



The Rise and Fall of Sunni-Shia Relations in Indonesia: The in-Between Theology, Political-Economics, and Da'wah

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the dynamics of the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites in Indonesia, which are sometimes tense, but generally harmonious. This study is qualitative-research using a literature review method. To sharpen the analysis of the discussion of the dynamics of Sunnis-Shiites, interdisciplinary research is used in the study of religions. The results of this study indicate that the main factor causing tension between Shiites vis-à-vis Sunnis is due to the doctrine of the Imamate which is the belief of the Shiites themselves. This doctrinal difference is what gives rise to other elementary factors such as politics and economics. That the elements of doctrine, politics and economics make the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites in Indonesia even more complicated. The three are intertwined in such a way that the Sunni-Shiite conflict develops in various regions of Indonesia. However, this study also shows a relatively harmonious relationship process between Sunnis and Shiites in various regions of Indonesia. The harmonization process between the two camps with different ideologies occurs at the grassroots level. This study recommends the process of strengthening cultural da'wah as one of the harmonization strategies among religious communities in Indonesia.

Keyword: Relationship-dynamics; shia; sunni.

INTRODUCTION

It cannot be denied that Indonesia is a country with a pluralistic society—both in terms of race, ethnicity, beliefs and religion, as well as in social, economic and political contexts. However, the ethno-religious plurality of Indonesian society does not entirely bring blessings to strengthening harmony and social cohesion. In fact, the existence of diversity and differences in theological beliefs has polarized Indonesian Muslim society into groups based on their socio-religious identities. The most phenomenal

among them are the Sunni and Shia groups (Enayat, 2011), (Anang & Husein, 2020).

At one point, the sharpening polarization resulted in theological conflict and violence. In the post-New Order period, for example, the Sunni-Shiite polarization that was not managed well enough gave birth to a conflict accompanied by violence. Several cases of violence involving mainstream Islamic groups (Sunni) against the Shia minority in various regions such as Batang (Central Java) in 2000 and 2006, Bondowoso and Bangil (East Java) in 2007, Sampang, Madura (East Java) in 2011, Jember (East Java) in 2012, Yogyakarta in 2013, and others (Ahmad & Shodiq, 2019). As with the Sunni-Shiite conflict in Indonesia in general, Al-Makin accused this violent action of being carried out by conservative-radical agents: “local radicals who persecuted the Shia and conservative activists who propagated anti-Shia ideology in national level.” (Makin, 2017).

Many studies have revealed the issue of religious sectarianism conflict between Sunni and Shia. Some argue that the conflict was triggered by differences in religious identity and theology. While others see economic and political aspects as the main factors triggering religious conflict and violence. There is also study that show the conflict occurred because of increasingly sharp religious polarization and contestation (Ahmad & Shodiq, 2019).

In addition to the various facts of social conflict between Sunni and Shia groups in Indonesian Muslim society, there are also other studies that explain the opposite phenomenon. The relationship between Sunni and Shia in Indonesia is dynamic and contextual. As Ahmad Zainal Abidin, Imam Fuadi, Nur Kholis, and Thoriqul Aziz said, “*in its historical reality, the two communities have peaceful and conflictual relations.*” (Abidin, Fuadi, Kholis, & Aziz). Another example is the results of the study of Ahmad Saefudin and Fathur Rohman on *Building Social Harmony in The Jepara Shiite Minorities*. The results of the study show that:

“The indications of disputes between the Sunni majority and Shiite minorities that occurred in some areas, such as in Bangil and Sampang, have never been seen in social relations in Jepara. The social structure between Sunnis and Shiites in Jepara is almost stable and non-conflicting. Every death ceremony, Sunni-Shia is not awkward to attend to each other. The existence of Sunnis as a majority does not make the Shiite minority inferior, so that it must be *taqiyah*. The Sunni community in Jepara is aware of the historical

fact that the Shiites since-fifteen centuries ago have colored the dynamics of Islamic civilization. So, inevitably it takes an attitude of mutual understanding and respect.” (Saefudin & Rohman, 2019).

