

ULAMA, AL WASHLIYAH, AND KNOWLEDGE IN MODERN INDONESIA (1930-1980)

Ja'far

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Lhokseumawe
Jl. Medan-Banda Aceh, Alue Awe, Muara Dua, Lhokseumawe, Aceh, 24352
e-mail: jafar@iainlhokseumawe.ac.id

Abstract: This article examines the role of Al Washliyah ulamas in the development of knowledge in Indonesia. This study is a literature study, by applying Kuntowijoyo's model, and utilizing historical and philosophical approach. Al-Attas' theory of the classification of knowledge will be used as a tool to analyze the topic of this study. This study argues that Al Washliyah ulamas have taken an important role in developing two types of knowledge, namely religious sciences; as well as the rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences, although their attention is more directed to the former. Their works cover the fields of the Qur'an, sunnah, shariah, Islamic theology, Islamic metaphysics (*tashawwuf*), linguistics, comparative religion, philosophy, and Islamic history. They wrote using Latin script (Indonesian), Arabic script (Arabic) and Jawi script (Malay). The works of Al Washliyah ulamas have become a reference for their students and Muslims in East Sumatra and Aceh.

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji peran ulama Al Washliyah dalam pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan di Indonesia. Studi ini merupakan studi kepustakaan, dengan menerapkan model penelitian sejarah Kuntowijoyo. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan historis dan filosofis, dengan analisis teori al-Attas tentang klasifikasi ilmu. Studi ini mengajukan argumen bahwa ulama-ulama Al Washliyah telah mengambil peran penting dalam mengembangkan dua jenis ilmu, yaitu ilmu-ilmu religius; dan juga ilmu-ilmu rasional, intelektual dan filosofis, meskipun perhatian mereka lebih banyak ditujukan pada jenis ilmu yang pertama. Karya-karya mereka meliputi bidang Alquran, al-sunnah, al-syariah, teologi, metafisika Islam (*tasawuf*), ilmu-ilmu linguistik, perbandingan agama, kebudayaan dan peradaban Barat, dan sejarah Islam. Mereka menulis dengan menggunakan aksara Latin (bahasa Indonesia), aksara Arab (bahasa Arab) dan aksara Jawi (Arab Melayu). Karya-karya ulama Al Washliyah telah menjadi referensi bagi murid-murid mereka dan juga kaum Muslim di Sumatera Timur dan Aceh.

Keywords: ulama, Al Washliyah, classification of knowledge, religious sciences, rational sciences

Introduction

Ulama is an elite group in the Islamic world and it is the plural form of the word 'alim, which means "a person who knows or has knowledge". However, Azra stated that the meaning has changed, as it is interpreted as "a person who has knowledge in the field of fiqh."¹ In the Sunni world, the ulama functions as guardians, transmitters, as well as interpreters of religious knowledge, specifically Islamic doctrine, and law.² According to Musa, the ulama carry out four tasks, namely *tablîgh* (delivering religious messages), *tibyân* (explaining related matters based on the scriptures), *tahkîm* (making wise and fair decisions), and *uswah al-hasanah* (setting a good example).³ They have also played a role as an agent of change in various fields, including social, political, cultural, intellectual, educational, as well as governmental fields.

The ulama function as agent of change in Indonesia. In the social intellectual context, those who live in the *peripheral Islam*, borrows Azyumardi Azra's term,⁴ and actively provides interpretations of Islam. According to Bustamam-Ahmad and Patrick Jory,⁵ Southeast Asian ulama has contributed to the development of Islamic thought. This contribution started when those in the sultanates of Aceh, Melaka, and Pattani responded to the problems faced by the *ummah* (Muslim community) by writing several interesting works. This shows that those in Southeast Asia are active in providing Islamic interpretations. Therefore, Islamic thought in this region has grown and developed since the introduction of Islam.

Several reports have been made on the ulama including those by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Azyumardi Azra, Abdurrahman Mas'ud, and Sumanto al-Qurtuby which are interesting. Also, al-Attas studied the two most influential ulama in Aceh during the reign of the Aceh Sultanate, namely Hamzah Fanshuri and Nururddin ar-Raniry.⁶ Azyumardi Azra examined the role of the ulama in the Archipelago during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when reconstructing the intellectual and socio-moral foundations

¹ Azyumardi Azra, "Biografi Sosial Intelektual Ulama Perempuan: Pemberdayaan Historiografi," in *Ulama Perempuan Indonesia*, ed. Jajat Burhanuddin (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2002), xxviii.

² Ian Richard Netton, *A Popular Dictionary of Islam* (London: Routledge, 1997).

³ Ali Masykur Musa, *Membumikan Islam Nusantara: Respons Islam Terhadap Isu-Isu Aktual* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2014).

⁴ Azyumardi Azra, *Jejak-Jejak Jaringan Kaum Muslim: Dari Australia Hingga Timur Tengah* (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2007), 31-32.

⁵ Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad and Patrick Jory, *Islamic Thought in Southeast Asia: New Interpretations and Movements* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2013).

⁶ Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970); Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Comments on the Re-Examination of Al-Raniris Hujjatul-Siddiq A Refutation* (Kuala Lumpur: Muzium Negara, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1975).

⁷ Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern "Ulama" in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Netherlands: Asian Studies Association of Australia, 2004).

of Muslim society.⁷ Furthermore, Abdurrahman Mas'ud discussed the traces of Indonesia ulama in Haramain (Mecca and Medina) and the Archipelago.⁸ Sumanto al-Qurtubi examined the intellectual influence of Indonesian migrants in Saudi Arabia.⁹ The studies continue to influence other literature which produced a more specific report on the biographies, movements, and thoughts of ulama in various Archipelago regions.

Experts have indeed made several reports on the studies of Islamic ulama in the Archipelago.¹⁰ However, certain ulama groups have not received proper attention. Furthermore, ulama Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah, an Islamic organization from Medan which was inaugurated on November 30, 1930, is a group that still lacks expert study. Ja'far only reviewed ulama's biography.¹¹ M. Rozali once discussed the Al Washliyah ulama tradition in North Sumatra with a focus on the role of educational institution in producing ulama as well as their activities in the Muslim community.¹² Although Ja'far examined the role of ulama Al Washliyah, the study is still focused on three aspects, namely the scientific chain, productivity of the organization's ulama, and their role in establishing religious educational institutions based on the yellow book (*kitab kuning*).¹³ Moreover, it only focused on the ulama who founded Al Washliyah, even though this organization has many prominent ulama that are not classified as founders. Several other experts examined the movements and thoughts of certain ulama from the organization. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no specific report on the role of ulama Al Washliyah in the development of knowledge by referring to primary sources.

