, with the primary mission of discussing medically-related issues from the viewpoint of Shar' (divine law). 74 The Panitia published its religious rulings through the journal that it had founded. Apart from the internal members of the committee, who were mainly modernist Muslims working in the Department of Health and Religion, there were also several non-civil servant members who were for the most part modernists, such as Moenawar Chalil, A Hassan, Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy and Fuad Mohamad Fachruddin. Unlike others, however, who were either representatives of institutions or appointed individuals, Chalil was admitted into the Panitin in his capacity as the chairman of the Majlis 'Uluma' of the Persis and as the secretary of the Lajnuh Ahli-Ahli Ḥadīth as well. 75 This certainly enabled him to exercise greater influence, when he was able to, upon the other members of the Shar' section, who alone had the authority to issue facwās. As a

⁷ Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 120.

⁷²Ibid., 123-125.

⁷³ Moenawwar, "Riwayat Hidup," 2-8; Munawwar "Rlil," 530; Kementerian Kesehatan R. I. "Putusan Panitia M.P.K.S. no. 2/ 1954." in Kesehatan dan Syara', 5 (December: 1954), 54; "K. H. Moenawar Chalil Diangkat Sebagai Aggauta Panitija Madjelis Pertimbangan Kesehatan R. I.," Suara Merdeka (December 27; 1954); "Berdirinja Madjlis Pertimbangan Sjara' dan Kesehatan di Indonesia," Hikmah (August 21; 1954)?

⁷⁴Kementerian Kesehatan R. I. "Kata Pengantar," in *Kesehatan dan Sjara*', 1 (September; 1954), 3.

⁷⁵Ibid., 54.

consequence of the modernist domination of the *Punicia*, the manner of approaching the cases under discussion was reformist in the sense that the deduction of the rulings was made with reference to the *Qur'ān*, *hadīth* and other literature which the reformists considered acceptable, such as *Zād al-Ma'ād* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah and *Bidāyau al-Mu'ād* by Ibn Rushd. They did not use the *fiqh* books referred to by the traditionalists. 76

The reformists held that the traditionalist fight books, such as the Tuhfah. al-Mahalli, al-Qalyobi and many others, which were widely studied in the pesantrens, were not acceptable on account of their incompatibility with the spirit of modernity which demanded analysis. 77 On the other hand, they discovered that the works of reformist wana? such as Ibn Taymīyah, Ibn Qayyim, 'Abduh and Ridā were analytical and, thus, were more in keeping with modern approaches. 78

Chalil's reputation was due, in part, to his wide knowledge of the Islamic sciences, which he shared with the Muslim community through his writings. Judged by the standards of Indonesian scholarship at the time, he was among the most productive writers. In 1958, a poll was conducted by the *Himpunan Pengarang Islam Indonesia* (the Association of Indonesian Muslim Writers) to determine the ranking of the writers of the day and Chalil was ranked in fifth place. He came out ahead of such celebrated writers as Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, whose authority in Islamic legal matters remains unrivaled until the present time, and A. Hassan, whose polemical style of writing in support of purifying the faith is the basis of his wide popularity throughout the country even today. ⁷⁹

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷They referred to Tuhfat al-Tullāb by Zakariyā al-Anṣāri, Tuhfat al-Muḥtāj li-Sharh al-Miahāj by Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytami, al-Maḥalli by Jalāl al-Din al-Maḥalli and Hāshiyatāa: al-Qalyūbi wa 'Amīrah by Shihāb al-Din al-Qalyūbi and al-Shaykh 'Amīrah. A. Halim Hasan, "Tafsir Al-Manar dan Pengaruhnja, 2," Pandji Masjarakat (February, 15; 1960), ?; see, Zakariyā al-Anṣāri, Tuḥfat al-Tullāb bi-Sharh Taḥrīr Tanqīh al-Lubāb (Indonesia: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyah, n.d) and Qalyūbi wa 'Amīrah, Hāshiyatāa: al-Qulyūbi wa 'Amīrah 'alā Sharh Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī, 4 vols. (Miṣr: Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣābiḥ, 1949). 78Hasan, "Tafsir Al-Manar dan Pengaruhnja, 2."