Different from similar studies which have exposed many factors that have caused the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites, this study focuses more on the aspect of the polarization of reciprocal relations—and therefore has an impact on the fluctuating conditions—among religious communities in Indonesia. Through a study of the pattern of Sunni-Shia relations in Indonesia which are of a fluctuating nature, this study can offer new insights into the social dynamics and also history of religious communities in Indonesia, as well as how to maintain the process of harmonization.

This study was a qualitative descriptive study, which employed library research. A qualitative approach is used, incorporating a multidisciplinary framework, specifically social-scientific history approach (Burke, 1993). This historical approach is synchronized (extended in time) with the theories and concepts from the social and political sciences that are synchronistic, focusing on the study of structuralism. In an attempt to place synchronic conditions in a synchronic context, the writing of this history is based on chronology. However, to present a historical-interconnective approach, this chronological method is combined with the thematic arrangement of writing. Using this interdisciplinary research model allows for a more comprehensive examination of both continuity (diachronic) and structural changes (synchronic). Consequently, this method acknowledges that alongside diachronic continuity, there have been significant synchronic changes (Latif, 2004).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The birth of sects in Islam were motivated by political conflicts and crises. The post-Prophet political crisis situation became a momentum that sparked the emergence of these differences (Enayat, 2011). In this case, each stream metamorphoses from merely a political movement and interests of power into a religious movement. This is also what frames the relationship between Sunni and Shia. The growth and development of Sunnis and Shiites was the impact of the issue of leadership rights (caliphate) after the Prophet Muhammad (d. 11 H/632 AD). Sunnis claim that those who have the right to be caliph are the senior companions of the Prophet, such as: Abu Bakr (d. 13 H/634 AD), Umar bin Alkhatib (d.

23 H/644 AD) and others. On the other hand, the Shiites believe that Ali bin Abu Talib (d. 40 AH/661 AD) has the most right to be caliph (Enayat, 2011).

Both Shia and Sunni who continue to develop from period to period are no longer in the form of mere political streams (Fauzan & Fata, 2018), but also schools of thought that have different characteristics and identities, between one and the other. If it is only a political issue, its sustainability will certainly only be temporary, only limited to the struggle for political interests. However, because what triggers the emergence of these streams is a framework of thought (paradigm), then these streams are eternal, beyond the context of the political crisis in Arabia after the Prophet Muhammad. As Philipp Holtmann said: “To understand the complex dynamics of the contemporary Sunni-Shiite conflict, one needs to understand both the historical and doctrinal context. This can shed some light on the kaleidoscopic nature of intra-Muslim conflict.” (Holtmann, 2014).

The Formation of the Shia Community in Indonesia and the Response from the Sunnis

When Islam entered Indonesia, the religious understanding of the majority of Indonesian society was *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah*. Throughout history, Sunni has been supported by the majority of Muslims. It is recognized as the ideology of various groups—both large and small—in various corners of the Islamic world. Today, there are at least 53 countries where the majority of Muslims are Sunni, including Indonesia. Likewise in Indonesia, the majority of Muslims in this country are Sunni. Some of them explicitly identify themselves or their group as part of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah*. However, some others, although they do not explicitly state that they are followers of the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah* ideology, still object to being identified as a non-Sunni group (Zuhri & Wahyudi, 2021).

It should be added that each historical period displays Sunnism with its own unique dynamics. Each region in the Islamic world also has its own unique characteristics in implementing Sunnism. In fact, each group of people displays their religious character differently from one another, even though they still identify themselves—or are identified—as Sunni. In other words, each Sunni community has its own special characteristics in appreciating and actualizing the ideology of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah* (Umar, 2016).

However, Sunni is not the only religious belief that is developing in Indonesia. Among the religious beliefs other than Sunni in Indonesia is Shia. Shia theological traditions and institutions have developed in parallel with the Sunni-dominated theological tradition (Fazlhashemi, 2021). According to some scholars such as Abu Bakar Aceh, the date of the arrival of the Shiites in Indonesia coincided with the beginning of the Islamic call in Indonesia and the arrival of Muslims in the archipelago from the sixth century AH onwards. The existence of various documents and antiquities such as tombstones, and inscriptions, etc., have led them to believe that the history of Shiism in Indonesia was formed with the beginning of the arrival of Islam in this region (Aceh, 1965).