This study discussed the contribution of ulama Al Washliyah to the development of knowledge in Indonesia. It will particularly answer two important questions, namely who were the ulama Al Washliyah from 1930 to 1980? What kinds of knowledge do they develop? Furthermore, the main objective of this study was to reveal their contribution in strengthening the Islamic intellectual tradition in Indonesia. Several reports have been

⁸ Abdurrahman Mas'ud, *Dari Haramain Ke Nusantara: Jejak Intelektual Arsitek Pesantren* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2006).

⁹ Sumanto Al Qurtubi, *Saudi Arabia and Indonesian Networks: Migration, Education, and Islam* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).

¹⁰ For example, see: Oman Fathurahman, "Jaringan Ulama: Pembaharuan Dan Rekonsiliasi Dalam Tradisi Intelektual Islam Di Dunia Melayu-Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 11, no. 2 (2004); Yusny Saby, "The Ulama in Aceh: A Brief Historical Survey," *Studia Islamika* 8, no. 1 (2001); Azyumardi Azra, "Networks of the Ulama in the Haramayn: Connections in the Indian Ocean Region," *Studia Islamika* 8, no. 2 (2001); Khoirun Niam, "Nahdlatul Ulama and the Production of Muslim Intellectuals in the Beginning of 21st Century Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, no. 2 (2017).

¹¹ Ja'far Ja'far, *Tradisi Intelektual Al Washliyah: Biografi Ulama Kharismatik Dan Tradisi Keulamaan* (Medan: Perdana Publishing and CAS, 2015).

¹² Muh. Rozali, "Tradisi Keulamaan Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Sumatera Utara" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2016).

¹³ Ja'far Ja'far, "Khazanah Kitab Kuning Di Madrasah Al Jam'iyat Al Washliyah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Al-Thariqah* 2, no. 2 (2017), [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.25299/althariqah.2017.vol2\(2\).1041](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.25299/althariqah.2017.vol2(2).1041).

made on ulama, but the following two factors are the hallmarks of this study. Firstly, reports tend to examine the biography of ulama Al Washliyah rather than their strategic role in the development of knowledge. Secondly, reports had limited primary sources. This article revealed the strategic role in developing knowledge in the archipelago and the data are from rare and ancient sources. It is important to examine these ulama because, in the study of Islamic philosophy, there are still many philosophers who are not well known and called “the minor philosophers” in Mulyadhi Kartanegara language.¹⁴ Therefore, in the context of Islamic studies, there are still many Indonesia ulama who are not known or studied. In this context, ulama Al Washliyah can be referred to as the minor ulama.

Methodology

This study examined the contribution of ulama Al Washliyah to the development of knowledge in Indonesia. Furthermore, it limited the period to the range of 1930 to 1980. This was a literature review that applied a historical and philosophical approach. The Kuntowijoyo’s¹⁵ historical analysis model was also used which revealed five stages of historical study, namely topic selection, source gathering, verification (historical criticism, source validity), interpretation, including analysis and synthesis, as well as writing. The sources are of two groups, namely primary and secondary. The primary sources were the books and articles of ulama Al Washliyah from 1930 to 1980. Meanwhile, the secondary sources were all written records, including books, study reports, and articles written by the experts who discussed Al Washliyah and ulama in Indonesia. This study used rare and old sources, which made it unique and contributes to the development of Islamic studies. Al-Attas’ theory of knowledge classification was also used as an analytical tool for the topic of discussion. Al-Attas subdivides knowledge into two groups, namely God’s given knowledge and the obtained knowledge.¹⁶ The former is known as the religious sciences, while the latter is the rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences.

Results and Discussion

1. Al Washliyah and Ulama in Indonesia: 1930-1980

Al Jam’iyatul Washliyah, abbreviated as Al Washliyah, was an Islamic organization founded by several students of Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (a madrasa led by Sheikh

¹⁴ Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Nalar Religius: Memahami Hakikat Tuhan, Alam Dan Manusia* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007), 125.

¹⁵ Kuntowijoyo, *Pengantar Ilmu Sejarah* (Medan: Tiara Wacana, 2013), 69-82.

¹⁶ Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1999), 40-42.

¹⁷ Al Rasyidin, “Islamic Organizations in North Sumatra: The Politics of Initial Establishment and Later Development,” *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 1 (2016).

Muhammad Yunus) and Al-Hasaniyah Madrasa (a madrasa led by Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum).¹⁷ It was inaugurated in Medan on November 30, 1930,¹⁸ and its purpose was to promote, prioritize, and increase the spread of Islam.¹⁹ Also, Al Washliyah was an organization based on Islam, believed in *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah*,²⁰ and adhered to the Syâfi'i school of law in the field of jurisprudence.²¹ This organization was built by ulama and managed to cadre successor ulama who would later become strongholds of the Sunni tradition in Indonesia.²²

The meaning of ulama, according to Al Washliyah, can be seen from the writings of the organization's ulama. There is no official concept of Al Washliyah regarding the understanding of ulama. It follows the meaning which developed in the tradition of the Shâfi'iyah school and *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah*. This is because the two schools are the official schools of thought adhered to by Al Washliyah. Ustaz Ramli Abdul Wahid and Ustaz Lahmuddin Nasution, who are two of the most influential ulama Al Washliyah in the Reformation era, once expressed their views on the meaning of ulama. Ustaz Ramli Abdul Wahid revealed that these are people who master and practice religious knowledge. The ulama are trusted by the community because of their knowledge and morals, hence, they are trusted and played the role of answering Muslims' questions. Their answer to a problem is a fatwa, which means a religious opinion in the field of Islamic theology and sharia experience.²³ According to Ustaz Ramli, the ulama give a fatwa, even though not everyone can issue a religious fatwa. A fatwa can be used as a basis when it is issued by a person who has the conditions for a fatwa. It was further stated that there are five conditions for issuing a fatwa, namely knowing the al-Qur'an, hadith, Arabic, the Arabic poetry or the knowledge needed to understand the al-Qur'an and Hadith, as well as the different opinions of ulama in various schools of thought.²⁴ Ustaz Ramli quoted the opinion of Imam al-Ghazâlî which classified the ulama into two, namely the afterlife ulama, meaning those who consistently practiced knowledge; and world ulama, who seek worldly luxuries with knowledge.²⁵ The afterlife ulama can serve as role models because they

¹⁸ Pengoeroes Besar Al Djamijatoel Washlijah, "Keringkasan Riwayat Hasil Dan Oesaha Pekerjaan Al Djamijatoel Washlijah Selama 5 Tahoen Moelai Tanggal 30 November 1930-30-11-1935," *Medan Islam*, 1936.

¹⁹ Udin Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al-Djam'ijatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad (30 November 1930-30 November 1955)* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1955), 4.

²⁰ Ja'far Ja'far, "Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Dan Pelestarian Akidah Ahl Sunnah Wa Al-Jamâ'ah Di Indonesia," *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 14, no. 1 (2019).

²¹ Ja'far Ja'far, "Peran Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Dalam Merevitalisasi Madhhab Shafi'i Di Era Kontemporer," *Justicia Islamica: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Dan Sosial* 13, no. 1 (2016).

