

Anti Shi'ism in Indonesia: Genealogy, Development, and Methods

Dede Syarif

Ph.d candidate at Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies, UGM
dd_syarif@yahoo.co.id

Iskandar Zulkarnain

State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
iskandar_yogya@yahoo.com

Dicky Sofjan

Indonesia Consortium for Religious Studies, UGM
dickysofjan@yahoo.com

Artikel diterima 18 Mei, diseleksi 18 Mei, dan disetujui 8 Juni 2017

Abstract

The notion of anti Shi'ism is founded in many countries such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, and some others countries in South East Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. This paper discusses the origin, development, and methods of anti Shi'ism in Indonesian context. In order to understand the anti Shi'ism this also will cover the responses expressed by majority Sunni in general and in particular some religious group that continually show their anti Shia sentiment in vary of methods, including the anti Shi'ism in social media and the establishment of National of Anti Shia Alliance, known as ANAS (Aliansi Nasional Anti Shia).

Keywords: anti-Shi'ism, heresy, minority, majority, prejudice.

Abstrak

Gagasan tentang Anti-Shia ditemukan diberbagai negara seperti Arab Saudi, Pakistan, Iraq, Suriah, dan sejumlah negara di kawasan Asia Tenggara seperti Indonesia, Malaysia, dan Brunei Darussalam. Makalah ini mengkaji asal usul, perkembangan dan metode yang digunakan sebagai bentuk sentiment anti-Shia di Indonesia. Makalah ini juga membahas berbagai respons dari kelompok mayoritas Sunni secara umum, dan secara khusus respon dari sejumlah kelompok organisasi kemasyarakatan yang secara berkelanjutan memperlihatkan sikap anti-Shia dalam berbagai cara, termasuk kampanye anti-Shia di sosial media serta berdirinya Aliansi Nasional Anti Shia (ANAS).

Kata kunci: Anti Syiah, bid'ah, Minoritas, Mayoritas, Prasangka.

Introduction

The recent decades of the twentieth century have witnessed a global raise in the public presence of religion in political life, both in the national and trans-national spheres (Casanova 1994). This is especially clear among Muslim societies where the turn towards politicized religious

identities has been more noticeable in public. The Indonesian political shift from the New Order regime towards democratic rule brought with it the rise of religious attribute in political life with Islamic political parties participating in elections. Instead of formal political institution like Islamic political party, Indonesian democratic era, known as *Orde Reformasi*,

also has been marked by an increase in hard-line Islamist groups and communal violence between religious groups in society. Using government regulation such as Blasphemy Law, some religious groups play role as police of moral and religion. Though, Indonesian constitution guarantees religious freedom as reflected in the country's national motto "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" which means "Unity in Diversity", but since democracy was introduced in 1998, numerous religious conflicts have come to the front (Human Right Watch 2013). Whereas these conflicts were repressed by Suharto (1967-1998), the new space to maneuver means that in predominantly Sunni-Indonesia conflicts are now erupting with greater intensity.

In the post New Order, there has been remarkable increase in violence against and discrimination of minority group. According to the Jakarta-based Setara Institute, which monitors religious freedom in Indonesia, there have been more than 200 violent attacks a year on religious minorities after 2008. In 2008 there were more than 260 such cases. Shia are the second-most frequently attacked groups, next to Ahmadiyah, in Sunni majority Indonesia. In particular, Shia Muslims are increasingly being targeted. While there has been passive Sunni-Shia tension in Indonesia, the geopolitical conflict, such as Syrian conflict has made it worse.

Despite rising Sunni-Shia tension, anti-Shia propaganda is growing in social media. To persuade the majority Sunni Muslims of the legitimacy of jihad against Shia, the jihadi groups propagate the anti-Shia narrative that frames the conflict in global level as sectarian one. Framing the war in Syria as a religious conflict, Muslims versus non Muslims, that justify jihad and mobilize people to participate in Shia exclusion. Indeed, in the last few years, various jihadi media have been flooded with anti-Shia

propaganda and hate speech. Images, photos, and articles on the infidelity and cruelty of Shia appear daily on various jihadi websites. In those images, photos, articles and other publications, the anti-Shia narratives, both in local and global nuance, are shared and liked by the anti-Shia supporters. The anti-Shia narratives which circulate in online media have two main goals, firstly, it gives theological justification for the war by portraying Shia as a deviant belief, which not only taints the purity of Islam but also is hostile to it. Secondly, it frames the Syrian conflict within a broader sectarian war between Sunni and Shia. The narrative goes that right through the history of Islam, the Shia have always tried to destabilize the Sunni caliphate (Nuraniyah, 2014:1).

In recent time, at least there are three streams that contribute to violent attacks on Indonesia's Shia minority (IPAC 2016). First, Pro-ISIS extremists have begun to target Shia as they increasingly take cues from ISIS propaganda and exhortations from Indonesian fighters in Syria and Iraq. Second, Saudi-oriented Salafis, following an ultra-puritan strand of Islam, see Shia as a heretical sect (*aliran sesat*) that must be banned. They have stepped up advocacy efforts against it, using the scenery of international events to warn that Shia are intent on wreaking destruction in Indonesia as they have in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain. Third, the growing concern of some conservative people in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) about Shi'a recruitment of their members, especially in East Java.

Those streams strengthen each other, particularly in a climate where Islamist civil society has been using democratic space to push the government to assume a greater role in defining Islamic orthodoxy. This pressure over the last decade has led to violence and legal restrictions in Indonesia against the minority religious group such as Ahmadiyah, but until recently there was less focus on Shia.