R. Michael Feener and Chiara Formichi said that, “Today the vast majority of Muslims in Southeast Asia identify themselves as “Sunni,” and this appears to have been the case for most of the region’s recorded history. Nevertheless, academic discussions of the ‘Islamization’ of the Indonesian archipelago have for more than a century used terms like “Shi’itic elements”, ‘crypto-Shi’ism’ and even ‘potpourri Syiah’, in reference to the prominence of figures like Ali bin Abi Talib, Fatima and their son Husayn in local Muslim tradition, as well as to religious practices that did not fit in the frame of mainstream Sunnism as understood in the modern period.” (Feener & Formichi, 2015)

According to Zulkifli, there are two elements and factors which have contributed to the formation of the Shia community in Indonesia. By tracing its genesis, that is, the presence of a Shia group among the community of Arab descent, and by examining the way in which the Shia have maintained their existence throughout history. Secondly, that the emergence of the “Qum alumni” and their promotion of their Islamic education in Qum, Iran. This is followed by a description of the emergence of the Shia campus group (Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015).

The precise number of adherents to Shiism in Indonesia is not known. Many notable Shia’s have tried to estimate their numbers, even though there are no reliable sources to call upon. Although the exact number of Shiites in this country is not provided and their number is never officially announced, but according to estimates by reputable scientific centers, the number of Shiites in the country is estimated at about one percent of Muslims, having reached several million people (Asadi, 2021)

(Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015).

At present, Shiites are present in most of the provinces of this country. The presence of Shiites in different parts of the country is accompanied by intensity and weakness, and many Shiites are not willing to make their beliefs public due to the dominance of the Sunnis, and hence they accompany the Sunnis in their programs and ceremonies. The cities in which the Shiites have an official presence and have established official centres and institutions are: Jakarta, Bandung, Cirebon, Surabaya, Jepara, Malang, Aceh, Makassar, Garut, Gambir, Begor, Samarang, Jogjakarta, Pekalongan, Madura, Bangil, Madan, Bukit Tinggi, Bengkulu, Pariaman, Lampong, Lampung, Lampak, Kupang, Pontianak, Banjarmasin, Bali, Balikpapan, Manado, Palo, Ambon, Jayapura, etc (Asadi, 2021). As Zulkifli said that “even though Shi’ism has been evident in Indonesia in the past, the majority of Shi’is are actually converts from Sunnism following the victory of the Iranian revolution of 1979.” (Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015).

The Indonesian Shi’a community is small enough. They are divided into three groups: Ikatan Jamaah Ahl-bait Indonesia (IJABI); Ahl-Bait Indonesia (ABI); and Organisation of Ahl-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-Shi’a advocacy has strained its relationship with the other two groups that have been careful in the past not to antagonize the Sunni majority (Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015).

The existence and development of Shia communities in Indonesia inevitably invites various responses from Sunnis—as the majority group. By and large, Indonesian Islam is characterized by the strong resistance of Muslim individuals, organizations and institutions to Shiism and the Shia. The most significant being the reactions to this growth from the Sunni Muslim majority. They are complex and range from the extremely negative to the moderate (Kayane, 2020).

In fact, there are similarities between Sunnis and Shias, both in terms of monotheism (worship to the oneness of God), the holy book Al-Quran, the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., human resurrection in the Last Day

(*ma'ād*), basic obligations, prayer, fasting, zakat, Hajj and Jihad. These main points, seen by Yann Richard, for example, are more important than the differences between both of them (Richard, 1995). However, the differences between these two schools of thought then became more apparent, in the detailed aspects of Islamic teachings: creed, law, ethics, and so on, even though both are primarily based on the same way of life, namely the holy book of the Qur'an.

To understand the complex dynamics of the contemporary Sunni-Shiite conflict, according to Philipp Holtmann, one needs to understand both the historical and doctrinal context which plagues the Middle East (Holtmann, 2014). Historical and social facts show the occurrence of various conflicts between Sunnis and Shiites in Indonesia. The presence and especially the rapid growth of the Shiite community in Indonesia has made the Sunnis very worried. Therefore, as a consequence of the growing concern, it is the trigger for the anti-Shiite movement in various regions of Indonesia. The anti-Shiite movement is mainly driven by the Salafi-reformist Islam—with the claim of being the guardian of the Aqidah of *Abi Sunnah*—in Indonesia (Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015). For this reason, this group has received support from several countries in the Middle East especially Saudi Arabia (Maola, 2020).