²² Ja'far Ja'far, "Al Washliyah Benteng Tradisi Sunni Sumut," *Waspada*, December 1, 2012.

²³ Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Visi, Misi, Orientasi Dan Implementasi Hidup Seorang Mukmin* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2016), 152.

²⁴ Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Peranan Islam Dalam Menghadapi Era Globalisasi Sekuler* (Medan: Citapustaka Media, 2014), 58.

²⁵ Wahid, *Visi, Misi, Orientasi Dan Implementasi Hidup Seorang Mukmin*, 131-134.

practice their knowledge, are humble, prioritize knowledge for charity and live a simple life. Ustaz Ramli also emphasized that the quality of the ulama was decreasing, as well as their population. Currently, their role has been replaced by Muslim intellectuals.²⁶

In Ustaz Lahmuddin Nasution's paper entitled "*Keulamaan: Peringkat dan Kriterianya*",²⁷ it was stated that the word ulama had experienced a narrowing of meaning. The word is usually defined as "a person who has in-depth knowledge (*râsikh*) of Islamic law". Ustaz Lahmuddin Nasution emphasized that the ulama can function "as fatwa givers, conveying sharia law and provisions regarding various problems faced by the *ummah*". Moreover, they are figures that can provide answers in the form of legal fatwas to problems. Therefore, in general, they need to master the sciences of sharia which are quite broad and deeply cover the fields of *fiqh* (Islamic law), interpretation, and hadith, as well as other supporting sciences. This is the opinion of Ustaz Ramli Abdul Wahid and Ustaz Lahmuddin Nasution regarding the understanding of ulama. The opinion is accepted and represents the view of Al Washliyah as an organization.

Ustaz Lahmuddin Nasution quoted Imam al-Nawawi's opinion regarding the levels of ulema/mufti, namely *mufti mujtahid mustaqil*, and *mufti mujtahid muntasib* (consisting of *mufti mujtahid mutlaq muntasib*, *mufti mujtahid muqayyad fi al-mazhab*, *mujtahid tarjih*, and *mufti* who can memorize, narrate, and understand the schools of thought, including the difficult parts). Ustaz Lahmuddin stated that the ulama also has criteria and characteristics, such as knowledge practice, integrity, the spirit of developing knowledge, '*adalah* (fair) and *tsiqah* (trustworthy), as well as the fear of Allah. Moreover, they do not make fatwas easy, do not ask for compensation for fatwas, are careful in selecting references, review each time fatwa is given, provide a firm answer, and following to a *rajih* (strong) *qaul*. The ulama provides concise answers using clear language, consistently holds on to sources without relying on the power of reason or *istiqamah*, and is not influenced by the will of the authorities or worldly interests. Ustaz Lahmuddin has also stated similar statements in his article entitled "*Peranan Ulama, Ormas dan Pemuda Islam Dalam Mengantisipasi Tantangan Umat Islam Hari Ini dan Hari Esok di Kabupaten Langkat*."²⁸

Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah is an Islamic organization founded by ulama from the Mandailing ethnicity in East Sumatra (now part of North Sumatra).²⁹ Al Washliyah is a moderate Islamic

²⁶ Ramli Abdul Wahid, "Kontribusi Ulama-Ulama Sumatera Utara Bagi Peradaban Islam Serantau Nusantara: Melacak Posisi Ulama Al Washliyah," in *Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah: Potret Histori, Edukasi Dan Filosofi*, ed. Ja'far Ja'far (Medan: Perdana Publishing and CAS, 2011), 79, 86.

²⁷ Lahmuddin Nasution, "Keulamaan: Peringkat Dan Kriterianya," n.d.

²⁸ Lahmuddin Nasution, "Peranan Ulama, Ormas Dan Pemuda Islam Dalam Mengantisipasi Tantangan Umat Islam Hari Ini Dan Hari Esok Di Kabupaten Langkat," n.d.

²⁹ Mhd. Syahnan, Asrul Asrul, and Ja'far Ja'far, "Intellectual Network of Mandailing and Haramayn Muslim Scholars in the Mid-19th and Early 20th Century," *TEOSOFI: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 2 (December 1, 2019): 257–81, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2019.9.2.257-281>; Ja'far Ja'far et al., "Discovering the Legacy of Mandailing Ulama: Education, Intellectuals, and Politics in North Sumatra in the Early 20th Century," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 26, no. 2 (2022): 296–336.

organization in Indonesia.³⁰ Al Washliyah immediately received support from several influential ulama after its inauguration. There is no official data on the number of ulama Al Washliyah. The book *Sejarah Ulama-ulama Terkemuka Sumatera Utara*,³¹ published by the North Sumatra Ulema Council, features 46 North Sumatran ulama figures, and as many as 13 are affiliated with Al Washliyah. M. Rozali's study mentioned five Al Washliyah ulama who contributed greatly to the life of Muslims in North Sumatra, specifically in the fields of education, *da'wah* (Islamic preaching), politics, and the economy, namely Hasan Ma'sum (d. 1936), M. Arsjad Th. Lubis (d. 1972), Nukman Sulaiman (d. 1996), Lahmuddin Nasution (d. 2007), as well as Ramli Abdul Wahid (d. 2020). M. Rozali stated that these ulamas have many students who are successors of the ulama tradition in the Al Washliyah organization.³² The Ja'far's book, entitled *Tradisi Intelektual Al Washliyah: Biografi Ulama Kharismatik dan Tradisi Keulamaan*, presented the biographies of 34 prominent Al Washliyah ulama from three generations.³³ Although this organization has many ulama, not all their biographies have been written by experts.

This limits the study to the role of Al Washliyah ulama in the development of knowledge in the range of 1930 to 1980. These ulama are those who are known to have produced works in the form of books or articles, namely Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum, Sheikh Mahmud Ismail Lubis, Ismail Banda, Abdurrahman Sjihab, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, Ismail Abdul Wahab, Baharuddin Ali, Adnan Lubis, M. Husein Abd. Karim, Nukman Sulaiman, Hamdan Abbas, Abubakar Ya'cub, and Abdul Majid Siradj. Several others who are quite influential, and have not produced any work, or whose reports have not been found, are Sheikh Muhammad Yunus, Sheikh Dja'far Hasan, Sheikh Ilyas, Sheikh Mahmud Syihabuddin, Sheikh Muhammad Arifin Isa, Sheikh Bahrum Ahmad, Sheikh Bahrin Saleh Nasution and Ustaz OK. Abdulaziz. In this case, their role in developing knowledge in Indonesia will be revealed.

Based on the study above, Al Washliyah organization defined ulama as a person who masters and practices religious knowledge. This shows the interpretation is in a certain sense. Moreover, the term generally means people who have deep knowledge. Therefore, ulama is a person who master and practice religious sciences, not rational sciences. Meanwhile, the organization interprets this term more as a person who masters and practices Islamic law especially *fiqh*.