The suspicious toward Shia as threat to unity of Indonesia is a bit excessive, since there is no logical reason and also the number of Shia in Indonesia is very small. The Indonesian Shia community is around 2.5 million out of a population of close to 250 million. They are divided into three groups: *Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia* (IJABI); *Ahlul Bait Indonesia* (ABI); and Organization of *Ahlul Bait* for Social Support and Education (OASE). IJABI, the largest, was established in 2000. ABI, founded in 2010 and much smaller than IJABI, is dominated by *Sayyids* (descendants of the Prophet) and religious scholars concerned with jurisprudence; it is more Iranian-oriented in terms of its doctrine and political stance. OASE is the smallest, with a more puritan outlook. Its growing militancy in the wake of anti-Shia advocacy has strained its relationship with the other two groups that have been careful in the past not to antagonize the Sunni majority (IPAC 2016).

The intensity of the anti-Shia campaign in Indonesia is relatively new, although anti-Shia sentiment is not. Some scholars identified that the Iranian Revolution as the inspiring momentum to the rising of political Shi'ism. The 1979 Iranian Revolution inspired hopes for revolutionary change, particularly among Indonesian students and led to many conversions to Shia, but it also kept government suspicions and spawned a wave of anti-Shia propaganda from Saudi-linked foundations (Zainuddin and Basyar, 2000). In the mid-1990s, NU conservatives became increasingly concerned about the encroachment of Shia schools into traditional NU strongholds in East Java and tried to mobilize locals against them. As political space for hard-line Islamist groups increased after Soeharto fell, a somewhat uncomfortable tactical anti-Shia alliance emerged between some of the East Java NU leaders and Salafis campaigning on

doctrinal grounds for a declaration of Shia as deviant.¹

Like the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the Syrian conflict drives tension in the Shia-Sunni relation in Indonesia. The propaganda of anti-Shia since the Syrian conflict erupted, however, is qualitatively different because it has the potential for targeted violence both physical and symbolical. The case of Sampang is physical one, whether the growing of anti Shia rhetoric in social media is an example of symbolic violent.

Differ from the past of anti-Shia campaign which based on intellectual arena throughout seminar, polemic in mass media, and book publication which circulated among religious elite and in formal sphere (Zulkifli, 2009: 244-250), the recent anti Shia campaign is more massive and sporadic involved both elite and laity actor (*orang awam*). The development of information technology facilitated this kind of anti Shia sentiment from just intellectual discourse as expressed in *fatwa*, religious preaching, and seminar, to become a daily expression. People could easily participate in spreading anti-Shia messages, meme, photos and uploading image framing Shia as deviant, bad, and dangerous.

Instead of personal attacks on Shia congregation, various efforts to deprive the right of Shia as citizen have been occurred in systematic and organized way. In East Java, some Sunni clerics have asked the local administration to issue a regulation limiting the spread of Shia Islam, saying that the sect matched the criteria for heresy issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). In 2014 the world's first ever anti-Shia conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia which is one of organized program ever against

¹East Java Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2012. "*Silaturahmi Ulama dan Ulama Menyikapi Masalah Syiah*" [Online] Available at: <http://jatim.kemenag.go.id/file/file/mimbar307/pyca1336000319.pdf> [Accessed on 17 June 2016]

Shia. A thousands *ulama* attended the program including government officials and 100 Islamic scholars and Jihad was declared against Shia (The Jakarta Post, April, 23, 2014).

As a minority group, Shia is a victim of majority-minority relation. Though, majority-minority relation is not always in tension, since the two were living side by side and contributed to the religious life in Indonesia, but as to the dynamic of political situation both global and local, the relationship could become worsen. Along with other minority group, Shia community now become the target of exclusion both from intra religious group (Sunni vs Shia) and state policy. Broadly, two dimension of discrimination against religious groups in Indonesia can be identified. The first perpetrators are government officials, state institutions, such as law enforcement agencies, and non-state institutions such as Indonesian Ulema Council (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*), the pre-eminent clerical body. The second is intolerance arising from community groups, particularly religious mass organizations such as anti-Shia movement.

Anti-Shi'ism : A Definition

The term of anti-Shia conceived as the prejudice against or hatred of Shia Muslims based on their religion and heritage. The term was first defined by Shia Rights Watch in 2011, but has been used in informal research and scholarly articles for decades (Kedourie, 1988). According to Shia Right Watch (SRW) the term Anti-Shi'ism must be used in regards to crimes against Shia. The term anti-Shi'ism and its derivations suggest a realistic depiction of events and their impact, and recognize the discrimination that targets Shia as a group, solely on the basis of their beliefs. These crimes are

serious, unjust acts that threaten the lives and livelihood of Shia community.

Anti-Shi'ism is expressed in different acts and forms including to faith when some religious group consider the Shia to be nonbelievers (*Kuffar*). This is clear with the fatwa (religious opinion) issued by MUI, for instance in East Java in 2012. Other form of anti Shi'ism is in economic sphere. Shia followers in Saudi Arabia are unable to climb to high level government jobs (Clarkson, 2014). Another anti-Shi'sim found in social sphere, for instance occurs in Malaysia where Shia excluded from participation in mainstream society (Shanaan, 2014). Anti shi'sim also expressed in social relation where, in some parts of the world, Shia are treated as second-class citizens and they restricted to access their right in politic, education and culture.