^{79&}quot;Hasil Angket Sepuluh Pengarang Islam Terkemuka Sekarang," Dawlah Islamyah.

Reformists realized the importance of periodicals as vehicles for disseminating their views and for challenging the traditionalist religious beliefs perpetuated in the curriculum and propagation emanating from the traditionalist centers of learning, notably in the countless pessatrens and pengnian circles. In the field of publication, the reformists were, therefore, far ahead of the traditionalists in terms of producing a larger number of books, magazines and pamphlets. This is particularly true for Persis which was even more active in this area than its fellow reformist groups, particularly in the publication of journals. Persis, which was a small and loosely knit organization, was able to publish ten journals and many practical guides to Islamic rituals, which served as manuals for reformist adherents throughout the country. Indeed, had it not been for its journals and books, the puritan teachings of Persis would have remained unfamiliar to non-Persis members. 80

Chalil had already established a magazine "Swarn Islam" (the Voice of Islam) in 1935. This magazine was founded for the sake of reviving the sunnah of the Prophet and eradicating bid'ah (unggegesang sunnah, mbongkar bid'ah).81 Chalil, who might have wanted to reach a larger audience, chose Javanese, the lingun franca of the largest Indonesian ethnic group, as the language of his magazine. The magazine was the first of its kind to target Javanese readers and was the only organ in Javanese that the reformists ever produced in the region of Semarang and its adjacent areas or presumably in the whole Javanese speaking areas.

The themes that appeared in the magazine dealt mostly with theology, rituals and ethics. As a typical reformist magazine, it provided a column for polemical issues, which were presented in the form of mynāzarah (exchange of ideas) or svāl-jawāb (questions

⁽December: 1957), 23-27; Tamar Djaja, Riwayat Hidup A. Hassan (Jakarta: Mutiara, 1980), 161.

⁸⁰This figure is mentioned in the bibliography of Federspiel's *Persatuan Islam*. Some of the journals appeared for a few months only, while many others were able to survive for a number of years. *Anti Komunis* (a weekly magazine), for example, was issued seven times only from January 1958 to March 1958. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 233.

and answers). The magazine had two goals: the first was to sound the trumpet of puritan ideas and the second to educate those Muslims who had a rudimentary knowledge of Islam. In pursuing the first goal, discussion focused on such disputed issues as debates over touching the *Qur'im* during minor ritual impurity or pronouncing the *qunüt* etc., while discussions revolving around the second goal consisted of lessons on the moral standards of Islam, rituals formulas and basic beliefs regarding God, the Prophets and the like. Needless to say, all discussions followed the puritan point of view. 82 Following the aggressive tradition of *Persis* in conducting *tabligh*, Chalil chose debate as the means of propagating his puritanist views and challenging his opponents. His debates, which were published in *Swarn Islam*, showed no tolerance for his rivals. This attitude was an outcome of the religious antagonism that plagued Muslims during Chalil's lifetime. His intolerance was similar to that of other *Persis* scholars who often used harsh language and resorted to a polemical style of expression. 83

Writing in modernist journals came easily to Chalil, whose membership in the Masjumi party provided him with the opportunity to write for the party's magazines and its newspaper, Abadi. His articles in Hikmah, a popular magazine whose chief editor was Natsir, generally exalted Islam, warning against relaxation in the observance of its teachings and appealing for broad-mindedness. Chalil too called for the acceptance of Islam in its entirety, since this, according to him, was the only way to achieve progress. In one of his articles, for instance, he points out that the unequal distribution of wealth was due to the Muslims' reluctance to observe wholeheartedly the duty of zikil. He believed that if the doctrine of zikil were observed and implemented in a proper way, the problems of

⁸²See, for example, Swara Islam, 4 (April; 1935); 5 (May; 1935); 6 (December; 1935).

⁸³Compare, for example, the way Chalil treated his rival, a Shafi'ite 'alim, in a debate over the validity of salah qabliyah (a recommended prayer done before a mandatory one) in the Friday prayer, with the treatment by a certain scholar of the Persis with respect to his rival, Mahfudz Shiddiq, in which he equated Shiddiq's action with the behavior of a bat, which feared light, because Shiddiq was reluctant to conduct an open debate with him. See Swaru Islam. 4 (April; 1935), 19-24; Al-Lisan, 4 (March 27; 1936), 30.