³⁰ Mhd Syahnan and Ja'far Ja'far, "Examining Religious Moderation of the Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah Fatwa Council," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 15, no. 1 (2021); Mhd. Syahnan, Ja'far Ja'far, and Muhammad Iqbal, "Ulama and Radicalism in Contemporary Indonesia: Response of Al Washliyah's Ulama on Radicalism," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 21, no. 1 (2021).

³¹ Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, *Sejarah Ulama-Ulama Terkemuka Di Sumatera Utara* (Medan: Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, 1983).

³² Rozali, "Tradisi Keulamaan Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Sumatera Utara."

³³ Ja'far, *Tradisi Intelektual Al Washliyah: Biografi Ulama Kharismatik Dan Tradisi Keulamaan*, 2-5.

2. *Al Washliyah Ulama and Knowledge*

This section will examine the role of Al Washliyah ulema in the development of knowledge. This study applied al-Attas' theory on the classification of knowledge in Islam, and subsequently revealed the tendency of the ulama in the development of knowledge. According to al-Attas, knowledge is divided into two types, namely knowledge given by God, also called religious sciences, and obtained knowledge which is known as rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences. The former is bestowed by Allah to humans and the source is the al-Qur'an, while the latter is acquired by humans based on their own experiences, observations, and investigations of existence.³⁴ The following shows the classification of knowledge according to al-Attas:

1. Religious sciences; (a) al-Qur'an: reading and interpretation (*tafsîr* and *ta'wîl*), (b) Hadith (life of the Prophet, history, as well as messages of previous Apostles, Hadits, and authoritative narrations), (c) al-Syarî'ah: statutes and laws, Islamic principles and practices (Islam, Imân, and Ihsân), (d) Theology (The Essence, Attributes, Name, Actions of God or monotheism), (e) Islamic Metaphysics/Sufism (psychology, cosmology, and ontology; valid elements in Islamic philosophy, including correct cosmological doctrines regarding the levels of being), (f) Linguistics (Arabic, grammar, lexicography, and literature).
2. Rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences; (a) Humanities, (b) Natural sciences, (c) Applied sciences, (d) Technological sciences, (e) Comparative religions, (f) Western culture and civilization, (g) Linguistics: Islamic languages, grammar, lexicography, and literature, (h) Islamic history (thoughts of Islamic culture and civilization, development of Islamic historical sciences, Islamic philosophy and science, Islam as world history).³⁵

From an institutional aspect, the role of Al Washliyah ulama can be seen in the madrasah, school, and university curricula that they arrange. In 1956, Al Washliyah managed 301 units of Madrasah Tajhiziyah, 296 of Ibtidaiyah, 14 of Tsanawiyah, 3 of al-Qismul 'Aly, and 1 unit of *Takhassus*. The organization also established 39 units of People's Schools, 7 units of Junior High Schools, 2 units of SMER, 2 units of SGB, and 5 units of PGA.³⁶ In 1958, it founded a college called Al Washliyah University (UNIVA) in Medan. This university, among other things, aims to prepare the ulama as well as intellectuals who are knowledgeable and responsible, virtuous to serve society, state, and religion.

³⁴ Mohd Zariat Abdul Rani, "Islam Sebagai 'Al-Din': Beberapa Pengamatan Terhadap Pemikiran Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas," *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 4, no. 1 (2003), 29-62.

³⁵ Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education*, 40-42.

³⁶ Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, "Madjlis Pendidikan, Pengadjaran Dan Kebudajaan," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad 30 Nopember 1930-30 Nopember 1955*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 296-303.

Until the 1980s, UNIVA opened the Department of Religious Courts in Sharia Faculty, the Department of Religious Education in Tarbiyah Faculty, and the Department of Da'wah (Islamic preaching) in Ushuluddin Faculty.³⁷ Before Reformation era, madrasah students who do not master Arabic are not likely to continue their studies at the university since the campus makes mastery of the language a requirement for becoming a student. This is because the students learn various religious studies and refer to the yellow book written by the ulama in the classical Islamic era as their main reference. Some prominent Al Washliyah ulama are senior lecturers at this campus. The number of Al Washliyah educational institutions, both madrasahs, schools, as well as tertiary institutions in the following era has increased, and are spread across various regions in Indonesia, although they are more numerous in North Sumatra Province.

From the curriculum of the institution, Al Washliyah ulama also teaches religious sciences as well as rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences. The early curriculum can be seen in the *Laporan Pelajaran Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah* (Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Lesson Report) which was published in 1956. At the Madrasah Tajhiziyah level, the students studied 13 subjects consisting of nine subjects on religions (religious sciences) and 4 subjects on general (rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences). At Ibtidaiyah, they studied 21 subjects consisting of 16 subjects on religions and five subjects on general. Meanwhile, at Tsanawiyah, the students studied 21 subjects consisting of 14 subjects on religions and seven subjects on general. At the Al-Qismul 'Aly Madrasah, the students studied 16 subjects consisting of 10 subjects on religions and six subjects on general.³⁸ The ulama also teaches religious subjects at the madrasah managed by Al Washliyah, such as interpretation, Hadith, jurisprudence, *ushûl fiqh*, *qawâ'id al-fiqh*, Islamic spirituality (*tashawwuf*), Islamic history, comparative religion, as well as *âdâb al-munazharah* and *al-wadh'i* knowledge with reference to the books written by the ulama in the classical Islamic era. In these madrasahs, the ulama taught and developed religious knowledge, and even managed to produce new ulama who would become their successors in the next era.

Al Washliyah ulama is known to have participated in developing religious sciences, and also rational, intellectual and philosophical sciences, although it is clear that they are more focused on the development of religious knowledge. In the Al Washliyah during the era discussed, the ulama served as the elite of the organization at the central level, teachers, and lecturers at Madrasah Al-Qismul 'Aly Al Washliyah and UNIVA Medan, preachers for Muslims as well as Muslim missionary in Muslim minority areas. Some of them were even members of the People's Representative Council (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*

³⁷ Universitas Al-Washliyah, *Lustrum VI Universitas Al Washliyah 18 Mei 1958-18 Mei 1988*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: UNIVA Medan, 1988).

³⁸ Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, "Laporan Pelajaran Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad 30 Nopember 1930-30 Nopember 1955*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 6-9.

Republik Indonesia) such as Abdurrahman Sjihab, as well as members of the Constituent Assembly (*Konstituante*) including M. Arsjad Th. Lubis and Adnan Lubis. All the Al Washliyah ulamas were supporters of the Masjumi Party in the Old Order Era where the organization was a special member of Islam, they also supported the Indonesian Muslimin Party (*Partai Muslimin Indonesia* or Parmusi) and the United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* or PPP) in the New Order Era.³⁹ Therefore, they also act as a politician. All of this shows that these ulama play multiple roles, namely organizational activists, teachers, lecturers, preachers, Muslim missionary, and politicians. In the context of this study, they write and publish scientific works, both books, and articles, which support all their roles.