The Conflict of Sunni-Shia in Indonesia: In-Between Theology, Politics and Social-Economy

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. The 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 or even with personal interest (Zulkifli, *What Drives Anti-Shia Framing in Indonesia*, 2024).

Firstly, the main difference between Shia and Sunni both theologically and politically is mainly related to the issue of imam and imamate. Shia has a different mindset from other schools of thought. It is identical to the concept of leadership (imamate) which is the cornerstone

of Shia faith (al-Ghita', 1957). Shia only believe that only *Ahl-Bait* have the right to replace the Prophet, both in worldly and religious matters. In Shia, the teaching of imamate was originally a political or state doctrine. In its development, now the imamate has become part of religious doctrine. If studied in depth, the core and foundation of Shia teachings are built on the doctrine of imamate. That someone who is considered an imam becomes the main reference in all kinds of beliefs, understandings, thoughts, images, and even fantasies (Enayat, 2011) (Yasrebi, 2008).

Shia religious discourse—from theology and cosmology, ideology, epistemology, ethics, law and politics—all refer to the doctrine and beliefs regarding the imams. This Shia doctrine has not changed much since the first period of Hijri (7th century AD) to the contemporary era, although the names of the figures or sects are different. The main doctrines revolve around the status of the imam who is equal to—if not exceeding—the Prophet Muhammad. The Imam is the center and source of guidance from God for all mankind, whose light is passed down from generation to generation to their children and grandchildren, with all the attributes of holiness, knowledge, and privilege. According to Adel Hashemi-Najafabadi, the imamate is “the cardinal principle of Islam” for Shia (Najafabadi, 2010).

Regarding the imamate, based on Richard Yann’s explanation, the points of difference between Shia and Sunni revolve around three important points, namely: the necessity of appointing an imam from the side of Allah, the necessity of an imam to have infallibility, and the necessity of an imam to have *ladunni* knowledge from Allah. The differences between these two schools of thought inevitably cause very serious problems because they result in mutual disbelief (*takfir*) between the two, and end in a rift between them, so that the two can hardly mix, and of course it is very difficult to unite (Richard, 1995).

“Over time, what started as political factionalism turned into deeper doctrinal differences. Today Sunni and Shi’a share many core beliefs regarding tawhid (the oneness of God), Muhammad as the last prophet, and the Qur’an as the holy book. But there are some fundamental differences, in particular the concept of imamah (leadership). Shi’a believe that after the death of Muhammad, the Muslim community (ummah) will be guided by infallible imams, direct descendants of Ali chosen by God, who have the sole right to interpret the Qur’an and make rulings for the community; they thus

have both a political and spiritual mandate. Sunnis see their leaders as guardians of Islam but not as infallible heirs of the Prophet who can directly deliver the wisdom of God. Globally, the Shi'a are divided into three main groups of which the largest, the Twelvers, includes most of the Indonesian community.” (Conflict, 2016).

Shiism as a stream existing in the Islamic world has principal differences from the Sunni madhhab (*ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat*) adhered to by Indonesian Muslims. The differences, among others, are: (1) Shi'ism rejects the Hadith not narrated by the *ahl al-bait* whereas the *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat* do not differentiate between them, provided they fulfil the requirements [recommended by] the sciences of Hadith; (2) Shi'ism views that the Imams are infallible, whilst the *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat* views them as ordinary men who are not free from mistakes; (3) Shi'ism does not recognize ijma' without the role of the imams whereas the *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat* recognize it without requiring the participation of imams; (4) Shi'ism views the establishment of leadership/government (the imamate) as a pillar of religion whereas the Sunnis (*ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat*) view it as public welfare, with the goal of the imamate being to guarantee and protect da'wa and the interest of the umma; and (5) Shi'ism in general does not recognize the caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, 'Umar bin al-Khattab and 'Uthman bin 'Affan while the *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat* recognize the four Rightly Guided Caliphs (Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali ibn Abi Talib).

