STUDIA ISLAMIKA

WHAT DRIVES ANTI-SHIA FRAMING IN INDONESIA

Zulkifli

THE 'ELECTIVE AFFINITY' OF ISLAMIC POPULISM:
A CASE STUDY OF INDONESIAN POLITIC IDENTITY
WITHIN THE THREE ELECTIONS

Wahyudi Akmaliah & Ibnu Nadzir

ISLAMIC UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT:
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What Drives Anti-Shia Framing in Indonesia?

Abstract: *As a global phenomenon, Anti-Shia movement in Indonesia is damaging the moderate characteristics of Indonesian Islam. Even though previous literature showed the role of state actors in Anti-Shia movement in Muslim-majority countries and uncovered religious, economic, and political causes, this current study focused on Anti-Shia framing and the contributing factors. Furthermore, fieldwork and library studies on MIUMI (the Indonesian Council of Young Intellectuals and Ulama) and ANNAS (National Anti-Shia Alliance) showed Shia was framed as heretical sect and a source of conflict in Muslim society. To address this issue, a nationally applied fatwa and the prohibition of Shia organizations, institutes, and foundations were required, in addition to exercising jihad against Shia. This was due to interconnected factors between religious ideology, majoritarian mindset, and perceived threat. Therefore, cultural and socio-psychological dimensions were significant social movement studies.*

Keywords: Anti-Shia, Framing, Religious Ideology, Majoritarian Mindset, Perceived Threat.

Abstrak: *Sebagai fenomena global, gerakan anti-Syiah di Indonesia telah merusak karakteristik moderat Islam Indonesia. Berbeda dengan studi-studi tentang gerakan anti-Syiah di negara-negara mayoritas Muslim yang menekankan pada peran aktor negara dan faktor-faktor keagamaan, ekonomi, dan politik, artikel ini berupaya mengungkap framing anti-Syiah dan faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi. Melalui kerja lapangan dan studi kepustakaan, berdasarkan sumber* online *dan* offline *pada kasus Majelis Intelektual dan Ulama Muda Indonesia (MIUMI) dan Aliansi Nasional Anti Syiah (ANNAS), artikel ini menemukan bahwa aktivis anti-Syiah membingkai Syiah tidak hanya sebagai sekte sesat tetapi juga sebagai sumber konflik pada masyarakat Muslim dan untuk menyelesaikannya diperlukan fatwa sesat berskala nasional dan pemerintah harus melarang organisasi, lembaga, dan yayasan Syiah, selain ajakan untuk berjihad melawan Syiah. Pembingkaian strategis tersebut dipengaruhi oleh faktor-faktor yang saling berkaitan, yakni ideologi keagamaan, pola pikir mayoritas, dan persepsi terancam.*

Kata kunci: Anti-Syiah, *Framing*, Ideologi Keagamaan, Pola Pikir Mayoritas, Persepsi Terancam.

ملخص: باعتبارها ظاهرة عالمية، فإن الحركة المناهضة للشيعة في إندونيسيا تلحق الضرر بالخصائص المعتدلة للإسلام الإندونيسي. و على الرغم من أن الدراسات السابقة حول الحركات المناهضة للشيعة في البلدان ذات الأغلبية المسلمة تؤكد على دور الجهات الحكومية والعوامل الدينية والاقتصادية والسياسية، يسعى هذا المقال إلى الكشف عن التأطير المناهض للشيعة والعوامل المساهمة فيه. من خلال العمل الميداني والدراسات المكتبية، استنادًا إلى مصادر عبر الإنترنت وخارجها حول حالات مجلس الشباب المثقف والعلماء الإندونيسي (MIUMI) والتحالف الوطني ضد الشيعة (ANNAS)، يجد هذا المقال أن النشطاء المناهضين للشيعة يؤطرون الشيعة ليس فقط على أنهم طائفة ضالة ولكنها أيضا مصدر للصراع في المجتمع الإسلامي. وحلها يتطلب فتوى على المستوى الوطني ويجب على الحكومة حظر المنظمات والمؤسسات الشيعية، بالإضافة إلى الدعوة إلى الجهاد ضد الشيعة. ويتأثر هذا الإطار الاستراتيجي بعوامل مترابطة، وهي الأيديولوجية الدينية، وعقلية الأغلبية، والتهديد المتصور.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحركة المناهضة للشيعة، التأثر، الأيديولوجية الدينية، عقلية الأغلبية، التهديد المتصور.

A nti-Shia, also known as "hatred of prejudice, discrimination, and violence against Shia Muslim based on religion and heritage", is a term first introduced by Shia Rights Watch in 2011 (Shia Rights Watch 2013), and has become a global phenomenon. This is not only limited to areas where Shia constitutes a significant minority, like the Middle East or as a tiny minority group in Southeast Asia, but extends to countries where Shia is nearly non-existent.

Several studies have been devoted to this phenomenon, primarily examining Anti-Shia discourse (Formichi 2014; Wagemakers 2021), Shia persecution and discrimination (Ali 2021; Makin 2017; Müller 2020; Sofjan 2016), Anti-Shia prejudice (Brooke 2017; Buehler and Schulhofer-Wohl 2023)), as well as Anti-Shia mobilization or movement (Amal 2020; IPAC 2016). This current study focused on factors contributing to Anti-Shia activism in Indonesia from a framing perspective, citing Wiktorowicz (2004, 16), "Islamic movement significantly participates in the production of meaning and concomitant framing processes". Atran and Ginges (2012, 857) stated that "when conflict is framed by competing religious and sacred values, intergroup violence may persist for decades, even centuries". Therefore, religious framing is important due to the persistent contribution to religious conflict and violence.