In another article written for Hikmah. Chalil also dealt with themes which called for strict adherence to Islamic messages and for rejection of any compromises in implementing its principles, as the only way to manifest a genuine imin (belief) and to reflect the spirit of jihād (struggle) exemplified in the Prophet's uncompromising attitude during his struggle for the victory of Islam. 85 Through his articles, Chalil introduced his audience to different opinions formulated by medieval jurists about rituals, without favoring any single opinion over the others. In doing this, he wanted to educate and to provide Muslims with a variety of views, so that strict adherence to one particular juristic rite would no longer be practiced. 86 Chalil claimed that difference of opinions was acceptable, provided that each was supported with strong arguments. Nonetheless, when he took part in any debate, he often supported his arguments with the opinions of modernist thinkers, whom he considered capable of providing a sound analysis due to their acquaintance with both traditional learning and modern science.87

Chalil also wrote a religious column for Abadi, the Musjumi party's daily newspaper, which was published throughout the 1950s.88 Chalil's writings mostly appeared in 1953, 1954 and 1955 and were published separately in the form of pamphlets numbering approximately one hundred in all. His role in the Majlis Shūrā may have been a factor in gaining the party's trust, enabling him to act as the "preacher" to its supporters of the religious themes he explored in the newspaper. In short, Chalil's writings in Abadi called for moral activism, gave lessons on basic rituals, acted as a guide to a better

⁸⁴ Moenawar Chalil, "Funksi Zakat Dalam Masjarakat, 2," Hikmah (April 4: 1954), 20-21; idem, "Funksi Zakat Dalam Masjarakat, 3," Hikmah (July 3; 1954), 20-22.

⁸⁵ Moenawar Chalil, "Tjara dan Djedjak Nabi Muhammad s.a.w. Dikala Hendak Menegakkan Hukum Allah Dimuka Bumi," Hikmah (October 12; 1956), 4-6.

⁸⁶ Moenawar Chalil, "Kaifijat Tjara Tjara Berchutbah Djum'at Sepandjang Pimpinan Nabi s.a.w." Hikmah (September 1; 1956), 21-22.

⁸⁷ Moenawar Chalil, "Alam Fikiran Manusia Terhadap Peristiwa Israa dan Mi'radj Nabi Muhammad s.a.w." Hikmah (March 20; 1954),19-21.

understanding of the Qur in and sunnah and launched attacks on popular religious practices.

As a reformist, Chalil advocated the concept of social responsibility and criticized both the passivity of Muslims and their quest for material progress, faults which, he believed, were partly due to a misinterpretation of the concept of $du'\bar{a}'$ (prayer). According to Chalil, $du'\bar{a}'$ alone is incapable of changing the conditions of a society unless accompanied by active effort in this direction. 89 This view seems to support the belief of earlier reformists that creation was ordained by God to follow the principles of nature and revolved around the system of cause and effect. No wonder, he adds, that Muslims are still enslaved by ignorance and immersed in complete stagnation, since what is preached to them every Friday from the pulpit means nothing. Muslims, he points out, have had failed to grasp the true spirit of Islam which, indeed, teaches the principles of dynamism and a strong work-ethos, which alone can translate worldly progress into reality. 90

In his capacity as a religious scholar. Chalil often wrote about issues of ritual practice in his articles for Abadi. He also discussed doctrinal matters, this in keeping with the newspaper's dedication to the cause of religion (untuk agama). His writings on doctrinal themes elaborated in particular the meaning of the pillars of Islam, i.e. prayer, alms, fasting, pilgrimage and tawhio. In addition, Chalil wrote on legal topics, in which he presented a variety of views to provide a broader perspective and meet the complex nature of contemporary problems. The topics he dealt with in this connection involved social issues, such as alcohol addiction, gambling, forced marriage, polygamy and the like. 92 Chalil was also concerned with moral issues and wrote a number of pamphlets

⁸⁹ Moenawar Chalil, "Do'a Jang Maqbul," Abadi (January 2; 1953).