This study examines the role of 14 prominent Al Washliyah ulamas from 1930 to 1980 in developing knowledge through writing, as well as publishing books and articles. They are Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum (d. 1937), Sheikh Mahmud Ismail Lubis (d. 1937), Ustaz Ismail Abdul Wahab (d. 1947), Ustaz Ismail Banda (1951), Ustaz Abdurrahman Sjihab (1955), Ustaz Adnan Lubis (d. 1966), Ustaz M. Arsjad Th. Lubis (d. 1972), Ustaz Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (d. 1980), Ustaz Baharuddin Ali (d. ?), Ustaz M. Husein Abd. Karim (d. 1983), Ustaz Abdul Majid Siradj (d. 1980), Abubakar Ya'cub (d. 1982), Ustaz Nukman Sulaiman (d. 1996), and Ustaz Hamdan Abbas (d. 2002). These are the 14 Al Washliyah ulamas who left several works in the form of books or articles. Some of them produced works in the field of religious sciences, and some others in certain knowledge within the cluster of rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences.

Al Washliyah ulama, who are the focus of this study, are productive because they have produced several books and articles in the field of religious sciences. Following the classification scheme of knowledge according to al-Attas, they contributed to the development of the knowledge of the al-Qur'an, Hadith, shari'a, theology, Islamic metaphysics (*tasawwuf* and philosophy), as well as Arabic. Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum (d. 1937), an alumnus of the Masjidilharam and student of Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi at Masjidilharam, produced several books in the field of religious sciences, and was a Malay scholar who became Al Washliyah's adviser until the death of Sheikh Hasan.⁴⁰ According to Tengku Luckman Sinar's notes, Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum wrote 17 books, namely 13 on Islamic law (worship, astronomy, prayer, and *dhikr*), one on Islamic theology, and three on Islamic spirituality/tarekat.⁴¹ Among the Sheikh's most important works was *Tazkîr al-Murîdîn*.⁴² After the demise, the works were not republished. Siradjuddin Abbas, an ulama from the Tarbiyah Islamiyah Association (*Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah*, or PERTI) organization,

³⁹ Ja'far Ja'far, "Pemikiran Politik Islamisme Moderat Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah," *Al-Araf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* 16, no. 2 (2019).

⁴⁰ Matu Mona, *Riwayat Penghidoepan Al-Fadhil Toean Sjech Hasan Ma'soem: Biografie Sedjak Ketjil Sampai Wafatnya* (Medan: Syarikat Tapanoeli, n.d.), 10-14.

⁴¹ Tengku Luckman Sinar, *Sejarah Medan Tempo Doeloe* (Medan: Perwira, 2007), 86-88.

⁴² Hasan Ma'sum, *Tazkîr Al-Murîdîn Sulûk Tharîqat Al-Muhtadîn* (Medan: Perca Timur, 1353).

called Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum the "middle pillar" of the Shâfi'i school of thought in North Sumatra.⁴³ The Sheikh Hasan was also recognized by Professor Mahmud Yunus as an expert on the Arabic language, Islamic religious sciences, Islamic spirituality, arithmetic, as well as astronomy, and has become a reference for Muslims in East Sumatra.⁴⁴

Sheikh Mahmud Ismail Lubis (d. 1937), a student of Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum, who was once the Chairman of Al Washliyah, wrote and produced several books in the fields of interpretation and theology. This included the commentary book entitled *Kitâb Yâsîn wa al-Fawâ'id*,⁴⁵ and the book in the field of faith entitled *Openbaar-Debat Oetoesan Ahmadiyah Qadian Contra Tengkoeh Fachroeddin* which was written with Mangaradja Ihoetan.⁴⁶ Apart from these two books, Sheikh Mahmud Ismail has written others that have not been discovered, namely *Siratun Nabawijah*, *Indonesian Chothbah*, *Ketjerdasan*, *at-Tarjuman*, *Buluchul Maram*, and *Tarichul Chulafa*.⁴⁷ Therefore, Sheikh Mahmud contributed to the development of the al-Qur'an/interpretation, Hadith, creed (Islamic theology), and Islamic history.

Ustaz Ismail Abdul Wahab Harahap (d. 1947), an alumnus of al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, was an adviser to Al Washliyah. Before going to Egypt, Ismail studied in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and allegedly admired the Wahhabi sect.⁴⁸ Moreover, Ismail wrote a book entitled *Burhân al-Ma'rifat*,⁴⁹ and also produced a number of articles in the field of al-Quran/interpretation which were published in *Medan Islam* magazine. Furthermore, Ustaz Ismail wrote a series of articles with the title *Taisiroel Wahhab* which was written while studying at al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, and published in *Medan Islam* magazine owned by Al Washliyah.

Ustaz Ismail Banda Lubis (d. 1951) was an alumnus of Madrasah Shaulatiyah, Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and studied Islamic philosophy at al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. Ustaz Ismail was the first Chairman of Al Washliyah, worked at the Ministry of Indonesia Foreign Affairs after graduating from the college, and was also appointed as Charge d'affaires of Indonesia in Tehran, Iran, and later in Kabul, Afghanistan. Furthermore,

⁴³ Sirajuddin Abbas, *Sejarah Dan Keagungan Mazhab Syafi'i* (Jakarta: Pustaka Tarbiyah Baru, 2010), 191-192.

⁴⁴ Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah pendidikan Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta : Mutiara Sumber Widya, 1992).

⁴⁵ Mahmud Ismail Loebis, *Kitâb Yâsîn Wa Al-Fawâ'id* (Medan: Pertja Timoer, n.d.).

⁴⁶ Mahmud Ismail Loebis and Mangaradja Ihoetan, *Openbaar-Debat Oetoesan Ahmadiyah Qadian Contra Tengkoeh Fachroeddin* (Medan, 1934).

⁴⁷ Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, "Riwayat Ringkas Pedjuang2 Al Dj. Washlijah," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad 30 Nopember 1930-30 Nopember 1955*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 411-412.

⁴⁸ Husnel Anwar Matondang, *Kewajiban Tuhan? Pemikiran Kontroversial Ulama Tanjungbalai Asahan Syekh Isma'il Abd Al-Wahab* (Medan: LP2-IK, 2004), 22.

⁴⁹ Ramli Abdul Wahid, Husnel Anwar Matondang, and Muhammad Iqbal, *Tujuh Butir Peluru Untuk Negeriku: Perjuangan Syekh Ismail Abdul Wahab Untuk Ibu Pertiwi Dalam Merintis Dan Mempertahankan Kemerdekaan RI* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2017), 61-71.

Ismail wrote a book as well as several articles, and produced one book of Islamic history, one on Hadith, 10 on Islamic history, 11 on sharia, and two Islamic articles.⁵⁰ The book entitled *Pengakoean Mesir dan Politik Arab League*⁵¹ revealed the history of Indonesian Muslim students' struggle in gaining independence abroad. However, there were still many works that have not been found. Al Washliyah has not attempted to trace all the works or to republish the ones that were found.