Discussion

The Rise of Anti-Shi'ism in Indonesia

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 yielded enthusiasm of Indonesia Muslims society with the rise a kind of religious revivalism among university students. The revolution, for some, inspired an outline to wage an Islamic revolution at home. At the same time, however, it also sprouted up antipathy that led to an anti-Shia backlash. This occurs among government who perceives the Iranian revolution could inspire the same spirit in Indonesia. The government, concerned about lessons Indonesians might draw from the successful removal of a dictator, moved to warn people against Shi'ism and step up surveillance of those considered sympathetic to the revolution. Instead of government, some Sunni organizations also reacted by refuting Shia doctrine and suggesting it was heretical.

Although the differentiation of the Shiite and Sunni sects dates back to

the earliest days of Islam, the political salience of sectarian identity has varied dramatically over the course of history. In Indonesia the Sunni Shia tension is relatively new. Even though the dispute have been exist since period of process of islamization. The anti-Shi'ism tends to escalate along with the political tension both in geopolitical and national level. Two geopolitical condition escalate Sunni Shia tension in Indonesia are the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the recent Syrian conflict erupted in 2011. These conflicts framed by government and some Sunni groups as Sunni Shia conflict which then accelerate anti-Shia sentiment in Indonesia.

Anti-Shia Campaign

Anti-Shia campaign expressed in many forms and activities. Since the development of information technology, the anti-Shia campaigns occur, both in conventional and non conventional methods. By the conventional method, I mean that the propagation conducted in general forms and activities such as preaching, publishing article and book etc. This method also called conventional in term of Sociological sense that employ physical interaction. For the conventional method, I refer to Zulkifli's four ways of Anti Shi'ism (Zulkifli, 2009). Meanwhile, in non conventional way, the anti-Shia is perceived as part of development of information technology where the propagation taking place in social media. The social media is a tool to spread and share messages and material contain anti Shia sentiment. In conventional ways at least there are four ways of anti-Shia campaign. This include seminars, discussions, appeals to government authorities and preaching.

The influence of the revolution in Iran was reinforced by the translation of books written by important revolutionary

figures. The works of some Shia scholars, such as Ali Shariati and Imam Khomeini were published and read by Sunni Muslim people in Indonesia. This firstly initiated by the Mizan Press with the publication of the so called "Shia books" in the early 1980s. For this, there were some important literatures to be addressed. The Arabic book *al-Muraja'at* constituting a dialogue between A. Sharafuddin Al-Musawi and Shaikh Salim al-Bisri al-Maliki was selected to be the foremost book published by the Mizan Press in 1983. It has been entitled *Dialog Sunni-Syi'ah* (A Dialogue between a Sunni and a Shia). According to the Director of Mizan Press, Haidar Bagir, the publication of this book was inspired by the fact that there was no appropriate and adequate discussion of Shia in Indonesia at that time (Zulkifli, 2009). As a response to the spreading of Shia literature, some anti-Shia figures also published anti-Shia writings. The publication is intended to compete with the growing number of Shia works in the market place, particularly those translated from Arabic, English and Persian originals. Anti-Shia literature offered a strong rejection of Shia and its teachings and drew upon both textual and rational proofs. Most of the literatures were translation from famous Arabic originals works. Two of the scholars were very famous as anti-Shia *ulama*: Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib (1886-1969) and Ihsan Ilahi Zahir (d. 1987). Al-Khatib was born in Damascus and from 1920 took up permanent residence in Cairo, where he became one of the most resolute advocates of Wahhabism. This was a direct result of the influence of the writings of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1323) during his education. Al-Khatib was a journalist, commentator, editor and publisher of his own periodicals, *al-Zahra* (1924-1929) and *al-Fath* (1926-1948). He also produced editions of classical Arabic books and Wahabi writings. He took a fiercely negative stance towards Shi'ism and strongly opposed any attempts to reach rapprochement and conciliation between

Sunnism and Shi'ism (Brunner 2004:255-256 in Zulkifli, 2009).

The most influential of the anti-Shia works translated into Indonesian are those by Zahir. His books include *Salah Faham Sunnah Syi'ah* ('Sunni Shi'i Misunderstanding', 1983), *Syiah dan Sunnah*⁴³ (Shi'ism and Sunnism, 1984) and *Syi'ah Berbohong atas nama Ahlul Bait* (The Shia Lie in the Name of Ahl al-Bayt, 1987). These are followed in popularity by al-Khatib's *al-Khutut al-Arida* (The Broad Outlines) which was translated into Indonesian under the title *Mengenal Pokok-pokok Ajaran Syiah Al-Imamiyah dan Perbedaannya dengan Ahlussunnah* ('Introducing the Principal Teachings of Imamiyya Shi'ism and their Differences from Sunnism', 1985). The foreword of this book was written by Muhammad Nasif, the then Secretary General of the Muslim World League. It is important to note that al-Khatib regards Shi'ism as a religion outside Islam rather than a *madhhab* within it. These books are distributed widely in Islamic institutions, organizations and libraries throughout Indonesia and this has made them widely read among large segments of Indonesian Muslim society.

These books are frequently referred by Indonesian Sunni Muslims to argue on anti-Shi'ism. The publication of this book was supported by Saudi Arabia. This stated by the translator of this book Bey Arifin, that the Muslim World League, which is a Saudi-based organization, promoted and financed the translation and publication of such books "The Muslim World League Centre in Mecca al-Mukarrama with its letter no.1/6/16 on 23 Safar 1404H through the Muslim World League Office in Jakarta with its letter no.133/VII/1404 on 8 December 1983 requested me to translate the book *al-Shi'a wa al-Sunna* into Indonesian (Natsir, 1984:11).