In Indonesia, intolerance, discrimination, and violence against Shia have marred the 'smiling face' of Indonesian Islam (Bruinessen 2013). The 2011-2012 sectarian violence against Shia group in Sampang, Madura, resulted in the death of one person, injuries to ten people, as well as the burning down of 40 houses and one Shia educational center. Shia families were forced to leave the villages and relocate to flats in Sidoarjo, East Java (Hilmy 2015; Kayane 2020). Series of violence against Shia also occurred in the early 2000s in places such as Pekalongan in Central Java, Bangil, Jember, Bondowoso in East Java, and Mataram in West Nusa Tenggara (Formichi 2014; Zulkifli 2013). At a popular level, Indonesian Muslim has a lower tolerant attitude and behavior toward minority Muslim groups such as Shia and Ahmadiyya than toward other religious adherents. Among students, for instance, internal tolerance was only at 33.2% while external tolerance reached 62.9%, (PPIM UIN Jakarta 2018). According to the Wahid Foundations report (Mardika and Djafar 2020), the issue of Shia was the highest rank in hate speech between 2009 and 2018, with Council

of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), and National Anti-Shia Alliance (ANNAS) being major actors. Sectarian hate speech is an important element of radicalization and extremist movement strategies, both online and offline (Matthiesen 2013; Siegel and Tucker 2018). With the widespread use of information technologies along with the democratic transition, Anti-Shia activism in Indonesia has intensified with extensive effects. The increased use of new media has enabled a small conservative group to monopolize Muslim authority regarding non-mainstream Islamic groups such as Shia and Ahmadiyya, with an attempt to homogenize Islamic interpretations (Schäfer 2018).

Several studies showed the significant role of state actors in discriminating and perpetrating violence against Shia group (Al-Rasheed 2011; Matthiesen 2013; Müller 2020; Musa and Tan 2017; Neo 2020). In Saudi Arabia, the state uses the issue of sectarianism in an effort to combat the influence of the Iranian revolution. The protection of Shia in an undemocratic socio-political situation leaves the community with no ability to resist (Al-Rasheed 2011; Neo 2020). Similarly, in Bahrain, ruling elites use sectarian forces to justify oppression and violence against Shia for political interests (Matthiesen 2013). In Malaysia, non-state Islamist groups, supported by the state through sharia law, religious bureaucracy, and the media, carry out and promote discrimination, hatred, as well as marginalization against the Shia (Müller 2020; Musa and Tan 2017). However, in Indonesia, Anti-Shia mobilization has been exercised through alliances and conspiracies between Islamists or new conservative groups with strong political agendas (Amal 2020)), or as part of the homogenization movement of Indonesian Islam (Makin 2017).

Previous studies showed that Anti-Shia resulted from religious, economic, social, political, international, national, and local factors. The significance of each factor depends on the specific context of time and place. In the Middle East and South Asia, geopolitical factors consistently play a significant role, often triggering intolerance and sectarian violence (Ali 2021; Buehler and Schulhofer-Wohl 2023; Wagemakers 2021). Buehler and Schulhofer-Wohl (2023) found that international dynamics and developments regarding Shia influenced interpersonal relationships toward a sense of acceptance and tolerance of Shia. Similarly, Anti-Shia in Indonesia appears to have connections with geopolitical or international factors, combined with national

politics, religious development, and local contexts (Formichi 2014) or even with personal interest (Kayane 2020).

Without disregarding international and political factors, this study aimed to investigate the cultural and socio-psychological aspects of Anti-Shia framing, focusing on religious ideology, majoritarian mindset, and perceived threat as major contributing factors. According to Snow, Vliegenthart, and Ketelaars (2018, 405)), "the relationship between collective action frames and framing processes as well as relevant cultural and social psychological factors, such as narrative, ideology, collective identity, and emotion, are not fully understood"). Similarly, in previous investigations on Anti-Shia movement, the contributing factors of religious ideology, majoritarian mindset, and threat perception have not been fully revealed.

This current study aimed to investigate the case of MIUMI (*Majelis Intelektual dan Ulama Muda Indonesia*, the Indonesian Council of Young Intellectuals and Ulama) and ANNAS (*Aliansi Nasional Anti Syiah* or National Anti-Shia Alliance) as new conservative organizations actively engaged in constructing and disseminating Anti-Shia framing. Besides the fieldwork in 2014, extensive library studies of offline and online sources such as books, articles, news, magazines, and websites were conducted, with qualitative analysis techniques. This article structurally commenced with a brief description of the two Anti-Shia organizations, followed by Anti-Shia framing processes and the contributing factors of religious ideology, majoritarian mindset, and perceived threat. The adopted conceptual framework was also provided.

Anti-Shia Framing

This study investigated Anti-Shia framing as a component of Anti-Shia activism, a new social movement focusing on creating meaning and identity. The term 'framing' in social movement refers to the process of construction. In sociology, framing analysis, developed in social movement studies and other fields, was first coined and popularized by symbolic interactionist Erving Goffman (1974). In the domain of social movement studies, framing is understood as "an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction" (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). It helps "to render events or occurrences, meaningfully organize experience, and guide action" (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). Framing processes are

"conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to share understandings of the world and personally legitimize or motivate collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996, 6). Therefore, Anti-Shia framing is the process of meaning construction associated with hatred of prejudice, discrimination, and violence against Shia Muslim.

Benford and Snow (2000, 615–18) identified three core framing tasks essential for social movement. First, diagnostic framing addresses aspects of social life, systems of government, or religious development as problematic and in need of change or revolution. Second, prognostic framing addresses specific issues raised in the diagnostic framing. Third, motivational framing provides 'a call to arms' or rationale to motivate support and collective action, necessary to persuade participants to engage in activism. This current study accounted for the three types of core Anti-Shia framing, aiming to investigate the relationship of cultural and social psychological dimensions, namely religious ideology, majoritarian mindset, and threat perception, with Anti-Shia framing.

Ideology is the fundamental beliefs of a particular group and the members. In the context of social movement studies, this refers to beliefs, values, and objectives associated with a particular movement, providing a rationale for individual and collective action (Oliver, Pamela E., and Johnston 2000). The cultural turn in social or new social movement has shown the ideological aspect of movement. Ideology determines how a movement perceives and interprets the world, justifying what is right or wrong by framing relevant issues and discontent (Zald 1996, 262). In other words, a social movement is an "ideologically structured action" (Zald 2000). This current study defined religious ideology as "a set of ideas that refer to religious and secular tools, accompanying political actions and processes in a sustained and systematic way" (Rachik 2009, 357). The primary objective of religious ideologists, in the context of a pluralistic society, is to mobilize people for the reformation movement (Rachik 2009), showing the significant influence of religious ideology in Anti-Shia framing.