Ustaz Abdurrahman Sjihab (d. 1955), a student of Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum, was an ulama who was the Chairman of Al Washliyah for a long time and had been the Chairman of the Madjlis Sjuro Masjumi (Masjumi) Party, as well as a member of the People's Representative Council of Indonesia. Ustaz Abdurrahman wrote two books in the field of sharia (worship), one on history, and one on Islamic book, five in the field of history as well as three Islamic articles.⁵² One of these books was entitled *Mengoendjoengi Tanah Haram*, and *Penoentoen Hadji*.⁵³ However, several books have not been found, and some others have not been republished. Ustaz Abdurrahman was one of the most important figures in East Sumatra during the Dutch and Japanese colonial era at the beginning of Indonesian independence.

Ustaz Adnan Lubis (d. 1966) was an alumnus of Madrasah Shaulatiah in Mecca, and Nadwatul Ulama in Lucknow, India, as well as a member of the Indonesia Constituent Assembly. Ustaz Adnan produced books in the fields of interpretation, Islamic spirituality, and Islamic history. Some of the works were entitled *Tashawuf*, *Kissah Isra' dan Mi'radj*, *Tafsir Djuzu' Amma*, and *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim: Surah Jaasin Ajat 1-83*.⁵⁴ Even though many articles were published in *Medan Islam*, *Dewan Islam*, and *al-Islam* magazines, they were not republished.

Ustaz M. Arsjad Th. Lubis (d. 1972) was a student of Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum, a member of the Indonesia Constituent Assembly, Chairman of Al Washliyah, and was included in Al Washliyah's ulema with the most books. Furthermore, Ustaz Arsjad produced

⁵⁰ Ja'far Ja'far, "Merantau Demi Republik: Kehidupan Dan Perjuangan Ismail Banda (1909-1951)," *Islamijah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 1, no. 2 (2020); Ja'far Ja'far, *Biografi Dan Karya Ismail Banda* (Medan: Centre For Al Washliyah Studies (Pusat Kajian Al Washliyah), 2021).

⁵¹ Ismail Banda, *Pengakoean Mesir Dan Politik Arab League* (Jogjakarta: Himpoenan Mahasiswa Islam, 1947).

⁵² Ja'far Ja'far, "Ulama Mandailing Awal Abad Ke-20: Gerakan Religius Dan Politik Abdurrahman Sjihab (1910-1955)," *Islamijah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2020); Ja'far Ja'far, *Sang Ulama Pemimpin: Biografi Abdurrahman Sjihab* (Medan: Perdana Publishing and CAS, 2021).

⁵³ Abdurrahman Sjihab, *Penoentoen Hadji* (Medan: Boekhandel Islamijah, 1940).

⁵⁴ Adnan Lubis, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Karim: Surah Jaasin Ajat 1-83* (Medan: Islamyah, n.d.); M. Ghallab and Adnan Lubis, *Falsafah Timur* (Medan: Saiful, 1950); Adnan Lubis, *Tafsir Djuzu' Amma* (Medan: Islamyah, n.d.); Adnan Lubis, *Kissah Isra' Dan Mi'radj* (Medan: Islamyah, 1958); Adnan Lubis, *Tashawuf* (Medan: UNIVA Medan, n.d.).

⁵⁵ Ja'far Ja'far, "Peran M. Arsjad Th. Lubis Dalam Pengembangan Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman," *Dialogia: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 18, no. 2 (2020).

many works, such as seven theologies of Islam, three on Qur'anic studies, one on Hadith studies, 15 on sharia/Islamic law, three on Islamic history, several general Islamic books and articles related to law, as well as Islamic history.⁵⁵ One of the most famous and influential books was entitled *Toentoenan Perang Sabil*⁵⁶ which was written at the beginning of Indonesia's independence era. Ustaz Arsjad also wrote knowledge books for madrasah students with the title *Riwayat Nabi Muhammad Saw.*,⁵⁷ *Pelajaran Iman*,⁵⁸ *Pelajaran 'Ibadat*,⁵⁹ *Pelajaran Tajwid*,⁶⁰ *al-Qawâ'id al-Fiqhiyah*,⁶¹ *al-Ushûl min 'Ilm al-Ushûl*,⁶² *al-'Aqâ'id al-Îmâniyah*,⁶³ and *Ishthilâhât al-Muhadditsîn*.⁶⁴ These books were printed many times, became references for religious students at the elementary level, and are currently circulating in North Sumatra and Aceh. Several Ustaz Arsjad's books, specifically in the fields of Islamic law and comparative religion, have been published and circulated in Malaysia.

Ustaz Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (d. 1980) was a student of Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum, wrote dozens of books as well as articles, and was once the Chairman of the Al Washliyah Fatwa Council. Furthermore, Yusuf Ahmad published two on *'aqîdah* (Islamic theology), seven on al-Qur'anic studies/interpretation, one on Hadith studies, seven on shari'a/worship, eight on morals/tasawuf/tarekat, four on Islamic history, as well as several general Islamic books and wrote 27 articles in the field of faith (Islamic theology), sharia, morals, and history.⁶⁵ One of the works was entitled *Tafsir Soerat al-Ma'oen*.⁶⁶ All the books and articles have not been republished while most of them were published and widely circulated in Malaysia.

Ustaz Baharuddin Ali was one of the Al Washliyah ulama, studied at the Shaulatiyah Madrasah in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and attended al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. Two out of Ustaz Baharuddin's works were *Nuzulul Qur'an: Pendjelasan tentang al Qur'an*, and *Kitab Washiyat al-Musthafa Shallallahu 'Alaihi wa Sallam Bagi Imam 'Ali Karramallahu Wajhah*.⁶⁷ Also, Baharuddin served as an officer in the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI).

⁵⁶ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Toentoenan Perang Sabil* (Medan: Soeloeh Merdeka, 1946).

⁵⁷ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Riwayat Nabi Muhammad SAW* (Medan: Islamyah, 1951).

⁵⁸ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Pelajaran Iman* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁵⁹ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Peladjaran 'Ibadat Untuk Sekolah Rendah* (Medan: Firma Islamiyah, 1971).

⁶⁰ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Pelajaran Tajwid* (Medan: Islamyah, 1950).

⁶¹ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Al-Qawâ'id Al-Fiqhiyyah* (Medan, 1959).

⁶² M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Al-Ushûl Min 'Ilm Al-Ushûl* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁶³ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Al-'Aqâ'id Al-Îmâniyah* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁶⁴ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Ishthilâhât Al-Muhadditsîn* (Medan: Islamyah, 1965).

⁶⁵ Ja'far Ja'far, "Tradisi Intelektual Ulama Mandailing Abad Ke-20: Dedikasi Dan Karya-Karya Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (1912-1980)," *Islamiyah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 1, no. 3 (2020).