The anti-Shia writing has increased since the 1980s. To mention but a few of the most popular in Indonesia: Muhammad Malullah's *Syiah dan Pemalsuan Al-Qur'an* (Shi'ism and Falsification of the Qur'an) published in 1982 by Pustaka Mantik in Jakarta, Muhammad al-Tunsawi's *Beberapa Kekeliruan Akidah Syi'ah* (Several Mistakes of Shia Doctrine) and Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi's *Dua Wajah Saling Menentang antara Ahlu Sunnah dan Syi'ah* (Two Opposing Faces between Sunnism and Shi'ism), both published by Bina Ilmu, Surabaya in 1984 and 1987 respectively. The tendency continues today with different types of publications, ranging from pamphlets to voluminous works, and with tones from provocative to more moderate. The most important of these might be As-Salus's *Ensiklopedi Sunnah-Syiah* (Sunni-Shia Encyclopaedia) originally consisting of four volumes in Arabic. This encyclopedia was praised in an introductory note by Muhammad Hidayat Nurwahid, the current spokesman of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly and prominent leader of PKS. Nurwahid, who is known to have a negative attitude towards Shia, claims that it is a "serious and scientific work, which can amplify the scarcity of authoritative literature on Shia." (Nurwahid 2001: xii).

Those literatures contain negative views on Shia. Two general, but related, points can be drawn from their contents. Firstly, emphasis is placed on controversies between the two *madhabs*, but with no intention of providing rapprochement. Secondly, the main issues of these controversies remain the same as those of past disputes. These literature could be summarized as the disagreement of Sunni interpretations on Shi'ism: 1) the Qur'an, Shia interpretations and alleged distortion (*tahrif*) of its text, 2) the authenticity and Shia view of Hadith, 3) the Shia view of the Prophet's companions, 4) the history and Shia concept of the imamate, 5) Shia legal norms, in particular regarding *mut'a*,

6) the Shia teaching of *taqiyya* and 7) certain Shia religious rituals (Ende, 1990: 221-222 cited in Zulkifli 2009). In addition to the translation, the reformist Muslim groups also publish their own anti-Shia writings which published in booklets. A large number of articles are to be found in *Al-Muslimun* of Bangil; from September 1979 to January 1998 there were 32 titles of anti-Shia articles published in this reformist magazine, which is the largest number to appear in the existing Islamic periodicals. Besides, polemical works in the national media indicate a dynamic opposition to the Shia in the country.

The latest book on anti-Shia propagation is *Mengenal dan Mewaspadaai Penyimpangan Syi'ah di Indonesia* (Identifying and Keeping on Guard against Shia Indonesia) (TIM Penulis MUI Pusat, 2013). This book written by the MUI team (Tim Penulis MUI Pusat). This book is distributed freely as stated in the cover "*tidak diperjual belikan*". This book look like a compilation from several articles topic on Shia from history of Shia Rafidhah, the fallacy of Shia doctrine, Shia movement and its spreading in Indonesia, and the last chapter is the MUI responses on Shia. Similar to the previous book, this one also be perceived as anti Shia campaign.

The second method of anti-Shia campaign is seminar, discussions and debates concerning Shia and Sunni-Shia relations. Unlike book publication, these activities of anti Shia campaign are more open to public. The seminars and discussion are carried out in a framework of Islamic *darwa* rather than intellectual discussion. For this it is necessary to mention some seminars that marked the anti Shia campaign.

There are two popular seminars that attracted public attention and considerable media interest. The first was the "Seminar on Islamic Doctrine" organized in Jakarta's Hotel Indonesia on 14 January 1988 by

the Middle East Alumni of Jakarta. It can be seen as a counter-action to a similar activity held in Jakarta about a month earlier, on 8 December 1987, at which all the speakers were famous liberal thinkers and 'enemies' of the reformist groups and of DDII in particular. The speakers event included Harun Nasution, Nurcholish Madjid, and Abdurrahman Wahid. For the anti-Shia group, this seminar was intended to contribute to the spread of Shia in the country. The controversial anti-Shia seminar in question involved three main speakers, M. Rasjidi, Ibrahim Hosen and Fuad M. Fakhruddin, who all agreed that Shi'ism was the main cause of the Iran-Iraq war. They also agreed on the danger of Shia for the Indonesian nation. The goal of the seminar was to confirm Shia as a heterodox sect, and in the framework of *da'wa* the participants were each given four anti-Shia books, consisting of Indonesian translations of Middle Eastern works by Said Hawa, al-Tunsawi, al-Khatib and Zahir. Abdul Malik M. Aliun, Chairman of the seminar's organizing committee said that "*the Middle East alumni think it necessary to correct Islamic doctrine from false streams, one of which is Shi'ism, and we the Muslim umma need to know Shia in order not to be plunged into sin*" (Zulkifli, 2009).

His opinion provoked angry reactions from the more moderate participants at the seminar, including Muslim intellectuals such as Nurcholish Madjid and Alwi Shihab. Following the seminar, no less than six critics wrote articles that were published in the national magazine, *Tempo* responding in particular to Fakhruddin's statement that "Ali bin Abi Talib tried to satisfy his personal ambition for the caliphate and therefore he was not Islamic". These critics, including Alwi Shihab, could see that this would be provocative to both Sunnis and Shia because of the undoubted personal quality of 'Ali and the prohibition on discrediting one of the four rightly guided

caliphs. In his response to Alwi Shihab, Fakhruddin maintained his stand.