The second factor is the majoritarian mindset, defined as "the bundle of presuppositions, received wisdom, and shared cultural understandings [of] persons in the dominant group" (Delgado and Stefancic 1993, 462). This concept is akin to majoritarianism, "a political stance that rejects constitutional guarantees of equality for all citizens and prioritizes the dominant group, with norms and values" (Jones 2021, 39), relegating

minorities to second-class citizenship in the country. The majoritarian mindset or majoritarianism originates from demographic imbalances and power relations in constructing majority and minority relations, with history being a contributor. This concept is frequently used to explain political developments in developing countries, particularly India and Sri Lanka. According to Haddad (2021), the majoritarian mindset creates normative assumptions underpinning the mainstream understanding of Islam in the context of Sunni-Shia relations, playing a crucial role in Anti-Shia framing.

The third is perceived threat. Intergroup threat theory has recently been used as an important theoretical framework to explain Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Immigrant attitudes as drivers of outgroup attitudes and prejudices (Meuleman et al. 2019). "Intergroup threats also activate other negative perceptions of outgroups, including negative stereotypes, perceived dissimilarity between the ingroup and the outgroup, as well as dehumanization" (Stephan, Ybarra, and Rios 2016, 268). Perceived threat is positively related to support for the restrictions of civil liberties (Carriere, Hallahan, and Moghaddam 2022). Intergroup threat has been associated with greater resentment toward minority groups such as Shia. Previous investigations identified two basic types of threat, namely realistic threat, which could be conceptualized in economic, political, and physical terms, as well as symbolic threat, based on perceptions related to values, beliefs, and norms (Stephan and Stephan 1996). In the current study, perceived threat was understood as a group symbolic threat due to perceived differences in values, attitudes, beliefs, worldviews, and cultures between an ingroup and outgroup. According to Meuleman et al. (2019), perceived categorization of threefold minority groups, namely deviant, competing, and dissident group with nature of threat, Shia, a deviant group, is perceived as a symbolic threat to the established social order, values, beliefs, norms, and Islamic doctrine, as well as to the state and nation. However, it does not represent a realistic threat to economic and material resources. The three factors, namely religious ideology, majoritarian mindset, and perceived threat are instrumental in explaining the influencing factors of Anti-Shia framing, as constructed, produced, and propagated by Anti-Shia activists in Indonesia, particularly MIUMI and ANNAS as new conservative organizations.

MIUMI and ANNAS as Social Movement

Primarily concerned with the weak Muslim leadership in Indonesia, MIUMI (*Majelis Intelektual dan Ulama Muda Indonesia*/the Indonesian Council of Young Intellectuals and Ulama) was formally established on February 28, 2012. It was initiated by fifteen young Muslim intellectual figures, with the primary initiators affiliated with INSISTS (Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilizations), a think tank established in 2003 by alumni of a modern Islamic boarding school in Gontor, Ponorogo, East Java, and DDII (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia/Indonesia Islamic Dakwah Council) activists studying at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Primarily known for anti-liberal stance, INSISTS activists were strongly inspired by the ideas of Islamic thinker and ISTAC rector Syed Naquib al-Attass. Fahmy Zarkasyi, Adian Husaini, Adnin Armas, Syamsuddin Arief, and Ugi Suharto were engaged in writing books and articles as well as organizing discussions, seminars, and workshops. In the establishment of MIUMI, the activists were united with other modernist-Salafi figures, including Bachtiar Nasir (Al-Quran Learning Center, formerly Muhammadiyah, alumnus of Medina International University), Zaitun Rasmin (Wahdah Islamiyah or Islamic Unity), Faried Okbah (Yayasan Al-Islam), Jeje Zaenuddin (Persatuan Islam or Islamic Union), and Fadlan Gamaratan (Yayasan Al-Fatih Kaffah Nusantara). Since the inception, MIUMI has been headed by Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi as the chairman, Bachtiar Nasir as the secretary general, and Fadzlan Garamatan as the treasurer. This list shows that MIUMI reflects the unification of both ulama and intellectuals from a wide array of the modernist and Salafi bloc (Aidulsyah and Mizuno 2020, 14).

MIUMI is presented as an intellectual movement rather than a mass organization, aiming to compete with existing socio-religious organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. Its vision is to "become the foremost Islamic formal leadership institution in upholding Islamic values and a unifying forum for Indonesian young intellectuals and ulama in building a map of the struggle for the glory of Islam" (MIUMI Pusat n.d.). This conservative think tank group, also referred to as "the elite wing of conservative and radical groups in Indonesia" (Makin 2017, 16), was established due to "the strong wind of liberalization and varying deviant religious teachings

which threaten Islamic creed and unity of the ummah" (MIUMI Pusat n.d.). As a loose organization of ulama and intellectuals from nearly all conservative spectrum in Indonesia, the group does not accept grassroot membership but has core members who oversee the organization and the activities, with the support of loosely affiliated participants from conservative figures.

MIUMI has recently established several regional branches, with the most active ones located in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Malang, Surabaya, Medan, and Makassar (Aidulsyah and Mizuno 2020, 13). This conservative organization has been actively promoting the deviance of Shia through website and other online media, as well as sponsoring various activities. In collaboration with INSISTS, MIUMI focuses on intellectual aspects through seminars, discussions, book reviews, public meetings, among others. Soon after its inauguration, MIUMI visited Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) center in Jakarta to urge MUI to issue a fatwa on the heresy of Shia. On March 19, 2012, MIUMI issued a press release supporting the two fatwas on the deviance of Shia by the local MUI of Sampang Regency and East Java Province. In summary, "MIUMI played a crucial role in propagating Anti-Shia sentiment through information posted on websites and in the support for the ideologies of radical groups. The ideas and propaganda served as legitimizing forces in support of radicals in spreading violence" (Makin 2017, 24).