So, the position of Shiite in Indonesia is complicated by a number of intertwined political and religious factors (Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015). For example, considering the principal differences between Shiism and the *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat* especially regarding the difference on imamate (government), Majelis Ulama Indonesia appeals to the Indonesian Muslims who uphold *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaat* to increase awareness of the possibility of the coming of streams based on the teachings of Shiism. A large number of activities have been undertaken by anti-Shia groups for the purpose of preventing or reducing the spread of the teachings of Shiism in Indonesia. These activities include seminars, discussions, appeals to government authorities and preaching (da'wa) (Zulkifli, *The Struggle of the Shiism in Indonesia*, 2015). This point thus resonates with Jeremy Menchik's argument that Indonesian Islam in fact lacks liberal values (although purportedly tolerant) (Menchik, 2016) (Sopyan, Fauzan, & Fata, 2020). Indonesian Islam, however, is not a single-faced entity.

Secondly, the relationship of Sunni-Shia is not influenced by religious-theology which is different but also a political-economy factors. According to Masdar Hilmi's research on Sunni-Shia conflict in Sampang, Madura, he argues vice-versa that it is not theology, but politics and economy, which mainly steered the conflict. Theology played a role in exacerbating the escalation of conflict. During the conflict, religious and theological arguments were deployed as a mobilizing force in order to justify the conflict. Furthermore, the existence of Shia community in Sampang is regarded by the mainstream Sunni community as a threat to their long domination over the socio-political structure in that region (Hilmy, 2015).

At the surface to society's structure, one may find the Shiah-Sunni conflict as an ideological contest between the two. However, when scrutinized more deeply, the conflict follows the structure of production mode wrapped in the argument of cultural essentialism, as though culture does matter for each conflicting party. Viewed from the surface of the structure, the cultural essentialist explanation above seems to be true. Viewed from the deeper structure, however, the cultural essentialist explanation might work only at the partial periphery of the conflict. The deeper one is getting into, he/she will be struck by the fact that a broader structure is at work behind the conflict. Religious and theological argument forms only insignificant part in explaining the reality of the conflict. What is meant by structure refers to an established mode of production in the making of religious tradition. One important element of the established mode of production is economy: the circulation of money among the kiais/religious men to whom the majority of Madurese pay homage and full respect. This is so because the religious men are mostly responsible as the sole agent in the production of meaning among the lay community (Hilmy, 2015).

Religious conflict, like religious violence, can also be combined with non-religious factors. When it emerges, it can be combined with various other factors according to the existing socio-cultural-political context. In other words, the claim of absolute truth by a religious group requires a certain socio-political context to erupt into open conflict. When the conflict is wrapped in religious ideologies, it has a very powerful driving force. In other words, the mainstream actors are afraid of losing their steady buyers, i.e. the followers of Sunni. This means that the conflict between Sunni and Shia is about the conflict over membership. In a different formulation,

Ahmad Zainul Hamdi posits that the conflict reflects the claim of religious authority, not the truth-claim in theology. He said that the Sunni-Shia conflict in Sampang is a conflict over the basis of religious leadership authority (Hamdi, 2014).

The Cultural Da'wa in Grass-root

The relationship between Sunnis and Shiites in Indonesia is not always conflictual. Culturally the closeness between the Sunni-Syī'ah in the traditions and religious rituals of Indonesian Muslims can no longer be denied. The fact that the tradition of *tahlilan*, *kehaul*, *diba'an*, and praying for deceased spirits practiced by the majority of Muslims in Indonesia bears a resemblance to the practice of Shiites. Likewise in the tradition of mauid reading in every Friday night, besides having similarities in the reading in the book, the names of priests who were recognized by the Shiites were also included. In the tarekat tradition, the two most dominant tarekat in Indonesia, Qadiriyyah and Naqshabandiyah, have links (*sanad*) to Imam Ali Musa al-Rida (seventh priest), Imam Musa al-Qasimi (sixth priest), Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (fifth imam), Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (fourth priest), Imam Ali Zainal Abidin (third priest), Imam Husein (second priest), and Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (first priest). That means, spiritual figures recognized by the Sunnis are also recognized by the Shiites (Jamaruddin, 2020).

The study of Saefudin and Rohman found that the strength of the Shiite citizens lie in the similarity of religious practice such as tahlilan, commemorating the Prophet Muhammad, and grave pilgrimages. The most important way for the Shiite minority to interact with the Sunni majority characterized in an open interaction with the majority of people both in the field of religious activities and national related commemoration. In addition, this close social relationship between the pesantren environment and the surrounding community contributed greatly in eroding the negative stigma about Shia heresy but rather live in harmony with the Sunni majority without suspicion, sentiment, or class tension (Saefudin & Rohman, 2019).