The second anti-Shia seminar held on 1997. This seminar took place in the hall of the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta. It was organized by LPPI (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam*, Institute of Islamic Studies and Research) in collaboration with *Gema*, a bulletin of the reformist Al-Irsyad. LPPI is led by Amin Djamaluddin, who claims to have been a student of Natsir. As a DDII activist receiving a monthly allowance from that organization, Djamaluddin has a vested interest in blocking the development of religious currents considered false. It also demonstrates the link between LPPI and DDII and their collaboration in the organization of *da'wa* activities. The importance of this 1997 anti-Shia seminar lies in its success, not only in having as its speakers several Muslim leaders representing great Islamic organizations and institutions in the country. Among them was K.H. Hasan Basri (1920-1998) the then General Chairman of MUI, who delivered the opening speech to the seminar. The large number of participants included state officials, military personnel, *'ulama*, Muslim leaders, leaders of Islamic organizations and 'ordinary' people. The seminar was widely reported and became the source of a long-running controversy in the Indonesian media.

Following the previous two methods, the anti-Shia propagation also directed to government. One example of the anti-Shia approach to the government was conducted by asking for the activation of the LPPI seminar recommendations. About a month after the seminar had taken place, LPPI wrote a letter, signed on 17 October 1997, requesting that the government - in this case the Attorney General, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Education and Culture and the Minister of Religious Affairs - forbid the existence of Shia in Indonesia. The group

also called a press conference, after which 15 Islamic leaders, including the LPPI director, Amin Djamaluddin and speakers from the seminar went to the office of the Attorney General and the Department of Religious Affairs to present the same request. In the previous year, LPPI had also sent the Minister of Religious Affairs, the Attorney General and the Chairman of MUI a similar appeal for the prohibition of Shia Islam in the country. The Indonesian government failed to respond to either request. The campaign for the banning of Shia in Indonesia continued. It became particularly strong following MUI's issuance of the *fatwa* prohibiting the practice of *mut'a*. Working towards its goal of ridding Indonesia of Shia, LPPI distributed a leaflet, and urged MUI to issue a *fatwa*, on the falsity of Shia and to endorse the prohibition of its spread in the country. Despite this request, MUI did not issue a *fatwa*, stating that its 1984 recommendation had been sufficient (Zulkifli, 2009).

The last method of anti Shi'ism as studied by Zulkifli is preaching. Comparing to the previous methods of anti-Shi'ism this is most common to the anti-Shia campaign as well as for the society in general. In this regard, the anti-Shia figures throughout the country include the charge of the falsity of Shia as a topic in their sermons at mosques and other venues. An example for this method is reported by Wisananingrum when, in 1991, she witnessed a leader of MUI give a sermon on the falsity of Shia at the Al-Muslimun Mosque in Bandung. She believes such actions to be a part of the anti-Shia propagation aimed at persuading the Sunni Muslim community to reject the teachings of Shia (Wisananingrum in Zulkifli, 2009). A number of anti-Shia sermons were also delivered at the DDII mosque in Jakarta. Furthermore, similar sermons were broadcast through radio stations such as At-Thohiriyah FM in

Jakarta, which produced a program about 'false currents'.

Those four methods of anti-Shia propagations were directed to all segments of the community and state, the laity and the elite. In the eyes of the anti-Shia movement, not only are the Sunni community members to be protected from the influence of Shia teachings, but the Indonesian government is expected to take a decision on the prohibition of Shia in the country. The attempts by the Sunni reformist group to protect their community from the influence of Shi'ism and to prohibit the *madhhab* has inevitably led to high tension between the two groupings. Shia figures in Indonesia recount many bitter experiences from negative reactions from the anti-Shia group. These reactions were directed not only to individuals but also to institutions and they varied in their roughness.

The Establishment of National Alliance of Anti-Shia

In preference to the four ways of anti-Shia propagation, the anti-Shi'ism entered new development with the emergence of Aliansi Nasional Anti Shia (National Alliance of Anti Shia), known as ANAS. With the establishment of this alliance, the anti-Shi'ism transforms to more organized and systematic strategy with wide networking. This alliance also put Shia issues as the only target of the campaign. It is worth to mention that ANAS is not a mainstream religious group such as NU, Muhammadiyah and Persis, but with its skill in issuing on Shia in media, this Alliance is very influential in public opinion.

This alliance was established in respond to the violence in Sampang in December 2011. Few months after the Sampang incident, several conservative Muslim leaders in West Java initiated moves toward a National Anti-Shia

Alliance. The idea first arose at the 2012 national congress of the Forum Ulama Ummat Indonesia (FUUI), one of the many pro-shari'ah advocacy organizations that emerged with the opening of democratic space. The FUUI was initiated from regular meeting held by Bandung ulama around 1980s. Several senior Bandung clerics like KH. M Rusyad Nurdin, (Alm) KH Latief Mukhtar, (Alm) KH Mukti Nurdin, Dr Yusuf Amir Faisal held forum to respond the problem among *ummah*. Some issues had been addressed such as government policy on *Sumbangan Dana Sosial* (SDSB) and the Munawar Sadzali idea to evaluate *fiqh* on *waris* (Farida and Syarif, 2013). Formally, the FUUI was founded in 2001 by a Bandung-based *kiai* named Athian Ali, it focused on countering liberalism, Christianization (*kristenisasi*), apostasy (*pemurtadan*) and deviant sects. The organization is probably best known for having in 2002 imposed a death sentence on Ulil Abshar Abdalla, founder of the Liberal Islam Network (JIL).