⁹⁰ Ibid.; Moenawar Chalil. "Sebaik-baik Manusia Sepandjang Pimpinan Islam." Abadi (April 8; 1960).

⁹ See the following articles by Moenawar Chalil, "Kaum Muslimat Dan Sembahjang Hari Raja," Abadi (May 28; 1954); "Apakah Hasil Puasa Kita?" Abadi (April 1; 1960); "Zakat Fitrah," Abadi (March 25; 1954); "Kewadjiban Zakat-Fitrah," Abadi (June 5; 1953).

9 2 Moenawar Chalil, "Hukum Lotere," Abadi (October 9; 1953); idem, "Kawin Paksa

Chalil's concern with the *Qur'im* as the primary source of the *Shuri'uh* constitutes an important part of his writings in *Abadi* and indicates his strong adherence to the principle of a return to the *Qur'im*. Chalil, thus, attacked those who, in his eyes, had abused the *Qur'im* in putting it to irrelevant issues, such as remedying the sick, making amulets and other folk practices. An uncompromising attitude towards popular religious beliefs was taken up by Chalil who embarked upon the grand mission of challenging those traditions which, in his view, had corrupted the purity of Islamic teachings and had contaminated its noble message. He raised his voice against belief in the *kūthin* (soothsayer), takhnyyul (magic tricks) and khunutat (superstitions), as well as the excessive religious celebrations on Mawlidal-nabi (the Prophet's birthday), 'Ashura' (the tenth day of the month of al-Muḥarram) and taulatbi-ul-hulūt (the 'Idul-Fitr).

Alirun Islam, which claimed to be a progressive magazine and which was devoted

Betulkah Dari Pimpinan Islam?," Abadi (October 23; 1953); idem, "Soal Wali Hakim," Abadi (April 9; 1954); idem, "Hukum Bersumpah," Abadi (November 20; 1953); idem, "Kufu Dalam Perkawinan," Abadi (December 11; 1953); idem, "Mana Jang Lebih Benar: Kedjelekan Atau Kebaikan Poligami," Abadi (October 29; 1954); idem "Mengapa Agama Islam Memperkenalkan Poligami? Poligami Adalah Tabiat Kaum Lelaki," Abadi (October 10; 1954); idem, "Tudjuan Pokok Dari Poligami Adalah Menolong Anak² Jatim Dan Kaum Wanita," Abadi (October 15; 1954).

^{9 3} Moenawar Chalil, "Amal Perbuatan Jang Ichlas," Pemandangan (June 3; 1951); idem, "Apakah Dan Siapakah Munafiq itu?" Abadi (December 4; 1953); idem, "Arti Mensjukuri Nikmat," Abadi (March 13; 1953). idem, "Djangan Meremehkan Dan Menghina Jang Ketjil," Abadi (May 20; 1955); idem, "Hikmah dan Filsafat Salaam," Abadi (February 13; 1953); idem, "Kesempitan dan Kelapangan," Abadi (?); idem, "Kewadjiban Menegur Orang Jang Zhalim," Abadi (May 6; 1960); idem, "Kupasan Arti Sjukur," Pemandangan (July 2; 1951); idem, "Sekitar Soal Bachil," Abadi (January 5; 1954).

⁹⁴See his "Al-Quraan," Abadi (February 4; 1953); idem, "Al-Qur'anul Hakiem," Abadi (November 27; 1953); idem, "Al-Qur'anul Hakiem," Abadi (April 17; 1953); idem, Al-Qur'anul Hakiem," Abadi (September 4; 1953); idem, "Al-Qur'anul Hakim," Abadi (October 3; 1953).