⁶⁶ Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Tafsir Soerat Al-ma'oen* (Medan Deli: OE.M.A.M, 1938).

⁶⁷ Baharuddin Ali, *Kitab Washiyat Al-Musthafa Shallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam Bagi Imam 'Ali Karramallahu Wajhah* (Kairo: al-Mathba'ah al-Marbawiyah, n.d.); Baharuddin Ali, *Nuzulul Qur'an: Pendjelasan Tentang Al Qur'an* (Pematang Siantar: Gudang Ilmu, 1963).

Ustaz Abdul Majid Siradj (d. 1980) was a graduate of al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, and had been a lecturer at Al Washliyah University (UNIVA) and North Sumatra Islamic University (UISU). As an ulama, Abdul Majid wrote four books in the field of religious sciences. These works were entitled *Risâlat al-Tauhîd*, *Akhlaq Anak Terhadap Orang Tua*, *Fiqh li al-Banin*, and *Munazarah*.⁶⁸ Abdul Majid was also the leader of Al Washliyah at the Executive Board level.

Ustaz Abubakar Ya'cub (d. 1982) was an Al Washliyah ulama who schooled in Mecca and also studied with a number of ulama including Sheikh 'Ali Maliky. Abubakar Ya'cub was one of the ulama who has produced the most works, with 15 books on fiqh, four on theology, 17 on worship (prayers), seven on Islamic history, one on *tajwid* (al-Qur'an), 18 on literature/poetry, and 23 on Islamic medicine, Islamic religious textbooks, and *mahfuzhat*.⁶⁹ However, Abubakar Ya'cub's role was less prominent in the Al Washliyah, because Ya'cub was not a leader in the organization.

Ustaz M. Husein Abd. Karim (d. 1983) was an Al Washliyah ulama who once taught at Al Washliyah University in Medan, and was even the Dean of the Tarbiyah Faculty as well as the Vice-Rector on this campus. Ustaz M. Husein produced a book of creeds entitled *Kifâyat al-Mubtadi fi 'Ilm al-Kalâm*,⁷⁰ and legal commentaries entitled *Tafsir Aayaatil Ahkaam: Bahagian Orang-orang yang Berhak Menerima Zakat*.⁷¹ Furthermore, Husein wrote a book on the science of Arabic entitled *al-Tashrif al-Wadhîh* in two volumes.⁷² Some of the lecture materials were published in the form of a pocketbook.

Ustaz Nukman Sulaiman (d. 1996) was a Malay ulama who was the Chancellor of Al Washliyah University in Medan, North Sumatra, and one of the students of Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum and Ustaz M. Arsjad Th. Lubis. Similar with the teachers, Nukman Sulaiman produced many books and papers in the religious sciences. However, some of the works have not even been published. Nukman Sulaiman was a hafiz of the al-Qur'an and taught the book *Tafsîr al-Jalâlain*.⁷³ One of the books in the field of Qur'anic studies was entitled *Al-Qur'an Mukjizat yang Kekal*. Some of the books produced in the field of sharia/worship, included *Tuntunan Haji Praktis*,⁷⁴ and *Adab dan Doa di Tanah Suci*.⁷⁵ Moreover, Nukman

⁶⁸ Ja'far, *Tradisi Intelektual Al Washliyah: Biografi Ulama Kharismatik Dan Tradisi Keulamaan*, 92-94.

⁶⁹ Muaz Tanjung, "Syair-Syair Karya Abubakar Ya'cub (1915-1982)," *Annual International Conference on Islamic Studies (AICIS XII)*, n.d., [http://digilib.uinsby.ac.id/14028/1/Buku 5 Fix bagus_17.pdf](http://digilib.uinsby.ac.id/14028/1/Buku%205%20Fix%20bagus_17.pdf).

⁷⁰ M. Husein Abd. Karim, *Kifâyat Al-Mubtadi Fi 'Ilm Al-Kalâm* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁷¹ M. Husein Abd. Karim, *Tafsir Aayaatil Ahkaam: Bahagian Orang-Orang Yang Berhak Menerima Zakat* (Medan: UNIVA Medan, 1979).

⁷² M. Husein Abd. Karim, *Al-Tashrif Al-Wadhîh* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁷³ Muhammad Hasballah Thaib and Zamakhsyari Hasballah, *Bersama Almarhum Prof. Drs. H. Nukman Sulaiman* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2012).

⁷⁴ Nukman Sulaiman, *Tuntunan Haji Praktis* (Medan: Azizi, 1978).

⁷⁵ Nukman Sulaiman, *Adab Dan Doa Di Tanah Suci* (Medan: Islamyah, 1980).

Sulaiman produced works in the field of theology and translated a book written by Sheikh Thahir bin Salih al-Jazairy and published under the title *Sendi Iman: Mutiara Ilmu Kalam (Membicarakan Aqidah Dalam Islam)*.⁷⁶ In the same field, a book entitled *'Aqidah Islamiyah: Pokok-pokok Kepercayaan Dalam Islam* was written.⁷⁷ Nukman Sulaiman has also produced many unpublished papers, specifically in the fields of faith, law/worship, and history. *Uswah al-Hasanah*⁷⁸ and *Bintang Lima*⁷⁹ were two of the books published several times even currently and are references for religious students at the elementary level. These books have circulated in North Sumatra and Aceh.

Ustaz Hamdan Abbas (d. 2002) was an Al Washliyah ulama who became a member of the Al Washliyah Fatwa, Advisory and Advisory Council, as well as General Chairperson of the Indonesian Ulama Council of North Sumatra Province (1990-1995). Also, Hamdan Abbas produced a book on the al-Qur'an/interpretation, five books on Islamic law, and a book on faith. Among these books were *Ushûl al-Tafsîr* and *Fiqh al-'Ibâdat*.⁸⁰ A number of papers were also produced in the field of Islamic law that has never been published.

Some Al Washliyah ulama are known to have contributed to the development of rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences. Following al-Attas' theory of knowledge classification, it appears that the Al Washliyah Ulama helped in developing several branches of these sciences. For example, they wrote books and articles in the fields of comparative religion, philosophy, and Islamic history. M. Arsjad Th. Lubis and Yusuf Ahmad Lubis are two Al Washliyah ulama who have expertise in the field of comparative religion, especially Islam and Christianity. Ustaz Arsjad wrote seven books on comparative religion, the most important of which is the *Rahsia Bijbel*.⁸¹ Ustaz Yusuf Ahmad Lubis wrote nine books in this discipline, one of which is titled *Ketuhanan dan Salib*.⁸² Yusuf Ahmad Lubis also wrote a book in the field of political science entitled *Ilmu Politik*. Adnan Lubis was a ulama who contributed and translated the work of M. Ghallab to the field of philosophy, which was later entitled *Falsafah Timur*. Ismail Banda was also a philosophy expert, who earned a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Islamic philosophy from al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. Unfortunately, Banda's work in this field has not been discovered. Some of the Al Washliyah ulama have also produced books in the field of Islamic history.