Athian Ali is a deeply conservative activist with ties across the Islamic organizational spectrum and close relations with local politicians, most recently demonstrated when he was asked to give a lecture before the solar eclipse at Bandung's largest mosque in the presence of the West Java governor (IPAC interview, Athian Ali, Bandung, 19 January 2016). As hard-line coalitions gained ground after Reformasi, Athian's name kept appearing as part of an interlocking directorate of organizations whose members were involved in protesting the construction of churches, preventing Christian gatherings, attacking Ahmadiyah property and taking part in anti-vice raids, in some cases, in partnership with local police and often accompanied by low-level vigilante violence. He did not lead trends as much as follow them and seemed to have an unerring instinct for how to take issues

that had attracted public interest and mobilize mass protests around them.

Until the Sampang issue arose, Shia had not been a particular preoccupation because it was not in the public attention, though Athian Ali was personally close to several anti-Shia Persis leaders and also had a longstanding antipathy to Jalaluddin Rakhmat. He kept an eye on the development of Shia in Bandung but only took action after January 2012, when he received a visit from 27 East Java clerics who had come to lobby MUI to ban Shia in the wake of the Madura violence. On 28 February 2012, FUUI agreed to formulate a fatwa on Shia (<https://fuuina.wordpress.com/2014/07/01/maklumat-fuu-indonesia-tentang-pemilihan-presiden-9-juli-2014/>, didownload 23 Feb 2017).

FUUI then organized an expert meeting from 17 to 22 March, with a team consisting of Amin Djamaluddin from LPPI, Daud Rasyid and Hartono Ahmad Jaiz from DDII and Luthfi Bashori from NU *Garis Lurus* (Straight Line). They drafted a fatwa declaring Shia to be “deviant and promoting deviancy (*sesat dan menyesatkan*)”. The fatwa was issued on 22 April 2012 during FUUI's second national congress, attended by the West Java governor and by prominent ulama from both reformist and traditionalist camps.

Branches sprang up around the country but mostly in places where hard-line clerics already had a strong political presence, as in Garut, Tasikmalaya, Cianjur, Bogor and Purwakarta in West Java, Probolinggo in East Java, and Balikpapan in East Kalimantan. As of February 2016, ANAS was preparing to establish more branches in so-called “Shia-prone” cities, particularly in Sumatra. According to Athian Ali, ANAS was not concerned with areas where a strong anti-Shia movement was already active, as it was in East Java. Instead it

was focusing on regions facing rapid development of Shia communities that lacked Sunni resistance, for example in Pekanbaru and Medan where he said many Shia immigrants from Afghanistan and Iraq were trying to promote Shia.

Most of the groups and individuals that joined ANAS had been previously involved in anti-Shia or anti-Ahmadi campaigns before. ANAS appointed people like Ahmad Zein Alkaf (the leader of the Surabaya-based al-Bayyinah and member of NU's regional advisory board), Farid Okbah, and Said Abdussamad (leader of LPPI Makassar) as members of its advisory board. ANAS also gave the leadership position of its new branches to locally influential clerics.

The significant point to the establishment of ANAS lays in its role as an organized anti-Shia movement. Unlike the previous anti-Shia propagation which conducted partially, the ANAS locates Shia as the only target of their campaign.

Conclusion

Anti-Shi'ism in Indonesia related constantly to geopolitical conflict. In the previous, it was related with the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and now links to the Syrian conflict. Some cases show that the sentiment is changing from personal rivalries, political interests and international developments, overlaid by the constant of Salafi antipathy. Unlike in the Middle East, the anti-Shi'ism in Indonesia Sunni-Shia conflict is rare, but now increase rapidly after the Reformation era. The methods of Anti-Shi'sim, as prejudice based on religious belief, evolves from stigmatization -as expressed in seminar, book publication, and preaching- to violation and exclusion of Shia congregation. The transition of democracy opened up space for the hard-line groups to demand enforcement of religious orthodoxy, though, the

anti-Shi'ism has reached new levels with implementation of information technology, where the campaign takes new technology in spreading message. Channeling the social media, the present anti-Shi'ism sentiment involves both religious elite and laity. The establishment of National of Anti-Shia Alliance or *Aliansi Nasional Anti Shia (ANAS)* marks the development of anti-Shi'ism to more organized and systematized method in

spreading anti-Shia campaign. Using its alliance and networking of the anti-Shia rhetoric of hard-line advocacy organizations creates an atmosphere that makes extremist violence more likely. Through its campaign, ANAS puts Shia community more in the public consciousness, and it opens the possibility that the issue will spread widely covering theological, social, and political sphere.

References

- Abduh, Umar and Abu Huzaifah (ed). *Mengapa Kita Menolak Syi'ah: Kumpulan Makalah Seminar Nasional tentang Syi'ah di Aula Masjid Istiqlal Jakarta 21 September 1997*. Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam. 1998.
- Atjeh, Aboebakar. *Perbandingan Mazhab, Sji'ah: Rasionalisme dalam Islam*. Jakarta: Jajasan Lembaga Penyelidikan Islam. 1965.
- — — *Aliran Syi'ah di Nusantara*. Jakarta: Islamic Research Institute. 1977.
- — — *Sekitar Masuknya Islam ke Indonesia*. 4th edition. Solo: Ramadhani. 1985.
- Azra, Azyumardi. "Syi'ah di Indonesia: Antara Mitos dan Realitas" *Ulumul Quran: Jurnal Ilmu dan kebudayaan* 6 (4), 1995.
- — — "Hadhrami Scholars in the Malay-Indonesian Diaspora: A preliminary Study of Sayyid 'Uthman" *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 2 (2) 1995.
- — — "Akar-akar Ideologi Revolusi Iran: Fislafat Pergerakan Ali Syari'ati" in M.Deden Ridwan (ed) *Melawan Hegemoni Barat: Ali Syari'ati dalam Sorotan Cendekiawan Indonesia*. Jakarta: Lentera, 1999.
- Baabdullah, M.O. *Fatwa dan Pendirian Ulama Sunni terhadap Aqidah Syi'ah*. Bangil: Penerbit Ma'had 'Aly Ilmu Fiqh dan Da'wah Masjid Manarul Islam. 1990.
- Casanova, Jose. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. The University of Chicago Press. 1994.
- Clarkson, Anya. *Saudi Arabia: Anti-Shi'a Discrimination in Employment and the Work Place*. The Center for Academic Shi'a Studies. 2014.
- Djamaluddin, M. Amin. *Catatan Atas Jawaban Lengkap Dr. O. Hashem Terhadap Seminar Nasional Sehari tentang Syi'ah 21 September 1997 di Aula Masjid Istiqlal Jakarta*. Jakarta: LPPI. 2000.
- Enayat, Hamid. *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of the Shi'i and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century*. New Edition. London: I.B. Tauris, 2005.