ANNAS (Aliansi Nasional Anti Syiah/National Anti-Shia Alliance) is a coalition of well-known Anti-Shia activists in Indonesia. It was established in Bandung, West Java, on April 20, 2014, to combat the existence of Shia adherents in Indonesia and protect Muslim in the country from the influence of Shia teachings. Being the first alliance of the kind in the world, it has garnered significant attention both nationally and internationally. The initiative first took shape during the 2012 national congress of Forum Ulama Umat Indonesia (FUUI), led by the deeply conservative activist Athian Ali Dai, following a series of meetings with prominent Anti-Shia figures from DDII, NU hardliner factions, and others. FUUI was founded in Bandung in 2001 with the objective of countering Christianization, liberalism, apostasy, and deviant sects. Specifically, Athian Ali Dais conservative attitude was shown by the advocacy for the death penalty of the founder of Islamic Liberal Networks, Ulil Abshar Abdalla (IPAC 2016, 20).

Due to Athian Ali Dais close ties and alliances with many other conservative figures across the nation, ANNAS was supported by a dozen of high-profile ulama widely recognized as anti-Shia figures. These figures included Abdul Hamid Baidlawi of NU, Ahmad Zein Alkaf (passed away on May 10, 2020) of Al-Bayyinat Foundation, Ahmad Cholil Ridwan of MUI, Muhammad Said Abdus Shamad of LPPI of Makassar, Yusuf Utsman Baisa (the current chairman of Al-Irsyad), Maman Abdurrahman (the former chairman of Persis or Islamic Union), and Abu Jibril (passed away in January 2021) of Majlis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI or Council of Indonesian Holy Warriors), along with Adian Husaini of MIUMI. The declaration claims to have been attended by more than a hundred ulama from across Indonesia and around a thousand participants. Ahmad Heryawan, the governor of West Java at that period, was scheduled to attend but later canceled. The declaration was signed by Athian Ali Dai as the executive chairman, Athip Lathiful Hayat as the board of experts, and Abdul Hamid Baidlowi as the advisory council. The central structural leadership of ANNAS includes Athian Ali Dai as the chairman, Tardjono Abu Muas as the secretary, Ahmad Zain Alkaf as the chairman of the advisory council, and Athip Lathiful Hayat as the chairman of the expert board.

According to the name, ANNAS commits to the following principles:

1. Promoting virtues and preventing abonible acts.
2. Taking necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of heretical teachings by Shia followers.
3. Forging good relations with other preaching organizations.
4. Demanding that the government immediately bans Shia and revokes all licenses for foundations, organizations, and institutions owned by Shia (ANNAS Indonesia 2014).

With the vision of "becoming the strategic Muslim power in promoting unity and brotherhood against Shia heretical teachings in Indonesia (ANNAS Indonesia 2014)," ANNAS has established its programs and wing organization by conducting various Anti-Shia activities. It has set up branches in districts, towns, and provinces where conservative activists wield strong political influence, such as Garut, Tasikmalaya, Cianjur, Bogor, Bekasi, and Purwakarta in West Java; Jakarta and Solo in Central Java; Probolinggo in East Java; Medan in North Sumatera; Makassar in South Sulawesi; as well as Samarinda and Balikpapan in East Kalimantan. ANNAS also established wing

organizations, including GEMA for women movement, GARDA for youth movement, and Jundullah for paramilitary activities. To achieve the main objective of eradicating the existence of Shia in Indonesia, ANNAS held a meeting with MUI in Jakarta. Led by Athian Ali Dai, ANNAS urged MUI to take two specific actions, namely issue a fatwa denouncing Shia as deviant and not within Islamic denomination, and pressing the government to prohibit the dissemination of Shia teachings and revoke the licenses of all institutions associated with Shia practice. ANNAS and MIUMI share the same demands in this situation.

The emergence of these two movements was related to the political opportunity structure after the fall of New Order in 1998. This transition facilitated the proliferation of various movements and political parties based on ethnicity, religion, region, and culture. While initiatives promoting minority rights were initiated during the presidencies of Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati, and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, heresy campaigns by activists such as ANNAS and MIUMI intensified against Shia and Ahmadiyya groups. According to Suryana (2018; 2019), during Yudhoyono presidency from 2004 to 2014, when these two organizations were established, violence against the minority Muslim groups significantly increased due to institutional factors limiting the presidential power. Intolerant conservative figures consolidated the influence on the executive government during this period (Bush 2015), leveraging political opportunity structure to propagate the ideology and standard of morality to the public.

In addition to the political opportunities, social movement also facilitated the emergence of new movement (Zald 1996). The establishment of MIUMI and ANNAS formalized and intensified Anti-Shia movement that had been ongoing since at least the New Order period. According to Zulkifli (2013), the struggle of Shia in Indonesia faced varied responses from the Sunni majority, including negative reactions from reformist Muslim groups. It was also an effort to mobilize existing resources, such as connections and affiliations with previous Anti-Shia groups to achieve the mentioned objectives. Wiktorowicz (2004, 13) suggested that radical activists responded to structural constraints by "mobilizing through informal social networks and institutions … [or] through a loose web of personal relationships, study circles, and informal meetings".

The establishment of MIUMI and ANNAS was also a response to international political developments, particularly the Arab spring of the 2010s, which intensified Sunni-Shia sectarian conflict in the Middle East (IPAC 2016; Kayane 2020). However, this cannot be disconnected from the increasing trend of discrimination and violence against Shia in Indonesia. A significant case is the violent sectarian violence conflict against Shia group in Sampang, Madura, during 2011-2012, followed by the expulsion from the hometown and resettlement in flats in Sidoarjo, East Java. The failure of local and national authorities to address the sectarian violence increased the role of Anti-Shia as key players in Anti-Shia movement in Indonesia. Therefore, the formation of these two conservative organizations might be perceived as justifying discrimination and violence against Shia or, in Sofjan terms, minoritization and criminalization of Shia Islam (IPAC 2016).