⁹⁵ See the following articles by Chalil, "Djangan Pertjaja Kepada Kahin," Abadi (August 23; 1954); "Djangan Pertjaja Kepada Tachajul dan Churafat, Abadi (October 30; 1954); "Djangan Pertjaja Akan Tangkal dan Guna-Guna," Abadi (July 10; 1953); "Djangan Pertjaja akan Sihir," Abadi (March 6; 1953); "Bid ah pada Asjuraa," Abadi (September 25; 1953); "Hadits2 Mauludan," Abadi (February 20; 1953); Menjingkap Tabir Kepalsuan Dari Hadits2 Mengenai Kekeramatan Dan Kesaktian Hari Asjura," Abadi (July 15; 1960); "Peringatan Asjura," Abadi (August 3; 1954); "Tachajul Dlm Bulan Shafar jang Harus Dibongkar," Abadi (November 6; 1953).

to Islamic thought in religious doctrines, politics, society and culture, was another of the publications for which Chalil wrote. The editor-in-chief of Alirun Islam was a prominent Masjumi figure, namely M. Isa Anshary. The magazine invited modernist thinkers like Moehammad Natsir, M. Isa Anshary, M. Rasjidi and Abu Hanifah, who were well-informed on the relation between religion and modernity, to contribute to its forum. The magazine also published articles written by such nationalist figures as Sukarno, M. Hatta and M. Yamin, provided they dealt with the interests of all groups including Muslims. 96 Chalil for his part wrote on religious subjects and adopted a rational approach in his writing in order to demonstrate that Islam was compatible with modernity. 97

Chalil's participation in the *Masjumi* publishing efforts was not only confined to writing, but extended to membership on the editorial board of *Dawlah Islamyuh*, a highly regarded *Masjumi*-affiliated magazine which identified itself as "the voice of the Islamic revolutionary group." ⁹⁸ In *Dawlah Islamyuh* Chalil wrote several articles, one of the more daring of which denounced the validity of the *fatwā* issued by the chairman of the *Majlis Shūrā*. ⁹⁹ Several articles were also written by him in *Masjumi's* official magazine. *Suara Partui Masjumi*. One of these articles deals with the role of the Imām in Islam and traces the significance of the office of *imāmah* in the system of government of early Islam. ¹⁰⁰ Chalil's treatment of the concept of *imāmah* may have represented an attempt on his part to recreate the image of the golden period of the *nl-Khulafā nl-Rāshidūn* (the first four orthodox Caliphs). ¹⁰¹ Many reformists had earlier laid an emphasis on this aspect of

⁹⁶See Sukarno, "Revolusi Indonesia adalah Sebagian dari Revolusi Dunia," Aliran Islam. (July-August; 1949); M. Hatta, "Politik Synthese," Aliran Islam, (December; 1948); M. Yamin, "Penglaksanaan Kemerdekaan," Aliran Islam, (February; 1949).

⁹⁷See, for example, his two articles, "Pendjelasan Para Filosof Islam Tentang Israa dan Mi'radj," Alican Islam (?); idem, "Peristiwa Nabi Muhammad s.a.w. Disihir Orang Jahudi dan Munafiq," Alican Islam, (July-August; 1949), 529-535.

⁹⁸See the inside of the Dawlah Islamyah front cover.

⁹⁹For another article that he wrote, see his "Peraturan Allah Atas Segenap Bangsa dan Hubungannja Atas Kaum Muslimin, 2," Dawlah Islamyah, (October; 1957), 25-33.

¹⁰⁰ Moenawar Chalil, "Kedudukan Imam Didalam Islam," Svara Partai Masjumi 7-8 (?), 26-27, 31.

¹⁰¹ Although Chalil did not explicitly speak of the era of the four orthodox Caliphs, he

Muslim history in order to attract the attention of Muslims to the past "glory" of Islam.

Chalil's other writings were scattered in other modernist publications, such as *Pundji Masjurakat*, a magazine established in Jakarta as a continuation of a previous one published in Medan under the title of *Pedomun Masjurukat*. Although *Pundji Masjurukat* did not claim affiliation to any particular sectarian group, the names of those serving on its board of editors show a clear allegiance to the *Muhummadiyah*. In *Pundji Masjurukat*. Chalil wrote at least two articles in which he condemned the 'uluma' for having become the political brokers and called for enjoining good and forbidding evil. 103 Chalil wrote for *Pundji Musjarukat* on a regular basis, being appointed as the permanent correspondent for the Semarang region. 104 Finally, it should be mentioned that Chalil contributed several articles on moral uprightness as prescribed by Islam to the newspaper *Pemundungan*. 105