- “Sunni Polemical Writings on the Shi’a and the Iranian Revolution” in David Menashri (ed) *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World*. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1990.
- Ende, Werner. “Sunni Polemical Writings on the Shi’a and the Iranian Revolution” in David Menashri (ed) *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World*. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1990.
- Farida, Anik and Dede Syarif. *Respon Ormas Islam di Jawa Barat terhadap Syiah*. Laporan Penelitian, Balai Litbang Agama Jakarta. 2013.
- Federspiel. *Islam and Ideology in the emerging Indonesian State: the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), 1923 to 1957*. Leiden: Brill. 2001.
- Feener, Michael. “Tabut: Muharram Observances in the History of Bengkulu” *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 6 (2). 1999.
- Formichi, Chiara. “Violence, Sectarianism, and the Politics of Religion: Articulations of Anti-Shi’a Discourse; Indonesia 98 (October 2014) and “Shaping Shi’a Identities in Contemporary Indonesia between Local Tradition and Foreign Orthodoxy,” *Die Welt des Islams*.
- “From Fluid Identities To Sectarian Labels”, *A Historical Investigation of Indonesia’s Shi’i Communities*. Al-Jāmi’ah: Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol. 52, no. 1 (2014). doi: 10.14421/ajis.2014.521.101-126
- Formichi and Michael R. Feener (Ed). *Shi’ism in Southeast Asia: Alid Piety and Sectarian Constructions*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 2015.
- Harfenist, E. *Anti-Shia Sentiment Simmers Ahead of Indonesia’s Election*. Vice News [Online] (Last updated on 26 May 2014), Available at: <https://news.vice.com/article/anti-shia-sentiment-simmers-ahead-of-indonesias-elections> [Accessed on 27 September 2016]
- Hasani, Ismail dan Bonar Tigor Naipospos (editor). *Negara Menyangkal. Kondisi Kebebasan Beragama/Berkeyakinan di Indonesia 2010*. Jakarta: Pustaka Masyarakat Setara. 2011.
- Hashem, O. *Syi’ah Ditolak Syi’ah Dicari*. 4th edition. Jakarta: Al-Huda. 2002.
- Hasjmy, A. *Syi’ah dan Ahlussunnah: Saling Rebut Pengaruh dan Kekuasaan sejak awal Sejarah Islam di kepulauan Nusantara*. Surabaya: PT. Bina Ilmu. 1983.
- Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict Report No. 27 (IPAC. 2016). *The Anti Shi’a Movement in Indonesia*. www.understandingconflict.org, . 2016.
- Jaiz, Hartono Ahmad. *Aliran dan Paham Sesat di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar. 2002.
- Kaff, Thohir Abdullah Al. “Perkembangan Syi’ah di Indonesia.” in *Mengapa Kita Menolak Syi’ah: Kumpulan Makalah dan Kesimpulan Seminar Nasional Sehari tentang Syi’ah*. Jakarta: LPPI. 1998.
- Kaptein, N.J.G. *Perayaan Hari Lahir Nabi Muhammad SAW*. Jakarta: INIS. 1994.
- Kartomi, Margaret J. “Tabut – A Shi’a Ritual Transplanted from India to Sumatera” in David P. Chandler and M.C. Ricklefs (eds.) *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Indonesia: Essays in honour of Professor J.D. Legge*. Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Studies Monash University, 1986.