The formalization of the existing alliances was intended to "strategically direct activism to maximize impact and efficacy" (Wiktorowicz 2004, 10). The primary objectives of both movements were to obtain a fatwa denouncing Shia issued by MUI and to prohibit the presence of Shia, including the organizations, institutions, and activities, in Indonesia. However, MIUMI, ANNAS, and other conservative figures have expressed disappointment with the moderate stance taken by MUI and state authorities regarding Shia-related issues. MUI and the government have not been able to fulfill these requests, although ANNAS and other conservative groups succeeded in influencing the provincial government of South Sulawesi to issue a circular on "Vigilance and Anticipation of the Spread of Shia Teachings" on 12 January 2017. Districts and cities in South Sulawesi followed suit by issuing similar circulars. As part of ANNAS efforts to achieve primary objectives, a book titled *Fatwa-fatwa Syiah Sesat* (Fatwas on Deviant Shia) was published in 2018, accessible on the website (annasindonesia.com). Despite facing disappointment, both organizations and other conservative activists are determined to persist in the struggle to promote the ideology and to achieve primary objectives.

Anti-Shia Strategic Framing

Based on the framing perspective formulated by Benford and Snow (2000), MIUMI and ANNAS attempted to fulfill the social movement function of attributing blame, identifying problems, formulating

solutions, and providing a motivating rationale for collective action against Shia group and teachings. Both organizations have also directed and organized various activities to achieve the objectives. In addition to public meetings, religious gatherings, seminars, and discussions, conservative activists promote and disseminate framing through websites and social media platforms. The internet has become a space for Anti-Shia activists to propagate ideology, reaching a wider audience and attracting followers, while also serving as an interactive channel connecting conservative individuals. Larsson (2016) stated that the internet had become an arena for Sunni and Shia conflict. The organization websites include www.miumi.pusat.org for MIUMI and www.annasindonesia.com for ANNAS, and other conservative websites such as www.syiahindonesia.com, www.arrahmah.com, www.nahimunkar. net, www.voa-islam.com, and www.islampost.com. Framing processes constructed by Anti-Shia activists in Indonesia include diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framings. Diagnostic framing addresses aspects of social life, governmental systems, or religious development as problematic and requiring resolution or change (Benford and Snow 2000, 615–18). In the context of Anti-Shia activism, diagnostic framing explains what is considered wrong with Shia and the activities of Shia adherents. Anti-Shia activists typically construct diagnostic framing by asserting that Shia not only serves as a source of religious, social, and political problems in Muslim society but also presents a threat to the nation and the state.

The first diagnostic framing widely disseminated by Anti-Shia activists in books, pamphlets, websites, banners, and even in T-shirts portraysportray Shia as a heretical sect or outside the bounds of Islamic orthodoxy. This is an ongoing trend, with arguments similar to those found in Sunni polemical writings (Ende 2019). From the perspective of Anti-Shia activists, theologically, Shia deviates from the true teachings of Islam. Commonly used and propagated phrases include 'Shia is misguided and misguiding,' 'Shia is outside Islam,' 'Shia is not Islam or based on Islamic teachings,' 'Shia is a heretical sect,' or even 'Shia are disbelievers' (*Syiah Kafir*). The deviance is considered destructive to the Islamic creed, with the belief that maintaining Islamic orthodoxy and protecting Muslim are religious and moral responsibilities.

The second diagnostic framing considers Shia as a source of Sunni-Shia conflict, with Anti-Shia activists persistently propagating that

Shia is the primary source of these conflicts in Indonesia. It is often asserted that the existence of Shia facilitates peace in a country. The MIUMI chairman claimed that harmonious coexistence between Sunni majority and Shia is not feasible due to stark differences between the two groups. The presence of Shia can have a negative impact on the unity of Muslim, with Sampang case suggesting that Sunni-Shia relations may harbor national conflict in the future (Zarkasyi 2014).

The third diagnostic framing pertains to the perceived danger by Shia. This framing is indeed a prevalent Anti-Shia perspective worldwide. According to Haddad (2021, 4), "Shia is not just heresy but danger—a cancer to be expunged, an insidious threat which Islam should be defended against". Anti-Shia activists have compared Shia to narcotic drugs, cancer, colonial soldiers, or other perilous concepts to demonstrate the inherent danger. In comparison to other minority groups such as Ahmadiyya, targeted by conservative figures, Shia is considered even more hazardous. M. Amien Djamaluddin considered Shia as more dangerous than Ahmadiyya due to the political nature, believing that the return of Mahdi is based on Shia controlling the global politics. Consequently, this doctrine poses a significant danger to the integrity of the Unitary State of Indonesia (Arrahmah 2012). The danger is also framed as a Jewish invention attributed to Abdullah bin Saba, aimed at undermining Islam from within (Barzegar 2011). Achmad Zen Alkaf (2005, 6–7), former chairman of the advisory council of ANNAS, asserted that Shia is even more dangerous than Jews and Christians who are external enemies, as it represents enemy from within.

The fourth diagnostic framing is the Shiaization of Sunni Muslim. More important than doctrine, Shia is considered a threat to the majority Muslim society in Indonesia due to its missionary nature. Shia is accused of propagating its teachings and converting the Sunni Muslim. In other words, the attempt of Shiaization has disrupted Sunni-Shia relations. Therefore, the phrase 'Indonesia without Shia' essentially means 'Indonesia without Shiaization' (Hasib 2014, 166–67). Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, the chairman of MIUMI, stated that the spread of Shia teachings in Indonesia or other countries could lead to social conflicts, such as the Sampang case in Madura. This could also escalate to the national level, causing threat to the security and sovereignty of Indonesia (Zarkasyi 2014, xii–xiii). Similar to Christianization as an

external threat, Shiaization is perceived as an internal threat with adverse effects on Indonesian society. Therefore, preventing the conversion of Sunni to Shia is seen as a prerequisite and a peaceful solution to fostering better Sunni-Shia relations (Husaini 2013, 74).

The fifth diagnostic framing presents Shia as a threat to the Unitary State of Indonesia. The rejection of Shia is not only seen as a religious issue but also from a political perspective. It is specifically contextualized as a threat to the nation and state in Indonesia. Shia is considered as an ideology that contradicts the state ideology of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the Unitary State of Indonesia, as supported by all Anti-Shia activists. Kholili Hasib (2014, 173–74), for instance, stated that Shia problem could not be trivialized because the concept of imamate, where absolute authority should be in the hand of Imams, was highly vulnerable to clash with the Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, the Unitary State of Indonesia. Therefore, Shia is believed to pursue the ideal of establishing an absolute Imamate government model, similar to the case of Iran when Shia population becomes the majority. The guidebook of MUI states, "Since the birth of the Iranian revolution of 1979, Shia movement in Indonesia from 1982 until 2012 (approximately 30 years) has remained covert and planned-latent… The systematic planning to establish Shia Islamic state offers a latent threat" (Tim Penulis MUI Pusat 2013, 115–16).