Generally, with the above approach towards the Shiites at Jepara, the students of the Darut Taqrib Islamic Boarding School in particular, have never experienced enough serious problems in social life. The existence of the Darut Taqrib Islamic Boarding School, including students and religious teachers, was well received by the people of Jepara. The Jepara government and the community around the pesantren have never questioned the

existence of the pesantren even though the teachings are different from the majority Sunni community. Likewise, in the midst of society, the students and Shiites in Jepara do not need to hide their Shia. They are free to express their teachings without having to cover up the ideological identity as adherents of Shia (Saefudin & Rohman, 2019).

From a social perspective, one of the causes of peaceful relations Shiites with the Sunni group is because they are merging with society. This is useful to maintain their rights in the community. The members did not put an attitude of sentiment towards the local people who had direct contact with them. They are active in doing many things like joining jamaah prayer in local mosques, conducting “Fatimahs kitchen”, holding community service, taking care of the patrol (security) posts, and others. Because of this, the Shiite does not feel different, even though the ideology they have is different (Abidin, Fuadi, Kholis, & Aziz).

The culture of dialogue comes hand in hand with the process of the social transformation of the people of Yogyakarta (as an example). This culture has been guaranteed by the social cohesiveness of the people of Yogyakarta with cultural forces as a buffer. With the formation of these cultures, an understanding of the importance of tolerance will be created. Therefore, if there is an event or conflict it will not last long. This reality is one of the things that distinguishes it from the Sunni-Shiite conflict in Sampang, which most of the population has low levels of education (Abidin, Fuadi, Kholis, & Aziz).

Likewise, the results of Eva Ida Amaliyah’s study related to social interactions between Sunni and Shia followers in Banjaran, Jepara, Central Java. Sunni and Shia followers in Banjaran Village show a harmonious face in social relations. Both parties are aware that there are differences in worship, but they do not want to widen the gap. They choose to be together in the context of social-humanitarian relations. This is because both parties respect each other. This condition cannot be separated from the existence of Mbah Muhammad Arif who for the Banjaran community is a symbol of unity between Sunni and Shia. Mbah Muhammad Arif is the forerunner of the village as well as the spreader of Islamic teachings in the area (Amaliyah, 2015).

CONCLUSION

The study shows that the socio-religious relationship between Sunni and Shia is dynamic like a venture throughout history in the Muslim world,

including Indonesia. The main factor causing tension between Shia vis-à-vis Sunni is due to the doctrine of the Imamate which is the belief of the Shia themselves. Because of this doctrinal factor, the meeting point between Sunni and Shia becomes difficult and seems to be a myth. This doctrinal difference gives rise to other elementary factors such as politics and economics. It cannot be denied that the elements of doctrine, politics and economics make the Sunni-Shia relationship in Indonesia more complicated. The three are intertwined in such a way that the Sunni-Shia conflict develops in various regions of Indonesia.

However, in the process of the tense relationship, a relatively harmonious relationship process was also found between Sunni and Shia in various regions of Indonesia. Studies on the harmonization between the two camps with different ideologies show that in fact at the grassroots level they need peace of life in the reality of differences in ideology and even religion. Culturally, Indonesian Muslim society is a humanist, tolerant and very warm-friendly society. Therefore, this study recommends the process of strengthening cultural da'wah as one of the strategies for harmonization among religious communities in Indonesia.

The studi recommended that a real movement to build intensive communication among the very diverse Muslims must be carried out so that the energy of Muslims is not wasted in internal conflict. The poverty that has hit some Muslim-populated countries and the occupation of Palestine by Israel are some of the important problems that must be resolved immediately. The noble message to prioritize the unity of the people and understand the differences that exist has been exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad when he made brothers between the Muhajir from Mecca and the Ansar from Medina. The scholars and leaders of Islamic countries throughout the world should prioritize dialogue in resolving the problems of the Muslim community so that Muslims do not suffer great losses. Partial political interests should be put aside so that the welfare of all Muslims is achieved.

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