- Kedourie, Elie. *Anti-Shi'ism in Iraq under the Monarchy*. Middle Eastern Studies. 1988. doi:10.1080/00263208808700740.
- Latif, Yudi. *Intelegensia Muslim dan Kuasa*. Bandung: Mizan. 2005.
- Latief, Hilman. *The Identity of Shi'a Sympathizers in Contemporary Indonesia*. Journal of Indonesian Islam. Volume 02, Number 02, December 2008.
- Madjid, Nurcholish. "Kata Pengantar: Sekilas Tinjauan Historis tentang Paham-paham Sunnah-Syi'ah" in S. Husain M. Jafri *Awal dan Sejarah Perkembangan Islam Syi'ah: dari Saqifah sampai Imamah*. Jakarta: Pustaka Hidayah, 5-19. 1989.
- Mudzhar, Muhammad Atho. *Fatwa-fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia: Sebuah Studi tentang Pemikiran Hukum Islam di Indonesia, 1975-1988*. Jakarta: INIS. 1993.
- Musawi, As-Sayyid Syarafuddin al-. *Dialog Sunnah Syi'ah: Surat Menyurat antara Asy-Syaikh al-Misyri al-Maliki, Rektor al-Azhar di KairMesir dan as-Sayyid Syarafuddin al Musawi al Amili seorang Ulama Besar Syi'ah*. Bandung: Mizan. 1983.
- Natsir, Mohammad. "Kata Berjawab" in Ihsan Ilahi Zahir *Syi'ah dan Sunnah*. Translated by Bey Arifin. Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 9-10. 1984.
- Nuraniyah, Navhat. *Syrian Conflict Fallout: Time to Contain Hate Speech in Indonesia*. S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU: RSIS Commentaries. 2014.
- Nurjulianti, Dewi and Arief Subhan. "Lembaga-lembaga Syi'ah di Indonesia" *Ulumul Quran: Jurnal Ilmu dan Kebudayaan*, 1995.
- Nurwahid, M. Hidayat. "Menyoal Gaya Pembelaan Syi'ah, Jawaban dan Tanggapan untuk O. Hashem" in Umar Abduh and Abu Hudzaifah (ed) *Mengapa Kita Menolak Syi'ah: Kumpulan Makalah Seminar Nasional tentang Syi'ah di Aula Masjid Istiqlal Jakarta 21 September 1997*. Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam, 1998.
- — — "Kata Pengantar: Mendudukkan Kembali Sunnah Syiah" Ali Ahmad As-Salus *Ensiklopedi Sunnah-Syiah, Studi Perbandingan Aqidah dan Tafsir*. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2001.
- Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kehidupan Beragama (1986/1987). *Mazhab Syi'ah*. Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Agama Departemen Agama RI.
- Rakhmat, Jalaluddin. "Dikotomi Sunni-Syi'ah Tidak Relevan lagi" interview by Arief Subhan and Nasrullah Ali-Fauzi in *Ulumul Quran: Jurnal Ilmu dan Kebudayaan* 6 (4): 92-103 1997 *Catatan Kang Jalal: Visi Media, Politik, dan Pendidikan*. Bandung: Rosda
- Rasjidi, M. *Apa Itu Syi'ah*. Jakarta: Media Dakwah, . 1984.
- Riddell, Peter G. "Religious Links Between Hadhramaut and the Malay-Indonesian World, c. 1850 to c.1950" in Ulrike Freitag and William Clarence-Smith (eds) *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*. Leiden: Brill.
- Safwan, A. M. "Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia (IJABI) Sebagai Gerakan Sosial Keagamaan," paper presented to Muslim Student Association of Agricultural Technology Department, Gadjah Mada University of Yogyakarta 21 February 2001 (<http://raushanfikr.tripod.com/makatul/sosio-agama.htm> accessed 27/1/2003)

- Shanahan, Rodger. *Malaysia and its Shi'a Problem*. Australian National University. 2014.
- Shihab, Quraish. *Sunnah Syi'ah Bergandengan Tangan, Mungkinkah? Kajianatas Konsep Ajaran dan Pemikiran*. Jakarta: Lentera Hati. 2007.
- Soeherman, Abdi Mahaestyo. "Syiah bukan Sampar" in A. Latief Muchtar *Gerakan Kembali ke Islam: Warisan Terakhir A. Latief Muchtar, Ketua Umum Persis 1983-1997*. Bandung: Rosda, 1998.
- Sofjan, Dicky (ed). "*Minoritization & Criminalization of Shia Islam in Indonesia*". *Journal of South East Asias and Middle Eastern Studies*, winter 2016, vol. XXXIX, No. 2.
- Tim Penulis MUI Pusat. *Mengenal dan Mewaspadaai Penyimpangan Syi'ah di Indonesia*. Jakarta: 2013.
- Zainuddin, A. Rahman et al. *Syiah dan Politik di Indonesia: Sebuah Penelitian*. Bandung: Mizan dan PPW-LIPI. 2000.
- Zulkifli. *The Struggle of Shi'is in Indonesia*. Universiteit Leiden. 2009.
- "Being a Shi'ite among the Sunni Majority in Indonesia: A Preliminary Study of Ustadz Husein Al-Habsyi (1921-1994)" *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 11 (2): 275-308. 2004.

Electronic Sources

- Human Rights Watch. 2013. In Religion's Name: Abuses Against Religious Minorities in Indonesia. [Online], Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/02/28/religion-s-name-0> [Accessed on 23 September 2016]
- Husain, R. 2014. Malaysian "Confronting the Shia Virus" Seminar was Precursor to Anti Shia Alliance Meeting". *Communities Digital News* [Online] (Last updated on 29 April 2014), Available at: <http://www.commdiginews.com/worldnews/middle-east/malaysian-confronting-the-shia-virus-seminar-was-precursor-to-anti-shia-alliance-meeting-16310/> [Accessed on 30 April 2014]
- Menag Tegaskan Syiah Bertentangan dengan Islam, 2012. *Media Indonesia*, [Online] (Last updated on 26 January 2012 Available at: <http://www.mediaindonesia.com/read/2012/01/25/293947/293/14/Menag-Tegaskan-Syiah-Bertentangandengan-Islam> [Accessed on 30 May 2016]
- MUI Sampang Keluarkan Fatwa Sesat Syiah yang DibawaTajul Muluk," Hidayatullah, January 3, 2012, <http://www.hidayatullah.com/read/20493/03/01/2012/mui-sampang-keluarkan-fatwa-sesat-syiah-yang-dibawa-tajulmuluk.html> (accessed May 15, 2016).
- The Jakarta Post. 2014. Anti-Shia alliance reported to police. *The Jakarta Post* [Online] (Last updated on 23 April 2014), Available at: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/04/23/anti-shia-alliance-reported-police.html> [Accessed on 18 May 2016]