The issues identified are not only recognized but specific solutions are proposed in the prognostic framing (Benford and Snow 2000, 615–18). There are two primary solutions proposed by activists in Anti-Shia prognostic framing, namely the issuance of a fatwa by MUI regarding the deviance of Shia teachings, as well as the banning of all Shia organizations, foundations, and institutes by the government. All Anti-Shia activists in Indonesia, including MIUMI and ANNAS, address the necessity of MUI to issue a nationally applicable fatwa denouncing Shia. To enforce the fatwa, the government is urged to dissolve Shia-related institutions in an effort to protect and uphold Sunni creed. There is also an emphasis on reinforcing Sunni teachings in Muslim society. This is advocated "to foster unity among Sunni, stabilize understanding, counter defamation, and protect Sunnism from external creeds" (Hasib 2014, 168). Therefore, the strengthening of Islamic brotherhood among individuals, groups, and organizations is required in order to protect Muslim from the influence of Shia

teachings. In other words, Sunni should establish awareness to unite and unify all societal elements in strong brotherhood to fight against Shia (Tim ANNAS 2018).

In addition to the diagnostic and prognostic framings, Anti-Shia activists adopted motivational framing to rally support and promote collective action, with the aim of engaging individuals in Anti-Shia activism (Benford and Snow 2000, 615–18). The activists widely promoted the slogan "Indonesia without Shia" through websites, online media, banners, among others. In this context, the call for jihad against Shia is a prominent advocated motivational frame. The establishment of ANNAS, for instance, is portrayed as a component of jihad in the path of God. Achmad Zein Alkaf, chairman of the advisory council of ANNAS, stated, "Indonesia should eradicate Shia teachings to prevent conflict between Shia and Sunni, even inciting violence against Shia. It is time to declare jihad against Shia. They should no longer be tolerated" (Zulkifli 2014).

The most controversial motivational framing is the command by Abu Jibril to get rid of Shia, "ISIS has called for the killing of Shia" (IPAC 2016, 23). As stated in ANNAS declaration, the religious command should be based on the Prophetic hadith, "The Islamic teachings forbid us to declare each other as infidel… Do not declare each other as infidel. But declaring Shia as infidel is obligatory because the Messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad, has done it: Whoever meets with Shia kill them because they are idolaters"." (Zulkifli 2014). Therefore, jihad against Shia needs to be conducted by both intellectuals and warriors (Makin 2017). This motivational framing has clearly become theological justification on the series of sectarian violence such as the killing of Shia adherents in Madura and the burning down of Islamic boarding schools in Madura, East Java, and Pekalongan, Central Java.

Religious Ideology, Majoritarian Mindset, and Perceived Threat

Religious Ideology

Both MIUMI and ANNAS share similar ideological foundations and religious orientations based on exclusive theology and Salafi doctrine, a puritanical strand in Islam. Puritan Islam has a literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, rejecting the contextual interpretation of Islamic teachings. It advocates direct and independent interpretation (*ijtihad*) based on these fundamental sources while rejecting *taqlid* and *madhhab* (school of Islam law) system. The emulation of *al-salaf al-*

salih or pious predecessors is required. Puritan Islam accentuates the centrality of *tawhid* (the unity of God) against the notion of *shirk* (polytheism, idolatry), with the attempt to purify Islam from syncretic and popular religious practices and customs among Indonesian Muslim, such as visiting of the saint graves and engaging in Sufi rituals. This purging aims to eliminate religious innovations (bid'ah) in both doctrine and jurisprudence. Various traditional religious beliefs and practices particularly associated with rites of passage, such as pregnancy, birth, marriage, and death, considered superstition (*khurafat*) should also be abolished. The popular term used by reformists in striving for purification is the three pack of evil called TBC (Takhayul Bid'ah Churafat/Khurafat), symbolizing the pursuit to cleanse Islam of heresy, innovation, and superstition, and also referencing tuberculosis, an infectious disease combated by the Indonesian government. The main objective is to "reform religious life by eradicating superstition, blind imitation, as well as beliefs and practices unsupported by authentic scriptural references" (Bruinessen 2013, 22).

MIUMI and ANNAS advocated for the legal-formalistic aspects of Islam or Islamic sharia, both in private and public spheres, as well as societal and state levels. The implementation of sharia at local and national levels are supported while the adversaries are opposed (Makin 2017). Functioning as *dawa* organizations, MIUMI and ANNAS have strong missionary zeal encapsulated in the slogan 'commanding virtue, prohibiting evil' and aim to Islamize society and the state. The struggle against Shia is a part of *dawa,* efforts, advocating for repentance and conversion to Sunni path of Islam.

In line with the literal Islamic interpretation, MIUMI and ANNAS, alongside similar groups, have unified ideologically against liberal Islamic philosophies, operating under anti-westernization, anti-liberalism, anti-secularism, and anti-pluralism banner to systematically organize movement. This resonates with the 2005 MUI fatwa against secularism, pluralism, and liberalism, referred to as SIPILIS by conservatives. These groups target progressive Muslim intellectuals advocating religious pluralism, exemplified by Athian Ali Dai call for the death penalty on Ulil Abshar Abdalla, founder of Islamic Liberal Networks (IPAC 2016, 20). Rejecting religious pluralism, similar conservative ideology was shared with Salafi groups, aiming to homogenize Sunni Islam in Indonesia by eradicating 'deviant' faiths such as Shia (Makin 2017).