Chalil disseminated his reformist views through his books as well. 106 However, unlike the case with his articles, the issues he raised in his books were rather similar and can, therefore, be divided into three categories. The *Qur inic*-related studies make up the first category, wherein the discussion reflects his faith in the superiority of the teachings of the *Qur in* over man-made ideological concepts. He argues in these works that a return to

believed that those four were the ones chosen by the Prophet to be the Caliphs for his vmmah as stated in his hudich. As for other hudichs which included the Umayyads among the Caliphs promised by the Prophet, Chalil doubted the reliability of its muta (content), which contradicted their tyrannical and oppressive rule. Moenawar Chalil, Chulifuh Atuu Kepala Negara Sepandjang Pimpinan Qur'an dan Sunnah (Solo: Siti Sjamsijah, 1957), 42-44

¹⁰²Mohd. Faqih Usman who was elected as the chairman of the Central Board of the Muhammadiyah in 1968 became its general editor, while Hamka, who was one of the advisers for its central board from 1978-1984, was its editor-in-chief. See the board of editors of Piadji Masjarakat published at the end of 1959 and the early 1960s and the list of names in the leadership board of the Muhammadiyah in Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesia (Yogyakarta: Central Leadership of Muhammadiyah, n.d.), 15-16.

¹⁰³ Moenawar Chalil, "'Ulama dan 'Ulama: Imam Al-Ghazali Mengutuk 'Ulama Penggila Kedudukan Disamping Baginda Radja." *Pandji Musjurukut* (January 1; 1960), 9-12.

¹⁰⁴See *Pandji Masjarakat* (March 28; 1960), 31.

¹⁰⁵ See, for instance, his writings under the titles of "Amal Perbuatan Jang Ichlas," *Pemandangan* (June 3; 1951), "Kupasan Arti Sjukur," *Pemandangan* (July 2; 1951) and "Idul Fitri Lambang Keluhuran Budi Pekerti," *Pemandangan* (July 5; 1951);

the Qur'in was the only assurance for progress and victory. The second category includes material related to the Prophet as an exemplary figure. He discusses in particular those traditions which support and promote the idea of purification. The third category comprises miscellaneous writings discussing the true meaning of Islam and seeking to rectify misconceptions of its noble mission. Other subjects in this category include the duties and rights of the 'wama' in society and the state, the role of women and the function of rulers according to the prescriptions of the Shart'nh.

Chalil's biography reflects a series of activities inspired by the spirit of religious reform and manifested in his involvement in a number of reformist institutions. His association with the Majlis Tarjih, the Majlis Shūrī and the Majlis 'Ulamā' indicates his strong commitment to the cause of reform through those councils, which were charged with preserving, developing and spreading reformist principles. His opinions on various subjects were spread through pamphlets, articles and books and served as a means of hastening the propagation of reformist ideas, which would have, otherwise, been overshadowed by traditionalist thought, rooted as it was in the traditional learning institutions for centuries. Although the subjects Chalil covered extended from the basic doctrines of Islam to disputed matters, the final analysis bear the hall-mark of the reformist thesis of a return to the pristine purity of Islam and the eradication of non-Islamic practices. As a reformist, Chalil was one of the many who were committed to challenging the traditionalist views, not only through publications, but also through screening the ideological orientation of members working in religious institutions.

Chalil's reforms were linked to the concept of a nation-state, i. e., an ideal Islamic state where Islam could be observed without hindrance. This political stance was in harmony with *Masjumi's* political doctrine, which relentlessly fought to achieve this goal. It seems, therefore, that the ambition of realizing such "an Islamic state" inspired Chalil to raise the issue of the unity of the 'ulamā'. In his view, the role of the 'ulamā' in

Indonesian society would be to serve as co-rulers with the zu'amā' (the authorities), once Islam became a ruling system. His ideas pertaining to religious reform and his political awareness were intertwined and sprang from a spirit of activism which he gained through his intellectual interaction with the Middle Eastern reformists, who sought to establish belief in the superiority of unspoiled Islamic teachings over man-made ideological concepts.