⁷⁶ Nukman Sulaiman, *Sendi Iman: Mutiara Ilmu Kalam (Membicarakan Aqidah Dalam Islam)* (Medan: Islamyah, 1968).

⁷⁷ Nukman Sulaiman, *'Aqidah Islamiyah: Pokok-Pokok Kepercayaan Dalam Islam* (Medan: UNIVA Medan, 1972).

⁷⁸ Nukman Sulaiman, *Uswah Al-Hasanah* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁷⁹ Nukman Sulaiman, *Bintang Lima* (Medan: Sumber Ilmu Jaya, n.d.).

⁸⁰ Ja'far, *Tradisi Intelektual Al Washliyah: Biografi Ulama Kharismatik Dan Tradisi Keulamaan*, 86-91.

⁸¹ M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Rahsia Bijbel* (Medan, 1932).

⁸² Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Ketuhanan Dan Salib* (Medan: MASA, 1973).

⁸³ Azhari Akmal Tarigan, Watni Marpaung, and Ziaul Haq, *Menjaga Tradisi Mengawal Modernitas: Apresiasi Terhadap Pemikiran Dan Kiprah Lahmuddin Nasution* (Medan: Citapustaka Media, 2009).

The latest ulama Al Washliyah has continued to develop religious sciences where books and articles are written. Among them are Lahmuddin Nasution,⁸³ Muslim Nasution,⁸⁴ Ramli Abdul Wahid,⁸⁵ and M. Ridwan Ibrahim Lubis.⁸⁶ Lahmuddin Nasution was an expert on the Shâfi'iyah school, who has written two books entitled *Pembaruan Hukum Islam Dalam Mazhab Syafi'i*,⁸⁷ dan *Fiqh*.⁸⁸ Lahmuddin also translated a book of creeds written by Abû 'Abd Allâh Muḥammad bin Yûsuf al-Sanusi entitled *Syarh Umm al-Barahin: Bahasan tentang Sifat Allah yang Duapuluh*.⁸⁹ Muslim Nasution, an alumnus of Umm al-Qura University, Mecca, Saudi Arabia, has written several works, specifically in the fields of faith, sharia, and Islamic history. Among these books are *Menuju Ketenangan Batin*,⁹⁰ *Haji & Umrah*,⁹¹ and *Tapak Sejarah Seputar Mekah dan Madinah*.⁹² Ramli Abdul Wahid also wrote a number of books in the fields of the al Qur'an, hadith, faith (Islamic theology), jurisprudence, and history. Among these works are *Hadis: Tuntunan dalam Berbagai Aspek Kehidupan*,⁹³ *Kupas Tuntas Ajaran Ahmadiyah*,⁹⁴ and *Fikih Ramadan*.⁹⁵ Meanwhile, M. Ridwan Ibrahim Lubis, the current senior scholar of Al Washliyah, produced a number of works, and among the most important is *Method Berpikir Imam Syâfi'i Dalam Pembentukan Sikap Mental dan Dinamika Hidup*.⁹⁶ Several of them often become references for Al Washliyah cadres, specifically essays on history and concepts within the organization. In the latest era, Al Washliyah has experienced a scarcity of ulama. Furthermore, Al Washliyah educational institution was less productive in creating ulama. Although many alumni with several madrasas succeeded in continuing their studies at al-Azhar University, Cairo,

⁸⁴ Ja'far Ja'far, *Biografi Ketua Umum Pengurus Besar Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah 1930-2015* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2015), 109-116.

⁸⁵ Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Anak Desa Tak Bertuan Jadi Profesor: Kisah Nyata Kehidupan 60 Tahun Prof. Dr. Drs. H. Ramli Abdul Wahid, LC., M.A.*, ed. Ja'far Ja'far and Irwansyah Irwansyah (Medan: CV. Manhaji, 2014).

⁸⁶ Ja'far, *Biografi Ketua Umum Pengurus Besar Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah 1930-2015*, 87-100.

⁸⁷ Lahmuddin Nasution, *Umat Bertanya Ulama Menjawab*, ed. Husnel Anwar Matondang and Watni Marpaung (Bandung: Citapustaka Media, 2007).

⁸⁸ Lahmuddin Nasution, *Fiqh 1* (Jakarta: Logos, n.d.).

⁸⁹ Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad Yusuf al-Sanusi and Lahmuddin Nasution, *Syarh Umm Al-Barahin: Bahasan Tentang Sifat Allah Yang Duapuluh* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 1999).

⁹⁰ Muslim Nasution, *Menuju Ketenangan Batin* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2002).

⁹¹ Muslim Nasution, *Haji & Umrah: Keagungan Dan Nilai Amaliahnya* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1999).

⁹² Muslim Nasution, *Tapak Sejarah Seputar Mekah Dan Madinah* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1999).

⁹³ Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Hadis: Tuntunan Dalam Berbagai Aspek Kehidupan* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2015).

⁹⁴ Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Kupas Tuntas Ajaran Ahmadiyah* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2011).

⁹⁵ Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Fikih Ramadan* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2012).

⁹⁶ M. Ridwan Ibrahim Lubis, *Method Berpikir Imam Syâfi'i Dalam Pembentukan Sikap Mental Dan Dinamika Hidup* (Jakarta: Dayakami, 1982).

Egypt, as well as other campuses in the Middle East, and returned to Indonesia to become religion teachers. That's why, some ulama from the outside organization were asked to join and strengthen Al Washliyah Fatwa Council or *Dewan Fatwa Al Washliyah*. Al Washliyah and its educational institutions have also prepared a precise strategy to create a new ulama in the future.

Conclusion

This study showed Al Washliyah ulama developed two types of knowledge in the 1930-1980 period, namely religious sciences as well as rational, intellectual, and philosophical sciences. However, their attention was more focused on the development of religious sciences. They produced works in the form of books and articles written in Indonesian (Latin script), Arabic, and Malay (Jawi script). Furthermore, the works are published in Medan, Indonesia, while some are published in Malaysia. These books and articles are quite influential because they have become references for students in various madrasas, universities, and for Muslims in Indonesia and Malaysia. Unfortunately, most are no longer republished. This showed that the influence of Al Washliyah ulama in the 1930s to 1980s has started to wane. This study succeeded in revealing their role in developing knowledge in Indonesia. Furthermore, the strength of this study is the use of ulama works as the main data source. Al Washliyah ulama work is hard to find currently. Therefore, the treasures of thoughts contained in their monumental works should be alternative solutions to dealing with contemporary human problems. Their works as well as thoughts need to be studied by other experts. This study did not reveal the thoughts of the Al Washliyah ulama as contained in their works. According to the result, these thoughts cover the fields of religious sciences as well as rational, intellectuals, and philosophical sciences.

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