Anti-Shia activists in Indonesia had strong connections with Wahhabi ideology. According to Steinberg (2009, 109), "the Saudi Wahhabi Arabian movement has been the main source of Salafi Anti-Shia today" and "the Wahhabiyya has been a violently Anti-Shia movement since its inception in the first half of the eighteenth century… and the doctrine has historically been Anti-Shia and fundamental part of teachings" (Steinberg 2011, 163). Therefore, global Anti-Shia movement has been frequently connected with Saudi actors, institutions, and foundations.

The conservative ideology aspects contribute significantly to the framing of Anti-Shia sentiments, including diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing. While religious ideology is a crucial factor in Anti-Shia framing, it is not a sole element. This study contrasted with the perspective of Snow and Byird (2007), undermining ideology in Islamic social movement, particularly terrorist movement.

Majoritarian Mindset

Majoritarian mindset asserts Indonesia as Sunni country and homeland based on historical and Islamic textual references. Despite the smaller number, all Anti-Shia activists consistently identify themselves with Indonesian Sunni majority or act in the name of majority, attributing significant contributions to the founding of Indonesian state and nation. Consequently, the activists are considered the founding inhabitants and true citizens of the nation. In the Islamization of the Indonesian archipelago, the engagement of Shia is dismissed, although some scholars argued that Shia might have participated in the process, potentially preceding Sunni influences. In other words, Indonesia is viewed as belonging exclusively to Sunni, leaving no room for Shia or other minority Muslim groups. The activists are believed to hold the obligation to decide what is right or wrong, good, or bad for religious adherents in the country. While Sunni Islam represents the norm for Muslim, Shia and other minority groups are considered abnormal in terms of religious beliefs and practices (Zulkifli 2013).

Manifesting in various ways, the majoritarian mindset negates the rights of minority Muslim groups to practice religious duties, norms, and rituals, perceiving religious pluralism as a threat to majoritarianism (Jones 2021). The activisits consider Shia as alien to Islam and Indonesian society, encapsulating what Sofjan (2016) labels as the minoritization and criminalization of Shia in Indonesia. The protection

of Sunni majority from any forms of disturbance or threat by Shia is essential. This was supported by McCoy (2013, 289), stating that "in a democracy with strong constitutional protections for freedom of religion, a subset of Muslim is asserting personal interpretation of majority rule, the majority has the right to be protected from the minority, and insults to the majority are destabilizing"), essentially justifying religious intolerance.

In the context of safeguarding Sunni majority, Anti-Shia activists frequently urge MUI to issue a fatwa denouncing Shia and implore the government to dissolve Shia organizations, foundations, and institutions, as described in prognostic framing. These activities cite a solution, drawing on precedents from Malaysia. References was made to the 1996 Malaysian Federal inspired fatwa, alongside state-level fatwas, which banned Shiism and its teachings. These have been used to justify criminalization and persecution of Shia individuals, resulting in human rights violations on the minority group (Müller 2020; Musa and Tan 2017; Samuri and Quraishi 2016). MUI has not been able to issue requested fatwa, contrary to the fatwa issued on the deviant status of Ahmadiyya in 1980 and 2005 by other socio-religious organizations (Burhani 2013). Similarly, the Indonesian government has not taken steps to dissolve Shia organizations, foundations, and institutions.

The majoritarian mindset rejects constructive dialogue with the minority Shia group. Even efforts at reconciliation, such as Council of Indonesian Sunni Shia Brotherhood (Majlis Ukhuwah Sunni Syiah Indonesia/MUHSIN) established on May 20, 2011, or Islamic ecumenism organizations sponsored by Iran, namely *Majma jahani taqrib mazahib Islami* or The World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought (Rainer Brunner 2004; Buchta 2001)), are viewed with suspicion. These are seen as strategies to propagate Shia teachings and conceal deviance and minority status. The suspicion is not only limited to Indonesian Anti-Shia activists, as Middle Eastern scholars harbor similar attitudes and prejudices reconciliation efforts. For instance, Syaikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1926-2022), who long advocated for Sunni-Shia rapprochement, expressed disappointment with Iran, claiming that "Iranian advocacy for approchement (*taqrīb*) is merely a means of disguising primary objective, which is to convert Sunni" (Elad-Altman 2007, 5). This suspicion has led to a deficit in institutional dialogue between Sunni and Shia (Krause, Svensson, and Larsson 2019)

as the majority perceives it as unnecessary. Unlike Krause, Svensson, and Goran (2019) who argued that the situation reflects a democratic deficit in the Middle East and Muslim world, Indonesia is "now being cited as a model for successful democratic transition following the fall of the dictator, President Suharto, in 1998" (McCoy 2013, 276).

Indonesia has at least two of the largest and most influential Muslim organizations or civil societies, namely NU and Muhammadiyah. These organizations have engaged in dialogical meetings with Shia organizations, namely IJABI (Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia) and ABI (Ahlul Bait Indonesia). However, no institutional established dialogue has been formalized. It is important to note that significant democratic figures, such as the former President Abdurrahman Wahid and the former chairman of NU, initiated intensive dialogue with Shia figures and institutions. However, the democratic and tolerant approach faced bitter criticism and suspicion from other members and ulama in the organization accused of being Shia adherents. This has sparked controversy among Anti-Shia activists aiming to influence NU members in order to secure leadership positions (Kayane 2020).

Perceived Threat

The perception of Shia threat is a significant factor contributing to Anti-Shia framing. Since the 2000s, Shia has been seen as "the new representatives of the threat to social order" (Formichi 2014, 27) in Indonesia. This perception primarily includes the threat of Shiaization of Sunni and the perceived danger that Shia posses to the Indonesian state and society. This fear of Shiaization can be considered a misperception or an exaggeration far from reality. According to Zulkifli (2016)), the conversion of Sunni into Shia occurs slowly due to active religion demanding the significant support of others, rather than as result of aggressive missionary efforts.

The perceived Shia threat is also related to domination in terms of culture, economy, and politics. For instance, "The existence of Shia community in Sampang is considered by the mainstream Sunni community as a threat to the long dominance over the socio-political structure in Madura" (Hilmy 2015, 48). Therefore, to a certain extent, this perception is connected to the majoritarian mindset mentioned earlier.

The perceived Shia threat to the state is often associated with the revolutionary spirit within Shia, particularly the Iranian revolution in 1979, where Pahlevi regime was overthrown and Islamic Republic of Iran was successfully established. Conservative activists believe prominent and influential Shia followers can instigate a revolution similar to Iran. Despite the prevalence of Shia-majority populations in countries such as Iraq, Bahrain, and Azerbaijan, no subsequent Shia revolution has occurred after the Iranian revolution. Even during the Iran-Iraq war in 1980-1988, Shia soldiers fought against their co-religionists. However, the notion of Shia danger has persisted in Indonesia since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. For instance, in 1984, MUI issued a religious recommendation warning about the perceived Shia danger, urging Indonesian Muslim to uphold *ahl al-sunna wa al-jamaa* and be vigilant about the teachings of Shia" (Adlani, Ichwan Sam, and Ma'ruf Amin 1997, 90). This perception has been further propagated and nurtured by the conservative wing of MUI, as detailed in the book on Anti-Shia sentiments published in 2013 (Tim Penulis MUI Pusat 2013). Similar Anti-Shia prejudices were also observed in the Middle East due to perceptions of an Iran threat (Buehler and Schulhofer-Wohl 2023).

One of the aspects of Shia teachings considered highly dangerous is the concept of imamate. This is the belief in the twelve Imams succeeding the leadership of the prophet Muhammad, starting from Ali bin Abi Talib, the prophet cousin and son-in-law and the fourth caliph in Sunni Islam, up to al-Mahdi al-Muntazar, who is in a great occultation and whose awaited return is anticipated by Shia. This distinguishing factor between Shia and Sunni (Zulkifli 2013)) is seen as a great threat by activists, particularly the political nature of imamate doctrine, suggesting that Shia would establish Shia state when holding political power. Shia is perceived as loyal only to the Imam, not to Indonesian leaders, and potentially more in line with Iran than Indonesia. This disloyalty is connected to the concept of *wilayat al-faqih* implemented by the jurists in Iran. Despite the affirmation of Shia to Indonesian state ideology of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, the Unitary State of Indonesia, and Unity in Diversity (Zulkifli 2017), Anti-Shia activists are distrustful due to the concept of *taqīya* (dissimulation of faith).

Anti-Shia articulation is equated with communism portrayed as the greatest danger in Indonesia since 1965s. During the annual meeting held on May 14, 2017 in Bandung, ANNAS appealed to the Indonesian government and society to increase awareness and alertness of the rising communism and Shia threat since both aim to replace Pancasila ideology with communism and imamate (ANNAS Indonesia 2017). Due to the same pattern of political movement between Shia and communism, an ANNAS figure states that "there is no other choice for the struggle of the umma except to crush the Shia and Communist movement. This is the way of jihad in the path of God" (ANNAS Indonesia 2019). Social media platforms like Facebook harbor "Indonesia Anti Syiah dan Komunis," indicating that "Connecting Shia Islam to communism is to denounce it as a great danger" (Schäfer 2018, 145).

Shia threat can also be related to anti-Semitism, where Shia is framed as Jewish invention by Abdullah bin Saba to destroy Islam from within (Barzegar 2011). Conservative activists share the same ideological and eschatological foundation as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in which anti-Semitism and Anti-Shia are inherently integrated. "At the end of times, the Shia and the Jews will work together to destroy Islam" (Rickenbacher 2019, 8). Considered as Jewish conspiracy, Shia is framed to takeover Indonesia in sixty years after Shiaization, spreading chaos, and revolution (Tim Penulis MUI Pusat 2013, 216). Therefore, these types of perceived threat significantly contribute to the construction of Anti-Shia framing.

Conclusions

In conclusion, Anti-Shia activists portrayed Shia as a heretical sect and a source of conflict in Muslim society. This necessitated advocacy for a nationally applied fatwa and a call for the government to prohibit Shia organization, institutes, and foundations. Every Muslim was also urged to exercise jihad against Shia to ensure security, safety, and prosperity in Indonesia. This strategic Anti-Shia framing was an outcome of the interconnectedness between conservative religious ideology, a majoritarian mindset, and a perceived threat. While several movement studies tended to undermine the role of ideology, this current study found the conservative Islamic ideology was an essential influencer of Anti-Shia framing, with majoritarian

mindset and perceived threat serving as sufficient conditions. In addition to religious ideology, socio-psychological causes, specifically the majoritarian mindset and perceived threat, were contributing factors to Anti-Shia framing. The results were in line with previous investigations on socio-psychological components in social movement studies, as well as in ingroup-outgroup interactions or minority-majority relations, particularly regarding anti-Immigrant, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia. This study made pioneering efforts to investigate socio-psychological dimensions previously neglected. However, future studies on Anti-Shia movement was recommended to consider cultural and socio-psychological factors, alongside religious, political, and political economic elements, as well as international, national, and local contexts.

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Zulkifli, *Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) of Jakarta, Indonesia.* Email: zulkifli@uinjkt.ac.id.

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5. Utriza, Ayang. 2008. "Mencari Model Kerukunan Antaragama." *Kompas*. March 19: 59.
6. Ms. *Undhang-Undhang Banten*, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
7. Interview with K.H. Sahal Mahfudz, Kajen, Pati, June 11th, 2007.

Arabic romanization should be written as follows:

Letters: ʾ, *b*, *t*, *th*, *j*, *ḥ*, *kh*, *d*, *dh*, *r*, *z*, *s*, *sh*, *ṣ*, *ḍ*, *ṭ*, *ẓ*, ʿ, *gh*, *f*, *q*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *h*, *w*, *y*. Short vowels: *a*, *i*, *u*. long vowels: *ā*, *ī*, *ū*. Diphthongs: *aw*, *ay*. *Tā marbūṭā*: *t*. Article: *al-*. For detail information on Arabic Romanization, please refer the transliteration system of the Library of Congress (LC) Guidelines.

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MAU'IẒAT AL-IKHWĀN AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ACEHNESE PAST

Amirul Hadi

تدابير الدولة العثمانية لحل القضايا المعقدة
لحجاج الجاوي ١٨٤٩– ١٩١٦م:
دراسة في ضوء وثائق الأرشيف العثماني

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